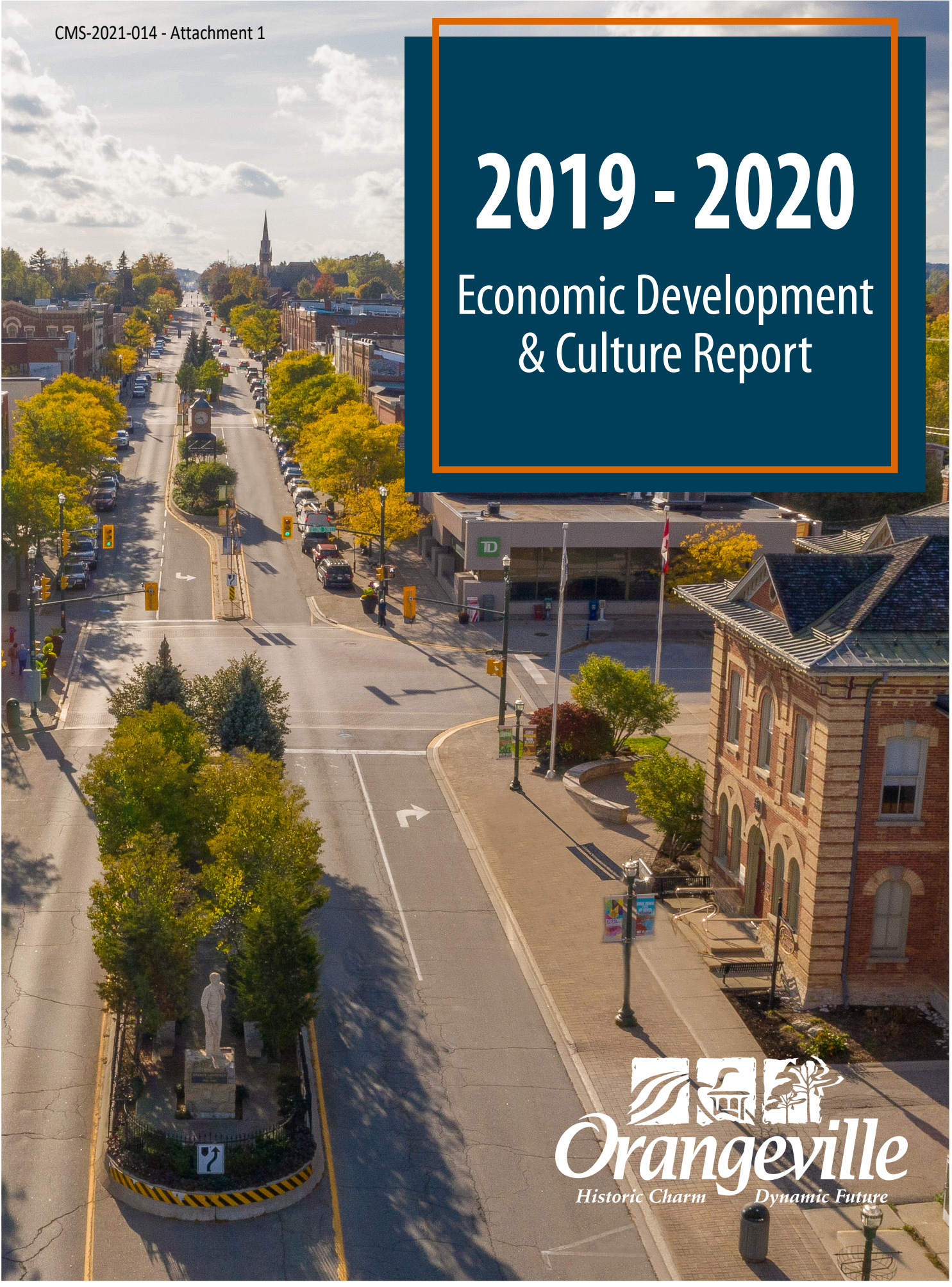


2019 - 2020

Economic Development & Culture Report



The Town of Orangeville's Economic Development & Culture office is committed to fostering the economic vitality of our community by maintaining an attractive business environment, increasing tourism and cultural opportunities, furthering workforce development, and nurturing entrepreneurship.

In 2020, adapting to the challenges created by COVID-19 became another essential role for the office. Throughout the year, the Economic Development & Culture team continually assessed and responded to the immediate needs of the business community, increasing communication and relaying critical information while also moving quickly to implement programs and initiatives in support of our local entrepreneurs. As Orangeville continues to respond to COVID-19, ongoing objectives include supporting our business community in its response and recovery from the pandemic while also increasing the Town's resiliency to future crises.

While COVID-19 impacted the office's ability to produce an annual report for 2019, this report summarizes initiatives undertaken in both 2019 and 2020 and includes data that demonstrates the impact that the pandemic has had on the community.

Mayor's Message

On behalf of Council, I am pleased to present the 2019/2020 Economic Development Report for the Town of Orangeville. The onset of a global pandemic in 2020 created unprecedented challenges and upheaval for our own town and for municipalities across Canada. Our local businesses were thrust into uncharted waters – yet repeatedly, they rose and kept swimming – sacrificing for the health and well-being of our community and demonstrating incredible resiliency.

At the municipal level, we moved quickly to alter operations and service delivery to ensure that support for business continued seamlessly. Provision of a COVID related relief package for residents, property, and business owners helped to alleviate financial pressure. Information about the pandemic response and business resources moved online and demand for services increased as business owners worked to navigate an ever-changing environment. Virtual learning and program delivery became our new norm. An award-winning COVID-19 Recovery Plan was developed and implemented. It included focused efforts to support the business, tourism and cultural sectors of our community in the short- and long-term. While the plan will continue to guide our recovery from the pandemic, the Town remains adaptable and ready to seize any new opportunities with our federal and provincial partners that will support the recovery, maintenance, and growth of our businesses.



Despite the incredible obstacles we've faced over the past 16 months, we've made progress. Numerous projects and initiatives are underway that will help to shape Orangeville's future. Capitalizing on funding available through a partnership with the Province of Ontario, the Economic Development office delivered two digitalization programs to assist downtown businesses in adopting new technologies and take their ventures online. An enhanced virtual consultation program was also implemented to offer business owners professional advice based on their specific needs, by-laws were adapted to support our local food and beverage establishments, and a new website was developed to provide clear and easy access to business information and resources.

With the goal of supporting the hard-hit tourism and hospitality sector, Council approved a new Tourism Strategy and Action Plan in 2020 – a plan that considers the pandemic and outlines more than 70 actions. Many of the recommendations identified for implementation in year one are now in progress and these efforts will provide a basis for re-building and growing the tourism sector in Orangeville as the economy re-opens.

Preliminary steps are also being taken to examine investment opportunities that could have economic impact to the Town and strengthen private sector investment. Development opportunities for 82-86 and 90 Broadway were presented to Council in 2020 and staff are now completing steps to prepare the site for potential future sale and development. Completion of a new Community Improvement Plan was also approved by Council in 2021. When implemented, CIPs can help to facilitate revitalization and redevelopment efforts in defined areas by establishing programs to encourage private sector investment.

Preparations for the short and longer-term recovery of our community are occurring throughout all Town departments and we look forward to the next year with hope and optimism. As you will see in the coming pages, we've pulled together and are weathering the storm. The dedication, creativity and hard work that our business community has showcased throughout the pandemic will lead us to brighter days ahead.

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Response to COVID-19

In May 2020, the Town published its Open Orangeville Recovery Plan, which included a three-phased plan specifically designed to help businesses to recover from the pandemic. Each phase – Restart, Relaunch, and Recover – included actions that ensure adherence to provincial and public health guidelines while also addressing the specific needs of Orangeville’s business community. The document was intended to be fluid, with both short- and long-term objectives and actions added, changed, and modified as recovery from the pandemic progresses, timelines change, and unforeseen, new issues arose.

Identified in the plan are the types of business support that can be provided by the Town:



Advocate

Support and implement provincial and federal initiatives while advocating for local business



Support

Be as flexible as possible to support business recovery by making its services easy to access and understand, removing barriers



Stimulate

Stimulate local recovery by moving ahead with infrastructure projects, investing in our community wherever possible



Plan

Initiate discussion on a new Community Improvement Plan that would support long-term goals and future investment in the community



Share

Identify and share best practices relating to recovery



Encourage

Encourage the community to invest in Orangeville and shop locally

Key Actions and Projects

Key actions and projects undertaken in 2020 to implement the business components of COVID-19 Recovery Plan included:

- Creation of an online portal to provide current information on government programs, guidelines, and resources
- Completion of two surveys with the business community:
 1. Online survey to identify immediate needs and establish a benchmark
 2. Phone survey to connect with highly impacted sectors and understand challenges and needs, providing immediate support and information where possible and linking businesses and manufacturers to opportunities that existed
- Introduction of a buy local initiative that highlighted opportunities to buy, dine, hire, and play locally
- Promotion of online learning resources, including an “Ask the Expert” series and numerous webinars hosted by credible partners
- Launch of an online Business Resiliency Map to share the operational status of local businesses
- Establishment of a PPE database to provide local and regional access to the equipment required by businesses for re-opening
- Shift to online presentation of key events such as the Economic Outlook Breakfast and Arts & Culture Awards
- Amendments to bylaws to enable expansion of boulevard cafés and outdoor display of merchandise options for downtown businesses
- Implementation of a second digitalization program, designed to support entrepreneurs through the provision of grants and expertise
- Introduction of a specialized, virtual coaching program to provide business owners with one-to-one topic-specific guidance and advice in overcoming challenges and adopting new practices
- Completion of a new five-year Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, with COVID considerations and recovery actions identified to support this hard-hit sector.



As the community continues to relaunch and recover from COVID-19 in 2021, this plan will act as an ongoing guide for future actions.

Economic Development Indicators and Initiatives

Economic Indicator	2018	2019	2020
Total Employment ¹	12,130	12,508	11,299
Number of Businesses Operating ²	2,584	2,613	2,578
Total Construction Value ³	\$29,701,081	\$68,004,700	\$18,722,295
Residential ⁴	\$13,114,131	\$55,672,650	\$3,387,495
Industrial, Commercial, Institutional ⁵	\$16,586,950	\$12,332,050	\$15,334,800
Housing Resale Activity ⁶	545	613	621
Average House Selling Price ⁷	\$541,420	\$564,384	\$641,211
New Dwelling Units ⁸	61	256	2
Unemployment Rate ⁹	3.4%	4.7%	7.5%

Sources: ¹⁻² OMAFRA Analyst Data EMSI 2021.1 | ^{3-5,8} Town of Orangeville Building Department | ⁶⁻⁷ Market Watch, Toronto Real Estate Board, December 2018, 2019, 2020
⁹ Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0387-01 Labour force characteristics, three-month moving average, Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, unadjusted for seasonality, last five months

Economic Outlook Breakfasts offered financial insights

In 2019, the annual Economic Outlook Breakfast was held on November 5. James Marple, Director and Senior Economist at TD Bank Group presented an analysis of the Canadian economy to a crowd of over 90 business and community leaders. Ken Hall of Ken Hall Arts and 2Dogs Games also shared the story of his evolving entrepreneurial journey in our community.



Economic Outlook Breakfast 2019

The event shifted to a virtual presentation in 2020. Held on October 27, the economic analysis presented by Mr. Marple was accompanied by presentations by three local business owners. The online audience heard stories of pandemic resiliency from Shelley Wishart of GoYoga, Mark Jamieson of Kwalify Clean Solutions, and Milena Parreira and Derek Train, owners of Temple Nutrition. Orangeville's business community demonstrated its adaptability to new learning platforms - 95 people registered for the event and the presentation was viewed over 200 times on YouTube.

Jobs by Sector	2019	2020
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	14	14
Utilities	168	161
Construction	648	605
Manufacturing	1,227	1,138
Wholesale trade	347	326
Retail trade	2,162	1,997
Transportation and warehousing	174	182
Information and cultural industries	209	197
Finance and insurance	457	447
Real estate and rental and leasing	135	117
Professional, scientific and technical services	566	543
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	713	648
Educational services	826	772
Health care and social assistance	1,865	1,772
Arts, entertainment and recreation	86	63
Accommodation and food services	1,552	1,116
Other services (except public administration)	568	479
Public administration	571	523
Unclassified	221	201
Total	12,508	11,299

Source: OMAFRA Analyst Data EMSI 2021.1

New online portal showcases regional employment resources

A new online employment portal – Findyourjob.ca – launched in April 2020. The initiative is a partnership between Dufferin County, Wellington County, the City of Guelph, the Region of Waterloo, and the local Workforce Planning Board.

The online resource collects job postings from a variety of sources, publishing them in list and location format. Job seekers and employers can use the tool to explore information about skills, education, and salaries for local postings as well as census information.

Job Fair promoted local employment opportunities

On October 22, 2019, the Town of Orangeville hosted its third community job fair. The event supported local hiring efforts while showcasing the variety of positions available in Dufferin County. More than 30 participating employers represented a wide variety of local sectors including manufacturing, health care, hospitality, social services, and retail. Approximately 450 job seekers attended the fair, making it an effective way for employers to meet potential candidates.

Commute Ontario partnership offered free resources

In January 2019, the Town of Orangeville partnered with Commute Ontario to deliver a time-limited, provincially funded initiative that encouraged residents and employees to choose active and sustainable modes of travel. Free resources were made available to make commuting easier. Both individuals and organizations could register for the program and benefit from incentives offered throughout the year. Orangeville was one of 15 partner municipalities across Ontario that helped to raise awareness of the benefits of shared and active travel options. Funding for the program was discontinued in March 2021.

Economic Development Projects and Plans

New website to enhance Orangeville's digital presence

In September 2020, the Town of Orangeville launched a new website, improving online functionality and user features while offering easier navigation and connections to information. Content was revised for all Tourism and Economic Development pages and enhanced business directories and event calendars made information more accessible for users. As a living entity, the website will continue to evolve based on the needs of the community.

Development options considered for 82-90 Broadway

Led by the Economic Development and Culture office, work was undertaken in 2020 to evaluate potential development options for properties located at 82-86 and 90 Broadway. Following a comprehensive review of the properties, the Town's existing policies and by-laws, and consultation with the community and stakeholders, three potential development scenarios, inclusive of financial considerations, were presented to Council in November. Council directed staff to commence preparations for the eventual sale of the properties for development. The completion of environmental assessments, an Economic Impact Study and a Downtown parking analysis are three projects that will be completed by the Economic Development and Culture office in 2021.

Sustainability Plan approved for implementation

The Town of Orangeville's first Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (SNAP) was formally received by Council on June 24, 2019. It outlined a vision for the municipality as "a thriving, green, healthy, and connected community."

Along with a sustainability vision for the Town of Orangeville, seven key themes were identified in the plan:

- Climate Change and Energy
- Corporate and Fiscal
- Economic Development and Culture
- Land Use and Planning
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Social Well-being
- Transportation System

For the Town to become a leader in sustainability and maximize quality of life for its residents, goals and strategies for fulfillment of each theme were established. The plan also provides metrics, timelines, and benchmark data to help measure success.

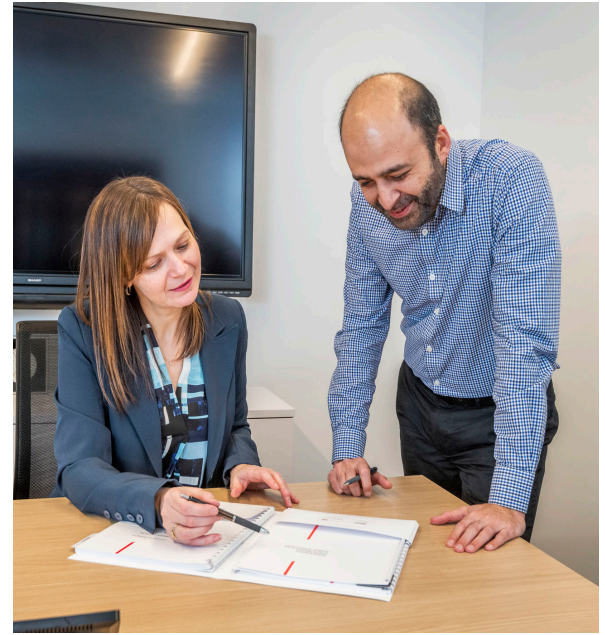
Overall, the plan was shaped through considerable input from community leaders, organizations, businesses, and members of the public, with more than 580 people and 40 organizations providing input.



Sustainability Award Presentation 2019

Professional Services BR+E completed

In December 2019, the Town of Orangeville's Economic Development & Culture office completed a year-long Business Retention + Expansion (BR+E) program with the local professional, scientific and technical (PST) sector. Results from the completion of 36 comprehensive surveys showed that Orangeville's PST sector was well-established in the community, with 86% of businesses locally owned and operated. An overwhelming majority - 98% - rated their impression of the community as a place to do business as good to excellent. According to these businesses, Orangeville's small-town appeal and central location is well-complemented by its available amenities. Ninety-eight percent identified the quality of life in Orangeville as good to excellent, demonstrating that the Town offers a positive setting, both professionally and personally, for many businesses.



The most significant challenge identified by PST businesses was the availability of skilled workers, followed by the ability to attract new employees. Fifty-seven percent of businesses said they had difficulty hiring. A competitive environment, coupled with the need for specialized skills, experience and education for many available positions in this sector made it difficult to find local talent.

Twenty-two actions were established to help address challenges and opportunities for this sector. The complete Survey Results and Action Plan for Orangeville's PST BR+E can be viewed at orangevillebusiness.ca.

Tourism Strategy & Action Plan outlined five-year vision for Orangeville

A new Tourism Strategy and Action Plan was completed in 2020 (adopted by Council in January 2021) to provide a five-year approach to re-building and expanding Orangeville's tourism sector. Initiated in May 2020, the plan identified specific assets within the Town that together, could be further developed to create a compelling draw for tourists. The plan identified new and innovative approaches to attracting visitors, building upon the themes of public and performing arts, trails and outdoor experiences, our historic downtown, culinary offerings, and festivals and events.

Four strategic priorities headline the plan:

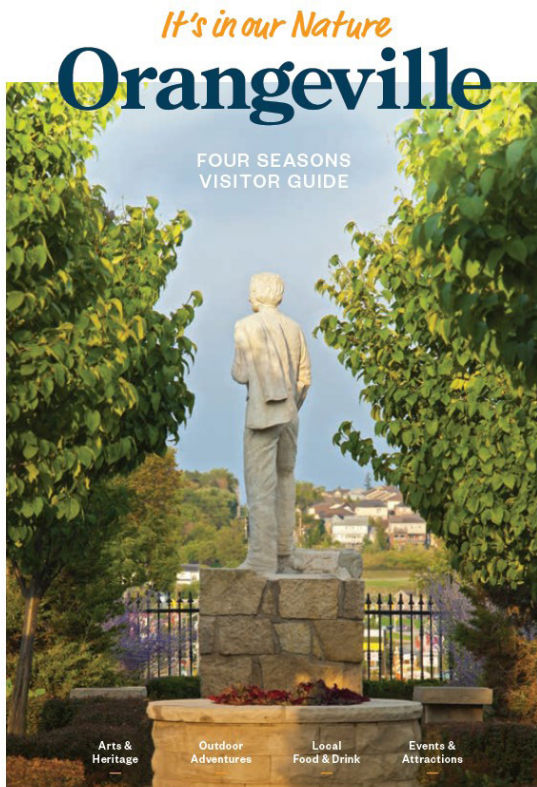
- Administration and Operations
- Branding and Promotions
- Tourism Assets and Experience Development
- Infrastructure and Investments

Based on these priorities, an action plan with more than 70 key recommendations, timelines for completion and budgetary considerations was created. The impacts of COVID-19 were also considered with recognition that the first 12 to 24 months of implementation should be viewed as a rebounding period and an opportunity to enhance the Town's tourism appeal.

The complete Tourism Strategy and Action Plan can be found at orangevillebusiness.ca.



Tourism



New guide welcomed visitors

A new four-season Visitor Guide was published in December 2019. The publication was a joint project between the Economic Development & Culture office and the Orangeville Business Improvement Area (BIA). As part of the update, new templates for tourism-focused advertising were created along with new seasonal banners for the downtown medians.

Find the guide online at orangevilletourism.ca or pick up a copy at the Visitor Information Centre at 200 Lakeview Court.

Downtown improvements funded

The Main Street Revitalization Initiative was announced in 2019 by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to help municipalities support capital improvements within Ontario's main street areas. In Orangeville, the funds were used to enhance the public space at 112 Broadway and included removing the gazebo and adding seating and tourism-oriented signage.

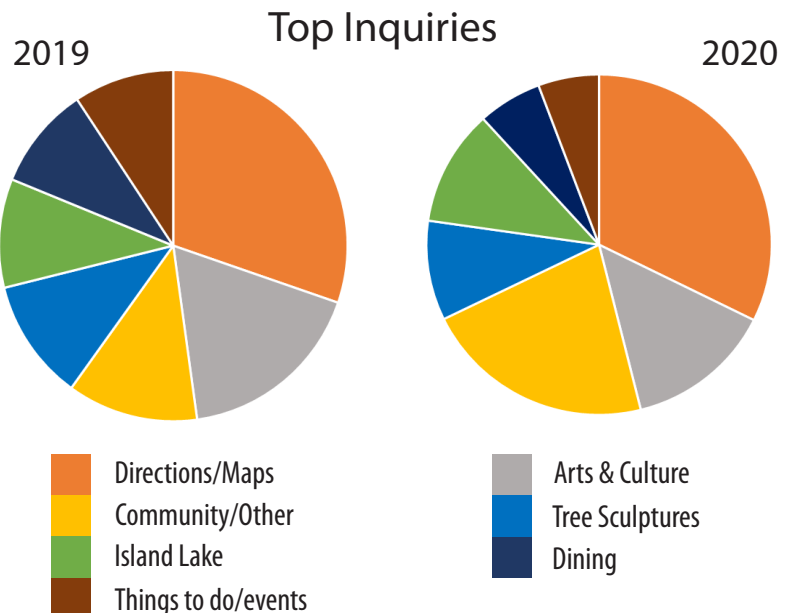
General tourism inquiries

2019: 6,599
2020: 2,675*

Visitors from outside of Orangeville

2019: 2,730
2020: 1,129*

The Visitor Information Centre welcomed tourists to the community



*Not surprisingly, pandemic related shut-downs and travel restrictions that continued throughout most of 2020 had a significant impact on the tourism sector. The Visitor Information Centre was closed from March 24 to August 24, 2020 due to COVID-19.

Arts and Culture

Arts & Culture Awards recognized local contributions

In 2019, the 10th annual Town of Orangeville Arts & Culture Awards were presented on September 26. An evening reception was held at Town Hall to celebrate the local arts and culture sector and pay tribute to the outstanding contributions made by individuals, businesses, and organizations throughout the region. Several nominations were received across eight award categories, with judging completed by an experienced, independent panel from outside Dufferin County.



Arts & Culture Awards 2019

In 2020, the awards were celebrated with a pre-recorded online presentation. The event maintained the tradition of having past award recipients introduce the nominees and announce each winner. Filming took place at a variety of locations in Orangeville to showcase the multitude of creative spaces available in the community. Featured locations included Dragonfly Arts on Broadway, Maggiolly Arts, TriTone Music Studios, BookLore, the amphitheatre at Island Lake Conservation Area, the Orangeville Public Library's Mill Street location, and the Town of Orangeville's Opera House. Award nominees and winners were recognized in the 30-minute video that was viewed over 400 times.

Public art collection consolidated online

Orangeville's entire public art collection, including tree sculptures, murals, utility boxes and other monuments, was consolidated into one online map in 2020. The platform allows users to see the individual locations of the artwork as well as images and details about each piece. Featured in the online collection are six new tree sculptures and eight new utility box locations that were added in 2019 and 2020. A link to the map can be found at orangevilletourism.ca.



Local artwork featured on walking track

As part of the 2020 Call for Artists, four new murals were installed along the walking track at Alder Recreation Centre. The new installations were intended to showcase attractions in Orangeville while promoting the work of local artists. The new murals add to the diversity of the Town's public art collection, complementing existing tree sculptures, utility box art, and monuments.

Filming of holiday movie brought September snow

Portions of a holiday movie were shot in downtown Orangeville in September 2020. Production company Cineflix installed imitation snow and holiday décor to downtown areas to set the scene for Ice Wine Christmas. Filming took place in front of Le Finis and along Mill Street, including Mill Square Park. The film is expected to be released for holiday viewing in 2021. The filming, and presence of its related crew, provided a much-needed boost to downtown businesses and the BIA during pandemic restrictions.



Orangeville & Area Small Business Enterprise Centre

SBEC adapted to serve growing client base

The Orangeville & Area Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) offers free guidance and resources for start-up and existing small businesses in Dufferin County and surrounding areas. In 2020, the transition to online, virtual services was made seamlessly, with no disruption for clients. As business owners navigated the many government programs and operating requirements, the SBEC was available to provide ongoing support.

Reflective of the changing and evolving restrictions and resources created by the pandemic, inquiries to the office increased substantially in 2020. General inquiries increased by 22% over 2019 and more involved consultations increased by 29%. This increase also reflects the success of increased communication strategies utilized as the pandemic ensued.

Key Performance Indicators	2019	2020
General Inquiries	4,836	5,916
Business Consultations	581	750
Seminars, Presentations and Events	27	26
Event Attendees	845	832
Grant Dollars Distributed	Total: \$80,000 Starter Company: \$60,000 Summer Company: \$15,000 Digital Main Street: \$5,000	Total: \$141,000 Starter Company: \$29,000 Summer Company: \$12,000 Digital Main Street: \$100,000
Business Start-Ups*	73	38
Jobs Created	154	127

*Excludes start-ups resulting from Starter Company and Summer Company. Refer to page 10.



“The Starter Company Plus grant has allowed me to purchase a new weaving loom for my business which will in turn allow me to increase my productivity and allow me to participate in a number of prestigious juried artisan shows and sales. I am proud to tell people that I am from Orangeville and that we have a thriving arts community here in Dufferin County. Thank you for allowing me to further my career as an artist and a weaver.”

Elizabeth Bryan, Owner of Weaverbee Textiles

Entrepreneurship Programs

Summer Company Program

The Summer Company program has helped dozens of area youth get a start in small business. Offered by the Orangeville & Area SBEC in partnership with the Province of Ontario, Summer Company is open to eligible students wishing to start and run their own businesses. The program provides entrepreneurial training, mentorship and grants of up to \$3000. Students must be between the ages of 15 and 29 and returning to school in the fall to apply. In 2019, six local students started their own businesses with the support of the program. Four students participated in 2020 with the additional challenge of demonstrating capacity to operate their ventures under the public health guidelines and restrictions imposed by to the COVID-19 pandemic.



2019 Summer Company participants

Starter Company Plus Program

Starter Company Plus supports eligible entrepreneurs from Orangeville and surrounding areas who are starting, expanding or buying a business. The provincially funded program is managed locally by the Orangeville & Area SBEC and provides training, mentorship, one-to-one consultations, and opportunities to compete for small business grants.



2019 Starter Company grant presentation

Starter Company Plus Results



Total Participants

2019: 78
2020: 63



Grants distributed*

2019: 14
2020: 10



Businesses started/expanded

2019: 56
2020: 33



Funds distributed*

2019: \$60,000
2020: \$29,000

* Funds available in the renewed 2020 Starter Company contract decreased compared to the previous contract, resulting in fewer grants and distributed dollars.

Business Events

Small business webinars moved online

In March 2020, the SBEC quickly moved from in-person workshop delivery to the promotion of more than 180 relevant and vetted online events. In September, the fall workshop schedule, comprised of six topic areas, was delivered entirely online to 230 registrants. These important resources supported small business owners as they worked to quickly pivot their operations in response to COVID-19.



Outsmarting the Competition with Terry O'Reilly

CBC radio show host and marketing guru Terry O'Reilly captivated a sold-out audience of 160 entrepreneurs and community members on May 14, 2019. His presentation - Don't Outspend them, Outsmart them – was a relevant and entertaining discussion about using wit and wisdom to create effective advertising. Terry explained that budget should never get in the way of great marketing and presented dozens of examples of cost-effective, yet successful strategies.



Terry O'Reilly presentation 2019

Food-focused learning for entrepreneurs

On March 21, 2019, an information-packed workshop was hosted to assist forty-five food entrepreneurs in navigating the highly regulated and closely monitored food industry. Selling Food in Ontario featured presentations by a panel of food experts including representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. Topics included food regulations, the inspection process, pricing, packaging, and market channels. Successful, local food entrepreneur Christian Horner also shared his expertise in growing his local food business, Fire in the Kitchen Spice Company.



“Our time in the Starter Company Plus Program allowed us to not only develop a solid business plan, but also build a support network with a wonderful group of individuals and entrepreneurs that guided us through the first two years of business. The candid advice really prepared us for the many challenges and opportunities our business would face. The time invested in this program and our business helped us to become the first ever poultry provider in Ontario that is certified Halal, certified Organic and registered with Chicken Farmers of Ontario.”

Shaheer Abha and Bahaar Luhar, Owners of Chicken Thika Farm

Small Business Support

Digitalizing downtown businesses

In 2019 and 2020, the Orangeville & Area SBEC partnered with the Business Improvement Areas of Orangeville, Shelburne, and Grand Valley to launch Digital Main Street (DMS), a joint program funded by the Government of Ontario and delivered by the Ontario BIA Association. The region-wide initiative helped main street businesses enhance and grow their online presence. Initially launched in 2019, the program was re-introduced in 2020 as a recovery effort for small businesses. In both rounds, a DMS Co-ordinator was hired by the Town and served as a free resource to business owners as they worked to improve their online presence and digital capabilities. Eligible businesses could apply for grants of \$2,500 to support digital investments such as hiring a website developer, advertising on social media, or purchasing office software, subscriptions, and point-of-sale hardware devices. Seventy-one small businesses in Dufferin County participated in the DMS program.

DMS Results

Orangeville

2019/20: 16 recipients | \$40,000

2020/21: 27 recipients | \$67,500

Shelburne

2019/20: 5 recipients | \$12,500

2020/21: 15 recipients | \$37,500

Grand Valley

2019/20: 4 recipients | \$10,000

2020/21: 4 recipients | \$10,000

Virtual Business Advisor program launched in November

Funded by the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Network was introduced in November 2020 to provide funding to help small businesses from the fallout of COVID-19. Grant funding of \$32,000 flowed to the SBEC through the Small Business Centres (SBC) Ontario network. This enabled the office to launch the Virtual Business Advisor Program and hire contractual business advisors to provide specialized assistance and education to local small businesses. Private sector professionals were matched with small business owners to deliver enhanced, one-to-one confidential coaching services on a range of topics including marketing, digitalization, sourcing new markets, bookkeeping, financial forecasting, and future planning. The program was well-received by local businesses in 2020 and will continue to September 30, 2021, or until funding is exhausted.

Partnerships

These key partners helped the Orangeville Economic Development & Culture/Orangeville & Area SBEC to provide fully accessible and well distributed services for local businesses in 2019 and 2020:

- Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade
- County of Dufferin
- Centre for Business & Economic Development
- TD Bank Group
- Town of Shelburne
- Dufferin Board of Trade
- Shelburne Employment Resource Centre
- Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin
- Innovation Guelph
- Contact North
- Georgian College
- Humber College
- BIAs of Orangeville, Shelburne and Grand Valley
- Digital Main Street
- Ontario BIA Association

**Town of Orangeville Economic Development & Culture
200 Lakeview Court (upper level)
Orangeville, Ontario**

www.orangevillebusiness.ca

www.orangevilletourism.ca

Facebook: @OrangevilleED | @OrangevilleTourism

Twitter: @OrangevilleED

Instagram: @OrangevilleTourism

