

The Town of Grimsby  
Economic Development  
**Strategic Action Plan**  
**2022-2025**  
Summary

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SEPTEMBER 2022



TOWN OF  
**GRIMSBY**

[grimsby.ca](http://grimsby.ca)



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# Message from the Mayor & Council

Council's shared vision established the first economic development office and proactively developed a new Strategic Action Plan focusing on the strategic priority of Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E).

To ensure responsible growth and the creation of new employment opportunities, Council hired the first Economic Development Officer (EDO) in 2020. In the fall of 2021, the EDO and the Grimsby Economic Development Advisory Committee (GEDAC) Working Group undertook the task of developing a Strategic Action Plan that would be achievable and relevant. Due to the pandemic, the Town of Grimsby focused on a three-year plan that would strengthen the Town's economic development activities. The three-year Strategic Action Plan would serve as a foundation for an expanded economic development strategy in the future.

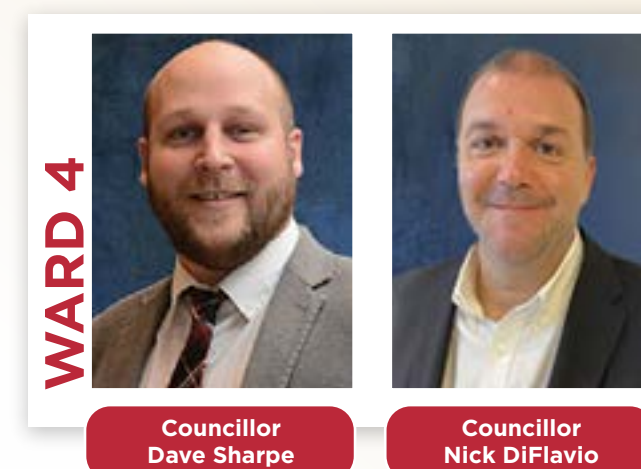
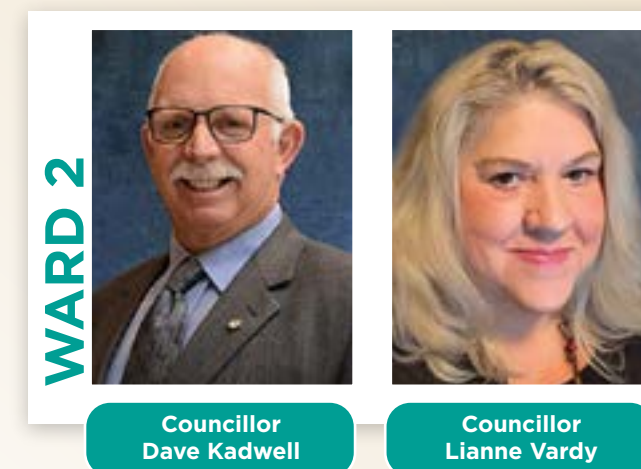
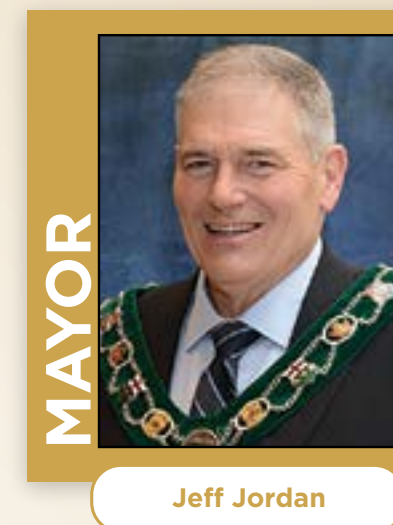
Over the course of the next three years, the Strategic Action Plan will help prioritize and guide the Town's economic development efforts by identifying the Town's challenges and opportunities, and how to effectively address them. Council is proud of to have laid the groundwork to support and strengthen responsible growth of our local economy through this plan.

Through an extensive consultation process, economic analysis, business focus groups, and surveys, five (5) strategic goals were identified as important to the current and future needs of Grimsby's economic development:

1. **Support Business Retention & Expansion**
2. **Workforce Development & Alignment**
3. **Business Attraction & Investment Readiness**
4. **Collaborative Marketing**
5. **Support Innovation, Entrepreneurship, & Home-Based Businesses**

These strategic goals are supported with 13 objectives and 35 action items.

While the strategy will be advanced by the EDO, it is recognized that successful implementation will be the result of collaboration among stakeholders and partners, including businesses, educational institutions, governments, and community organizations. Businesses go where they are invited; they stay and expand where they are well treated. This is our focus to prosperity.



# Strategic Action Plan Overview



Grimsby aerial view.



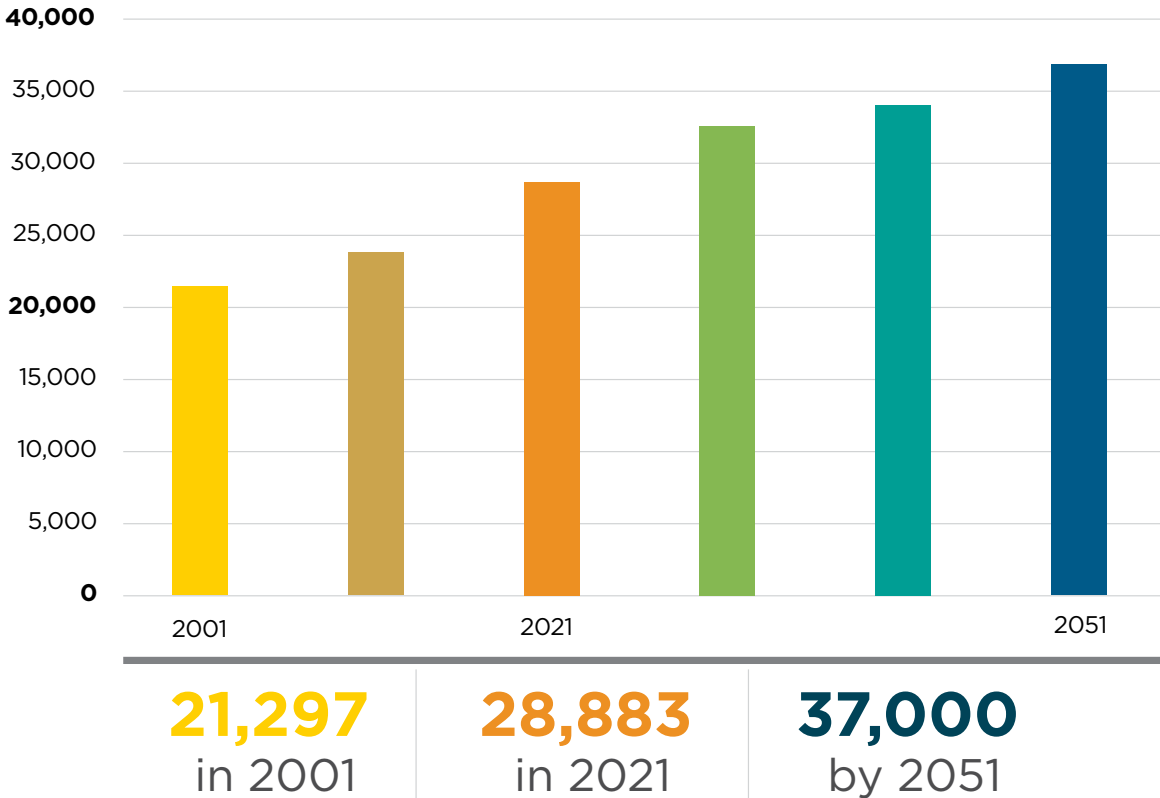
Waterfront Pedestrian Bridge.

The Town of Grimsby's Council is focused on improving the quality of life for its residents, while supporting a vibrant and strong local economy.

#### The Strategic Action Plan was derived from the three-phase methodology:

1. **Where are we now?** The economic base analysis was developed by the Niagara Workforce Planning Board (NWPB). The Board analyzed trends and existing factors related to population, demographics, income, education, workforce, industry, and business.
2. **Where do we want to go?** This phase focused on consultations with the business community and stakeholders, which included the Business Retention & Expansion report, Business Roundtable Workshops, GEDAC Working Group Workshops, and one-on-one interviews with members of Council. The results of these consultations formed the basis of where Grimsby's economic development needs to go.
3. **How do we get there?** The team developed goals, objectives and action items through a critical evaluation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOTs). This assessment helped to create the strategic goals, objectives and specific action items of the Strategic Action Plan.

# Population Projection



# Location

from Grimsby



# Employment



Health Care/  
Social Services  
**1,460 Jobs**

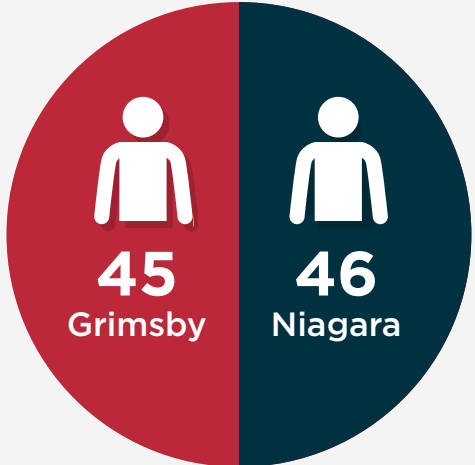


Food and Beverage  
**690 Jobs**



Manufacturing  
**1,088 Jobs**

# Median Age (Years)



# Household Income (average)

Grimsby  
**\$92,038**

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Niagara Region  
**\$72,105**



# Workforce



Access to over **600,000** workers within a 30 km radius

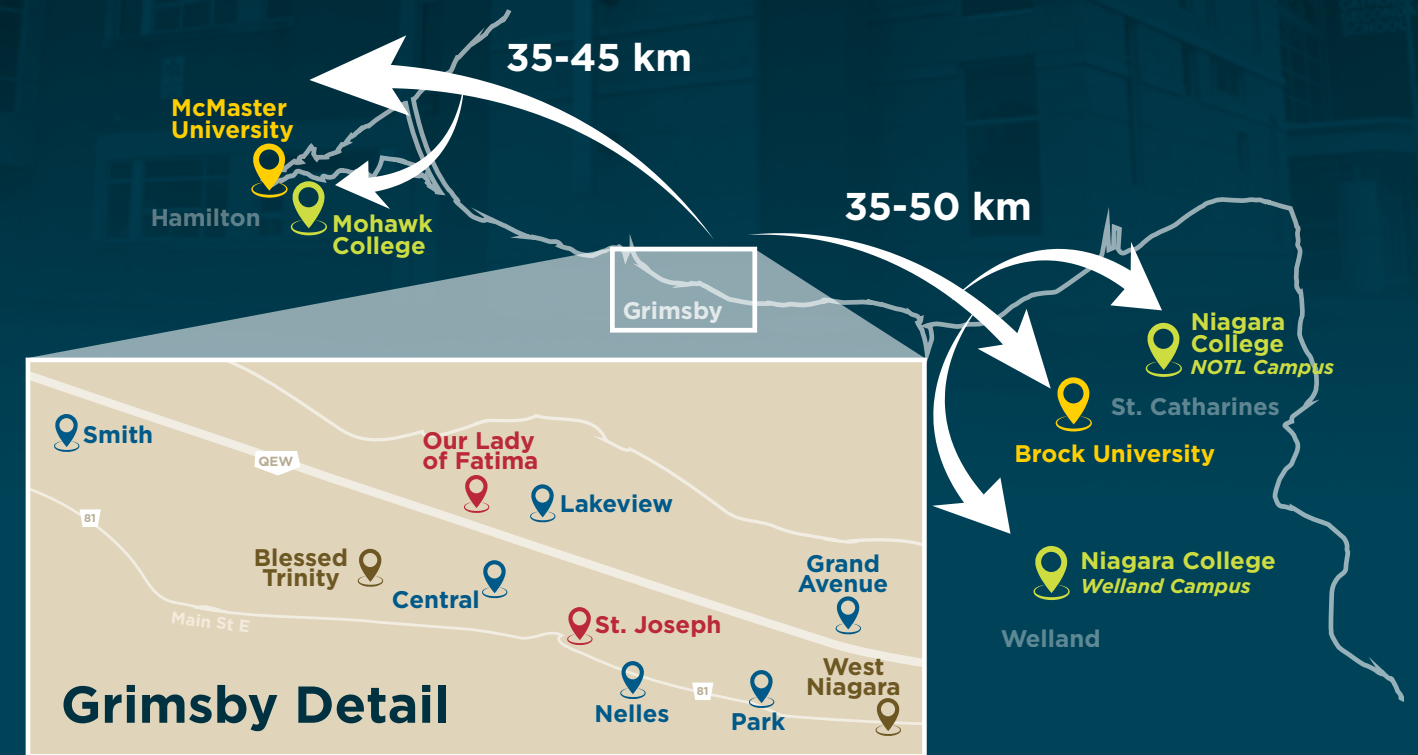
# West Lincoln Memorial Hospital

OPENING 2025



3D rendering of the new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, opening 2025.

# Schools



Blessed Trinity Secondary School.

## Elementary Schools

### Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB)

- Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School
- St. Joseph Catholic School

### District School Board of Niagara (DSBN)

- Central Public School
- Grand Avenue Public School
- Lakeview Public School
- Nelles Public School
- Park Public School
- Smith Public School

## Secondary Schools

### Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB)

- Blessed Trinity Secondary School

### District School Board of Niagara (DSBN)

- West Niagara Secondary School

# Transit

**GO Transit Train Station Site  
and Niagara Bus Transit Hub**  
(Casablanca Blvd. and QEW)

# Strategic Directions

Goals, Objectives & Actions



Andrew Peller Ltd. - One of Canada's largest wineries.



Cimcorp - Modernizing Intralogistics with software-driven automation.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

### 1. Support Business Retention & Expansion



As identified through the BR&E survey and Business Roundtable discussions, the importance of reaching out to the business community through a business visitation program will support the retention and expansion of jobs. This is an essential and fundamental priority for the Town's economic development program. Over 90% of new jobs created in a community come from existing businesses. Grimsby needs to develop proactive relationships with existing businesses to help remove barriers that prevent or delay plans for growth. The need to reduce red tape to facilitate new investment and expansion was also an opportunity identified during the strategy consultations.

#### Objectives:

1. Proactively improve partnerships with the local business community by implementing an ongoing monthly business visitation program of 2-3 businesses per month
2. Establish quarterly information and networking events starting in 2023
3. Support Downtown and Grimsby on the Lake businesses through shop local campaigns
4. Streamline and facilitate the planning approvals process on business expansions by 2024
5. Explore by-law changes to increase industrial lot coverage in Grimsby by 2024

#### Actions:

- Initiate business visitation program
- Implement a customer tracking tool
- Develop information network events with the businesses and development community
- Collaborate with business associations to attract tourism
- Enhance the Digital Main Street Program
- Strengthen the concierge program
- Explore greater lot coverage for businesses





Precision Metalworks Inc. - Custom Machining & Fabricating.



Gift Shop at Forty Creek Distillery.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## 2. Workforce Development & Alignment



Data suggests that employment levels will rebound in 2022 to pre-COVID levels; however, there is and continues to be a skills gap in regards to the labour force seeking employment and the type of work available. Employers cite a deficit in technology capabilities, interpersonal and communication skills, and organizational management. Skills shortages are also a result of many students pursuing careers in fields that have very limited opportunities.

To help address the workforce development needs of Grimsby, there is a need to align regional and local organizations with employers to establish a Workforce Development Alliance Group (WDAG) focused on identifying the gaps and possible solutions. The WDAG can advocate for policies and programs that will develop a highly-skilled talent pipeline to ensure continued economic growth in our region. Partnerships between educators and employers, whether they be internship or apprenticeship opportunities, curriculum development collaboration, cooperative education programs or other forms of experiential learning, are vital to strengthening pathways to success and providing opportunity for students.

**Objectives:**

1. Establish a Workforce Development Alliance Group by engaging local employers to be receptive to working with educational institutions and support student co-ops and bring students into the workplace by 2023
2. Strengthen public transportation mobility through the Niagara Transit Commission and the GO Transit Train Station by opening communication and status with Metrolinx and the Niagara Region by 2023

**Actions:**

- Create a Workforce Development Alliance Group
- Advance and promote the GO Transit Train Station and the Niagara Bus Transit Hub at Casablanca and QEW



Outdoor advertisement for GO Transit Train Station in Grimsby.



Precision Rolls Inc. - High-Quality Custom-Manufactured Rolls, and Industrial Components.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

**3. Business Attraction & Investment Readiness**



The attraction of new investment is challenging for most small communities. Given that Niagara Economic Development is the lead in the attraction of foreign and Greater Toronto Area (GTA) investments, Grimsby will focus on business retention and expansion. By supporting the Niagara partnership, Grimsby's value proposition and opportunities will strengthen the Town's chances to attract new investment. To compete for the attention of sophisticated investors who make decisions based on their business needs, available infrastructure supports, and the flexibility and ease of local planning and development processes, Grimsby must have the necessary tools and information to meet their demands and be positioned to win new investment opportunities.



VTR Feeder Solutions - Online Feeder Manufacturer.

**Objectives:**

1. Leverage West Lincoln Memorial Hospital by exploring the development of a health campus by 2025
2. Identify local Agri-tourism opportunities and determine value
3. Explore film and television sector by leveraging the Region's film program

**Actions:**

1. Create an Advisory Group to explore the development of a health campus
2. Develop a bike trail e-brochure with neighbouring municipalities
3. Collaborate with the Region to explore film and television industry investments



## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

### 4. Collaborative Marketing



The Town of Grimsby's current slogan is "Friendly by Nature"; however, it has not been widely adopted or promoted so that the slogan is intrinsically associated with the Town. Grimsby should engage a branding/marketing firm to shape an economic development brand that builds on the Town's notable convergence. The key to branding is differentiation; ensuring Grimsby promotes itself as a unique entity in comparison to neighbouring communities. Brand development will also require a multi-year marketing plan, at the centre of which will be a notable economic development website presence.

Grimsby must be investment-ready prior to launching a marketing program. Generating investment interest and not providing the information required by the investors would be detrimental and a waste of resources.

#### Objective:

1. Develop an information database and collateral material to attract, retain and expand businesses

#### Actions:

- Develop a Community Profile to attract prospective investors
- Facilitate joint promotional and marketing activities
- Review Grimsby's brand
- Strengthen Grimsby's digital presence
- Develop a Business Ambassador Program



Handling Specialty - Custom Material Handling Equipment.

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## 5. Support Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Home Businesses



Firms that innovate more consistently employ more workers, demand higher skills, pay higher wages, and offer more stable prospects for their workforce. Innovation and entrepreneurship are interlinked and Grimsby has a growing entrepreneurial environment that can foster innovation. The innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem that enables micro-enterprises to scale up is active in Niagara and should be expanded to Grimsby.

#### Objectives:

1. Explore the opportunity to engage the St. Catharines Enterprise Centre and bring Entrepreneurship services to West Niagara in 2024
2. Encourage home-based business growth and expansion by attracting Co-Working spaces for start-ups by 2023

#### Actions:

- Explore co-sharing Entrepreneurship services
- Position Grimsby as a home-based entrepreneurial hub
- Strengthen the zoning by-law to support home-based businesses



Boone Dog Office Spaces - Meeting Center and Coworking Space.

# Emerging Sectors



Grimsby will need to focus on sectors that demonstrate the possibility of supporting local expansions and/or prospects considering new business locations. While Grimsby does not have a notable concentration of employment among digital technologies representing future job growth, over the next three to five years the community is likely to emerge as a more prominent location for firms in the professional and financial services space. Grimsby has already attracted head-quarters and satellite operations for professional offices (DeSantis Homes and Salit Steel) because of its prominent location straddling the GTA and Niagara. Access will increase when the new GO Transit Train Station is built in the near future.

## Three emerging sectors have been identified for potential growth opportunities in Grimsby.

1. Health and Science
2. Film Industry
3. Agricultural-Food & Beverage

Grimsby's challenge is to ensure dedicated economic development resources are allocated to fully implement the action plan and beyond for these emerging sectors.

# Measuring Results

Charts and graphs showing data results.



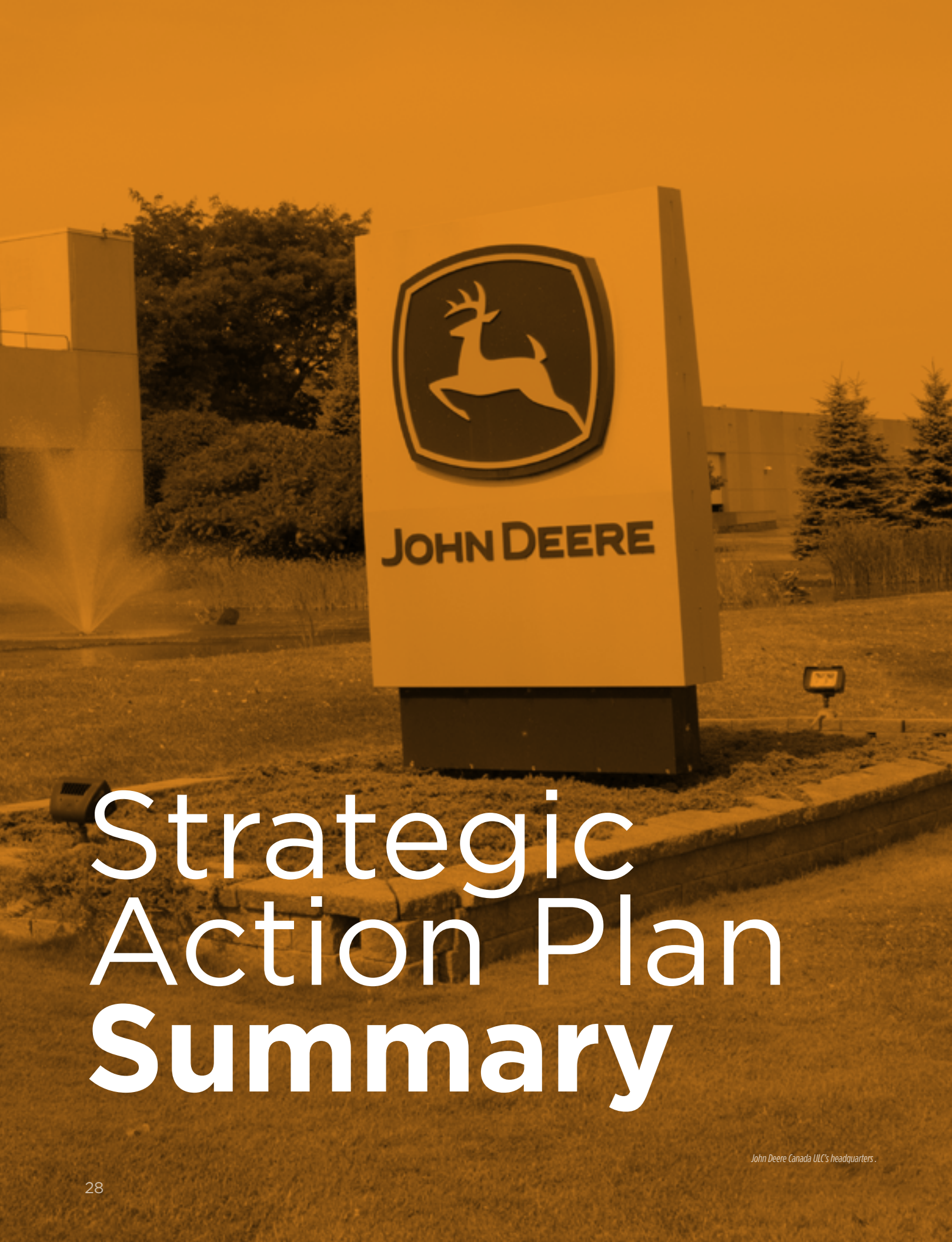
Budget and other financial data.

The goal of local economic development activities is to strengthen and improve the quality of life of a community. Specific action plans are aligned with a performance measurement plan that will be reported annually.

The monitoring process includes periodic evaluations of each action plan performance and an evaluation of the cumulative costs, benefits, and degree of goal attainment of the economic development program. If unfavorable results are identified during the implementation of an action, further review and possible implementation of remedies will be required.

## Economic development indicators:

1. Population growth
2. Employment growth
3. Total investments
4. Business expansions
5. New businesses
6. Increase in Industrial & Commercial Tax Ratio Percentage
7. Business visits



# Strategic Action Plan Summary

John Deere Canada ULC's headquarters.

## 1. Support Business Retention & Expansion



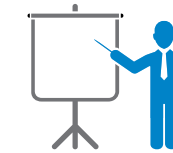
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## 2. Workforce Development & Alignment



- Create a Workforce Development Alliance Group
- Advance and promote the GO Transit Train Station and Niagara Bus Transit Hub

## 3. Business Attraction & Investment Readiness



- Create an Advisory Group to explore the development of a health campus
- Develop a bike trail e-brochure with neighbouring municipalities
- Collaborate with the Region to explore film and television industry investments

## 4. Collaborative Marketing



- Develop a Community Profile to attract prospective investors
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- Strengthen Grimsby's digital presence
- Develop a Business Ambassador Program

## 5. Support Innovation, Entrepreneurship, & Home-Based Businesses



- Explore co-sharing entrepreneurship services
- Position Grimsby as a home-based entrepreneurial hub
- Strengthen the zoning by-law to support home-based businesses



## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many businesses and volunteers who took the time to provide insight, share ideas, and participated in the development of the Economic Development Strategic Action Plan. Staff and Council appreciate your commitment and input which will play a key role in promoting sustainable economic growth in Grimsby.

Grimsby's Economic Development Office would also like to thank GEDAC members and staff who played a crucial role in the development of the Strategic Action Plan.

### Grimsby Economic Development Advisory Committee

Councillor Dave Kadwell - Chair  
Councillor Kevin Ritchie  
Alejandra Wichartz - Chair, Economic Development Working Group  
Richard Dunda  
Michael Marini  
Rebecca Shelley - Chamber of Commerce Liaison  
Michael Williscraft - Downtown Improvement Area Liaison

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[grimsby.ca](http://grimsby.ca)