

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF
G NANOQUE
Canadian Gateway to the 1000 Islands



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2011-2013

Executive Summary:

The Economic Development Strategy is a compilation of information presented in various reports created by and for the Town of Gananoque. The Vision, Goals and Objectives were established through various planning sessions and the Official Plan. This document reflects a synthesis of data, thoughts, opinions and ideas collected through consultation processes with key community stakeholders, partners and leaders.

Council recognizes that the economic base of the Town is dependent upon a mix of commercial, service industries, manufacturing activities and tourism. The intent of this document is to establish a living, adaptable framework to direct economic growth and new employment generation while sustaining existing economic strengths. This framework is expected to evolve according to economic variances and opportunities as they arise.

Town Vision:

Our Vision is to preserve and enhance the Town's unique "small town" heritage, preserve our historic and environmental character, and provide a high quality of life through a sustainable development pattern.

Economic Development Vision:

The Town of Gananoque will build upon the Town's unique heritage, environment and culture to lead economic development efforts, foster the growth of strategic industries and promote the region as a location for investment, tourism and residence.

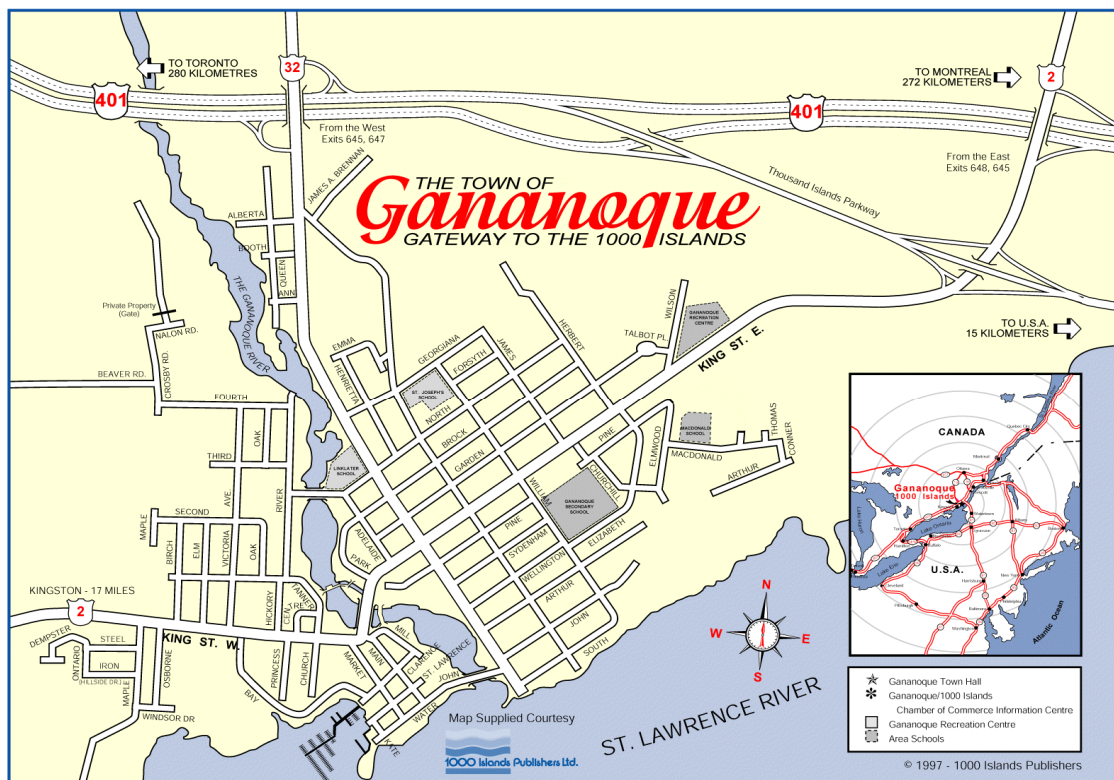
Goals and Objectives

- To sustain and to build on the existing strength of the commercial, industrial and tourism sectors of the economy.
- To undertake initiatives that sustains and stimulates new employment generation.
- To work cooperatively with government, community groups and regional organizations in promoting and undertaking economic development activities.
- To develop a connection/transition between the downtown and lower town
- To optimize funding opportunities to support economic development activities.
- To promote and market the Town of Gananoque as an ideal destination for investment, tourism and residence.
- To become investment ready.
- To sustain and enhance the community pride and local champions.

Town of Gananoque

Internationally renowned as the “Gateway to the 1000 Islands”, the Town of Gananoque is recognized as one of Eastern Ontario's most stunning waterfront communities. It has truly developed into a world-class destination for travelers, businesses, and residents.

Strategically located on the Hwy 401 corridor and near the U.S. border, Gananoque is centrally located between major urban centres including Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa. This rural community offers a variety of attractions unique to the region including a scenic cycling path along Thousand Island Parkway, a captivating waterfront trail, beautiful beaches, a Heritage Museum, an OLG Charity Casino, outstanding performances at the Thousand Islands Playhouse, and one of the most prominent golf courses in Ontario, Smugglers Glen. With its unbeatable quality of life and larger centers only minutes away, Gananoque is ideal community to locate your business, visit and reside.



Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy is a living document that can be used as a tool to direct the economic development activities and focus on achieving the goals and objectives. This road map deliberately focuses on the need for business retention and expansion, cultural planning and improved regional collaboration, communication, outreach and partnership. This document is intended to adapt to local changes and opportunities as they arise while addressing the SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Geographical Location (Proximity to Markets)

- Toronto / Montreal / Ottawa / US Boarder
- Hwy 401 / Railway / Airports (Ottawa/Montreal/Kingston) / St Lawrence River
- Post Secondary Institutions
- Hospitals – teaching and ancillary hospitals

Quality of Life

- Natural Beauty / Aesthetics / Pace of Life
- Local Produce
- Local Medical and Emergency Services
- Local Police Protection
- Recreation / Trails / Skate board park

Amenities (What makes the Town better than anywhere else)

- Doctors / Emergency Services
- Land availability for development
- Unesco (2) Rideau & Old Fort Henry / Unesco (1) – Frontenac Arch Biosphere
- OLG Casino
- Strong Labour Pool
- Strong leaders inside and outside the community
- Service Clubs & Organizations (TAIP/BIA/Chamber/Rotary/Lions, etc.)
- Strong volunteer base

Capacity for Growth

- Water & Sewer Capacity
- Accommodations / Restaurants / Churches / Schools

Weaknesses

Vision / Strategy / Plan

- Lack of a shared vision between the various groups and local government
- Lack of a unified tourism strategy – business collaboration
- Lack of an Articulated Tourism & Economic Strategy
- Lack of a promotional strategy of promoting the whole area
- Lack of communication of the Town's historical attributes

Infrastructure / Facilities

- Lack of Industrial & Commercial growth / availability of open serviced land / available commercial and industrial buildings
- Availability of Senior and affordable housing
- Lack of adequate conference facilities
- Vacancies in down town area – lack of variety of commercial outlets / Absentee landlords

Communication (Outward)

- Lack of promoting Towns asset such as their historical background, arts and cultural facilities, natural beauty attractions, etc.
- Lack of promoting the whole area of the County of Leeds & Grenville
- Lack of a unified front – perception of competition between local municipalities
- Lack of assertiveness of local merchants to get involved

Employment / Jobs

- Tourism is seasonal
- Mental set of “Living in Yesterday”
- Low education level
- Bedroom Community
- Aging population

Opportunities

Study Trends (Develop New Opportunities)

- Conference Centre
- Bicycling
- Canoeing / Kayaking
- Heritage Image

Identify / Exploit Attractions (Existing)

- Capitalize on waterfront area – owned by the Town
- Expand Marina Facilities
- Develop all four season tourism – pond hockey & ski trails
- Media Advertising to draw from Kingston – specially east end
- Host events like Trade & Boat Shows
- Historical asset which is not available in other communities
- Exploit quality of life – health care, recreation, etc.

Develop Partnerships

- Employer Relations & Networking to determine their needs
- Downtown to develop strategies to attract variety of small commercial
- Other municipalities to develop a County wide tourism marketing strategy
- Government & Private Organizations recognizing constraints – Ontario East Economic Development organization
- Apply for Grants
- Share assets with neighbours – expand water services into Township

Capacity Utilization

- Subdivisions

Threats

Economy / Currency

- Provincial & Federal Policies – Destination Tax, HST
- Loss of Grants
- Canada / US Currency Exchange
- General economy weakness
- Property tax arrears
- Lack of Funds – insufficient money to finance infrastructure
- High Water Rates
- High Property Taxes
- Size of Town – ability to financially support their infrastructure
- Costs of maintaining facilities – arena

Competitiveness / Uniqueness

- Loss of major employers
- Aging Physical Infrastructure
- Lack of adequate traffic flow, parking, and signage in lower town (water front area)
- Underdevelopment of assets

Lack of Business Diversity

- Loss of Culture & the Arts
- Lack of new or innovative investment
- Narrow business diversity
- Lack of buildings or property at the development readiness stage

Image / Negativity

- Progressive thinking – living in the past
- Ownership of pride in the Town

Economic Development Work Plan:

Business & Industry Retention and Expansion			
<i>Promote Gananoque as an area for business investment and retention while fostering growth of strategic industries.</i>			
Lead Contact: Shelley Hirstwood			
Priority	Projects	Potential Partners	Time Line
High	Downtown Revitalization Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage a group of key stakeholders to review the downtown studies and create a long term strategy. This strategy will be facilitated by the ED office and will be endorsed and implemented by the BIA 	BIA, Chamber, OMAFRA, CDC	2011
High	Business Directory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to the businesses - Create a business listing - Complete a gap analysis 	BIA, Chamber	2011
High	Investment Packages	OMAFRA, ICCI	2011
Medium	Herbert Street Feasibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine and implement next steps 	OMAFRA, ICCI, Community Futures	2011-2012
Medium-Low	Business Clusters and Niche Industry Attraction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with larger businesses to determine needs and cluster potentials - Seek and attract the appropriate businesses and industry 	OMAFRA, ICCI	2011-2013
Low	Housing Needs and Demands Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examine housing needs as a whole including social, seniors, market and affordable housing 	CMHC, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, CDC, Rural Secretariat	2012-2013
Measures of Success			
Quantitative		Qualitative	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Number of new businesses that open each year -Amount of funding received to complete projects -Completion of project stages 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Involvement and collaboration between organizations -Creation of resource material and investment packages -Establish relationships between businesses and the Town 	

Cultural & Heritage Development			
Lead Contact: Pam Staples			
Priority	Projects	Potential Partners	Time Line
High	Maximizing Empty Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use empty store windows to promote local artists, historical information etc 	Local Artists	2011
High	Creative Industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research creative industries possibilities 	Creative City, OMAFRA	Ongoing
Medium	Lowertown Signage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In concert with initiatives to redevelop Lowertown, provide directional and interpretive signage that encourages pedestrians to walk to and from King Street to the waterfront. 	BIA – expanding on the Foot path – capital project – street scapeing on connecting streets	2012
Medium	Design Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create design work (ie. historical, banner, sign, brochure) as required by ongoing projects 	Local Businesses, Museum, BIA, Chamber, TIAP	Ongoing
Low	Provide artistic and cultural activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - restoration of the wireshed 	Local businesses , local farmers Trades people (barn raising community event) Funding - OMAFRA	2012 - 2013
Measures of Success			
Quantitative		Qualitative	
-The number of people that attend the workshops -Increased usage and visibility of our trails systems -Tracking usage through on-line passport system		-Collaboration between businesses, volunteers and organizations -Increased community spirit and community pride -Healthy active living promotion	

Education & Communications

Promote and develop activities that build community pride and help celebrate our successes.

Lead Contact: Shelley Hirstwood & Pam Staples

Priority	Projects	Potential Partners	Time Line
High	Youth Entrepreneur Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the school to initiate the Youth Entrepreneur Program 	School	September 2011
Medium	Entrepreneur Event	School, Chamber, BIA	2011-2012
Medium - Low	Mentorship Program (Shelley & Pam) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a list of 'mentors' - Develop networking opportunities 	BIA, Chamber, Probus , Lions, Rotary , local Boards of Directors ie - Biosphere	Ongoing
High	Celebrate Gananoque (Shelley & Pam) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create and implement a plan to celebrate our successes (ie. Gala/Business of the Month/Media Coverage) - Create a plan to recognize our local champions 	Media, Local Businesses	Ongoing
Medium	Business Assistance (Shelley & Pam) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist local businesses in embracing new technologies and business practices - Series of workshop i.e. social media boot camp , marketing 101, Small Business strategies 	Chamber , BIA, Chamber	Fall 2011
High	Website Maintenance (Pam)		Ongoing
High	Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with community organizations to collaborate, build partnerships and facility effective boards 	BIA, Chamber, Regional Offices, OMAFRA	2011-2012

Measures of Success

Quantitative	Qualitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The number of mentors participating -The number of business started through the Youth Entrepreneur Course -The number of people that attend events and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Collaboration between businesses, mentors and organizations -Increased community spirit and community pride

Tourism Development

Focus on development of activities that promote the unique heritage, cultural, and natural resources of the area. Work collectively on regional initiatives and partnerships, growth and retention initiatives that support and attract new products or services to augment our region on a year around basis.

Lead Contact: Shelley Hirstwood & Pam Staples

Priority	Projects	Potential Partners	Time Line
High	Promote and Develop Year Around Tourism (Shelley & Pam) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with organizations to facilitate a marketing plan - Research target markets and new ideas 	TIAP, Chamber, BIA, Region 9	2011-2012
High	Lowertown Improvements (Shelley & Pam) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a plan to connect the Lowertown and Downtown areas - Create a mural on the textile building - Beautify the Lowertown area 	TIAP, Chamber, BIA, Region 9, Kingston Arts Council, School, OMAFRA	Ongoing
Medium	Trail Development (Pam) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster the town's role as a regional hub for walking, biking, cycling, trails and road-based touring in Leeds and the 1000 Islands and the rest of the region. - Tourism Development Fund 	Regional – FABR, TIAP , Brockville , volunteers	2012
Medium - Low	Research and develop transportation opportunities (Shelley)	Clark Bus Lines, TIAP, BIA	2012
High	Parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research parking needs and demands - Create a plan to address those needs 	MTO, TIAP	2011
Medium	Infrastructure Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the potential reuses of the Textron and Mitchell and Wilson property 	FCM, OMAFRA, Regional Communities	2011-2012
Measures of Success			
Quantitative		Qualitative	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The number of year around tourists -The number of people that visit both the Lowertown and Downtown area 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improvements to the beautification of the Lowertown -Increased community spirit and pride -Involvement of the community in beautification efforts -New off season market development 	