

Economic Development Strategy

FINAL REPORT

2021-2026





Page 4 **INVESTMENT
READINESS AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**



Page 8 **INVESTMENT
ATTRACTION**



Page 12 **BUSINESS
RETENTION AND
EXPANSION**



Page 16 **ENTREPRENEURSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**



Page 20 **ENHANCED
COMMUNICATIONS**

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Town of East Gwillimbury recognizes and acknowledges the lands originally used and occupied by the First Peoples of the Williams Treaties First Nations and other Indigenous Peoples, and on behalf of the mayor and council, we would like to thank them for sharing this land.

We would also like to acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as East Gwillimbury's closest First Nation community and recognize the unique relationship the Chippewas have with the lands and waters of this territory. They are the water protectors and environmental stewards of these lands, and we join them in these responsibilities.

Artwork by Lauri Hoeg



EAST GWILLIMBURY CIVIC CENTRE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of East Gwillimbury's Economic Development Strategy (2021–2026) established a clear roadmap to guide local economic growth, business development, and job creation.

The strategy was structured around five strategic priorities: Investment Readiness and Infrastructure, Investment Attraction, Business Retention and Expansion, Entrepreneurship Development, and Enhanced Communications. Together, this provided a comprehensive framework to strengthen the Town's economic position, improve competitiveness, and align the Town's actions with community needs.

The Town has made significant and measurable progress in advancing these priorities, most notably in the form of over 150 new business openings, over 2,000 local jobs, and a foundation for ongoing and future investment attraction and business support.

The actions taken in support of the strategy occurred alongside a period of rapid growth and change in our community, and align with the goals within Council's strategic plan, including economic sustainability, responsible growth, and a vibrant local economy. This progress provides a strong direction as the Town develops its next Economic Development Strategy.

Ensuring the Town is prepared to attract and secure non-residential investment.

INVESTMENT PACKAGE

In order to support investor due diligence, a detailed investment package was developed, including several pieces of information key to decision making. This includes a document introducing investors to EG's value proposition, target sector profiles, data on each of EG's commercial areas, and an in-depth community profile detailing demographic and statistical information.



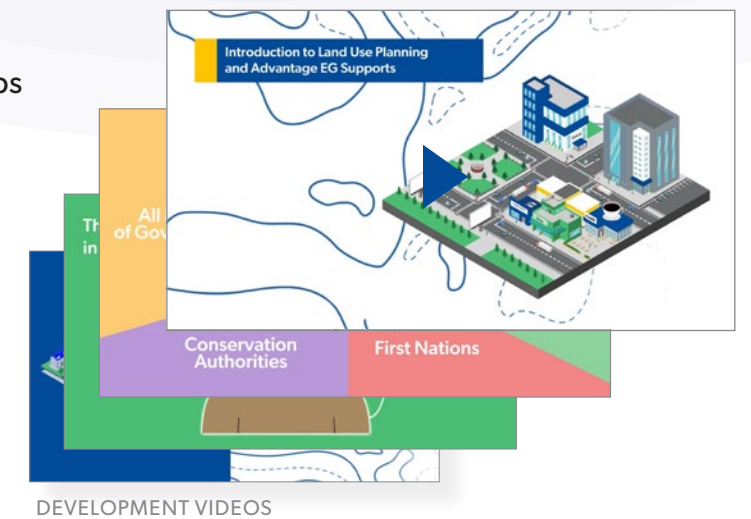
TARGET SECTOR PROFILES

The target sector profiles share key data including business and job counts, prominent local employers, and opportunities in EG across the Agriculture and Agri-Food, Building and Construction, Warehousing and Logistics, and Manufacturing sectors, with an additional Healthcare profile under development following the recent hospital announcement.

SECTOR PROFILES

DEVELOPMENT VIDEO SERIES

A video series was developed detailing key steps in the development process aimed at business owners and entrepreneurs that wish to expand and develop, but lack the experience in doing so. The videos introduce concepts relating to the Planning and Building processes, as well as Economic Development supports.



EG SPEED TEST PORTAL

NEW SPEED TEST PORTAL

The Town continues its advocacy work to expand internet access across EG, launching a speed test portal in partnership with the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) to gather data on areas lacking suitable service. Over 500 speed tests have been completed in the first two months since launch.

YORKNET'S FIBRE NETWORK EXPANSION

YorkNet has also continued to expand across York Region towards its goal of over 1,600 kilometres of fibre coverage. New service connections are expected in both Queensville and Mount Albert in the near future through its service delivery partner, Galaxy Fibre.



96% Estimated broadband connectivity in EG

ADVANTAGE EG PROJECT MANAGEMENT

EG’s Economic Development team successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of the Advantage EG approach by leading a cross-departmental project management team to expedite the Metrus industrial development visible from Green Lane and Highway 404.

The development includes two large buildings and will be home to a variety of industrial tenants, including Scholastic Canada, bringing jobs and investment to EG.



The applicant’s ambitious timelines presented unique challenges that required coordination with provincial agencies and municipal neighbours in Newmarket to the south. By regularly bringing together both the Town and Metrus teams to navigate the development process and engage external agencies, such as the Ministry of Transportation and Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority, staff ensured that Metrus was able to meet their tight timelines for obtaining building permits, and construction is now largely complete.

“The Town demonstrated a cooperative and solution-oriented approach and continues to be a pleasure to work with going forward.”

METRUS PROPERTIES

The project is expected, at full build out and occupancy, to generate hundreds of local job opportunities and significant non-residential taxation, which helps to balance the Town’s tax base and relieve pressures on residential taxation.



METRUS PROPERTIES

2022



16,130

2025



**Total number
of jobs in EG**

18,264

This has surpassed EG’s 2031 projection found in
York Region Official Plan of 16,500

Attracting new jobs and investment dollars to the Town.



TCS GROUP

WOODBINE AVE LANDOWNER COORDINATION

The Economic Development team actively builds relationships and works alongside the development and real estate communities to highlight individual site opportunities for lease and sale. This includes identifying landowner intentions, infrastructure gaps, and opportunities for collaboration, especially in the employment area along Woodbine Ave. In 2025, staff brought together over 15 landowners in the southern portion of the Woodbine employment lands to discuss these opportunities, with the goal of continuing the development momentum in the corridor. Several follow up meetings have since occurred.



LOBLAW DISTRIBUTION CENTRE

MATCHMAKING ENTREPRENEURS WITH NEW COMMERCIAL SPACE

Due to EG's low commercial vacancy rate (3.8% as of 2025), Economic Development continues to act as a matchmaker between small businesses seeking space and developments offering pre-construction opportunities. This demonstrates both the demand for new commercial space in the community, and opportunity for new business offerings. EG currently maintains a list of over 20 entrepreneurs seeking space for their operations.

Approximately



Over \$207 Million

in non-residential permit value since 2024



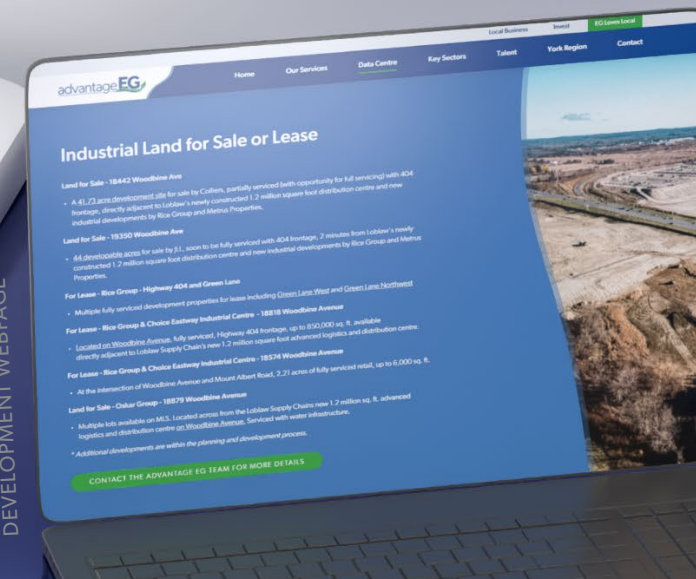
Queensville

HOSPITAL SITE SELECTION

The team played a key role in the attraction of Southlake Health's second hospital site, working together with Council, the Green Earth Village team and Town staff to ensure that key development-related information was shared with Southlake. This ultimately led to the identification and selection of the hospital site in Queensville.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES WEBPAGE

As part of the AdvantageEG.ca website refresh, a new section has been created within the Invest section highlighting recent and future developments, opportunities for pre-construction business matching, and vacant land opportunities across the community.





442,000 sqft

NEW INVESTMENTS IN EG

METRUS PROPERTIES

Industrial facilities on Ringwell Drive



1,200,000 sqft

SHARON CORNERS RETIREMENT

Retirement residence on Mount Albert Road



204 suites

LOBLAW AND WITRON

Advanced distribution and logistics facility on Woodbine Avenue



12 acres

KELSON

Fabrication facility on Woodbine Avenue



75,000 sqft

CONVERTUS GROUP

Biofuel facility on Garfield Wright Drive



45,000 sqft

GREENWORKS TOOLS

Office, warehouse, and showroom on Toll Road



313,000 sqft

TCS GROUP

Steel manufacturing facility on Sluse Road



MAYOR VIRGINIA HACKSON



PREMIER DOUG FORD



A NEW REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN EAST GWILLIMBURY

In April 2026, Premier Doug Ford announced Southlake Health's second acute care hospital in East Gwillimbury, as well as the redevelopment of the existing hospital in Newmarket. Together, these projects will connect more than 250,000 people across communities in northern York Region and southern Simcoe County to more convenient, high-quality care close to home.

Once opened, the new hospital would include:

- Expanded acute and post-acute care, including medicine, surgery, orthopedics, rehabilitation, maternal and child health, and pediatric mental health.
- Increased inpatient capacity to meet the community's future needs and allow more people to connect to care sooner.
- A new emergency department with diagnostic imaging and upgraded infection prevention and control measures.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Strengthening existing businesses by helping them to expand, innovate, and retain jobs.



BENJAMIN MOORE - THE CORNER DECOR PAINT & MORE

BUSINESS CELEBRATIONS PROGRAM

The business celebrations program has been reorganized to assist Council in recognizing local business milestones including grand openings, anniversaries, expansions, and relocations. The program now includes a coordinated intake process, business outreach, and coordination with Neighbour Media to capture the moment and create content to support the business, helping to enhance local business visibility and community connection.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

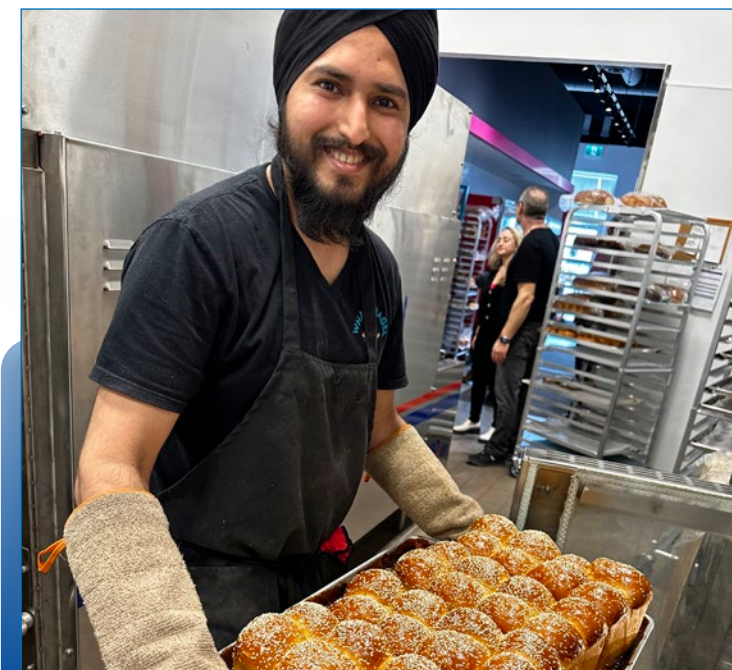


EG MEDICAL CENTRE

CONNECTING WITH EG'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The team acts as the Town's main point of contact with the business community, building and nurturing relationships with local businesses throughout their journey, from initial inquiries to opening, growth, and expansion. With over 1,700 business interactions since 2024 through direct outreach and one-on-one support, the team introduces available programs and resources, collects business data, identifies opportunities or challenges, and strengthens connections.

Over 
1,700
Business interactions
since 2024



WHAT A BAGEL

EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

EG has participated in the annual York Region Employment Survey, which supports direct outreach to hundreds of EG brick-and-mortar businesses. The survey collects key business and employment data used to monitor economic trends, identify business needs, and inform the Town's economic strategy.



BENNY'S BBQ



SHARON CORNERS



WHAT A BAGEL

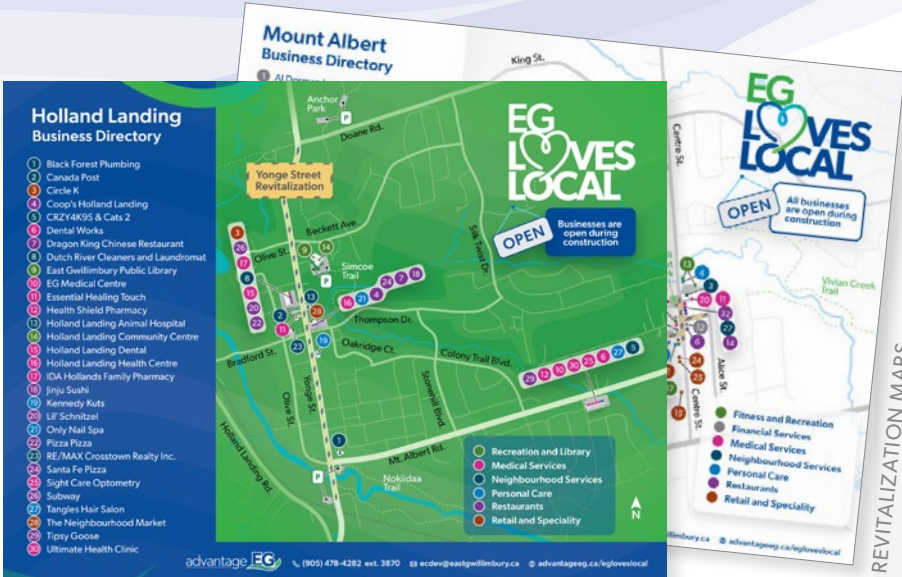


TCS GROUP

SUPPORTING DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

To help support businesses throughout the downtown revitalization projects in Holland Landing and Mount Albert, Economic Development has implemented a variety of promotional, marketing, mentorship, and business development initiatives designed to maintain visibility and connect businesses with resources and support.

Marketing and promotional supports include ongoing digital billboard advertising and paid social media campaigns promoting the EG Loves Local brand, print advertising in local media, business directory maps, and business videos. All of these initiatives reinforce that businesses remain open and accessible throughout construction.



HOLLAND LANDING DOWNTOWN

Business advisory and mentorship support includes free time for local entrepreneurs with various business advisors and subject matter experts, and the YSpace Business Boost program, offering support for Google Business Profiles, improved search engine optimization, and social media assistance.

Financial and networking supports are provided through both Southlake Futures, who are offering micro loan programs of up to \$25,000 for façade improvements, signage, and equipment, and the Central York Chamber of Commerce, who are offering membership discounts and ongoing support services.

These initiatives have been designed to help businesses remain visible, connected, and supported throughout the construction period while encouraging residents and visitors to continue shopping, dining, and supporting local businesses.



MOUNT ALBERT DOWNTOWN

Approximately **1.2M Square Feet**
Total retail and service square footage (June 2024)



SHARON PLAZA

Approximately **84%**
of all commercial space at intersection of Yonge & Green Lane



GREEN LANE PLAZA



GREEN LANE PLAZA

FOR LEASE

3.8%
Commercial vacancy rate

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Supporting entrepreneurs to start, scale, and sustain their businesses.



YSPACE PROGRAMMING AT THE DOANE HOUSE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT



CURATED THEMED BOXES

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Town partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to launch the EG Loves Local product box initiative, which curated themed boxes featuring products from local businesses and agricultural producers. The initiative supported more than 20 local businesses, generated over \$15,000 in sales, and resulted in more than 400 boxes sold to residents.

YSPACE PARTNERSHIP

The Town continued its award-winning YSpace partnership with York University and the Town of Georgina to deliver workshops, mentorship opportunities, and training focused on business growth. The program rotates through offerings that support business plan development, improving digital skills, and business foundations. Over 210 East Gwillimbury entrepreneurs have been supported since 2022.

183

Networking events and educational workshops since May 2022



A NEW HOME FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To support these program offerings, Economic Development relocated its operations to both the Doane House, and the Health and Active Living Plaza, utilizing these facilities to offer 1-to-1 mentorship and guidance, as well as small and large group sessions. Since the creation of the YSpace partnership in 2022, over 180 events have been hosted.

The YSpace program has supported over

210



in East Gwillimbury since May 2022

Entrepreneurs

1,247

Number of businesses with 1+ employees

1,089

2022

2025

14.5%
increase

Core Program Offerings

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR BUSINESS

Builds digital literacy for small business owners through practical training in marketing, social media, e-commerce and AI to improve visibility, customer reach and efficiency.

ENTREPRENEUR IN RESIDENCE (EIR)

Provides one-on-one advisory support from experienced business leaders to help entrepreneurs navigate strategy, growth and challenges at every stage.

PEER-TO-PEER WITH TECHCONNEX

Combines expert-led workshops with in-person networking to help business owners learn, connect and build meaningful partnerships.

BUSINESS PLAN BOOTCAMP

A hands-on program that helps early-stage entrepreneurs develop actionable business plans through guided workshops, peer sessions and mentorship.

“Turning complex AI capabilities into clear business outcomes that non-technical clients can actually understand—and say yes to. The East Gwillimbury and YSpace York-Simcoe community has been a big part of making that happen.”



Steven Yu
AHA SOLUTIONS
YSpace client since 2022

BUSINESS FOUNDATIONS (FOUNDERS FUNDAMENTALS)

Provides new business owners with essential skills in market research, finances and operations to confidently launch and manage their business.

YSPACE BUSINESS BOOST

Delivers hands-on, in-community support to help small businesses strengthen digital adoption, marketing and resilience while supporting downtown revitalization.

ROOT TO RISE WOMEN IN BUSINESS MINDSET COHORT

Empowers women entrepreneurs with advanced skills, tools and growth strategies through expert-led, outcome-focused sessions.

MENTOR MATCH

Connects entrepreneurs with experienced mentors to support growth, knowledge sharing and access to the right resources at the right time.

“I have been involved in YSpace York-Simcoe, Mentorship (assisting start ups with next steps), Workshops at Doane House and YSpace in Sutton and many events. The support has definitely positively impacted my business in more ways than I thought possible.”



Joanne Wiseberg
RED SCARF GIFT
YSpace client since 2022



YSPACE YORK-SIMCOE

Enhancing engagement with businesses through clear, targeted communication.

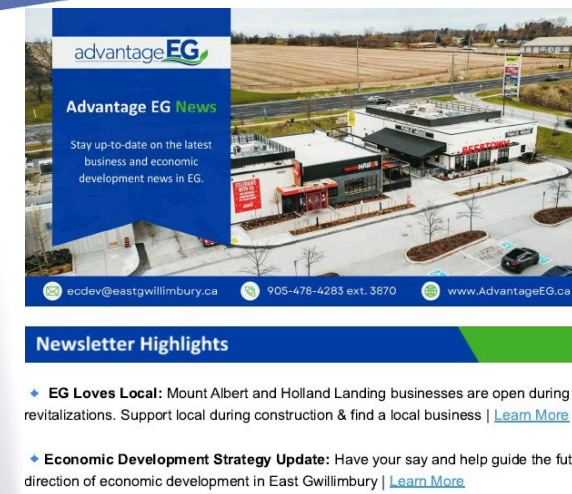
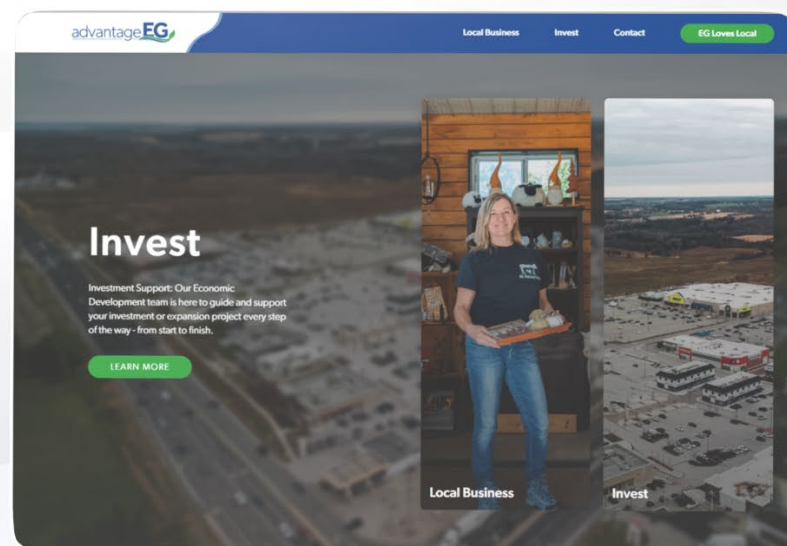
TRACKING BUSINESS INTERACTIONS

The team implemented a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and email marketing system to more closely track business interactions, and where development-related inquiries are within the pipeline (for example, performing due diligence, invested, offboarded). This has allowed the team to report on these items much more efficiently.



ADVANTAGEEG.CA WEBSITE REFRESH

As part of the AdvantageEG.ca website refresh, the Local Business and Invest sections were separated to ensure clients can find the information they need quickly and easily. The local business section identifies support partners, hosts a calendar of events, and shares news and successes from EG. The invest section highlights recent and future developments, opportunities for preconstruction leasing, and EG's investment package.



25+ Advantage EG newsletters sent per year since 2024

BUSINESS NEWSLETTER LAUNCH

A biweekly business newsletter was launched, which regularly shares events, funding programs, general Town information, business celebrations, and other opportunities over 25 times annually. The Economic Development contact database has grown over 130% since 2024 to over 1,100 contacts.

ADVANTAGE EG NEWSLETTER



MARKETING BROCHURE



EG LOVES LOCAL BROCHURE

1,100+ Business contacts in economic development database. Growth of 136% since 2024



**SIGN UP TO OUR
NEWSLETTER FOR
MORE INFORMATION**



Brennan Kenny

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**FOR INVESTMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT INQUIRIES**

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Brittny Stevenson-Byers

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**FOR LOCAL BUSINESS INQUIRIES,
INCLUDING THE YSPACE PROGRAM**

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