



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN 2020-2025: OVERVIEW



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## VISION 2025

Collingwood offers residents and visitors a healthy lifestyle of activities in beautiful and safe settings, including an active transportation network, an inclusive multi-generational artful community with strong civic pride, an animated waterfront and boating facilities, and is a hub of successful entrepreneurs and businesses offering rewarding jobs.

**This means that we will:**

- **Encourage Collingwood's growth** as a thriving, entrepreneurial hub for innovative products, services, and sustainable design—especially in key areas like water, environment and health sciences innovation.
- **Champion collaboration** between government, business and academic institutions, making it easy for new and existing business to find the support they need to grow in Collingwood; and to attract the young, skilled workforce that will support expanding knowledge-economy businesses.

### 1 Plan, 3 Goals

With its natural beauty and promise of work-life balance, Collingwood is growing quickly. This Action Plan zeroes in on just three key points, informed by the Economic Advisory Team—those that will best help us drive economic success in our municipality.



**MAKE COLLINGWOOD A  
HUB FOR SUSTAINABILITY  
INNOVATION**



**PROMOTE COLLINGWOOD  
AS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE  
& WORK**



**ENSURE  
COLLINGWOOD IS  
INVESTMENT-READY**

### Part of a Broader Plan

The Action Plan forms one of the five pillars of the broader Town of Collingwood Community-Based Strategic Plan:

**Transparent and  
Accountable Local  
Government**

**Public Access to a  
Revitalized World-  
Class Waterfront**

**Support and  
Manage Growth &  
Prosperity**

**Enhance  
Community  
Well-being and  
Sustainability**

**Encourage Diverse  
Culture and Arts  
Offerings**

This brochure is a toolkit for the Town to use in checking off economic development actions. Inside you will discover how to action the plan.





**WHERE are we going?**  
These goals will best help us drive Collingwood's economic success.

**HOW will we get there?**  
Each Goal is composed of Objectives, which in turn contain distinct Actions.

**WHEN will we know we've arrived?**  
You know you're hitting the mark when you pass each milestone.

**GOAL 1:**  
**MAKE COLLINGWOOD A HUB FOR SUSTAINABILITY & INNOVATION**  
Creating job opportunities

From ingenious shipbuilding to ceramics-based sonar, the first electric mining machines to groundbreaking advances in architectural glass, Collingwood punches way above its weight as a hub for great ideas. Starting in 2020, we turned up the dial on both innovation and sustainability.

**GOAL 2:**  
**PROMOTE COLLINGWOOD AS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE & WORK**  
Attracting the workers we need

Demographics show that Collingwood has a strong need for more young people in the workforce, especially 20- to 39-year-olds with technical knowledge and abilities. This demographic fills entry-level positions at local businesses. As they acquire more skills, their wages increase and make buying a home in Collingwood viable.

**GOAL 3:**  
**ENSURE COLLINGWOOD IS INVESTMENT-READY**  
Making it easier to do business

We will continue to improve our one-stop-shop, collaborative approach to helping businesses start and grow. This approach will be combined with new online tools, increased process transparency and a customer service orientation proven to help attract new investments and encourage established businesses to invest.

**MAKE COLLINGWOOD A HUB FOR SUSTAINABILITY & INNOVATION**

**Objective 1.1 Accelerate Small & Medium Business Growth**

We can help take local businesses from surviving to thriving. We can add to the other services we offer, do a better job of connecting businesses to services and opportunities, and help businesses find the investment dollars they need to get to the next level.

**Objective 1.2 Promote Sustainability Projects with Partners**

Sustainable businesses and initiatives of all kinds are blossoming in Collingwood. We can encourage this desirable growth by acting as a catalyst for sustainable sectors by finding synergies and by supporting the creation of a hub for business acceleration.

**PROMOTE COLLINGWOOD AS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE & WORK**

**Objective 2.1 Promote Collingwood's Better Lifestyle**

Collingwood is Ontario's premiere four-season playground. It's a big reason why many business leaders choose Collingwood and a key part of attracting skilled workers. We need to safeguard this aspect through environmental stewardship and support for vibrant parks, trails, recreation and culture, and to promote these lifestyle benefits to the kinds of people we wish to attract.

**Objective 2.2 Attract a Young (20-39) Workforce to the Region**

Sufficient young workers is a prerequisite for long-term economic health. We will get to 'sufficient' in collaboration with neighbouring communities by making it affordable to live here, attracting young skilled workers who embrace the outdoor lifestyle and improving public transit, among others.

**Objective 2.3 Offer Workforce Education to a Multi-Generational Talent Pool**

All adults can contribute to our local economy through knowledge, purchases or work. Our citizens should have the opportunity, regardless of age, to acquire new skills to attain the kind of employment they desire and meet the needs of our local businesses.

**ENSURE COLLINGWOOD IS INVESTMENT-READY**

**Objective 3.1 Characterize, Magnify & Market business growth areas with available lands & space**

We will help investors find space in Collingwood by identifying and encouraging effective use of space, as well as by adopting a more collaborative, customer service-oriented approach.

**Objective 3.2 Make it Easy to do Business with the Town**

Hard-working staff in the Town of Collingwood do their best to serve citizens and local businesses. We will continue to do so in an efficient, effective and collaborative way.

**Objective 3.3 Establish a Collingwood Ambassador Team Comprised of Local Business Leaders**

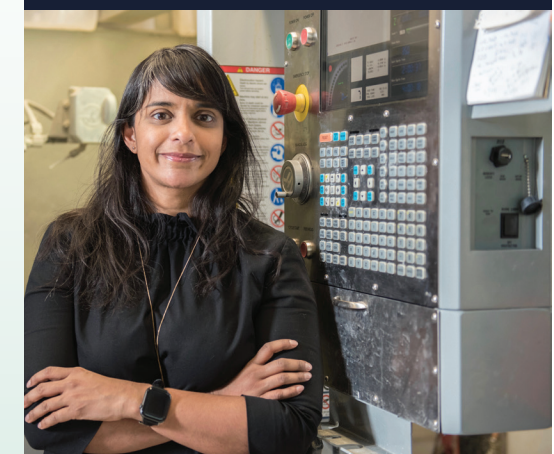
Local business leaders carry tremendous influence with potential investors. Keeping these 'ambassadors' informed about and engaged with the latest economic development news is just as important as listening to their feedback about what's working, what can be improved and how the town can find new opportunities with other levels of government.

**Watch for headlines like these in the years ahead:**

- UN Habitat Conference Chooses Collingwood as a Hub for Sustainability, Innovation
- Collingwood Digital Discovery Platform to Help Downtown Sustainability, Walkability
- Business Accelerator Opens Doors in Collingwood, Welcomes 6 Companies for First 6 Months
- Major New Employer to Build Water Innovation Centre, Investing Millions
- NEW Live More Now Podcast Series Part of Workforce Recruitment Initiative
- Transportation Task Force Increases Employee Bus Usage 50%, Introduces New Active Transport Options
- 2021 Census Data Reveals Rapid Growth of 'Creative Class' in Collingwood
- Collingwood Tracks Progress on Sustainability Index, Developed Jointly with UN
- New Interactive Land & Space Portal Helps Businesses Find Space in Collingwood
- Collingwood Recognized as One of Best Places to Live & Work
- New Interactive Portal Helps Businesses Find Land & Space in Collingwood
- Town Wins Provincial Business-Friendly Award for Its High Level of Service and Support

**BUILDING ON SUCCESS**

- Building permits up
- Unemployment down
- Strong growth across small and medium-sized business



# MEASURING PROGRESS

What gets measured gets done. Annual scorecards will focus on these key metrics:



- Number and growth of jobs in prioritized knowledge-economy sectors; job vacancy rate



- Growth rate and number of people in the 20–39 age group
- Workforce post-secondary education levels; overall workforce participation across multiple generations



- Satisfaction with town approval processes
- Tax base across residential, commercial and industrial
- Investments by companies made in commercial and industrial building developments
- Index of business leader local-investment sentiment



- Impact of Business Development Centre (BDC) grants, loans and coordinated capital investments in helping local businesses grow and create new jobs
- Number and growth of entrepreneurs, small (1–99 employees) and medium (100–499 employees) companies



- Measure quality of life based on an index that evaluates Collingwood's health, education, economic security, sustainability and several other values
- Quarterly lifestyle-event-focused surveys to assess satisfaction and economic impact

## SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVES

Just some of the projects designed to stimulate the kind of economic growth that Collingwood needs:



### Business Ambassador Team

Establish a business ambassador team composed of successful

local businesspeople. Such a team, informed about and engaged with the latest economic developments, can help Collingwood in many ways: with potential investors, with long-term planning and with problem-solving when it's needed the most.



### Attainable Accommodation

With low single-digit local unemployment, we have an acute labour shortage. Making more affordable accommodation available for workers to rent and buy will require innovative ideas from developers and a municipality open to considering opportunities.



### Business-Friendly Customer Service

When processes and expectations are clear, projects move forward efficiently. We will ensure that the community is investment-ready and that residents, applicants and businesses understand each process and can work collaboratively with municipal staff.



### Business Accelerator

Business accelerators help turn fledgling companies into stable, thriving businesses. They offer space, mentorship, services, professional advice and funding options. Joining an accelerator may be the next logical step once a new business has leveraged municipal services and Collingwood's Centre for Business & Economic Development (CBED).



### Sustainable Innovation Hub

The Sustainable Innovation Hub is a public-private partnership designed to bring environmentally-aware pilot projects to the Collingwood area. With our wealth of water-sector expertise, our thriving tech and health care sectors, Collingwood is a model testing ground for green initiatives.

WANT TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS?

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