



# BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM SURVEY RESULTS & ACTION PLAN

**2019** PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND TECHNICAL SERVICES SECTOR





# INTRODUCTION

A key recommendation of the Town of Orangeville's 2018 Economic Development Strategy was to continue delivering structured Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) programs within the community to help the Town better understand the issues, concerns and opportunities that could exist for local businesses. The program, originally initiated by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), helps to grow relationships between the Town, local stakeholders and businesses. It also creates opportunities to share important information with businesses and to identify initiatives, resources and programs that could further the economic development of the town. As a key sector identified within our Economic Development Strategy, completion of a BR+E project with the professional, technical and scientific (PST) services sector was recommended.

Led by a project task force comprised of the Town of Orangeville's Business and Economic Development Advisory Committee members, a PST focused BR+E initiative was undertaken in January 2019.

As a co-operative effort between PST businesses, municipal government representatives, and OMAFRA, the Orangeville BR+E initiative brought the voices of the local business community together to help guide economic decision-making. The program began with business visitations and the completion of 36 comprehensive surveys to identify business needs, opportunities, and issues. The information collected was then used to address urgent problems, connect businesses with relevant support programs and services, and to identify gaps where resources could be improved or created to support economic development strategies within the community. The project was delivered in parallel with similar programs delivered by the County of Dufferin and the Town of Shelburne in an effort to create a larger critical mass and heighten the impact of the findings.

The ultimate objective of the BR +E initiative was to build capacity within the community by creating a more positive business climate and helping local businesses to mitigate potential problems. The program provided the Economic Development office with a better understanding of the issues and trends that exist within the business community, opened lines of communication to gain a better understanding of the needs of private enterprises, and created opportunities to address concerns and, where possible, removed barriers by responding to business issues. The program also offered an opportunity to provide businesses with information on the programs and services available to help them become more competitive.

The information gleaned from Orangeville's PST BR+E initiative has provided an opportunity to develop clear and measurable goals across four themes that will be implemented as the Town continues to work to increase the competitiveness of local businesses and build a stronger local economy.

## THE FOUR THEMES ARE:

-  **Business Attraction and Support** |  **Workforce Development**
-  **Workforce Attraction** |  **Community Development**

# BR+E BACKGROUND

The Business Retention and Expansion initiative (BR+E) is an economic development tool that was developed by the Province of Ontario to provide communities with a better understanding of the needs of local businesses and to help set priorities for projects to address those needs. First introduced by OMAFRA in 1998, the BR+E program has evolved over time to become a business-friendly and action-oriented economic development tool.

The program enables municipal leaders, partners and staff to develop proactive short- and long-term goals that will increase competitiveness, enable business development, investment and job creation, and foster an environment for future growth.

The BR+E program involves four stages: initial preparation, the collection and analysis of data, development of goals and action plans, and the implementation of the actions along with monitoring and tracking of results.

Survey questions were based on OMAFRA's standard business retention survey. Businesses interviewed were defined by the professional services sector classification provided by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and included firms offering the following services:

- Accounting and Bookkeeping
- Engineering, Architecture and Land Surveying
- Design Services (graphics, interior, industrial)
- Legal Services
- Consulting Services (financial)
- Advertising and Public Relations
- Veterinary Services

Comprised of six major sections (Business Information, Business Climate, Future Plans, Business Development, Workforce, and Community Development), the BR+E survey provided confidential, detailed business information that was then reviewed in aggregate format to make strategic action plans.

In total, 36 surveys were completed in Orangeville, achieving a confidence rate of more than 90%, and indicating that the survey results highly reflect the opinions of the business community.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ORANGEVILLE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FIRMS

Our industry-specific BR+E Project would not have been possible without the co-operation and involvement of our local professional, scientific and technical (PST) sector businesses. Between January and August 2019, thirty-six local business leaders took the time and effort required to participate in the surveying process, opening lines of communication and helping us to achieve a confidence rate of more than 90%. Orangeville's PST business leaders are very engaged in their community and we are grateful for their involvement.

## THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Town of Orangeville Business and Economic Development Advisory Committee (BEDAC) provided leadership, time, and effort to the BR+E Project. The members are:

**Councillor Joe Andrews**, Chair  
**Pete Renshaw**, Vice Chair  
**Wendy Edwards**  
**Linda Horne**

**Diana Morris**  
**Buddy Pitt**  
**Shokheen Singh**  
**Bruce Walkinshaw**

## THE VOLUNTEER VISITATION TEAM

The visitation team dedicated many hours of professional, committed effort to ensure that confidential business interviews were completed efficiently and thoroughly. The visitation team was comprised of:

**Pete Renshaw**, Vice Chair, BEDAC  
**Buddy Pitt**, Owner, Orangeville Home Hardware, BEDAC member  
**Ruth Phillips**, Manager, Economic Development and Culture  
**Katrina Lemire**, Co-ordinator, Business, Culture and Tourism  
**Ellen Sinclair**, Co-ordinator, Small Business Enterprise Centre

## PROVINCIAL STAFF ADVISORS/TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM

**Rian Omollo**, Economic Development Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
**Cheryl Brine**, Agriculture and Rural Economic Development Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

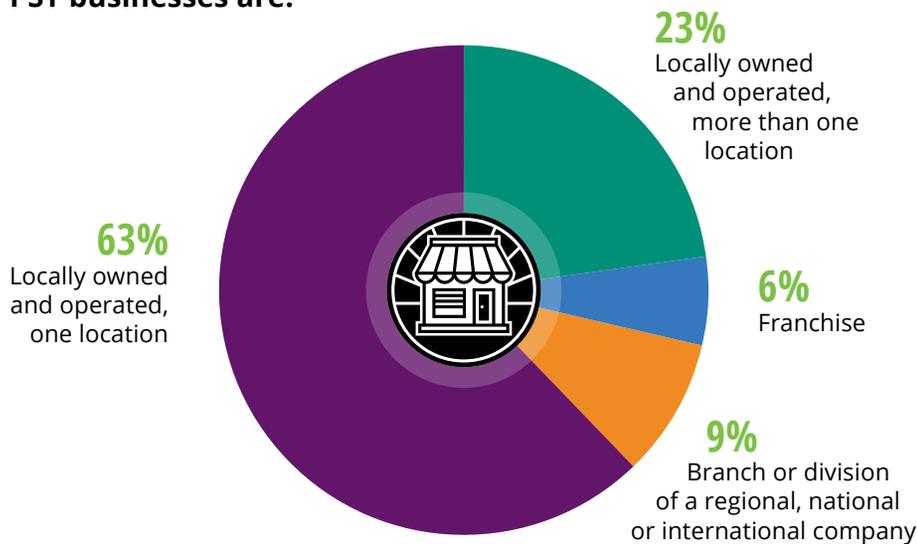
# BUSINESS INFORMATION

*Business information questions helped to create a profile of the PST businesses operating locally as well as the jobs created by them.*

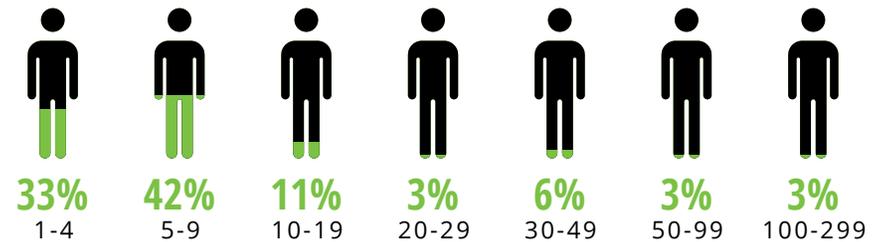
With the majority of businesses locally owned and operated, Orangeville's PST sector is well-established in the community. Many business owners are also residents of Orangeville, creating long-term connections with both residents and other businesses. Forty-five percent of businesses have operated in Orangeville for more than 25 years, creating opportunities to diversify the sector by attracting start-ups and undertaking succession and business planning initiatives.

## THEMES: Business Attraction and Support

### PST businesses are:



### Including owners, number of employees at the business location:



### Length of operation in the community:



### Primary markets are:



67%

have at least one owner who is a resident of the community

94%

of owners are involved in the day-to-day operation of the business

52%

of businesses have a business plan

49%

of businesses own their location

81%

of tenants anticipate no issues in renewing lease

# BUSINESS CLIMATE

The quality of life available in Orangeville, combined with the community's amenities and infrastructure, make it a desirable location for PST businesses. Although highly valued by many who use them, the services offered by some community organizations could be more widely promoted to enhance awareness.

*The business climate section provided an overall impression of the community as a place to conduct business and identified the satisfaction level with various community-based services and local government offerings.*

**THEMES:**  **Business Attraction and Support** |  **Workforce Development**



98% rated their impression of the community as a place to do business as good to excellent

### Municipal services generating excellent/good satisfaction rates by 100% of respondents included:



elementary/  
secondary schools



fire  
services

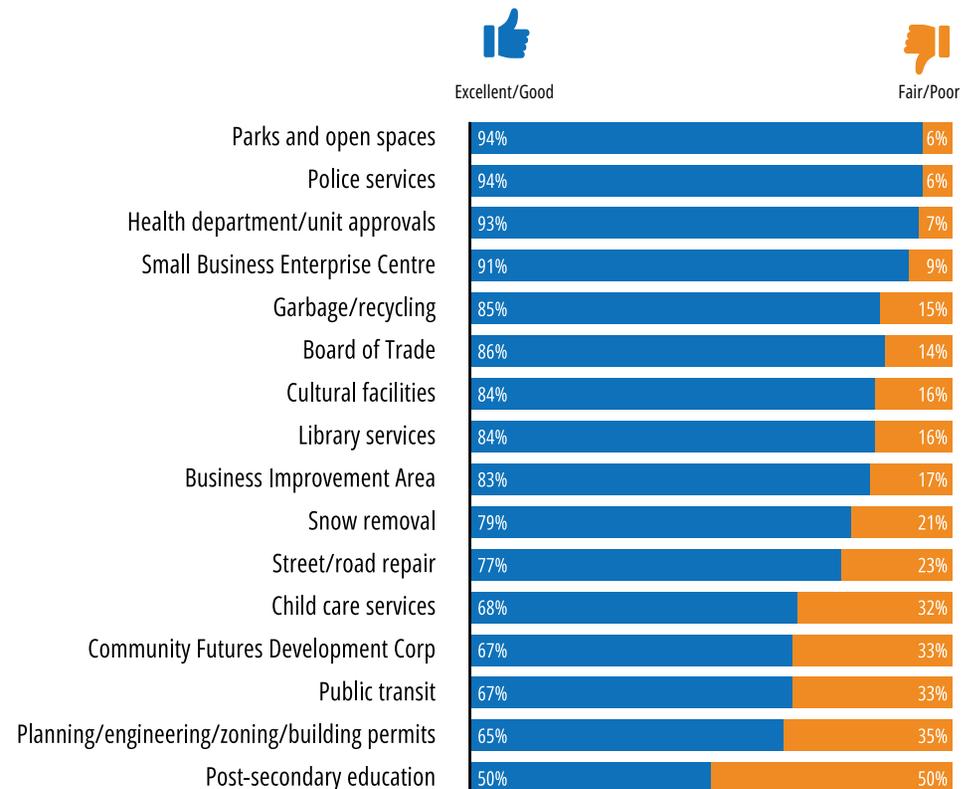


recreational  
facilities

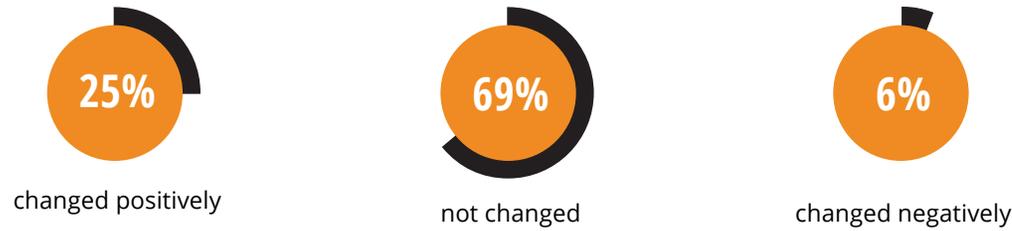


economic  
development services

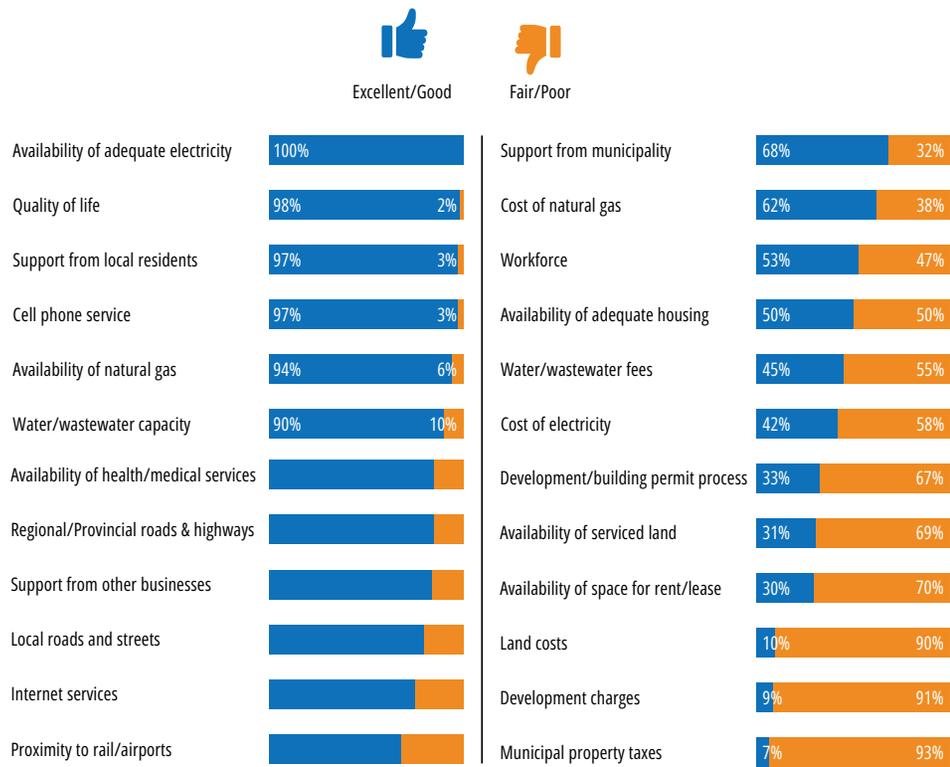
### Level of satisfaction with community services



**In the past three years, businesses stated their attitude about doing business in the community has:**



**Rating of community factors as place to do business:**



# FUTURE PLANS

Many of Orangeville's PST businesses are considering expansion. To enable their plans, support may be required to assist them in hiring and training qualified employees, finding appropriate space for growth, and encouraging the public to purchase locally.

*Businesses shared their future operational plans, including expansion or downsizing expectations. Any issues related to their plans and potential supports required were also identified.*

**THEMES:**  **Business Attraction and Support** |  **Workforce Development**  
 **Workforce Attraction** |  **Community Development**

**47%**  
 plan to expand in  
 the next 18 months

Most businesses with plans for expansion advised of a requirement for increased workforce and increased floor space, with 15 expanding business planning to create 56 new jobs collectively. Seven business owners reported that their plans would collectively require an additional 11,000 square feet.

### Thirty-three percent identified difficulties with expansion, including:



Shortage of skilled employees and applicants

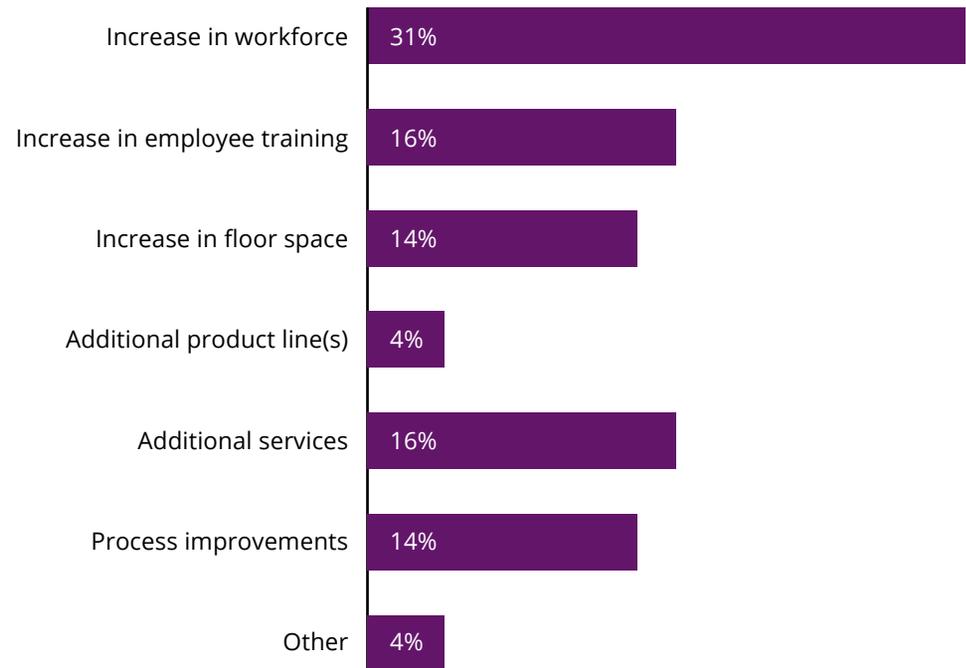


Shortage of parking for clients and staff



Difficulty finding available space greater than 6,000 sq ft

### Expansion plans include:



# 65%

of respondents indicated that the community could potentially provide some assistance with their expansion plans.

## Businesses suggested the community could assist by:

- Continuing to host local job fairs
- Providing leadership seminars and social media training
- Continuing to offer and promote grants/programs such as Façade Improvement and Access Orangeville assistance
- Encouraging community members to shop locally

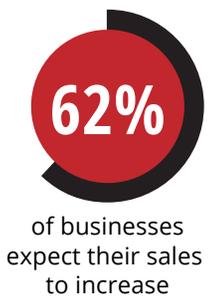


# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Sales are stable or growing for 89% of Orangeville's PST businesses, indicating robust conditions across the sector. A high use of technology creates a need for efficient access to technology and other technical support. Opportunities to network with peers generated moderate interest.

The business development section offered general insights into the outlook for the PST sector as well as details about individual business projections, use of technology and related barriers, and interest in utilizing a collaborative approach to business issues.

**THEMES:**  Business Attraction and Support |  Workforce Development |  Community Development

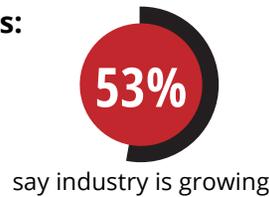
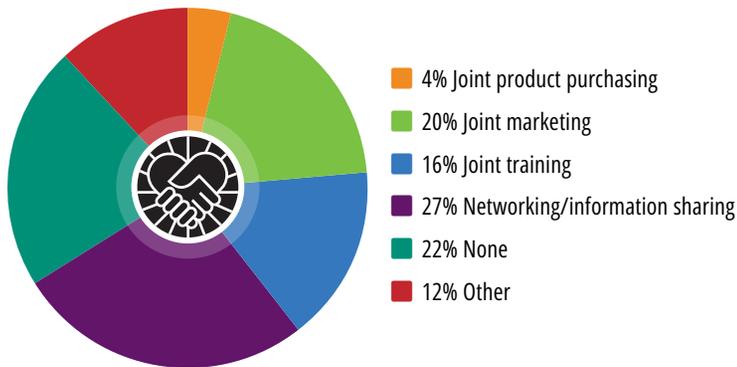


## Reasons for their projections included:

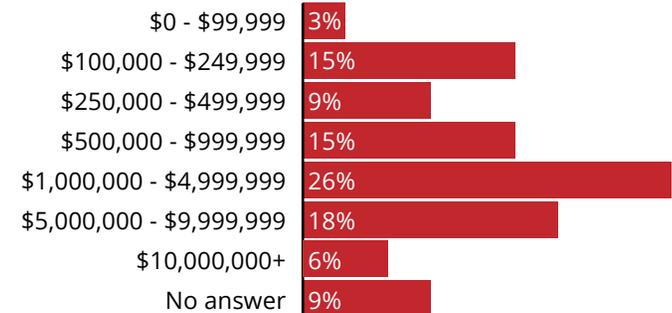


The majority of businesses interviewed (95%) rated their use of technology as moderate to very high. Most commonly identified barriers related to information technology use included internet speed, access to the internet, and hardware and software support - although 47% reported no barriers.

## Interest in working co-operatively with other businesses:



## Approximate sales range:



# WORKFORCE

The availability of qualified workers, followed by the ability to attract new employees, are significant challenges for many PST businesses. A competitive environment, coupled with the need for specialized skills, post-secondary educational requirements, and relevant experience for many available positions in this sector make it challenging to hire locally.

*Workforce questions provided an opportunity for business owners to advise of workforce patterns, identify issues related to labour force availability, attraction and retention, and to identify any barriers to fulfilling their workforce requirements.*

**THEMES:**  Business Attraction and Support |  Workforce Development

 Workforce Attraction |  Community Development



**89%**  
had added staff  
in last 3 years  
(51 new jobs)



**77%**  
rated the availability  
of qualified workers  
as poor/fair



**57%**  
of businesses  
interviewed said they  
have difficulty hiring

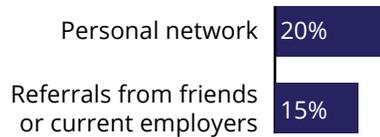
**59%**

indicated that  
challenges were specific  
to their industry

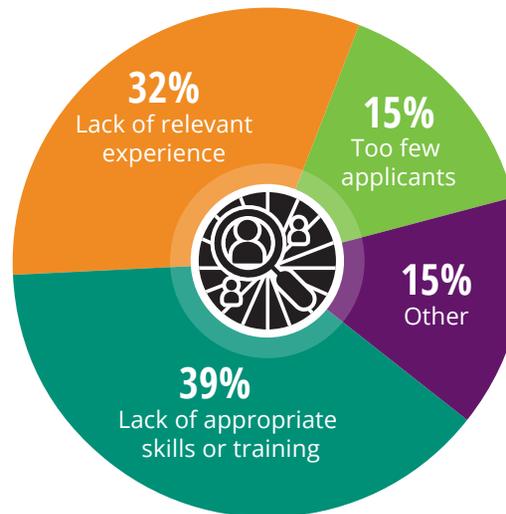
**41%**

said challenges were  
community specific

### Most common recruitment strategies:



### Reasons for hiring difficulties:



### Occupations identified as being difficult to recruit included:

-  Accountant/Accounting Technician
-  Law Clerk/Law Clerk Assistant
-  Graphic Designer
-  Architect
-  Autocad Operator
-  Engineers  
*(intermediate and senior with 5 years + experience)*
-  Web Designer

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Orangeville's small-town appeal and central location is well complemented by its available amenities. However, high tax rates, workforce challenges, and limited availability of land and space for growing businesses are concerns for this sector.

*The community development section asked about the types of assistance or opportunities that would be helpful in supporting PST businesses while also gathering open-ended feedback about doing business in Orangeville.*

**THEMES:**  Business Attraction and Support |  Workforce Development |  Community Development

## Top three areas of assistance to support businesses:



Business networking sessions



E-marketing, social media and online workshops



Workforce training and attraction

In terms of overall impact to Orangeville as a place to do business, owners were also asked to identify the most significant change they would like to see in the next five years. Their comments included:

1. Reduce property taxes
2. Create land/space for business attraction
3. Improve local planning processes and fees



### Community's top advantages:

- Centralized location, including proximity to GTA and to rural environment
- Quality of life
  - Small town appeal/culture with larger scale municipal offerings
  - Amenities available within town to meet needs
- Support from customers



### Community's top disadvantages as a place to do business:

- High property taxes
- Workforce – employee attraction/recruitment
- Size of community
  - Smaller population, smaller customer base

# RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SECTOR BR+E PROJECT 2019

 Business Attraction and Support | 
  Workforce Development | 
  Workforce Attraction | 
  Community Development

| Action   | Time Frame            | Lead/Partner  | Measure  |
|--|-----------------------|---|--|
|  <b>Business Attraction and Support</b>   |                       |   |  |
| Promote community as place to do business and feature quality of life/location through refreshed website.  | 6 months/ongoing      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC and Corporate Services</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information readily available to promote benefits of location</li> <li>New businesses located to community</li> <li>Website/social media analytics</li> <li>Feedback from businesses</li> </ul> |
| Attract creative sector/entrepreneurs through increased and targeted marketing.  | 6 months/ongoing      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>County of Dufferin</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New businesses located to community</li> </ul>  |
| Increase awareness of support/assistance available with business planning.   | Immediate and ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>Municipal partners</li> <li>BIAs</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New businesses located to community</li> <li>Increased consultations for business planning support</li> <li>Financing referrals made</li> </ul>   |
| Elevate knowledge and completion of succession planning by businesses.   | 6-12 months/ongoing   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>Municipal partners</li> <li>BIAs</li> <li>Private businesses</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Succession planning events held and attendance to them</li> <li>Literature available and accessed to support succession planning initiatives</li> </ul>   |
| Monitor, distribute and advocate for Federal/Provincial broadband initiatives. Continue to work with OMAFRA, Ministry of Innovation and monitor for program/funding announcements. | Ongoing               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Orangeville Corporate Services and Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>County of Dufferin</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in infrastructure by government, businesses and internet service providers</li> </ul>  |
| Increase awareness of Economic Development/SBEC services through increased promotional campaigns.  | Ongoing               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>Municipal partners</li> <li>County of Dufferin</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website analytics</li> <li>Attendance to workshops</li> <li>Inquiry/consultation metrics</li> </ul>   |

DBOT - Dufferin Board of Trade | SBEC - Small Business Enterprise Centre | BIA - Business Improvement Area | WPB - Workplace Planning Board of Waterloo-Wellington-Dufferin  
 BEDAC - Business and Economic Development Advisory Committee.

| Action  | Time Frame                     | Lead/Partner  | Measure   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
|  <b>Business Attraction and Support</b>  |                                |   |   |
| Promote wage subsidy/training opportunities that are/may become available to business owners through programs offered by colleges/local community service providers.              | Ongoing                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georgian Career and Employment Community Services</li> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development</li> <li>• Municipal partners</li> <li>• DBOT</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased uptake of training and wage support available to employers locally</li> </ul>  |
| Promote local purchasing of goods and services.   | Ongoing                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBOT</li> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>• Municipal Partners</li> <li>• BIAs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved/new business interactions</li> </ul>  |
| Implement sector networking opportunities.  | Within next 6-12 months        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBOT</li> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development</li> <li>• BIAs</li> <li>• PST sector businesses</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased business interactions between PST sector businesses</li> <li>• Attendance to events</li> </ul>   |
| Launch and deliver ongoing Business Visitation Program geared to existing businesses and incorporating all sectors to ensure ongoing, timely communication and support available. | First quarter 2020 and ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>• BEDAC Committee</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual reports to Council outlining outcomes</li> <li>• Participation rates by employers</li> <li>• Referrals made and support provided</li> </ul>             |
|  <b>Workforce Development</b>  |                                |   |   |
| Continue to offer variety of affordable, quality SBEC workshops geared to business owners and staff, with increased and varied opportunities for social media training.           | 6 months and ongoing           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and themes of workshops offered</li> <li>• Attendance to workshops</li> </ul>   |
| Hold periodic meetings with partners to explore attraction/retention challenges within community, identify and act on initiatives.  | Quarterly                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All municipal Economic Development offices</li> <li>• DBOT</li> <li>• Georgian Career and Employment Community Services</li> <li>• WPB</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance to meetings</li> <li>• Initiatives launched</li> <li>• Number of partnerships created</li> </ul>  |
| Continue to promote training opportunities available through Lynda.com (online training and skill development database with more than 4000 offerings).                            | Ongoing                        | Town of Orangeville Economic Development/IT/Library   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotional efforts undertaken</li> <li>• Uptake of resources available</li> <li>• Library memberships by Dufferin businesses including Orangeville</li> </ul> |

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 BEDAC - Business and Economic Development Advisory Committee.

| Action  | Time Frame            | Lead/Partner  | Measure   |
|---|-----------------------|---|---|
|  <b>Workforce Attraction</b>   |                       |   |   |
| Launch newcomer attraction efforts through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with program providers offering new immigrant services</li> <li>• Celebrating cultural diversity in Orangeville</li> <li>• Providing education to employers</li> </ul> | 6-18 months           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newcomer Centre of Peel</li> <li>• County of Dufferin</li> <li>• Municipal partners</li> <li>• Orangeville's Diversity Committee</li> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events held to celebrate cultural diversity</li> <li>• Inventory of programs and resources available to support newcomers to community</li> </ul>  |
| Deliver workforce related event for local businesses focused on recruitment and retention of youth.   | 24-30 months          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>• Georgian Career and Employment Community Services</li> <li>• Municipal partners</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance to event</li> <li>• Feedback from participants</li> </ul>   |
| Provide learning opportunities for firms on recruitment strategies, inclusive of social media options.  | 6 months and ongoing  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>• Georgian Career and Employment Community Services</li> <li>• Social media service providers</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uptake of services/information/workshops provided</li> <li>• Survey results</li> </ul>   |
| Continue to host periodic larger-scale job fairs to support attraction efforts of all sectors.  | 18 months and ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC</li> <li>• County of Dufferin</li> <li>• Georgian Career and Employment Community Services</li> <li>• Dufferin HR Group</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation by local employers</li> <li>• Attendance to job fairs</li> <li>• Survey results following event</li> </ul>   |
| Support creation of regional comprehensive job search website through partnership between County/WPB.   | First quarter 2020    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County of Dufferin</li> <li>• Municipal partners</li> <li>• WPB</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website launch and uptake metrics</li> <li>• Employer utilization of site</li> </ul>   |
|  <b>Community Development</b>  |                       |   |   |
| Evaluate and support implementation of business hub with DBOT/County of Dufferin as established by further research/review of regional needs.   | Next 6-12 months      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBOT</li> <li>• County of Dufferin</li> <li>• Town of Orangeville Economic Development</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of space tailored to regional community needs</li> <li>• Utilization of business support/services</li> <li>• Events targeted to/attended by home-based entrepreneurs/micro enterprises</li> </ul> |
| Promote opportunities to bring labour to Orangeville through participation in Commute Ontario Program through to 2021.  | Ongoing               | Town of Orangeville Economic Development/SBEC   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation rates by employers</li> <li>• Participation rates by members of the commuting public and by Orangeville residents</li> </ul>   |
| Promote public transportation available within the municipality and encourage uptake specifically geared to workforce via social media campaigns.   | 6 months and ongoing  | Town of Orangeville Transportation Services/Communications  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus utilization statistics</li> </ul>  |
| Advocate for affordable/attainable housing options and investment.  | Ongoing               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County of Dufferin – Social Services</li> <li>• Town of Orangeville Planning division</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives launched</li> <li>• Number of affordable units available over long-term</li> <li>• Inventory of multi-unit dwellings established</li> </ul>  |

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