



City of Port Colborne Economic Development Strategic Plan: 2018-2028

March 2018



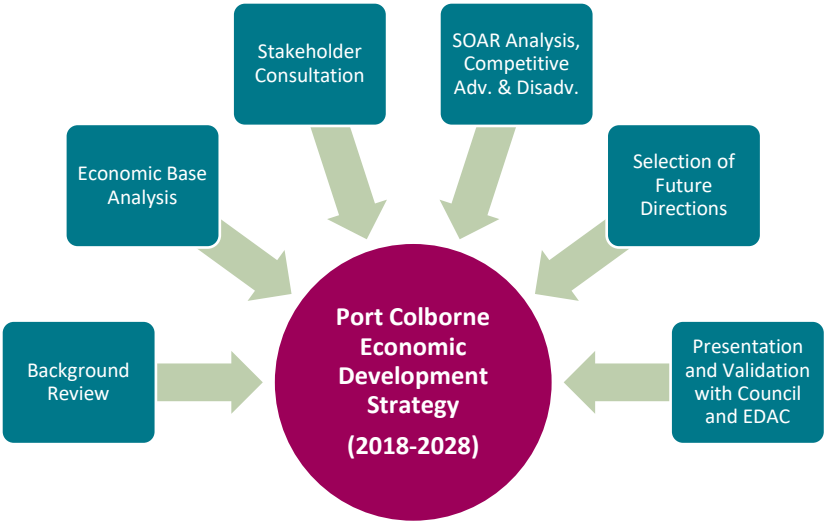
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Executive Summary

The *City of Port Colborne Economic Development Strategy* establishes a strategic approach to economic growth by developing a shared understanding among local community, business, and political leaders on the priorities of economic development and goals for future prosperity. The Plan provides a fact-based understanding and approach that incorporates the growth challenges in the city, the community’s leading and emerging economic sectors, and thoughts gleaned from extensive consultation with local and regional stakeholders. The Strategy explores four priority growth areas and presents supporting action plans.



Economic Development Vision Statement

The City of Port Colborne’s Economic Development Advisory Committee created the following vision to guide the economy of Port Colborne into the future. It is recommended that this vision be adopted to guide the Economic Development Strategy.

The economic development vision statement is:

Port Colborne is a place to live well and enjoy life in a safe, healthy, prosperous, well-run, inclusive and respectful community

Port Colborne will earn the reputation outlined in the vision statement by:

- Encouraging high levels of collaboration and partnership between various levels of government and the community
- Encouraging a diversity of businesses through retention and attraction from a variety of industries to create the strongest economic foundation possible
- Enabling a communications plan that consistently promotes the city’s merits to the target markets identified in this strategic plan

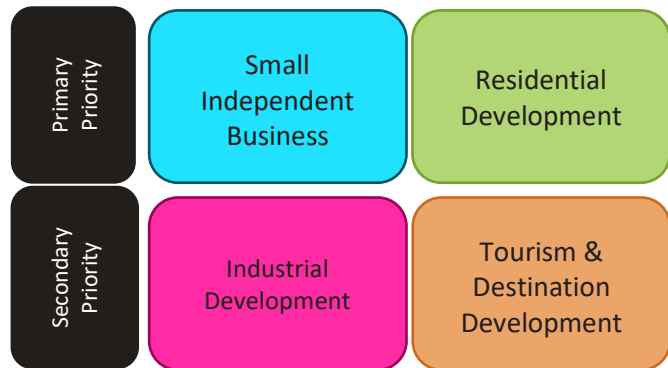


- Living and promoting an explicit culture of ‘customer first’ service within the City of Port Colborne in order to communicate that the municipality is “open for business” and is always considering the interests of taxpayers
- Improving residential quality of life by engraining a corporate culture that emphasizes community enhancement and beautification and continuing to enhance recreational, cultural, and social opportunities as a way to create important economic spin-off opportunities
- Having a vibrant and unique downtown core is an important aspect of attracting residents, visitors, and a young and talented labour force to the community
- Making a political commitment to the goals of this strategic plan and evaluating progress against performance metrics and adjusting strategy and tactics based on results

Focusing Economic Development Priorities

There are four economic development priorities for Port Colborne to focus on over the coming ten years. They are:

- Small Independent Business
- Residential Development
- Industrial Development
- Tourism & Destination Development



Each of these four directions are further explored in the table below.

Exploring the Potential of Port Colborne's Economic Development Strategic Directions

	Small Independent Business	Residential Development	Industrial Development	Tourism & Destination Development
Estimated long-term sector growth	Very Strong	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
Complement to existing local base	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Potential to significantly impact local economy	Very Strong	Very Strong	Moderate	Strong



	Small Independent Business	Residential Development	Industrial Development	Tourism & Destination Development
Target market(s)	Professional services, cultural/creative industries, health and wellness, 'lone-eagles' looking for quality of life, small retail	Retirees looking for lower housing costs, young families	Growing the industrial base (existing and new)	Visitors to the Niagara Region, residents from the GTA down
Current state of the sector	Port Colborne's small businesses are an undervalued but important part of the economy. New investments in the downtown core are helping to offer more compelling opportunities.	Years of no growth have changed as more momentum is building for new-housing starts. Residential communities along the rural shores of the city have done well.	Historical base of industry to build on. Still represents good concentrations of employment and business.	Some good tourism draws which gives good exposure for the community. More year-round destination development needed before city consistently draws crowds in a tough competitive environment.
City's current ability to capitalize on the sector	<p>Good</p> <p>Port Colborne needs to establish a reputation as a charming, small-town community in a broader marketing campaign. Growing investment in the downtown and residential sector are also adding to the ability of the city to sustain growth over time. Costs are a positive. Major concerns with a shrinking and aging population persist though.</p>	<p>Very Good</p> <p>Lower housing costs relative to the rest of southern Ontario and favourable positioning near Lake Erie, strong recreational assets, and the U.S. border support growth in new residents. There is a strong need to create a resident attraction marketing campaign to get the word out about Port Colborne. Opportunities exist for urban core, suburban, and rural developments.</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Already home to a strong industrial base of businesses, Port Colborne will be severely restricted in its ability to attract new mid to large scale developments without more serviced land. This will also limit the ability of local companies to expand their operations, prompting some to maybe relocate or delay expansion.</p>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good tourism assets to build from (beach, lake, and canal in particular) and some important tourism events that draw visitors into the community. Need to better link tourism assets together to create a Port Colborne experience and a compelling reason for the millions of visitors in the Niagara Region to come.</p>
Capitalize on these competitive advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing investment in the community (downtown and residential) ▪ Quality of life and access to excellent recreation amenities (including Lake Erie) ▪ Lower cost housing and commercial rents ▪ A place with a bit of a gritty edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lower cost housing and land ▪ Quality of life and access to excellent recreation amenities (e.g. Lake Erie) ▪ There is vacant land to build a wide variety of housing types in the rural and urban parts of the city ▪ Specific available properties are well-suited to residential" (e.g. site of former hospital) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good concentration of existing industry ▪ Existing industry is well-established but also innovative and competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community assets especially as they pertain to heritage and culture ▪ Strong slate of events that already attract visitors ▪ Quality recreational assets ▪ Dining/Drinking options and experiences are improving ▪ Less expensive rents



	Small Independent Business	Residential Development	Industrial Development	Tourism & Destination Development
Beware of these competitive disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited availability of small offices or co-working spaces ▪ Inconsistent high-speed internet ▪ A shrinking and aging population ▪ Critical infrastructure investments needed in the downtown core ▪ Not perceived as a place for young people to start a career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little market presence to 'sell' the community as a place to live ▪ Costly to develop land because of bedrock ▪ Properties fronting the lake and the canal are owned by other entities ▪ A highway network that can easily get bottlenecked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A shrinking/aging population (smaller labour force than other areas of the region) ▪ Distance from freeway and main supply chain hubs ▪ Nearly no serviced land that is easily developable is a risk to not only attraction but maintaining the presence of existing firms ▪ Zoned unserviced land is extremely expensive to get adequately serviced ▪ Little market presence to 'sell' the community as a place to invest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very few accommodations and shopping experiences ▪ Disconnected tourism assets that do not speak to an experience ▪ Properties fronting the lake and the canal are owned by other entities
Desired future situation by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An entrepreneurial ecosystem that is admired by communities in the region ▪ A 20% increase in the number of businesses in the city ▪ A revitalized downtown contributing to the growth of dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere ▪ An overall 'very satisfied' rating when asked about satisfaction working with the City on business needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A resident population of 25,000 to 30,000 people ▪ Clear statistical signs of a younger demographic living in the community ▪ Recognition as one of Ontario's best small cities to live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An overall 'very satisfied' rating when asked about satisfaction working with the City on business needs ▪ Successful marketing campaign highlighting why investors should look to Port Colborne ▪ Three new industrial investments in Port Colborne leading to a minimum of 2,000 new jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A revitalized downtown contributing to the dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere ▪ Increased number of visitors and visitor spending by a minimum of 25% ▪ Recognition as one of Niagara's most compelling tourism destinations



Action Planning

Five goal areas have been identified with accompanying action plans and performance measurement systems:

Goal: Nurture Port Colborne's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

- Prioritize a 'Customer First' service experience.
- Review development application policies and procedures.
- Conduct ongoing business BR+E surveys.
- Investigate the feasibility for the creation of a business space to support young start-up companies/entrepreneurs.
- Encourage activities that bring youth together from across Port Colborne and the region to network and discuss issues they see.
- Engage local schools, business leaders, and youth support agencies to develop and promote a youth entrepreneurship program.

Goal: Invest in Quality of Place Infrastructure

- Lobby to expand the fibre optic network.
- Boost efforts to improve curb appeal and property standards along major thoroughfares and in the downtown core.

Goal: Refresh Port Colborne's Image as an Attractive Place for People to Invest, Live, and Visit

- Develop a marketing and promotions campaign targeted at attracting new residents and businesses to Port Colborne.
- Review and update municipal by-laws and policies as they pertain to home occupations and businesses.
- Complete a retail gap analysis.
- Organize 'reverse trade shows' in areas where the City wants to attract businesses.
- Identify future residential nodes and zone them accordingly.
- Create a seasonal 'community tours' program to showcase quality of life assets.



Goal: Grow the Profile of the Tourism Sector

- Create a Tourism and Marketing Strategic Plan.
- Work with neighbouring municipalities to cross-promote complementary themes and tourist operators.
- Consider the use of incentives (e.g. free advertising, marketing etc.) to encourage product development or experience enhancement.
- Establish an ongoing tourism visitor survey and sharing of competitive intelligence on visitors.
- Link fragmented tourism assets throughout the municipality.
- Host experiential events in shoulder seasons.
- Explore the feasibility of attracting new and innovative ecotourism experiences to the area.

Goal: Build on the Current Industrial Base

- Explore the feasibility and political interest in developing a new joint industrial park with Fort Erie or Welland.
- Reposition information on the City's website to speak directly to information requirements of site selectors
- Develop lead generation network connections.
- Work with regional post-secondary institutions to explore the feasibility of opening a satellite campus or operation in Port Colborne.

Performance measures are included for each goal identifying activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Introduction





1. Introduction

The City of Port Colborne is a community with opportunities ahead of it. With increasing demand for new residential land, a good concentration of industrial/manufacturing businesses, low cost of living and some strong recreation and tourism assets, proximity to the United States, and access to the urban amenities of the Niagara Region and the Greater Toronto Area, Port Colborne should consider itself poised for growth compared to many other communities of comparable size in Ontario.

Despite these opportunities, the economy of Port Colborne is faltering. Large challenges persist, including a declining and aging population (when communities around it are growing), a business base that struggles to find the workforce and land they need, and a stagnant image of itself that needs to be reinvented and actively marketed. Recognizing these challenges, the City of Port Colborne is looking to create a vision to guide its economy over the coming decade and identify pathways from which it can capitalize on its unique assets and realize more growth opportunities for the future.

The *City of Port Colborne Economic Development Strategy* establishes a strategic approach to economic growth by developing a shared understanding among local community, business, and political leaders on the priorities of economic development and goals for future prosperity. The Plan provides a fact-based understanding and approach that incorporates the growth challenges in the city, the community's leading and emerging economic sectors, and thoughts gleaned from extensive consultation with local and regional stakeholders. The Strategy explores four priority growth areas and presents supporting action plans.

A Changing Economy and Changing Way of Doing Economic Development

The transition to a knowledge economy has been upon Canada for several decades. As communities, investors, and entrepreneurs grapple with this transformation there is a growing recognition of the forces which shape it. The owners of companies that are driving today's economy – and will increasingly drive it tomorrow – are globally oriented, clustered together with peers, looking for creative people to bring ideas to life, value a non-traditional business structure and workforce, and know their businesses operate on a much shorter life-cycle than tradition would boast.

The nature of work is changing and the skills and infrastructure needed to support this shift are also changing. The traditional form of inward investment is declining in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs.

Having a mix of assets that align with what creative entrepreneurs and talent want plus a community-wide desire to become even better, Port Colborne's leadership is wonderfully positioned to ensure a thriving economy over the long-term. The town can be elevated to stand out in the Niagara Region.

What does the Economic Development Strategy do?

- Provides a fact-based approach to create a strong and diverse local economy.
- Creates a vision for the economy with strategic directions to help guide decision-makers over the next 10 years.
- Recommends specific action items that increase the appeal of the municipality to business investors.
- Aligns with Council's goals and objectives, Municipal initiatives, and the goals and aspirations of the community, but also charts a course for the municipality to incorporate into its future actions.



The advantages of being a jurisdiction where innovation drives economic activity are clear. Innovation comes from people. A proactive community can play a lead role in enabling the creativity of its citizens and attracting more creative people. This method has proven to be the engine for economic growth and wealth creation in urban areas across North America over the last decade.

Knowledge workers and entrepreneurs want to live and work in a community that has interesting civic spaces, a place that exudes character and authenticity, and has opportunities to explore new cultures and deepen friendships. These stimulus-rich environments are not found everywhere. They can be found in Port Colborne.

By necessity, this strategy stresses the importance of a cross-sectoral approach to dealing with the implications of a transforming economy and focuses on identifying opportunities that have implications for all sectors of Port Colborne's economy.

In this sense, this project is a means to optimize Port Colborne's economic development capacity by prioritizing economic opportunities and supporting them with clear action plans. To maximize effectiveness, the City must prioritize those with the greatest return on investment and marshal resources accordingly. This Economic Development Strategic Plan gives due consideration to investment attraction, but also promotes a range of activities designed to bolster the town's economy and ensure long term economic prosperity.

Economic development practice has moved well beyond business attraction towards activities that build economies from within. Increasing emphasis is being placed on innovation, knowledge, creativity, talent, and fostering entrepreneurial skills. This shift from the production of goods and commodities to less tangible knowledge and creative-based economies has contributed to a diversity of new economic development practices which fall under the umbrella of "economic gardening"¹ and "business retention and expansion". In this light, this Economic Development Strategy gives due consideration to attracting new investment to Port Colborne but also promotes a range of activities designed to bolster the inner workings of the municipality's economy and ensure long-term economic prosperity.

Project Approach

The approach used to develop this Strategy combined research and analysis of the current economic context in Port Colborne and the surrounding region with a comprehensive consultation and engagement process that included residents, business and community leaders, and regional organizations. These efforts provided a foundation to create informed strategic directions for Port Colborne and actions to implement those directions.

The detailed components of the methodology include:

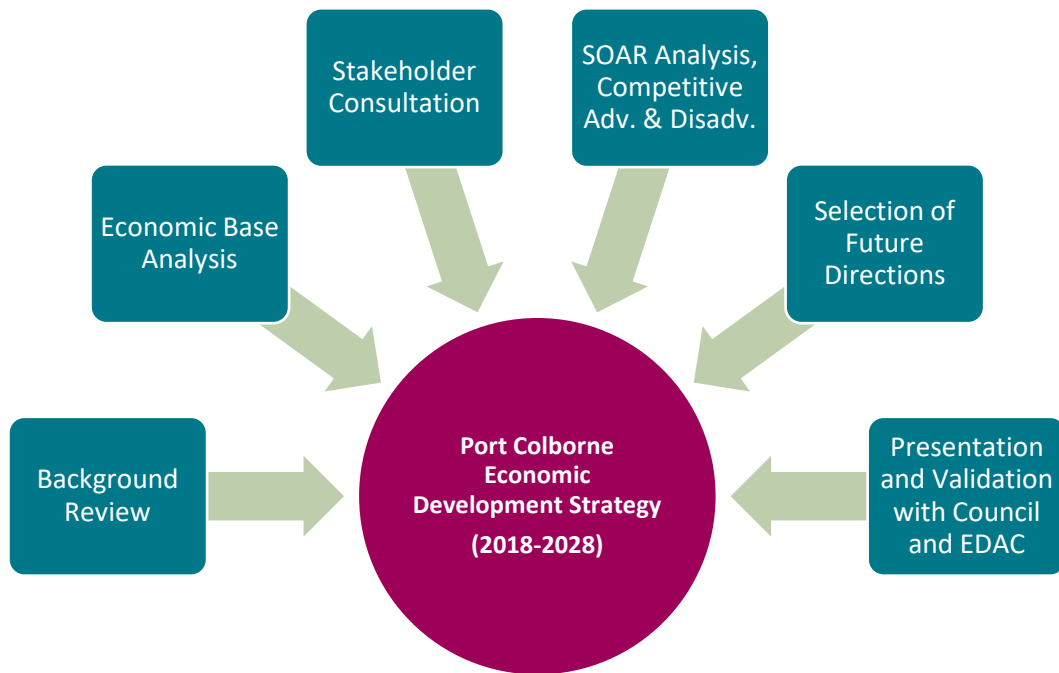
- **Research and Engagement** - Background review, economic base analysis, four focus groups, 18 key informant interviews, and a statistically valid telephone survey of 100 businesses

¹ Economic gardening is an economic development model that embraces the fundamental idea that entrepreneurs drive economies. The model seeks to create jobs by supporting existing companies in a community.



- **Strategic Directions & Action Planning** – SOAR analysis, competitive advantages and disadvantages, selection of future directions and opportunities, and action planning
- **Validation of Findings and Project Conclusion** – Presentation to Council and the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)

Figure 1: Strategic Planning Process



Report Structure

The Economic Development Strategy is organized into five sections and appendices:

Section 2 provides an overview of Port Colborne’s competitive situation, including information on previous plans and priorities of the City and demographic, labour force, and business profile information. *More detailed information on all elements of this section are provided in the Appendix.*

Section 3 outlines the results of the consultation activities. Common themes emerging from the telephone survey, interviews, and focus groups are presented in summary form.

Section 4 identifies a path for prioritizing Port Colborne’s economic development opportunities and presents the economic development vision.

Section 5 presents the action and implementation plans for each of the strategic priority areas, including information on performance measures to track success.

An **Appendix** is also included with additional information that expands on certain sections presented in the main body of the report.



Case studies on the experience of small urban areas that have gone from ‘good to great’ are included in the report. One of these case studies is presented below, with a number of them also included in the Appendix.

From Good to Great Case Study: Cobourg, Ontario

Cobourg is a community 90 minutes east of Toronto on the Highway 401 corridor. It has waterfront along Lake Ontario and is host to a quality beach, a lively downtown, and a rejuvenated small business sector. Cobourg was not always such a vibrant community but, through several important changes, was able to transform itself to where it is today.

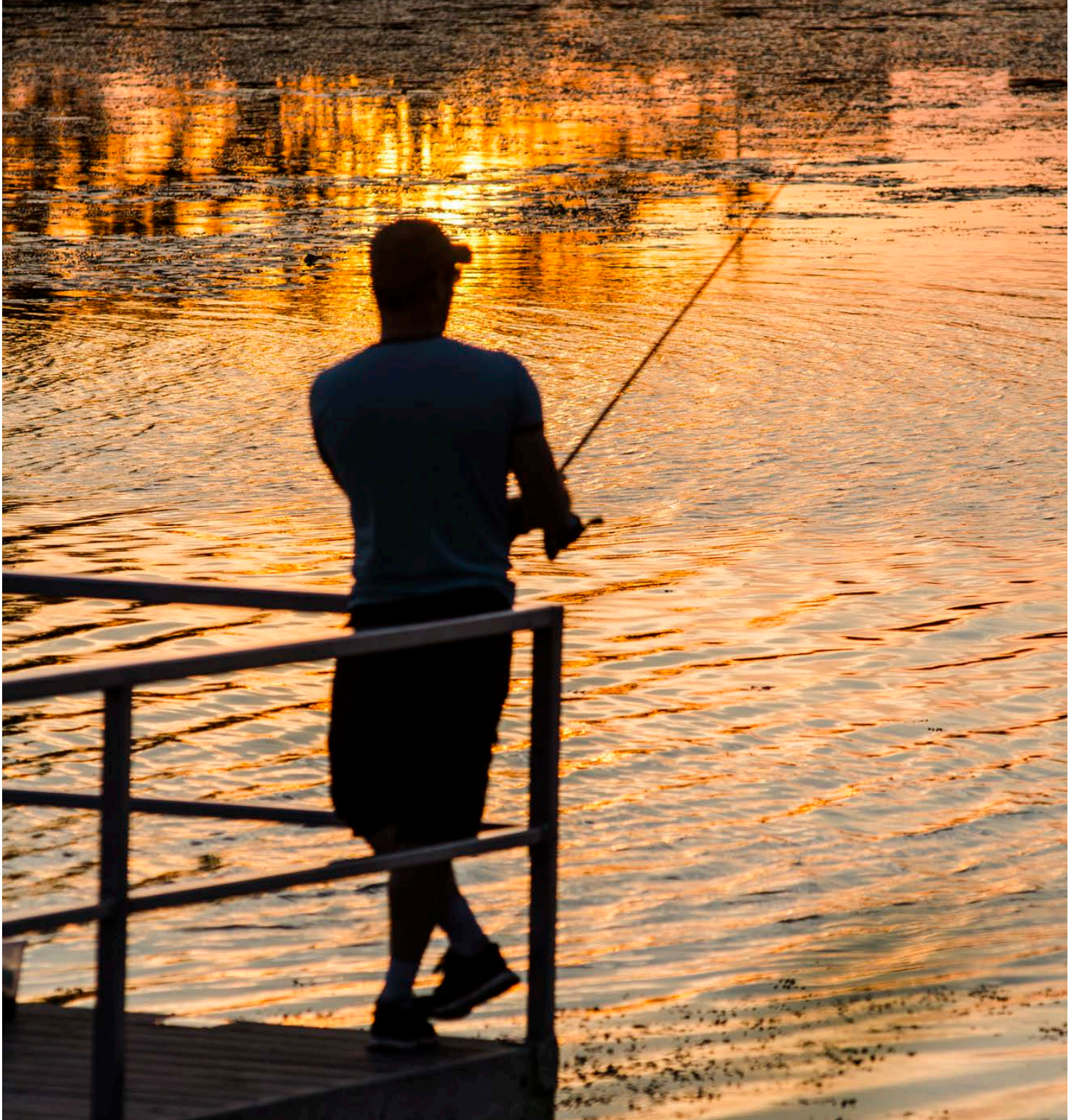
The main element to transforming Cobourg into what it is today was revitalization of the waterfront, which was once heavily industrial in nature. To kickstart the process, the Town obtained funding to create a downtown promenade that served as a catalyst for change. Revitalization started with the walkway directly in front of the beach and throughout the years continued along the marina and harbour. The Town then built a new marina that was owned by Cobourg which is now a revenue generator and self-sustaining. Hundreds of residents now live in condominiums across from the marina and waterside parks – all where factories once stood. Public access to the waterfront has been retained.

After the promenade, the town started on what they called the “Downtown Vitalization” – a master planning exercise. It was initiated with a red-carpet public event. The event allowed individuals to put their ideas on a map and they were encouraged to sign up to volunteer for activities. Other significant projects were also undertaken including the Downtown Master Plan, Community Improvement Plan, and signage directing people from the 401 to the downtown. A Business Attraction Strategy was also developed and has been cited as being successful due to the collaboration and partnership with the Chamber and the Business Improvement Association. Together, they were able to pool marketing resources and funds to make a stronger impact in business attraction.

Cobourg has struggled with retaining youth and stimulating businesses that are built for the 21st century. As such, the most recent initiative is the launch of an innovation centre. Venture 13 has been developed out of a former Transcom call centre that, after a few years of neglect, the Town purchased. The top floor houses police services. The renovated 30,000 square foot building will feature open spaces, 77-seat lecture hall, and 24/7 access. It will accommodate 30 seats and 8 offices for entrepreneurs with work stations and makerspaces and will be limited to innovative businesses through a vetting process.

Cobourg cited the ability to form partnerships and collaborations as key to the success of the community. As a smaller community, the budgets allocated for individual departments would not have been able to create as strong an impact as they have been able to do through collaboration and a progressive Mayor and Council.

Port Colborne's Competitive Situation





2. Port Colborne's Competitive Situation

2.1 Strategic Context

An early step in the research for developing the Economic Development Strategy for Port Colborne involved an examination of key City planning documents. The goal was to provide an understanding of the planning and decision-making context within which the Economic Development Strategy will be developed. A range of documents were examined, including:

- City of Port Colborne Business Retention & Expansion Project
- Team Niagara Economic Development Action Plan
- Competitive Analysis of Industries in the City of Port Colborne
- City of Port Colborne Official Plan
- City of Port Colborne Industrial Community Improvement Plan
- City of Port Colborne Arts & Culture Master Plan

In reviewing the documents, a number of common themes emerged. These themes are explored in more detail below.

Business Retention and Investment Attraction

The City of Port Colborne has identified the need for investment attraction and assisting existing local businesses with the aim of retaining business and facilitating expansion. A significant portion of existing businesses have been operating in Port Colborne for over 30 years.

A survey conducted by the City found that businesses had difficulty hiring employees and that 55% of businesses hire individuals who reside outside of the city due to lack of qualified candidates locally. However, businesses also indicated that they do most of their recruiting through personal networks. There is a disconnect between employers and employees, as those seeking work report job shortages and businesses seeking employees are not having their hiring needs met. It was identified that there needs to be an assessment of the specific skill requirements of employers and that a broader, more formalized network for hiring needs to be better established. An established hiring network can help to mitigate the gap of employers and employees in meeting their needs.

Documents also acknowledged the need to increase investment readiness in the city. This included increasing the availability of serviced land. This would not only help with business attraction, but also expansion for existing businesses. There was also an identified need to actively seek industries that aligned with the strategic objectives of Port Colborne and Niagara. Key sectors for growth have been identified as advanced manufacturing, tourism, aerospace, logistics, food processing, health, biosciences, green technologies, and interactive media.

Port Colborne has been recognized as an Economic Gateway Centre and has been in the process of strategically positioning itself as such. Efforts include encouraging cross-border trade, providing land and infrastructure for the continued sustainable development of tourist facilities, encouraging port facilities, promoting existing industrial lands, and capitalizing on major transportation routes.



Quality of Life

Quality of life is an important factor for any community, but seems to be of particular significance in Port Colborne. Overall, residents feel that there is a robust quality of life, and that the community offers a great atmosphere to live. That being said, the community does struggle with a number of social issues, including high drug use, high school drop-out rates, and teen pregnancy which highlight divisions within the community.

With a declining population, there is a need to attract individuals to the community, and for individuals who were raised in Port Colborne to continually choose Port Colborne as a place to live and raise a family. Residents identified favourable quality of life factors such as affordable housing, short commute times to work, safety, and the natural attributes of the community such as the waterfront.

The promotion of these positive attributes has been identified as a priority. Advocating these attributes in the way of tourism has also been identified as requiring greater attention and has the opportunity to provide a great deal of potential for Port Colborne.

The City Official Plan identified the need for providing a range of housing opportunities and choices. This is another facet to quality of life that could assist in bringing in a broader range of individuals as current housing options are mostly limited to single detached homes which are typically more expensive. The Plan also identified the need for creating walkable neighbourhoods, all of which can help to encourage population growth in Port Colborne.

The Arts & Culture Plan made mention of several avenues by which Port Colborne could enhance their arts and culture sector. This is an aspect to a community that is also important to quality of life and entertainment for residents. Enhancing the arts and culture within a community can help to advance the tourism sector.

Downtown Revitalization

The designated downtown area, specifically the downtown business district, has been of particular focus. The Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan identified that the project area has begun to show signs of stagnation and early deterioration. There were several attributes identified for the vision of the downtown business area. These attributes included elements such as maintaining and enhancing the authentic feel and character, and being a vibrant and commercial area throughout the day and year with a variety of stores that are open longer hours. Having more people living downtown in a diverse range of housing and streetscapes within a visually interesting public realm has also been identified as important goals to improve the downtown business district.

Another main identified need for downtown revitalization is to have improved connections with the canal, waterfront, marina, the Olde Humberstone Commercial Area, and the community east of the canal. Waterfront enhancement and more use of the canal were revealed in several documents as a priority and opportunity for further growth. There was also the mention of underutilized land that had potential for business and to serve as public gathering spaces.

The need to attract business to the downtown was made apparent by the lack of services and goods available for purchase in Port Colborne and by the number of empty store fronts. Having an improved downtown will enhance pedestrian traffic which can lead to improved business opportunities.



Key Take-Aways

- Business owners are concerned with the lack of adequately skilled labour in Port Colborne and have identified the need to encourage youth to pursue skilled trades and occupations where a gap exists.
- Employment in the city is largely focused on three sectors: manufacturing, health care and social assistance, and retail trade.
- Downtown is in need of continued revitalization. Improvements are required but should be made in such a way as to maintain the authentic character, be a year-round commercial area, showcase the canal, and be more pedestrian friendly.
- The City of Port Colborne has acknowledged the importance for improved cultural vibrancy, including enhancing events, natural heritage, cultural heritage, cultural space and facilities, supporting community cultural organization and cultural enterprises.
- There is, essentially, no vacant zoned industrial land that can be built upon.

2.2 Economic Indicators²

Demographics

Port Colborne has experienced a stagnant (and slight decline) in population growth since 2006 (as seen in Figure 2 below). This is far below the population growth experienced in both the Niagara Region and Ontario (growth of 3.8% and 4.6% respectively from 2011 to 2016).

In addition, Port Colborne has a noticeably older population relative to the Niagara Region and Ontario (as seen in Figure 3, a greater portion of the population lies in the 50+ age category, with fewer under 50 years). This is not typically a favourable age distribution as it has a limited working age population to draw from. This can partly be explained by the fact that many youth are leaving Port Colborne for post-secondary education and more specialized job opportunities in the larger urban centres of southern Ontario. An older population, however, does also present a number of opportunities for Port Colborne including attracting businesses to serve this population and a relative wealth that seniors may have as they downsize their homes.

Both a stagnant/declining population and the aging of the population, however, are starting to have detrimental effects on the Port Colborne economy as businesses are finding it more difficult to find the workforce they need to operate their businesses successfully.

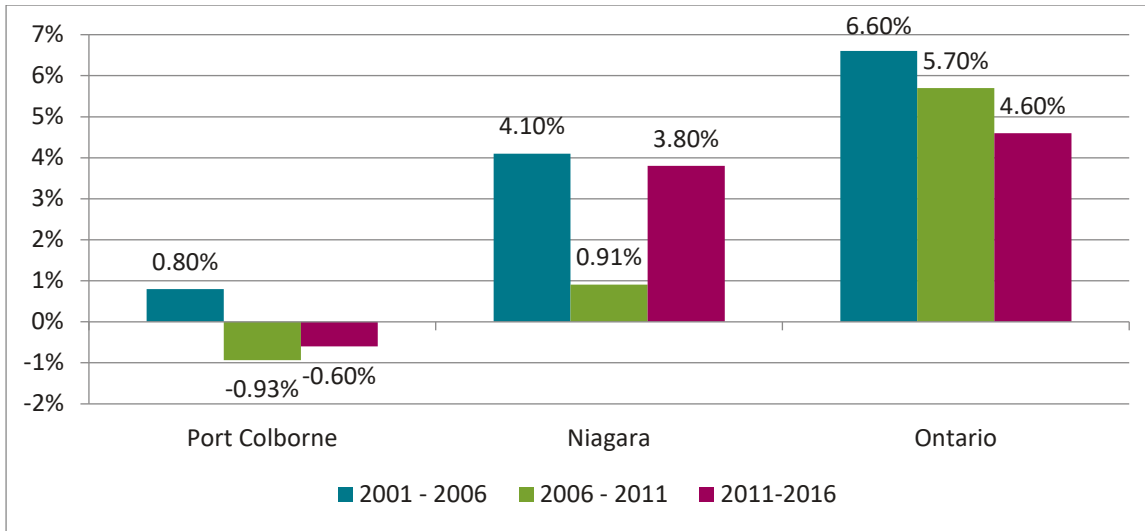
As housing prices in the Greater Toronto Area have increased rapidly over the past 10 years, more and more people are leaving Toronto and moving to Hamilton, Grimsby, and the Niagara Region in search of more affordable housing and a lower cost of living. This has resulted in a surge in housing prices and population increases in these communities. Port Colborne, on the other hand, has not fully realized

² All information in this section is based on Statistics Canada data sources.



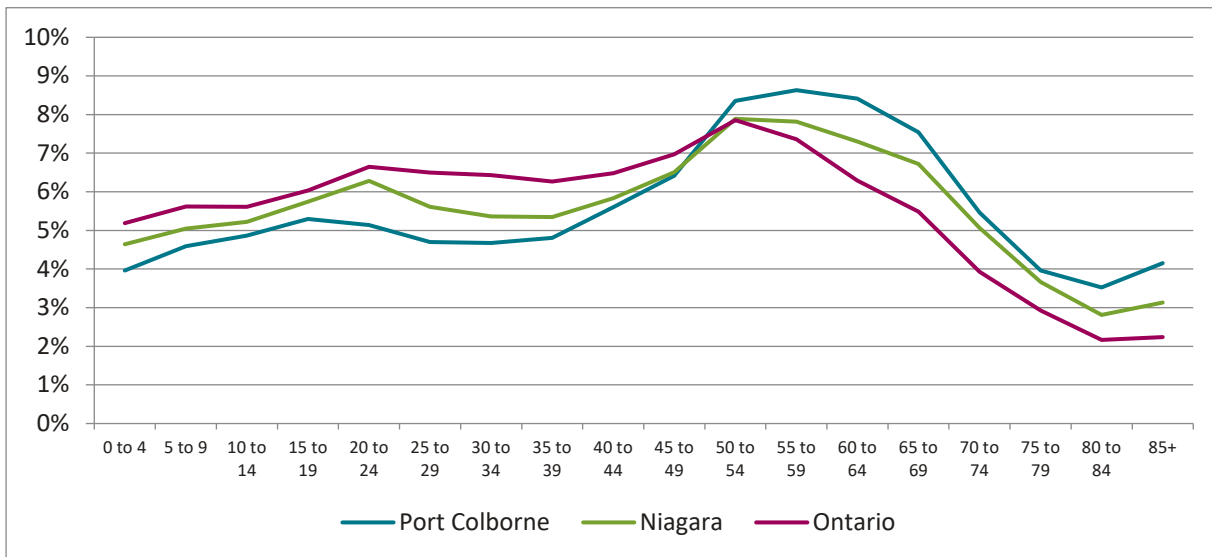
these increases and stands poised to be able to attract new residents to the community in search of even more affordable housing prices. The average dwelling value in 2016 in Port Colborne was \$237,725, below both the Niagara Region (\$323,219) and Ontario (\$268,684). Housing values have grown by 18% in Port Colborne since 2011, whereas they have grown by 25% in the Niagara Region and 38% in Ontario.

Figure 2: Population Growth, 2001 to 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile, 2011 National Household Survey, 2006 Census Profile.

Figure 3: Population by Age Distribution, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile.



Labour Force

Port Colborne's population (aged 25 to 64 years old) has relatively less education than that of the Niagara Region as a whole. As shown in the figure below, Port Colborne has the highest percentage of individuals with no certificate, diploma or degree. Port Colborne also has the highest percentage of individuals having received a high school diploma as their highest level of education. Port Colborne has a significantly lower percentage of individuals having attained a university certificate or diploma at a bachelor level or above.

These statistics speak to the types of jobs available in Port Colborne with fewer knowledge-based employment opportunities and more hands-on trades-based jobs. It also speaks to the likelihood of being able to attract certain types of businesses to Port Colborne and the difficulties the community might have in convincing businesses in need of university graduates that the appropriate labour force can be drawn on from within the community.

That being said, businesses in Port Colborne do draw on a labour force from throughout the Niagara Region (and beyond). Roughly 40% of the employment in Port Colborne is filled by residents living outside of the city, with 17% of positions filled by individuals commuting from Welland, 7% from Fort Erie, and 6% from St. Catharines. Roughly 60% of employment in the city is filled by local Port Colborne residents.

With that in mind, however, approximately 56% of Port Colborne's residents commute outside of Port Colborne for work. The top communities in which residents commute to are Welland, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, and St Catharines.

These numbers highlight the fact that there is a shortage of jobs in Port Colborne to satisfy the number of residents in the workforce. Even if all positions in Port Colborne were filled by local Port Colborne residents, there would still be the need for 2,080 individuals to commute elsewhere to find work.

Figure 4: Highest Level of Education Attained, 2016

Highest Level of Education	Port Colborne	Niagara Region
Bachelor's degree or higher	12%	21%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	31%	29%
Apprenticeship certificate	6%	8%
High school diploma or equivalency	33%	30%
No certificate, diploma, or degree	12%	10%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile.



There were 7,820 people employed in Port Colborne in 2016, a slightly lower number than 2011. This is also reflected in the fact that the unemployment rate in Port Colborne increased between 2011 and 2016, from 8.2% to 9.5%.

The largest proportion of the workforce is employed in Retail Trade (14%), Manufacturing (12.9%), Health Care and Social Assistance (11.8%), Construction (8.3%), and Accommodation and Food Services (8.1%). All of these sectors (except for Manufacturing) have increased their shares of employment in the Port Colborne economy since 2011. Employment in the manufacturing sector, on the other hand, has decreased by just over 3% since 2011.

The top occupations in Port Colborne are:

- Sales and service occupations (26.9%)
- Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (18.5%)
- Business, finance and administration occupations (11.6%)
- Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services (10.3%)
- Management occupations (10.3%)

The number of employed in each occupation stayed relatively constant between 2011 and 2016, with the exception of Management occupations which grew by its share of employment by 2.6% and Business, finance and administration occupations which shrunk its share of employment by 4.1%.

Business Characteristics

There were 1,266 businesses in Port Colborne in 2016, an increase of 3% since 2014. Approximately 63% of the businesses are 'self-employed'³. Of the employer-based businesses (i.e. non-self-employed), there are 25 that employ 50 or more employees. Leading industries for these medium to large businesses are in Manufacturing (8 businesses) and Retail Trade (5 businesses).

In terms of the total business composition, the following industry sectors exhibited the highest proportion of business establishments in Port Colborne as of 2016:

- Real estate and rental and leasing (227 businesses, 93% self-employed)
- Other services (except public administration)⁴ (120 businesses, 54% self-employed)
- Construction (119 businesses, 64% self-employed)
- Retail Trade (116 businesses, 35% self-employed)

³ Those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners.

⁴ This sector comprises establishments, not classified to any other sector, primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance, on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, funeral services, laundry services and other services to individuals, such as pet care services and photo finishing services; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating (promoting) various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members. Private households are also included.



- Professional, scientific and technical services (87 businesses, 74% self-employed)

Since 2014, industries that have experienced the highest rates of growth in the number of new businesses include Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services (+21%), Educational Services (+14%), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+10%). Industries that have shrunk in terms of the number of businesses include Management of Companies and Enterprises (-46%), Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (-37%), and Wholesale Trade (-26%). Of special note is a slight growth in the number of Manufacturing businesses, increasing by three since 2014.

As for the concentration by business type relative to the Niagara Region (known as Location Quotients)⁵, Port Colborne has a slight growing concentration of businesses in Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing, and Other services (except public administration). These areas of growth complement an already high concentration relative to the Niagara Region for businesses in the industries of Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction, Utilities, and Public Administration.

Figure 5: Location Quotients by Industry compared against the Niagara Region

Industry	LQ 2014	Classification	LQ 2016	Classification
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1.00	Average	0.77	Average
21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction	3.19	High	3.18	High
22 - Utilities	2.56	High	2.23	High
23 - Construction	0.89	Average	0.93	Average
31-33 - Manufacturing	1.34	High	1.41	High
41 - Wholesale trade	0.90	Average	0.66	Low
44-45 - Retail trade	1.26	High	1.10	Average
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	1.28	High	1.36	High
51 - Information and cultural industries	0.94	Average	0.93	Average
52 - Finance and insurance	0.84	Average	0.87	Average
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	0.93	Average	1.01	Average
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	0.73	Low	0.80	Average
55 - Management of companies and enterprises	1.32	High	0.71	Low
56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	0.84	Average	1.01	Average
61 - Educational services	0.69	Low	0.78	Average
62 - Health care and social assistance	0.88	Average	0.94	Average
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.50	High	0.94	Average
72 - Accommodation and food services	0.99	Average	0.91	Average
81 - Other services (except public administration)	1.22	Average	1.30	High
91 - Public administration	2.29	High	2.28	High

Source: Statistics Canada. *Canadian Business Patterns*, December 2016

⁵ Location Quotient (LQ) is a measure of employment specialization or strength based on the concentration of employment as compared to a larger geography (in this case the Niagara Region). It is important when looking at the LQ to remember that it is being compared against another region, and as such changes from year to year in the LQ could be the reflection of a change within the comparator region, and not necessarily an absolute change in the city. An LQ of 0 to 0.75 is considered low, 0.75 to 1.25 is considered average, and above 1.25 is high.



Port Colborne's population declined from 2011 to 2016. This compares to Niagara where population increased by 4%.



Port Colborne is experiencing an aging population. The median age in Port Colborne is 4 years older than the median age in Niagara and 9 years older than Ontario.

Median household income declined in Port Colborne from 2005 to 2015. Niagara and Ontario experienced median household income growth.



Median household income in 2015 in Port Colborne was less than Niagara by nearly \$8,000 and \$17,043 less than Ontario.

The average dwelling value in Port Colborne in 2016 was \$85,494 less than it was in Niagara.



The cost of dwelling values increased in Port Colborne from 2011 to 2016 by 18%, dwelling values in Niagara from 2011 to 2016 increased by 25%.

Port Colborne has the lowest percentage of individuals without a University education when comparing to Niagara and Ontario.



Port Colborne has the highest percentage of individuals with an apprenticeship or college degree compared to both Ontario and Niagara.



56% of the work force in Port Colborne commute outside of Port Colborne for work.



60% of available jobs in Port Colborne are filled by Port Colborne residents.

The highest portion of business establishments in Port Colborne are; real estate and rental and leasing; other services; construction; retail trade; and professional, scientific and technical services.



Businesses characterized as the owner being the sole employee represent 62% of total business establishments in Port Colborne.



Voice of the Community





3. Voice of the Community

The planning process for the Economic Development Strategy included an engagement process involving a range of stakeholders from throughout Port Colborne, including business owners, community and municipal leaders, and residents. These consultations were designed to encourage participants to share their insights, ideas, and opinions on the current business climate in Port Colborne, identifying the important assets that the community can build on, as well as the opportunities, barriers, vision, and priority action items for the future.

Consultation activities included:

- **Telephone Survey of Businesses** – A statistically valid survey of 100 randomly selected businesses in Port Colborne to generate insight into satisfaction with Port Colborne as a place to own and operate a business as well as the identification of areas of opportunity and challenge.
- **Stakeholder Interviews** – A total of 18 telephone interviews were conducted with business, community, and municipal leaders in Port Colborne. These interviews were open-ended, each averaging approximately 20-30 minutes in length.
- **Focus Groups** – Four focus groups hosted in Port Colborne with a variety of groups including the City's Economic Development Advisory Committee and City staff, young entrepreneurs, the general public, and local manufacturing leaders and the business community. Focus groups were held in October 2017 and were each two hours in length.
- **External Stakeholder Interviews** – Interviews were conducted to gain a sense of the perceptions of Port Colborne as a place to invest by businesses based outside of the city.

A summary of results from the consultation activities is presented in this section. A more detailed review of findings from the engagement activities can be found in the Appendix.

Key Findings

Business Climate

Many respondents felt that the business climate in Port Colborne needed improvement. While some did share a more optimistic outlook on the prospects of business attraction within the city and favourable experiences working with the City and the support provided, discussion often centred on a need to reduce red tape within City processes in order to encourage faster development processes and facilitate new, innovative business ideas. Respondents would like the City to be more proactive and encouraging in attracting new investment and supporting new start-up businesses.

Overall, respondents felt that there are not many compelling reasons to want to do business in Port Colborne over other areas. A major concern seen by many was the lack of available serviced land. The current business park was felt to be sub-par and offered sites that were not appropriate in size or quality. In addition, some of the land that is available in the business park is costly to build on as it requires special studies and surveys, or has large costs associated with getting the necessary servicing. Interviewees encouraged the City to look at sourcing more available serviced land that would serve as a better incentive for businesses to locate in Port Colborne.



Port Colborne's Assets

Respondents cited the existence of Port Colborne was due to the Welland Canal. The Welland Canal has allowed for the emergence of various industries within Port Colborne that would have otherwise not been possible. With cargo traffic coming through Port Colborne it has given rise to supporting businesses that service these ships. The Welland Canal has also provided a tourism asset for Port Colborne. However, many respondents cited that the canal was underutilized.

Port Colborne's location is also an important asset. Proximity to the US border, proximity to Toronto and major international airports, proximity to St. Catharines, and proximity to international shipping via the Welland Canal were discussed. In addition to location, the weather associated with the location of Port Colborne was also mentioned as a positive asset with winters being mild, and summers being sunny.

Additionally, other quality of life indicators were mentioned including a great small-town community feel where people are friendly and welcoming. Several individuals mentioned the benefit of the lake and beach as a tourist destination and also for recreation of local residents. Affordable housing (relative to other areas in the Niagara Region and the Toronto Area) was also believed to be an asset for attracting individuals from the Toronto area as a retirement destination and also business attraction. Respondents also mentioned other positive features such as arts and culture, short commute times, and city events and festivals.

Visions for the Economy

Many individuals identified the need to attract more people to live in Port Colborne and grow the population. One of the main avenues by which people saw this coming to fruition was to build more and diversified housing options. Several individuals also identified residential development options along the canal as being a strong opportunity for population growth. There was an overall belief that building along the canal would be attractive for individuals retiring from Toronto and looking for less expensive housing options. In addition, mixed residential options are attractive for families who can't afford a single detached but might be able to afford a less expensive option such as a row house or condominium.

While there was a noticeable impression of creating a retirement community in Port Colborne, others did share that this was not the way to create sustainable economic growth, and instead Port Colborne should focus their efforts on attracting young families and promote Port Colborne as an ideal place to raise a family.

Another vision that many people shared was to increase tourism in the area. There was an impression that Port Colborne was known as a stopover location, and not a tourist destination. Individuals believed that the natural resources in the city were underutilized and under promoted. One respondent shared that they had heard Port Colborne described as a "hidden gem" and that it needs to not be hidden. Another missing piece in Port Colborne in regards to supporting tourism growth is hotel options. Several individuals indicated that there were not adequate hotel options in the city for leisure or business. Individuals who had business dealings often would send visitors to neighbouring communities for accommodation as the options in Port Colborne were poor.

Challenges and Barriers

By far the most mentioned comment during the engagement process was the significant barrier of a lack of available serviced land for industrial purposes. Individuals asserted that if there was more serviced



land in the community it would be a stronger incentive for businesses to establish themselves in Port Colborne, with resulting increases in jobs and people relocating to Port Colborne.

An aging population was cited as another concern deterring businesses from locating in Port Colborne. Businesses had staffing concerns with a large proportion of the population being older than the prime working ages (25 to 64 years old). Some businesses felt that it was difficult to find workers with the necessary skill sets and as a result were hiring individuals living outside of Port Colborne. These workers, who were commuting to Port Colborne, would often have high turnover rates as they grew tired of the commute, and would seek employment closer to home. Many respondents identified that building additional housing options would encourage people to the area and therefore increase population leading to more local employment and job opportunities.

Other challenges/barriers that were discussed included:

- High tax rates
- Red tape and bureaucracy in City Hall that slows the ambitions of businesses
- Poor state of infrastructure in the downtown core
- A lack of appropriate highway transportation routes and distance from major highways, with existing routes often congested
- A lack of shopping options for everyday goods forcing residents to look outside of the city to meet their needs

Opportunities and Priorities

A number of opportunities and priorities were discussed, including:

- Developing the waterfront (both the Canal and Lake Erie). Interviewees believed there was significant untapped potential in residential, commercial/tourist, and industrial uses along the waterfront. Some recommended further industrializing the canal and exploring options around improved access to shipping and positioning Port Colborne as a warehousing hub. Residential development was also seen as an option.
- Encouraging more residential development and attracting people from throughout Southern Ontario to the community (both retirees and young families). The less expensive land and housing in Port Colborne offer significant opportunities in attracting individuals and businesses to the community.
- Advocating for new transportation routes into and out of Port Colborne.
- Improving the availability of accommodation options, allowing Port Colborne to grow its overnight visitor stays and be in contention for hosting more events such as sporting tournaments.
- Continuing to enhance the downtown core and attracting more businesses to take up vacant storefronts.
- Working to improve the stock of available serviced industrial land and marketing that land to prospective businesses to move their operations to Port Colborne.
- Marketing Port Colborne more effectively and sharing what Port Colborne has to offer to individuals outside of the Niagara region. There was a strong sense that improvement across a number of



variables (business interest, residential development, tourism profile) could be seen from a strong marketing campaign.

- Creating a business incubator in the community to support the emergence of start-ups and emerging businesses across a variety of sectors.
- Working to reduce the red tape and bureaucracy associated with starting/running a business in the city.
- Creating a more cohesive vision for how the city will grow and to have that vision guide all City decision-making.

Business Survey Findings

A random sample of 100 businesses from Port Colborne's business directory participated in a statistically valid telephone survey to generate insight into satisfaction with Port Colborne as a place to own and operate a business as well as the identification of areas of opportunity and challenge.

Note that 64% of businesses surveyed were in the following three industries: Retail trade (27), Accommodation and food services (19), and Other services (except public administration)⁶ (18).

Key findings from the business survey include:

- 91% of businesses expressed a level satisfaction with Port Colborne as a place to do business, while 9% expressed a level of dissatisfaction (48% responded very satisfied, 43% satisfied, 8% somewhat satisfied, 1% very dissatisfied).
- The highest ranked factor of satisfaction of doing business in Port Colborne was 'Festivals and Events', and 'Internet Service', with 62% of people responding 'Very Satisfied.' Second highest ranked was 'Overall quality of life' with 60% responding 'Very Satisfied'.
- The factor with the highest ranked 'Very Dissatisfied' was 'Municipal property taxes' with 31% responding very dissatisfied followed by 'Energy costs' with 27% responding very dissatisfied. The factor with the lowest percentage responding 'Very Satisfied' with only 17% was 'Development/building permit processes'.
- 42% of businesses reported having increased profits within the last three years, with 55% suspecting to increase profits in the coming three years.
- 25% of businesses reported plans for business expansion within the next three years.
- 41% of businesses currently have difficulty hiring in Port Colborne. Of these businesses, 43% said that the difficulty with hiring lies in there being a lack of skills or training in the local labour force, followed by too few applicants, and lack of relevant experience.

⁶ This sector comprises establishments, not classified to any other sector, primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance, on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, funeral services, laundry services and other services to individuals, such as pet care services and photo finishing services; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating (promoting) various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members. Private households are also included.



- 94% of businesses commented that the most important element in creating a successful economy in Port Colborne over the next 20 years is attracting and developing the local workforce, followed by encouraging more residential development. Other elements for a successful economy that were mentioned include a need for more industry, activities for the young and retaining the young, and more stores and businesses.
- Areas of priority concern for businesses in Port Colborne are (see Figure 6 below):
 - Municipal property taxes
 - Energy costs
 - Availability and quality of the workforce
 - Retail shops and shopping experience
 - Diversity of age groups

Figure 6: Derived Importance of Businesses across a Variety of Categories

Category	Derived Importance [‡]	Room for Improvement (Proportion answering 'somewhat dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied')	Priority Ranking (Derived Importance x Room for Improvement)
Municipal property taxes	7.2	43%	3.11
Energy costs	6.0	47%	2.80
Availability and quality of the workforce	8.5	32%	2.72
Retail shops and shopping experience	5.6	31%	1.73
Diversity of age groups	7.8	22%	1.71
Availability of adequate housing	7.4	18%	1.33
Land costs	6.1	21%	1.29
Development Charges	6.5	19%	1.24
Quality of business parks and industrial areas	6.9	17%	1.17
Development/building permit process	5.6	20%	1.12
Revitalization of the downtown area	7.4	12%	0.89
Availability of space for rent or lease	6.9	12%	0.82
Zoning	6.3	13%	0.82
Availability of serviced land	5.4	13%	0.70
Support from local residents	6.1	10%	0.61
Internet Service	6.1	10%	0.61
Festivals and events	8.7	7%	0.61
Overall quality of life	7.0	6%	0.42

[‡] **Derived importance** is a measure of the relative importance of each category in relation to the question "Overall how satisfied are you with Port Colborne as a place to open and operate a business?" The correlation for each category has been converted to a ten-point scale, with '10' representing the category that had the highest impact in respondents being satisfied with doing business in Port Colborne. All numbers are in relation to each other and give a sense of the relative comparison between categories and their impact on the satisfaction of businesses.



From Good to Great Case Study: Perth, Ontario

Perth is a community of 5,930 people located an hour outside of Ottawa. Perth is home to a heritage downtown core and the Tay River that splits and runs through the majority of the downtown. Some of the downtown is an island formed by the two channels of the river. While other communities were being affected by the recession in the early 2010s, Perth stayed surprisingly consistent. Now, post-recession, it is thriving. The success in Perth can be attributed to several factors.

Several years ago, Perth focused efforts on the revitalization of the downtown core. This started with receiving heritage grants to assist in renovating downtown heritage buildings. A number of other loans distributed to help with façade improvements and enhancements of downtown businesses. In parallel, a study concluded that the best use of vacant land on the riverfront across from Town Hall (referred to as the 'dust bowl' gravel parking lot) would be a community space. It is now used for events such as the farmers market.

The next major component to the downtown revitalization was the Glass Palace. The palace was constructed out of recycled materials and now hosts weddings, markets, the Christmas of Lights, and other events. This was instrumental as it was an initiative that aimed to bring people into the downtown and increase traffic in the downtown. It has worked in attracting locals and visitors alike.

Another initiative designed to increase traffic in the downtown was the transformation of an old co-op building site on a prime waterfront location. Town officials had wanted a hotel for a long period of time and it would have been easier to attract one to Highway 7 near the fast food and larger format retailers, but they were committed to supporting downtown with a unique amenity. A study was commissioned that looked at the validity of having a hotel in the downtown. The study found that a hotel was feasible and this information was used by a local entrepreneur to receive financing. This not only encouraged tourism in the core, but reinforced the community's strong brand image, and facilitated business partnerships through deal offerings and co-marketing.



Prioritizing Economic Directions





4. Prioritizing Economic Directions

4.1 SOAR Analysis

The Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR) Analysis provides a means of synthesizing input from the research and community engagement process. The idea of the SOAR is to build from what works rather than fixating on what does not, lending an analysis to identifying the positive actions and steps forward. Details on each of the four components of the SOAR are included in the table below.

Figure 7: SOAR Analysis

S	Strengths What can we build on?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we doing well? • What key achievements are we most proud of? • What positive aspects have individuals and organizations commented on?
O	Opportunities What are our best possible future opportunities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What changes in demand do we expect to see over the next years? • What external forces or trends may positively impact development? • What are key areas of untapped potential?
A	Aspirations What do We Care Deeply About?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we deeply passionate about? • As a City, what difference do we hope to make? • What does our preferred future look like?
R	Results How will we know we are succeeding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What meaningful measures will indicate that we are on track in achieving our goals? • What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects and initiatives? • What are the key goals we would like to accomplish in order to achieve these results?



Strengths

- Strong existing clusters of industry/manufacturing
- Good access to transportation infrastructure (water, highway, rail, air) and close proximity to the US border and Toronto.
- Low cost of living with great housing prices relative to surrounding areas.
- A sense of pride by residents and a desire to support local businesses.
- A tourism event that brings a significant number of people from throughout the region into Port Colborne.
- Good recreation assets (e.g. Vale Centre, marina, promenade, beaches).
- World class fishing resource.
- Fibre optic backbone in the city.

Aspirations

- Attract thousands of new residents to Port Colborne and develop a wide reputation as being an attractive community that is a great place to live, work, and raise a family.
- Revitalize and energize the community to become a tourism destination (like Niagara-on-the-Lake) with a unique Port Colborne flair. This includes creating new and exiting events and things for people to do, drawing in a fraction of the millions of visitors that come to the region.
- Become a community that is more accommodating to an aging population (e.g. public transit, housing, age-friendly infrastructure).
- Continual growth of jobs and opportunities in the community and the enticement of more private investment.
- Work to build up and animate areas/neighbourhoods throughout Port Colborne beyond the downtown core.
- Help existing businesses in Port Colborne expand and hire more people.
- Enhance the experience on the waterfront (beaches, restaurants).
- Be an intuitive and inventive city.
- A picturesque community that is safe and family friendly.
- A growing downtown (restaurants and cultural amenities).

Opportunities

- Create a collaboration/incubation space where start-ups and emerging businesses can grow.
- Create a marketing campaign targeting new residents and investors to come to Port Colborne. Make the case for why people from outside of the region should come. Become a residential centre.
- Enhance the visitor experience with more things to do, easier to access information, linking experiences, and animating spaces.
- Improved transportation into and out of Port Colborne as regional transportation networks improve (i.e. GO service)
- Position the City as a proactive and progressive partner to local business owners to support new ideas and business opportunities.
- Continue to develop the downtown. Offer incentives or tax breaks to encourage more businesses to rent space in vacant buildings.
- Develop the waterfront for commercial and recreational purposes.
- Develop and service land to attract new mid to large investment.
- Develop along the canal – residential and commercial.

Results

- Increased exposure and name recognition among audiences throughout southern Ontario leading to more visitors/tourists and an increased residential population.
- More businesses, sole-proprietors, and entrepreneurs that are inquiring about and investing in Port Colborne.
- A revitalized community with vibrant storefronts, and a welcoming atmosphere.
- Local businesses growing and hiring more employees.
- A diversified workforce with the skills needed by employers.
- More access to housing and a diversified housing stock.
- A growing base of retail/shopping options along with more cultural amenities.
- Increasing income levels across the community and a smaller proportion of residents considered low-income.
- New and exciting business run and operated by young entrepreneurs



4.2 Competitive Advantages and Disadvantages

Looking at competitive advantages and disadvantages is helpful in differentiating Port Colborne from its regional counterparts. The city’s competitive advantages form the basis of the unique value proposition the community offers to new residents, businesses, and potential investors. Competitive disadvantages are the factors that need to be addressed to minimize the effects of barriers, particularly when looking to attract new residents and investment.

Figure 8: Port Colborne’s Competitive Advantages and Disadvantages

Competitive Advantages	Competitive Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low cost of living with lower housing prices relative to surrounding areas ▪ A strong manufacturing base ▪ A strong base of recreational assets ▪ A historic and unique downtown core ▪ Vibrant rural and vacation communities ▪ Passionate community leaders ▪ Direct access to Lake Erie ▪ Fibre optic backbone in the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A shrinking and aging population base with lower levels of education than the region as a whole ▪ Location is considered the ‘end of the road’, with businesses having to pay a premium to bring in supplies ▪ A road/highway network that can easily get bottlenecked with limited other options to get in and out of the community ▪ No availability of post-secondary education programs within the community ▪ Lack of diversified housing and industrial land

4.3 Establishing an Economic Development Vision

A vision statement is meant to capture the goals, aspirations, values, and collective desires of a community and act as a clear guide for choosing future courses of action. An economic development vision for Port Colborne is meant to capture these attributes through the lens of economic prosperity. It encompasses the desired future state of what the city can ultimately achieve from an employment and business growth perspective. Wealth generation, entrepreneurship, innovation, and increased investment can all directly translate into increased quality of life, fuller and more meaningful employment, improved services, and community well-being.

An economic development vision statement is presented below to guide the economic development efforts of the City of Port Colborne. The vision statement is grounded in input from community stakeholders as well as the challenges and opportunities that the city faces.



Economic Development Vision Statement

The City of Port Colborne's Economic Development Advisory Committee created the following vision to guide the economy of Port Colborne into the future. It is recommended that this vision be adopted to guide the Economic Development Strategy.

The economic development vision statement is:

Port Colborne is a place to live well and enjoy life in a safe, healthy, prosperous, well-run, inclusive and respectful community

Guiding Principles

Port Colborne will earn the reputation outlined in the vision statement by:

- Encouraging high levels of collaboration and partnership between various levels of government and the community
- Encouraging a diversity of businesses through retention and attraction from a variety of industries to create the strongest economic foundation possible
- Living and promoting an explicit culture of 'customer first' service within the City of Port Colborne in order to communicate that the municipality is "open for business" and is always considering the interests of taxpayers
- Improving residential quality of life by engraining a corporate culture that emphasizes community enhancement and beautification and continuing to enhance recreational, cultural, and social opportunities as a way to create important economic spin-off opportunities
- Having a vibrant and unique downtown core is an important aspect of attracting residents, visitors, and a young and talented labour force to the community
- Enabling a communications plan that consistently promotes the city's merits to the target markets identified in this strategic plan
- Making a political commitment to the goals of this strategic plan and evaluating progress against performance metrics and adjusting strategy and tactics based on results



4.4 Focusing Economic Development Priorities

There are four economic development priorities for Port Colborne to focus on over the coming ten years. They are:

- Small Independent Business
- Residential Development
- Industrial Development
- Tourism & Destination Development

Each of these four directions are further explored in the table below.

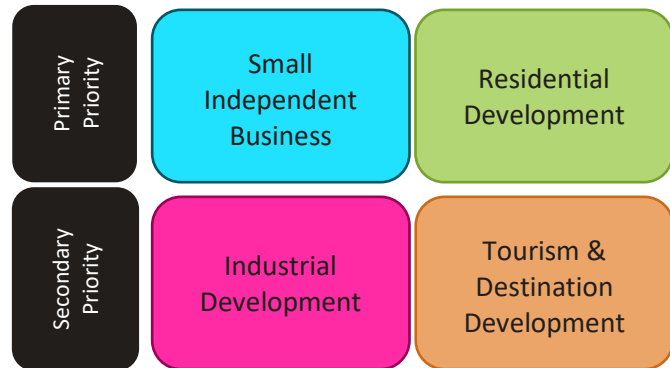


Figure 9: Exploring the Potential of Port Colborne's Economic Development Strategic Directions

	Small Independent Business	Residential Development	Industrial Development	Tourism & Destination Development
Estimated long-term sector growth	Very Strong	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
Complement to existing local base	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Potential to significantly impact local economy	Very Strong	Very Strong	Moderate	Strong
Target market(s)	Professional services, cultural/creative industries, health and wellness, 'lone-eagles' looking for quality of life, small retail	Retirees looking for lower housing costs, young families	Growing the industrial base (existing and new)	Visitors to the Niagara Region, residents from the GTA down
Current state of the sector	Port Colborne's small businesses are an undervalued but important part of the economy. New investments in the downtown core are helping to offer more compelling opportunities.	Years of no growth have changed as more momentum is building for new-housing starts. Residential communities along the rural shores of the city have done well.	Historical base of industry to build on. Still represents good concentrations of employment and business.	Some good tourism draws which gives good exposure for the community. More year-round destination development needed before city consistently draws crowds in a tough competitive environment.



	Small Independent Business	Residential Development	Industrial Development	Tourism & Destination Development
City's current ability to capitalize on the sector	<p>Good</p> <p>Port Colborne needs to establish a reputation as a charming, small-town community in a broader marketing campaign. Growing investment in the downtown and residential sector are also adding to the ability of the city to sustain growth over time. Costs are a positive. Major concerns with a shrinking and aging population persist though.</p>	<p>Very Good</p> <p>Lower housing costs relative to the rest of southern Ontario and favourable positioning near Lake Erie, strong recreational assets, and the U.S. border support growth in new residents. There is a strong need to create a resident attraction marketing campaign to get the word out about Port Colborne. Opportunities exist for urban core, suburban, and rural developments.</p>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Already home to a strong industrial base of businesses, Port Colborne will be severely restricted in its ability to attract new mid to large scale developments without more serviced land. This will also limit the ability of local companies to expand their operations, prompting some to maybe relocate or delay expansion.</p>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good tourism assets to build from (beach, lake, and canal in particular) and some important tourism events that draw visitors into the community. Need to better link tourism assets together to create a Port Colborne experience and a compelling reason for the millions of visitors in the Niagara Region to come.</p>
Capitalize on these competitive advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing investment in the community (downtown and residential) ▪ Quality of life and access to excellent recreation amenities (including Lake Erie) ▪ Lower cost housing and commercial rents ▪ A place with a bit of a gritty edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lower cost housing and land ▪ Quality of life and access to excellent recreation amenities (e.g. Lake Erie) ▪ There is vacant land to build a wide variety of housing types in the rural and urban parts of the city ▪ Specific properties are well-suited to residential" (e.g. site of former hospital) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good concentration of existing industry ▪ Existing industry is well-established but also innovative and competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community assets especially as they pertain to heritage and culture ▪ Strong slate of events that already attract visitors ▪ Quality recreational assets ▪ Dining/Drinking options and experiences are improving ▪ Less expensive rents



	Small Independent Business	Residential Development	Industrial Development	Tourism & Destination Development
Beware of these competitive disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited availability of small offices or co-working spaces Inconsistent high-speed internet A shrinking and aging population Critical infrastructure investments needed in the downtown core Not perceived as a place for young people to start a career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little market presence to 'sell' the community as a place to live Costly to develop land because of bedrock Properties fronting the lake and the canal are owned by other entities A highway network that can easily get bottlenecked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A shrinking/aging population (smaller labour force than other areas of the region) Distance from freeway and main supply chain hubs Nearly no serviced land that is easily developable is a risk to not only attraction but maintaining the presence of existing firms Zoned unserviced land is extremely expensive to get adequately serviced Little market presence to 'sell' the community as a place to invest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few accommodations and shopping experiences Disconnected tourism assets that do not speak to an experience Properties fronting the lake and the canal are owned by other entities
Desired future situation by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An entrepreneurial ecosystem that is admired by communities in the region A 20% increase in the number of businesses in the city A revitalized downtown contributing to the growth of dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere An overall 'very satisfied' rating when asked about satisfaction working with the City on business needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A resident population of 25,000 to 30,000 people Clear statistical signs of a younger demographic living in the community Recognition as one of Ontario's best small cities to live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overall 'very satisfied' rating when asked about satisfaction working with the City on business needs Successful marketing campaign highlighting why investors should look to Port Colborne Three new industrial investments in Port Colborne leading to a minimum of 2,000 new jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A revitalized downtown contributing to the dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere Increased number of visitors and visitor spending by a minimum of 25% Recognition as one of Niagara's most compelling tourism destinations

A Movement towards "Tourism Experiences"

The tourism industry has undergone a shift in the past number of years towards "experiential tourism". Experiential tourism prioritizes creating tourism experiences for visitors at a destination rather than simply presenting tourism assets to visitors to make their own experience. Tourism assets such as a waterfall, museum, or boardwalk need to come alive, providing a once in a lifetime experience where people create memories through direct hands on participation. Visitors are looking for opportunities that engage them in memorable and authentic cultural experiences that are personal, engage the senses and make connections on an emotional, spiritual and intellectual level.



Some of the key elements of experiential tourism are:

- **Hands-On Activities** – a participatory experience that provides new knowledge and authentic experiences
- **Local Authentic Community Experts** – engaging with local community members to share in their expertise of their home and history. Visitors want to engage with their destination through the knowledgeable lens of a local guide that can deepen their interaction with the place they are visiting.
- **All Five Senses** – engage all five senses of smell, sight, touch, sound and taste to ingrain the experience with visitors so they will remember it as unique and immediately identifiable with the destination
- **Highlighting Uniqueness** – each destination offers an incredible diversity of experiences and history. Make sure that experiences for visitors are framed around what makes the destination unique (i.e. local nature, culture, history, cuisine)
- **A Personal, Unique, and Intimate Experience for Each Visitor** – match visitor interests and provide a sense of personal accomplishment that creates a unique memory for each visitor

Target Market Segments

Market segment profiles for four target markets are included in this section. These target market segments are recommended to be the focus for resident attraction and retention initiatives in Port Colborne. It is important to note that while the first point of contact a person may have in Port Colborne is as a tourist, each tourist falls into one of the following four categories when they make their decision to move somewhere. Therefore, the goal of any resident attraction is not necessarily to attract more tourists (because that is the goal of other organizations), but rather to turn these four target markets into residents of Port Colborne.

The four target market segments are:

- Nomadic entrepreneurs and flex workers
- Recent retirees
- Local entrepreneurs and independent businesses
- Skilled trades & professionals



Persona / Target Market	Description – Who are they	Rationale – Why are they a Target	How to reach them
Nomadic Entrepreneurs and Flex Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part-time property owners that wish to lengthen their stay in Port Colborne and have flexibility to work remotely ■ Are typically middle to senior management with a high degree of autonomy ■ Includes new Canadians/immigrants and the opportunity for them to attract more people from the same culture to the area ■ Independent professionals or small business owners whose location is not driven by their customers' location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Opportunities to transition to more permanent residents due to local awareness and considerations for future retirement ■ The nature of work is changing and the skills and infrastructure needed to support this shift are also changing. The traditional form of inward investment is declining in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inbound social media marketing campaign ■ Word of mouth ■ Specialty news publications focused on the sector ■ Trade shows, conferences, and association meetings
Key Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be an independent professional running your business from Port Colborne, close to strong regional markets and great transportation connections to the rest of the world ■ Easy access to the rest of the world through international airports in Buffalo, Hamilton and Toronto ■ Live by the lake and enjoy fantastic recreation opportunities ■ Enjoy a family-friendly small community where neighbours know each other ■ Live in a community that allows you to be free from the rush of the city with all the amenities 		



Persona / Target Market	Description – Who are they	Rationale – Why are they a Target	How to reach them
Recent Retirees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retirees from the GTA looking for more value for their money Part-time property owners looking to spend more time or to potentially relocate permanently Prospective purchasers of vacation properties that value Port Colborne’s offerings and smaller city atmosphere People who are still active in their community and typically are wealthier than average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are already in Port Colborne or huge opportunities to draw them from surrounding areas based on favourable cost of living May be mentors, part-time business owners, or looking for flexible work opportunities Already invested or looking to invest for lifestyle reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inbound social media marketing campaigns National publications such as <i>Zoomer</i> and <i>50Plus</i> Urban centre newspapers and publications in Toronto and Hamilton Distribution lists and websites (i.e. community alumni, tourism sites, rating sites like Trip Advisor)
Key Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel welcome as a newcomer and explore all the ways to be involved in community life Live in a beautiful home and experience a high quality of life at a reasonable cost Live by the lake and enjoy fantastic recreation opportunities Enjoy a family-friendly small community where neighbours know each other 		

Persona / Target Market	Description – Who are they	Rationale – Why are they a Target	How to reach them
Local Entrepreneurs and Independent Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people raised in Port Colborne that are part of the school system and that often leave for post-secondary education Young people who regularly migrate to and from the area for family and community connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This group can bring new business offerings, and new perspective as they gain experiences outside of the area and abroad Home grown entrepreneurs have greater flexibility where they work due to the internet age Through career and family development phases of life, there is a natural propensity for young people to return to where they grew up due to family and community connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Word of mouth Inbound social media marketing campaigns Universities and colleges Local business community (real estate, attractions, accommodations) Social media campaigns using interactive media, networking, email, and website postings
Key Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live close to family and friends while running your business from a community that supports its local businesses and where a variety of commercial spaces are available in a growing downtown core Live in a community that allows you to be free from the rush of the big city with all the amenities Live by the lake and enjoy fantastic recreation opportunities 		



Persona / Target Market	Description – Who are they	Rationale – Why are they a Target	How to reach them
Skilled Trades & Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ People to support existing and growing sectors including manufacturing, construction/home building, tourism/hospitality, arts & creative industries, and business & professional services ■ Recent graduates and families typically early in their career who are open to relocation and can be found at nearby post- secondary institutions ■ Includes new Canadians/immigrants and the opportunity for them to attract more people from the same culture to the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skilled trades and professionals matching labour demand and are critical to business sustainability ■ Often have spouses and families that sustain local services ■ Spouses/partners contribute to the available skill sets ■ People attraction efforts guided by and coordinated with business attraction and retention efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Universities/colleges ■ Inbound social media marketing campaigns using interactive media, networking, email, and website postings ■ Urban centre publications in Toronto, Hamilton, and St. Catharines ■ Sector news publications
Key Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Live in a city that has a strong base of professional and industrial businesses that are looking to hire skilled and experienced talent ■ Enjoy a family-friendly small community where neighbours know each other ■ Purchase or rent high quality property at a reasonable cost to run your dream business ■ Live in a community that allows you to be free from the rush of the big city with all the amenities 		

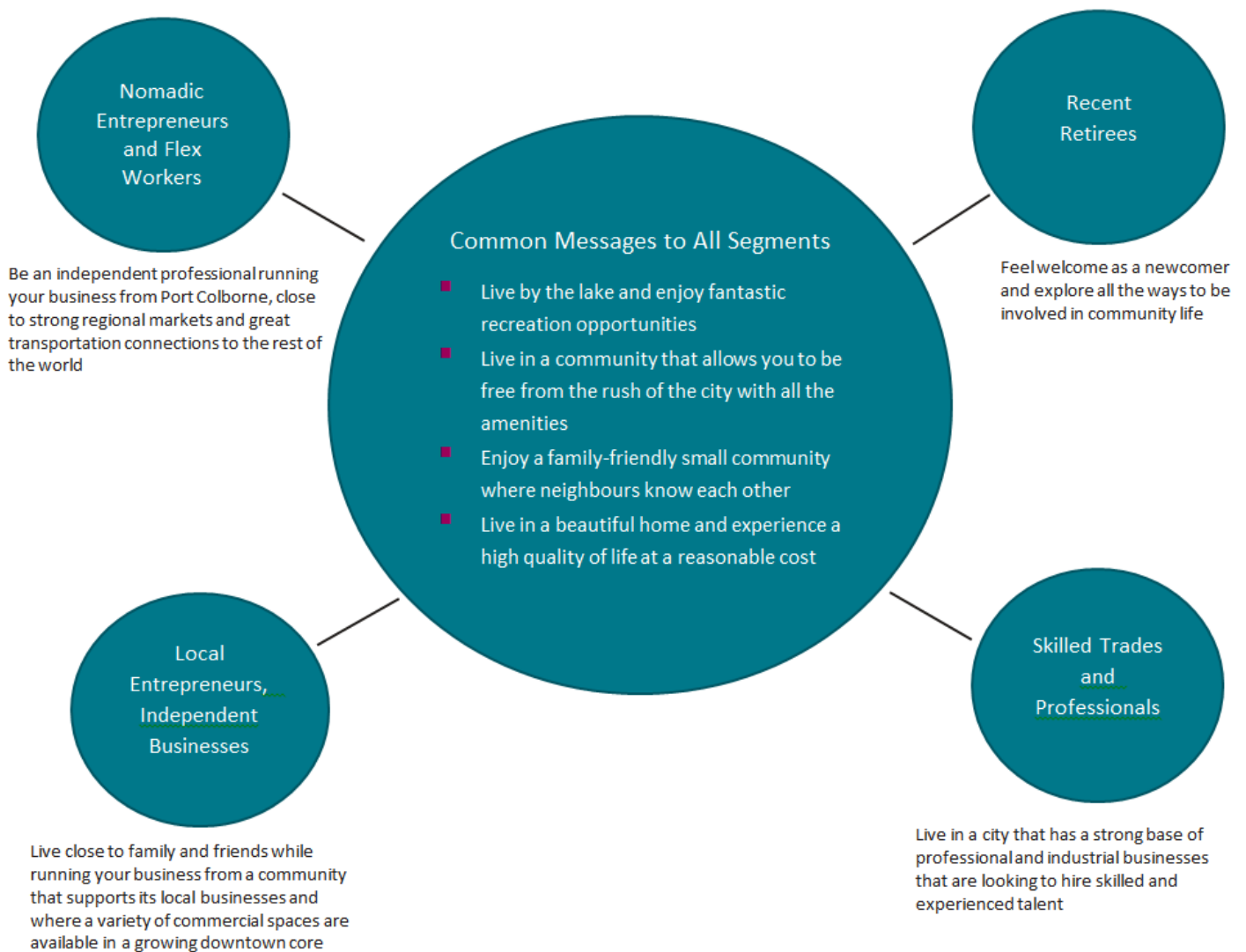


Overlapping Marketing Messages

While four target market segments have been identified above, there are a number of overlapping marketing messages that apply to all segments. With this in mind, it is important to recognize that the City does not need to run multiple resident attraction campaigns, but rather can target each of the four segments using the same campaign. These overlapping messages largely focus on the quality of life advantages to living and working in Port Colborne. More specific messaging for each segment can be added to a campaign based on the additional messaging needed.

An overview of the overlapping messaging is provided below in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Overlapping Marketing Messages



Action and Implementation Planning





5. Action and Implementation Planning

5.1 Interpreting the Action Plans

The following section provides a series of action plans which directly support the economic development priorities described above. These actions plans should be interpreted in the following context.

Timing and Priority

In the actions tables to follow, the level of priority has been based on several criteria including:

- The level of immediacy based on the City of Port Colborne's economic development objectives
- The potential to contribute to the overall economic vitality and sustainability of Port Colborne
- The resources required (i.e. the capacity to implement given the current state)
- Logical sequence of actions

The priority level assigned to each action item also corresponds to a specific timeframe. The time frame for each priority level may be operationalized as:

- Short (S) – 1 to 3 years
- Medium (M) – 3 to 6 years
- Long (L) – 6 to 10 years
- Continuous (C) – ongoing throughout the life span of the Strategy



5.2 Action Plans

Goal: Nurture Port Colborne’s Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
1.1	<p>Prioritize a ‘Customer First’ service experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in regular formal and informal communications with businesses to showcase Council support for business development and the importance of having a healthy business culture in Port Colborne. Establish a high standard for customer service and build those into the municipal brand and identity. This includes establishing customer service standards and expectations for review of development applications. 					<p>Lead Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce</p>



Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
1.2	<p>Review development application policies and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a review team of Senior Administration and representatives from the local development community to brainstorm improvements to the commercial, industrial, and multiple-unit residential development review process. ▪ Prepare process flowcharts or checklists to expedite customer understanding (e.g. development approvals flowchart, list of important contact people, etc.). ▪ Create expedited service channels and processes to serve urgent/priority cases (e.g. Hamilton green folder system, Ajax “Priority Path”). ▪ Create a pre-application review process that incorporates preliminary review and feedback from all City departments who would ordinarily comment on a development application. ▪ Promote the enhanced development review process including sharing metrics used to track change over time. ▪ Acquire Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to manage interactivity with existing and prospective businesses ▪ Be the first in Niagara Region to brand a “Business First” service as a competitive differentiator 					<p>Lead Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, Regional Municipality of Niagara</p>
1.3	<p>Conduct ongoing business BR+E surveys to hear from the business community what barriers to growth need to be removed and what opportunities exist for individual businesses (among other questions).⁷</p>					<p>Lead Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce</p>

⁷ During the research for this Strategy, a statistically random business survey identified issues of importance to businesses that, if improved, will do the most to increase satisfaction rates. Conducting such a survey annually will allow the City to identify “green flag” issues that represent opportunities to help businesses



Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
1.4	Investigate the feasibility for the creation of a business space to support young start-up companies/entrepreneurs or home-based businesses that are looking to expand. Key considerations include central location with ample parking, internet access, access to printing and photocopying, and providing access to business mentoring services.					Partner Innovate Niagara, Niagara Falls Small Business Enterprise Centre, Brock University BioLinc, VALE
1.5	Encourage activities that bring youth together from across Port Colborne and the region to network and discuss issues they see. Spin-off working groups around entrepreneurship and mentoring as well as networking events could build on the relationships developed during the forum. Create an annual Youth Social Forum and, throughout the year, engage with NEXTNiagara to bring their events to the city.					Partner NEXTNiagara, District School Board of Niagara, Brock University, Niagara College, Regional Municipality of Niagara
1.6	Engage local schools, business leaders, and youth support agencies to develop and promote a youth entrepreneurship program as a way to foster the growth of an entrepreneurial culture in the city. ⁸					Partner District School Board of Niagara

expand or grow and “red flag” issues by helping to solve existing problems that threaten local employment and assessment revenues or. The survey could also be expanded to address concerns that may be current at the time (e.g. workforce, supply chain, transportation).

⁸ A partnership with an organization such as Startup Canada, whose mantra is “We are entrepreneurs on a mission to build an environment for entrepreneurial momentum and success in Canada” can bring many ideas to the community. Their emphasis is on creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is driven by entrepreneurs rather than government – something that is important in Port Colborne and other places with few resources to invest.



Goal: Invest in Quality of Place Infrastructure

Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
2.1	<p>Enhancements to Lobby to expand the fibre optic network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Internet backbone is good in Port Colborne, but an environmental scan is worthwhile to ensure that all areas of the city are serviced properly and that costs of connection and service are kept as low as possible. 					<p>Lead Regional Municipality of Niagara, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce</p>
2.2	<p>Boost efforts to improve curb appeal and property standards along major thoroughfares and in the downtown core.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan from 2010. Identify critical infrastructure investments for businesses and beautification initiatives and create an investment plan (e.g. sewer upgrades and streetscape improvements). Consider the development of a cultural district or artists row to create more focus in the downtown core. Refresh entry signage to Port Colborne along with signage for key destinations within the city. 					<p>Lead Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce</p>



Goal: Refresh Port Colborne’s Image as an Attractive Place for People to Invest, Live, and Visit

Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
3.1	<p>Utilizing the personas/market segments prepared in this strategy, develop a marketing and promotions campaign targeted at attracting new residents and businesses to Port Colborne. This campaign should outline the quality of life and business advantages of living and working in Port Colborne, share success stories from businesses that have relocated to the area, and clearly list the contact people within the municipality to reach out to for more information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify target market profiles and key messaging and create a targeted social media campaign for outreach in the region and beyond. Consider a separate web portal for promotions – separate it from the ‘hard’ news that the municipality must communicate to its tax payers (e.g. fire bans, changes to landfill hours, construction updates). Create a database of nomadic entrepreneurs based in the GTA and Niagara Region that have the potential to be attracted to Port Colborne (e.g. marketing, graphic design, e-commerce, tech, and potential satellite office space for professional service firms). Develop relationships with these businesses and include them in periodic information updates on the advantages of living and working in the city. Gather testimonials from local entrepreneurs and businesses to identify the regional and community specific elements that make doing business in Port Colborne attractive. 					<p>Lead</p> <p>Regional Municipality of Niagara, NEXTNiagara, Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association, Niagara Association of Realtors, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce</p>
3.2	<p>Review and update, on a regular basis, the municipal by-laws and policies as they pertain to home occupations and businesses. Make them appealing to home-based entrepreneurs.</p>					<p>Lead</p> <p>Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce</p>



Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
3.3	Complete a retail gap analysis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine market potential/recruitment targets for commercial districts. Improve understanding of the retail trade area for existing businesses. Improve the understanding of gaps in the provision of goods and services to allow for new or expanding business opportunities. 					Lead Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, Niagara Association of Realtors
3.4	Organize ‘reverse trade shows’ in areas where the City wants to attract businesses. These invitation-only events would include a reception, video presentation, and personalized packages for attendees to share the key selling features of Port Colborne as a place to own/operate a business.					Partner Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, Niagara Association of Realtors
3.5	Identify future residential nodes and zone them accordingly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage more medium-high density mixed use commercial and residential developments through the planning process. Consider policies on allowing tiny homes in the city as more people are interested in them as an affordable option. 					Lead Niagara Association of Realtors, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara Construction Association
3.6	Create a seasonal ‘community tours’ program to showcase the quality of life assets of Port Colborne for those considering living in the municipality.					Partner Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association



Goal: Grow the Profile of the Tourism Sector

Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
4.1	<p>Create a Tourism and Marketing Strategic Plan that will support the creation of tourism and marketing initiatives in the municipality. The Plan should include a vision for the sector and a five to 10-year capital plan with matching funding to encourage necessary investments and upgrades in the tourism sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of these types of investments include trails, signage, aesthetic improvements, events and festivals, recreation and picnic areas, and facility expansions. 					<p>Lead Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association, Downtown Port Colborne BIA, Regional Municipality of Niagara</p>
4.2	<p>Work with neighbouring municipalities to cross-promote complementary themes and tourist operators and help to broker partnerships between operators.</p>					<p>Partner City of Welland, Town of Fort Erie, City of Niagara Falls, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association</p>
4.3	<p>Consider the use of incentives (e.g. free advertising, marketing etc.) to encourage product development or experience enhancement for existing tourism operations/activities.</p>					<p>Lead</p>
4.4	<p>Establish an ongoing tourism visitor survey in the municipality. Build buy-in from tourism operators to distribute the survey upon the completion of stays. The City can be a champion for database management and competitive intelligence sharing for all businesses to use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This information will assist in determining what may encourage people to stay or extend their stay in the area. 					<p>Partner City of Welland, Town of Fort Erie, City of Niagara Falls, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association</p>
4.5	<p>Link fragmented tourism assets throughout the municipality (e.g. Nickel Beach, Roselawn Centre, etc.). Offering guided tour services or creating trails or cycling routes connecting them all offer interesting opportunities to do this.</p>					<p>Lead Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association, Niagara Sport Commission</p>



Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
4.6	Host experiential events in shoulder seasons to draw more visitors to the community.					Lead Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association
4.7	Explore the feasibility of attracting new and innovative ecotourism experiences to the area, combining the strong outdoor beauty of the area with a desire by many visitors for conservation and environmental sustainability.					Lead Niagara's South Coast Tourism Association, Regional Municipality of Niagara



Goal: Build on the Current Industrial Base

Action #	Actions	Timeline				City Role and Potential Partners
		S	M	L	C	
5.1	Explore the feasibility and political interest in developing a new joint industrial park with Fort Erie or Welland. Use examples provided in Appendix B of this strategy to develop a rationale for this innovative initiative.					Partner City of Welland, Town of Fort Erie, City of Niagara Falls, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara Industrial Association, Niagara Association of Realtors
5.2	Reposition information on the City’s website to speak directly to information requirements that site selectors look for including information on business retention, labour force, and broader marketing and promotions information.					Lead Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara Industrial Association
5.3	Develop lead generation network connections including key influencers in industrial and commercial real estate involved in site selection in southern Ontario.					Lead Regional Municipality of Niagara, Niagara Industrial Association, Niagara Association of Realtors, Economic Developers Council of Ontario, Economic Developers Association of Canada
5.4	Work with regional post-secondary institutions to explore the feasibility of opening a satellite campus or operation in Port Colborne building on its assets (e.g. water quality testing, Great Lakes testing, shipping and receiving, etc.).					Partner Brock University, Niagara College



5.3 Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is “the process of collecting, assessing and reporting on data in order to evaluate progress towards a desired outcome or objective.”⁹ By carefully tracking and reporting on the performance of their programs, economic development practitioners are able to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their work while also creating an accountable, transparent, and consistent structure of reporting for political decision-makers and the public to access information on how public resources are being used.

Performance measurement serves a number of other important functions for economic development practitioners, including:

- Informing the design, scope, and purpose of economic development programs
- Creating statistical benchmarks that can be built on over time to illustrate trends and support evidence-based decision-making
- Aiding in decision-making for organizational resource management and budget allocations
- Demonstrating and documenting success (or failure) and change over time

While performance measurement is widely recognized as an important part of any economic development practitioner’s work, a number of challenges persist that can make performance measurement a difficult undertaking. These challenges include trying to measure elements that are less tangible (i.e. qualitative measures require more judgement and can be easily challenged), issues in attributing credit to specific organizations based on broad economy wide outcomes, and a recognition that performance measurement can be a burdensome and costly process for which few resources are allocated. In addition, there are some that see performance measurement as an exercise that yields little helpful information and that fails to accurately capture difficult to understand economic outcomes.

There is no simplistic one-size-fits-all answer in creating successful performance measurement systems. Each economic development practitioner must consider what measures are most useful for their unique situation and build from their base. Regardless of their focus and the challenges that need to be overcome, economic development practitioners must create rigorous and meaningful justification of their work in order to adhere to the strong call by stakeholders and the public to be accountable and effective in creating programming that produces incremental and measurable results for the community.

Moving Beyond “Activities”

The most commonly reported element of a performance measurement system is to report on “activities”. Activities represent the physical, tangible actions taken by an economic development practitioner to achieve a specific goal or objective. Examples of commonly reported activities by economic development practitioners include the number of workshops or meetings hosted or attended,

⁹ As defined by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs



the number of marketing materials created, the creation of a training or mentorship program, and the development of a strategic or economic plan.

While activities are an important part of any performance measurement system, the best and most effective systems focus on measuring the “outputs” and “outcomes” of economic development work. By focusing beyond activities, economic development practitioners are better able to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of their actions, quantifying the results of an activity and helping reveal the relationship between economic development programming and performance and resource allocation.

The most important elements for economic development performance measurement systems to report on are:

- **Inputs** – the resources needed for an economic development plan or program to work. Examples include human, financial, organizational, and community resources.
- **Activities** – the physical actions taken that ultimately support the goals and objectives of an economic development plan or program. Examples include reporting on the number of events hosted, the creation of marketing material, and the number of meetings attended.
- **Outputs** – the measures that help define and quantify the results of an activity. Examples include reporting on the number of people who received training, the number of hits to a website, the number of brochures distributed, or the number of participants at events. Outputs should not be used in isolation to measure the performance of an activity.
- **Outcomes** – the specific changes in behaviours, knowledge, skills, status, level of understanding, and functioning associated with activities and outputs. Outcomes help illustrate the relationship between overall performance and the resources used to achieve the particular outcome. Outcomes are often classified as short, intermediate, and long-term.

A focus on inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes help economic development practitioners ensure that their actions contribute to their overall objectives and goals, and that they reach those goals in a responsible and resource appropriate manner.

Additional considerations when creating or implementing a successful performance measurement system which can aid in the process include:¹⁰

- **Select a handful of measures rather than measuring everything** – outcomes should be the main focus of the performance measurement system, and it is important to balance the desire for information about performance with an organization’s ability to collect and use it. Too many performance measures increase the cost and complexity of measuring performance, often to the point where the entire process can become paralyzed. It is important to brainstorm a large list of performance measures and to select a critical few for ongoing collection and analysis.
- **Reflect the goals of the organization through the measures selected** – metrics should come directly from the goals of an already established plan. All measures must be clearly defined.

¹⁰ EDAC “Performance Measurement in Economic Development”, September 2011, pg.28-29 and Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University “Performance Measurement in State Economic Development Agencies”, 2004 from EDAC “Performance Measurement in Economic Development”, September 2011, pg. 2



- **Include a few measures to show activity and outputs** – even though the end goal is to focus on measuring outcome, activity and output are useful measures to track what an economic development office is doing and how busy they are (which can be helpful when trying to get budget approval for more resources).
- **Identify a data source for all metrics** – some measures are easier to collect from internal sources. Others take more time and rely on external sources. Some measures may make sense to track on a monthly basis, whereas others will only be meaningful on a quarterly, semi-annual or even annual basis.
- **Survey your clients** – some measures require client feedback and will involve the development of data collection tools.
- **Claim only what your organization played a role in** – only report on outcomes in which your organization can honestly claim credit for. This is difficult when assessing broad outcomes that may have been contributed to by a number of other organizations.
- **Report outcomes over time** – it takes time for economic development projects to take hold, so showing their impacts over time can help show that expenditures in economic development are good long-term investments in the community. All measures should be revisited following a period of time (for at least six months) to determine their usefulness and value.

An important next step is for Port Colborne staff to identify specific performance measures that will track its success. These will be reviewed and approved by both the Advisory Committee and Council.

The charts below outline examples of performance measures under the following classifications:

- **Activities** – the physical actions taken that ultimately support the goals and objectives of the economic development plan or program.
- **Outputs** – the measures that help define and quantify the results of an activity.
- **Outcomes** – the specific changes in behaviours, knowledge, skills, status, level of understanding, and functioning associated with activities and outputs.



Goal: Nurture Port Colborne’s Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Activity	Output	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular formal and informal communications with businesses ▪ Creation of a Municipal ‘Customer First’ brand identity ▪ Review of development application policies and procedures ▪ Preparation of process flowcharts or checklists ▪ Creation of expedited service channels and processes ▪ Ongoing business BR+E surveys ▪ Creation of an annual Youth Social Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growth in number of business start-ups ▪ Growth in number of business establishments and business licences ▪ Jobs created due to new businesses and start-ups, business relocation and existing businesses expanding ▪ # of business retention and/or expansion success stories ▪ % change in business composition/diversification ▪ Number of businesses accessing municipal incentive systems ▪ Business participation in school and civic events ▪ # of businesses visited/surveyed/engaged ▪ # of mentoring sessions held and # of mentorship relationships formed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An entrepreneurial ecosystem that is admired by business owners and communities in the region ▪ An increase in the number of businesses in the city ▪ A revitalized downtown contributing to the growth of dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere ▪ An overall ‘very satisfied’ rating when asked about satisfaction working with the City on business needs ▪ A decrease in the unemployment rate in Port Colborne

Goal: Invest in Quality of Place Infrastructure

Activity	Output	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct an environmental scan on the internet bandwidth ▪ Update the Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan ▪ Identify critical infrastructure investments for businesses and beautification initiatives and create an investment plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved curb appeal and property standards throughout Port Colborne ▪ Upgrades to infrastructure important in the attraction and retention of business ▪ Number of businesses accessing municipal incentive systems ▪ Growth in number of business establishments, especially in the downtown core 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A revitalized downtown contributing to the growth of dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere ▪ An increase in the number of businesses in the city ▪ High satisfaction levels of business in owning/operating in Port Colborne



Goal: Refresh Port Colborne’s Image as an Attractive Place for People to Invest, Live, and Visit

Activity	Output	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of a marketing and promotions campaign targeted at attracting new residents and businesses ▪ Creation of a separate web portal for promotions ▪ Gather testimonials from local entrepreneurs and businesses ▪ Completion of a retail gap analysis ▪ Organization of ‘reverse trade shows’ and seasonal ‘community tours’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Successful marketing campaign highlighting why potential residents and investors should look to Port Colborne ▪ Growth in the number of inquiries received about relocating to Port Colborne ▪ Growth in the number of business establishments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A resident population of 25,000 (approximately 3% compounded growth per year) ▪ Recognition as one of Ontario’s best small cities to live ▪ Increases in average income across Port Colborne ▪ Increases in the percentage of knowledge workers in Port Colborne’s economy ▪ Statistical signs of a younger demographic living in the community

Goal: Grow the Profile of the Tourism Sector

Activity	Output	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of marketing and/or promotional products ▪ Cross-promotion initiatives with neighbouring municipalities ▪ Establishment of a visitor satisfaction survey ▪ Creation of a Tourism and Marketing Strategic Plan ▪ Collection of tourism business feedback through a BR&E survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growth in the number of tourism businesses ▪ Growth in the number of new tourism experiences developed and marketed ▪ Continuously improving visitor satisfaction levels ▪ Growth in the number of new festivals and events ▪ # of collaborative relationships created ▪ Continuously improving web site metrics for tourism related pages (i.e. unique visitors, click-rate, time spent on the site, # of downloads of visitor guide book) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A revitalized downtown contributing to the growth of dining, arts, culture, and shopping atmosphere ▪ Increased number of visitors, length of stay, and visitor spending ▪ Recognition as one of Niagara’s most compelling tourism destinations



Goal: Build on the Current Industrial Base

Activity	Output	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connect with neighbouring municipalities to discuss developing a joint industrial park ▪ Develop lead generation network connections ▪ Reposition information on the City’s website to address site selector interests ▪ Connect with regional post-secondary institutions to explore the feasibility of opening a satellite campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Successful marketing campaign highlighting why investors should look to Port Colborne ▪ Development of a new industrial park/serviced parcels of land ▪ Growth in the number of inquiries received about investing in Port Colborne ▪ Expanded lead generation contact list ▪ Number of site visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attraction of new industrial investments leading to new job creation ▪ An overall ‘very satisfied’ rating when asked about satisfaction working with the City on business needs ▪ A decrease in the unemployment rate in Port Colborne

5.4 Committee Structures and Next Steps

No major changes are recommended after reviewing the Terms of Reference for Port Colborne’s Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC). With a clear mandate to provide local perspective, guidance and expert strategic advisement in the delivery of economic development services in the City of Port Colborne and a good representation of Committee members from a cross-section of economic development stakeholders in the city, the EDAC is already organized around a number of leading practices for committees of its type throughout Canada.

In implementing the Economic Development Strategic Plan, it is recommended that the EDAC play a significant role. This role should centre on the establishment and tracking of milestones for implementation, driving the fulfilment of action items, and tracking success and performance over time for the City. These roles should be accomplished in close collaboration with the City’s Economic Development Division. To assist with monitoring the delivery of the Economic Development Strategy, we recommend that a Management Group be established including one City staff member, one member of City Council, and 3 EDAC members.

As for the Tourism and Marketing Advisory Committee, it is recommended that the City disband it in favour of the creation of a working group to support specific major activities that emanate from the action plan. There could be multiple depending on the resources that the City puts behind the action plan. Such a group(s) would be more implementation oriented, have a defined expiry date, and would contain interested members of EDAC as well as other members of the public or specific organizations who are partners in the initiative or add value to its completion. In this system, the City will avoid having standing committees that sap staff time and the focus will be on the achieving specific results.

Appendix





Appendix A – Telephone Survey of Port Colborne’s Businesses

A random sample of 100 businesses from Port Colborne’s business directory participated in a statistically valid telephone survey to generate insight into satisfaction with Port Colborne as a place to own and operate a business as well as the identification of areas of opportunity and challenge.

Due to the fact that the survey was a random sample, it can be extrapolated to the broader community to a margin of +/- 9.37%, 19 times out of 20.

Business industries that participated in the telephone survey

Industry by NAICS Code	# of Respondents
44-45 Retail trade	27
72 Accommodation and food services	19
81 Other services (except public administration) ¹¹	18
31-33 Manufacturing	9
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	7
41 Wholesale trade	4
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	4
52 Finance and insurance	3
62 Health care and social assistance	3
51 Information and cultural industries	1
56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	1
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	1

Q1 Overall how satisfied are you with Port Colborne as a place to open and operate a business?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Very Satisfied	48	48.0	48.0	48.0
2 Somewhat Satisfied	43	43.0	43.0	91.0
3 Somewhat Dissatisfied	8	8.0	8.0	99.0
4 Very Dissatisfied	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

¹¹ This sector comprises establishments, not classified to any other sector, primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance, on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, funeral services, laundry services and other services to individuals, such as pet care services and photo finishing services; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating (promoting) various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members. Private households are also included.



Q2 How satisfied are you with each of the following factors of doing business in Port Colborne

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Unsure
Development Charges	26%	18%	7%	12%	37%
Municipal property taxes	21%	30%	12%	31%	6%
Development/building permit process	17%	24%	8%	12%	39%
Zoning	28%	27%	8%	5%	32%
Availability and quality of the workforce	24%	39%	20%	12%	5%
Availability of serviced land	31%	18%	6%	7%	38%
Land costs	28%	23%	6%	15%	28%
Availability of space for rent or lease	27%	30%	6%	6%	31%
Energy costs	20%	24%	20%	27%	9%
Revitalization of the downtown area	48%	36%	8%	4%	4%
Quality of business parks and industrial areas	35%	30%	13%	4%	18%
Festivals and events	62%	30%	4%	3%	1%
Retail shops an shopping experience	32%	36%	12%	19%	1%
Diversity of age groups	39%	34%	15%	7%	5%
Availability of adequate housing	32%	35%	10%	8%	15%
Internet Service	62%	26%	5%	5%	2%
Overall quality of life	60%	32%	3%	3%	2%
Support from local residents	55%	32%	8%	2%	3%

Derived Importance Calculation

Derived importance is a measure of the relative importance of each category in relation to the question "Overall how satisfied are you with Port Colborne as a place to open and operate a business?" The correlation for each category has been converted to a 10-point scale, with '10' representing the category that had the highest impact in respondents being satisfied with doing business in Port Colborne. All numbers are in relation to each other and give a sense of the relative comparison between categories and their impact on the satisfaction of businesses.

Areas of priority concern for businesses in Port Colborne (based on the calculation between their identification of the relative importance of factors and their dissatisfaction with factors):

- Availability and quality of the workforce
- Municipal property taxes
- Diversity of age groups
- Energy costs
- Availability of adequate housing



Derived Importance of Businesses across a Variety of Categories

Category	Derived Importance ^ϕ	Room for Improvement (Proportion answering 'somewhat dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied')	Priority Ranking (Derived Importance x Room for Improvement)
Municipal property taxes	7.2	43%	3.11
Energy costs	6.0	47%	2.80
Availability and quality of the workforce	8.5	32%	2.72
Retail shops and shopping experience	5.6	31%	1.73
Diversity of age groups	7.8	22%	1.71
Availability of adequate housing	7.4	18%	1.33
Land costs	6.1	21%	1.29
Development Charges	6.5	19%	1.24
Quality of business parks and industrial areas	6.9	17%	1.17
Development/building permit process	5.6	20%	1.12
Revitalization of the downtown area	7.4	12%	0.89
Availability of space for rent or lease	6.9	12%	0.82
Zoning	6.3	13%	0.82
Availability of serviced land	5.4	13%	0.70
Support from local residents	6.1	10%	0.61
Internet Service	6.1	10%	0.61
Festivals and events	8.7	7%	0.61
Overall quality of life	7.0	6%	0.42

^ϕ **Derived importance** is a measure of the relative importance of each category in relation to the question "Overall how satisfied are you with Port Colborne as a place to open and operate a business?" The correlation for each category has been converted to a ten-point scale, with '10' representing the category that had the highest impact in respondents being satisfied with doing business in Port Colborne. All numbers are in relation to each other and give a sense of the relative comparison between categories and their impact on the satisfaction of businesses.

Q4 Over the past three years have your revenues at your businesses...

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Increased	42	42.0	42.0	42.0
2 Decreased	8	8.0	8.0	50.0
3 Remained The Same	36	36.0	36.0	86.0
4 Varied By Year	12	12.0	12.0	98.0
9 Not Sure	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	



Q4_1 What are your expectations for this year's total revenues compared to last year?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Higher	55	55.0	55.0	55.0
	2 Lower	7	7.0	7.0	62.0
	3 The Same	34	34.0	34.0	96.0
	9 Not Sure	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Q5 Within the next three years, which of the following are you planning for your business?

	Yes	No
Expand	25%	75%
Relocate outside the municipality	3%	87%
Downsize	3%	97%
Close	1%	99%
Sell	4%	96%
Stay the same	25%	75%

Q5A1 Are you currently experiencing difficulties with your expansion plans?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	4	4.0	16.0	16.0
	2 No	21	21.0	84.0	100.0
	Total	25	25.0	100.0	
Missing	System	75	75.0		
Total		100	100.0		

Q5A2 Are there any reasons why the community may not be considered for future expansion?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes, please specify reasons:	6	6.0	24.0	24.0
	2 No	19	19.0	76.0	100.0
	Total	25	25.0	100.0	
Missing	System	75	75.0		
Total		100	100.0		

Reasons why the community may not be considered for future expansion plans include increasing taxes, lack of support, and an aging population and need for a younger generation in the community.



Q5B-D What is the timeframe for the following?

	Within six months	Longer than six months
Relocating		11%
Downsizing	3.5%	7%
Closure		3.5%
Selling		1%

Q6 During the past 3 years how has the number of people you employ in your business changed?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Increased	30	30.0	30.0	30.0
2 Decreased	17	17.0	17.0	47.0
3 Stayed the Same	53	53.0	53.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Q7 Does your business currently have difficulties hiring?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Yes	41	41.0	41.0	41.0
2 No	59	59.0	59.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Q7AM1-4 Which of the following is giving you difficulty in the job hiring process?

Too Few applicants	25%
Lack of appropriate skills or training	42.5%
Lack of relevant experience	25%
Other	7.5%

Q7B Are the hiring challenges specifically related to the community or industry?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Community	9	9.0	22.0	22.0
2 Industry	12	12.0	29.3	51.2
3 Both	20	20.0	48.8	100.0
Total	41	41.0	100.0	
Missing System	59	59.0		
Total	100	100.0		



Q7_1M1-3 What occupations do you have difficulty in recruiting for your business?

Other; specify	26%
General Labour	26%
Mechanist	4%
Retail/Sales/Sales Clerk	8%
Drivers	5%
Cooks	2%
Skill Technical/Skill Labour/Skill Trade	9%
Welders	2%

Q8 Does your business have difficulty retaining employees?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Yes	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
2 No	91	91.0	91.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Q8AM1-4 What are the reasons for these difficulties in retaining employees? - MENTION 1

Wages	24%
Work Environment/Nature of Job	6%
Competition	6%
Seasonal Employment	9%
Other	3%

Q9A-G What elements are most important to you when you think about what a successful economy in Port Colborne looks like over the next 20 years?

	Important	Not Important	Unsure
Having a diverse mix of businesses across industries	92%	8%	
Attracting and developing the local workforce	94%	5%	
Being a top location for new investments	88%	12%	
Supporting entrepreneurs to start new businesses	89%	11%	
Continuing to focus on the success of the downtown	88%	11%	1%
Encouraging more residential development	90%	9%	1%
Oher	47%	2%	51%



Q9GOM1-3 You mentioned other elements as being <Q9G> to you when you think about what a successful economy in Port Colborne looks like over the next 20 years. Can you please specify the other elements?

Other; specify	30%
More industrial/industry	16%
Increase jobs	3%
Get more families	5%
More housing	3%
Lower taxes/Tax breaks	5%
Do more activities for the young/Retain the young	10%
Better maintained roads/Repave	3%
Fix city/Clean up city	3%
More stores/business	10%
More events/festivals	5%
Focus on certain geographical areas/Should focus on other areas too	7%

Q10M1-3 What are one or two top priorities that would help your business be successful that you think is important for the City to know about as it creates a new Economic Development Strategy?

Other; specify	25%
Lower taxes/Lower property taxes	4%
More business/industries	5%
More advertising/let people know	4%
More people/Increase population/families/Residential development	8%
More young people / Do things for young people	5%
Better Economy	2%
More skilled people/labour training programs (co-op)	3%
Traffic flow/Increase lanes/Less traffic interruptions	3%
Promote canal/Better access to canal	2%
Less bureaucracy building permits/Development approval cumbersome	2%
No/None/Nothing	28%
Nothing	11%



Appendix B – Site Selection Considerations

A Site Selector’s Checklist

Communities and companies share many things in common when it comes to the factors that support sustainable strategies and prosperity. Everyone is stronger when a community has modern and well-maintained utility and roadway infrastructure, healthy and safe neighbourhoods, a government that is a productive and valued partner of the business sector, and education and training resources produce a productive and up-to-date workforce.

Selecting the best location for new and expanding facilities requires corporate managers to carefully consider the attributes of candidate locations. Increasingly important is the need for decision makers to identify communities that track the changing needs of niche industrial sectors and the community adjusts offerings accordingly. A facility located in one of these communities is more likely to achieve long-term success by reducing risk from swings in technology, markets, raw materials, workforce and other forces.

The top characteristics site selector’s look for in considering a community for investment are:

Workforce

- Characteristics
 - An available workforce that includes both skilled and unskilled workers
 - Ability to attract talent to move to area
 - Available sources of new labor entrants (i.e. universities)
 - Reasonable wage rates and fringe benefits relative to competing cities
 - Work ethic
- Training Resources
 - K-12 education system – regional occupational training and college prep
 - Community Colleges – certification programs, linkages to businesses, specialized training
 - Universities – specialty programs, industry-related programs, linkages to business community, research

Real Estate

- Available Sites
 - Ready-to-go sites ranging from 1 to 100 acres in settings suitable for office, light & heavy industrial.
 - Served with all utilities, good highway access, proper zoning, compatible neighboring land uses.
 - Controls in place that will stop undesired development.
 - Located near labor force and worker amenities.



- Available Buildings
 - An inventory of industrial buildings ready to go including small industrial and commercial space, and larger industrial buildings.
 - Class A, B, C offices.
- Start up Space
 - Low or no rent space for entrepreneur start-ups
 - Support services in place to help start-up businesses

Sustainability

- Local Sustainability Action Plan
- Local energy conservation and efficiency programs
- Local recycling and reuse programs
- Green building standards
- Fast track development for new / upgrade LEED and Energy Star Buildings
- Community / residents embrace “green” culture

Sense of Community

- Well-funded cultural institutions with active programs
- Mix of high-end and discount shopping choices
- Wide range of quality recreation opportunities
- Wide range of neighborhood living alternatives
- Healthy downtown reflecting community pride

Incentives

- Incentive policy in place and clearly communicated
- Documentation of statutory incentive programs and understanding of how they apply to specific client projects
- Due diligence procedures to vet worthiness of incentive package (impact model, review company financials)

Initial Impressions from Site Selector Community Visit			
Category	Strength	Average	Weakness
1. Organization	_____	_____	_____
2. Business Retention	_____	_____	_____
3. Leadership	_____	_____	_____
4. Permitting	_____	_____	_____
5. Marketing	_____	_____	_____
6. Labor Force	_____	_____	_____
7. Workforce Training	_____	_____	_____
8. Available Sites	_____	_____	_____
9. Available Buildings	_____	_____	_____
10. Incubator Space	_____	_____	_____
11. Utilities	_____	_____	_____
12. Operating Costs	_____	_____	_____
13. One Time Costs	_____	_____	_____
14. Sustainability	_____	_____	_____
15. Living Environment	_____	_____	_____
16. Risk Management	_____	_____	_____
17. Incentives	_____	_____	_____

When a community is shortlisted as a candidate for corporate investment, a site selector will visit to gather information that will go into a comparative study of location alternatives. As the consultant project comes to an end, final recommendations are prepared that weight overall strengths and weaknesses of each location. The communities with the fewest flaws generally rise to the top.

A step in compiling the recommendations the site selector will review is comparing initial impressions from the site visit against data findings. Those impressions can mean the difference between high and low marks in the final tally.



The table above is an example of a scorecard of “gut feelings” at the end of a community visit. Competitive communities are those with economic development programs that address the factors in the checklist, ensuring they meet a high standard or efforts are in place to make needed improvements.

Investment Readiness in Port Colborne – First Impressions

Economic development branding and marketing strategies are often replicated on different platforms; versions on the same theme are found on websites, marketing collateral, advertising, proposals, qualifications and other customized documents. A community’s website is a window to the world that gives site selectors a first impression. Consequently, getting the website “right” has serious implications for overall prospects for program success.

A well run economic development program maintains a repository of up-to-date information that captures both the spectrum and depth of community attributes. When this information is available on a website, a site selector’s confidence in the community’s ability to meet project needs is immediately elevated.

First Impressions

Site selection projects typically begin with a high-level study of location alternatives. Site selectors typically first touch a community through links uncovered when investigating provincial and regional economic development websites. Local authorities generally never know when a review of this type is being conducted.

Once landed on a community’s website, a site selector scans for key elements. Any delays in loading, broken links encountered, or hard to find information will send the site selector to the next community. Key elements that should pop quickly to view include:

- Contact information (phone number, email) for an economic development representative(s)
- Investment targets and associated business case value propositions
- An inventory of industrial sites and buildings along with property information
- A data center that houses details about the economy, demographics, workforce, and other community information
- Business directory listing major employers along with number of employees and products produced

As part of this exercise, the economic development websites for Niagara Region, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, St. Catharines and Welland were scanned, first quickly as in a real site selection project, then with more care.

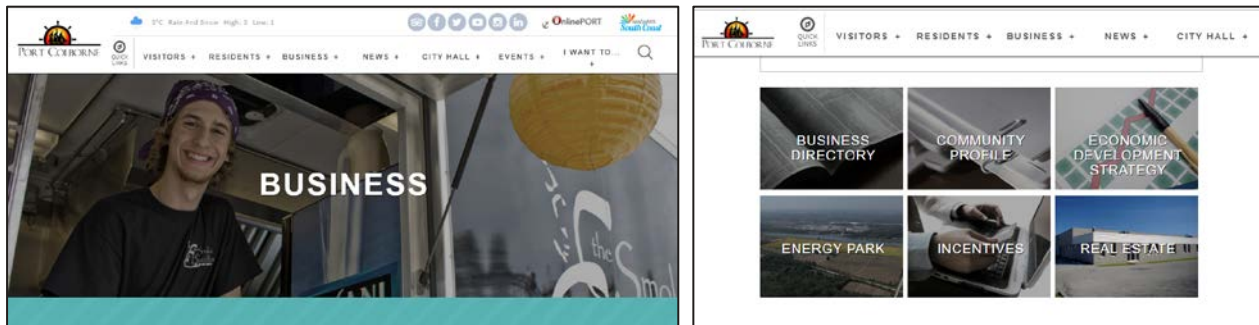
First impressions were mildly positive for Niagara, Welland, Port Colborne and St. Catharines, Fort Erie less so. All the websites lack a cohesive structure that ties together the required depth of information in a navigation format that is intuitive.



Niagara Region and Communities

The Niagara Region landing page makes an attractive case for “Why Niagara?” Locate, Work, Expedite, Start are compelling statements.

Port Colborne Website - Port Colborne’s economic development landing page leads with the picture below left. What does a 20-something in a food truck say about business opportunities in Port Colborne? Scrolling down the page, the viewer comes across the links shown below right. Isn’t this the stronger message?



The website references *Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan* and the *Competitive Analysis of Industries* studies. Impressions after a quick review of these documents are that they contain sound recommendations for growing the economy. However, there is little evidence on the Port Colborne website to suggest that any of the recommendations were implemented.

Port Colborne links to Niagara Site Finder which produces one industrial site, a 2.5 acre parcel in the Loyalist Industrial Park. The Port Colborne website lists two city owned properties, Invertose Drive - 20.7 acres, and Ramey Road - 56.5 acres not currently serviced, but not the Loyalist Park property.

The website also provides a link to Energy Park (Nylon Oil) but without a clear explanation of whether it is available for development. The website does not provide a map showing the location of available properties.

Fort Erie Website - A Google search of the term “Fort Erie economic development” yields the landing page show below left high on search results. This page offers a general statement on the community’s economic development mission but no obvious links to information that site selectors are typically seeking. A careful reading shows a barely visible link to “Bridging Opportunity – Creating Success” taking the viewer to the webpage at right. This page has several links to useful data. One link is “Site Locater/Land” as noted by the longer red arrow.



The Site Locator/Land web page again presents a general statement on available property and goes on to make statements (shown lower left) that are outwardly discouraging to site selectors.

A request to submit project detail before seeing property information is an odd way to sell the community:

“Call one of the Fort Erie EDTC’s professional staff today to discuss your property/site specifications and requirements today. The EDTC will help you identify and research potential properties and broker introductions with the owner/broker of the property.

Before you call the EDTC with a site selection request, please be prepared to provide the following information to help narrow our search...”

“Broker introductions” do not convey confidence that the investigation of property will run smoothly.



Welland Website - Welland's economic development landing page offers both an outline of services and links to site selector relevant information including resources on the #MadeInWelland website. Information spread across two websites gives an impression that economic development branding/messaging is a work-in-progress.

Welland does not rely on the Niagara Site Finder feature to direct visitors to property data but displays properties on a map. The functionality is a little cumbersome, but links to data and an attractive map makes for a satisfactory property search.

Live - Business - City Hall - Discover -

Investment Opportunity Properties

Interested in the Investment Opportunity Properties listed below, please email edc@welland.ca for information.

Properties listed on map:

- 475 Canal Bank Street
- 555 Canal Bank Street
- 635 Canal Bank Street
- 361 Enterprise Drive
- 368 Enterprise Drive
- 381 Enterprise Drive
- 392 Enterprise Drive
- 897 Niagara Street

[View larger map](#)

Made in Welland

#MADEINWELLAND

Just 2 turns from Toronto. Just 2 turns from New York State.

INVEST IN WELLAND. WHY WELLAND.

- Location
- Community Improvement Plans
- Skilled & Established Labour Force
- Innovation, Academic & Industry

475 Canal Bank Street

Streets > Canal Bank Street > 475 Canal Bank Street

GENERAL PROPERTY INFORMATION

Page Last Modified: 10/31/2017 1:32:46 AM

Address: 475 Canal Bank Street

Assessment Roll Number: 271906000203409

Parcel ID: 31318

Road Jurisdiction: City of Welland

Legal Description: N/A

Zoning: G1

ICA

Zoning Document

Old Zoning: I2 (Bylaw 2667)

Official Plans: General Industrial, Core Natural Heritage, General Industrial, Core Natural Heritage, General Industrial, Area Specific Policy Area 4

Planning Districts

Area (calculated): 306563.32 (square metres) / 73.75 (acres)

Ward: 6

Councilor: Jim Larouche - 905-734-3310

Bonnie Foltz - 905-736-0469

LOCATION MAP

Zoom In | Zoom Out

Open Interactive Map

Map in Google Maps (Interactive)

GOOGLE STREET VIEW™

Commercial Real Estate

Industrial Real Estate

Address	Property Info	Contact Info
27 Centre Street	Type: 3-storey Office Building Zoning: I1 - Office/Commercial Listing Price: \$1,789,900	Bernadine Bowen, Sales Representative Royal LePage Credit Valley Real Estate, Brokerage Telephone: 905-793-0000 Fax: 905-793-0020 Email: bernadine@royallepage.ca
The Cotton Mill Complex, Premium Industrial Address: 129 Hagar St.	Zoning: Industrial/Warehousing Size: Available Units: 8000 sf + 19,000 sf + 31,000 sf Price: \$3.95 - \$8.95 per sq. ft.	Larry Harcori, Real Estate Sales Representative Re/Max Active Realty Inc., Brokerage 905-240-5954
Warehouse/Industrial Space 19,000 s.f. - \$3.95 p.s.f. Address: 129 Hagar Street	Type: Warehouse/Industrial Building Zoning: I2 Size: 19,000 sq. ft. Listing Price: \$3.95 per square foot - Only \$0.85 /sq.ft.	Larry at 905-732-5445 x233
Industrial Shop for Lease Address: 129 Hagar Street	Type: Industrial & Warehouse 2 Size: 3700 sq. ft. Listing Price: Please Contact	Larry at 905-732-5445 x233
Secured & Climate Controlled Industrial Storage Space Address: 129 Hagar Street	Type: Industrial & Warehouse Size: 1250 sq. ft./2500 sq. ft. / up to 50k sq. ft. Price: From \$250/month	Larry at 905-732-5445 x233
700 Major Street mls Listing	Type: Multi-Tenant Industrial Zoning: I2 Price: \$499,000	Carlo Amoroso Royal LePage Telephone: 905-329-4448 Fax: 905-336-5032
Shaw Street (Townline Road and the Old Canal)	Type: Vacant Land Zoning: I1 - Light Industrial Listing Price: Negotiable	Dan Degazio Director, Economic Development City of Welland 90 East Main Street Welland, Ontario L3E 3X4 Phone: 905-735-1700; ext. 2110 Fax: 905-735-1443 Email: dan.degazio@welland.ca



Alternative Industrial Park Models

At one time it was common for neighbouring communities to fiercely compete with one another and, in some cases, steal from one another by luring companies to cross jurisdictional boundaries. The movement toward regionalism was initially sprung from the need to lift a community's marketing profile to compete in a global economy but cooperation often ended there.

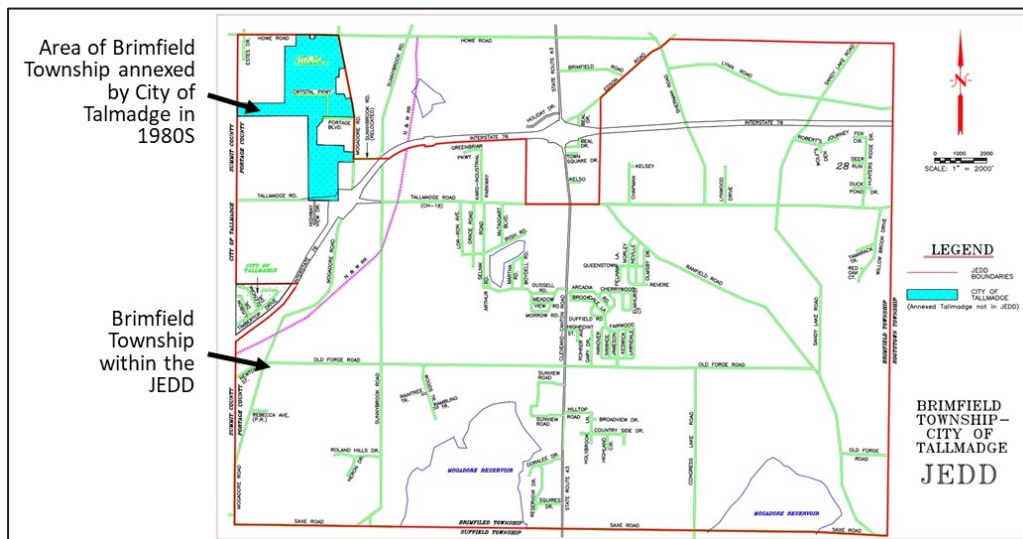
Regionalism has since taken on other forms including municipalities working together to establish a larger portfolio of real estate ready for development. This often favors municipalities with tracks of developable land over those without. Collaboration, therefore, requires building trust among elected officials, community stakeholders and business leaders around a common vision.

Site selectors and corporate managers increasingly recognize that success is best achieved when regional partners work cooperatively to support stable and sustainable economies. Turf battles are both unbecoming of forward-thinking communities and ultimately counter-productive. When communities sit down and talk about what is important for economic prosperity there are always opposing views, but with open lines of communication and trust there is often a path to success.

Tax Sharing Arrangements

Port Districts in Washington State, Industrial Development Districts in Michigan, and Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) in Ohio are among the tax sharing arrangements found in the United States. The Talmadge/Brimfield JEDD near Akron, Ohio is representative of a tax sharing arrangement that employs multi-jurisdictional cooperation on industrial and commercial development.

Land resource poor City of Tallmadge and neighbour Brimfield Township, a roughly 30 square mile community with large tracks of open land, created a JEDD in 2003 under provisions of the Ohio Revised Code for Cities and Townships (see map below). The goal of a JEDD is for communities to work together to develop industrial and commercial areas of the district in conjunction with the hosting community's development plan.





Host community residents benefit as the area develops with additional employment opportunities, while both communities realize increased funding through sharing of new city income tax revenue. Ten percent of all income taxes collected are set aside in a separate fund to be used exclusively within the commercial and industrial areas of the JEDD.

New businesses locating in the JEDD are automatically included in the agreement. Property owners are also able to petition to be part of the JEDD Program as development takes place within the district.

Brimfield Township provides police and fire protection, street services and planning for the district. The City of Tallmadge provides economic development assistance and water and sewer services.

Collaborative Non-Tax Sharing Model

A more common collaborative model is that of non-profit organizations. These organizations are sometimes formed under the umbrella of a chamber of commerce, industrial commission, or economic development/tourism group. All models have been shown to be successful in fostering partnerships across jurisdictional boundaries.

Members of these partnerships abide by a foundational principle; what is good for one is good for all. The model succeeds when connections between communities, companies, places and people are built on a sound economic development strategy. The secret is to identify and cultivate those connections, all aimed at advancing a healthy economy.

Henderson County Economic Development Partnership (HCEDP) in Henderson County, North Carolina is one of many examples of successful collaborative non-tax sharing organizations. A weak economy brought on by decline in traditional manufacturing (textiles, wood products) in the 1980-90s spurred community leaders to pursue new approaches to economic development.

Cities and township governmental units within the county turned over the task of managing economic development to the non-profit HCEDP. HCEDP raises money through corporate donations and member community contributions. The organization also actively pursues public and private grant monies.

Under this organizational form, there is a split in responsibilities. Among the tasks HCEDP undertakes is to develop industrial parks and stand-alone shovel-ready sites around the county, some owned by the non-profit, some by government, and others staying in the hands of private citizens.

Government is responsible for developing and maintaining traditional services such as water, waste water, and transportation infrastructure. A critical aspect in Henderson County's eventual success has been each community's attention to quality of life elements including parks, education, and downtown redevelopment. The area is now a preferred location for skilled workers and wealthy retirees.

The City of Hendersonville has grown significantly over the last 20 years with the help of HCEDP, this despite most industrial development supported by the city occurring outside city boundaries. The downtown district is now fully occupied and prosperous, and the area now has a healthy mix of industrial, commercial and retail employers.

A factor in Henderson County's long-term success has been ongoing attention to strategic planning and project implementation. HCEDP holds an annual Industrial Executives Forum to discuss next steps. The 2016 forum agenda addressed the elements listed below, deemed important to maintaining a sustainable community.



- Affordable Housing – What can we do about helping employers retain workers?
- Millennials and Workforce - How can companies recruit, understand and develop a work environment for millennials?
- Entrepreneurship - Does Henderson County support start-ups?
- Agriculture - How does the agriculture community market itself?
- Business-to-Business Connections - How can we increase awareness of business opportunities internal to the county?
- Broadband - How can Henderson County grow broadband as a necessary utility?
- Recycling and Sustainability - What resources are available for industry recycling and repurposing?
- Transportation - How can Henderson County develop and improve transportation including public transportation and greenways?



Appendix C – Additional Best Practices from Good to Great in U.S. Cities

A good economic development strategy has its origin in community vision; what do we want to be in the future? A good place to start the visioning process is to consider what might be possible by looking the experience of successful communities. Presented below are examples of U.S. cities and towns who were once faced with lagging economies and were able to refashion themselves and become sustainable and prosperous.

Common elements to the achievement of success in these communities include:

- Development of shovel-ready industrial parks and sites
- Downtown redevelopment
- Quality of life initiatives including parks and greenways
- Collaboration with regional partners
- Identification of industry targets aligned with community attributes
- An economic development program with broad community support

City / State	What was the spark?	What actions were taken?	How did the town change?
Hudson, Wisconsin ¹²	Decline in traditional manufacturing weakened the economy at the same time nearby suburbanization from Minneapolis/St. Paul pulled retail from the downtown leading to further decline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support for the regional development organization (Momentum West). • Community developed plans around improving the urban landscape as a way of becoming more attractive as a place to live. • Investment in a river front park • Downtown streetscape and store front improvements. 	Hudson is now both a daytrip tourist destination, and a favoured bedroom community for the creative class. The population has more than doubled in the last 25 years. Attractive and prosperous downtown.

¹² www.momentumwest.org/momentum-west/our-region/st.-croix-county/hudson/?columns=demographics%2C+higher_education%2C+quality_life%2C+workforce_establishments%2C+workforce_occupations&location=604



City / State	What was the spark?	What actions were taken?	How did the town change?
The Dalles, Oregon ¹³	The decline in the forest products industry that began in 1970s pushed the community into a long period of economic decline. Community stakeholders said, "Enough is enough" and people stepped up to do something.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support for a regional development organization. • Industry targets defined • Development of a community owned industrial park • Downtown streetscape improvement. Became Main Street Community • Community made large investment in waste water treatment plant to keep a major maraschino cherries employer in the community 	Significant increase in population. Attracted several large employers including a \$100 million data centre. The community is now viewed as a hip place to live and starting to attract young entrepreneur types.
Walla Walla, Washington ¹⁴	The economy of sleepy and isolated big agriculture community Walla Walla was dependent on commodity markets and private Whitman College. Leadership emerged that sought to drive economic development through community investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support for Port District leadership on economic development • Support of agriculture and wine industry • Downtown streetscape and store front improvements • City/Whitman College collaboration on many fronts • Local emphasis on tourism associated with wine industry • Transit hub developed in the town center and increased routes established to connect the community • Airport terminal built, and air service attracted 	Rapidly growing wine industry and other agriculture related investments. Significant population growth. Global reputation as a great place to visit.
Hendersonville, North Carolina ¹⁵	Weak economy brought on by decline in traditional manufacturing (textiles, wood products) in the 1990s spurred community leaders to pursue new approaches to economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support for county wide economic development organization, giving the organization responsibility for investment attraction, city leaders then focused on making the city better • Downtown streetscape and store front improvements • Local emphasis on tourism and retirement, playing on Blue Ridge Mountains • Development of shovel-ready industrial property 	Hendersonville has grown significantly over the last 20 years. The downtown district is now fully occupied and prosperous. The area now has a healthy mix of industrial and commercial/retail employers.

¹³ www.mcedd.org

¹⁴ www.portwallawalla.com/economic-development

¹⁵ gohendersoncountync.org



City / State	What was the spark?	What actions were taken?	How did the town change?
Bend, Oregon ¹⁶	Decline in the forest products industry that began in 1970s pushed the community into a period of economic decline. Tourists visiting the area started to target the area for retirement. This pressured local leadership to develop long range plans for managing growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for a regional economic development organization as the primary representative of the community for outside investment • Support for business incubation • Investment in urban revitalization including the cleanup of brownfield sites and new roads/bike trails • Downtown redevelopment - streetscapes and storefronts. 	Bend has had explosive growth over the last 20 years. The area has attracted a creative class that has started many new businesses. The area has also become a retirement destination for high income people.
Twin Falls, Idaho ¹⁷	Traditional rural agriculture town far from large markets was dependent on commodity markets. Economy was stagnating as young talent left the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in leadership resulted in strong support for economic development investment • Strategy developed to support growth of food industry included efforts to protect water and land resources in support of agriculture. This included investment in waste water utility systems • Downtown streetscape and store front improvements undertaken to improve quality of life to retain young talent and make town more attractive to the outside • Ongoing coordination with College of Southern Idaho on economic development. 	Twin Falls has attracted large food processors including ConAgra Foods, Amalgamated Sugar Company, Cliff Bar, and Chobani. Non-food companies include Jayco RV Manufacturing, C3 Connect, Seastrom Manufacturing. The economy is booming. Population is growing.

¹⁶ edcoinfo.com

¹⁷ www.tfid.org/index.aspx?NID=149



Appendix D - Demographic and Labour Force Analysis and Detailed Background Review

Demographic and Labour Force Analysis

This section references data drawn from the 2011 National Household Survey, 2016 Census Profile and 2006 Community Profile. This section will be updated throughout 2017 as components of the 2016 Census Profile are released.

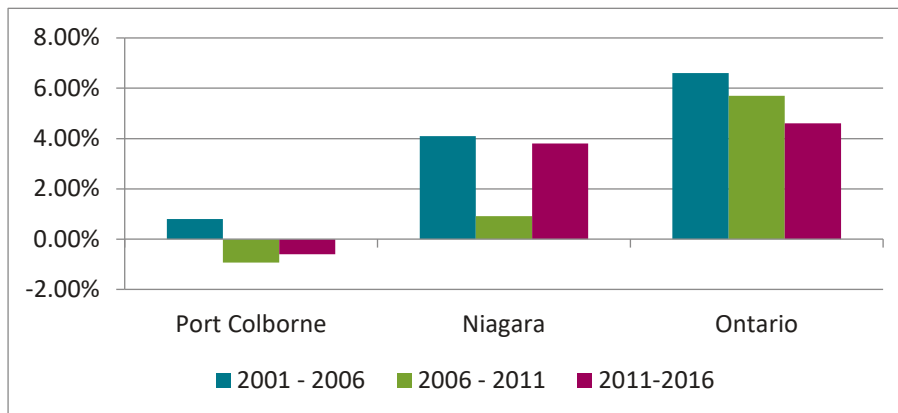
Population and Population Growth

In Port Colborne there was a population decline from 2011 to 2016 of -0.60%. In comparison, Niagara and Ontario both experienced positive growth from 2001 to 2016. Niagara grew by 3.8% from 2011 to 2016 and Ontario grew by 4.6%. In absolute numbers, Port Colborne's population declined by 118 people from 2011 to 2016.

A declining population can be detrimental to the local economy as it can lead to several negative economic impacts. A growing population is one of the main avenues in which a community can increase its economic prospects, and as such this should be made a priority for Port Colborne.

The figure below illustrates the population change in Port Colborne, Niagara, and Ontario over the past 15 years.

Figure 11: Population Growth, 2001 to 2016



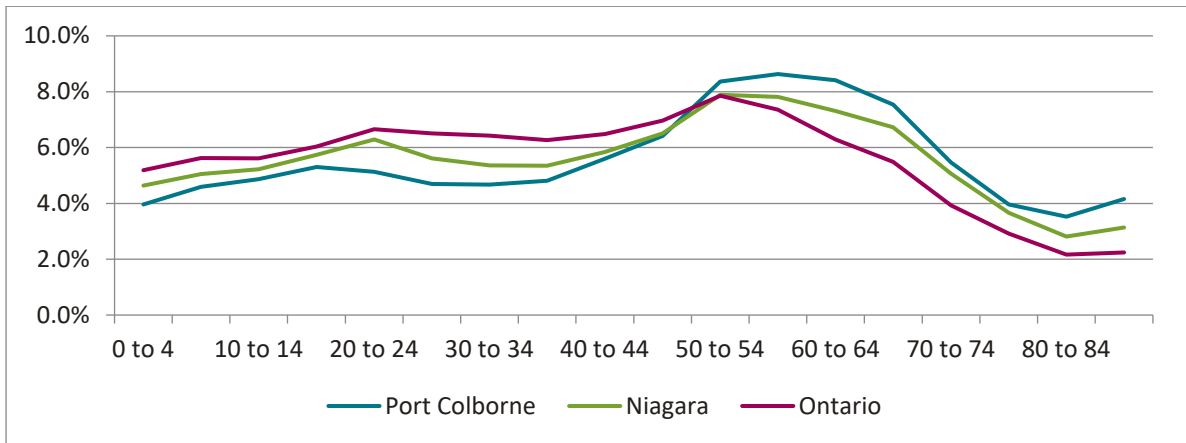
Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile, 2011 National Household Survey, 2006 Census Profile.

The graph below represents the age distribution in Port Colborne and other comparator locations. When comparing to other locations, Port Colborne has a noticeably older population. A greater portion of the population lies in the 50+ age category, with less under 50 when comparing to both Niagara and Ontario. This is not typically a favourable age distribution as it has a limited working age population. Communities without a strong working age population could find it difficult to attract businesses to the



area, as businesses will typically choose to locate where their staffing needs will be able to be met. In addition, with a smaller working age population, there is typically less money coming into and being spent in the community. An older age distribution can also indicate a shrinking population with death rate outweighing birth rates.

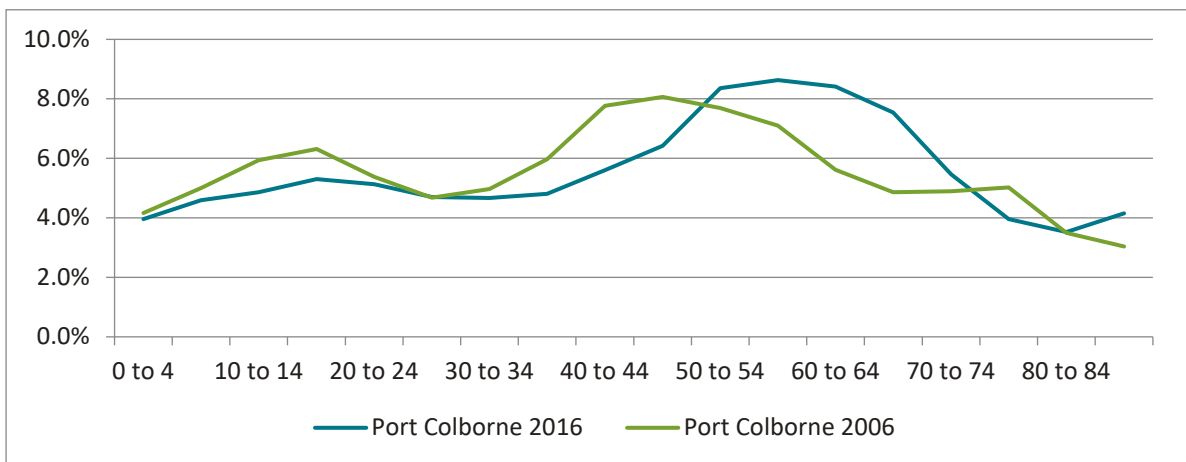
Figure 12: Population by Age Distribution, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile.

Figure 13 illustrates the change in age distribution in Port Colborne from 2006 to 2016. As evidenced from the figure, Port Colborne has experienced an aging population. In 2006 there is a slight peak in the ages of 5 to 19 but this spike is no longer evident by 2016. One would suspect to see a corresponding spike in the age groups of 20-30 as by 2016 this previous increase in ages 5-19 would now be 10 years older. However, this is not the case. This could be caused by a number of factors. One such factor might be the result of ‘brain drain’ whereby educated individuals leave the community in search of more specialized jobs, typically in larger centres. Attracting businesses that provide well-paying jobs could help to encourage individuals to remain in Port Colborne after completing schooling.

Figure 13: Population by Age Distribution, Port Colborne 2006 & 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile. 2006 Community Profile



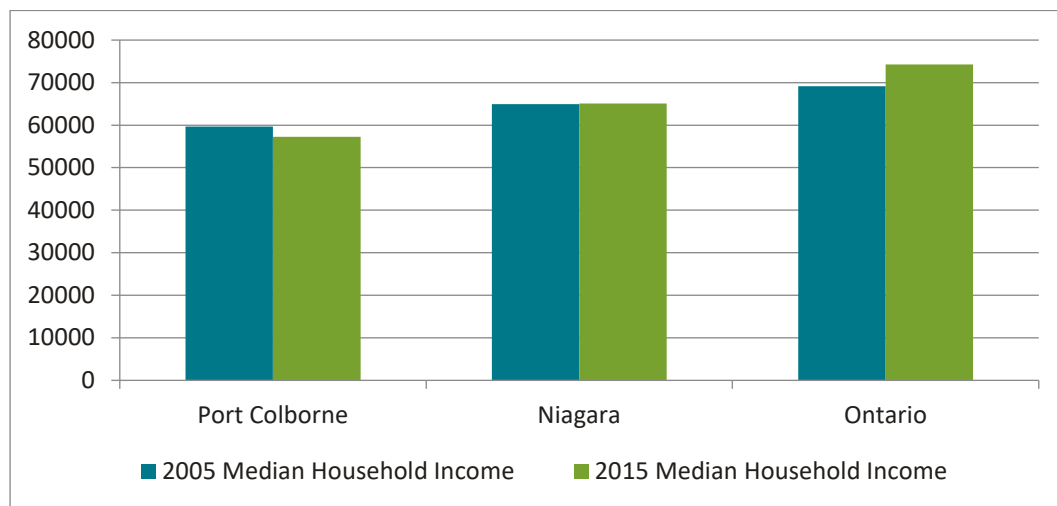
Household and Individual Income

Household income is a measure of the combined incomes of all people sharing a particular household or place of residence. It includes every form of income such as salaries and wages, retirement income, investment gains, and government transfers.¹⁸ The median household income helps to give an indication of quality of life in a particular area and the potential disposable income. From Figure 14 below it is evident that Port Colborne experiences a median household income that falls below Niagara and Ontario. In 2015, the median household income in Port Colborne was \$57,244, this is a decline from 2005, where the median income was \$59,646. This compares to Ontario where the median income in 2015 was \$74,287.

The median household income in Port Colborne could be a deceiving indication of actual wealth in the community. With a low median household income, it is typically assumed that there isn't much wealth in the community. However, with a population consisting of a disproportionate amount of older age cohorts there could be previously accumulated wealth with now only a small proportion of their wealth being reflected as income. If this is the case then the disposable income available in the community could be much higher than is being reflected.

A study by Bank of Montreal confirms this potential theory of seniors having more wealth than is potentially being captured with income statistics. The study found that since 1984 seniors have seen their wealth quadruple which far outpaces the growth of wealth among younger Canadians.¹⁹ Looking at other indicators such as total wealth of households in Port Colborne might give a different story than looking at income.

Figure 14: Median Household Income, 2005 & 2010



Source: Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Surveys.

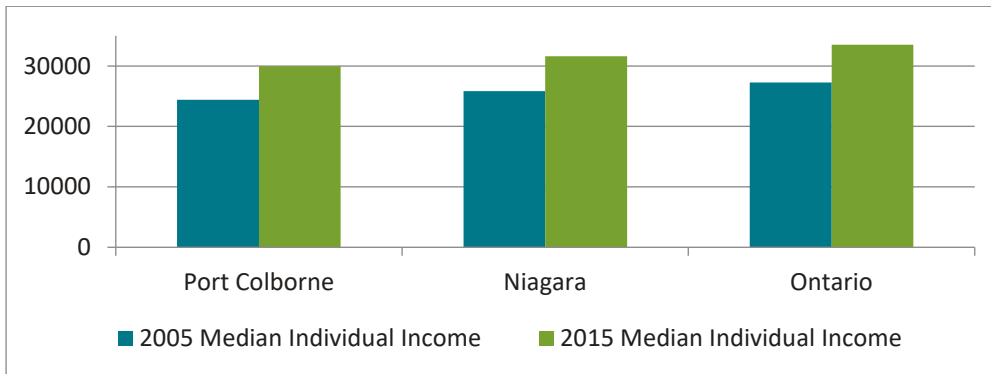
¹⁸ OEC "Glossary of Statistical Terms," November, 2017, www.oecd.org

¹⁹ "Seniors and the generation spending gap," Maclean's. November 2017.



The median individual income in Port Colborne also ranked slightly below Niagara and Ontario. Median individual income in Port Colborne in 2015 was \$29,977, while in Niagara it was \$31,601 and \$33,539 in Ontario. While median household income declined from 2005 to 2015, median individual income in Port Colborne increased over the 10-year period.

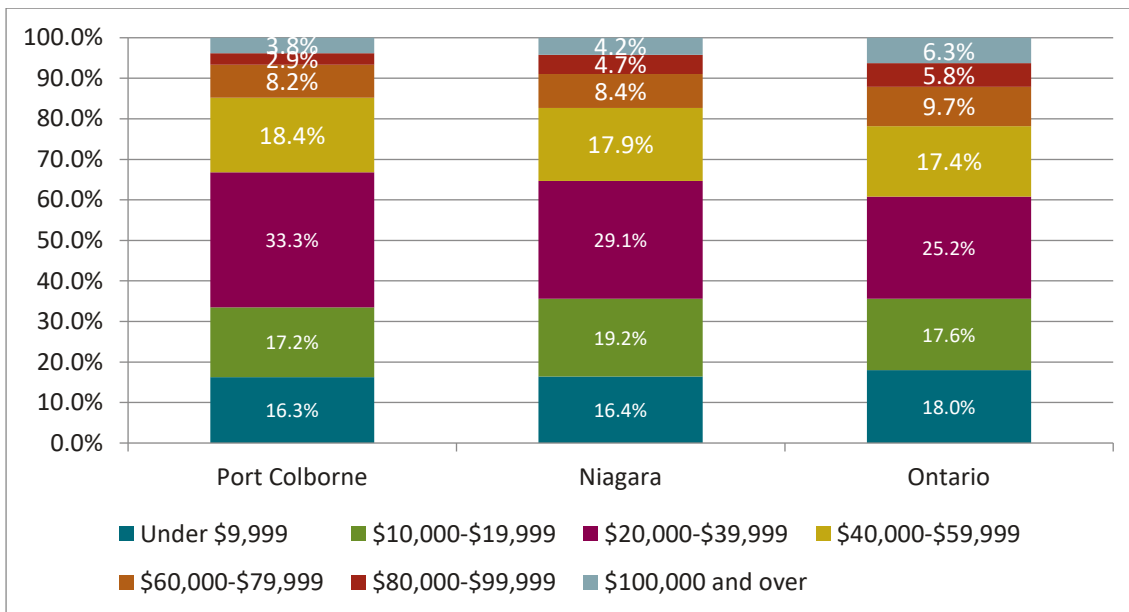
Figure 15: Median Individual Income, 2005 & 2015



Source: Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Surveys

Figure 16 illustrates the individual income distribution within given income brackets. In Port Colborne, the largest income bracket is \$20,000-\$39,999 with 33% of population falling within it. In Niagara and Ontario this is also the largest income bracket, with Niagara having 29.1% of population earning within this range and Ontario with 25.2%. Port Colborne also has the largest percentage of population falling within the earning bracket of \$40,000-\$59,999 when compared to other comparators. However, Port Colborne has the lowest percentage of the population with an income over \$60,000.

Figure 16: Individual's Income Distribution Aged 15 Years and Over, 2011

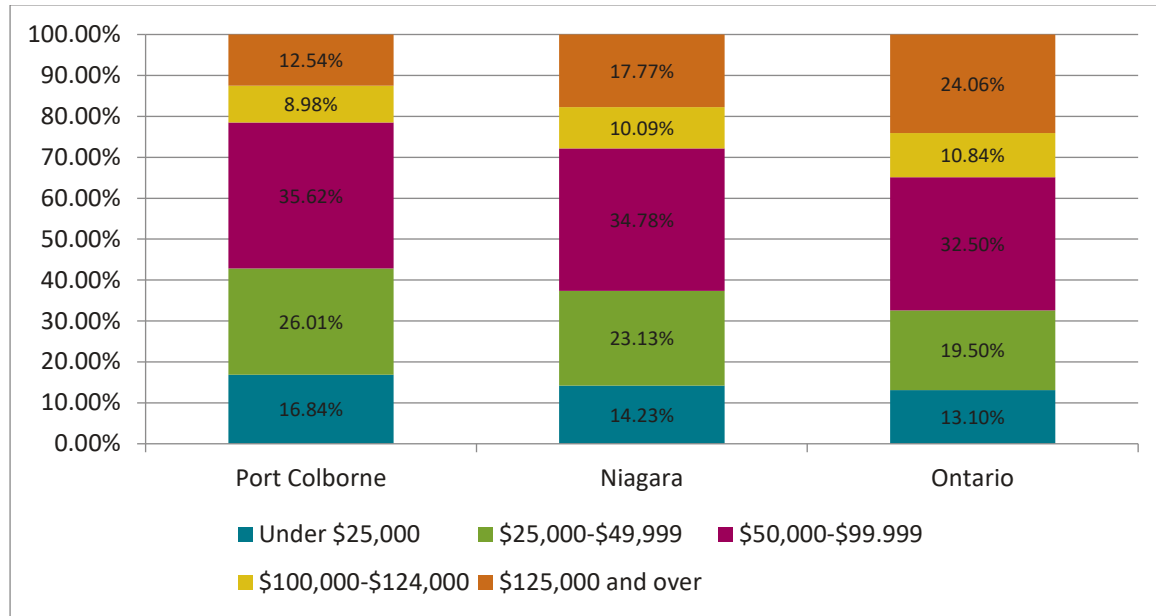


Source: Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Survey.



The graph below graph illustrates the household income distribution in Port Colborne and comparators. Again, Port Colborne has a smaller percentage of household earnings above \$100,000 when compared with the other regions. 78.5% of households in Port Colborne have an income less than \$100,000, with the remaining 21.5% of households earning over \$100,000. In Niagara 29% of households earn over \$100,000 and in Ontario 35% of households earn above \$100,000. The largest income bracket for all regions is \$50,000-\$99,999.

Figure 17: Household Income Distribution, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile.

Dwelling Values and Characteristics

Dwelling values in Port Colborne are significantly less than in both Niagara and Ontario. This is promising to see as with lower income, having less to spend on housing helps to compensate with amount of available disposable income and spending on other luxury items that can help to improve quality of life. The average dwelling value in 2016 in Port Colborne was \$237, 725. Niagara’s average dwelling value was \$85,494 more than Port Colborne’s and Ontario’s was \$268,684 more.

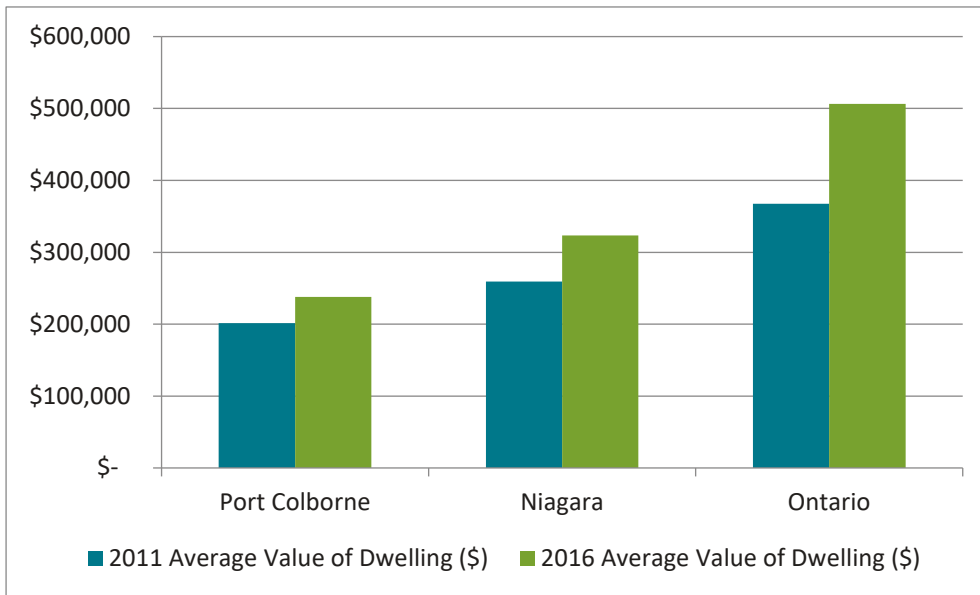
The housing value growth rate from 2011 to 2016 for all comparator regions is as follows:

- Port Colborne: 18.1%
- Niagara: 24.7%
- Ontario: 37.8%

Ontario experienced the greatest growth in housing prices from 2011 to 2016 with Port Colborne being the lowest at 18.1% growth.



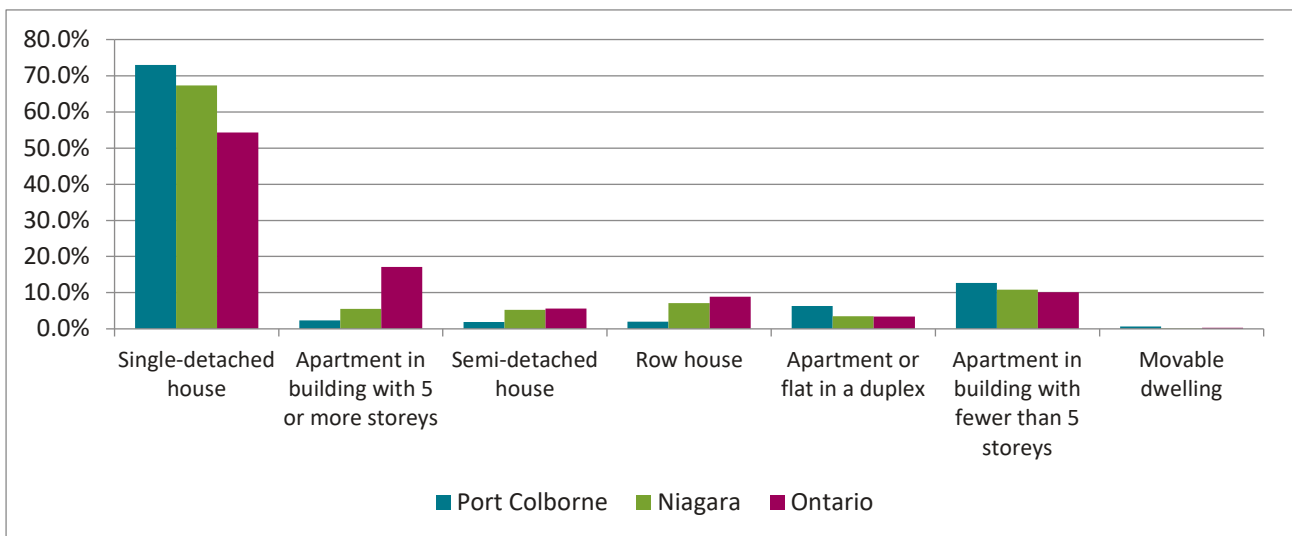
Figure 18: Average Value of Dwellings, 2011 & 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Survey, 2006 Community Profile.

Figure 19 below highlights the types of dwellings that are most prominent in the community. Port Colborne had the highest percentage of single-detached housing, apartment in a duplex, and apartment in fewer than 5 stores when compared to Niagara and Ontario. 73% of dwellings in Port Colborne were single-detached. 54.3% of dwellings in Ontario were single-detached. The least common dwelling type in Port Colborne was movable dwelling with 0.7% of homes under this category, followed by semi-detached house at 1.9%.

Figure 19: Types of Dwellings, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Survey.



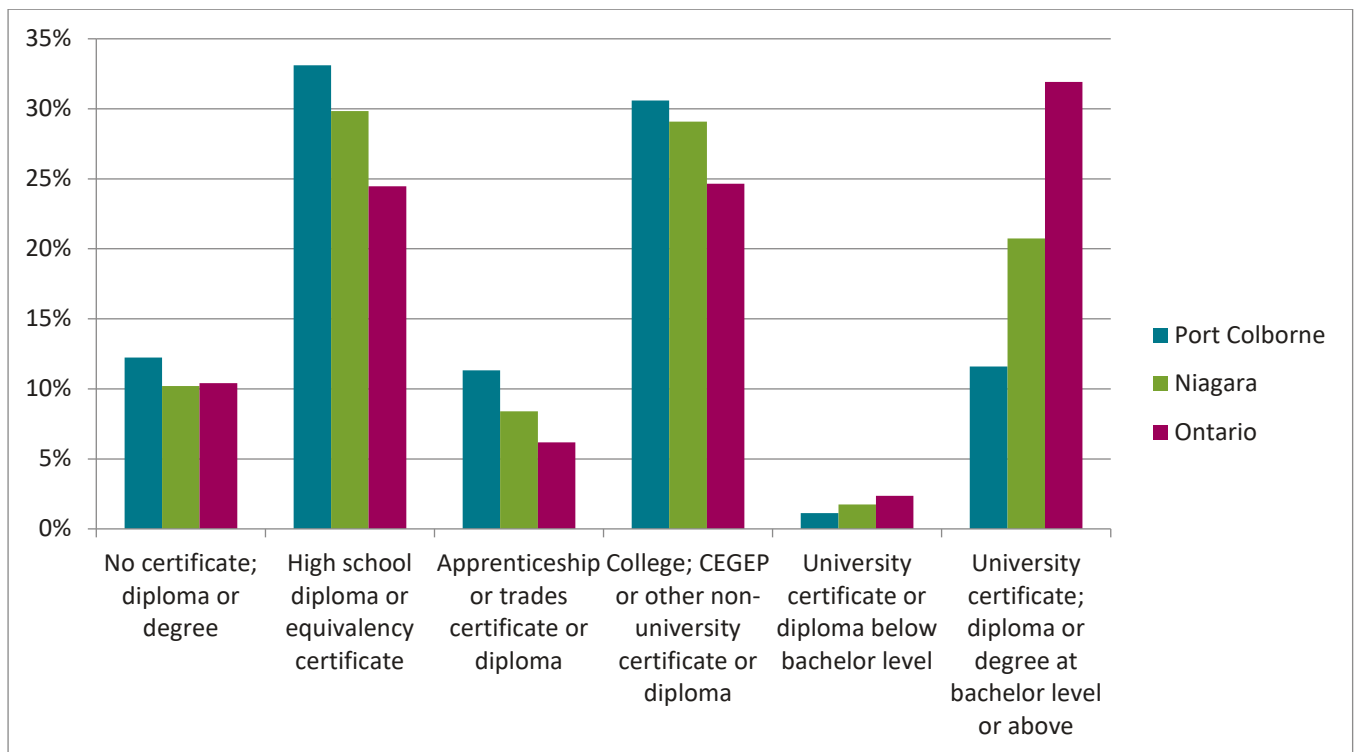
Educational Profile

An educational profile is an important socioeconomic indicator as it reveals a community’s ability to staff new and existing businesses. For the purposes of this profile, the total population aged 25 to 64 years old was examined in relation to the highest certificate, diploma or degree they have obtained.

As shown in the figure below Port Colborne has the highest percentage of individuals with no certificate, diploma or degree. Port Colborne also has the highest percentage of individuals having received a high school diploma, apprenticeship or trade certificate or diploma, and college or other non-university certificate or diploma. Port Colborne has the lowest percentage of individuals having attained a university certificate or diploma below bachelor level, and lowest percentage of university certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above.

This speaks to the types of jobs available in Port Colborne with few knowledge-based employment opportunities and more hands-on trades-based jobs. It also speaks to the likelihood of being able to attract certain types of businesses to Port Colborne. It is less likely that a knowledge base business will locate in Port Colborne as the types of businesses would likely require individuals with a university level education. Individuals who would meet this job profile are fewer in Port Colborne than would be in other communities.

Figure 20: Population Aged 25 to 64 Years Old by Educational Attainment, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census.

Education by major field of study in Port Colborne for those having received higher education is as follows:

- No postsecondary: 45%



- Education: 3.7%
- Visual and performing arts: 2%
- Humanities: 2%
- Social and behavioural sciences and law: 5.6%
- Business; management and public administration: 9%
- Physical and life sciences and technologies: 1%
- Mathematics; computer and information sciences: 1.7%
- Architecture; engineering and related technologies: 13%
- Agriculture; natural resources and conservation: 1.2%
- Health and related fields: 9.7%
- Personal; protective and transportation services: 5.4%

Labour Force

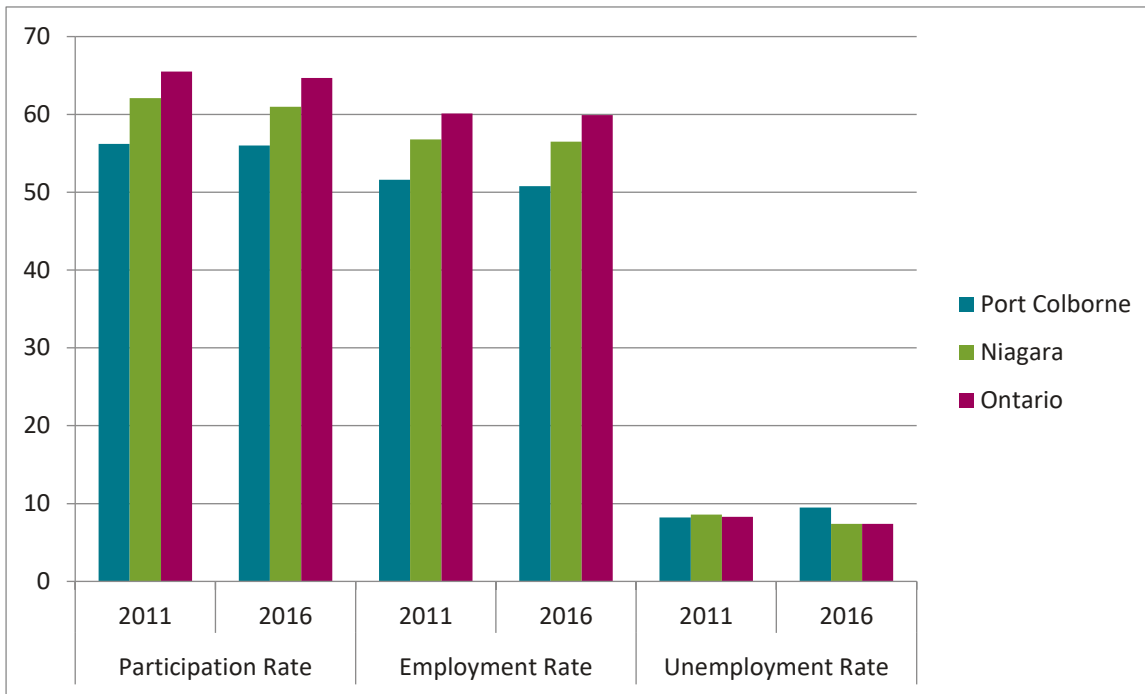
Annual Unemployment, Employment, and Participation Rate

From 2011 to 2016 the unemployment rate in Port Colborne increased by 1.4%, the employment rate therefore had a corresponding decrease effect, with a decrease of 0.8% from 51.6% to 50.8%. The Participation rate is a percentage measure of the population 15 years of age and older who are part of the labour force or actively seeking work. The participation rate in Port Colborne is 56%, this compares to the Ontario average where the participation rate is 61%.

Port Colborne experienced the lowest employment and participation rate when compared to Niagara and Ontario. With the majority of the population in Port Colborne being typically over working age, it is not unexpected to see a low participation rate. However, Port Colborne also experienced the highest Unemployment rate in 2016.



Figure 21: Unemployment and Participation Rate, 2011 & 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2011 National Household Survey & 2016 Census Profile.

Labour Force by Industry Sector

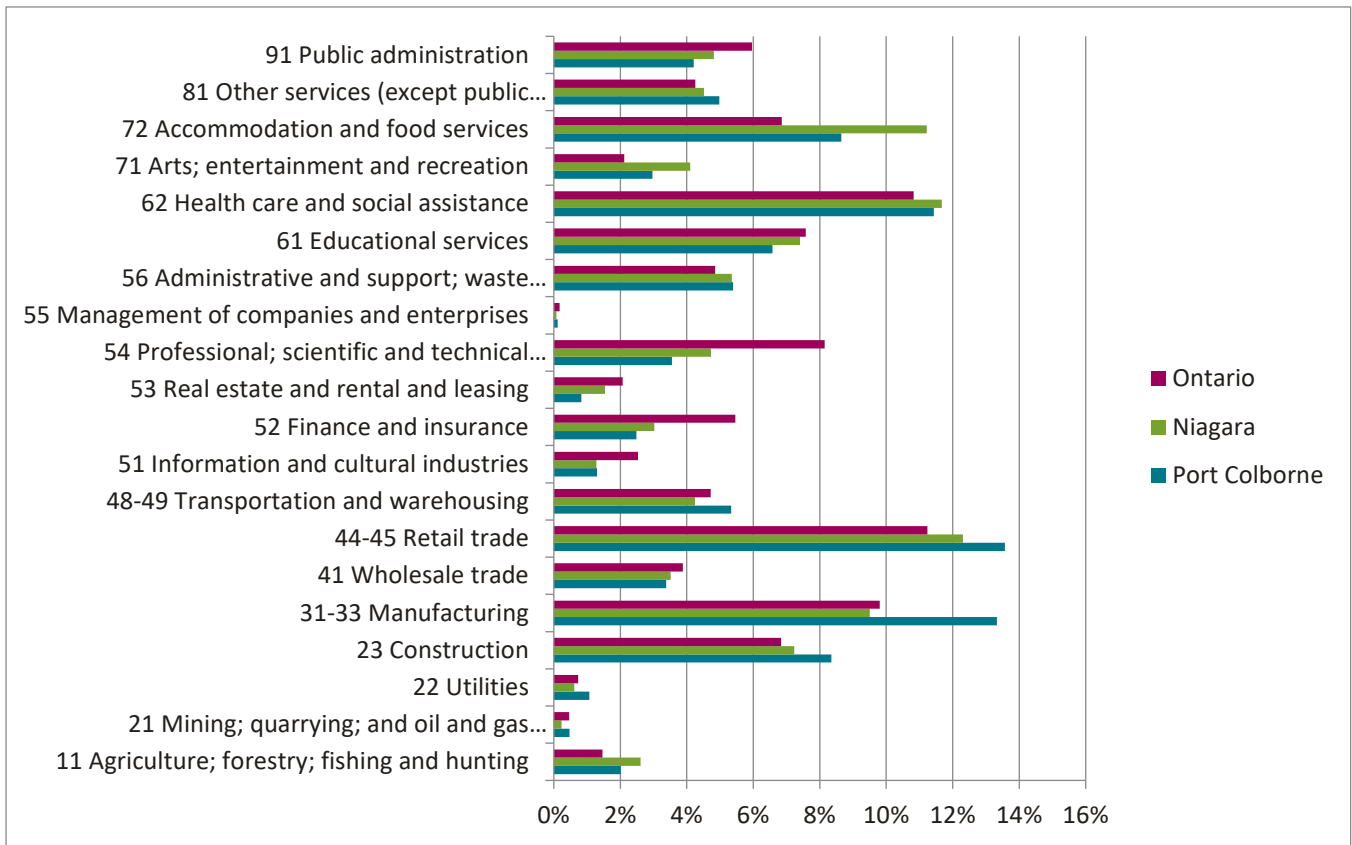
Labour force by industry sector for all comparator regions was examined to determine how Port Colborne’s labour force composition compared to Niagara and Ontario. The figure below demonstrates labour force by population in each industry sector.

The top 3 industry sectors by population participation are as follows:

- Retail Trade
- Manufacturing
- Health Care and Social Assistance



Figure 22: Total Labour Force Population Aged 15 Years and Over by Industry, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile.

Retail Trade jobs in Port Colborne outweighed all other industries, and comparators. Manufacturing was second most dominant, and also outweighed other comparators. It is important to note that this information was based on individuals living in Port Colborne, not total jobs in Port Colborne. Individuals who live in but commute outside of Port Colborne for work are included in this statistic.

Labour Force by Occupational Classification

Examining Port Colborne’s total labour force by occupational classification provides further insight into the composition and skill sets of its local labour force. Figure 23 illustrates the occupational composition in Port Colborne.

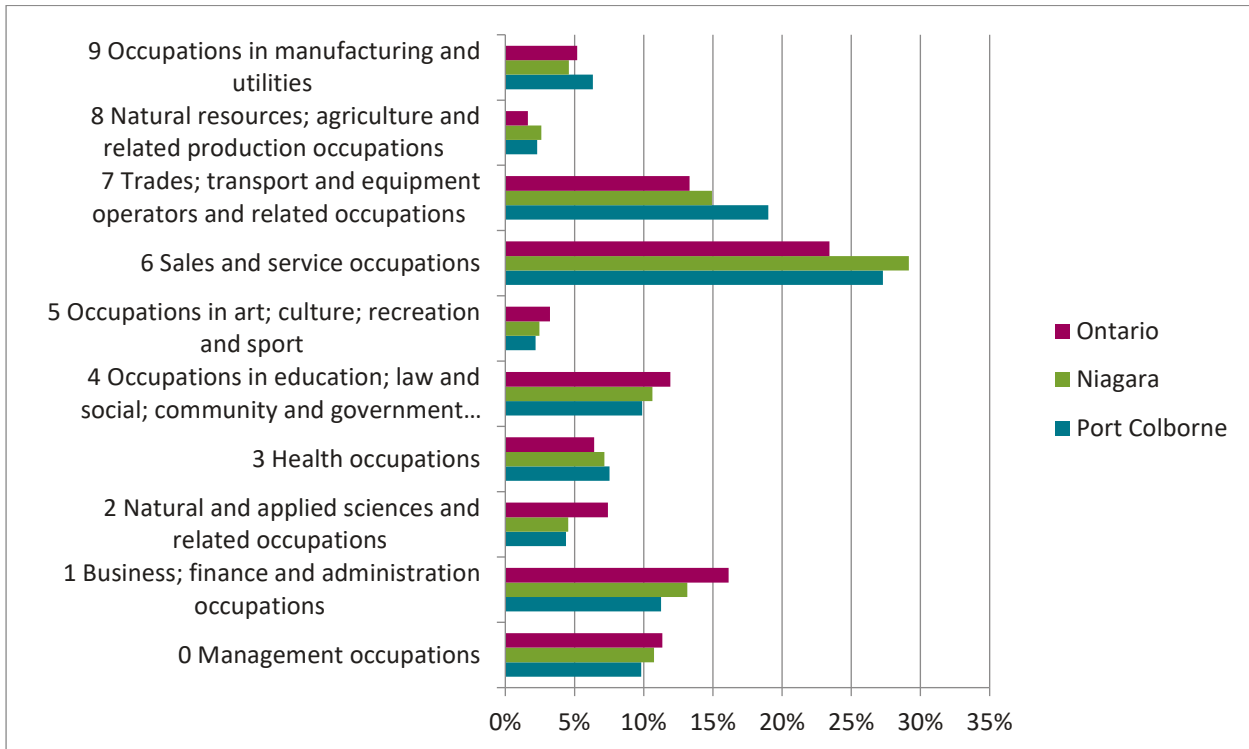
The top three occupational categories in Port Colborne are as follows:

- Sales and service occupations
- Trades; transport and equipment operators and related occupations
- Business; finance and administration occupations



Of the top three occupational classifications in Port Colborne, Port Colborne only outranks other comparator regions in trades. On a percentage of total occupations, Port Colborne also outranks all other regions in occupations in manufacturing and utilities.

Figure 23: Labour Force by Occupational Classification, 2016



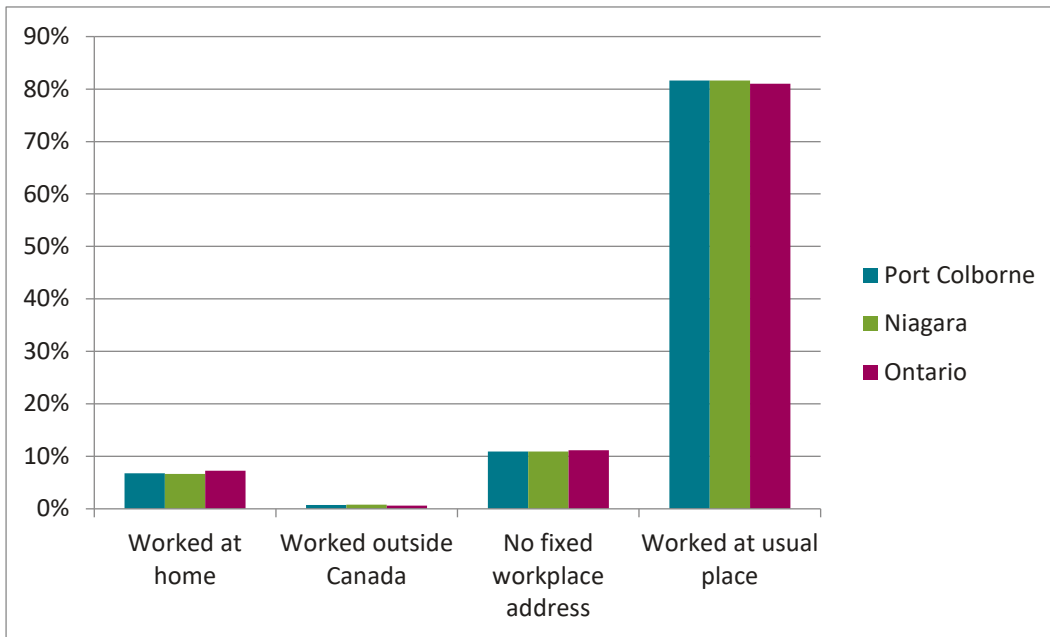
Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile

Place of Work Status

Looking at the place of work status can help to give some kind of indication of the nature of the jobs within the city. For example, if there was a high percentage of ‘worked at home’ this might indicate that there are a high percentage of people with home-based businesses. In addition, ‘worked at usual place’ would indicate typically an office type, or given location type of employment. Compared to other regions, Port Colborne experienced the highest percentage of individuals who ‘worked at usual place’ and the smallest percentage of ‘worked at home’ or ‘no fixed workplace address’.



Figure 24: Total Employed Population Aged 15 Years and Over by Place of Work Status, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada.2011 National Household Survey.

Commuting Patterns

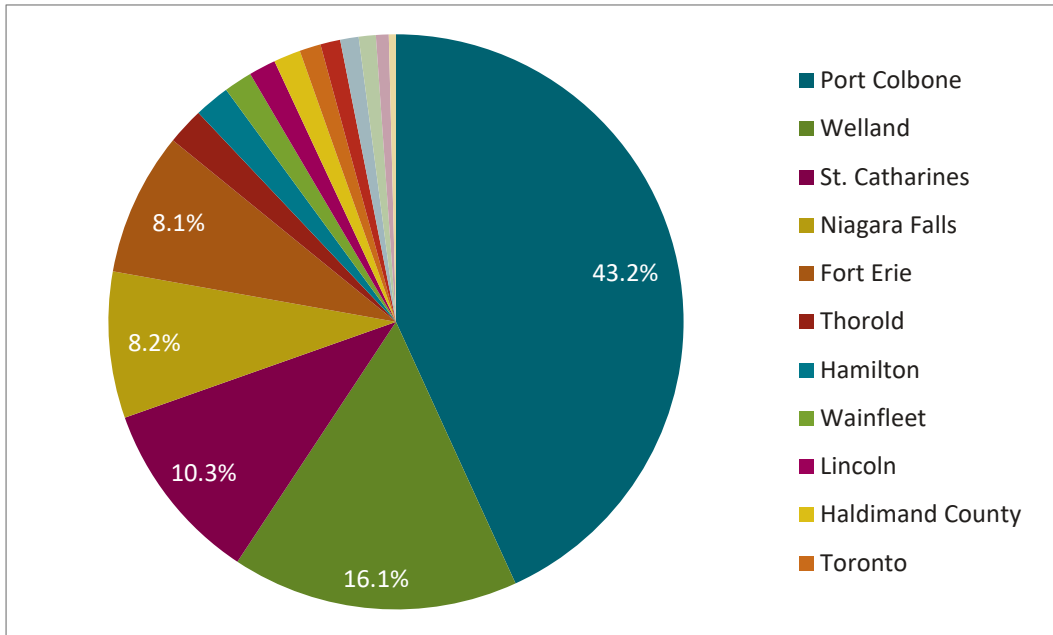
The following two figures display the community patterns for workers that reside in Port Colborne, and for individuals that work within Port Colborne.

Figure 25 shows the locations of where Port Colborne residents commute for work. 43.2% of Port Colborne citizens work in Port Colborne. The second most commuted to location for Port Colborne residents is Welland, followed by Niagara Falls. Over half of the residents (56.8%) commute outside of Port Colborne for work.

As for the commuting patterns of those working in Port Colborne, 55.9% of the available jobs in Port Colborne are filled by local residents (as seen in Figure 26). The other 44.1% of positions are filled by residents living in outside communities. 15.8% of positions are filled by individuals commuting from Welland, 7.8% from Fort Erie, and 5.8% from St. Catharines.

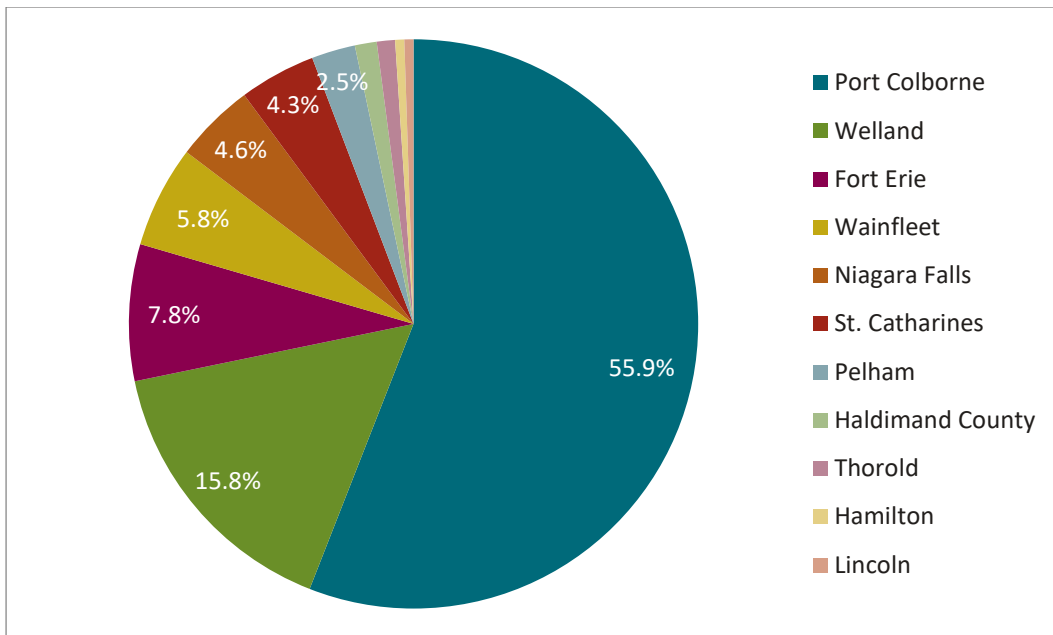


Figure 25: Commuting Pattern of Port Colborne Residents



Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census Profile.

Figure 26: Commuting Pattern of Individuals Working in Port Colborne



Source: Statistics Canada.2016 Census Profile

With a large portion of Port Colborne residents leaving Port Colborne for work, and just over 40% of jobs available in Port Colborne being filled by outside residents, there is an opportunity to encourage



residents to work within Port Colborne. An emphasis where skills are available might be placed on encouraging the hiring of local residents. This would help to keep more earnings and spending stay in Port Colborne, and also likely decrease turnover rate within jobs of commuters from far distances.

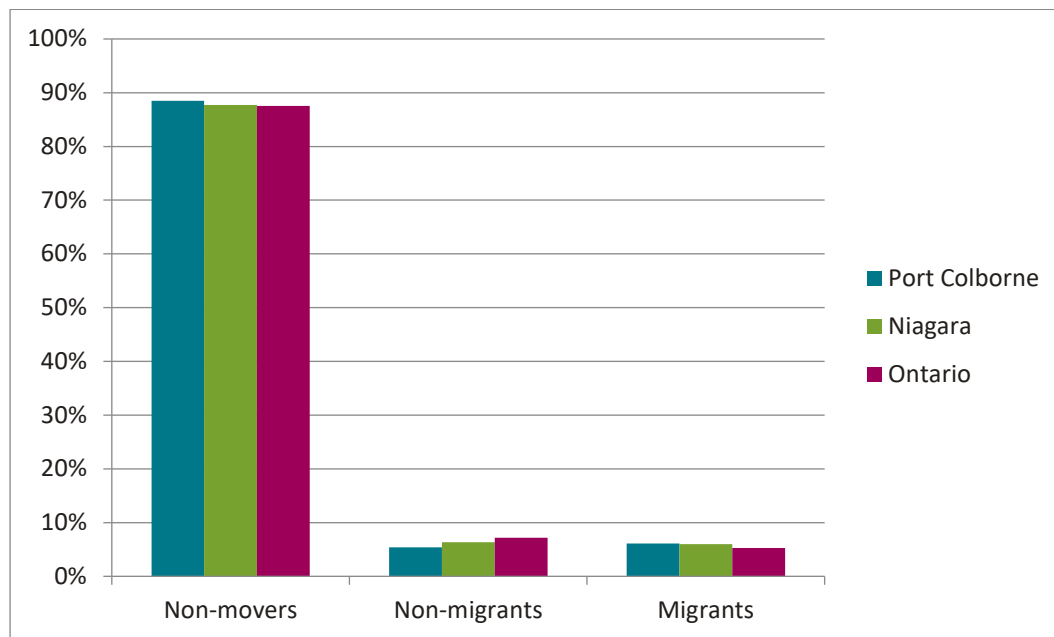
There is a shortage of jobs in Port Colborne to satisfy the number of residents in the workforce. There are 6265 residents from Port Colborne who work, but only 4835 positions in Port Colborne being filled. This means that even if all positions in Port Colborne were filled by local Port Colborne residents, there would still be the need for 1430 individuals to commute elsewhere to find work.

Mobility Status

The mobility status of residents was examined in order to determine the level of new residents that Port Colborne was able to attract in comparison to other geographical locations. The figure below shows the proportion of non-movers (those who have not moved since the last census), non-migrants (those who have moved but remained in the same municipality since the last census), and migrants (those who have moved to a different municipality within Canada since the last census).

Just under 90% of the population in Port Colborne are non-movers. This is similar to other comparator regions. All regions being examined ranked almost the same in regards to percentage of non-movers, non-migrants, and migrants.

Figure 27: Mobility Status for Residents, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census Profile.



Other Quality of Life Indicators

Drug Use

In Niagara region, Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit drug among secondary students. Overall, 35.5% of students have used cannabis in the past 12 months. 41.2% of students have used Cannabis in their lifetime, compared to Ontario where 31.6% of students have used cannabis in their lifetimes. Cannabis drug use in Niagara is noticeably higher than the average cannabis use for the province. 13.3% of high school students have used prescription pain medication.²⁰

In 2016 there were a total 155 suspected opioid overdoses. By June 2017 there were 209 suspected overdoses.²¹ In 2016, 147 naloxone kits were distributed. In the first half of 2017, there were 190 naloxone kits used.

Crime Severity

The crime severity index takes into account change in volume of a particular crime and the relative seriousness of that crime in comparison to other crimes. The crime severity index is calculated by assigning each type of crime a particular weight. More serious crimes are given a higher weight than less serious crimes. The number of police-reported incidents for each offence is multiplied by the weight for that offence. All weighted offences are then added together and divided by the corresponding population total. The crime severity index in St. Catharines-Niagara was 50. This compares to Canada where the crime severity index was 71.

In 2016 there were 17,922 incidents reported in the St. Catharines-Niagara region. This is a decline from the previous year of -0.16%. In 2016, there were 934 crimes reported by youth aged 12 to 17.²²

Dropout Rate

According to the 2011 National Household Survey 13% of the population aged 25 to 64 did not have a high school diploma.

Business Patterns Assessment

Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Patterns Data provides a record of business establishments by industry sector and size. This data is collected from the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA). The business data collected for Port Colborne includes all local businesses that meet at least one of the three following criteria:

- Have an employee workforce for which they submit payroll remittances to CRA; or
- Have a minimum of \$30,000 in annual sales revenue; or
- Are incorporated under a federal or provincial act and have filed a federal corporate income tax form within the past three years

²⁰ Youth Substance Misuse, www.niagararegion.ca/health/statistics/behaviour/youth-drugs.aspx

²¹ Niagara Region, Opioid Usage. www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/alc-sub-abuse/drugs/opioids.aspx

²² Statistics Canada, Incident-based crime statistics, St. Catharines-Niagara.



The Canadian Business Patterns Data records business counts by “Total”, “Without Employees” and “With Employees” categories. The establishments in the “Without Employees” category include the self-employed (i.e. those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners). It should be noted that the Canadian Business Patterns Data uses the CRA as a primary resource in establishment counts; therefore, businesses without a business number or indicating annual sales less than \$30,000 are not included. The population of these small, unincorporated businesses is thought to be in the range of 600,000 in all of Canada.

Key Business Characteristics

A detailed review of the business patterns provides an understanding of the growth or decline of businesses over time, and the key characteristics that define the municipality’s business community. When combined with the broader industry analysis, the business patterns information will assist in understanding the key industry opportunities for Port Colborne.

Understanding the trends in business growth in the community provides valuable insight into the directions that future growth and investment within Port Colborne might take. It also provides an indication of where the priorities of the municipality should lie, especially with regards to program development and delivery, and strategic planning.

In terms of business composition, the following industry sectors identified in Figure 28 below exhibit the highest proportion of business establishments in Port Colborne as of 2016:

- Real estate and rental and leasing (227 businesses)
- Other services (except public administration) (120 businesses)
- Construction (119)

62% of business establishments in Port Colborne are characterized by self-employed (and/or those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners).

It is also important to note the prevalence of small sized businesses in Port Colborne. Medium and large firms are generally believed to provide different economic functions within an economic region than small firms. Small firms are seen as the major source of new product and ideas, while large firms typically develop as products become more homogeneous and firms begin to exploit economies of scale.

Up to 90% of new jobs in a community come from already existing businesses. As such, it is important to provide necessary services to assist in business growth and retention.



Figure 28: Business Establishments within Port Colborne by Industry Sector and Size, 2016

Industry	Total	Without Employees	With Employees	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100+
Total	1,266	802	464	222	118	71	28	17	8
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	39	30	9	4	1	3	0	0	1
21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction	3	0	3	1	1	1	0	0	0
22 - Utilities	7	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
23 - Construction	119	76	43	26	10	4	2	1	0
31-33 - Manufacturing	52	17	35	12	5	4	6	6	2
41 - Wholesale trade	22	9	13	3	5	1	3	1	0
44-45 - Retail trade	116	41	75	37	17	12	4	3	2
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	65	40	25	11	4	6	3	1	0
51 - Information and cultural industries	11	8	3	1	1	1	0	0	0
52 - Finance and insurance	61	43	18	6	8	3	1	0	0
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	227	212	15	12	2	1	0	0	0
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	87	65	22	14	7	1	0	0	0
55 - Management of companies and enterprises	7	6	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	46	25	21	13	3	4	0	1	0
61 - Educational services	8	3	5	5	0	0	0	0	0
62 - Health care and social assistance	77	35	42	12	18	9	0	1	2
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	22	13	9	4	1	2	2	0	0
72 - Accommodation and food services	54	15	39	10	10	14	4	1	0
81 - Other services (except public administration)	120	65	55	32	16	4	2	1	0
91 - Public administration	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Patterns, December 2016.

It is also valuable to examine the growth in businesses by industry, so as to better understand the areas of emerging opportunity within Port Colborne’s economy, or to take note of industries that might be slipping.

The industries that have experienced the highest rates of percentage growth from 2014 to 2016 include:

- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services, 21.1%
- Educational services, 14.3%
- Professional, scientific and technical services, 10.1%

Industry sectors that have experienced the greatest negative growth between 2014 and 2016 are as follows:

- Management of companies and enterprises, -46.2%
- Arts, entertainment and recreation, -37.1%
- Wholesale trade, -26.7%



Figure 29: Business Establishments within Port Colborne by Industry Sector and Size, 2014 & 2016

Industry (NAICS)	2014 Total	2014 Without Employees	2014 With Employees	2016 Total	2014 Without Employees	2014 With Employees	Absolute change 2014 to 2016, Total	% change 2014 to 2016, Total
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	50	41	9	39	30	9	-11	-22.0%
21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction	3	1	2	3	0	3	0	0.0%
22 - Utilities	8	6	2	7	6	1	-1	-12.5%
23 - Construction	114	70	44	119	76	43	5	4.4%
31-33 - Manufacturing	49	17	32	52	17	35	3	6.1%
41 - Wholesale trade	30	14	16	22	9	13	-8	-26.7%
44-45 - Retail trade	132	58	74	116	41	75	-16	-12.1%
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	61	35	26	65	40	25	4	6.6%
51 - Information and cultural industries	11	9	2	11	8	3	0	0.0%
52 - Finance and insurance	58	33	25	61	43	18	3	5.2%
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	208	194	14	227	212	15	19	9.1%
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	79	58	21	87	65	22	8	10.1%
55 - Management of companies and enterprises	13	11	2	7	6	1	-6	-46.2%
56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	38	22	16	46	25	21	8	21.1%
61 - Educational services	7	4	3	8	3	5	1	14.3%
62 - Health care and social assistance	72	31	41	77	35	42	5	6.9%
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	35	27	8	22	13	9	-13	-37.1%
72 - Accommodation and food services	58	18	40	54	15	39	-4	-6.9%
81 - Other services (except public administration)	112	52	60	120	65	55	8	7.1%
91 - Public administration	2	1	1	2	1	1	0	0.0%

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Patterns, December 2016.

Another important measure is the location quotient (LQ). Location Quotient is a measure of employment specialization or strength based on the concentration of employment as compared to a norm, (i.e. the province or Niagara). It is important when looking at the LQ to remember that it is being compared against another region, and as such changes from year to year in the LQ could be the



reflection of a change within the comparator region, and not necessarily an absolute change in the city. A LQ of 0 to 0.75 is considered low, 0.75 to 1.25 is considered average, 1.25 to 5.0 is high, and 5.0+ is considered very high.

The figure below illustrates the LQ of **total businesses** in 2014 and 2016 within Port Colborne as compared with Ontario.

Industries with the highest LQ (compared against Ontario), indicating the greatest specialization in Port Colborne in 2014 based on total businesses are as follows:

- Utilities, 3.71
- Arts, entertainment and recreation, 1.83
- Mining and oil and gas extraction, 1.58

Industries with the highest LQ (compared against Ontario) in 2016 based on total businesses are as follows:

- Utilities, 2.86
- Mining and oil and gas extraction, 1.73
- Manufacturing, 1.59

Greatest increase in LQ from 2014 to 2016 of total businesses:

- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services, 0.17
- Manufacturing, 0.12
- Other services (except public administration), 0.09

Greatest decrease in LQ from 2014 to 2016 of total businesses

- Utilities, -0.85
- Arts, entertainment and recreation, -0.69
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, -0.20



Figure 30: Local Concentration of Total Businesses in Port Colborne compared to Ontario by Location Quotient, 2014 & 2016

Industry (NAICS)	LQ 2014	2014 Classification	LQ 2016	2016 Classification
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1.14	Average	0.94	Average
21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction	1.58	High	1.73	High
22 - Utilities	3.71	High	2.86	High
23 - Construction	0.98	Average	1.00	Average
31-33 - Manufacturing	1.47	High	1.59	High
41 - Wholesale trade	0.76	Average	0.59	Low
44-45 - Retail trade	1.52	High	1.38	High
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	0.95	Average	0.95	Average
51 - Information and cultural industries	0.59	Low	0.60	Low
52 - Finance and insurance	0.90	Average	0.80	Average
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	1.03	Average	1.09	Average
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	0.49	Low	0.52	Low
55 - Management of companies and enterprises	0.42	Low	0.63	Low
56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	0.79	Average	0.96	Average
61 - Educational services	0.57	Low	0.60	Low
62 - Health care and social assistance	0.90	Average	0.96	Average
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.83	High	1.14	Average
72 - Accommodation and food services	1.54	High	1.40	High
81 - Other services (except public administration)	1.47	High	1.56	High
91 - Public administration	1.54	High	1.47	High

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Patterns, 2014 & December 2016. Adapted by MDB Insight Inc.

Figure 31 below illustrates the LQ of Port Colborne when compared against Niagara region of **total businesses** in 2014 and 2016.

Industries with the highest LQ in 2016 based on total businesses measuring against Niagara are as follows:

- Mining and oil and gas extraction, 3.19
- Public Administration, 2.28



- Utilities, 2.23

Industries with the lowest LQ in 2016 based on total businesses measuring against Niagara are as follows:

- Wholesale trade, 0.66
- Management of companies and enterprises, 0.71
- Educational Services, 0.78

Figure 31: Local Concentration of Total Businesses in Port Colborne compared to Niagara Region by Location Quotient 2014 & 2016

Industry	LQ 2014	2014 Classification	LQ 2016	2016 Classification
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1.00	Average	0.77	Average
21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction	3.19	High	3.18	High
22 - Utilities	2.56	High	2.23	High
23 - Construction	0.89	Average	0.93	Average
31-33 - Manufacturing	1.34	High	1.41	High
41 - Wholesale trade	0.90	Average	0.66	Low
44-45 - Retail trade	1.26	High	1.10	Average
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	1.28	High	1.36	High
51 - Information and cultural industries	0.94	Average	0.93	Average
52 - Finance and insurance	0.84	Average	0.87	Average
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	0.93	Average	1.01	Average
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	0.73	Low	0.80	Average
55 - Management of companies and enterprises	1.32	High	0.71	Low
56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	0.84	Average	1.01	Average
61 - Educational services	0.69	Low	0.78	Average
62 - Health care and social assistance	0.88	Average	0.94	Average
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.50	High	0.94	Average
72 - Accommodation and food services	0.99	Average	0.91	Average
81 - Other services (except public administration)	1.22	Average	1.30	High
91 - Public administration	2.29	High	2.28	High

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Patterns, 2014 & 2016. Adapted by MDB Insight Inc.

Figure 32 illustrates the top-ranking industry sub-sectors in Port Colborne and corresponding employee size. The top industry sub-sectors based on total businesses in 2016 are as follows:

- Lessors of real estate, 181 businesses
 - Percentage of businesses without employees: 95%
- Other financial investment activities, 34
 - Percentage of businesses without employees: 94%



- Full-service restaurants, 34
 - Percentage of businesses without employees:15%
- Residential building construction, 33
 - Percentage of businesses without employees:76%
- Offices of real estate agents and brokers, 30
 - Percentage of businesses without employees 90%

With the exception of full service restaurants, the majority of top industry business establishments do not have employees. 63% of businesses in Port Colborne did not have employees (802 out of 1266).

Figure 32: Top Business Establishments in Port Colborne by Industry Sub-Sector and Employee Size, 2016

Industry (NAICS)	Total	Without Employees	With Employees	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100+
Lessors of real estate	181	172	9	8	1	0	0	0	0
Other financial investment activities	34	32	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places	34	5	29	4	7	13	4	1	0
Residential building construction	33	25	8	7	0	1	0	0	0
Offices of real estate agents and brokers	30	27	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
Management, scientific and technical consulting services	29	25	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
Automotive repair and maintenance	28	13	15	8	3	3	1	0	0
General freight trucking	23	15	8	6	0	0	1	1	0
Building equipment contractors	22	11	11	6	3	1	1	0	0
Personal care services	22	16	6	3	3	0	0	0	0
Building finishing contractors	20	16	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
Offices of other health practitioners	20	13	7	4	3	0	0	0	0
Services to buildings and dwellings	19	9	10	6	1	3	0	0	0
Architectural, engineering and related services	18	14	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
Grocery stores	17	5	12	3	4	1	1	2	1
Offices of physicians	17	7	10	5	5	0	0	0	0
Foundation, structure, and building exterior contractors	16	7	9	6	3	0	0	0	0
Other specialty trade contractors	16	11	5	3	2	0	0	0	0
Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll services	15	12	3	2	0	1	0	0	0
Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment (except automotive and electronic) repair	15	10	5	2	2	0	0	1	0
Other amusement and recreation industries	14	7	7	2	1	2	2	0	0
Specialized freight trucking	12	7	5	2	1	1	1	0	0



Industry (NAICS)	Total	Without Employees	With Employees	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100+
Agencies, brokerages and other insurance related activities	12	5	7	2	4	1	0	0	0
Health and personal care stores	11	3	8	2	3	0	2	0	1
Religious organizations	11	0	11	9	1	1	0	0	0
Specialty food stores	10	5	5	1	3	1	0	0	0
Other miscellaneous store retailers	10	3	7	5	2	0	0	0	0
Activities related to real estate	10	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Residential developmental handicap, mental health and substance abuse facilities	10	0	10	1	2	7	0	0	0
Oilseed and grain farming	9	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Patterns, 2014. Adapted by MDB Insight Inc.

The industry sub-sectors that have experienced the highest rates of percentage growth from 2014 to 2016 include:

- Offices of real estate agents and brokers, 42.9% growth
 - Change of 21 to 30 businesses
- Offices of other practitioners, 42.8% growth
 - Change of 14 to 20 businesses
- Services to buildings and dwellings, 35.71% growth
 - Change of 14 to 19 businesses

Industry sub-sectors sectors that have experienced the greatest negative growth between 2014 and 2016 are as follows:

- Management of companies and enterprises, -46.2%
 - Change of 13 to 7 businesses
- Other amusement and recreation industries, -42.6%
 - Change of 26 to 14 businesses
- Oilseed and grain farming, -40%
 - Change of 15 to 9 businesses



Detailed Background Review

Document	Purpose	Key Takeaways
City of Port Colborne Business Retention & Expansion Project (2015)	<p>The BR&E plan centered around a survey of local businesses in order to better understand the business climate and hear the opinion of entrepreneurs as a place to do business. BR&E aims to retain business as well as facilitate expansion and investment.</p>	<p>Four stages of the project include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project planning 2. Immediate Follow-up 3. Data Analysis and Recommendations 4. Presentation of Findings and Implementation of Action Plan <p>Businesses expressed frustration with lack of skilled or adequately qualified workers that could meet their demands, particularly in high skilled areas such as manufacturing. In addition, most businesses indicated that they did recruiting through personal networks.</p> <p>Work needs to be done to encourage youth to pursue skilled trades and occupations where gap exists in the community. Access to broader formalized network can provide better opportunities to connect employers with workers.</p> <p>Businesses expressed little or no knowledge of existing resources available for them, better awareness initiatives need to be made.</p>
Team Niagara Economic Development Action Plan (2015-2018)	<p>Provides a framework to build on past and current private sector efforts to develop a strategy of cooperation for the future. The action plan identifies and uses the region's strengths to take advantage of opportunities for future growth.</p>	<p>Key pillars critical to region's future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1: Investment Attraction/Leads Generation, Innovation & Entrepreneurship ▪ Phase 2: Economic Research and Analysis ▪ Phase 3: Advocacy <p>The Plan is geared toward providing real economic benefits, reduced costs, effecting changes in the region's regulatory environment, and toward driving sustained improvements in how business and investors operate in Niagara.</p>
Competitive Analysis of Industries in the City of Port Colborne (2009)	<p>The purpose of the study is to identify and assess relevant trends occurring within industries in the region. These analyses form the basis for informed and strategic decisions regarding the allocation of critical resources aimed at promoting sustainable economic development.</p>	<p>Objective of the competitive analysis is to maximize potential for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retention of existing businesses ▪ Expansion of established firms ▪ Stimulation of entrepreneurial activity ▪ Attraction of new investment opportunities <p>Employment in the City is concentrated in three sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manufacturing



Document	Purpose	Key Takeaways
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Care and Social Assistance ▪ Retail Trade <p>Sector development priorities for the city are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Driving: Health Care and Social Assistance, Other Services (except Public Admin) ▪ Accelerating: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; and Administrative Waste Management/Remediation Services ▪ Rising: Wholesale trade; Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
<p>Downtown Central Business District Community Improvement Plan (2010)</p>	<p>The purpose of the CIP is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the physical, economic and other strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to revitalization of the Downtown CBD ▪ Articulate vision for the downtown CBD ▪ Specify a Public Realm Improvement Plan that contains recommended improvements to various elements and features of the downtown CB to improve pedestrian environment and private sector activity ▪ Develop a toolbox of incentive programs that can be offered by the City to directly stimulate private sector investment in the revitalization and redevelopment of the downtown CBD 	<p>The designated project area has begun to show signs of stagnation and early signs of deterioration. A number of critical community improvement needs were identified in the Project Area through a detailed SWOT analysis.</p> <p>From the SWOT a vision was put together for the downtown CDB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and enhance the authentic feel and character. ▪ Be an active and vibrant commercial area at all times throughout the day and year. ▪ Have greater variety of stores and open longer hours. ▪ Have strong visual and physical relationship with the Welland Canal and celebrate history as a working port. ▪ Be more pedestrian and cycling friendly. Add more street furniture. ▪ Updated building facades and signage. ▪ More people living downtown in diverse range of housing options. ▪ More public gathering space.
<p>City of Port Colborne Industrial Community Improvement Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To diversify the local economy by attracting new businesses that represent new and desirable sectors of the local economy 	<p>The Industrial CIP focus on following high-potential sectors that have been identified: Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Services, Tourism, Business Services, Distribution and Logistics, Local Government, Personal Services.</p> <p>Industrial CIP Goals and Objectives:</p>



Document	Purpose	Key Takeaways
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage job creation through the attraction of new businesses and/or expansion of existing businesses into identified sectors of the economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage capital investments that create and/or maintain existing permanent jobs, as well as short-term construction jobs ▪ Support investments in specified high potential economic sectors that contribute to diversification of economy ▪ Support investment and development that increases property assessment and grows non-residential tax base ▪ Provide financial incentive programs ▪ Facilitate redevelopment of City's vacant lands, and industrial sites ▪ Support the establishment and on-going development of sector clusters
<p>City of Port Colborne Official Plan (2012-2031)</p>	<p>Purpose of the plan is to provide the City with policies designate to secure health, safety, convenience an welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the Planning Area.</p>	<p>The Plan identifies and addresses subject matter that influences the growth and development of the City such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic development, Development of control tools, Subdivision of land policies, Community improvement policies, Development incentives <p>The plan addresses concepts related to good community building such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation and/or enhancement of natural resources, heritage resources ▪ Parks and open space requirements ▪ Expectations of water and wastewater servicing <p>The City has been identified as an Economic Gateway Centre and will continue to strategically position itself as part of Ontario's Economic Gateway Centre by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encouraging cross-border trade ▪ Providing land and infrastructure for continued sustainable development of tourist facilities ▪ Working in partnership with all levels of government the ensure attractive employment lands to allow growth in key sectors: Advanced manufacturing, tourism, aerospace, logistics, food processing, health, biosciences, green technologies, and interactive media ▪ Encouraging port facilities and marine transportation industry



Document	Purpose	Key Takeaways
<p>City of Port Colborne Arts & Culture Master Plan (2016)</p>	<p>This plan will leverage the city’s cultural resources, which will help to support a prosperous and sustainable economy, improved quality of life, increased community cohesion and civic pride. Purpose of the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a shared vision connecting all communities grounded in the continuation of cultural resources to the health and prosperity of all communities in Port Colborne ▪ Recommend a comprehensive mandate in the delivery of Cultural Services ▪ Provide a 10-year plan with short, medium and long-term objectives and recommendations with measurable actions and initiatives 	<p>Vision: In ten years, Port Colborne will be a more culturally vibrant community, supported by collaborative institutions and organizations. The city’s cultural resources will be widely accessible and inclusive for residents and visitors of all ages.</p> <p>Cultural Resources: Festivals & Events, Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage, Cultural Space & Facilities, Community Cultural Organization, Cultural Enterprises</p> <p>The plan has 4 Strategic Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate leadership in the community by connecting individuals and organizations towards share cultural goals 2. Celebrate and enact policy to support community vitality by enhancing the city’s unique cultural spaces and activities 3. Increased local and regional awareness of Port Colborne’s depth and range of cultural resources 4. Build a strong and collaborative cultural sector to create opportunities and experiences for cultural development that are inclusive and accessible to residents and visitors of all ages <p>Some notable action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold an annual Civic Night or “Celebrate Port” night at Roselawn Centre ▪ Convene Annual Cultural Summit ▪ Increase vibrancy of downtown ▪ Develop and promote Public Art Policy ▪ Strengthen festivals and events ▪ Reimagine and resource the Roselawn Centre to become a creative/cultural incubator ▪ Emphasize business sponsorship and support for cultural sector ▪ Engage, activate and support local youth, and culturally related volunteerism