



October 2024

Economic Development and Culture Strategy





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Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the treaty lands and territory of the Williams Treaty Nations and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize that Dufferin County is the traditional territory of the Wendat and the Haudenosaunee, and is home to many Indigenous people today.

Acknowledgements

The creation of the Economic Development and Culture Strategy relied on input received from a dedicated group of stakeholders. Thank you to all residents, business owners, organizational leaders, and other community members who participated in the engagement process.

Steering Committee members included:

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Executive Summary

The Town of Orangeville is a well-balanced community offering a beautiful and vibrant downtown with many locally owned restaurants, services, and shops. Established commercial and industrial businesses are located on the Town's primary employment lands and well-preserved heritage buildings can be seen throughout the community. The Town is conveniently located with easy access to major highways and transportation networks and a fare-free pilot program has increased ridership on local transit routes. A varied mix of housing options, multiple recreational amenities, and a comparatively diverse economy make Orangeville an ideal place to live. A vibrant arts scene is supported by a steadfast group of artists and creatives and committed volunteers contribute to an enviable quality of life. As the largest urban centre in Dufferin County, Orangeville supports neighbouring municipalities and is home to regional amenities such as the hospital, police, County offices, and many social services. Orangeville residents are very proud of their community and have a passion for supporting the success of Orangeville today and into the future.

In May 2024, the Town of Orangeville embarked on the development of a 5-year Economic Development and Culture Strategy (EDC Strategy), led by the Town of Orangeville's Economic Development and Culture (EDC) Staff and Steering Committee. The Strategy is built under three themes: CONNECT with Orangeville, ENHANCE Orangeville and BUILD Orangeville, and considers three priority focus areas: Resilient Business Community; Small Business; and Tourism and Culture. In crafting this Strategy, the Town of Orangeville has laid out its plan to build on its existing assets to become a fully integrated community of choice for business investment, retention, and growth.



Priority Areas of Focus and Themes

Priority Areas of Focus

Through the development of the EDC Strategy, three Priority Areas of Focus were identified to guide the creation of the strategic actions. Each action directly supports one Priority Area of Focus and may also impact others. This is noted throughout the plan and demonstrates the many connections that exist in Orangeville's business community.



Developing a Resilient Business Community

Why is this important?

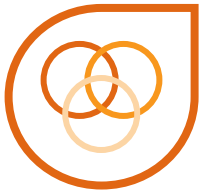
Economic diversity is one of the most effective ways to increase long-term economic resilience. Having a diverse economy means Orangeville can weather downturns in the economy, resist disruptive events (e.g., COVID 19) and help provide a more sustainable environment for business start-up, success and growth. It's all about retaining local business, providing opportunities for business to grow and attracting new business to the community while creating a climate conducive to investment.



Supporting Small Business

Why is this important?

Small businesses are the heart of Orangeville. Most of the jobs in Orangeville are provided by small businesses (5 to 9 employees) across a diverse range of sectors including manufacturing, retail, professional services, construction, and the creative sector. Beyond employment, small businesses support the economy by creating valuable local connections, investing in community initiatives, contributing significantly to the local tax base, and demonstrating pride for their community.



Fostering Tourism and Culture

Why is this important?

Tourism and culture are intertwined. In Orangeville, culture is broadly defined and encompasses heritage, visual arts, performing arts, and public art as well as festivals and events that celebrate our community. These important cultural assets also act as foundational tourism drivers that attract visitors, support local business, and create jobs in creative industries such as film, photography, and design. The Town's existing Tourism Strategy specifically recognizes the importance of tourism in Orangeville and identifies actions to attract visitors. The EDC Strategy aims to identify relationships, opportunities, and assets that can support culture and, in turn, tourism in Orangeville.

Connect, Enhance, and Build Orangeville

The themes of CONNECT, ENHANCE and BUILD encapsulate the strategic actions. CONNECT addresses the need to better understand and serve the business community. ENHANCE focuses on improving upon the well-established community that already exists. BUILD identifies the actions that are required for Orangeville's future success.

THEME 1: CONNECT with Orangeville

Why is this important?

By building a solid network with existing businesses, the Town of Orangeville will have a better understanding of what businesses require for success and what new businesses may be looking for in our community. Ongoing and effective connections, both internal and external, will demonstrate that Orangeville recognizes the importance of the business community and its contributions to the Town's resiliency.

THEME 2: ENHANCE Orangeville

Why is this important?

Orangeville is a vibrant community that is proud of its exceptional lifestyle, amenities, and culture. It is a great place to live and offers a variety of ways to do business. As times and conditions change, it is important to enhance and diversify our services and assets to continue to effectively support Orangeville's existing and potential businesses. Orangeville's growth and development is currently dependent on intensification - requiring the community to grow up, not out - and must utilize existing properties to their greatest potential.

THEME 3: BUILD Orangeville

Why is this important?

For the Town of Orangeville to continue to be successful, it needs to consider ways to enhance and grow its assets, services, and opportunities for future economic prosperity.

Corporate Strategic Plan Alignment

The Town of Orangeville Corporate Strategic Plan 2024-2027 guides the decisions, priorities, and plans for Orangeville. It includes specific goals and objectives that are related directly to Economic Development and Culture (see **Appendix 2**). The EDC Strategy aligns with these goals and creates actionable ways to achieve the Town's vision. Review the Corporate Strategic Plan on the [Town's website](#).



Strategic Actions

The actions are divided by theme, and then further categorized by Priority Areas of Focus.






THEME 1: CONNECT with Orangeville

To create strong relationships and effective communications, internally and externally.

CONNECT		
Strategic Actions	Rationale	Alignment
Developing a Resilient Business Community		
1. Establish the EDC office as the Town’s primary resource for all business-related inquiries and processes.	To effectively guide interactions between the Town and businesses and ensure businesses receive support and resources.	  
2. Build understanding of Town-wide processes that require business engagement.	To foster collaboration between Town divisions to better serve businesses.	  
3. Continue to regularly inform Council and Staff about EDC services, initiatives and projects.	To ensure Council and Staff understand their role in supporting economic development.	  
4. Lead the Town’s recognition and promotion of local business achievements (e.g., grand openings, celebrations).	To acknowledge local business success and build connections between businesses, Council, and Staff.	  






CONNECT



Strategic Actions	Rationale	Alignment
<p>5. Maintain internal databases and utilize external resources with reliable and current information about the business community.</p>	<p>To understand existing assets and opportunities to enable effective responses to investment and expansion inquiries.</p>	
<p>6. Review and enhance the economic development website.</p>	<p>To ensure website content is a reliable and current source of information for new and existing businesses.</p>	
<p>7. Review and enhance the use of communication tools to better target local businesses, investors, property owners, etc.</p>	<p>To deliver information more effectively to the business community.</p>	
<p>8. Continue to collaborate with Planning to promote the Community Improvement Plan to businesses in a targeted and simplified manner.</p>	<p>To encourage private investment that revitalizes and enhances lands and buildings.</p>	
<p>9. Create opportunities to build relationships and exchange information with local professionals (i.e., real estate, legal, accounting, banks).</p>	<p>To gain broad insights into the challenges and opportunities of local businesses.</p>	



CONNECT

Strategic Actions	Rationale	Alignment
<p>10. Continue to organize and promote local events and initiatives, in collaboration with regional partners (e.g., job fairs).</p>	<p>To support workforce development and to provide peer to peer business development opportunities.</p>	
<p>11. Develop an ongoing business visitation program.</p>	<p>To connect with existing businesses, share opportunities, and understand challenges.</p>	
<p>12. Collaborate with Dufferin County Economic Development and fellow lower-tier municipalities to strengthen connections and align on relevant strategic initiatives.</p>	<p>To build mutual understanding of regional challenges and opportunities and address any local implications.</p>	

Supporting Small Business

<p>1. Continue to promote the Orangeville and Area Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) to build regional awareness.</p>	<p>To ensure Orangeville is the hub for small business and entrepreneurship support in Dufferin County.</p>	
<p>2. Respond to the changing needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs by constantly improving education and networking opportunities.</p>	<p>To ensure SBEC services are always relevant and valuable.</p>	



CONNECT

Strategic Actions

Rationale

Alignment

- Identify specific opportunities for small business support (e.g., funding, training) by leveraging relationships with regional partners and understanding all available resources.

To ensure local business owners are aware of and have access to relevant resources.



Fostering Tourism and Culture

- Continue to build relationships with local arts organizations.

To enhance the EDC office's credibility with and understanding of the arts sector.



- Leverage relationships to develop events, resources, and initiatives tailored to artists and creative entrepreneurs.

To support the needs of artists and creative entrepreneurs.



Resilient Business
Community




Small Business



Tourism
and Culture

THEME 2: ENHANCE Orangeville

To leverage existing assets to continue to diversify and grow.

ENHANCE		
Strategic Actions	Rationale	Alignment
Developing a Resilient Business Community		
1. Develop a “buy local” campaign, building upon the success of the Love, Orangeville brand.	To encourage residents and businesses to support local business first.	  
2. Establish a network of local business owners to act as ambassadors or mentors to new/growing businesses.	To build alliances, connections and support in the business community.	  
3. Complete an internal analysis of the businesses and properties located in the Town’s MI zone.	To understand the existing business mix and identify opportunities for growth/change.	 
4. Consider amendments to the Town’s Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw to refine employment area land use policies.	To encourage property uses that enhance employment opportunities.	 
5. Clarify and establish the economic development roles of Dufferin County and Orangeville.	To avoid duplication of efforts, ensure effective use of resources, and collectively achieve both regional and local goals.	  



ENHANCE

Strategic Actions

Rationale

Alignment

Supporting Small Business

1. Identify opportunities to support targeted sectors (i.e., food, creative) and leverage partnerships to offer relevant services.

To better address and support the specific needs of local businesses.



2. Monitor availability of government programs (i.e., Digital Main Street) to offer additional resources for local businesses.

To support local business owners with funding and resources aimed at improving their business processes.



3. Develop and promote Town assets (e.g., Maker Space at the library) as resources for small business owners and entrepreneurs.

To better utilize existing resources to support local businesses.








Fostering Tourism and Culture

1. Continue to implement the existing Tourism Strategy while collaborating with partners (e.g., Central Counties Tourism, Dufferin County, lower-tier municipalities) to support regional tourism.

To solidify Orangeville's role in the region's tourism development plans.



ENHANCE

Strategic Actions	Rationale	Alignment
<p>2. Enhance and promote the existing tourism directory to be more user friendly and digitally based.</p>	<p>To ensure the tourism directory is current and relevant for all users.</p>	
<p>3. Develop and maintain a Memorandum of Understanding with the Orangeville Business Improvement Association (OBIA).</p>	<p>To solidify downtown Orangeville's role as a foundational tourism driver and community hub by clarifying roles and responsibilities of the Town and the OBIA.</p>	
<p>4. Complete a Business Mix Analysis to guide attraction and retention efforts for the downtown core.</p>	<p>To support downtown growth and development in a targeted way.</p>	
<p>5. Regularly assess value, demand/utilization, and requirements of downtown parking.</p>	<p>To ensure downtown parking fulfills business/visitor needs.</p>	
<p>6. Identify opportunities for better use of and activation of downtown public spaces (i.e., sidewalks, parks, parking lots) and develop supportive policies, investment, and promotion.</p>	<p>To maintain downtown Orangeville's vibrancy and relevance.</p>	



ENHANCE

Strategic Actions

Rationale

Alignment

7. Evaluate opportunities to utilize existing Town-owned assets (i.e., recreation centres, train station, Town Hall, Opera House) as flexible spaces to accommodate creatives and businesses.

To provide alternative spaces to address needs of artists, arts organizations, and creative businesses.



8. Evaluate the costs, benefits, and feasibility of growing the film sector in Orangeville.

To assess the potential impact of film production in our community.



THEME 3: BUILD Orangeville

To develop new assets, services and opportunities to drive economic resiliency.

BUILD

Strategic Actions

Rationale

Alignment

Developing a Resilient Business Community

1. Undertake a land use planning exercise to explore opportunities to expand Orangeville’s municipal boundary for increased serviced employment land supply.

To have additional employment lands available for future business opportunities.



Supporting Small Business

1. Build capacity to support succession planning for local business owners.

To ensure the future viability of the local business community.



2. Develop a business case for expanded SBEC services so any opportunities for increased funding/resources can be leveraged.

To expand SBEC services and offer more value to clients.



Resilient Business Community



Small Business



Tourism and Culture

BUILD

Strategic Actions

Rationale

Alignment

Fostering Tourism and Culture

1. Conduct a feasibility study to determine opportunities for dedicated arts and culture space(s) to support the creative sector and elevate creative entrepreneurship.

To ensure that fiscal responsibility is appropriately balanced with the Town’s desire for expanded arts and culture spaces.



2. Work with sports tourism partners to understand needs and develop resources to support and grow this market.

To create more opportunities for sports tourism in Orangeville.



Process Followed

The creation of the EDC Strategy followed a specific four-step process, as outlined below. During each step, relevant and valuable information and input was gathered and then built into the key deliverables and final EDC Strategy. Completion of this strategy initiates its execution, guided by a detailed Implementation Plan that will be used by the EDC Staff over the next five years. Throughout the process community consultation, discussions and verification of the actions was completed, with final review and approval from Staff, elected officials and the EDC Steering Committee.

STEP 1: DISCOVER

Background Review & Analysis.

- » Document Review.
- » Community Analysis.
- » Community Comparator Review.
- » Situational Economic Analysis.
- » Informal Investment Readiness Assessment.

STEP 2: DEFINE

Stakeholder Consultation.

- » One-on-one Interviews.
- » Online Survey.
- » Focus Groups.
- » Staff Priority Setting Session.

STEP 3: DEVELOP

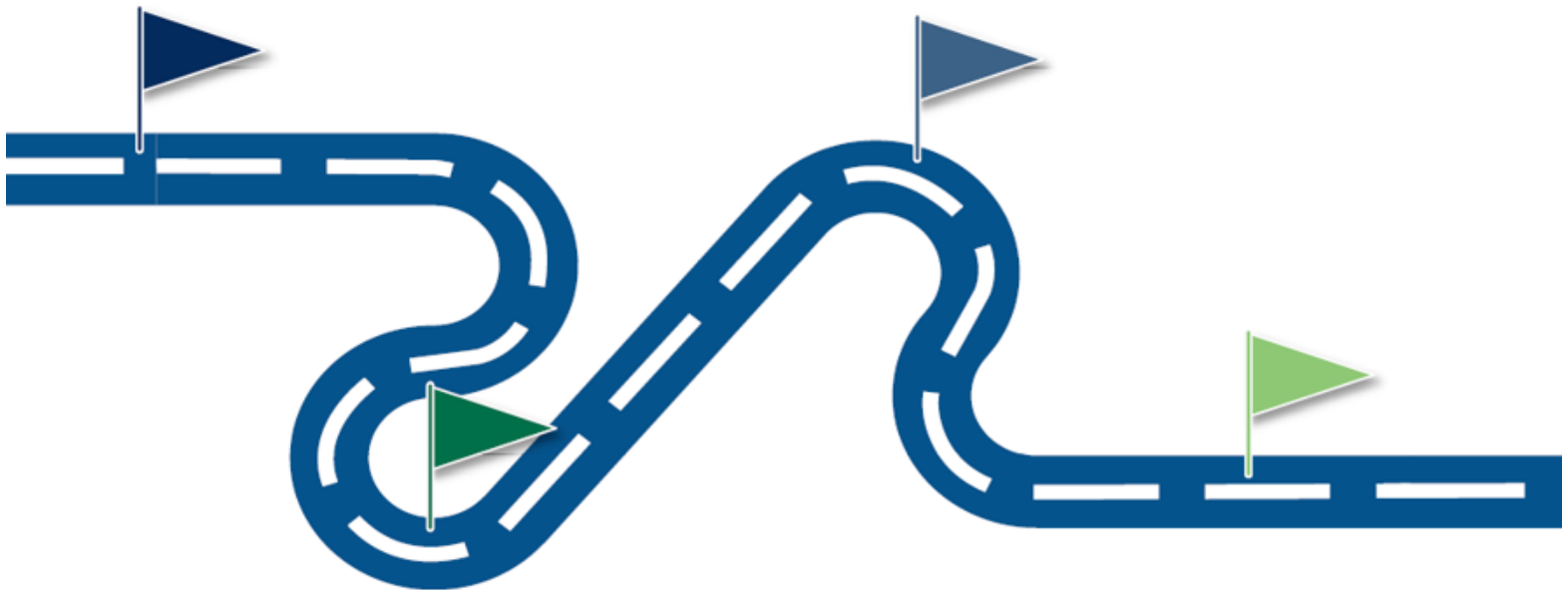
Progress Summary & Draft Strategy.

- » SCOAR®.
- » Summary of Findings.
- » Working Session.
- » Strategic Action Planning Session.
- » Draft Strategy.

STEP 4: DELIVER

Final Strategy & Action Plan.

- » Final Strategy.
- » Presentation to Council.



Step 1: Discover

Background Review and Analysis

To begin the process, an in-depth review of the current situation in the Town of Orangeville was undertaken. This included the completion of a Comparator Community Review, provided to the Steering Committee as background information. A Community Analysis was also completed that assessed the Town of Orangeville through a quantitative lens (see **Appendix 3** for a snapshot of the available data), alongside a Document Review.

Document Review

Relevant Town and County documents were reviewed along with the Town website specifically the economic development pages, to provide background information and to better understand the Town of Orangeville. Documents reviewed include:

- Orangeville Cultural Advantage Plan, 2014
- Manufacturing BR+E Report, 2016
- County of Dufferin Economic Development Strategic Plan, 2017
- Orangeville Cultural Plan Progress Report, 2018
- Orangeville Economic Development Strategy, 2018
- Orangeville Cycling and Trails Master Plan, 2019
- Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan, 2019
- PST BR+E Report, 2019
- Orangeville Official Plan, 2020
- Recreation and Parks Master Plan, 2020
- Covid-19 Business Impact Survey, April 2020
- Covid-19 Business Impact Survey, September 2020

- Orangeville Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, 2021
- County of Dufferin Tourism Strategy, 2021
- Town of Orangeville Corporate Strategic Plan, 2022
- Community Improvement Plan, 2022
- Orangeville Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, Progress Report 2024
- Orangeville BIA Strategy, Focus 2026
- Orangeville Annual EDC Reports
- Orangeville New Business Reports

Informal Investment Readiness Assessment

An informal assessment of Orangeville’s investment readiness was undertaken with EDC Staff. The basic tools and assets required for investors was reviewed including the EDC website, investment marketing tools, employment lands, and how site selection requests are handled. The results are reflected in the actions.



Step 2: Define

Stakeholder Consultation

The consultation process used to develop the EDC Strategy was meaningful and intensive, ensuring broad community support and active engagement. Participants included key stakeholders from the community, businesses, local organizations, Town Staff and elected officials, and County Staff and elected officials.

Community Consultation

Consultations were conducted with **125 community members participating in one-on-one interviews, focus groups and an online survey**. Consultations were based on seven open-ended questions that captured the essence of the community's vision of Orangeville.

There was also a priority setting session held with relevant Town Staff. Leveraging internal expertise and day-to-day understanding of the community was essential in determining realistic and meaningful priorities that can help to move Orangeville forward.



Step 3: Develop

Progress Summary and Draft Strategy

SCOAR® Analysis

Once the background research and initial consultations were completed, the 'developing' process began with a summation of the findings of the initial consultations and data analysis, presented through a Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results (SCOAR®) Analysis. The SCOAR® was used as the fundamental basis to determine the five themes for the Working Session. The SCOAR® findings are available upon request.



The SCOAR® is a detailed analysis of the current situation involving statistical analysis of the local economy, regional competitive outlook, trends and forecasts, investment readiness assessment, strengths/weaknesses/opportunities review using the McSweeney exclusive SCOAR® analysis.

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis has a "50%" focus on "negative" aspects of analysis. A Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) analysis emphasizes the positive, though it fails to address barriers or challenges to economic growth that every community faces. This SCOAR® Analysis provides greater balance than either SWOT or SOAR analysis.

Working Session

A half-day working session brought together an engaged group of stakeholders to review consultation findings and begin to draft realistic and doable actions. Participants included 31 representatives from local businesses and organizations, Town and County Staff and elected officials, and key partners such as the Orangeville Business Improvement Area, the Dufferin Board of Trade, the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin, and Georgian College.

The Strategic Working Session provided an opportunity for participants to begin to develop a set of draft strategic actions that would form the base of the EDC Strategy, inclusive of a 5-year action plan.

Throughout the working session input from participants was based on these five themes, each reflecting the current and future needs of the Town.



Strategic Directions and Action Planning Session

Upon completion of the external consultation process, the five original themes were honed down to three to create simplicity and avoid duplication. A draft set of strategic community-based actions were prepared for review. To ensure that the actions aligned with the aspirations and vision of the Town of Orangeville, a virtual strategic planning session was held with the EDC Steering Committee.

Collaboratively, McSweeney and Associates and Staff co-developed strategic actions that are realistic, and achievable over the next five years.

Step 4: Deliver

Final Strategy and Action Plan

This final EDC Strategy was completed in October 2024 and presented to the Town of Orangeville at their November 2024 Council meeting.

Execution of the strategy will begin immediately, guided by an Implementation Plan. The specific tactics, timelines, partners, and budget related to fulfilling all strategic actions will be outlined in the Implementation Plan.



Appendix 1: Critical Issues Outside the Scope of the Strategy

During the consultative process, issues were discussed that are top-of-mind for Town of Orangeville residents and businesses but are outside of the scope of this EDC Strategy. These are not necessarily economic development, tourism or culture initiatives but may have an impact on businesses and their employees. These issues all have regional implications and may require a higher-level of collaboration and resources to make progress.

EDC Staff should be part of discussions and initiatives related to these issues, with a goal to ensure that business needs are considered. However, leading this work is outside the scope of the EDC team.

Housing

A consistent theme discussed repeatedly was the perceived lack of attainable housing. This issue is not isolated to the Town of Orangeville, as it is pervasive in communities across Canada. A lack of attainable housing means young families struggle to move to the area, employers have difficulty filling roles, retired individuals are forced out of their properties, and residents dealing with financial hardships face uncertain housing prospects, among other challenges.

Transportation

Access to transportation was a consistently mentioned topic. There was acknowledgment that the Town understands the need for effective public transportation options and specifically recognizes it as a resource to help businesses attract and retain employees. Discussions included enhancing local solutions and routes. There is also a need to improve



regional connections and find better ways to connect Orangeville to the rest of Dufferin County and other neighbouring regions.

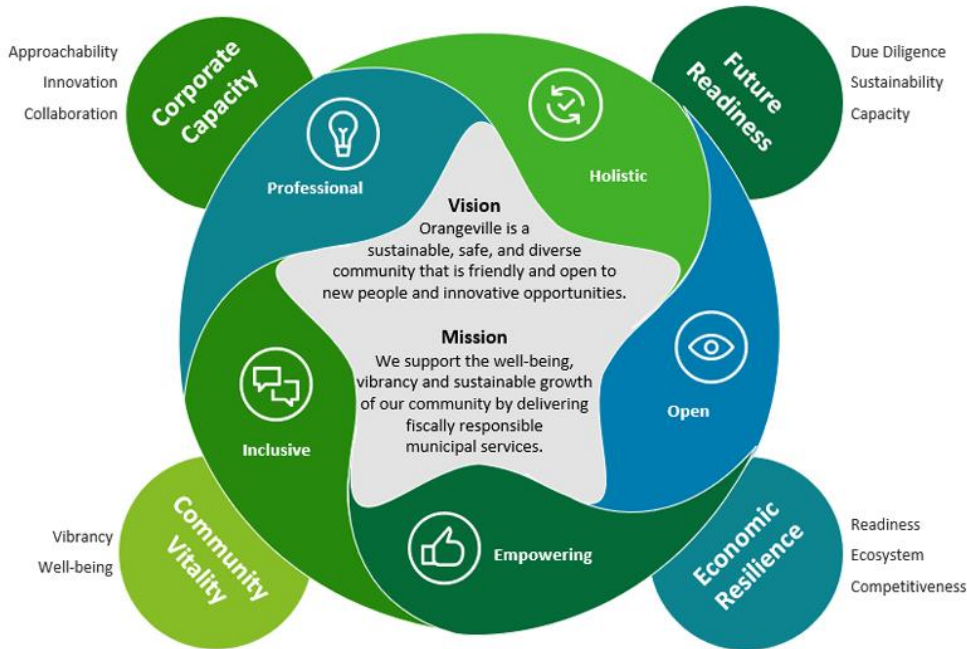
Infrastructure

Two issues came up that referred to the need to improve infrastructure that would be beneficial to supporting business investment.

Discussions included the need to petition the senior levels of government to assist with development and approvals of wells and water supply to increase water capacity required and funding needed for existing and future development. The second was the need to have conversations with the Ministry of Transportation and future road development such as the proposed extension of Highway 410 to Highway 9.



Appendix 2: Corporate Strategy Goals and Objectives



Two of the four goals included in the Town of Orangeville’s Corporate Strategy will be supported through actions identified in this EDC strategy:

GOAL 3: Community Vitality

The Town of Orangeville nurtures the livability of its community through pride of place, and by supporting groups that cultivate positive, supportive connections across society. The Town wants to reinforce a tangible feeling of belonging among those who live, work, and play here.

GOAL 4: Economic Resilience

The Town of Orangeville wants to ensure the resilience of its economy by providing an ecosystem of support and flexibility. The Town works to meet the changing needs of developers and entrepreneurs and to take an active role in economic development.

Appendix 3: Demographic Snapshot

The Orangeville Community Analysis was completed as part of the EDC Strategy. The following are the key findings from the Community Analysis and can be found in the Demographic Snapshot. The full document is available upon request.



Town of Orangeville Community Assets

Arts and Culture

Orangeville's Downtown mainstreet showcases the best of Ontario's small-town charm with walkable streets offering an inviting experience. Heritage buildings dot the landscape with public art pieces displayed along main street leading to the historic Opera House. Downtown Orangeville is a bustling place, but even moreso when hosting the many events Orangeville's Arts and Culture community hosts. Orangeville has a vibrant arts and culture scene, with the historic Opera House serving as the largest arts and culture landmark in Town. Events hosted within the Town include:

- Weekly Farmer's Market
- Celebrate Your Awesome
- Blues and Jazz Festival
- Dufferin Film Festival
- Taste of Orangeville
- Edgary Afloat

And so much more!

Community Analysis

2. Demographic Analysis

2.1 Population Growth

This subsection illustrates population characteristics for the Town of Orangeville. The wider economic landscape relevant to the region is explored by using Ontario as a benchmark.

Table 1 illustrates population changes in Orangeville from 2011 to 2023, compared to Ontario. The census population in Orangeville has grown at a comparable rate to the province at large, rising above 30,000 residents in 2021 that growth is expected to continue, with the Town projected to rise to slightly above 35,000 by 2033.

	2011	2016	2021	2023	2028	2033
Orangeville						
Population	22,775	28,500	30,167	31,936	33,466	35,035
% Change	3.5%	3.3%	4.4%	n/a	4.9%	4.6%
Ontario						
Population	12,651,621	15,148,494	14,223,942	15,479,114	16,355,232	17,228,601
% Change	5.7%	4.6%	5.8%	n/a	5.7%	5.3%

Note: Statistics Canada Census Profiles 2011-2021; Manulife SuperDemographics 2023-2033. 2023 projections are applicable through the 2021 and 2023 data sources use different methodologies. Data changes are therefore reflective of these methodological differences more than actual population growth increases.

The population in Orangeville is projected to surpass 35,000 residents by 2033.

McSWEENEY



Town of Orangeville Demographic Snapshot



*Proposed Growth Allocated to Orangeville by Dufferin County.

Population Profile

MEDIAN	AVERAGE
Region Age 39	Region Age 40
Ontario Age 41	Ontario Age 42



Highest Education

Population ages 25-64



31%
Secondary

59%
Post-secondary

Household & Earnings



24% **ONTARIO 28%**

of Orangeville's population spends 30% or more of total household income on shelter costs.



Average Dwelling Value **\$863,775**
Median Dwelling Value **\$864,845**



Total number of households

11,632

Town of Orangeville Demographic Snapshot



Labour Force & Local Economy

Median Employment Income | Average Employment Income

\$49,661 | **\$57,238**

ONTARIO MEDIAN | ONTARIO AVERAGE
\$43,942 | **\$60,007**

PARTICIPATION RATE

ONTARIO
66.0%

74.5%

EMPLOYMENT RATE

ONTARIO
62.4%

71.0%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

ONTARIO
5.4%

4.6%

Top 5 Sectors by Industry*

* by labour force employment for people living in Orangeville.



Retail Trade



Manufacturing



Health Care & Social Assistance



Construction



Educational Services

Small Business**

** Source: Lightcast 2024.1

73.3%

Of businesses with employees are small businesses (less than 10 employees).

Businesses by Number of Employees

1 to 9 Employees

727

10-49 Employees

210

50+ Employees

50

All data sourced from Manifold SuperDemographics 2023, unless otherwise specified.