

Appendix 1 to MEM-ADMIN-2019-0002 State of Economy Snapshot - Q4 2018



Inside of the 564,000 square foot Triovest building on Cleve Court in the Premier Gateway

This Appendix highlights key economic development matters that transpired in Q4 2018. Some of the projects have carried over to 2019 and/or are ongoing. The highlights are organized into these sections:

1. Business Attraction
2. Business Retention & Expansion, Including Community Improvement Plan (CIP)
3. Premier Gateway
4. Georgetown and Acton Development
5. Tourism as an Economic Driver
6. Partnerships and Industry Engagement
7. Marketing and Communications
8. Priorities for Q1 2019

1. Business Attraction

Business Attraction is the process of positioning and promoting Halton Hills as 'The' location choice (in Halton, GTA, Canada, internationally) for business investment. Key services and initiatives include various local and regional marketing tactics and assisting with business site selection inquiries. Highlights include:

- 17 inquiries for land purchase, building purchase and/or building leases.
- 3 food processing inquiries.
- 3 inquiries from existing Halton Hills' businesses looking to relocate.
- 7 inquiries for industrial-zoned lands.



New Halton Hills location of HPG on Brownridge Road, Premier Gateway

- HPG LP (a division of Trimaster Group) is anticipated to open shortly in the Premier Gateway at 29 Brownridge Road. Trimaster Group is in the precision machining sector, serving aerospace, power generation, defense, industrial and digital cinema markets. Over 100 jobs are anticipated to be created once the company is fully operational.

2. Business Retention & Expansion, including Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) is the process of implementing and executing relevant and timely policy and programs which support business prosperity in order to retain or grow business investment, jobs and assessment. Key services and initiatives include building contacts and positive relationships; offering access to business resources, guidance and support through regional, provincial and federal partners' services and programs; offering incentives such as the Community Improvement Plan and Manufacturing Expansion Fund grants; and the collection and sharing of business and market data to support the strength of sector clusters.

2.1 Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

Halton Hills offers loans and grants through its Community Improvement Plan (CIP) program for business improvements such as façade design, building improvements, revitalization/redevelopment, feasibility studies, retail commercial conversions, environmental site assessments, brownfields and landscape improvements. These financial incentives aim to revitalize, redevelop, and renew businesses. These initiatives translate into new investment in the community. The CIP continues to be a very successful program and local economic development tool.

➤ *CIP Investments to Date*

- Total grant money committed since program started in 2015: \$350,000 (\$75,000/year)¹
- 2017 & 2018 total projects: 18 signed agreements; 12 completed (6 in process)
- 2017 & 2018 total grants issued: \$212,641
- 2017 & 2018 total private sector investment: \$699,685
- Projects completed in Q4 2018:
 - Helson's Law Office, 33 Mill St. East, Acton (Façade Improvement and Residential Rehabilitation)
 - MCO Acton (aka Giant Tiger Plaza), 8 & 12 Main St. North, Acton (Façade Improvement at both addresses)

¹ The project cycle on any grant can span multiple years, which means project reporting does not always align with the calendar year

➤ *Active CIP Files and Status (projected \$77,908 total in CIP funding)*

- 48 Main St. South, Georgetown (Façade Improvement) – project complete
- 33-47 Main St. South, Georgetown (Façade Improvement) – project complete
- 13-15 Mill St. East, Acton (Façade Improvement) – project complete
- Stonebridge (aka Ventawood), 89 Guelph St. Georgetown (Environmental Site Assessment) - project extended to spring 2019
- Acton Vet Clinic, Façade Improvement, 77 Mill St. East, Acton – construction started
- Downtown Acton BIA Streetscaping - fixed amount of \$27,500 through the CIP

➤ *CIP Program Administration*

With the 2019 Budget approved, the CIP program is actively being promoted for 2019. The funding envelope for 2019 is \$191,500. This includes the Town’s capital contribution, supplemented by approximately \$84,000 is funding received from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).



CIP cheque presentation to Helsons Law Office, Acton



CIP cheque presentation to MCO Acton, property owners of "Giant Tiger Plaza"

2.2 BIA Façade Improvement Program

Up to \$10,000 annually is earmarked from the Town’s CIP for the Downtown Georgetown BIA (\$5,000) and Downtown Acton BIA (\$5,000) to administer and fund smaller façade projects (typically \$800-\$4000, e.g. new awnings, refreshed signs, power washing, etc.). In 2018, six such projects were implemented in the Georgetown BIA. The Acton BIA has promoted the program and is seeking applicants. Both BIAs have refreshed their CIP program administration and marketing for 2019.



Main Video & Variety – sign before facade improvements (Google Streetview)



Main Video & Variety – after façade improvements for signage

2.3 Manufacturing Expansion Fund (MEF)

The Manufacturing Expansion Fund (MEF) was established to assist with the expansion of manufacturing businesses by covering the cost of certain Town fees, including Site Plan, Site Alteration, Minor Variance, Cash in Lieu of Parkland, and fees related to obtaining Conditional Building Permits. Criteria to qualify include: manufacturing use; minimum 5 years on the Halton Hills site; minimum 50 employees; minimum 5000 square foot expansion, and others. Currently, one MEF project is nearing completion and a new project is being evaluated. As part of the 2019 Budget, dedicated funding has been allocated to support implementation of the MEF.

3. Premier Gateway

The Premier Gateway is the Town's strategic employment area and source of the vast majority of new employment growth. The Gateway accounts for a significant portion of all jobs in Halton Hills. Today, there are about 5 million square feet of development in the Gateway. Significant additional development is pending and/or being contemplated for the future.

Demand for commercial and industrial development continues to be robust in the Premier Gateway. One recent example has been the expansion of the Toronto Premium Outlets (TPO) – officially opened in mid-November 2018.

Additional detail on new tenants and developments is noted in confidential Appendix 2.



Aerial view of the Premier Gateway, looking west along Steeles Avenue.

4. Georgetown and Acton Development

4.1 Georgetown

➤ *Georgetown Industrial Area*

As a mature employment area, the Georgetown Industrial Area has limited land supply and therefore limited opportunities for new development. However, the area continues to evolve according to the natural course of business cycles, such as occasional changes in ownership and small expansions.

For example, the recent sale of *Mold Hotrunner Solutions (MHS)*, located at 60 Armstrong Avenue, to U.S.-based Westfall Technik is expected to result in the expansion of the local operation. MHS specializes in hot runner and injection moulding technology for precision plastic parts. MHS' parts are used in medical devices, including insulin syringes and inhalers. MHS also produces larger moulds used in the automotive and packaging industries.

➤ *Notable Commercial Projects*

- The Furnace Room Brewery opened in December 2018, providing a unique business and tourism destination in Halton Hills.



Furnace Room Brewery exterior, 1 Elgin Street

4.2 ACTON

➤ *Acton Industrial Area*

Similar to the Georgetown Industrial Area, the Acton industrial employment area is a mature area, and continues to evolve according to the natural course of business cycles. The Halton Hills Industrial Park being developed by Futura Properties continues to be actively marketed.

➤ *Acton BIA*

- Economic Development staff continued to collaborate closely with the Acton BIA to support downtown vitality.
- 8 new business openings in Q3 & Q4 2018:
 - Ambition Performing Arts Studio
 - Helson Law Office
 - House of Work Wear
 - JV Computer Repair
 - Oh Behave Canine Pawellege
 - One Stop Medical Clinic and Pharmacy
 - Plant Kitchen Society / Vegan Food Services
 - TicToc Watch and Clock Repair



Opening of Ambition Performing Arts Centre, Acton, Q3 2018

5. Tourism as an Economic Driver

As a \$34 billion business in Ontario, tourism offers a significant untapped economic development potential for Halton Hills. In partnership with the Town's Tourism Committee, a strategic workplan has been developed and implementation is underway.

5.1 Tourism Market Data

Staff designed and implemented a new Economic Development and Tourism survey to collect valuable local tourism data to establish benchmarks and guide decision-making. From May to December 2018, staff:

- Attended 19 community events to administer survey and strengthen partnerships.
- Completed 883 surveys, representing over 2,805 visitors.
- Of those surveyed, 15.6% were tourists and 36.4% were out-of-towners. The Province defines a “tourist” as someone who travels more than 40km and an “out-of-towner” is defined as someone who travels 10km plus.



Head for the Hills –Craft Beer Festival

- Based on this sample of surveys, each same-day visitor to Halton Hills spent about \$29.
- Provincially, on average, each same-day visitor spends \$82. Within the Regional Tourism Organization (RTO3) of which Halton, Hamilton and Brant are part, about 11 million visitors generate about \$850 million in visitor spending or almost \$59 per person same-day visit.
- A key objective of the Town’s tourism program is to implement initiatives that will close the gap between the average spending at the local and regional levels, and hence raise the associated economic benefits for Halton Hills.

5.2 Tourism Marketing & Communications

- Leading the production of a modern and multi-purpose promotional video which will showcase Halton Hills’ economic prosperity, quality of life, cultural vibrancy and tourism opportunities as a vehicle for marketing Halton Hills as a top-of-mind investment and tourism destination.
- Distributed over 7,400 pieces of tourism marketing materials. This includes providing Ontario Travel Information Centres with Halton Hills’ tourism material.
- Completed an initial audit of the content and functionality of the visithaltonhills.ca website. Based on the audit, the website has been updated and refreshed. Although additional work needs to be done, the update has led to significant improvements resulting in a more visually attractive, streamlined, engaging, updated and easier to navigate website.



Videotaping line dancing class at Hillsview Active Living Centre (Acton)

- Visitor traffic to the website has expanded and continues to grow. Between May and December 2018, visithaltonhills.ca had about 15,100 website visits – a traffic increase of 33.7% from the same period in 2017.
- Expanded social media promotion and created a dedicated tourism hashtag: #hhTourism.
- Published over 420 tourism specific social media posts.
- Created a new Visit Halton Hills rack card (in English and Chinese) to highlight local tourism assets and drive traffic to the visithaltonhills.ca website. The English version of the rack card is now on display at a variety of locations around Town including the Toronto Premium Outlets, Town Hall, arenas, etc.

5.3 Tourism Committee

- Held the first three meetings of the Town’s Tourism Committee to provide a status update and discuss recommended workplan priorities for 2018 and 2019. Information, knowledge and potential partnership opportunities continue to be exchanged to maximize the economic benefits of tourism.
- Prepared a comprehensive Tourism workplan to leverage tourism for economic development. Priority deliverables include:
 - Collecting, analyzing and publishing local tourism data
 - Updating the Tourism Committee Terms of Reference
 - Updating the 2014 Tourism Strategy
 - Developing tourism itineraries and packages to raise economic benefits.
 - Focusing on close collaboration with key tourism stakeholders, including restaurants, local tourism attractions, event organizers, accommodation providers, Toronto Premium Outlets, BIAs, Chamber, Regional Tourism Organization 3 (RTO3), tour operators, neighbouring Regional Tourism Organizations
 - Updating print and digital communications and marketing materials
 - Developing a ‘How to Start a Bed and Breakfast Guide’ relevant for the local marketplace
 - Implementing a new approach to assisting local event organizers, in partnership with Community Development staff
- In partnership with Corporate Communications, implemented new communication tools, including social media, banners, brochures, e-newsletters, ‘Let’s Talk Halton Hills’ and infographics.
- In an effort to continue to increase the economic impact of tourist visitation and encourage overnight stays, the Tourism Committee - in partnership with the Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association (RT03) - will be hosting a tourism workshop titled: “Developing Tourism Offers - Partnering for Success” in March 2019. This workshop will provide local tourism organizations and businesses with valuable tools to develop and/or enhance their experiential activities and programs for residents and tourists.
- Updated Terms of Reference for the Tourism Committee have been prepared for discussion with the existing Committee. These Terms of Reference are based

on examples from across the region to ensure that the Town is aligned with best practices in terms of objectives, committee size, membership base, workplan priorities, etc.

5.4 Tourism Stakeholders

- Had discussions with various potential tourism partners (e.g. accommodations, Toronto Premium Outlets, Ontario Baseball Championships, Regional Tourism Organization #3 (RTO3), Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, Halton Region, Halton Small Business Centre, etc) regarding potential cross-promotion and tourism marketing initiatives. Detailed plans for implementation are being developed and implemented.
- Prepared and shared valuable and concise tourism data with event organizers in the form of new “Tourism Snapshot” reports. This new deliverable has been very well received and will assist community groups with their future plans by providing data that can be used to set benchmarks, assess event success, support funding requests and guide future event plans.
- Held follow-up meetings with festival and event organizers to determine how the Town can best support their events from a tourism perspective.

5.5 Cycle Tourism

- Collaborated with local and regional tourism, economic development and industry partners, including RTO3 and Halton Region, to promote the area, including Halton Hills, as a tourism destination during the Tissot World Track Cycling World Cup.
- Recently joined the Ontario By Bike™ Network - a program certifying and promoting bicycle friendly businesses and cycle tourism in a growing number of regions across Ontario. The goal of the program is to create a network of businesses that together enhance our regions’ cycle tourism product and collectively Ontario’s cycle tourism sector.
- Became an active member of the Ontario By Bike Industry Partnership Advisory Committee
- Created Ontario By Bike business outreach packages which were hand-delivered to a pilot list of local cycle-tourism ready businesses. Promoted the program via e-newsletter, website and social media. Joining the Ontario By Bike Network is FREE for all businesses and locations interested in becoming certified as bicycle friendly.



Promoting cycle tourism in Halton Hills

- In partnership with the Town's Transportation division, Corporate Communications and the *Bike It Committee*, supporting the upcoming Halton Hills Cycling Summit.
- Collaborated with Corporate Communications and the *Bike It Committee* to create a half-page promotional ad for inclusion in the upcoming Recreation & Parks Guide.

6. Partnerships and Industry Engagement

Economic Development staff continued to strengthen partnerships and engage with the industry to advance local economic development priorities. These partnerships facilitate marketing, industry awareness and delivery of key initiatives. Key partners include the Chamber of Commerce, BIAs, Halton Region, HalTech and Province – among others. All Town departments are also key partners in facilitating the development process.

6.1 Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce

- Continued to actively participate on various Chamber committees, including the Membership Services and Economic Development Committees
- Sponsored Business Achievement Awards (Sustainability Award to ISPA Store Fixtures)
- Attended Manufacturing Super cluster/USMCA Trade Agreement event in November

6.2 Halton Region Economic Development

➤ *Economic Development*

- Marketed Halton Hills as a business destination at the annual Realtors' Forum held in October.
- Participating in the annual *Halton Employment Survey* project.

➤ *Halton Region Small Business Centre (SBC)*

- SBC continued to conduct twice-monthly complimentary business consultations for entrepreneurs at the Georgetown Branch of HHPL.
- Secured two days of consultation services for the Acton HHPL in Q1 2019.
- Continued to promote all SBC services via the InvestHaltonHills.com website.



Annual Realtor's Forum

➤ *Halton Region Global Business Centre (GBC)*

- Continuing to promote GBC's 4-part *Doing Business in the United States* free seminars; topic is relevant in light of uncertainties posed by the USMCA.

- Co-ordination of an Export Summit is underway for late Q1 2019.

6.3 Other Partnerships (RTO3, Haltech, BREB, industry associations, Province, etc.)

- Manager of Economic Development, Innovation and Culture is an active member of:
 - Economic Development Council of Ontario (EDCO) - Professional Development Committee
 - Board of Directors for the Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association (RT03)
 - Committees for various Town studies (e.g. Employment Lands Needs Study, Destination Downtown)
- Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator is an active member of:
 - Credit Valley Trail Experience Planning Committee
 - Credit Valley Trail Arts, Culture & Tourism Committee
 - Ontario By Bike Industry Partnership Advisory Committee
 - Tourism HR Canada Advisory Council
 - Hotel Association of Canada/Tourism HR Canada's Destination Employment Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Officer is an active member of:
 - Development Review Committee
 - Staff Sustainability Team
 - Regional Economic Development Officers committee
- Submitted an application for funding to support the production of an Economic Prosperity, Cultural Vibrancy and Tourism video.
- Submitted an application to Industry Canada's "Invest Canada Communities Initiatives" (ICCI) for \$40,000.
- Submitted an application to OMAFRA's "Rural Economic Development" (RED) for \$80,000.
- Attended Halton Region Federation of Agriculture (HRFA) AGM.
- Attended Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association (RT03) Tourism Industry Symposium.
- Promoted events and resources offered by industry partners such as HalTech, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Peel Halton Workforce Development Group (PHWDG) via InvestHaltonHills.com website.



Halton Federation of Agriculture AGM

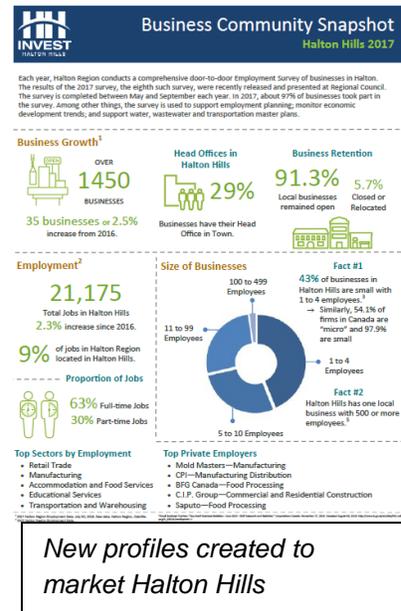
6.4 Real Estate Transaction and Market Intelligence

To provide Council and stakeholders with the most reliable market information and to support decision-making, Finance and Economic Development staff are in the process of procuring real estate market software. This new tool will enable the Town to access up-to-date non-residential real estate transaction data. Among other things, this will enable staff to assist investors with site location decisions.

7. Marketing and Communications

Expanded marketing and communications approaches are key to effectively engaging existing businesses and attracting new investment to Halton Hills. In partnership with Corporate Communications, in addition to the tourism-related marketing accomplishments noted earlier, Economic Development staff continued to implement a variety of marketing and communications approaches, including:

- Wrote and published two editions of the Economic Development e-Newsletter (Oct, Dec); 321 subscribers at beginning of Q4. The number of subscribers continues to grow.
- Promoted the Halton Region Small Business Centre through an ad developed for the Spring & Summer Recreation & Parks Guide.
- Continued to update and maintain the Town's business-focused website: investhaltonhills.com
- 1200 local, regional and international business contacts entered into a new contacts database to assist with business retention and expansion initiatives
- Produced the Town's first-ever industry sector and community demographic profiles, including:
 - State of Economy (spring 2018)
 - Demographic Profile
 - Business Community Snapshot
 - 4 Industry Sector Profiles



8. Priorities for Q1 2019

- Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Strategy
- Community Improvement Plan (CIP) - program update
- Manufacturing Expansion Fund grant - program update
- Tourism Workshop (see section 5)

- Continued implementation of the Halton Hills – Wenjiang sister-city Action Plan
- Continued marketing of Halton Hills as a prime investment location
- State of Culture report (e.g. Cultural Master Plan, Public Art Master Plan, Culture Days, Helson Gallery)