



Economic Development Strategic Plan

Abstract

The Economic Development Strategy is designed to focus and refine activities of the Town and specifically the actions of the Tourism and Economic Development Committee. It is focused on talent and community building within the municipality, and future positioning and reputation building outside the municipality.

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Introduction

The Town of Kingsville is located on the north shore of Lake Erie in southwest Ontario. Kingsville is home to approximately 23,000 residents, and 1226 businesses.

Kingsville offers opportunities for an active lifestyle with access to unique assets where residents can shop locally for all of their needs and access fresh local food. It is our vision that the best and brightest young people will make Kingsville their family home with satisfying, well-paying jobs. It is a place with a vibrant cultural scene that attracts visitors who choose to re-locate here, and a place that attracts professionals, creative people and educated entrepreneurs.

In 2017 a new Strategic Plan was adopted establishing a vision for the municipality to help guide corporate activities, programs and resources. The Strategic Plan identified thirteen goals to achieve positive outcomes in the immediate future.

Economic development is identified in these goals, with a particular focus on “Supporting the growth of the business community.”

About the strategy

An economic development strategy provides a framework to guide activities and to gain an advantage beyond status quo. The Town of Kingsville's Economic Development Strategy includes goals and actions for the municipality as a whole, and opportunities for the broader business community to work together to make a difference.

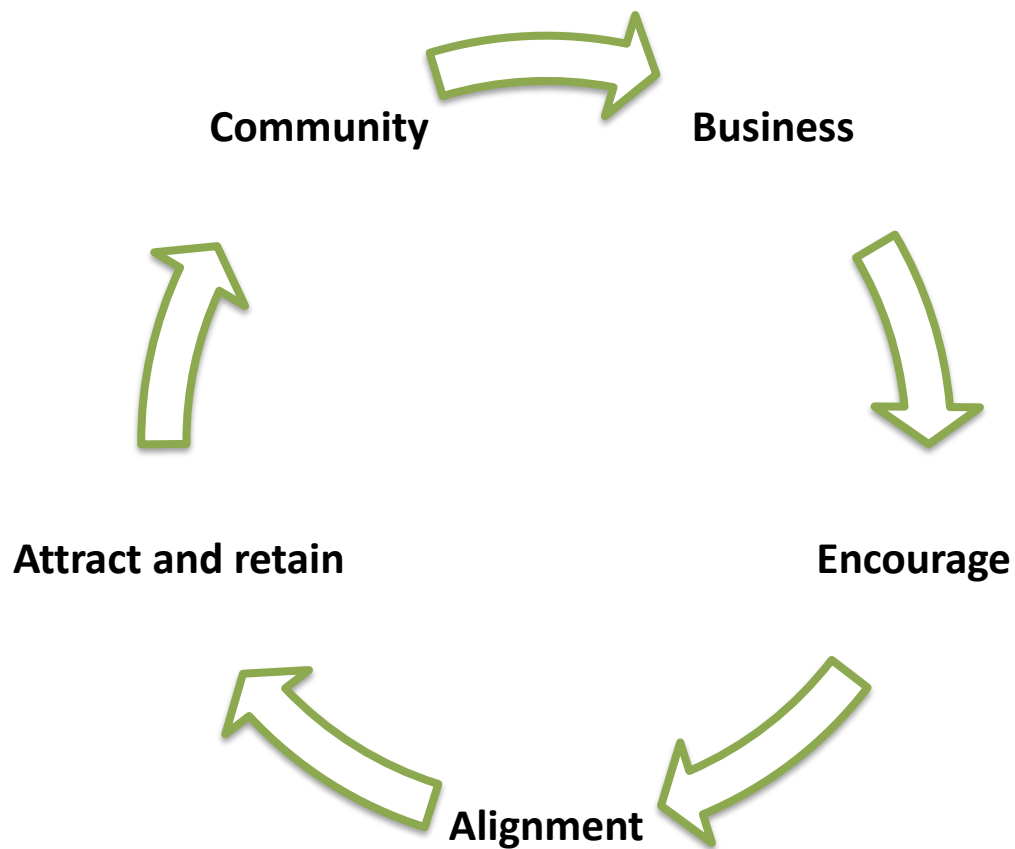
Drawing upon background research, economic analysis and consultation with local business leaders, the Economic Development Strategy direction is a refined and focused approach to conducting economic development activities. It focuses on supporting existing assets and strengths to grow. It works towards a future in which there is a strong local economic base in Kingsville.

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Town of Kingsville Economic Development Strategy goals

1. Adopt a community-based focus
2. Grow specific business sectors
3. Encourage a positive business culture
4. Align and inspire town resources
5. Attract and retain a new generation of great entrepreneurs and workforce



Strategic goals, objectives and actions

Goal 1: Adopt a community-based focus

A positive awareness of Kingsville is important to focus activities and communications. This should be accomplished through unified marketing and developing community-based programs that leverage the advantage of being a town with a local approach.

Objectives	Actions
Build awareness of the Town of Kingsville as a destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop an economic development marketing campaign to align existing programs and messaging (2018-2019)• create and implement a digital marketing campaign to promote existing programs and new opportunities (2018)• develop a targeted Media Relations Plan to reach desired outside audiences (potential tourists, residents, investors) through earned media with a focus on regional/national/international media (2018)• develop and implement a Town of Kingsville brand across all departments to align and integrate messaging across the municipality (2020)

Objectives	Actions
Implementation of community economic development strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, fund and implement a Cottam Downtown Community Improvement Plan (2017-2018) • develop Ruthven Community Improvement Plan and Kingsville Community Plan (2018) • seek new opportunities for place making initiatives to attract new residents, visitors and businesses (ongoing)

Measurement:

- advertising and marketing outreach
- number of Downtown Revitalization Action Plan activities completed
- return on investment from Community Improvement Plan



Goal 2: Grow specific business sectors

The significant majority of new jobs in a community will come from the growth of existing businesses. First, these programs should help existing businesses grow and new businesses enter the local market, and second work with these businesses to develop their respective clusters as a whole to grow employment in Kingsville.

Objectives	Actions
Agriculture and food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• grow the Town of Kingsville agri-brand; begin with a focus on the existing greenhouse and processing operations
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• grow the food processing sector (expansion of existing processors, identify new opportunities for processing) to build employment around value added agriculture• distribution• support the innovation and diversification of local agriculture• grow agri-culinary participation among producers to tourism
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• partner with Leamington and surrounding greenhouse sector and processing

Clusters	Objectives
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the volume of year-round accommodations of all kinds, in all markets • develop operator experiences to boost tourism traffic (cross-sector and cross promotion) • develop a guided touring sector (e.g. two wheels) • expand visitation into the shoulder-season and winter and connect these off peak activities to culture • identify and support unique retail that either generates tourism visits or extends those visits
Specialized manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultivate a community of specialized manufacturers that raises the profile of Kingsville • support the innovation, growth and expansion of existing businesses to increase sustainability and employment • create an active network of local manufacturing mentors • develop a program to attract new manufacturers (start-up and relocating) to existing employment areas • develop infrastructure to support the health of local industrial areas

Clusters	Objectives
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase town arts, culture and heritage for profit and not-for-profit businesses • foster the development of cultural events and festivals (partnering with tourism) • develop the arts, heritage, culture brand of Kingsville so that it becomes an attraction for tourists, new residents and entrepreneurs working in the sector • grow the craft/ maker segment (number of small or micro businesses and sales per business due to increased tourism traffic) • action the Heritage and Cultural Implementation plans
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop opportunities with colleges, educational institutions and innovation organizations to expand business and employment opportunities in Kingsville (particular emphasis on environment and water engineering, and disruptive technology) • establish a network of existing business owners and leaders with ambitions to grow their cluster (to grow businesses and employment)

Refocus economic development programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify an economic development team leader (pilot) for each cluster • each Pilot to undergo training to better understand trends and needs of the industry segment, how and what municipal services impact that segment and how best to partner with it (2020) • integrate programs (existing and new) around each cluster (network building, shared promotion, business skills training, youth business training)
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Measurement:

- number of businesses participating in cluster networks
- business growth and sector inquiries
- number of tourists (based on Ministry reporting which lags current timelines)
- employment numbers



Goal 3: Encourage a positive community business culture

Identify, nurture and expand a positive Kingsville business culture that crosses community boundaries and is aligned with strategic goals. This will lead to an increased ability for the municipality, local businesses, organizations, and communities to work together to strengthen communities and support business growth.

Objectives	Actions
Develop peer-to-peer networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• work with leaders in each cluster to develop networks, and an annual summit focused on building the cluster through new ideas (2019)• create a peer-to-peer business ambassador program in each cluster to attract and connect with new business owners and promote the town (2020)
Support local community business organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• continue to develop relationships and programming with local business organizations (ongoing)• support community based business organizations in local economic development activities (ongoing)

Measurement:

- participation in annual cluster summits
- number of ambassador program partnerships established
- business community engagement (number of businesses and organization sharing messaging through social media)

Goal 4: Align and inspire town resources

Organizations that work together towards specific, common goals typically outperform organizations that operate in silos. Aligning internal resources that impact business development and attraction will improve the reputation of the town as a partner in economic development and encourage new investment.

Objectives	Actions
Establish business pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop and implement a business pilot program where businesses have a single point of contact at the town that focuses on business expansion or start-up (2018)• integrate new economic development programs around, and in support of, growth in the five clusters (2019)
Enhance team building within Town of Kingsville staff to build the reputation for business receptiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop and implement an integrated business owner support process within the pre-plan, planning and development process to encourage business growth and expansion (2018)
Improve municipal policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• integrate an economic development focus to projects town-wide (e.g. parks, trails, downtown redevelopment, infrastructure) (2017)• complete the Official Plan updates (2018 and beyond)

Objectives	Actions
Plan and execute critical infrastructure projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fund and implement infrastructure projects to accommodate growth and investment in a competitive manner (ongoing)

Measurement:

- number of new and expanding businesses in the pilot program



Goal 5: Attract and retain a new generation of entrepreneurs and workforce

The residents are owners, employees, and leaders of business and community organizations. It is the ambition and decisions of these residents that will create employment growth and contribute significantly to a vibrant community. Kingsville naturally attracts an older demographic, therefore, attraction programs will focus on retaining and attracting a younger demographic to balance the population age and support a healthy, vibrant economy.

Objectives	Actions
Diversify the talent and age of our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• create a millennials steering group with representation from across Kingsville to guide youth retention, repatriation and attraction plans (2018)• promote Young Professionals week annually and support young professional groups (2018)• support the development of affordable housing across Kingsville, enabling young people in the early stages of their work life to have affordable, safe housing (2018)• <u>build the reputation</u> of Kingsville as a great place for young families in marketing programs (2019)

Objectives	Actions
Repatriate Kingsville alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop projects with colleges and universities to connect with and keep alumni in the community (2019)• create a Kingsville homecoming event in the summer to communicate the new opportunities for relocating back to Kingsville (2020)

Measurement:

- number of steering group participants under the age of 40
- social media engagement
- number of people at events



Implementation

The Economic Development Strategy is designed to focus and refine activities of the town and specifically the actions of the Tourism and Economic Development Committee. It is focused on talent and community building within the municipality, and future positioning and reputation building outside the municipality. The strategy will amplify the strengths of our existing business owners, support the creation of new jobs and businesses, engage younger business leaders, and improve the reputation and recognition of Kingsville as a desirable community for business and life.

This document will be utilized as the basis for developing operational plans at the department level. Staff will monitor and report on the results of this strategy on an annual basis. The committee will continue to work in partnership with the community to implement, refine and share results.

