



**STRONG**  
**STRATEGY TO REVITALIZE OUR NEW GODERICH**



**BUSINESS RETENTION + EXPANSION**  
**FINAL REPORT**



February 13, 2007

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## **Executive Summary**

Creating jobs and building on existing or new business opportunities are key factors in developing a healthy and vibrant community. Business Retention and Expansion is all about promoting job growth and economic prosperity by helping identify both opportunities for expansion and the barriers facing local businesses.

BR+E is a community based, volunteer driven economic development tool that encourages the growth & stability of local businesses. Business Retention & Expansion works to improve the competitiveness of local businesses by evaluating and addressing their needs & concerns. This is crucial to the sustained viability of our community since businesses that stay competitive are more likely to remain and expand in our community.

*Strong – Strategy to Revitalize Our New Goderich* has two key components to the program:

- determine the needs, the opportunities and the barriers in our community
- Develop & implement necessary actions & programs for Business Retention & Expansion in our community.

The interview process involved 99 businesses and gave a clear indication they are very interested in this community and its future for not just their business but also the community as a whole. The surveys, results and discussions were conducted in a totally confidential atmosphere.

One hundred and ninety printed pages of raw data were collected. The Task Force met many times to review and develop this BR+E report. From the data, eight strategies have been developed with action items, a lead to develop and implement the strategy, a timeline associated with each action item and a priority level and measures of success. Listed in alphabetical order, the strategies are:

- Coordinator for Economic Development
- Downtown Revitalization
- Medical Recruitment
- Municipal Issues
- New Business
- Training and Development
- Tourism
- Transportation

For each of these strategies to be successful there needs to be a commitment from many partners whether they are the lead for each strategy or part of the resource team. In addition, there needs to be a solid implementation plan, monitoring and review program to assure the recommendations are executed and achieved. This is a first step in future economic development for Goderich. There is much to be done and the opportunity to work together for the betterment of the community. It is time to tell the world:

***We are open for business!***

# **STRONG**

## **Strategy to Revitalize our New Goderich**

### **The Funding Partners**

#### **Town of Goderich**



Deb Shewfelt  
Mayor  
Town of Goderich

The Town of Goderich is proud to be a part of the Business Retention and Expansion Strategy. This six member funding partnership is a terrific example of how we can all work together to improve our community. Economic Development is vital to a healthy, progressive business environment. We must continually work to remain competitive in the future by implementing the BR+E strategies and outcomes identified in this program.

The successful completion of the BR+E strategy has given our business community a stronger profile, provided future direction for all the organizations involved and created a road map for future cooperation and success.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone involved but especially to the volunteer members of the Task Force, the Interview Teams and the businesses that participated in the surveys. It is because of your commitment to this program that we are able to learn so much. By working together we can all succeed.

## The County Of Huron



Joyce Wilson  
Town Planner  
County of Huron

Congratulations on the release of the Goderich BR+E Final Report, marking the tremendous collaboration of businesses focusing on local issues, and launching the Chamber towards a new phase of implementation.

The County of Huron, through its Planning and Development Department, was pleased to support Goderich's BR+E initiatives with a financial contribution and staff assistance.

The County advocates for community-based models of economic development with the knowledge that most economic growth and potential will originate from within the community. Supporting the local efforts of business organizations and industry associations results in positive community benefits for the participating businesses and the community as a whole.

The BR+E initiative reflects these beliefs as businesses together identify and tackle issues of importance to the local and regional economy. Similar efforts are continuing in other parts of Huron County and with the industry associations that the County supports, including the Huron Manufacturing Association and the Huron Tourism Association.

The County's economic development plan, in partnership with the Huron Business Development Corporation, envisions a funding program that will bring investments into the County for implementing BR+E strategies, among other initiatives. Should the Province approve our funding application, we will be in touch to explore new opportunities.

We are grateful for the support of Warden Shewfelt and County Council to provide support to local projects such as the Goderich BR+E, and we wish you every success implementing the strategy.

## The Goderich & District Chamber of Commerce



Lianti Muller  
President  
Goderich & District Chamber of Commerce

When the Chamber embarked on the BR+E project early of 2006, we could not have anticipated the cooperation and input that would be received from the community throughout the whole project. The final report contained in this document is a result of a very inclusive process involving many people, businesses and organizations.

A group of 25 volunteers spent numerous hours collecting information from our businesses in an attempt to identify critical steps to be taken to keep and expand our existing and future businesses. It was a grueling and thorough exercise to get the opinion of our business owners on the current issues.

Throughout the year, community leaders showed their support by participating as Task Force members, deliberating the direction to be taken and working through many issues, such as the unique questions for our town and area.

Our BR+E coordinator, Judy Crawford, spent numerous hours to analyze and best integrate all opinions that were received. She did an excellent job in facilitating the process and keeping to a tight schedule.

The end result of everybody's efforts is a document that highlights key strategies that our businesses feel should be addressed to help them thrive in our community.

It is now the responsibility of all community leaders to act on the expectations of our businesses. Implementation of the identified strategies will be important for the success of our community as a whole. The exciting time is now in front of us to ensure that all the person-hours that went into the compilation of this document was not wasted, but an excellent start to a better, flourishing Goderich.

We would like to thank all businesses, volunteers and community leaders for supporting the BR+E project.

## **Goderich Business Improvement Area**



Cheryl Dunn  
Chair  
Goderich Business Improvement Area

The Board of Management of The Goderich Business Improvement Area is pleased to have been a part of this important Business Retention and Expansion Strategy for the Town of Goderich. Over the last 27 years, the Goderich BIA has worked diligently to promote and beautify our unique Courthouse Square and the streets which radiate from it to form downtown Goderich. The BIA understands that by working together we can achieve great things. This partnership has allowed us the opportunity to find out what our businesses believe we can do to improve our community and our unique downtown core even more.

Congratulations to the Task Force and thank you to the volunteer interviewers who made this project successful. We look forward to initiating the recommended strategies in cooperation with the partners.

## **The Huron Business Development Corporation**



Pamela Stanley  
President  
Huron Business Development Corporation

As a long-standing member of the HBDC Board of Directors and its current President, I have had the opportunity to be part of many economic development initiatives over the years. None of these is closer to my heart than Business Retention & Expansion. In 1998, we were part of the very first Ontario BR+E pilot in Seaforth. Moreover, as that community continues to see results even now, I am pleased to witness the effort and enthusiasm that has gone into the STRONG BR+E campaign in Goderich.

Economic development is the *community's* business. In addition, the networking that comes from this exercise makes for a stronger, more vital community. Congratulations to the organizers, supporters and especially the volunteer interviewers for making this happen. Moreover, rest assured, as the new initiatives outlined in this strategy begin to unfold; HBDC will be there to assist Goderich's business community in whatever way we can.

## The Start

There are many components to creating a vibrant community, one of which is economic development. In the spring of 2005, the Chamber of Commerce felt it was time to become actively involved in economic development but did not know where to start. Then a lucky break happened. Goderich hosted the OSUM convention. One of the attendees was OMAFRA with information about their Business Retention and Expansion program. A discussion of this product commenced and the Chamber knew they had their project. The Chamber approached The Town of Goderich for their support and very quickly The Goderich Business Improvement Area, The County of Huron and The Huron Business Development Corporation joined in as funding partners. Five partners committed to the project and ....

### **STRONG – Strategy to Revitalize Our New Goderich**

was born with the financial support of Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Now the work had to commence. A needs analysis was done. Existing barriers were identified and measurable outcomes were determined. An application was created and approval to commence was received in January 2006.

## Barriers to Growth

Prior to the Commencement of the Survey - The barriers in our community were identified as:

- the stagnation of our population base and in fact the decrease in our total population
- the migration of our youth away from our community
- our aging population
- the geographical distance from the denser population of Ontario
- our distance to the transportation corridor
- lack of a public transportation system
- lack of skilled trades people
- low wage scale
- landlocked community
- lack of available serviced land
- lack of available housing
- lack of a cohesive business network
- perceived conflicts between business and the municipality
- lack of an economic development strategy

The data collected would determine if these barriers were correct. It was time to find out if there were additional issues that were not on the radar screen. It was agreed by the Task Force that the best people to ask would be the business community themselves.

## **Measurable Outcomes**

In the original application, possible measurable outcomes were itemized. The following were the suggested outcomes:

- Give business a voice and an opportunity to see and experience positive action
- The creation of an up to date, relevant business inventory.
- Create a comprehensive economic development strategy.
- Perceptions identified and if possible resolved
- Barriers addressed and where possible a solution created.
- Issues raised to be resolved if possible
- Prospects identified and acted upon
- Create a stronger, more cohesive business environment
- Address lack of population growth
- Provide training in our immediate area for skilled trades
- Address lack of Public Transit issue
- Address low average annual income
- Address lack of land for housing and business

Once the surveys were completed, it was the intention to review this list to see if these outcomes were in fact relevant, achievable or beyond the scope of this project.

It was hoped that the achievable outcomes would be weighted as short, medium and long-term goals and objectives.

## **The Task Force**

A team of community leaders volunteered their time to oversee the project. Their leadership, dedication to the project, insight of Goderich and a desire to improve the community allowed this program to achieve its goals and objectives. The members were:

Angela Cox  
Bob Marshall  
Doug Fines  
Jan Hawley  
Joyce Wilson  
Kimberly Payne  
Lianti Muller  
Paul Nichol  
Robert Evans  
Tom Fincher

Bill Thibert  
Deb Shewfelt  
Duncan Jewell  
John Grace  
Kenn Voss  
Larry McCabe  
Lorri Lowe  
Richard Lehnen  
Sally Walker  
Wayne Lyons

Judy Crawford, Coordinator

**Resource:**

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs representatives:

Nancy Ross – Economic Development Officer

Gary Stephens – Rural Business Consultant

Erin Panek – Client Account Officer

Karen Fischer - Business Retention and Expansion Specialist Rural Programs Branch

## **The Volunteer Interview Team**

Twenty-five hard working volunteers spent many hours interviewing the 99 businesses that were included in the project. We would like to thank these members of the community for their hard work and dedication to the program. Without their help, this project could not have achieved the insightful responses and depth of information received.

***Thank you very much to the following volunteers:***

Alison Lobb

Bill Lemmon

Dan Worthy

Dick Loney

Jan Hawley

Judy Crawford

Lois Chapman

Mac Campbell

Marilyn Elgie

Mike Henry

Neil Hamilton

Paul Elgie

Sandra Goddard

Alvin McGee

Bill McLean

Deb Delyea

Duncan Jewell

Joe Lynett

Kimberly Payne

Lori Patterson

Malcolm Harrison

Mel Farnsworth

Nancy Fisher

Patricia Callender

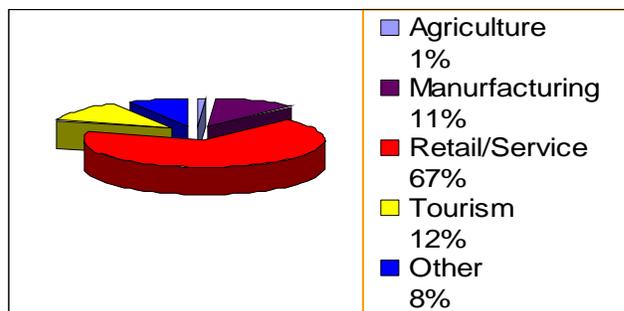
Roger Goddard

### **BR+E - What is It?**

The Business Retention and Expansion strategy is an initiative of community business visits with a systematic interview process, using community leaders and volunteer interviewers. It provides the opportunity to explore and understand the thoughts, concerns and values of the Goderich business community. It gives the existing community a voice and provides a platform to create a strategy for retention and growth. It provides the opportunity for an improved business climate for the existing businesses and allows the creation of a strong, cohesive environment for future development.

## Businesses Surveyed by Sector

During the last 6 months, ninety- nine (99) businesses were interviewed for their opinions, concerns, thoughts and suggestions. These businesses were a cross section of the business community giving representation from all sectors. The surveyed businesses represented over 15% of the business community and provided statistical significance. It was determined that if we had interviewed all our businesses our data would not have changed significantly.



**The Task Force would like to thank all the businesses that took part in the survey portion of this project.**

### Characteristics of The 99 Businesses Surveyed

Owners involved in daily operation	86%
Business headquarters in our municipality	80%
Owners that are residents of Goderich	74%
Family Owned businesses	68%
Set up as Corporations	62%
Own their own facility	48%
Sole proprietorship	20%
Franchised businesses	8%
Unionized businesses	6%

**More than fifty five percent (55%) of our businesses have been in business longer than 11 years and twenty three percent (23%) of our businesses have been in business longer than 35 years. Our business community is very strong in small operations with sixty-three percent (63%) operated by less than 10 employees and an additional thirty six percent (36%) operated by less than five employees.**

The majority of our businesses operate with business plans (75%) and marketing plans (68%). Considering our aging owner population, it is surprising and concerning that 60% do not have a succession plan in place.

## **BUSINESS CLIMATE**

From the data, we have learned a number of important details about our business community.

<b>97%</b>	<b>Consider the quality of life is good to excellent</b>
81%	Are happy with Goderich as a place to do business.
71%	Have not changed their opinion in the last 3 years
29%	Have changed their opinion in the last 3 years
68%	Of changed opinion has been a positive change
78%	Rate Ontario as good to fair place to do business
63%	Labour costs are good

**Survey Comments:**  
***“Work of Chamber of Commerce and BIA to enhance our community has given me a positive attitude to the community”***

The businesses feel they are well represented by the local business organizations such as The Chamber and The BIA although there is some level of dissatisfaction with the Manufacturing Consortium.

**Survey Comments:**  
***“I have received a great deal of help - very impressed with the community and its support”***

### **Local Government Services**

The highest level of satisfaction with local government services were with:

Fire Prevention and Services    74% very satisfied and 23% somewhat satisfied.  
Policing    52% very satisfied and 37% somewhat satisfied.

The lowest level of satisfaction with local government services were with:

Garbage Removal    17% somewhat dissatisfied and 13% very dissatisfied  
Public Transit    20% somewhat dissatisfied and 60% very dissatisfied  
Planning/Eng/Zoning    16% somewhat dissatisfied and 7% very dissatisfied

### **Local Community Services**

The highest level of satisfaction with local community services were with:

Recreational Facilities    72% very satisfied and 19% somewhat satisfied.  
Library    60% very satisfied and 38% somewhat satisfied.

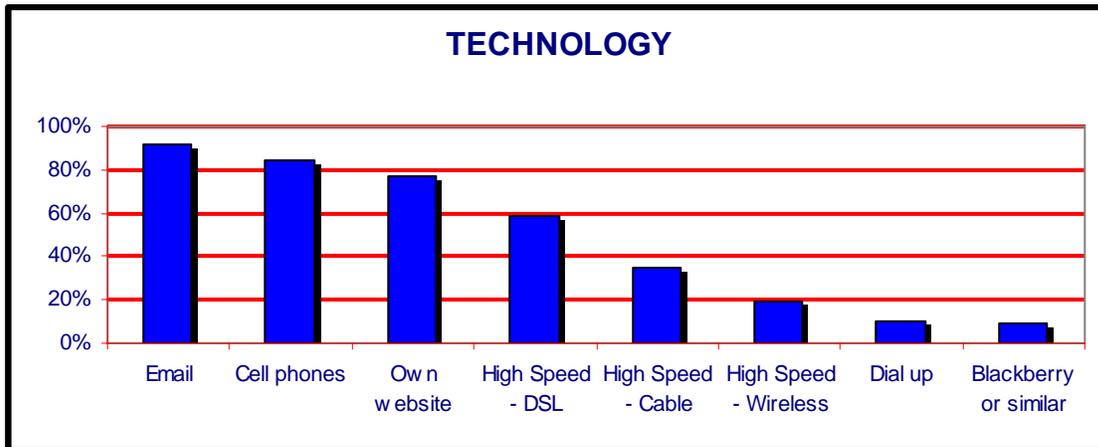
The lowest level of satisfaction with local community services were with:

Medical/Health Services    30% somewhat dissatisfied and 21% very dissatisfied  
Community College    25% somewhat dissatisfied and 21% very dissatisfied

**Survey Comments:**  
***“stable population with loyalty to the local businesses”***

## Technology

Communication is the lifeblood of most businesses and most use various forms of technology.



**Survey Comments:**  
*“Create a receptive climate for business”*

**Survey Comments:**  
*“We do not capitalize on our uniqueness”*

## Marketing

Businesses use a variety of vehicles to market their product or service. 48% are interested in pursuing collaboration/networking/information and 38% are interested in joint marketing. Sales within Canada make up 90% of the sales. 73% of sales are from within the local marketing area.

## Workforce/Training

Over the last 3 years, 46% of businesses increased their workforce, while 40% remained the same. Sales, increased market share and new product lines were the main reasons for the changes.

There is a positive projection that this trend will continue with 46% of the businesses planning to increase their workforce in the next 3 years and another 46% of the businesses interviewed will remain the same.

Businesses are concerned about availability of the workforce. The quality of the existing workforce is rated as Excellent 9%, Good 47%, Fair 31% and Poor 13%. The labour costs are considered good 63% to fair 31%. It is important to note the labour costs in Goderich are below the average for the province.

**Survey Comments**  
*“We hired from unemployment”*

**Survey Comments**  
*“It is more difficult to get staff and students to work more”*

The majority of employee needs for business are:

Skilled Trades	52%
Sales	45%
Clerical	40%
Unskilled Trades	34%
Business Administration	31%
Computer Technology	16%
Apprenticeship	16%
Industry Specialists	13%

Surprisingly, 81% stated they do not have difficulty retaining employees but training is a large concern. The major training barriers they face are distance to the training facility and lack of local training, cost, loss of production during training period and lack of awareness of existing training programs. Current areas for employee improvement are:

Customer Service	63%
Sales and Marketing	56%
Computer Software	52%
Health & Safety	49%
Working with Others	45%
Oral Communication	42%
Supervisory	42%
Computer Hardware	42%
Quality Assurance	42%
Written Communication	30%
Financial Management	22%
Reading	19%
Numeracy	16%

**Survey  
Comments:  
"labour pool  
needs skilled  
people"**

### **Future Plans**

In order to be a vibrant strong progressive community, it is important to remove all possible barriers that stunt growth to both existing businesses and the possible new businesses that would like to establish in Goderich.

Thirty-four respondents indicated they were considering expansion of their business but 47% were experiencing difficulties with this future expansion. The most difficult issues were local by-laws (50%); financing (33%), wastewater infrastructure (25%), sewer capacity (25%) and developing a marketing plan (25%).

Of the ninety-four respondents to the question about energy supply, management and efficiency, 43% were concerned with inconsistent supply/periodic blackouts and 77% were concerned with the cost of energy.

A number of barriers were identified to cause a lack of future development.



During the past 3 years, 73% of the businesses have seen an increase in total dollar sales and 8% have seen a decrease. 71% expect a continued increase in the future. 45% are seeing an increase in competition but 51% see no change. 59% consider their market share increasing and 31% see it remaining the same. Respondents were asked to identify costs of operation that cause a serious concern to the success of their business.

Thirty-five respondents were not completely satisfied with their existing site location. Their reasons for dissatisfaction were lack of room for expansion (34%), site too small (29%), business taxes (29%), current location inconvenient for customers (26%), lack of skilled labour (26%), current condition of building (24%), lack of public transportation (21%) and lack of local business support (18%).

Businesses are concerned with remaining competitive in the current marketplace. The major concerns were:

<b>Business &amp; Property Tax Structure</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Cost of Utilities</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Cost &amp; Availability of Part time Employees</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Insurance</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Cost &amp; Availability of Full time Employees</b>	<b>47%</b>

**Goderich needs to be proactive in assisting their current and potential new businesses in our community.**

**Survey Comments:**  
*"I Moved to Goderich due to business atmosphere." There is a better understanding of the community"*

**Survey Comments:**  
**Potential for reasonably skilled workers is high! "Better quality than Toronto."**

## Factors to Ensure Competitiveness



**The exciting news is there were 11 businesses identified that are interested in locating in Goderich.**

The businesses surveyed were not sure if there was a current economic development plan. 45% thought there was one; 17% did not think there was and 38% did not know. 33% felt the municipality took an adequate role in business and economic development while 38% did not think so and 29% were unaware of what was being done.

It is important to note that the most recent strategy for economic development was created in 1992.

**Survey Comments:**  
*"I am not sure if there is a plan, if so please share it"*

## **Information and Assistance**

Many businesses that were interviewed took advantage of the opportunity to request additional information (106 topics). Nine businesses requested assistance with the development of either business, marketing or succession planning.

## **Unique Questions**

This program allowed the opportunity to ask specific questions about our community. The results gave the Task Force excellent insight.

Survey asked if areas of town were under utilized:

Area	Yes	No
Courthouse Park	43%	57%
Courthouse Square	58%	42%
Park & Trail System	45%	55%
Waterfront	49%	51%

Many excellent suggestions of what should be done with the various areas were provided.

There were 99 respondents to the question of - name the top three issues that deter people from shopping/doing business or visiting in Goderich are:

- |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. Store / business hours | 52% |
| 2. Public Transportation  | 24% |
| 3. Parking                | 19% |
| 4. Washrooms              | 5%  |

There were 38 respondents to the question of why they or their staff to do not live in Goderich. The main reasons given were (multiple answers were allowed):

- |                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. Housing Prices       | 44% |
| 2. Taxes                | 39% |
| 3. Housing Availability | 34% |
| 4. Lack of Physician    | 26% |

There are four pages of suggestions that should be done for the community as a whole and there six pages of suggestions for the BIA. These pages are available for perusal.

## **Action Plan**

The following eight strategies encompass the achievable outcomes recognized by the Task Force and supported by the data collected. These strategies are listed in alphabetical order as all carry importance for the betterment of our business community.

- Coordinator for Economic Development
- Downtown Revitalization
- Medical Recruitment
- Municipal Issues
- New Business
- Training and Development
- Tourism
- Transportation

Each strategy was organized into workable units including the lead organization that should oversee the success of the strategy, a ranking of priority, an approximate time line and various resource organizations to complete the strategy successfully.

Strategy objectives were assigned to each category and identifiable measures of success.

Each Strategy has data to support the objectives and survey comments.

**Survey Comments:**  
*“The business community should be marketed as a total unit”*

**Survey Comments:**  
*“Let’s be open to pro-active development”*

**Survey Comments:**  
Let’s get a proper planning vision with proper by laws to control same”

**Survey Comments:**  
“Encourage New business in Community”

## Coordinator for Economic Development

There was a consensus among the Task Force that Economic Development needs to have a person or organization to drive this program. This should be a paid position and be supported by all business organizations and the Town of Goderich. This position could fulfill the role of assisting with enquiries from potential new business to the community and champion their cause.

Strategy	Lead	Priority	Timeline	Resource
<b>Identify and Hire Coordinator</b>	Chamber, BIA Town	<b>High</b>	<b>Short (3 Months)</b>	County, United Way, Huron Bus. Dev, Corp.

### Strategy Objectives

- Liaise between municipality, provincial, federal and business organizations
- Champion business recruitment process by providing free assistance/advocacy to new and existing businesses
- Track and develop all leads with an organized approach
- Create a recruitment/ambassador team
- Create an inventory of existing resources and contacts

### Measures of Success -

It is reasonable to measure the overall success for this particular initiative over a minimum period of three years. A quarterly report to lead organizations and resource partners including the following:

- Number of new businesses to the community.
- Number of new jobs created in community
- Number of inquiries/leads assisted
- Report on completion of various projects
- Report on successes and failures
- Liaise for jobs at risk and retain if possible

### Data to Support Strategy

Barriers to expansion of existing or new business

Local Bylaws	50%
Lack of proactive new business recruitment	40%
Approval process	30%

### Survey Comments

***“Approval process for items such as signs and holding events is so difficult for businesses. We need to unify efforts of the town, chamber, tourism and BIA to avoid duplication and to give a stronger voice while simplifying what it takes to establish a new business.”***

***“I feel strongly that council could be more proactive in setting the agenda for economic development but I feel strongly that it is up to local business to carry the load in developing a plan, a strategy that council then can respond to in a comprehensive balanced way.”***

***“We need business and government working together to develop & implement support from local community.”***

## Downtown Revitalization

Courthouse Square is the single most visible and important economic sector of our community. This area has seen many changes over the years and it is imperative that we retain this unique heritage designated area as a vibrant, exciting place to live, work and play. In order for this area to remain the well known signature of our community there are a number of improvements that can be done.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resource</b>
<b>Downtown Revitalization</b>	<b>BIA, Heritage, Town</b>	High	Short - Long	<b>Chamber, Planning Dept. Official Plan, GLT. Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Tourism</b>

### **Strategy Objectives**

- Rezoning for side street ground floor properties – this has been identified in the new official plan as a suggested improvement to encourage residential living in the core area.
- Residential Development - it is imperative that the core remain strong with not only commercial but with residential to support the commercial environment. It is important to have a balance of both.
- Washrooms – currently the washrooms in the basement of the Courthouse are not accessible for the disabled and there is no signage to identify where all the available public washrooms are in the core. There are available washrooms in the Tourism Office, The Library and The Museum, but all locations are dependent on each locations hours of operation.
- Hotel - put together a plan of action to encourage a developer to the core for development
- Arts & Cultural Centre - create a plan of action. This may be included with the hotel complex proposal or may be a stand-alone project.
- Current Provincial legislation now permits some municipal incentives. Some other incentives are better implanted with a Community Improvement Plan. A Financial Incentive Plan has been approved in principle by Council.
- Facade improvement grant program - investigate opportunities
- Parking – currently the municipal requirements for parking and lot coverage in the downtown core are too stringent and are recommended to be reduced and improved.

## Measures of Success

- Implementation of financial incentive program within 6 months
- New signage for washrooms
- Rezoning approved by council and communication provided
- Development of hotel
- Development of cultural centre
- Provide façade program to building owners
- Implement various Heritage programs – such as Goderich Heritage Enhancement Fund & Canadian Registry of Historic Sites

## Data to Support Strategy

Development charges fair to poor	67%	
Hotel Development -	75% rated 1 <sup>st</sup> priority	
	17% rated 2 <sup>nd</sup> priority	
Hotel Development preferred to be located in the core		67%
Residential Development	17% rated as 1 <sup>st</sup> priority	
	53% rated as 2 <sup>nd</sup> priority	
Residential Development preferred to be located in the core		28%
Performing Arts Development	14% rated 2 <sup>nd</sup> priority	
	55% rated 3 <sup>rd</sup> priority	
Performing Arts preferred to be located in the core		53%
Highest rated community asset to see developed– washrooms in core		57%
More niche market specialty shops	50%	
Parking deters business		19%
Where do your employees of this business typically park		
Closest available spot	15%	
In municipal lot	27%	
Lot owned by business owner	50%	

**Of the ten types of incentive programs named in the survey - Number of businesses to take advantage of them** 0%

**Do you know if your community offers any financial assistance programs to its businesses** Yes 0% No 11% Don't know 89%

***“Washrooms have been a long standing issue customer request to use my own facility often”***

***“Embrace tourism/extend hours, diversify encourage new businesses make square tourist dream with historic feel”***

***“There is talk about positive incentives to improve existing downtown buildings to accommodate more upgraded residential accommodation. Someone needs to rationalize & identify zones of development needs & design specific incentives”.***

## Medical Recruitment

Goderich has an established and active Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee. This is a community-based committee with members from The Town of Goderich, Hospital Board, Administrative and Medical staff and local residents. A professional recruiter has been retained by the Hospital and works closely with the committee. Having a CT scanner available will have spin off effects of assisting to recruit and retain family physicians, a radiologist and other specialists and related health care professionals to our region. Huron County is the only county in Southern Ontario without a CT scanner.

Strategy	Lead	Priority	Timeline	Resource
<b>Healthcare recruitment</b>	<b>Physician Recruitment &amp; Retention Committee</b>	High	Long	<b>Hospital Board Town, Chamber, BIA School Board</b>

### Strategy Objectives

- Reduce the orphan patient role (approx. 4000) through recruitment of doctors and nurse practitioners.
- Purchase a CT scanner to enhance value of medical treatment in area

### Measures of Success

- Report of less orphan patients
- Participate in recruitment fairs and conferences organized advertising campaign on the merits of the community
- Reverse of current under-serviced designation
- Continue to improve on ER wait times (local times are 1-2 hours – province standard is 4-8 hours)

### Data to Support Strategy

Level of dissatisfaction with medical and health care services

Somewhat satisfied	33%
Somewhat dissatisfied	30%
Very dissatisfied	21%

Barrier to business development

Health and medical services	38%
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### Survey Comments

***“No doctors for staff, we are afraid staff will leave”***

***“Lack of doctors for any family members”***

What issue if resolved will have greatest impact on growth of business? –  
***“availability of medical & health professional staff so they can expand  
 Ministry of Health approved current and future capital projects”***

## Municipal Issues

Goderich is landlocked. The municipality is working diligently with surrounding communities to create an equitable solution. Businesses have itemized a number of municipal concerns. It is always a challenge to balance perceptions versus realities. Clarification and communication can assist greatly with many municipal issues in Goderich.

Strategy	Lead	Priority	Timeline	Resource
Municipal Issues	Town	High	Short	Chamber, Planning Dept. BIA, Heritage New Official Plan, HBDC

### Strategy Objectives

- Resolve boundary issues- lack of available land and locations
- Tax concerns
- Municipal review of zoning concerns
- Service concerns – power, recycling, garbage removal, snow removal etc.

### Measures of Success

- Council and administration are actively working on the boundary issue.
- Create an inventory of available land and available business locations
- Create more favourable lot coverage, density and parking bylaw requirements
- Tax Facts information -*Understanding Your Assessment* provided to public
- Reported concerns in BR+E report dealt with

### Data to Support Strategy

Availability of zoned land rated fair to poor 75%  
 Municipal taxes rated fair to poor 81%  
 Planning/Engineering/Zoning Permits rated  
     somewhat satisfied 49% somewhat dissatisfied 16% very dissatisfied 7%  
 Garbage removal  
     somewhat satisfied 30% somewhat dissatisfied 17% very dissatisfied 13%

### Survey Comments

***“Go back to the basics & re-build the foundation - things such as snow & garbage removal. Don’t make the approval process for items such as signs & holding events so difficult for businesses. There is a need to unify efforts of the town, chamber, tourism, and BIA to avoid the duplication & give a stronger voice & simplify what it takes to establish a new business”***

***“Town should be more pro-active in zoning”***

## New Business Development

It is imperative that the community be proactive with business leads to our community and assist with future expansion of existing businesses. Development of the necessary tools to attract and assist business is recommended. This should be an organized joint initiative with partners in the community. It is the expectation of the Task Force that, new business development will be championed by the New Economic Development Coordinator.

Strategy	Lead	Priority	Timeline	Resource
<b>New Business Development</b>	<b>Town, BIA, Chamber,</b>	High	Ongoing	<b>Heritage, HBDC, County, Realtors, OMAFRA, Industry Canada</b>

### Strategy Objectives

- Creation of a New Business Kit to provide necessary information for a business that is considering opening in Goderich.
- Follow up leads provided from the BR+E survey
- Create a marketing strategy
- Provide assistance to business expansions

### Measures of Success

- Completion of new business kit
- New Businesses locating in the community
- Marketing created in cooperation with partners

### Data to Support Strategy

11 businesses know of a business interested in locating in this community  
 48% of respondents feel waterfront is underutilized  
 47% were experiencing difficulties with future expansion  
 Comprehensive plan to promote commercial district? No 23% Don't know 41%

### Survey Comments

***“No economic development centre that reports to council”***

***“Chamber is working at getting businesses working together and that is moving in the right direction. Encouraging more business to business interaction”***

***“Build up positive environment for new entrepreneurs to attract them to the community”.***

***“More commercial use at harbour front” “More activities at the harbour”***

## Tourism

Tourism is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest industry in Huron County and is one of the major employers of small business in Goderich. Tourism is a sustainable and vital industry in our lakeside community. Many travellers are finding Muskoka, Eastern Ontario and the larger centres of Ontario cost prohibitive today. They are looking for safe, convenient alternative locations to spend their vacation dollars. Goderich is the ideal alternative.

Strategy	Lead	Priority	Timeline	Resource
Tourism	Tourism Goderich	Medium	Ongoing	HTA, Special Events, Chamber, Heritage and Culture, BIA, HBDC, Service Clubs

### Strategy Objectives

- Partnership development – strengthen partnerships with regional tourism departments
- Build closer relationships with resource partners
- Joint marketing with Huron Tourism, Shakespeare to Shoreline, Perth and Oxford County
- Expand Festivals and Special Events coordination and delivery
- Improve signage
- Improve public washroom facilities
- Support the development of the Hotel and Arts and Culture facility

### Measures of Success

- Record increased visitor numbers
- Create a more proactive business community to tourism
- Create Garden Tour program with Perth and Oxford County Tourism
- Create packages of various services in community for marketing
- Special Events Calendar

### Data to Support Strategy

Improve Signage	83%
Highway signage good 30% fair 30% poor 40%	
More and better festivals and events	50%
Provide clean, well kept & well signed public washrooms	58%
Develop farmers markets and open markets	36%
Preferred target market – leisure travellers	92%

### Survey Comments

***“Have a strategic plan for tourism in downtown”***

***“Town has done a good job promoting but need to do more events”***

***“Promote more – more cultural and community events – the ones held now are done very well but would like to see more”***

## Training and Education

Knowledgeable, experienced staff is a key element to the success of a business. Having a strong labour pool to choose the best staff member from allows business to become strong and profitable. Providing training locally saves money and time for a business.

Strategy	Lead	Priority	Timeline	Resource
<b>Training and Education</b>	<b>Chamber, BIA</b>	High	Medium	<b>Small Business Centre, HBDC, Training Board, LHLC, Learning Centre, School Board</b>

### Strategy Objectives

- Coordinate training opportunities
- Investigate opportunities with local initiatives
- Create curriculum of business skills course for high school level in conjunction with the co-op program
- Contact businesses for training needs

### Measures of Success

- Creation of training schedule
- Market training schedule to all businesses in community
- Provide training in succession planning immediately
- Provide regular Superhost/customer service training
- Provide assistance when requested

### Data to Support Strategy

Access to training facilities rated fair to poor	73%
Businesses without a succession plan	60%
Businesses without a marketing plan	32%
Businesses without a business plan	25%

### Survey Comments:

***“Continue promoting university/college connection”***

***“Bringing training closer to Goderich would mean less time away from business”***

***“Skilled labour is drawn to major urban centres. More training is needed”***

***“Lack of trained workers”    “Still shortage of skilled trades”***

## Transportation

Living in Southwestern Ontario can be a challenge for a person who does not have access to personal transportation. The public transportation system continues to erode with the imminent cancellation of bus service from Owen Sound to London via Clinton. Currently, this is our closest and only source of public bus service.

Commercial transportation has challenges in regards to cost, cross border issues, quality of the surrounding highways etc.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Resource</b>
<b>Review of public transportation</b>	<b>United Way, Community Matters</b>	High	immediate	<b>County, Chamber Tourism, Town, Service Clubs</b>
<b>Industry Transportation</b>	<b>Chamber</b>	Low	Long	<b>Local businesses, Ministry of Transportation</b>

### **Strategy Objectives**

- A full review of available usage in area including service clubs e.g. Lions Club
- Create an RFP for out of town service
- Investigate costs for local bus service
- Review results in BR+E report regarding industry transportation

### **Measures of Success**

- Communicate results of public transportation review to community
- Communicate results of industry transportation investigation

### **Data to Support Strategy**

Transportation Costs	Good	33%	Fair	41%	Poor	24%
Availability of Transportation	Good	31%	Fair	33%	Poor	30%
Adequacy of public transportation	Good	14%	Fair	9%	Poor	77%

### **Survey Comments**

***“Many retirees have limited access to public transportation”***

***“ Seniors cannot walk to Zehrs”***

***“ No bus system”***

***“Transportation issues affect my business”***

## **Where Do We Go From Here**

**The number one priority is implementation.**

Of the 99 companies interviewed, we asked the question  
*Would you be willing to participate on a committee to address the  
issues raised in this survey?*

**Yes 24 Would Consider 25**

*We have a lot of business people who care about their community and  
want to be involved.*

**The Task Force is recommending the following priorities**

Call a meeting of Lead Organizations for each Strategy  
Set workable timetables with lead groups  
Create reporting mechanism with lead groups  
Prepare application for Rural Economic Development funding program  
for implementation of identified projects  
Review the measures of success on a timely basis

### **Number One Decision to be made**

Does The Task Force remain to follow up?

or

Does the new Community Partnership Committee do the  
recommended follow up?

**We need to work together for the betterment of our  
businesses and our community as a whole**

**And**

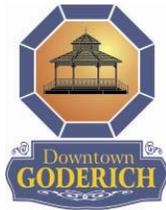
**We need to get the message out**

**WE ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS!**

## Funding Partner Contact Information



Town of Goderich  
57 West St.  
Goderich, Ont.  
N7A 2K5  
Phone : 519-524-8344



Goderich Business Improvement  
Area  
57 West St.  
Goderich, Ont.  
N7A 2K5  
Phone: 519-440-0871



Goderich & District Chamber of  
Commerce  
P.O. Box 414,  
Goderich, Ont.  
N7A 4C7  
Phone: 519-440-0176



Huron Business Development  
Corporation  
Box 1120 138 Main St. S.  
Seaforth, Ont.  
N0K 1W0  
Phone: 519-527-0305



Huron County  
Courthouse,  
Goderich, Ont.  
N7A 1M2  
Phone: 519-524-2188



Ministry of Agriculture, Food and  
Rural Affairs  
1 Stone Rd. West,  
Guelph, Ont.  
N1G 4Y2  
Phone: 888-466-2372