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Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Several abbreviations and acronyms are used to conserve space in the Town of Prescott Economic Development Strategy, including the following:

- Augusta = Township of Augusta
- Brockville = City of Brockville
- CSE = CSE Consulting (Employment Services)
- EODF = Eastern Ontario Development Fund¹
- EOMC = Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus²
- EORN = Eastern Ontario Regional Network³
- EOWC = Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus⁴
- EWIB = Eastern Workforce Innovation Board⁵
- FCLGL = Food Core Leeds Grenville Lanark⁶
- GCFDC = Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation⁷
- LGSBC = Leeds Grenville Small Business Centre⁸
- MEDJCT = Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
- OEEDCC = Ontario East Economic Development Commission⁹
- PBIA = Prescott Business Improvement Area¹⁰
- PC = Parks Canada¹¹
- PJ = Port of Johnstown
- RTO9 = Regional Tourism Organization 9 / South Eastern Ontario¹²
- SGCC = South Grenville Chamber of Commerce¹³
- SLC = St. Lawrence College¹⁴
- SLCEDC = St. Lawrence Corridor Economic Development Commission¹⁵
- SLRIP = St. Lawrence - Rideau Immigration Partnership¹⁶
- SOS = Save Ontario Shipwrecks
- TEC = Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal
- UCLG = United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

¹ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/eastern-ontario-development-fund>

² <https://eomc.ca/members/>

³ <https://www.eorn.ca/en/news/eastern-ontario-officials-respond-to-provincial-broadband-funding.aspx>

⁴ <http://www.eowc.org/en/index.aspx>

⁵ <http://www.workforcedev.ca/index.php/en/>

⁶ <http://www.foodcorelgl.ca/>

⁷ <https://www.grenvillecfdc.com/>

⁸ <https://www.lgsmallbusiness.com/about/>

⁹ <https://ontarioeast.ca/>

¹⁰ <https://downtownprescott.ca/>

¹¹ <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/wellington>

¹² <https://southeasternontario.ca/>

¹³ <https://www.southgrenvillechamber.ca/>

¹⁴ <https://www.stlawrencecollege.ca/>

¹⁵ <https://slcedc.com/home/>

¹⁶ <http://www.leedsgrenvilleimmigration.ca/>



Executive Summary





A new crossroads

The Town of Prescott is at an economic development crossroads.

For millennia, Indigenous peoples have lived and traded in this area, followed three centuries ago by the French and British. International trade, logistics, and travellers have long been Prescott's bread and butter. Today, the town sits on an intersection of international road, rail, and marine shipping.

A pandemic has scrambled the known and the expected, jarred global supply chains, and disrupted society and business in ways no one saw coming. Prescott Town Council has wisely chosen this moment in time to pause at the economic development crossroads, to take in the situation and circumstances, to listen to local voices, and to plan the next steps toward economic prosperity.

Through an analysis of the local and regional economy and extensive engagement with businesses and citizens, the Town of Prescott has developed this Economic Development Strategy. Strengths, obstacles, aspirations, and risks have been considered, scenarios painted, and ideas examined. The process exposed enthusiasm among leaders of the Prescott business community, resolve among members of Town Council, and a passion for this community among its residents.

Keeping businesses top of mind

The needs of existing businesses are the needs of the local economy. Supporting them provides the highest return on investment to the community by ensuring existing businesses flourish. By keeping businesses top of mind, Prescott can improve investment attraction activities and generate new opportunities. That means understanding employers even better and elevating the good business relations that currently exist between companies and the municipality.

Continuing the RiverWalk revival

Placemaking and the visitor economy are increasingly being recognized as important factors in the economic performance of communities. By continuing to revive the downtown core and waterfront – the RiverWalk District – Prescott can build a variety of on-trend experiences that residents and visitors enjoy. Moves made over the last decade to improve the area are excellent, building on assets already in place. Businesses support downtown revitalization, and citizens are willing to share their space with visitors if the sense of place continues to improve.

Attracting new citizens, workers, dollars

Millions of commuters, business executives, tourists, and dollars by-pass Prescott every year. By fully capitalizing on this the 21st Century crossroads, the Town can expand its reputation as a place to build a business, a safe community to raise a family, and a destination to host tourists. By choosing to welcome new investment, the Town can diversify and grow the local economy in complementary sectors, grow the workforce and population base, and fully leverage community assets. Prescott should take a long, hard look at what differentiates it from other communities and focus on that authentic value.



The time is now to move Prescott to the next level through actions and tactics that are tangible and measurable. Three specific plans emerged from the strategic planning exercise:

Targets, technology, communications

Improvements in targeting, technology and communications will take Prescott's business retention and expansion (BR+E) tactics to the next level. This important area of economic development work includes identifying the supply chain opportunities of major employers and high-growth companies, tracking key performance indicators, and communicating regularly. Providing unparalleled support to businesses and aligning programs and resources are just two critical areas to be reviewed. The creation of an Economic Development Squad for the Town, made up of innovative, community-minded business owners, will also aid business retention and expansion.

Readiness, partnership, and collaboration

The Town of Prescott must take a sophisticated approach to attract investment, given that almost all of the land in the jurisdiction has been developed. Attracting new residential development by infilling existing space or partnering on new subdivisions in Augusta Township will strengthen the nucleus of commerce that Prescott already has. By collaborating with other regional partners and upgrading its tools and protocols, the Town can make itself more ready for investment.

Being genuine matters

In a post-pandemic age, what keeps Prescott genuine will be the catalyst to investment flowing into the community. The identity of the town and how it is perceived beyond its borders play enormous roles in the financial choices of potential investors, visitors, and residents. When the Town fortifies the image of Prescott as an exciting, cool, safe place, it strengthens people's sense of belonging to that place. Tourism marketing and resident attraction plans must be centred around fostering new and improved businesses, offering authentic experiences that build community and attract visitors and promoting Prescott's stories and images.

Moving forward

At every crossroads on the path to the future, tradition places ten thousand men to guard the past, said Nobel laureate Maurice Maeterlinck. Implementing an economic development strategy requires bravery and dedication. It means battling the reticence of the risk-averse. People have dreams and hopes, but they also resist change. That challenge can be any town's biggest hurdle. However, with a firm foundation and realistic expectations, the Town of Prescott is ready to navigate the labyrinth of crossroads ahead, to move forward on its economic path to the future.



Overview





Project Objectives and Methodology

Economic development is the process of supporting a community's growth, adapting to change, converting weaknesses into strengths, and seizing opportunities. The critical components of new development and investment attraction are investment readiness and land development. The consulting team has worked to identify the highest return on investment for the Town's lands and lay out the steps to achieve the desired growth.

The goal of the project was to create a strategic framework that helps strengthen the region's economic base and contribute to sustainable prosperity for all. The Economic Development Strategy sets the future direction for economic development activities, aiming to increase opportunities for growth of existing businesses and establishing new firms and generate more high-quality employment opportunities.

The Town of Prescott and the Township of Augusta commissioned two distinct five-year Economic Development Strategies and a joint Land Development/Needs Analysis. The project methodology proceeded in four phases, including initiation, research and analysis, engagement, and development and reporting of strategic objectives and action plans.

This document is Prescott's Economic Development Strategy, and under separate covers are Augusta's Economic Development Strategy, and the Land Development/Needs Analysis.

Authoring the documents were MDB Insight, EVB Engineering, Fotenn Planning + Design, and FBM, experienced economic development, engineering, planning, and market research firms.



PROJECT INITIATION

Project Launch Meeting
Project Charter



1

2



PHASE 2: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Background and Governing Policies Review
Baseline Economic Analysis and Forecast and Supply Chain Assessment
Investment Readiness Assessment
Existing Land Supply and Infill / Expansion Opportunities
Demand Forecasting

PHASE 3: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

Workshop with Municipal Council
Stakeholder One-on-One Interviews
Community Visits
Community Workshop
Business Survey

Case Studies of Service Extensions
Timeframe and Approval Paths
Alignment with Economic Development Goals
SOARR Assessment



3

4



PHASE 4: HOW TO GET THERE?

Selection of Future Directions Workshop & Feedback Sessions
Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan
Business Retention and Expansion Plan
Tourism/Residential Investment and Marketing Plan
Investment Attraction Plan

Final Council Presentation



Economic Conditions & Analysis





Background Review

The first step of the Town of Prescott Economic Development Strategy was the review of 24 or more relevant strategic and policy documents to understand common issues of concern. The review included impacts of COVID-19, leading research related to development issues, technology impacts, and talent attraction. Key topics were catalogued to observe patterns which are summarized below.

Location Advantages

Reports by the United Counties of Leeds & Grenville (UCLG) and St. Lawrence Corridor highlighted key advantages of locating in the region. For businesses choosing to locate or expand in Prescott, the proximity to strong logistical assets (St. Lawrence Seaway, Port of Johnstown, Highway 401 and 416, and rail lines) for transportation and distribution are seen as strong competitive advantages.

Investment Readiness

Prescott's Strategic Plan outlines that vacant land adjacent to Highway 401 is prime for industrial and commercial development, adding that the Town should market this land and be ready for a wide range of possible uses. Residential development was highlighted as a major need for the Town to expand.

Tourism Development

The attraction of new hotels next to Highway 401 or the waterfront was a key point in Prescott's Strategic Plan. Prescott's Strategic Plan recommended completing a tourism asset inventory, improving the flexibility of land-use policies, and enhancing collaboration between Town departments, community organizations, and neighbouring municipalities.

Enhance Quality of Life and Place

Prescott's Strategic Plan emphasizes the goal to reduce the number of vacant storefronts and increase activity in the downtown by supporting events and activities and developing the linkages with the waterfront RiverWalk District. Prescott's Downtown Revitalization Strategy proposed a bold step forward for downtown revitalization, either a large theatre tent or a mixed-used building along the river.

Regional Collaboration

Collaborating within the region is a repeating theme in several documents, especially the Corridor 2030 Report, which identifies Electrical Component Manufacturing as a key priority to rebuild the economy after years of job losses. Three major employers in the region – including Northern Cables and Measurements International of Prescott and Motor Coils Mfg. of Brockville – could be leveraged to grow opportunities through regional collaboration. The international bridge to Ogdensburg and that city's airport and Foreign Trade Zone may leverage opportunities in the U.S.

Workforce Development

The Corridor 2030 Report mentioned that Prescott and neighbouring communities could be excellent destinations for new immigrants to Canada. Business investment opportunities such as restaurants, farms, and small businesses could be identified with a goal to interest newcomers. The UCLG region's excellent work/life balance should be emphasized to attract and retain young families in the area.



Baseline Economic Analysis and Forecast

Detailed information about the Town of Prescott's demographics and economic data can be found in Section 3 of the separate Joint Technical Report.

Population

Prescott's population is expected to increase to 4,471 by 2030, a 6% increase from 2016. This forecast growth rate is faster than Augusta Township (-1%) and Brockville (2%) but slower than UCLG (9%) or the Province (21%).

Housing

Prescott has a more diverse housing mix with 33.5% of its housing stock being row houses and apartments, compared to Augusta (1%), Brockville (41%), UCLG (18%), and the Province (39%). The average value of dwellings in Prescott was \$240,720 in 2020¹⁷, the least expensive of comparator jurisdictions.

Ethnic Diversity

The share of Prescott's total population that is considered as visible minorities is 1.2%. The rate for UCLG is 2.3%, Augusta 2.5%, Brockville 4%, and the Province 29.5%.

Income

Prescott's average household income was \$64,725¹⁸ in 2020, lower than all comparator jurisdictions. 15% of Prescott households earned \$100,000 and over, compared to Brockville, 21%; UCLG, 31%; Augusta, 35%; and the Province, 37%.

Education

45% of Prescott's working-age population have some post-secondary education, which is similar to Brockville (48%) but lower than Augusta (54%), UCLG (52%), and the Province (55%).

Labour Force

Prescott's labour force grew by 7.4% between 2016 to 2020, more than Augusta (3%), Brockville (4.8%), but less than UCLG (7.6%) or the Province (10%). The largest sectoral changes in jobs in Prescott are outlined below.

¹⁷ Source: Manifold Data Mining Inc., 2020.

¹⁸ Source: Manifold Data Mining Inc., 2020.



Finance & Insurance
+80% (24 jobs)



Professional / Tech
+29% (23 jobs)



Wholesale
+45% (18 jobs)



Manufacturing
+10% (18 jobs)



Agriculture / Forestry
-40% (-6 jobs)



Accommodation & Food
-5% (-6 jobs)



Construction
-3% (-4 jobs)

Industry Competitiveness and Business Counts

Areas of comparative sector strength relative to Ontario include electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing and truck transportation. 500+ businesses are registered in Prescott. 59% are sole proprietors without employees. Of the remaining businesses with employees, 72% have less than ten workers.¹⁹

Commuting Patterns

Prescott is a net importer of workers. 820 people drive to Prescott to work in Retail, Transportation and Warehousing, Public Administration, and Accommodation and Food Services.

Economic Outlook

The GDP of Prescott shrank by 9.8% in 2020 but is expected to bounce back and grow by 6.9% in 2021. Prescott was impacted by the pandemic influence on the retail and hospitality sectors. Prescott's higher near-term employment will be driven by a solid recovery in transportation and logistics and hopes for a recovery in the accommodation and food sectors. These two sectors account for 30% of Prescott's total employment.

¹⁹ Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Counts Data provides a record of business establishments by industry and size. This data is collected from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The business data collected for the Town of Prescott includes all local businesses that meet at least one of the three following criteria: (1) establishment has an employee workforce for which it submits payroll remittances to CRA; or (2) establishment has a minimum of \$30,000 in annual sales revenue; or (3) establishment is incorporated under a federal or provincial act and has filed a federal corporate income tax form within the past three years. [Business counts presented by Statistics Canada's Business Counts Data should not be compared to municipal business licensing data.](#) Municipal licences may not include sole proprietorships, landlords, non-profit corporations, and other entities that are excluded within a municipal licensing by-law but do get counted in CRA reporting. Municipal licensing offices also may not have the capacity to enforce municipal by-laws, unlike CRA's capacity to enforce federal tax law.



Project Engagement Activities

Various stakeholder engagement activities were conducted to understand the challenges, opportunities, solutions, and aspirations directly from the Town's residents and business owners.



20 Interviews

of key local stakeholders



3 Visits

of the community by consultants



31 Survey Responses

from local businesses



24+ Documents

Reviewed by consultants to understand the background



Several Discussions

- 1 Council session
- 1 Community workshop
- 1 Management session
- Several talks with staff



3 Assessments

- Economic Analysis
- Investment Readiness
- Supply Chain Assessment



What We Heard

Key takeaways from the engagement phase of the strategic planning exercise were:

- The Town of Prescott has an excellent relationship with its business community. Most businesses recommend locating in Prescott. Businesses are looking for additional support, and the Town's approach to economic development to date is well respected.
- Prescott's collaboration with other communities is seen as a positive. Partnerships with other municipalities and organizations, including Brockville and local colleges, were seen as good options to help facilitate growth.
- Availability and affordability of housing are seen as critical issues to be addressed.
- Technology is expected to displace some unskilled workers, and transition supports will be needed.
- Downtown revitalization and waterfront experiences may help expand Prescott's tourism industry.
- The friendliness of the community and the beloved quality of life should be used to attract residents, including people who work from home and newcomers to Canada.

Prescott's Assets

Interviews with 20 key informants in Prescott saw the Town having key strengths in its location, access to major cities, active citizens, the waterfront, and the quality of life. They said significant opportunities might flow from an increased population resulting from more residential development, more co-working spaces in the downtown, and more manufacturing and logistics businesses. Stakeholders pinned many hopes on developing tourism, citing nearby cities, access to the 401 and the U.S., and the attractiveness of the St. Lawrence River as prime assets. A survey of Prescott businesses was conducted to gather inputs and perceptions of the business community on the local labour force and business environment. Among the businesses surveyed, 87% noted that overall, they were very or somewhat satisfied with Prescott as a place to own or operate a business. Further, 45% of businesses had expansion plans over





the next two years. Approximately 15 community members participated in the Prescott Workshop. Those who attended thought Prescott's friendly community, low crime rate, and quality of life were excellent foundations to build upon for economic opportunities. They pointed to advanced manufacturing prospects with clean and sustainable environmental practices, as well as work-from-home trends. It was felt many people were leaving the GTA²⁰ to settle in smaller communities.

Future Growth

Asked which economic sectors had significant potential, interview subjects pointed to tourism, warehousing and logistics, the need for residential housing, and remote workers. Partnerships with other municipalities and organizations, including Brockville and local colleges, were seen as good options to help facilitate growth. Workshop participants discussed attracting new Canadians and those who have left the community but want to come back to a more relaxed, idyllic lifestyle. They felt Prescott could be more welcoming and conceived of signs along the highway in other languages encouraging newcomers to consider Prescott. Retaining the Town's down-to-earth nature is important. Local stakeholders also expressed their thoughts on major economic transformations that are expected to affect Prescott over the next decade. Residential growth pressures, homelessness and housing shortages are predicted. Jobs will become more automated, and support services will be needed in the area to deal with the transition. Interview subjects hoped to see a stronger local tourism industry, including more people staying at hotels and accommodation in Prescott and having more options to dine in the Town rather than Brockville. Businesses in Prescott were highly optimistic about the future within the area. Among the respondents, 42% expected their revenues to increase over the next year. Similarly, 45% expected to expand their business over the next two years.

Local Challenges

Challenges facing the local business climate, according to interviews, were workforce availability, housing availability, the need for more small business supports, vacant properties downtown, lack of tourist accommodation, internet connectivity, and utility costs. The Town's identity and brand, and its lack of appeal to the younger generation, were also seen as problematic. The Town's location and waterfront were seen as positives that could help overcome the challenges, as were the municipality's economic development efforts and its willingness to collaborate with others. Among the Prescott businesses that responded, 42% reported their business had decreased because of the pandemic, while 32% reported that their business had increased. Revenue generation from past customers and maintaining staffing levels were two of the areas most reported as immediate concerns for businesses in the area. Affordable housing and workforce/talent retention and attraction need to be addressed. Ideas for intervention included social media and marketing campaigns to encourage people to move to Prescott. Participants felt the Town should identify key comparative advantages that should be promoted to attract new industries and residents, make Prescott a community hub. Other barriers to growth were identified: municipal infrastructure, availability of childcare, internet needs, and financial sustainability of volunteer organizations.

²⁰ The reference to the GTA is a perception by a number of stakeholders. Data on where new residents and workers move from within Ontario would require additional data purchases from Statistics Canada.



Suggested Priorities

Asked how the Town should prioritize its support for economic development activities, stakeholders who were interviewed spoke about downtown and waterfront revitalization, more affordable/attainable housing, resident and workforce attraction, business supports, keeping a pro-business attitude, tourism development, youth retention and attraction, and keeping up on infrastructure.

At the community workshop, participants outlined several priorities. These included continuing the Community Improvement Plan but focusing on attracting new sectors, businesses, and tourists to the downtown and targeting residential development and building accessibility. Resident, entrepreneur, newcomer, and workforce attraction were the focus of the workshop discussion.

Businesses surveyed²¹ said they were dissatisfied with the availability of property for purchase or lease, availability of unskilled labour, availability of skilled labour, and availability of adequate housing. Top-of-mind priorities for businesses included support for small businesses, programming to support businesses to adopt new technology and productivity tools, promotion and marketing of Prescott, enhanced tourism amenities, and downtown revitalization.



²¹ Source: Town of Prescott Business Survey, 31 respondents.



Investment Readiness Assessment

The Investment Readiness Assessment (detailed in full in the separate Joint Technical Report) applied a critical eye to the Town's delivery of economic development services. From an investor-facing perspective, assessment criteria were grouped into seven categories, each element representing an aspect of the economic development customer service delivery model. The framework is meant to be scalable, depending on the size and intricacy of the local economy. Several elements were probed in the assessment.

How can Prescott improve?

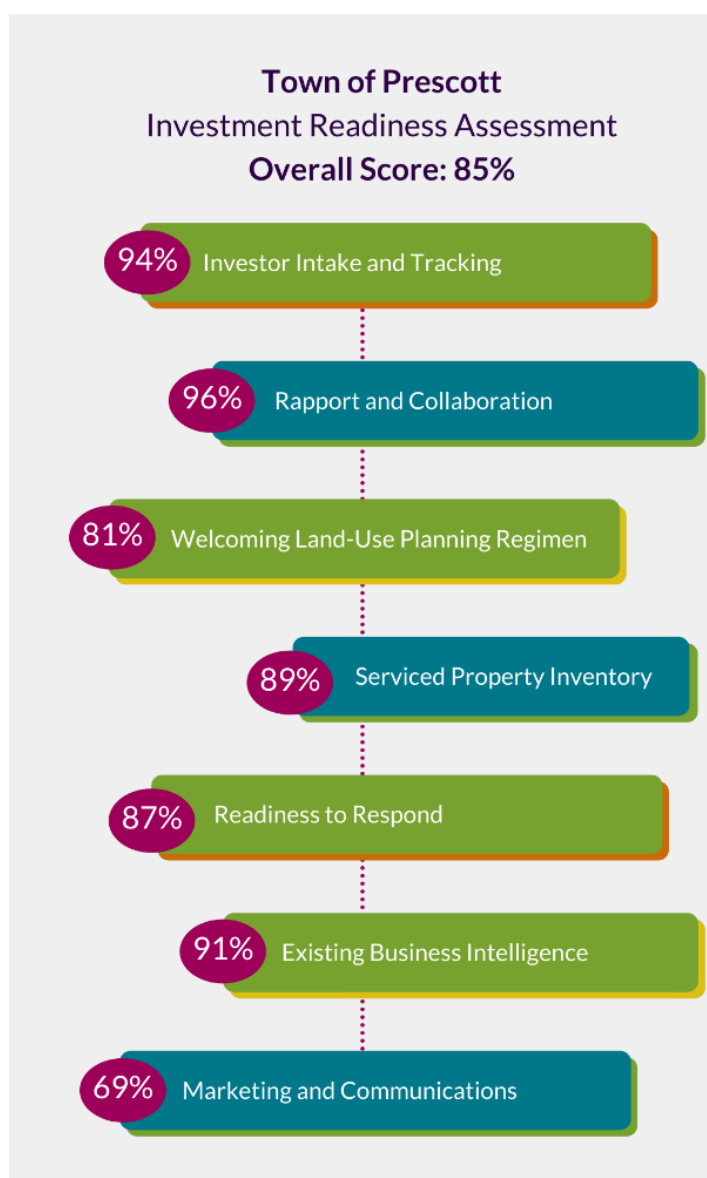
The Town can solidify its reputation of offering a welcoming land-use planning regimen by communicating approval timelines and costs more effectively and fine-tuning the existing development review team to guide proponents along the process.

The Town is collaborating with the Township of Augusta on a Land Needs Analysis, which will help to address land and property availability, which is key for ensuring a serviced property inventory.

The Town could boost its existing business intelligence by establishing an economic development advisory committee. The creation of a business ambassador program will also help the Town be ready to respond to new investments.

Marketing and communications activities are very important to economic development. By making statistics and information more readily available, the Town will be positioned to attract more interest from potential investors. A stand-alone microsite for online inquiries among site selectors should be considered. A marketing and branding strategy should be prepared, which may help to ensure that economic development promotional tactics aimed at investors are distinctly separate from general municipal promotional activities aimed at citizens.

Overall, the Town of Prescott scores relatively well for investment readiness compared to recent assessments prepared confidentially by MDB Insight for comparable clients in other parts of Ontario.





Supply Chain Analysis

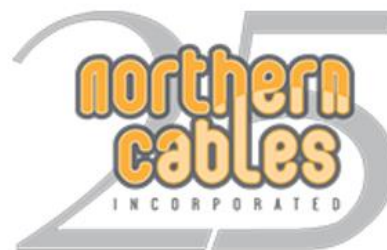
Regional Supply Chain

The total supply chain for Prescott and Augusta totals over \$294 million²². 77% or \$226.3 million of the supply chain came from imported purchases. 24% or \$36.3 million came from purchases in the region. The detailed supply chain analysis is provided in Section 3.6 of the Technical Report.

Manufacturing

Across both municipalities, manufacturing was the top industry sector, with \$146.8 million in total purchases, 75% of which were imported into the local communities. Key subsectors of Manufacturing included:

- **Basic chemical manufacturing:** \$57.3 million in purchases, 29% in-region, Location Quotient (LQ) 9.74. This subsector presents an opportunity to attract more businesses in the supply chain to the region.
- **Resin, synthetic rubber, and artificial and synthetic fibres and filaments manufacturing:** \$13.9 million in purchases, 100% in-region, LQ 63.62.
- **Plastic product manufacturing:** \$3.4 million in purchases, 36% in-region, LQ 1.01.
- **Other chemical product manufacturing:** \$2 million in purchases, 22% in-region, LQ 10.9. This subsector has a competitive advantage in the region, compared to the province of Ontario.
- **Other electrical equipment and component manufacturing:** \$1.6 million in purchases, 98% in-region, LQ 24.04. This subsector is currently strong when compared to national data. However, jobs are expected to decline by 2028.



Transportation and Warehousing

Transportation and warehousing are the second largest industry regionally. Total purchases are \$34.6 million (34% in-region).

- **General freight trucking:** \$11 million in purchases, 77% in-region, LQ 12.06.
- **Specialized freight trucking:** \$8.4 million in purchases, 88% in-region, LQ 1.01.
- **Warehousing and storage:** \$1.2 million in purchases in 2017, 25% in-region, LQ 3.53.



²² 2017 EMSI Analyst data is most recent comparable data available.



Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services represented the third-largest industry sector, purchasing \$14.7 million, 23% in-region. Prescott businesses purchased \$6.3 million, 22% in-region. Subsectors included:

- **Management, scientific and technical consulting services:** \$1.9 million in purchases, 56% in-region, LQ 2.92.
- **Waste treatment and disposal:** \$1.7 million in purchases, 75% in-region, LQ 1.29.
- **Other professional, scientific, and technical services:** \$1.2 million in purchases, 71% in-region, LQ 2.23. Jobs are projected to grow to 30 by 2028. Combined with other subsectors, there is the opportunity to support a professional and technical services cluster.
- **Data processing, hosting, and related services:** \$432,000 in purchases, 78% in-region, LQ 3.91.



Other Industries

Other industries in the top ten in Prescott and Augusta, in terms of comparisons of total purchases in-region, were ranked as follows:

- Agriculture, \$6 million, 56% in-region
- Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services, \$10.3 million, 19% in-region
- Construction, \$4.6 million, 34% in-region
- Utilities, \$7.5 million, 19% in-region
- Wholesale, \$12.2 million in purchases, 11% in-region
- Retail, \$4 million, 31% in-region
- Health Care and Social Assistance, \$5.89 million, 18% in-region.



Local Supply Chain Purchases

The supply chain for Prescott alone totalled \$107 million, with 81.7% coming from imported purchases.

Prescott businesses recorded \$32.9 million in total manufacturing purchases, 89% of which were imported. The next largest supply chain included Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Administrative and Support Services, Real Estate and Leasing, Finance and Insurance, Waste Management, and Information and Cultural Industries, totalling \$26.9 million, 88% of which were imported purchases.

The third-largest supply chain group in the Town of Prescott included Transportation and Warehousing, Wholesale and Retail Trades, totalling \$26.5 million, 67% of which were imported purchases.



Land Use Demand Forecast

The Land Use Demand Forecast established a retail trade area for the Town of Prescott and examined an updated business inventory to highlight the current business mix and identify potential gaps. This analysis lays a foundation for the future, positioning the allocation of new demand to 2030. The full forecast document is available in the Technical Report.

Future demand within the Town of Prescott is likely to come from new retail uses as well as supporting niche office uses in the RiverWalk District. To date, the Town has not enabled a proliferation of external retail. This may be a major factor as to why the Downtown has such vitality and potential. This vibrancy can be maintained if demand for retail and office is planned around infill within the RiverWalk District to incubate and attract new local businesses that require smaller spaces at slightly more affordable rates.

By maintaining a pragmatic approach to accommodating demand that continues to be in step with growth, the downtown can continue to thrive while still allowing for new retail in other nodes. This includes (Neighbourhood Commercial, Community Commercial and Highway Commercial in the north and east of Prescott that benefit from external trade area patronage, future infill residential growth, and Highway 401 access and visibility.

The future allocation of new industrial demand should continue to be accommodated within the current industrial/business park node to further infill and take advantage of existing servicing capacity. Prescott has the distinct opportunity to meet the identified future demand allocation in a way that maintains cost-effective growth and development while filling land and business mix gaps, all while maintaining the allure of the community that is sure to be a major selling point to new residents and investors. The Town is blessed with many available land assets and over the next decade does not need to expand or leapfrog Highway 401 to achieve economic success.

The proposed Aquaworld development and residential growth west into Augusta Township will be beneficial to Prescott and its downtown business mix and culture. There should be an increasing desire for more visitor accommodations and mixed-use formats as a result. Retail in the RiverWalk District is an asset for residents and visitors and should be harnessed for this economic value.





Land Needs Analysis

Several development opportunities are possible in the Town of Prescott and adjacent to the Town in cooperation with the Township of Augusta and/or private developers. These opportunities are considered at length in the Land Needs Analysis, a separate report within this project

The study included population and employment projections aggregated by sector, a review of policies and regulations which impact land use, and evaluation of the Town's water, wastewater, and transportation systems to support growth in Augusta. The full Land Needs Analysis report is available separately.

Land Use Analysis - Specific Sites in Town of Prescott



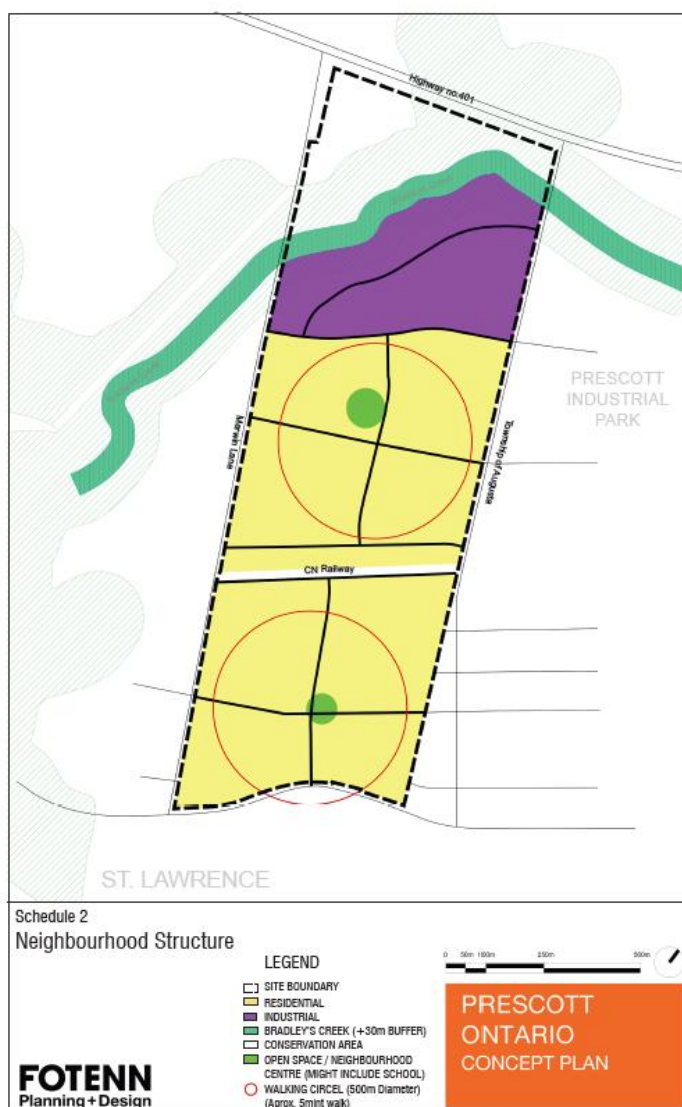


Greenfield Opportunities: West

According to the Lands Needs Analysis, the area of the Township of Augusta immediately to the west of the Town of Prescott's boundaries represent a prime opportunity for an efficient extension of existing municipal services for the development of new neighbourhoods in proximity to existing infrastructure, services, and amenities. The lands are already identified in the Township of Augusta Official Plan as a Settlement Area. The development of these lands would fill a gap between existing communities in Prescott to the east and Riverview Heights to the west.

Extension of streets south of the rail line, with a new arterial route running north from County Road 2, would provide land for residential development (see Schedule 2 image). The extension of municipal servicing to these lands would be a highly cost-efficient option, given the lands' proximity to existing municipal services. The lands are also in proximity to several existing amenities and services found in the Town of Prescott. Existing roadways in the Town of Prescott, including Churchill Road West, Jessup Street, James Street West, and Dibble Street West, may be extended west into the lands, providing convenient and close access to the existing road network within Prescott. In particular, several east-west streets in the Town of Prescott currently terminate as stubs at the Town's boundary and may therefore be easily extended further west. Roadway connection opportunities are also present via Merwin Lane and County Road 2. Paths and traffic should be encouraged to connect with points south and east, especially the RiverWalk District.

A mix of housing types should be considered within this new neighbourhood, including denser, smaller units such as townhouses, back-to-back townhouses, rear-lane townhouses, stacked townhouses, and low-rise apartment buildings. The provision of smaller unit types will contribute to a greater mix of housing types and densities in the region, helping





to make housing more affordable and providing downsizing opportunities for senior populations. Investment prospects in apartment developments, according to PwC and Urban Land Institute²³, indicate there is a good-to-excellent future in senior housing, moderate/workforce apartments, and lower-income apartments.

A portion of the lands to the north of the rail line could be developed with commercial and/or business park uses (including light industrial and office uses) adjacent to Prescott's existing industrial/business park area. Commercial uses located here would serve local residents as well as visitors to the future Aquaworld resort to the west, with patrons expected to use the extended Development Drive to access the resort from Highway 401. The extension could facilitate the construction of additional highway commercial opportunities, such as a hotel within Prescott's boundaries.

Commercial uses along Development Drive should be carefully planned to not hinder the viability of restaurants, retail, hospitality and recreation venues in the RiverWalk District.

The Town of Prescott also owns land on Sophia Street, part of which will house the new recreation complex. The property could also leverage the development of additional industrial properties, subject to environmental constraints. Additional recreational uses connected with a new neighbourhood to the west would be advantageous.

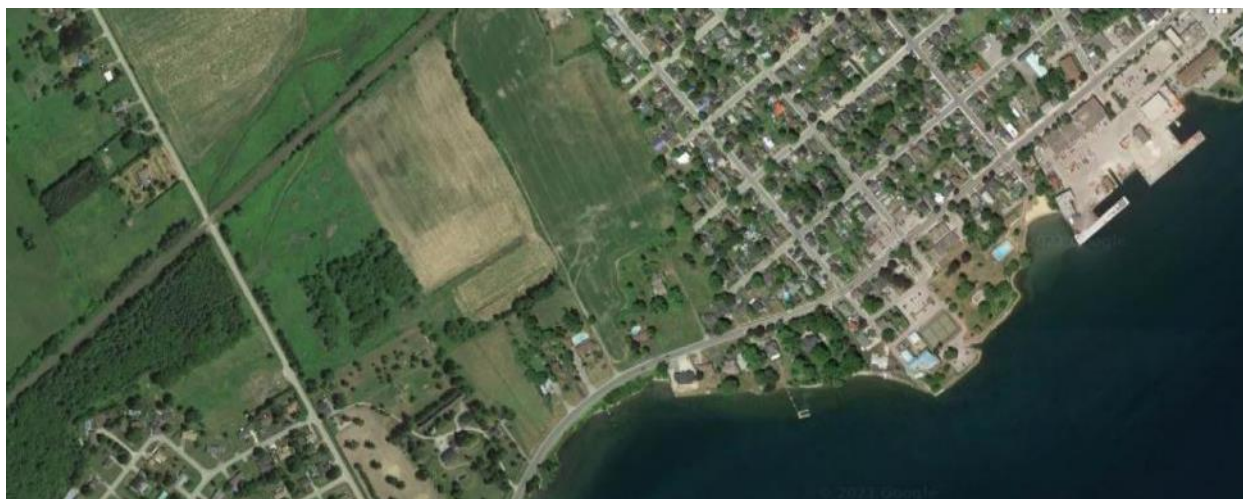
Greenfield Opportunities: Northeast

Development to the east of the current terminus of Prescott Centre Drive would also provide prime visibility for highway commercial or industrial along Highway 401. A hotel would also be a welcome addition to the town in this area. Additional vacant land could be serviced from Kingston Crescent or Boundary Street. Residential development may be an opportunity in this area; however, there are potential environmental considerations. The lands represent an opportunity to introduce new, higher-density low-rise housing forms that may be found in other markets but are not yet present in the area, including stacked dwellings, stacked townhouses, and back-to-back townhouses. Any new development proposal would be subject to environmental studies determining impacts to any natural heritage systems in the area.

Greenfield Opportunities: North

Development north of Highway 401 with water and sewer servicing has been investigated and will be a costly endeavour to install under the highway. Typically, such costs would be recovered from the private-sector developer, which may turn off investors. There are options for other types of servicing (well/septic), but these would be limited to commercial or industrial. With that in mind, light industrial developments are a good consideration as they use little in the way of services for water and waste water.

²³ Emerging Trends in Real Estate 2020, PwC and the Urban Land Institute;
<https://www.pwc.com/ca/en/industries/real-estate/emerging-trends-in-real-estate.html>



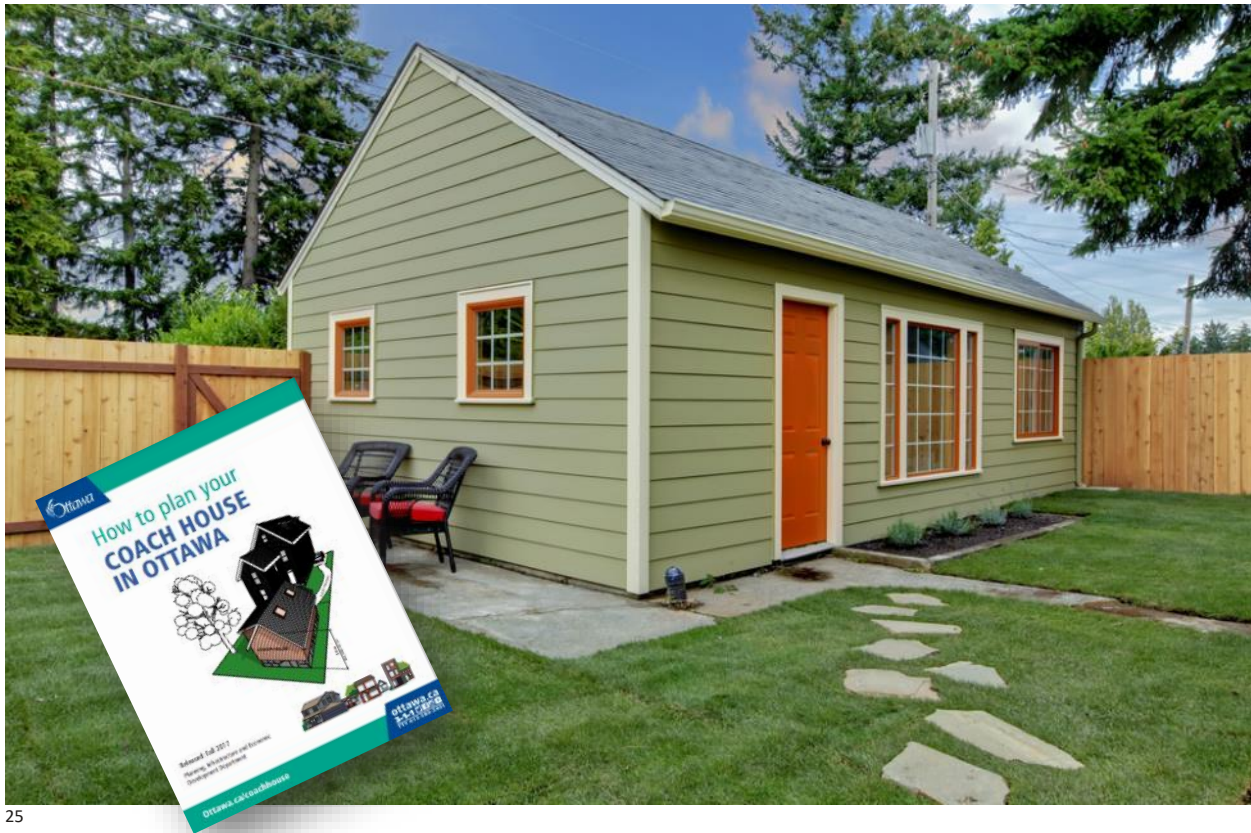
Town of Prescott Greenfield Opportunities

Use	Priority	Development Potential	Site	Next Steps
Residential	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated Settlement Area in Proximity to Prescott. The natural extension of Prescott's Street network. Lowest servicing and operational costs due to gentle topography, preferable soils, and no physical encumbrances. Immediate access to amenities in the town, including recreation, RiverWalk District, and shopping. Intensification would help reduce servicing and infrastructure costs. Access to Broadband: Bell Wireless, Cogeco 1G. Supports future water or sewer extensions into Riverview Heights subdivision. Brings value to the investment required to extend Development Drive. <p>(Note: In this area of Augusta Township <u>north of the rail line</u>, a residential extension of Prescott is not as feasible. The servicing costs are higher than south of the rail line.)</p>	<p>Specific parcels of land west of Town of Prescott in Township of Augusta (AP1, AP13²⁴.</p> <p>West of Town boundary, north of County Road 2, east of Merwin Lane, south of rail line.</p> <p>Privately Owned</p>	<p>These steps need to be taken to prepare the sites for development or wait until privately led.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint servicing agreement between Prescott and Augusta Develop concept plan for the new neighbourhood. Provincial approvals for water and sewage infrastructure (Prescott). Municipal Environmental Assessment and/or Plan of Subdivision (Augusta). Amendments of Official Plans and Zoning Bylaws (Augusta, Prescott, UCLG). Construct additional water storage (Prescott). Undertake improvements to water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, and stormwater systems (Prescott, Augusta). Construct street extensions into Augusta Township. Construct municipal servicing extensions into Augusta Township from the Town of Prescott.



Use	Priority	Development Potential	Site	Next Steps
Commercial	MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible limited commercial uses or innovative industrial Setback requirement related to the creek Proximity to built-up area Lack of existing servicing Currently zoned R1 – Low Density Residential; M1 – General Industrial Ultimately, the best use of this land may be extending recreational uses from PP16 	PT2 950 Sophia Street 45 acres Municipally Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More technical studies required Possible geotechnical study Nearby creek may require study Possible environmental assessment Official Plan/Zoning By-Law change Extend services from nearby streets
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of site is vacant land Close to 401 Serviced Zoned M1 – General Industrial 	PP16 Churchill Road West 5.25 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial infill, no zoning amendment required Possible environmental issues. Current owner could explore severance to create new developable lot or infill opportunities.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway Commercial potential Vacant land No services Environmental/ access constraints Zoned D – Development 	PP15 1500 Edward Street North 83.29 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No services recommended to be extended Developer to take next steps
	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good connectivity to Highway 401 Potential road connectivity to proposed Augusta north service road to Merwin Lane No services Environmental constraints exist Zoned M1 – General Industrial; C2 – Highway Commercial 	PT10 Development Drive 61.81 acres Municipally Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development proposals that require no municipal services (would need well/septic)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good connection to 401 and potential north service road to Merwin Lane Zoned C2 – Highway Commercial No services 	PP13/PP14 Development Drive 3.52-acre parcels Privately Owned	
	MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent to existing commercial sites No services Services may be extended from Kingston Crescent Wetlands, woodlands nearby Zoned C2 – Highway Commercial 	PP3 Prescott Centre Drive/Boundary Street 11.19 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property is ready for a commercial development application Extend services from nearby streets
			PP4 Boundary Street (east side) 46.08 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best suited for residential, may face environmental constraints Zoning Bylaw amendment needed Extend services from nearby streets

²⁴ Sites in Township of Augusta identified in Lands Needs Analysis



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Redevelopment Opportunities: Residential

There are redevelopment opportunities among properties in the ring of residential neighbourhoods around the RiverWalk District that could be developed as high-intensity multi-residential. Homeowners with larger lots could be encouraged to build secondary suites, coach houses²⁶ or tiny homes and connect them to the Town's services. Similar to the Homes for Heroes Tiny Home Village²⁷ in Kingston, vacant public lands could be declared surplus and redeveloped with affordable housing.

In the northeast section of Prescott, there are infill opportunities in the Boundary Street and McAuley Road areas. Adding residential housing would fill gaps between existing neighbourhoods, with services accessed from nearby streets. If the zoning by-law were made more flexible, homebuilders could benefit from as-of-right permissions that would allow them to proceed without delay.

Several vacant properties are situated adjacent to rail lines within walking distance of the downtown core. This area could be rezoned as a multi-residential neighbourhood catering to markets in search of less expensive housing options.

²⁵ Image source of Ottawa Coach House: <https://www.upfrontottawa.com/coach-houses-in-ottawa/>

²⁶ City of Ottawa, "Adding a Coach House": <https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/building-and-renovating/do-i-need-building-permit/adding-coach-house-secondary-dwelling-units-accessory-structure>

²⁷ <https://homesforheroesfoundation.ca/kingston/>



Redevelopment Opportunities: Commercial

The Land Needs Analysis outlined that infill opportunities should be explored within Prescott's existing Industrial Park, in the northwest area of the town, which already benefits from convenient access to Highway 401. Lighter, smaller-scale industrial uses should be considered in this area, given its proximity to the existing built-up area of Prescott. While opportunities were identified to add new types of industrial uses here – such as coworking spaces and limited, small-scale commercial uses (e.g., full-service restaurants) – any developments catering to tourists or remote workers should be encouraged to locate in the downtown core until all space there is filled.

Redevelopment Opportunities: RiverWalk District

Downtown Prescott is at a scale that works well and offers an excellent setting to incubate small businesses. Redevelopment opportunities near the east end waterfront lands would be best reserved for uses that enhance the RiverWalk District as a tourism and hospitality destination. A sustainable boutique hotel, craft brewery, distillery, unique restaurant, cafes doubling as coworking spaces, or local food/artisan markets would be preferred developments here. These lands represent a prime real estate opportunity in proximity to water, park space and amenities.

Vacant historic buildings could be renovated by entrepreneurs to establish unique small businesses. Several buildings in a row could be purchased, with the second storeys converted into residential, connected with a second-storey corridor to elevators for more affordable, accessible housing. Examples of reimagining downtown commercial include the Indwell's conversion of a church hall and a tavern in Simcoe, Ontario, or an old clothing factory in Woodstock²⁸ or the redevelopment of an old flooring shop into coworking space in Port Dover.²⁹

If several buildings in the RiverWalk District become vacant at the same time, the Town of Prescott could develop an inventory of these sites and position them for redevelopment. By working with the Prescott BIA and the local chamber of commerce, the Town could promote the properties, using initiatives such as an empty storefront tour (e.g. Webster, Iowa³⁰).

²⁸ <https://indwell.ca/housing-programs/>

²⁹ <https://23market.ca/>

³⁰ <https://buildingpossibility.com/empty-buildings-tour/>



The golf course east of downtown offers potential for tourism and hospitality development. Golf courses are not a big generator of property tax revenues, courtesy of MPAC's methodology guide³¹ for valuing these properties. Also, golf is in decline, according to U.S. data³², where participants in golf fell from 29 million per year in 2006 to 24 million in 2019. Golf is similarly challenged in Canada, with fewer rounds of golf being played³³ and limited interest in the sport outside of those already participating³⁴. Seasonal accommodation, such as safari tents or short-term-rental tiny homes, could be connected by cycling and walking trails to increase foot traffic among downtown businesses. Hammond Hill, an eco-experience and wilderness resort located on Hammond Golf Club in the City of Clarence-Rockland, could be used as a model for tourist accommodation on the golf course³⁵. Seasonal glamping, portable cabins, and retail pop-ups along the riverfront would be popular additions to the tourism product mix here.

The Waterfront Mixed-Use Development) zoning for the parcel marked "PT1" – also known as the Letters Patent lands – permits a variety of hotel, residential, commercial or open space uses, many of which are tourism-related. Expanding the list of permitted uses to allow retail may provide additional flexibility and opportunities for new mixed-use development.

The zoning for the site also envisions a maximum building height of four storeys and a maximum density of 65 units per hectare (with opportunities to increase the density through bonusing). The site's prime location on the water and in proximity to the downtown provides an excellent opportunity for a denser and/or taller mixed-use development.

Water-oriented experiences and attractions could be added near the property, such as tourist use on barges: spas, restaurants, overnight accommodation. Boatels have become popular in some waterfront

Le Louisbourg Cabin at Hammond Hill, \$145 per night



Floatel, Penetanguishene



³¹ MPAC Methodology Guide, Valuing Golf Courses in Ontario, <https://www.mpac.ca/sites/default/files/docs/pdf/GolfCourses.pdf>

³² Golf course data, Statista: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/191907/participants-in-golf-in-the-us-since-2006/>

³³ Economic Impact of Golf in Canada (2019), http://canadagolfs.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Final-Golf-EIS-2019-Results_EXTERNAL_November-2_FINAL-2.pdf

³⁴ Canadian Golf Consumer Behaviour Study, http://canadagolfs.ca/wp-content/themes/canadagolfs/downloads/Canadian%20Golf%20Consumer%20Behaviour%20Study_Executive%20Summary_english%20%28FINAL%29.pdf

³⁵ Hammond Hill, <https://hammondhill.ca/>



communities, such as the Floatel On-Water Accommodation at Hindson Marina³⁶ in Penetanguishene.



A Phase II Environmental Assessment Report³⁷ of the property reported soil and groundwater contamination as deep as 15 feet. A minimum of 25,000 metric tonnes of material containing heavy metals would need to be removed from the site.

Despite perceptions from local stakeholders that brownfield sites are no-go areas for developers, several case studies in Canada point to recent remediation success stories. Funding from senior levels of government is critical in advancing these projects.

The Cobourg Tannery District³⁸ remediation was facilitated by the preparation of a sustainable neighbourhood master plan³⁹ by the Town of Cobourg. The municipality also has several financial incentive programs that are designed for brownfields, including the Environmental Study Grant, Brownfields Property Tax Cancellation Program, and Redevelopment/Rehabilitation Grant Program.

The Greenwish-Mohawk site remediation in the City of Brantford Over involved the excavation of almost 150,000 cubic metres of soil over two years, with the majority of soil being treated on-site and reused. The Green Municipal Fund provided financial aid with \$23.5 million, which was used as part of soil remediation efforts. The Province committed \$5 million in funding, which was used throughout each stage of the remediation process. The Federal Government provided \$12 million towards remediation efforts. Brantford's City Council also allocated a total of \$1.8 million towards all stages of the remediation process⁴⁰.

³⁶ <https://www.hindsonmarina.com/floatel-on-water-accommodation>

³⁷ King St East, Prescott, Ontario Phase 2 EI Report, St. Lawrence Testing & Inspection Co. Ltd., April 2015

³⁸ <https://www.brownfieldsresearchlab.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/16-Cobourg.pdf>

³⁹ <https://fotenn.com/project/tannery-district-sustainable-neighbourhood-master-plan/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.brownfieldsresearchlab.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/FINAL-Greenwich-Final-Final.pdf>

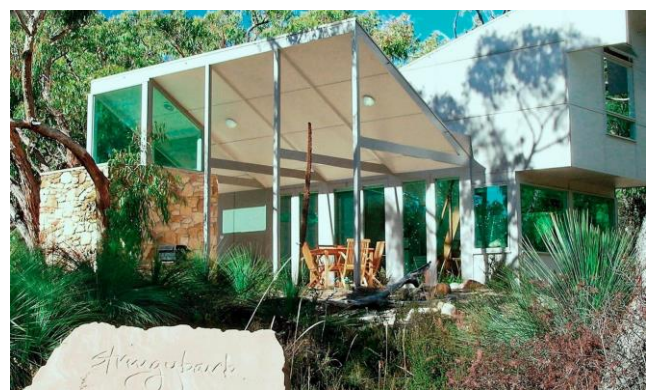


Overnight tourism experiences could include visitors camping overnight in tents like those housing soldiers in the 1800s.

Sustainable hotel concept

The RiverWalk District is an excellent location for a sustainable or green hotel and meeting venue near the waterfront that embraces the recreational and hospitality uses around it. The Town could lead the development by demanding that proponents design a facility that responds to concerns about climate change, energy, and species conservation. Examples of sustainable hotels are becoming easier to find, such as Aquila Eco Lodges in Australia, which are recognized for a low environmental impact approach to development and set a benchmark for ecotourism.

Aquila Eco Lodge, Australia



The Patent Lands property would make an excellent location for a sustainable hotel. It is also adjacent to Prescott's Scuba Park, which features a staircase, training platforms, and the first artificial wreck of the St. Lawrence River, the SS Prescott.



Town of Prescott Redevelopment / Infill Opportunities

Use	Priority	Development Potential	Site	Next Steps
Residential	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill gaps between existing neighbourhoods Higher density townhouses Zoned R1 – Low-Density Residential 	PT8 Fischl Drive / Woodland Drive Municipally Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible, permitting higher density developments should be encouraged Amend Zoning Bylaw to permit higher-density residential uses Extend services from nearby streets
			PP12 McAuley/Woodland 2.43 acres Privately Owned	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High visibility, near 401 Serviced Zoned R1 – Low-Density Res. 	PP5 999 Edward Street 0.4 acres Privately Owned	
	MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant Land (portions under development) 	PP11 850 Boundary Street / Churchill Road 14.2 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review possible environmental constraints (woodlands and wetlands) Develop servicing plan Extend services from nearby streets
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to downtown, rail No existing services Zoned R3 – High Density; R2-h1 – Medium Density Res. – Hold 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant Land No services Medium-density residential Zoned R2-h1 – Medium Density Residential – Hold 	PP10 Fort Town Drive / Churchill Road 4.4 acres Privately Owned	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density townhouses, multi-residential, no services, nearby neighbourhoods Zoned R2-h1 – Medium Density Residential – Hold 	PP9 Boundary Street 1.07 acres Privately Owned	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-residential housing up to 5 storeys Existing servicing Proximity to downtown Zoned M2 – Light Industrial 	PP8 Ann/Clarendon Street (south of rail tracks) 1.37 acres Privately Owned	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential infill opportunity Serviced Zoned P – Public Park 	PT9 Boundary Street (Fairway Park) 4.72 acres Municipally owned	
			PT11 Prince Street 4.5 acres Municipally owned	



Use	Priority	Development Potential	Site	Next Steps
Industrial	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for infill commercial or industrial development Serviced, close to Highway 401 Zoned C1 – General Commercial 	PP1 Churchill Road West 3.35 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote site, respond to commercial development proposals If needed for light industrial, developer must apply for zoning amendment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for infill commercial Serviced Close to Highway 401 Zoned C1 – General Commercial 	PP2 Prescott Centre Drive (southern parcel) 4.1 acres Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote site Respond to commercial development proposals
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters Patent (#92810) directs “heritage hotel” for property and restricts heights to 8 or 9 metres, depending on parcel Currently parking/ vacant land Marina adjacent Prescott lacks roofed tourist accommodation - development of boutique hotel will increase traffic and spending to benefit existing / new commercial uses Fully serviced with water/sewer, broadband fibre Zoned CW – Waterfront Mixed-Use Development Phase II Environmental Assessment reports soil and groundwater contamination as deep as 15 feet. At least 25,000 tonnes of material containing heavy metals would need to be removed from the site 	PT1 King Street and East Street 3.85 acres Municipally Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Environmental Assessment remediation cost estimates and prepare a mitigation plan to remove the contaminated areas Collaborate with the federal government to establish a Heritage Hotel Development Commission with a mandate to put plans in place for the construction of a waterfront hotel Review all work to date on development of a “heritage hotel” Clarify other uses that may be included in a “heritage hotel” (e.g., hotel with ground-floor hotel-related commercial uses) Consider a signature/green “heritage hotel” within strictly controlled height of Letters Patent Recruit a developer and/or contractor to establish a budget for the development and create a construction plan
Commercial	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown core near waterfront, parks, serviced Zoned CC - Core Commercial; Waterfront Mixed-Use Development, potential for hotels, inns, second storey units Craft brewery or distillery, unique restaurants and cafes, boater services, bicycle, kayak, SUP rentals Scuba diving training centre Coworking spaces, shared / unique retail Local food/artisan markets Maker spaces/downtown community hub Mixed-use development 	PP18 King Street West Various properties in downtown core, occupied and vacant Privately Owned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No servicing concerns No specific planning recommendations Address heritage constraints Highlight RiverWalk District as a priority area in Official Plan update Increase for CIP incentives for downtown Organize regularly scheduled events and entertainment Experiment with scheduled pedestrian-only street closures Provide resources to schedule professional and amateur entertainers, buskers, and artists Support improvement of Farmers' & Crafters' Market experience



Use	Priority	Development Potential	Site	Next Steps
	HIGH⁴¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasonal, temporary tourism uses to complement the Fort Wellington waterfront lands Zoned P – Public Park Popup hospitality / culinary, food trucks Scuba diving training, recreation, wellness experiences Provide access to boatels (floating accommodation), hospitality and tourism experiences on barges Increase traffic and spending to benefit existing and new commercial uses Leverage marina services and increase options for marina patrons to participate while moored in Prescott 	<p>PP6 King St E Fort Wellington waterfront lands West parcel 27.71 acres Owned by Federal Government</p> <p>pp7 King Street East Fort Wellington waterfront lands - East parcel 27.71 acres Owned by Federal Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning policy constrains lands to recreational, public open space Develop waterfront master plan with Parks Canada Negotiation of a partnership/use agreement between Parks Canada and Town of Prescott Request proposals from entrepreneurs for monetized tourism, recreation, and wellness experiences Plan and coordinate special events supported by other commercial, recreation uses in rest of RiverWalk District
	MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoned parks and open space Waterfront commercial potential 	<p>PT7 Mary Street tennis courts 1.05 acres Municipally Owned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop waterfront master plan Request proposals from entrepreneurs for tourism, recreation, wellness experiences Kayak rentals, diving activities likely do not need OP amendment Zoning amendment would be needed if commercial building (e.g. restaurant)

Indwell Affordable Housing Development Concept, under construction in Simcoe, Ontario



⁴¹ In the Land Needs Analysis, these parcels were scored as having “Low” development potential, due to the land-use constraints placed upon them by Parks Canada. However, from an economic development and tourism perspective, these parcels should be given special priority due to the potential for non-structural development.



SOARR Assessment

A Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Risks and Results (SOARR) Assessment is a method of reflecting on strategic planning. It is a forward-looking model, taking elements of what would traditionally be affiliated with a Strengths Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. It then uses insights gained through the background review, economic analysis, and stakeholder consultations to inform what is desired for the future and how to determine when our aspirations have been met.

The concepts underpinning the SOARR model are outlined in the figure below. The SOARR Assessment is used in conjunction with the rest of the content of this Consultation Report. In essence, it represents a summary of all the important learnings uncovered to date so that some preliminary directions can be explored for the Workforce Development Strategy.





S

Strengths

What can we build on?

- What are we doing well?
- What key achievements are we most proud of?
- What positive aspects have individuals and enterprises commented on?



What are we doing well?

- Business owners scored the Town of Prescott very highly in terms of satisfaction with municipal services. The survey showcased how much businesses approve of the Town's approach to economic development.
- Prescott scored well in an investment readiness assessment. In areas of investor intact and tracking, rapport and collaboration, existing business intelligence, and readiness to respond, the Town received high marks.
- The Town is focused on revitalizing the downtown and waterfront area. At least ten new businesses have opened recently downtown, and three have expanded. Improved business confidence has translated into an upswing in improvements, and the Community Improvement Plan is reportedly one of the catalysts.
- The municipality clearly understands the importance of regional collaboration, working closely with neighbouring municipalities, including the City of Brockville, on a transit pilot and regional groups on broadband infrastructure improvements.

What key achievements are we most proud of?

- Recreation / Quality of Life, including the new recreation complex – catering to younger families, partnering with Augusta, opens up new locations for residential growth.
- Public access to the waterfront, marina, riverfront, parks, sporting activities, beach, community pool, nice place to live.
- Location on 401 near 416, transport companies are doing well and nearby deep-water port and bridge to the US border.
- Less expensive housing. Drawing commuters from nearby cities, room for residential growth within the town and to the north or west. Retirement facilities and housing for seniors are positive given the aging demographics of Prescott.
- Development of North and South Industrial Parks. Interest is there, and land costs/taxes are perceived to be competitive.
- Partnering with Augusta has been fruitful while saving money.
- Dedicated staff looking at economic development with a progressive elected Council.
- New businesses and residential on and around the main street.




- Low unemployment rates. Businesses are hiring.

What can we build on?

- Local stakeholders feel Prescott's location is strategic, given its proximity to large urban centers like Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa.
- Great tourism potential. The Town has recently approved to build a multi-purpose recreation complex, and this is a good economic activity generator for the Town. Outside of that, attracting other types of tourists to the area is possible, including those from the U.S., given the proximity to the bridge.
- Continue to help small and medium-sized businesses to retain and attract bricks-and-mortar developments and to transform digitally. Digital service squad/Digital Main Street is a great program. Prescott coordinated this program for a few municipalities.
- Stakeholders suggested, to address vacancies in the RiverWalk District, introducing co-sharing and co-working spaces similar to larger centres.
- Local stakeholders have suggested introducing community ambassadors on the streets and engaging with residents and visitors, a program that has been successful in Brockville.
- Infill potential of public and privately-owned land within the town's borders.
- Regional collaboration with the St. Lawrence Corridor has brought more resources to investment attraction activities.
- Youth volunteer engagement and the committee is essential to ensure the success of many local programs, including renewed interest in sports because of the new community centre.
- We need to create a youth committee that will be invested in the town.
- Bring more vibrancy to the RiverWalk District, including additional use of the Kinsmen Amphitheatre and Fort Wellington for other events.
- Prescott has been experiencing growth in investment over the past few years. More advertising and marketing campaigns should target external investors as well as residents who are encouraged to shop local.

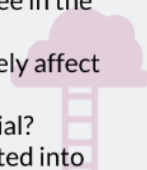




Opportunities

What are our best possible future opportunities?

- What changes in demand do we expect to see in the future?
- What external forces or trends may positively affect development?
- What are the key areas of untapped potential?
- What weaknesses or threats can be converted into SMART improvements?



What are our best possible future opportunities?

- 45% of businesses surveyed will be expanding within 24 months. Help businesses expand by designating and intensifying land uses. Highway commercial and industrial could fill the corridor along Highway 401 into Augusta.
- Focus on residential growth, especially infill opportunities. Development of vacant residential land for more housing to increase the Town's tax base. Attract new residents by catering to new hires generated by commercial and industrial development in Edwardsburgh/Cardinal.
- Bolster downtown rejuvenation, filling vacant stores with appropriate businesses/tenants. New retail opportunities are needed, such as larger retail stores to attract more residents, more unique shops and services. Build on the RiverWalk District and Fort Town, which have great historical significance.
- Enhance the harbour, golf course, and Fort with seasonal businesses to supplement existing tourism sectors. Add more entertainment, activities (sports/recreation/fairs) and make Prescott a destination of choice.
- Opportunities related to waterfront assets, experiential water-based tourism/recreation amenities, cycling, eco-tourism partnerships with neighbouring townships.
- Attract more private-sector investment, coupled with expanding the tourism infrastructure, including hotels. Host sports tournaments and concerts in recreation facilities, weekend/corporate retreats, scuba diving.
- More collaboration and partnership with Augusta on County Rd 2 corridor, another connecting route south of 401. Partnerships with Ogdensburg and to promote cross-border shopping and tourism when the border reopens.
- Build quality of life and grow community pride and positivity. Continue strong partnership between Council and Staff, continue to embrace economic development, being proactive.
- Create awareness of economic development programs, job creation helping existing businesses. Improve marketing and expand of Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentives. Market investment opportunities internationally.
- Visitors from the Ottawa market and Quebec provide excellent tourism opportunities.
- Work with post-secondary education (e.g., St. Lawrence College, Algonquin College) on workforce initiatives and skills development programs close to home, housed in high school.



What changes in demand do we expect in the future? What external forces or trends may affect development?

- The workforce shortage is a problem, with businesses concerned they can't grow their businesses due to a lack of reliable labour. Prescott needs to understand the type of labour needed, unskilled vs skilled, trades vs knowledge sector, connected to employment sectors experiencing workforce issues.
- Affordable housing for young families and seniors with a variety of different options, including rental buildings, is needed.⁴²
- Infrastructure constraints need to be addressed, along with land conditions, water table issues, municipal drains. Transportation is a challenge, but the RiverRoute pilot project is a positive development. The 401/416 interchange is perceived as needing to be upgraded⁴³.
- Work-from-home trends will impact where people work and where they spend their dollars.
- Support the efforts of regional partners and neighbouring communities to make Prescott a focal point and collaborate to build on what we have as a region.



Aspirations

What do we care deeply about achieving?

- What are we deeply passionate about?
- What difference do we hope to make for businesses, residents, and institutions?
- What does our preferred future look like?



What are we deeply passionate about? What do we care about achieving?

- Become a logistics hub given the close proximity to Ottawa, Montreal and Kingston. Continue to leverage location, 401 and 416, rail, bridge to U.S. Build up the 401 corridor, adding job opportunities for industrial/commercial.
- Advanced manufacturing with clean and sustainable environmental practices, no intensive carbon-based manufacturing with good-paying jobs.

⁴² UCLG prepared the 10-Year Housing and Homeless Plan 2014-2024, <https://www.leedsgrenville.com/en/services/resources/Housing/10YearHousingAndHomelessnessPlan2.pdf>

⁴³ Ministry of Transportation has not published any plans to upgrade the 401/416 interchange. Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-highway-programs>



- Lively downtown area supporting inclusivity and accessibility. More specialty stores and restaurants in their downtown area. Good mix of amenities and attraction of tourists to the area. Change perception as a drive-through community to a destination for investment and tourism. Cycling tours and fishing⁴⁴ could help build opportunities around the tourism sector. Be known as a place to visit. Get more visibility in Ontario and have a more-established brand.
- Capitalize on work-from-home trends. Many people are leaving larger cities to settle in smaller communities. Figure out ways to turn traditional retail storefronts into shared workspaces for permanent remote workers.
- Affordable housing options that can appeal to young families and retirees. Embrace and address sustainable residential growth, advance green development using prudent planning and proper development. Firm up land-use policies that are still in use in partnership with Augusta.
- Attract new Canadians and those who have left the community but want to come back to a more relaxed, idyllic lifestyle. Be welcoming. Preserve our quality of life.



Risks

How will we recognize and mitigate or eliminate potential risks?

- What challenges do we need to be aware of?
- What policy shifts could impact our aspirations?
- What contingencies should be in place address threats or consequences?




- Talent attraction and workforce development were problems pre-pandemic and are worse now. It's difficult to keep people in the area and have sustainable businesses that will provide meaningful employment opportunities.
- The higher price of hydro electricity in Prescott is perceived as a deterrent to attracting new businesses
- Loss of educational amenities (e.g., South Grenville High School) if plan is not developed
- Housing availability for young families and older residents needs to be addressed.
- Internet deficiencies may discourage businesses from operating in the area.
- There are perceptions that Prescott has a stigma as a low-income town with social assistance housing. Any progress on upskilling opportunities, and more support services for mental health and social services, should be communicated to counter poor perceptions and attitudes.
- Diving growth may be limited. Interest in training and certification may rebound but only in southern travel destinations once borders reopen.

⁴⁴ Angler websites such as hookandbullet.com indicate that there is abundant fishing in waterways near Prescott. Consult the Ontario Fisheries Management Plan for Zone 18: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/fisheries-management-plan-fisheries-management-zone-18>



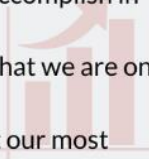
- Prescott gets pooled into a catchment area for programs for businesses and the community. People don't want Prescott to be a satellite area, with a need to travel to Brockville for everything.
- Concerns that the twin pad arena may not attract more tourism and sporting weekend venues for the community. A suggestion was made to study Smith Falls and learn what works and what doesn't.
- More supporting data is needed to attest to Ogdensburg's viability as a partnership opportunity
- There is a shrinking volunteer base to help with community initiatives. Financial sustainability affects various organizations and clubs. The Town should be careful not to overburden volunteers.
- Stay focused on priorities and tangible results. The Town should avoid having too much on the go.



Results

How will we know we are succeeding?

- What are the key goals we would like to accomplish in order to achieve these results?
- What meaningful measures will indicate that we are on track toward achieving our goals?
- What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects and initiatives?



- Business satisfaction rates with the Town's performance remain stable or improve.
- More affordable housing units are available to purchase or rent.
- More commercial and industrial land is available for development.
- More employees in the local workforce, both skilled and unskilled.
- Property owners in RiverWalk District utilize Community Improvement Plan incentives.
- More residents and tourists visit and spend in the RiverWalk District.
- New and improved festivals, events, and sports tournaments.
- More tourism experiences are available for visitors to book/purchase.
- New construction of overnight accommodation (e.g., hotels, etc.)



Recommendations & Action Plans





Strategic Priorities

The Economic Development Strategy is supported by three interconnected action plans anchored by three Strategic Priorities to qualify all objectives and ensuing actions over the next five years. These recommendations support the stated priorities of the Town and the desired outcomes of the strategic planning process. It should be noted that the list of objectives and actions represents a prioritized starting point based on community input, research, and professional opinion. New actions will emerge and will need to be assessed against the priorities of this plan. The Strategy's objectives and actions are presented in the following manner:

1. **Strategic Priorities:** Primary directions of highest interest that have emerged through research and engagement among the business community, residents, Council, staff, and others.
2. **Objectives:** Each recommended aspect illustrates how these goals will be achieved and what must be accomplished in the years ahead.
3. **Action Plans:** The three interconnected components of the strategy. Actions refer to the tactical directions that, when implemented, will lead to achieving the Objectives.





Strategic Priority 1: Keep businesses top of mind

Why is this a priority?

The needs of existing businesses are the needs of the local economy; supporting them provides the highest return on investment to the community by ensuring existing businesses flourish. Enabling business success will also improve investment attraction activities and generate new opportunities in Prescott.

Keep
businesses
top of mind

Strategic plans always focus on the assets available, and the Town of Prescott currently scores very highly in terms of business satisfaction rates about municipal services generally. The survey showcased how much businesses approve of the Town's approach to economic development. Since the practice of economic development is a team game, this pat on the back should be extended to other supportive regional players with which Prescott has built rapport and aligned its objectives. This approval of actions to date is a beacon for the way forward, but it also means the Town always needs to keep the needs and aspirations of its businesses top of mind.

Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) is a cornerstone of economic development, with the highest return on investment compared to supporting entrepreneurship or pursuing investment attraction. Studies have shown that over 80% of new jobs and investments in a community will come from existing businesses. BR+E is a form of economic gardening. It is called so because it needs to be long-term and continually supported for maximum success. Relationships are the basis of these programs, and the most successful have dedicated staff maintaining clear lines of communication and providing consistent support to businesses.

Large businesses often have extensive government relations experience and understand not only what role municipalities play in economic development and business support but how to access these supports. Even still, having dedicated resources to supporting these major corporate citizens is a fundamental role of BR+E programming. Small and medium-sized businesses, however, often do not have the benefit of experience in accessing services and supports, typically requiring additional advice.

⁴⁵ Photo source: <https://www.facebook.com/kriskatransportation/photos/1976015092572411>



Small and medium-sized enterprises play a significant role in supporting and sustaining the diversity of the business base, including providing higher value employment opportunities⁴⁶. Small businesses are often touted as delivery agents of some of the most positive economic impacts a community can experience. They are extremely nimble, can scale up and scale down employees and production to match the boom-and-bust cycles of the economy and can reach a national and international market.

Indeed, businesses in Prescott are very clear about what they see as important for the future growth of the Town. They would like to see more support for small businesses, programming to support businesses adopt new technology and productivity tools, and promotion and marketing of Prescott. It is important for the Town and its collaborators across the region to maintain a supportive small business climate by looking at ways to provide information and other services important for small business success and provide programs, such as support for training, knowledge sharing, workshops, or co-working spaces. The Town should lean on other agencies to help with specific program opportunities.

These supports should also include information on how to access large business supply chains. In Prescott, Kriska Transportation Group and Northern Cables purchase millions of dollars in products and services, creating opportunities for new and existing local businesses. The potential for more acres of industrial land – especially west of Prescott between the rail line and Highway 401 – would provide locations for new businesses that can support existing industry leaders.

Businesses desire more supports and programming from the Town, such as help with adopting technology and productivity tools and Community Improvement Plan incentives. With excellent relationships already in place between the business community and the municipality, this momentum can be leveraged to build on existing successes.

Well-resourced BR+E programming also allows municipalities to monitor major government facilities such as Fort Wellington, the Canadian Coast Guard, and other government service providers. These institutions contribute greatly to the economy and their quality of life. Maintaining relationships with these operations reduces the risk of losing them and improves opportunities for expansion or added services delivery. These projects may be long-term but yield considerable benefits.



⁴⁶ More than half of all businesses in Prescott are sole-proprietorships or have no employees. Of those that do, nearly 75% have fewer than 10 employees.



Strategic Priority 1 Objectives



Strategic Priority 2: Continue RiverWalk revival

Why is this a priority?

Placemaking and the visitor economy are increasingly being recognized as important factors in the economic performance of communities. The importance of the identity of a community as livable, diverse, and inclusive is a vital component of its ability to attract visitors and attract and

retain residents and business owners.

The tourism and hospitality sector is a major driver of economic impact and diversity in Eastern Ontario, and Prescott should be making a stronger claim of its share. Marine-based tourism and recreation employment⁴⁷ increased in Canada between 2014 and 2018, by 29%, from 55,926 to 63,587 workers. By developing key messaging and cohesion around a revitalized downtown core and waterfront (known as the RiverWalk District), Prescott can leverage existing strong assets and actively pursue boutique/experience-oriented businesses and monetized recreation and wellness experiences that appeal to visitors and citizens alike.

The concept of the RiverWalk District in downtown Prescott is currently a vision that holds the potential for a variety of on-trend experiences that residents and visitors enjoy. These activities currently range from performing arts events (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival) to outdoor recreation (pleasure boating from the marina) and boutique shopping. The field is literally wide open – in parks and in front of Fort Wellington – for more opportunities in the medium to long-term: new festivals and events, culinary experiences, wellness activities, and monetized tourism experiences.

Scuba diving has held a longstanding but undervalued place in Prescott's tourism experience but lacks focus or support. North American data indicates the number of new divers is increasing in specific markets and that core dive enthusiasts⁴⁸ are fueling increased interest in ongoing training opportunities⁴⁹. Worldwide dive certifications are increasing, and the divers are joining the sport at younger ages, and more women are getting certified.⁵⁰ With infrastructure in place already, Prescott could take a leadership role by collaborating with neighbouring communities and supporting one aspect of the diving experience: training and certification. By providing a welcoming home to dive instructors and clubs and helping to turn interest in scuba diving around, the Town could position itself as a unique



Continue
RiverWalk
revival

⁴⁷ Economic contribution of marine sectors, Fisheries and Oceans / Statistics Canada, 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/16-002-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm>

⁴⁸ <https://medium.com/scubanomics/scuba-diving-participation-rate-statistics-36b9eecd8540>

⁴⁹ DEMA 2021 Diving Fast Facts. Source: <https://www.dema.org/store/download.aspx?id=7811B097-8882-4707-A160-F999B49614B6>

⁵⁰ PADI Worldwide Certification Statistics. 2018. Source: <https://www.padi.com/sites/default/files/documents/2019-02/2019%20PADI%20Worldwide%20Statistics.pdf>



location in which to learn the sport or take advanced training. Parks Canada has no conflicts with scuba diving activities, welcomes that niche market, and has supported it in other locations.

What can happen now? For the most part, Prescott's waterfront is zoned "Public Park," which allows for opportunities including conservation uses, fairgrounds (temporary entertainment, grandstands, barns), heritage sites, private parks (swimming and boat facilities, picnic area, ski area, gardens, refreshment rooms, accessory buildings and structures), public parks (active and passive leisure and recreational uses for the general public), and recreation uses (leisure time activity for purposes of physical activity, health benefits, sports participation and skill development, personal enjoyment and positive social interaction), and winter tourism (skating trails, fire pits, cold-weather events).

Visitors are increasingly motivated (and conditioned, thanks to COVID) to pre-book experiences related to authentic local places, people, and activities, especially when entertaining stories – and local food and drink – are included. Prescott's waterfront parks offer beautiful gardens that could be used as backdrops for gardening classes. Well-developed infrastructure for scuba diving could be used to leverage a renaissance in scuba diving certification. Food trucks and pop-up retail could bring the flavours of Eastern Ontario to Prescott's waterfront for enjoyment by visitors and residents during any season of the year.

The 'bones' of downtown Prescott are strong; the fundamentals of heritage architecture remain in place, and the marina is rated highly on social media. Moves made over the last decade to improve the area are excellent, building on assets already in place. Making the RiverWalk District more 'river-walkable' will also help with attracting new residents and in-fill and second-storey housing development in and around the RiverWalk District. People who live downtown are more inclined to spend money there, a spin-off benefit for business retention, expansion, and attraction along the waterfront.

During engagement with the business community and residents, support for downtown revitalization and tourism was ranked very high. Citizens are willing to share their space with visitors if the sense of place continues to improve, and there are increasingly attractive collections of things to see and do along the waterfront.

There is also willingness on the part of Parks Canada to partner on new opportunities for the Fort Wellington land. A long-term tourism strategy would help to get the wheels in motion at the Parks Canada level and find resources and funding from the federal government. Parks Canada is willing to consider renewing the Millennium Walk Agreement or create a new medium- to long-term agreement for events, experiential tourism, and other land use.





Strategic Priority 2 Objectives:



Continue
RiverWalk
revival

**Accelerate
investment in the
RiverWalk District**

- Encourage owners of business properties to maintain and improve their buildings and sites
- Expedite second-storey residential development

**Expand and improve
public space and
amenities**

- Update and develop policies and strategies that enable development in the RiverWalk District
- Invest in public development of the RiverWalk District

**Bring life to the
downtown and
riverfront**

- Attract and support the development of downtown and riverfront events and entertainment regularly
- Encourage tourism and recreation entrepreneurs



Strategic Priority 3: Attract investment, workers, citizens

Why is this a priority?

Millions of commuters, business executives, tourists, and dollars by-pass Prescott on a yearly basis on not one 400-series highway but two. By fully capitalizing on this opportunity, the Town can expand its reputation as a place to build a business, a safe community to raise a family, and a destination to host tourists. Preparing Prescott for investment and being

proactive in attracting targeted sectors promotes nearly all the community's key aspirations. By choosing to welcome new investment, the Town can diversify and grow the local economy in complementary sectors, grow the workforce and population base, and fully leverage community assets.

Investment attraction is centred on increasing new business investment through developing and communicating business-friendly policies and a corporate culture that demonstrates the Town is "open for business." This includes ensuring institutional structures are streamlined to make the process of land selection, land acquisition, and building easy for investors; an accurate inventory of available 'shovel-ready' property exists, investment properties are easy to search for, and there is adequate infrastructure and land to satisfy projected demand. Since investment readiness is targeted at an investor who may not be familiar with Prescott, a coordinated approach to marketing investment-ready commercial, office, and industrial properties is essential. Investors have little time or patience to talk with several contacts to secure the needed information. Any confusion can result in a missed opportunity.

The perception of a community as liveable, diverse, and inclusive is also a vital component of its ability to attract and retain residents from a wide range of demographic groups. This discussion takes on greater relevance in the battle to attract the workforce required to drive the development of new business in Prescott and to support the supply chain of existing industries. Attracting professionals and remote workers, or the intellectual capital that powers the development of a knowledge-based economy has become a priority in Ontario.



**Attract
investment,
workers,
citizens**



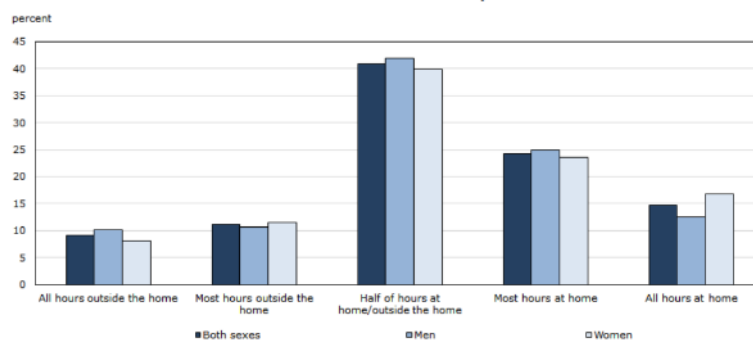
Remote workers should be of specific interest to Prescott, given its strategic location among large urban centres. As a result of the pandemic, people have increasingly worked from almost anywhere provided they have access to quality internet and reliable transportation infrastructure. These people do the majority of work from a home office or co-location space, as most of their clients tend to be in

other parts of the province, country, or even the world⁵¹. This demographic of businesses choose a location because of the amenities, assets, and quality of place attributes that appeal to them and their families because they do not have to choose a location simply because of where their clients are located. As professionals, they are typically involved in engineering, design, computer programming, media or cultural industries, law, research and development, or consulting.

A key component of capitalizing on this traffic is creating targeted messages that appeal to the different market segments that align with Prescott's targets. For example, executives at multinational corporations are likely to be focused on clients or operations in existing major centres such as Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa and are not motivated to consider Prescott's advantages. They just sail past the town. But entrepreneurs who are newcomers to Canada are likely employed in larger cities that are geographically closer to Prescott and hold the potential of passing through the community multiple times per year. They are drawn to an affordable housing market and a safe community to raise a family. A better understanding of these groups' motivations allows for the development of complementary assets that also support the residents of Prescott. By understanding what assets, experiences and amenities motivated entrepreneurs are looking for, complementary year-round draws can be developed, which, in turn, supports a higher quality of life for residents.

Prescott needs to be ready for new investment. There is currently a lack of serviced employment lands and a shortage of housing options. Prescott's average dwelling values are below regional averages, and the homeownership rate is well below the regional average. Acceptance of multi-residential as a dwelling type is much higher in Prescott than the regional average. There is also a low rate of visible minorities and recent immigrant arrivals. The community wants to turn these circumstances around. More diverse housing is seen as a prerequisite to attracting workers and new commercial/industrial. A move in this direction opens up the possibilities of attracting more remote workers and young people.

Preferences of new teleworkers for telework once the COVID-19 pandemic is over

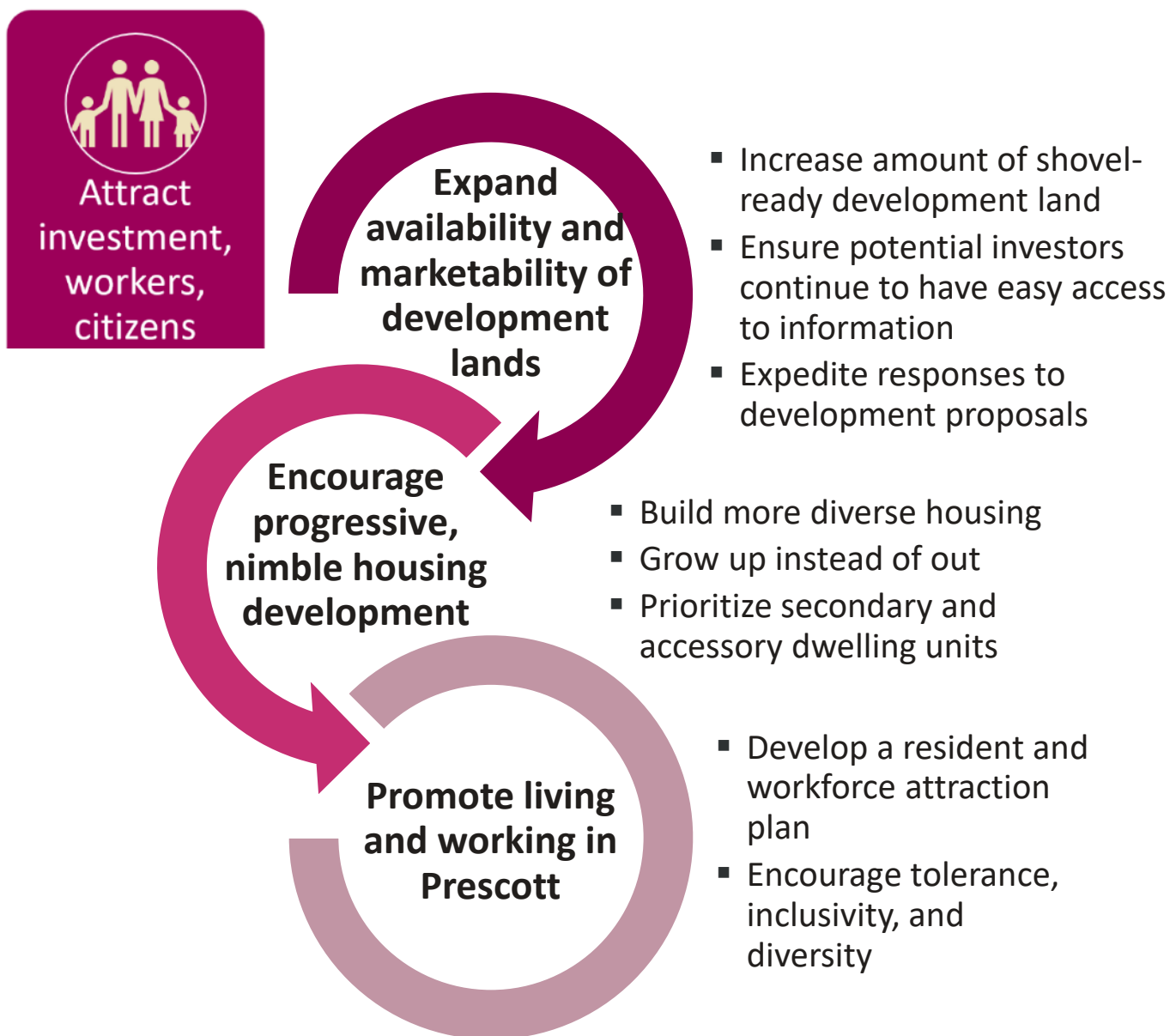


Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey and Labour Force Survey supplement, February, 2021.

⁵¹ [Statistics Canada](#) (February 2021) reported that 80% of new remote workers would like to work at least half of their hours from home once the pandemic is over.



Strategic Priority 3 Objectives





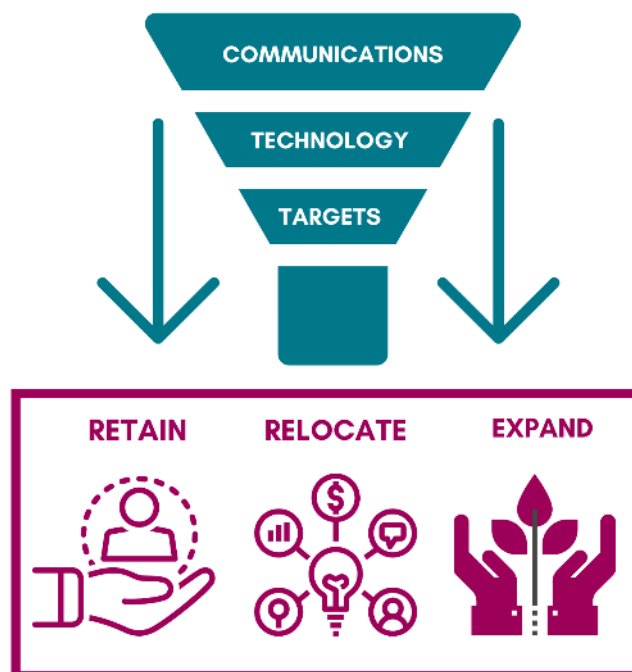
Business Retention & Expansion Direction and Action Plan

Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) efforts are all about helping current businesses prosper, grow, and diversify. With the approval of a satisfied business community, the Town of Prescott is poised to double down on its efforts to retain and expand companies.

Town staff have excellent relationships with business contacts and understand the importance of regional collaboration, working closely with neighbouring municipalities and regional alliances on strategic initiatives. By strengthening existing industries, the Town of Prescott can help build key growth sectors of the economy.

The BR+E Direction and Action Plan groups recommendations under the three primary pillars – *Targets*, *Technology*, and *Communications* – of this Priority One economic development practice.

MODEL FOR BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION ACTION PLAN








Special Notes

The timing of actions is articulated as (O) ongoing (life of the project), (S) short (within one year), (M) medium (2 to 3 years), or (L) long-term (4 years or more).


A list of abbreviations and acronyms is located at the beginning of this document.

Business Retention & Expansion Direction and Action Plan

Recommended Actions - Business Retention & Expansion		Timing	Regional
Targets  	Identify existing major employers and high-growth small-and-medium-sized enterprises in target sectors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation and logistics Advanced manufacturing Professional, scientific, and technical services Accommodation and food services Developers of residential housing Other owners/occupants of strategic parcels of land (e.g. Fort Wellington, the Canadian Coast Guard) 	S/O	Potential to team up with Augusta
	Leverage supply chain opportunities for target sectors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation and warehousing Professional, scientific, and technical services Chemical and other advanced manufacturing 	S-M/O	Potential to team up with Augusta, Brockville, TEC, PJ, UCLG, SLCEDC
Technology 	Establish a CRM (Client Relationship Management Software⁵²) to track existing businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep current data on industry supply chain purchases, employment statistics and other data from reliable sources, and encourage government agencies to update their data for Prescott (e.g. Business Counts) Monitor changes to the number of jobs, corporate ownerships, suppliers, and other critical information about employers. Record potential developments and investment prospects. 	S/O	Potential to team up with Augusta and OEDCC

⁵² Various developers of CRMs are on the market, ranging in price. There are affordable options for a municipality the size of Prescott.



Recommended Actions - Business Retention & Expansion		Timing	Regional
	Develop Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Tracking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop easy-to-understand KPIs to gauge the return on investment (ROI) and value added by BR+E program supports. Track KPIs and ROI through either the CRM or engagement platform to communicate the return on investment and value add the BRE program supports. 	M/O	Potential to team up with Augusta and OEEDCC
Communications 	Engage with major employers and high-growth small- and medium-sized enterprises in target sectors annually <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track issues of concern to local employers. Developing or adapting tools to support a business-centric and investment-focused website with up-to-date industry-standard data is needed to successfully support the local business community. 	S-M/O	Potential to team up with EWIB, GCFDC, PJ, RTO9, SGCC, PBIA, SLC, SLCEDC, SLRIP, OEEDCC, MEDJCT
	Regularly communicate results of the BR+E program and the importance of economic development across the broader Prescott community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a public-facing dashboard or tool that identifies progress, utilizing the KPIs tracked through technology platforms. Regularly communicate updates to the dashboard/tool and the positive results of the BR+E program. Regularly inform elected representatives, business groups, and major employers about the impact of local economic development practices. Publish periodic email newsletters and annual reports to Town Council, businesses, and the community. Host regular workshops and an annual summit focused on celebrating Prescott economic development and business achievements, and networking. 	S-M/O	EOMC, EORN, EOWC, EWIB, GCFDC, LGSBC, PJ, RTO9, SGCC, PBIA, SLC, SLCEDC, SLRIP, OEEDCC, MEDJCT, UCLG



Recommended Actions - Business Retention & Expansion		Timing	Regional
	<p>Establish a Prescott Economic Development Squad of local business operators and business support organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage feedback to Council from local businesses and business associations about bylaws and policies, and resource supports for Town staff. Meet with groups of local businesses on a regular basis to talk about business needs and future plans, supported by the EDO, CAO, senior staff, and Mayor and Council. Provide advocacy/support services to the business community. 	S/O	Partners: GCFDC, SGCC, PBIA, SLCEDC, LGSBEC, UCLG, CSE
	<p>Provide unparalleled support and follow-up to businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report back to individual businesses with information, support services, referrals, networking, workshops, and incentives that may help with their plans. Review data collected through BR+E visitation to develop industry-wide programming and enhance the Town's relationship with the business community. Update business satisfaction rates on an annual basis through surveys of employers to determine the value added by BR+E supports. 	M/O	<p>Review BR+E reports from across the region to track performance</p> <p>SLCEDC, UCLG OEEDCC</p>
	<p>Align programs, resources, and service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure communications are aligned with regional messaging and leverage the broad reach of the partner network. Create or leverage a centralized database of existing business support programming and resources to improve access to available resources. Ensure Town staff are provided with professional development training in economic development and allowed to network at relevant conferences and forums. Communicate with Statistics Canada to ensure community data is accurate and publicly available⁵³. 	M/O	<p>Potential for numerous regional partnerships</p> <p>Augusta, Brockville, TEC, SLCEDC, UCLG OEEDCC</p>

⁵³ Statistics Canada Business Counts data for the Town of Prescott is not as current as other municipalities.



Investment Attraction Direction and Action Plan

The Town of Prescott has excellent relations with businesses and a collaborative, forward-thinking attitude. While there is not an expansive inventory of developable industrial land, the municipality should be prepared to develop the Town-owned and privately held lands that are here. By leveraging the existing supply chains and viewing residential development as an investment, stronger concentrations of activity can help create a resilient economy. By working with its regional peers and focusing on attracting

new specialized professional, scientific and technical companies, the Town can build its population and workforce while creating new residential and downtown opportunities.

The Investment Attraction Direction and Action Plan groups recommendations under three primary pillars – *Target Opportunities*, *Infrastructure Investment*, and *Lead Generation*.

MODEL FOR INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

LEAD GENERATION

- Promote
- Respond



TARGET OPPORTUNITIES

- Knowledge
- Networking



INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

- Land & Buildings
- Servicing





Action Plan Tactics and Timing for Investment Attraction

Recommended Actions - Investment Attraction		Timing	Regional
Investment Readiness  	Ensure potential investors continue to have easy access to information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt existing tools to maintain a single comprehensive, accessible database of community data, employment lands and buildings. Publish an interactive GIS map of the town detailing zoning and other information about all property parcels. Publish an inventory of privately and publicly-owned development land and buildings (industrial, commercial, vacant and derelict properties). Check published data twice a year to ensure it is current. Publish a flow chart outlining the steps in the land-use planning and development process, along with a list of applicable fees, charges, and levies associated with processing a proposal. Embed or link all information and tools through the Town's website or, preferably, a stand-alone economic development investment microsite. 	S/O	Partner with SLCEDC, UCLG OEEDCC
	Expedite responses to development proposals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to streamline and digitize the development approvals process. Continue to support flexible and responsive permitting/zoning. Review the existing cross-department development review team to consider a more robust Development Concierge service. Continue to support developers in mitigating provincial regulatory challenges through facilitation and flexibility. 	S-M/O	Partner with regional and provincial advocacy groups and associations
	Support project development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop investment incentives to support new projects on priority sites in the Town. 	M	Potential to partner regionally





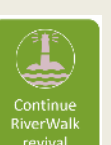
Recommended Actions - Investment Attraction		Timing	Regional
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize the land use analysis and data on economic drivers to support developers through the predevelopment, feasibility, and site analysis stages. Support project development by publicizing site assessment data and publicly supporting investment in target sites. 		
	Encourage owners of business properties to maintain and improve their buildings and sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the RiverWalk District as a priority development area in the Official Plan update. Increase existing funding for Community Improvement incentives for downtown properties, specifically façade improvement and second-storey residential, as well as structural/code compliance grants. 	M/O	
	Increase the amount of shovel-ready development land available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Land Needs Analysis recommendations in cooperation with the Township of Augusta. (See Section, “Findings from Land Needs Analysis”) Improve infrastructure and amenities to catalyze residential and industrial growth. Collaborate with landowners to promote the recommended sites identified through the Land Analysis. 	M-L	Team up with Augusta
Target Opportunities	Support residential development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with developers and landowners to secure new, diverse residential housing projects with a focus on the identified lands west of the Town of Prescott south of the rail lines. Permit high multi-residential building (up to 5 storeys) except in the RiverWalk District. Prioritize secondary and accessory dwelling units (e.g., tiny homes, second-storey suites, etc.) and update zoning bylaw to support tiny home showcase pilots and developments. 	S-M	





Recommended Actions - Investment Attraction		Timing	Regional
  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund Community Improvement incentives to accelerate targeted residential development, including development charge exemptions on specific types of housing. Promote the Town's objectives to industry associations and construction companies. Anticipate development constraints related to additional downtown residential units and mitigate their impacts (e.g. parking space exemptions). Create a new Community Improvement incentive for mixed-used commercial with second-storey residential development in existing downtown buildings (e.g. development charge exemptions in Clarington⁵⁴). 		
	Support commercial/industrial development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with investors to develop new commercial, shared office and light industrial properties. Leverage the Vacant Property Registry to find new owners and/or tenants for buildings owned by absentee landlords (e.g. Gananoque Make a Life Make a Living initiative, Webster Empty Building Tour) 	M-L	Partner with real estate board, chamber of commerce
	Develop a resident and workforce attraction plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canvas employers about the types of workforce they are in need of Connect with education programs at post-secondary educational institutions for potential solutions to workforce shortages. Create a library of Prescott stories and images for use in promotional tactics. Add a "Move Here" tab to the Town's website with relevant information or, preferably, a stand-alone resident attraction or tourism microsite. 	M	SLCEDC, UCLG, neighbouring municipalities, St. Lawrence College, Algonquin College, Queen's, Ottawa, Carleton universities

⁵⁴ Clarington's Development Charges By-law, 2015-035, which came into effect July 1, 2015, provides incentives for mid-rise residential development in the Revitalization Areas of Bowmanville, Courtice, Newcastle, and Orono. Incentives are designed to encourage more compact mid-rise residential development



Recommended Actions - Investment Attraction		Timing	Regional
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Town's social media presence onto additional channels (e.g. YouTube, LinkedIn). Establish an editorial calendar for the Town's social media and communications channels focused on highlighting Prescott as an excellent place to live and work. 		
	<p>Explore tangible opportunities in North Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlist Prescott businesses and citizens to provide intelligence on New York's North Country for potential opportunities for businesses in Prescott Connect with education programs at North Country colleges (Clarkson, St. Lawrence, SUNY Canton) for potential solutions to workforce shortages. Continue to collaborate on cross-border opportunities (e.g. ferry) and develop new ones (e.g. business gaps, buy-local, joint recreation interests). 	L	Potential to partner with regional agencies and the U.S.
<p>Infrastructure Investment</p> <div>  <p>Keep businesses top of mind</p> </div> <div>  <p>Attract investment, workers, citizens</p> </div> <div>  <p>Continue RiverWalk revival</p> </div>	<p>Secure additional servicing capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund the enhancement of water and sewer infrastructure for new residential development through investment and service agreements. Reduce the cost of utilities to support investment attraction (e.g. lower electricity rates). Continue to work with regional partners, senior government, and the private sector to secure broadband investment. Continue to work in collaboration with regional organizations to lobby and advocate for infrastructure investments. Utilize the targets identified in the strategy to focus on accessing provincial and federal funding to support municipal infrastructure investment that brings new industrial land online and enhances existing business and industrial parks to meet target sector needs. 	M-L	Potential to partner with Augusta, other municipalities, SLCEDC, UCLG, EORN, MEDJCT, etc.



Recommended Actions - Investment Attraction		Timing	Regional
	Secure improved transportation access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with regional partners to lobby the Ministry of Transportation for improved connections to Highway 401, including the Edward Street interchange. Continue to collaborate on regional rail infrastructure to support logistics and address noise buffering. Support the continuation and expanded frequency of passenger train service to the City of Brockville and enhance inter-city connections between Brockville and Prescott. Encourage other regional public transit services (e.g., rural bus) 	L	Regional partnership is essential EOWC, EOMC, SLCEDC, UCLG
Lead Generation  	Leverage lead generation partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage regional organizations for lead generation. Focus on the sectors identified in the Supply Chain Analysis to develop leads for outreach. Continue to work with regional partners to generate and work industrial investment leads in the Town. Join OEEDC's Transportation/Logistics Investment Team. Develop investor-focused marketing materials in target sectors. 	S-M	Regional partnership is essential SLEDC, UCLG, OEEDC, MEDJCT
	Establish relationships with site selection community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage BR+E activities to generate additional leads. Investigate hosting or supporting a regional Familiarization Tour in cooperation with regional partners, showcasing the RiverWalk District and residential development options (e.g., cater lunch or dinner outdoors on development land, take on a boat cruise, outline incentives and policy supports). Support a subset of the Economic Development Squad to act as Prescott Business Ambassadors, who can meet potential investors during site-selection visits (e.g., ask CEO of a major local employer to talk about Town's open-for-business philosophy or about merits of local labour force). Create kits of information, messages, and local gifts for use by ambassadors to encourage new employers to invest in Prescott (e.g., when a local business owner is visiting a client or supplier in another city, they can leave the material behind). 	S-M	Regional partnership is essential SLEDC, UCLG, OEEDC, MEDJCT



Tourism Development, Resident Attraction & Marketing Action Plan

The Town of Prescott wants to retain young talent and align workforce development efforts to match the skill needs of the targeted industries. It wishes to evaluate and provide strategies for developing a stronger tourism/visitation economy, and to improve its image and reputation, as a preferred investment, residential and tourist destination.

The Tourism/Residential Investment & Marketing Direction and Action Plan outlines recommendations under five primary pillars – *Value Proposition, Product and Experience Development, Marketing, and Infrastructure* – of this critical component of place-making and economic development practice.



The current Fort Town brand for Prescott is also considered, including a recommendation to review the brand in the context of aspirations for an inclusive, diverse, and welcoming community.

Scuba diving is a unique opportunity for the Town of Prescott. It is explored in greater depth following the Action Plan.

Model for Tourism Development / Resident Attraction & Marketing Action Plan






Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
Value Proposition, Brand, Leadership  	Support sense of place and rethink community identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate and promote tolerant, inclusive, and diverse neighbourhoods, businesses, community groups, and citizens. Improve newcomers' feeling of welcoming and belonging through coordination of grants for activities and events. Review Prescott's "Fort Town" brand within target markets for new residents and workers by defining what it means to visit and live in Prescott and whether the brand resonates⁵⁵. Modify Prescott's branding and identity, as needed. Update policies and strategies enabling RiverWalk District development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the RiverWalk District as a focus of economic development and tourism within the Official Plan. Update the Downtown Prescott Strategic Plan to ensure it includes modern best practices. 	S-M	Regional partners can support



⁵⁵ Prescott's Fort Town brand, while it celebrates the legacy of Fort Wellington, can create contradictory messages or perceptions related to the town's hopes for an inclusive, diverse, and welcoming community, given that the brand can be seen as highlighting the colonization of Canada, and the separation of settlers from Indigenous culture. For more information, see *Fort, Curriculum, and Indigenous Métissage: Imagining Decolonization of Aboriginal-Canadian Relations in Educational Contexts*, D.T. Donald, University of Alberta. Source: https://www.mfnerc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/004_Donald.pdf



Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
Product and Experience Development   	Foster new and improved local businesses, amenities, and experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand which organizations and community groups have the capacity to assist in any economic development activity and where Town staff and businesses will need to take the lead. Encourage entrepreneurs by fostering waterfront recreation (canoe, kayak, SUP, bicycle rentals), retail and culinary pop-ups (Amish sheds, etc.) and other mobile activations (e.g. food trucks), floating hospitality (tourist accommodation or restaurants on barges accessible from the riverbank), and eco-tourism developments and partnerships with neighbouring townships to harness natural assets/heritage. Facilitate shoulder season tourism opportunities (e.g., outdoor skating trail⁵⁶ on Fort Wellington lands). Develop a shared workspace⁵⁷ downtown to help businesses find the tools, resources, and partners they need to succeed. Work with community groups, regional organizations, and clusters of small businesses to develop gated and/or monetized experiences and package partnerships based on local food / culinary, recreation, and wellness (e.g. harvest dinners in the street, paddleboard rentals, yoga classes), and joint business/artisan experiences, e.g. classes or events hosted at businesses. 	S-M	RTO9 and other partners can support, FCLGL

⁵⁶ Example: Clarence-Rockland skating, clarence-rockland.com/en/loisirs-et-divertissements/alain-potvin-park.aspx



⁵⁷ Example: Revelstock Idea Factory, revelstokeideafactory.ca



Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position and promote the Prescott Dive Park as a regional scuba training and certification location⁵⁸. Facilitate the networking of Prescott tourism businesses with regional agencies (e.g. RTO 9), potential business partners on new experiences and products (e.g. regional tour bus companies, eco-tourism experiences), and development/marketing resources. Explore specific business partnership opportunities associated with the development of Aquaworld (e.g. accommodation packages, restaurant promotions, cross-promotion of RiverWalk District, etc.) Coordinate visitor interest in Prescott by adding a visitor centre (stand-alone or part of another building) to the RiverWalk District, where seasonal tourism ambassadors would be based and engage in part-time on-street ambassador activities. Leverage the Vacant Property Registry to communicate expectations about maintenance of downtown properties to property owners and to raise awareness about opportunities among other businesses and the general public of improvements to the RiverWalk District. 		

⁵⁸ Scuba Park, Quebec Sub Aquatique, scubapedia.ca/index.php/Scuba_Park



Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
Market Research, Targets, Tactics  	Develop a tourism marketing plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to refine Prescott's value proposition and target markets. Collaborate with regional partners to create a St. Lawrence Dive Tourism Action Plan. Develop marketing platforms and channels, digital tools and promotional materials (e.g. visitor info/passport application with an incentive program, interactive map) to promote the Town to a broader audience. Collect data on visitor volume and spending in Prescott and region Develop target demographic and geographic markets and group personas. 	S-M	Partner with RTO9, Brockville
	Develop a resident/workforce attraction plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the challenges and opportunities that employers and newcomers have experienced to date, and plan to address them. Develop messages to counteract perceptions of Prescott as a low-income town by highlighting workforce supports, upskilling for workers, and infill opportunities related to affordable housing (e.g., provide referrals to Essential Skills Ontario⁵⁹, Tourism SkillsNet Ontario⁶⁰ and other resources). Develop and refine a resident attraction-focused community value proposition. Coordinate with employers to develop welcome packages for new residents to support recruitment efforts and share through partner marketing channels. Implement marketing activities to attract new residents/workforce populations. 	M	Partner with Brockville, UCLG, and other neighbours

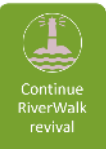


⁵⁹ Essential Skills Ontario, <http://www.essentialskillsontario.ca/>

⁶⁰ Tourism SkillsNet Ontario, <https://otec.org/workforce-development/tourism-skillsnet-ontario/>



Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
	<p>Offer authentic Prescott events and experiences that build community pride, and attract tourists and newcomers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build partnerships with third-party event organizers (non-profit and for-profit) who will take the lead on event organization ▪ Facilitate the organization of regularly scheduled RiverWalk District events and entertainment that encourages tolerance, inclusivity, and diversity (e.g. multicultural food and music festival, outdoor movie night, Take Back the Night walks, cricket for beginners, Pride parade, etc.). ▪ Experiment with scheduled pedestrian-only street closures. ▪ Invest in public spaces and pedestrian amenities (e.g. seasonal patios, parkettes, outdoor seating, small performance spaces, public chalkboards, etc.) ▪ Provide resources to schedule professional and amateur entertainers, buskers, and artists. ▪ Support organizers of the Prescott Farmers' & Crafters' Market to improve the experience (e.g., new market dates/times and locations, enhanced infrastructure, cultural and cooking experiences, music and entertainment, etc.) 	S-M/O	RTO9 and regional players can help promote



Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
Revitalize Place and Infrastructure   	Invest in public development of the RiverWalk District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiative discussions and execute an agreement with Parks Canada for cooperative use of lands south of Fort Wellington. Develop a RiverWalk District Master Plan with recommendations from Recreation Master Plan. Fund infrastructure improvements for parks, sidewalks, and parking in the RiverWalk District (e.g., winter skating trail on Parks Canada lands, dive-equipment rinse station, electrical services for pop-ups, floating accommodation, restaurants on barges). Develop a wayfinding signage strategy for the RiverWalk District and fund new signage. Partner with the Canadian Coast Guard on downtown beautification. Continue to develop the bicycle ferry project with Ogdensburg, New York. 	M-L	Collaborate with Parks Canada Learn from other waterfront communities on St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario
	Develop more attractions and assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop comprehensive profiles of all community assets and attractions and ensure they are represented through regional tourism organizations. Continue to support the identification, development and promotion of attractions and assets in the region through Prescott's BR+E program, leveraging regional asset development support. Create a task force to establish a co-working, incubator or cooperative space in the RiverWalk District (e.g. review best practices 	M	Partnering with other communities could mean reciprocal study tours to see how other communities support their waterfronts



Recommended Actions - Tourism Development / Resident Attraction		Timing	Regional
	<p>of small hubs in other communities;⁶¹ determine ownership/operation of co-working space)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with regional partners to lobby for and access grants to invest in new assets and amenities. 		
Storytelling and Promotional Tactics	<p>Promote Prescott stories and images</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the Prescott narrative highlighting specific experiences, locations, businesses, people, and products Assemble the promotional channels and contacts required to spread Prescott messages Implement a year-round editorial schedule aimed at delivering stories to target markets outside of Prescott 	O/S	Utilize all regional partnerships to share the messages

⁶¹ [Core21](#), Oshawa; [10C](#), Guelph; [Treehaus](#), Kitchener; [Canopy Coworking](#), Springwater, Collingwood, Barrie; [Riversyde83](#), Simcoe; [Milly's Pantry](#), Penn Yan; [Owen Sound Artists Coop](#); [The Food Shop](#), Peterborough; [Neighbourhood Resource Centre](#), Geneva; [FireHub](#), Bolton.



The Business Case for Dive Tourism

Several positive attributes support the business case for the Town of Prescott to pursue the scuba dive tourism industry as a lucrative source of visitors. Scuba can differentiate Prescott from almost every other community in Ontario, save Brockville and Tobermory. The warm waters, currents, and underwater features of the St. Lawrence River create strong demand from consumers. There are many scuba divers and related businesses in nearby cities. Interest in scuba diving is growing, and most divers are educated and affluent.

Thoughts from a diver's perspective

"The waters are warmer, the current is strong, and there is high visibility. The area appeals to a wide variety of skill levels."

We interviewed an advanced scuba diver from Southwestern Ontario who has visited the Brockville/Prescott area several times, stayed the weekend each time, usually as part of a group, and participated in 50 to 60 dives there.

"The waters are warmer, the current is strong, and there is high visibility. That makes for a more comfortable, more interesting dive because you tend to see larger fish, such as muskie. The shipwrecks are very interesting, too. The area appeals to a wide variety of skill levels, from the beginners at Prescott dock, intermediate level dives or night dives at Rothesay, or more advanced, technical drift dives or wreck dives in the river."

Divers are sensitive and aware of communities that welcome them and prefer to support small businesses whenever possible, according to the interview subject.

Scuba makes Prescott unique

In central Canada, there are only two geographic areas with a high concentration of charter scuba dive operators and scuba dive retail shops. Those two communities are:

- Brockville/Prescott – ranked #1 for Scuba Diving in Canada⁶²
- Tobermory/Fathom Five

The Town of Prescott is in the unique position of being at the epicentre of Canada's dive tourism economy, thanks to advocates locally and regionally.



Prescott is closer to major cities

Brockville/Prescott is well-positioned because of its location on Hwy 401, with shorter travel times from Montreal (home to many scuba divers), Ottawa, Toronto, and New York City, compared to Tobermory.

⁶² Article, <https://traveltriangle.com/blog/scuba-diving-in-canada/>



Prescott has warmer water

The season for diving in Brockville/Prescott extends well into the fall, thanks to the warm waters of the Great Lakes flowing through the St. Lawrence River.

Prescott has less congestion

The dive industry in Brockville/Prescott also benefits from being spaced along the St. Lawrence River, not headquartered within a single community (e.g., Tobermory) with other competing interests and traffic concerns in the downtown core associated with a passenger car ferry.

There is strong demand for diving experiences near Prescott

There are plenty of scuba divers, instructors, and diving-related businesses and clubs within a one or two-hour drive of Prescott. The following list includes a high-level review of these groups, based on a survey of Facebook groups and pages in Eastern Ontario, Montreal, and Upstate New York. Numbers beside the organization indicate membership or followers.

Boutique Plongée CPAS - 19,793	Plongée Atlantide - 1,003
École de plongée Triton - 14,067	Kraken Scuba, Albany - 952
Kanata Diving Supply - 6,000+	Kingston Dive Charters - 944
Aquatic World of North Syracuse - 3,596	Save Ontario Shipwrecks - 922
Action Scuba, Montreal - 2,816 followers	All About Scuba - 912
Centre de Plongée Neptéon - 2,794 followers	613 Scuba Diving - 848
Aqua Plein Air, Sainte-Therese - 2,738	Hunt's Dive Shop, New York - 833
Ontario Diving - 2,518	Scuba Finatics Ottawa - 634
Outaouais Scuba Diving School - 1,723	Plongée Protek - 578
Plongée CPAS, Montreal - 1,576	WeGoDown Scuba Diving Centre, Ottawa - 565
Ottawa Scuba Diving & Snorkeling / Sharky's Scuba - 1,502	Plongée DD, Boucherville - 560
Dive Brockville Adventure Centre & Abucs Charters - 1,496	Pat's Dive Charters - 528
Diver's Warehouse, Nepean - 1,262	Ontario Underwater Explorers SCUBA Club - 489
St. Lawrence Scuba Co. - 1,230	Kingston Scuba Divers - 460
Toronto Scuba Divers - 1,175	O2togo Dive Centre, Cornwall - 369
SOS Thousand Islands Chapter - 1,133	CFB Kingston Dolphin Scuba Club - 307
	Bluefin Diving North Country - 326
	SOS Ottawa Chapter - 189

Prescott has diving amenities

Two training platforms were installed at the Prescott Scuba Park in summer 2021, thanks to the SOS Ottawa Chapter. The platforms are located close to shore, at a depth of about 20 feet. New lines lead from the base of the dock near the entrance ramp to the platforms. A Peak Performance Buoyancy course has been added to the Scuba Park, comprised of PVC squares for divers to swim through when developing their buoyancy skills. A map of the Scuba Park is also being prepared. Diving clubs have excellent communications with the Town of Prescott to mitigate any concerns of non-diving residents (e.g., parking conflicts) and to improve existing equipment (e.g., modifying the steel entrance ramp).

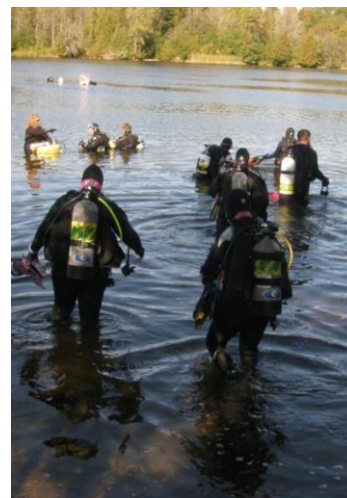


Scuba divers are affluent consumers

Scuba divers are an affluent consumer segment with above-average levels of post-secondary education (62.8%) and the third-highest household income of 21 outdoor activity types⁶³. While divers like to travel internationally, they were also the second most likely to have taken a trip within their own province or region (96.1%) and the third most likely to have travelled to an adjacent province or region (61.7%).

Those who went freshwater scuba diving and snorkelling while on trips were exceptionally active while on trips. Relative to the average Canadian Pleasure Traveler, this segment was at least twice as likely to participate in most outdoor and culture and entertainment activities and especially water-based activities (e.g., boating and swimming), sporting activities and events (e.g., team sports, professional sports events), and wilderness activities (e.g., hiking, climbing, and paddling, wilderness tour).

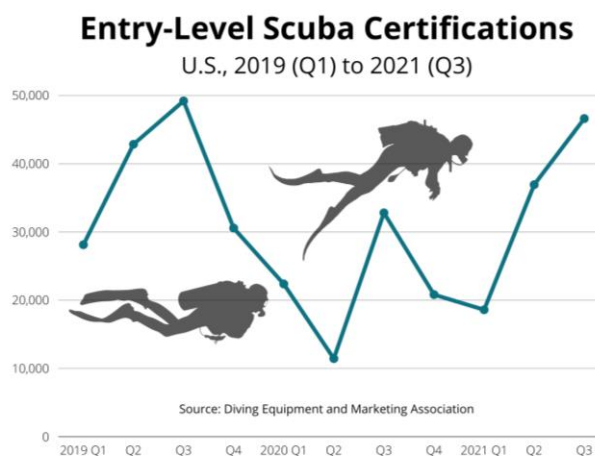
Scuba divers seek vacations that are novel, educational, physically challenging and enrich family relationships.



There is growth in interest in scuba diving

Statistics released by the Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA) show a rebound in entry-level scuba certifications. In the third quarter of 2021, more than 46,000 Americans received their basic certification, almost reaching the 49,000 recorded in the same quarter of 2019.

The proposed Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary⁶⁴ has cast an international spotlight on the Thousand Islands and St. Lawrence River. Released in the summer of 2021, the proposal seeks to designate a large section of eastern Lake Ontario, on the U.S. side, as a marine sanctuary. The increased awareness of the area as a diving destination may serve to bring additional international divers to the region, including Brockville/Prescott.



⁶³ Travel activities and motivations survey - Freshwater Scuba Diving and Snorkeling While on Trips of One or More Nights, Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/travel_activities/tams_scuba_snorkel_cdn.shtml

⁶⁴ Proposed Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary, July 2021, [PDF](#).



Tips to attract more scuba divers

What the Town can do

A diver always remembers where they completed their certification: the “open-water” portion of the instruction. With the Scuba Park, the Town of Prescott is in an enviable position to build a following of new divers, and by extension, the instructors, diving centres, charter operators, and businesses.

The good thing about focusing on diving tourism is that Prescott can expend a few resources on a very targeted niche market and see quickly how well it pays off. Here are some suggestions for the Town:

- Create a database of scuba dive contacts: instructors, retailers, charters, avid locals.
- Host a scuba diving festival, Discover Scuba Diving event⁶⁵, DiversNight⁶⁶, or monthly dive gathering with food for divers and their families. Invite diving instructors, retailers, and charter operators to set up tables. Share photos on social media. Encourage divers to remove debris and litter from the waters. Note: there are no established scuba diving festivals in Canada.
- Ask dive clubs and instructors for suggestions to improve amenities. Installing a rinse station or secure drying lockers and change rooms may facilitate a diver staying longer – and spending more money – in the RiverWalk District.
- Work with the BIA and nearby businesses to build relationships between divers and the RiverWalk District. Provide congratulation kits to dive instructors, containing discount coupons to local shops or a municipal pin to any newly certified divers who complete their instruction in Prescott.
- Map out a spouse and family promotion for those people related to the divers but who do not dive. If “bubble-watchers” know there are other things to do while their loved one is diving, they are more likely to join them on the trip.
- Develop a dive tourism strategy in conjunction with Brockville stakeholders.

Scuba Dive Locker Storage System



⁶⁵ 12 Activities to Keep Divers Active and Increase Business, Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI), [padi.com](https://www.padi.com)

⁶⁶ DiversNight 2021 involved 1468 divers at 141 sites in 21 countries, diversnight.com



What businesses can do

Like any niche tourism market, understanding and respecting the needs and wishes of the target audience through simple changes to business operations can go a long way to attracting repeat visits and building a friendly reputation.

- Know the names of dive sites, their levels of skills, and depths. Know about parking, public washrooms, and food options nearby.
- Know where to send divers who need to buy gear or make repairs. Share what other divers have told you, such as fish sightings or special rock formations.
- Provide a secure location where divers can hang up their wet suits and gear to dry.
- Know some hand signals⁶⁷ that are used by divers. In emergencies, it could be a lifesaver. For non-emergencies, knowing a signal or two will impress divers (e.g., a waiter could ask a table of divers if their meal is good and get a response without speaking).
- Be willing to accept wet money. Post a small sign in your window or on your menu, welcoming scuba divers.
- Provide discounts to divers who show their PADI certified diver card.
- Divers love picnic lunches, but nothing fancy. Sell them premade sandwiches or box lunches to be purchased in the morning before they head to their dive. Have breakfast sandwiches and packaged drinks ready for breakfast on the run.

Dive signal: "I'm OK."



Photo: Barry and Ruth Guimbellot, dtmag.com

Resources:

- [PADI](#)
- [Scubanomics](#)
- [Save Ontario Shipwrecks Ottawa Chapter](#)
































⁶⁷ Surface communication for scuba divers, dtmag.com



Critical Path

The critical path is a starting point based on research and engagement at a point in time. It is not a comprehensive list of all potential actions. New actions need to be assessed against existing priorities.

 Resources may be available in the Economic Development Department to initiate this action.
  More resources are needed for this action.
  Initiation of the action requires collaboration from internal and external stakeholders.

Action	Resources Available	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Business Retention and Expansion						
Identify major employers, high-growth companies		●	○	○	○	○
Leverage supply chain opportunities for target sectors.			●	○	○	○
Establish CRM to track existing businesses		●	○	○	○	○
Develop Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Tracking			●	○	○	○
Engage with major employers and high-growth companies		●	●	●	●	●
Regularly communicate results across the Prescott community		○	○	○	○	○
Establish Prescott Economic Development Squad		●	○	○	○	○
Provide unparalleled support and follow-up to businesses				●	○	○
Align programs, resources, and service delivery			●	○	○	○
Investment Attraction						
Ensure potential investors have access to information		●	○	○	○	○
Expedite responses to development proposals		●	○	○	○	○
Support project development				●	○	○
Encourage owners of properties to improve buildings		●	●	●	●	○
Increase amount of shovel-ready development land				●	●	
Support residential development			●	○	○	○
Support commercial/industrial development				●	○	○
Develop a resident and workforce attraction plan				●	○	○
Explore tangible opportunities in North Country				○	●	●
Secure additional servicing capacity				●	●	●
Secure improved transportation access					○	●
Leverage lead generation partners		●	●	○	○	○
Establish relationships with site selection community			○	●	○	○
Tourism/Residential Investment and Marketing						
Support sense of place and rethink community identity		●	●	●	○	○
Update policies/strategies enabling RiverWalk District development			●	○	○	○
Foster new/improved local businesses, amenities, and experiences		●	●	●	○	○
Develop a tourism marketing plan			●	○	○	○
Develop a resident/workforce attraction plan				●	○	○
Offer authentic experiences that build community, attract tourists			●	○	○	○
Invest in public development of the RiverWalk District					●	○
Develop more attractions and assets				●	○	○
Promote Prescott stories and images		●	●	●	○	○



Operational Implications

Based on the scope of the recommendations outlined in the Town of Prescott's Economic Development Strategy, several operational implications must be considered to ensure that implementation targets are realistic and achievable.

Operational matters are the responsibility of Town Management. As such, resource implications must be considered carefully in terms of the recommended priority actions and suggested timelines, as well as similar actions that can be accomplished simultaneously.

To maximize existing staff resources, it is recommended that a priority push (e.g., 85% of staff time) be placed behind Business Retention and Expansion, and Tourism Development, Resident Attraction & Marketing. The following actions would be considered critical first steps for the Economic Development staff to achieve quick wins under the Strategy:

- Engage with major employers and high-growth companies.
- Foster new/improved local businesses, amenities, and experiences.
- Establish Prescott Economic Development Squad.
- Support sense of place, rethink community identity.
- Promote Prescott stories and images.

While Investment Attraction is very important, the Town currently has a limited supply of development land, and the capacity to make a change in that area rests outside of the responsibility of economic development staff. As such, the secondary priority for economic development staff (e.g., 15% of staff time) should be placed behind achievable recommendations, primarily:

- Encourage owners of properties to improve buildings.
- Leverage lead generation partners.

The Town will need to review the staff complement and operating budget for the Economic Development function to ensure it is adequately resourced. In the absence of sufficient resources, some actions will need to be reprioritized or delayed to a subsequent budget year.

Several actions require leadership and/or assistance from Departments other than Economic Development (e.g., Provide unparalleled support and follow-up to businesses; Expedite responses to development proposals; Update policies/strategies enabling RiverWalk District development; Secure additional servicing capacity, etc.). Other Departments must consider the Economic Development Strategy as a corporate-wide document when preparing annual budgets and business plans.





Economic development is a team effort involving all departments of the Town, as well as regional and sectoral organizations, agencies, and other levels of government. Therefore, collaboration is essential to execute actions requiring partners beyond the Town itself (e.g., Support sense of place, rethink community identity; Secure improved transportation access; Develop a resident and workforce attraction plan).

Council and Management should be careful when considering new proposals, objectives, actions, or projects to ensure they align with economic development strategic objectives.

Performance Measurement

Using performance measurement, the Town of Prescott should monitor the annual progress of the Economic Development Strategy, preferably in advance of the yearly budget review process. A key element of monitoring progress on implementation is the identification of performance metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) that offer an evidence-based assessment of the outcomes and impact of the strategic actions. KPIs provide a consistent framework to evaluate the following:

- Did we achieve what we set out to do?
- Did our efforts have the desired impact?
- Are we closer to achieving our strategic goals because of these efforts?

Increased citizen demands for government accountability drive the use of KPIs in local government. Greater interest on the part of elected representatives in performance-related information to assist in program evaluation and resource allocation decisions is aimed at making governments more oriented toward results.

Performance metrics allow for an evaluation of tactics and strategies that support efficient and effective planning and resource allocation. They are diagnostic tools that help to focus energy, attention, and effort. They may also help to support a municipality's commitment to accountability and transparency.

For example, among the Prescott businesses surveyed, 87% noted that overall, they were very or somewhat satisfied with Prescott as a place to own or operate a business. This may become an important KPI for the Town. While the KPI is currently very strong, it can also be used to monitor improvements in business climate over time. Many KPIs may also be used as comparators to other municipalities.

The Town of Prescott should carefully construct a performance measurement system that includes KPIs that are easily measurable and relevant for each action in the strategy. This could be structured to utilize existing KPIs (e.g. multi-residential building permits) and the creation of other metrics to effectively measure new initiatives.

Standardized municipal performance measurement

The World Council on City Data⁶⁸ (WCCD) helps communities of all sizes globally embrace a new standard compliant with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). It is “standardized, independently verified, and globally comparable city data to make data-driven decisions on

⁶⁸ WCCD: <https://www.dataforcities.org/about-wccd>



management, planning and investment, monitor progress and results, and overall become more sustainable, safe, resilient, prosperous, inclusive and smart.” There are currently 30 WCCD-certified cities in Canada, as well as 15 cities currently participating in a three-year pilot funded by the Federal Ministry of Infrastructure and Communities. The metrics include 100 indicators captured within 19 themes and compared to other cities around the world.



Local municipal performance measurement

In lieu of participation in the WCCD, the Town of Prescott may establish its own KPIs to help measure the Town’s progress toward achieving outcomes. Some suggestions for KPIs include:

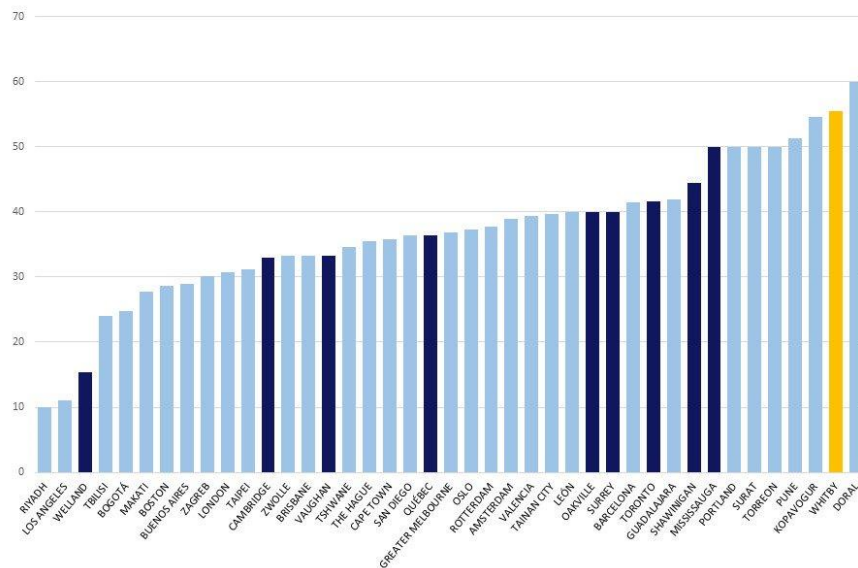
- Amount of private-sector investment associated with Community Improvement Plan incentives (Source: Community Improvement Plan Program).
- New housing starts by dwelling type (Source: Building Department).
- Area of new land serviced for commercial/retail (Source: Public Works Department).
- Area of new land serviced for light industrial (Source: Public Works Department).
- Increased visitor spending at Prescott RiverWalk merchants. (Source: Point-of-sale spending data)
- Business satisfaction rates (Source: Business surveys)
 - Prescott is a place to own/operate a business.
 - Availability of skilled labour in Prescott.



Performance Monitoring

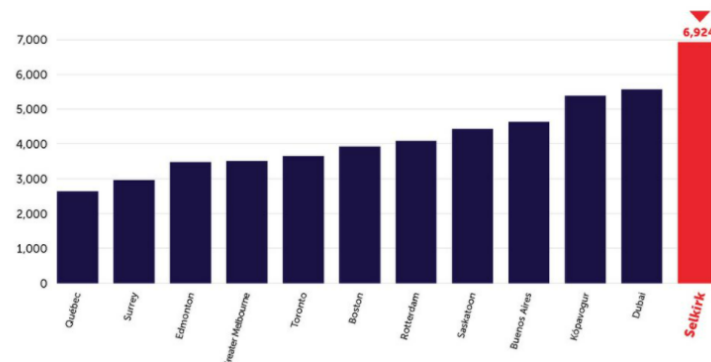
Ideally, performance measurement would apply to all municipal services, not just Economic Development. In the case of WCCD metrics, one of the measures follows the percentage of women elected to office: Whitby, Ontario, is a world leader.

WCCD ISO 37120 Indicator 11.2:
Women as a percentage of total elected to city-level office



Among the economic development measures offered by WCCD is tracking of the number of businesses in a community per 100,000 population: Selkirk, Manitoba, is a world leader.

Selkirk in a Global Perspective
Number of Businesses per 100 000 Population
ISO 37120 Indicator 5.5



If a municipality does not participate in standardized performance measurement, locally designed monitoring can also be very helpful. A performance monitoring report shared during an annual strategy evaluation would be the principal means of reporting economic development KPIs to the Town Council, the proposed Economic Development Squad, and the community. A system that feeds directly into the



Department's business plan is also recommended to ensure there is alignment between the strategic plan and day-to-day goals and tactics.

A basic monitoring report could contain a series of statements grounded in an informal, subjective assessment of a project's progress. The outcome could be measured as a percentage of progress towards the desired outcome (e.g., *New Economic Development Website: 80% complete.*)

Another basic example is the use of a table containing all strategies and actions, scored using colours or icons. A green circle may indicate the action is complete or nearing completion. A purple triangle or question mark could mean there are obstacles or resource issues. A red square or octagon could mean the action has stalled. A brief notes section could provide details.

Action	Score/Status	Notes
1. Update the Economic Development Website	●	Launch scheduled for spring
2. Create a Tourism SnapChat Account	?	Under review by IT
3. Develop an Entertainment District Incentive	■	Not approved by Council

Another method would be to focus on target outcomes in the monitoring report rather than actions and activities.

Desired Outcome Measurement	Benchmark KPI (2021)	Target KPI (2023)	Actual KPI (2023)
Number of new multi-residential dwelling starts	12 units	20 units	14 units
Private-sector dollars leveraged by CIP projects	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$367,489
Area of new industrial land serviced	1 Ha	4 Ha	0.8 Ha

Additional Information





For more detailed information, see the Joint Technical Report for the Economic Development Strategies for the Township of Augusta and the Town of Prescott.

