



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

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| Report To: | Council |
| From: | Andy Scott, Director, Strategic Initiatives & Business Development |
| Date: | February 28, 2022 |
| Report No: | ES-004-22 |
| Subject: | Economic Development Strategy |
| Recommendation: | THAT Council endorse the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The creation of a new economic development strategic plan was identified as key priority within the 2020-2023 Council-Staff work plan.
- In March 2021, staff retained Resonance Consultancy to support the development of a new economic development strategic plan for Milton.
- A comprehensive strategic planning process was implemented with an emphasis on research and analysis, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with broader corporate priorities.
- The strategic plan includes four goals, with a series of priorities and actions identified under each, and sets forth a measurable approach for achieving sustainable enterprise and job creation, innovation growth, talent development, and quality of place enhancements.
- The strategic plan will guide Milton's economic development work over the next five years, and has been designed to balance evaluation and progression with the flexibility needed to seize any opportunities that arise during this time period.

REPORT

Background

Milton's Council-Staff work plan is the road map for how the Town of Milton continues to accommodate growth while ensuring financial sustainability for the organization and the community. Under the goal of "Increasing Revenue Potential" for the 2020-2023 Council-Staff work plan, it was identified that a balanced commercial and industrial tax base, delivered via competitive employment lands and economic development that facilitates retention, expansion and attraction of business was key to achieving sustainable new revenue streams. The creation of a new economic development strategy was identified as key priority within this term of Council to support their achievement.

The community continues to grow and mature as the fastest growing municipality in Ontario, and one of the fastest anywhere in Canada. The Economic Development

Background

Division has taken a strategic approach to supporting economic growth over that time with our last interim economic development strategy (2018) designed to support the achievement of corporately identified goals & objectives.

This prior strategy is now at its natural conclusion. With successes achieved and the continued levels of community growth experienced. It was important to revisit our strategic approach to supporting economic growth and development ensuring we are attuned to the needs of our local and prospective business community.

Discussion

Strategic planning process

In March 2021, staff retained Resonance Consultancy to support the development of a new economic development strategic plan for Milton.

The process to create the strategy was divided into three phases, including: 1. Development of project work plan and consultation strategy; 2. Background research and analysis, and stakeholder consultation; 3. Strategic plan development and implementation. This comprehensive process was critical to ensuring Milton would be able to build an economic development strategic plan that would incorporate several key concepts, including:

- Communicating the long-term vision and values of Milton
- Building upon community assets and growth objectives
- Guiding investment attraction initiatives with data and expert intelligence
- Promoting Milton's growing industry clusters
- Offering a plan for growing and supporting entrepreneurs
- Offering innovative talent attraction and retention tactics
- Embracing Milton's investments in placemaking and quality of place

Community engagement and consultation

Throughout the strategy development process, staff embraced the concept of research and data as foundational components that would inform decision making and strategic direction. As such, staff leveraged a successful CanExport Community Initiatives grant application to retain a consultant, MDB Insights Inc., to lead a comprehensive research project that was implemented in parallel, and used to inform the economic development strategic plan. This initiative provided the data analytics that underpinned the creation of Milton's new economic development strategy and was designed to:

- Assess existing and emerging business and industry sectors that will stimulate and attract future trade, investment, research & innovation, and employment opportunities
- Provide an assessment and analysis of Milton's educational, business, workforce, and community assets to inform future strategic planning and investment attraction programming

Discussion

- Create targets and recommendations for sector-focused, local and international investment attraction efforts
- Identify new opportunities for workforce development and business attraction efforts

In addition to the research and analysis phase of the strategic plan's development, staff, along with Resonance, conducted an extensive community engagement and consultation exercise. By providing multiple platforms for key stakeholders to share their expertise and residents the ability to shape their community, the goal was to generate a universal understanding of economic opportunity.

The first phase of this engagement process included a series of roundtable discussions with 85 key stakeholders made up of residents, business leaders, elected officials, economic development agency partners, and post-secondary leaders among others. The discussions addressed a series of key themes identified from the initial quantitative analysis, including:

- Growing an entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Promoting the Town's quality of place
- Engaging local anchor institutions to drive development
- Positioning Milton as a place ideal for young professionals

The second phase of the engagement process included a community survey, hosted through the Let's Talk Milton online platform. The survey resulted in 178 responses and provided the strategy project team with community feedback on values relating to issues including: quality of place in Milton, local employment opportunities, local amenities, diversity, etc.

The community feedback received through the multi-modal engagement process was used by Resonance and Town staff to guide decision making in arriving at the final set of goals and objectives in the strategic plan. A full overview of feedback received through the engagement process can be found in Appendix B attached.

The Milton Economic Development Advisory Committee (MEDAC) played a critical role throughout the project. Acting as an advisory body to the project team they provided feedback and input while also acting as community advocates to increase the level of engagement during the engagement phase of the project. Representing a diverse set of Milton businesses, post-secondary partners and agency partners. MEDAC offered valuable consultation throughout and has endorsed the final version of the strategic plan.

The Economic Development Strategic Plan

Milton's five-year economic development strategic plan (attached in Appendix A) includes six guiding principles as well as a set of goals and objectives that will direct the work of



Discussion

staff over the coming years. The strategy also took into consideration other Town initiated strategic planning to ensure complimentary alignment and overall synergy with the goals and objectives outlined in the Council-Staff Work Plan.

The strategic plan includes four broad goals, with a series of priorities and actions identified under each, and sets forth a measurable approach for achieving sustainable enterprise and job creation, innovation growth, talent development, and quality of place enhancements:

- Goal 1: Grow and cultivate Milton's export clusters to foster prosperity
- Goal 2: Bolster Milton's start-up ecosystem to drive future competitiveness
- Goal 3: Build Milton as a premier destination for diverse talent
- Goal 4: Define and promote Milton's brand for new economic development

For this strategy to succeed, Milton will need to collaborate and partner with a variety of key stakeholders and organizations to seek collective progression towards these common goals.

Recognizing the strategic plan will guide the Towns work for a five year duration, it has been designed to balance evaluation and progression with the flexibility needed to seize any opportunities that arise during this time period. Periodic evaluation is planned and annual public progress reporting will continue.

Financial Impact

The economic development strategic plan will be implemented within the current scope of the existing economic development division budget. Any future service level adjustments or increase in resource requirements will be addressed through the Towns annual budget process. Staff will also continue to leverage other available sources of funding as a mechanism to supplement the approved operating budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Scott
Director, Strategic Initiatives & Business Development

For questions, please contact: Mike Launslager

Phone: Ext. 2160

Attachments

- Appendix A - Economic Development Strategy
- Appendix B - Background research and data report



CAO Approval
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

Recognition of Traditional Lands

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.

2022—2026

Town of Milton

Five-Year Economic
Development Strategy



**Milton—A Place of Possibility:
Where urban meets rural,
businesses prosper,
entrepreneurs innovate, and
a complete community thrives.**



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Executive Summary

Milton is a balanced community with a dynamic and modern urban centre that is positioning itself as a strong innovation hub. The fast-growing Town is ready for an economic development plan that considers the changing local and regional dynamics: a plan that prioritizes business attraction, retention, and expansion; employment; and potential industry sector targets.

KEY INSIGHTS

Milton has a fast-growing population.

Milton is home to 136,000 residents. The 19% increase since 2015 is three times the provincial growth rate.

Milton is an international community.

Almost four in ten Milton residents are immigrants. The 51.2% increase since 2015 is more than six times the growth rate of immigrants in the Toronto region.

Milton has highly skilled talent.

Milton's share of residents with a bachelor's or higher is 50% greater than the national average, an increase of 55% since 2015. Milton also has a competitive advantage in science-related, management, and business and finance occupations; it is fastest growing in health- and science-related occupations.

Milton has a thriving entrepreneurial community.

Milton has a high share of micro businesses, where nearly seven in ten Milton businesses have fewer than five employees.

Milton is a high-income community.

Milton's median household income (\$116,942) is 50% higher than the national average, and the town boasts a high homeownership rate: nearly nine in ten residents are homeowners.

Four target industries offer a strong foundation for Milton's Economic Development Strategy:

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

Milton's business profile is targeted toward a knowledge-based economy, where Milton's Professional Services industry is supported by an increasingly established academic and professional knowledge ecosystem. Development of the Milton Education Village (MEV) is critical to this sector.

Green Innovation

Given Milton's pride in and stewardship of its local natural environment, Green Innovation is a strategic and opportunistic sector. Green Innovation is anchored by Milton's computer systems design services, residential building construction and engineering services, and education programmes in Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University.

Advanced Manufacturing

Manufacturing is a significant export sector and will continue to be a top employer in machinery manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, and food manufacturing. Milton has a workforce strength in mechanical, electrical, and electronics assemblers, as well as in machine operators.

Transportation and Logistics

Milton's Transportation and Logistics sector is key, with a focus on supporting lean manufacturing, e-commerce, and globalized trade. Opportunities also exist in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, blockchain, and crowd-sourced fleets.

Milton's Economic Development Strategy will set forth a plan for achieving sustainable enterprise and job creation, innovation growth, talent development, and quality of place enhancements. As such, it has four goals:

- 1. Grow and cultivate Milton's export clusters to foster prosperity.**
- 2. Bolster Milton's start-up ecosystem to drive future competitiveness.**
- 3. Build Milton as a premier destination for diverse talent.**
- 4. Define and promote Milton's brand for new economic development.**

The following report describes Milton's Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan and includes the Competitive Market Assessment (Appendix A) and Stakeholder Engagement (Appendix B) that serve as the foundation for the plan. The Town of Milton has also commissioned MDB Insights Inc. to perform a Target Cluster Analysis (Appendix D) that evaluates the areas of opportunity for the Town. The different research exercises have laid a strong foundation for the strategy.

Economic Development Strategy

A key tenet of community economic development is flexibility. Plans and strategies need to evolve in response to changing economic conditions, new challenges, and new opportunities. However, the most successful strategies retain a set of core values and principles that can adapt with the times. Without a high-level strategy rooted in core values, economic development efforts become reactive and inconsistent. This report will help Milton generate a flexible, resilient economic development strategy that will guide the efforts of the Town and its partners over the next five years.

For this strategy to succeed, Milton will need to collaborate with numerous partners and organizations toward common goals. Public and private entities are partners in economic development efforts and must be at the Town's table together from day one. All of the key stakeholders in Milton must achieve consensus on the Town's vision, values, opportunities, and objectives; develop a toolkit to recognize opportunities as they arise; and immediately act on these opportunities.

Once goals and objectives are clearly defined and agreed upon, the assigned stakeholders must begin work to execute their respective roles in the broader strategies. Many of these actions will appear minor without the overall context of the plan, but together they will chart the course for a more prosperous future for Milton.

The intent of this strategy is to provide action items for several partners who are working toward the same goals. This is a flexible document that will be shaped as opportunities arise. It is important to annually revisit the document to determine where progress is being made and which areas are deficient. It will be necessary to evaluate the strategy in year three and update it in year five to keep pace with rapid changes in the economy.

The plan below begins by laying out the guiding principles upon which this analysis is based, following best practices in urban economic development. The plan then offers four broad goals, with specific evidence explaining each goal's importance and key priorities. An Implementation Plan that includes suggested action items, key partners, and metrics is provided as Appendix C.





Vision

Milton—A Place of Possibility: Where urban meets rural, businesses prosper, entrepreneurs innovate, and a complete community thrives.

Values

Milton has the following values:

A PLACE OF POSSIBILITY

We advance economic prosperity and opportunity for all Milton residents and enterprises.

A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

We foster resiliency through responsible development and protection of Milton's rural environment and recreational amenities.

A COMPLETE COMMUNITY

We envision Milton as a complete community where residents can live, work, learn, and engage.

A WELCOMING HOME

We celebrate and promote Milton's diversity of people, cultures, and businesses.

FUTURE-DRIVING INNOVATION

We invest in an innovative ecosystem that will ensure Milton's future competitiveness.





Guiding Principles

Six guiding principles serve as a framework to structure the development and implementation of the strategy:

1.

EXPORT CLUSTER-DRIVEN APPROACH

Follow an export cluster approach to drive economic growth and long-term prosperity. Decades of economics research have demonstrated that industry clustering is essential for competitiveness, innovation, and economic growth. An economic development strategy must align the assets of a cluster with its industry needs, including workforce training, infrastructure development, and government regulations.

2.

A FOCUS ON INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Foster an innovative start-up ecosystem to create a community that is not only “complete” but also “smarter.” Milton must encourage and support new business starts in a variety of sectors, including tech start-ups and small businesses of all stripes. New businesses contribute to economic development by capitalizing on new economic opportunities and absorbing the workforce of declining sectors and firms.

3.

PRIVATE-SECTOR AND ANCHOR ENGAGEMENT

Engage private-sector and anchor partners to advance the Town's economic development goals. With limited staffing resources, Milton cannot accomplish its goals alone—it will need to leverage its relationships with private-sector and anchor partners to achieve economic growth.

5.

QUALITY OF PLACE

Embrace and promote Milton's quality of place, recreational and natural assets, and access to the GTA, all of which make the Town a desirable destination for talent. Continually advancing and leveraging these community treasures will both attract and retain valuable talent.

4.

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT

Advance economic development initiatives that balance prosperity, job creation, sustainability, and livability. Milton's economic development goals cannot be the Town's singular focus. They must synchronise with the Town's ethos, values, and quality of place.

6.

EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING

Milton must invest in resources to tell its story. Effective economic development hinges on a community's ability to communicate its competitive advantages and assets. The story must be designed to reach a diverse array of stakeholders and audiences: talent, investors, policy makers, partners, and community members.





GOAL 1

Grow And Cultivate Milton's Export Clusters To Foster Prosperity

To be able to compete in today's economy, the Town of Milton must build a more resilient economy with diverse, high-growth sectors. Economic development strategies must be able to adapt to changing circumstances, just as companies and governments must be able to rapidly change course in response to unforeseeable economic challenges.

Milton can play to its strengths by supporting its large and many small businesses in established clusters like Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (PSTS); Green Innovation; Advanced Manufacturing; and Transportation and Logistics. These sectors provide jobs up and down the income and education spectrum, meaning their growth can contribute to social equity and upward mobility. A sector strategy seeks to help grow the business ecosystem rather than privilege a specific firm or sub-sector, ultimately making the local economy more competitive, dynamic, and successful.

The Evidence

The Town of Milton commissioned MDB Insights Inc. to perform a Target Cluster Analysis that evaluates the areas of opportunity for the town. This analysis is the essential foundation for supporting all business attraction, expansion efforts, foreign-direct investment, and incentives, as well helping to shape a narrative that resonates with new enterprises, site-selectors, and talent. The target clusters have been matched with Milton's local labour force skill set to ensure that business attraction efforts provide local employment opportunities.

According to the findings of this assessment, Milton's cluster strategy should be centered on four sectors:

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (PSTS)

- The PSTS businesses account for 19% of all businesses.
- The sector is projected to grow by 306 jobs from 2021 to 2028.

Green Innovation

- Green Innovation businesses account for 14% of all businesses.
- The sector accounted for 10% of all Milton jobs in 2021.

Advanced Manufacturing

- Milton's 5,424 manufacturing jobs accounted for 12% of jobs in 2021.
- Manufacturing jobs are projected to grow by 393 jobs from 2021 to 2028.

Transportation and Logistics

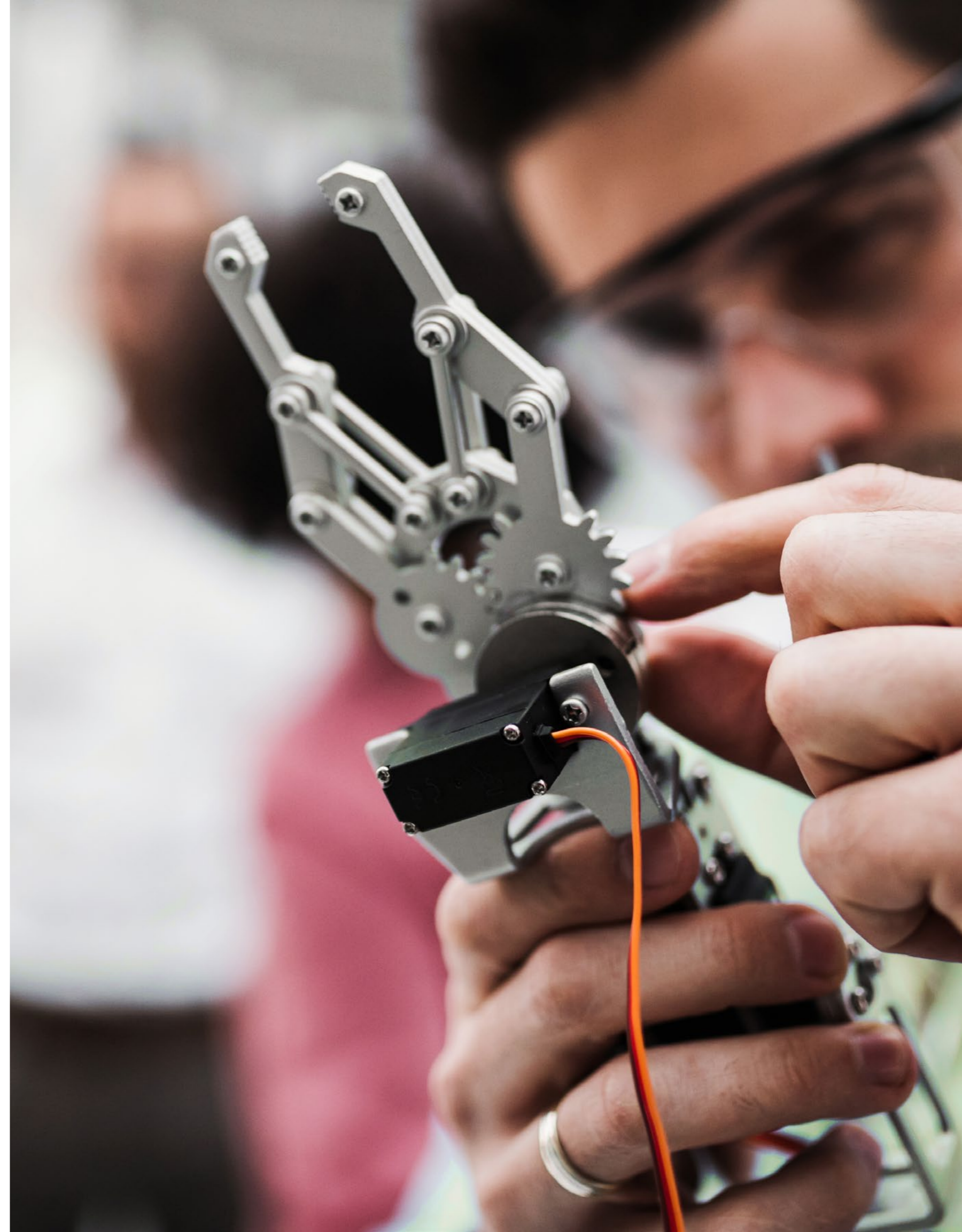
- The Transportation and Logistics businesses account for 11% of all businesses.
- Milton had 3,972 Transportation and Logistics jobs in 2021 (8% of jobs).

For detailed definitions of the clusters, please see Appendix D.

Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- New Businesses—tracking Milton's attraction and expansion of new businesses
- New Businesses by Cluster—tracking Milton's attraction of new businesses within its competitive industries
- Jobs Created—tracking total employment
- Jobs Created by Cluster—tracking cluster development and expansion
- Square Footage of Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) Development—monitoring development in Milton
- Non-Residential Assessment Rate—ensuring a balance between commercial and residential development





PRIORITY 1.1

Design and implement a cluster-focused business retention and expansion initiative.

Through the development of a systematic, tailored business retention and expansion program, Milton can support existing businesses while simultaneously appealing to new businesses with a value proposition that demonstrates the Town's economic competitiveness. Roundtable discussions will enable new and existing businesses to come together to co-create strategies and initiatives that promote cluster growth, maintain consistent engagement, and track progress.

ACTIONS

- Host cluster working groups in partnership with Milton Chamber of Commerce to identify opportunities and challenges, adding clusters as resources or staffing permits.
- Implement a comprehensive business visitation plan for Milton's target clusters, identifying expansion opportunities and workforce and supply chain needs.
- Report key findings systematically and annually to drive policy needs.
- Identify and create appropriate support programs for each cluster.

PRIORITY 1.2

Execute a site-selector engagement and lead generation strategy for Milton's core industries.

Lead generation and site selection are critical aspects of town-partner relations and a high priority for economic development. Milton's business attraction plan must include a focused site-selection strategy. Site selectors—particularly those conducting searches for global headquarters and knowledge-based industries—play an outsized role in short-listing and, ultimately, finalizing location. Emphasising local investment opportunities and continually building relationships with this target audience is key.

ACTIONS

- Incorporate site-selector engagement with all targeted market visits and campaigns.
- Partner with Halton Region, Ontario Investment Office, and other site-selector and RFP initiatives.
- Build a target site-selection list and develop a bi-annual community outreach.

PRIORITY 1.3

Support the development of Milton's new growth areas and facilitate investment opportunities aligned with target sectors.

Real estate/site development is a major factor in economic development. Milton's efforts in this area are augmented by the expertise and advising it offers to investors, developers, and companies. It is important that Milton build on these values and continue to pursue development that supports its economic growth and clusters. In addition, it is critical for Milton to consider how it can build competitive advantage by leveraging its vision for a complete community to attract investment; this includes a diverse and higher density mix of housing options, amenities, and employment areas.

ACTIONS

- Collaborate with the Town of Milton Development Services to identify and map potential redevelopment opportunities.
- Serve as trusted advisors to businesses and investors on real estate/commercial development and redevelopment transactions.
- Partner with commercial real estate brokers (including engaging with organizations like ULI, SIOR, NAIOP) and others to highlight and market new commercial development opportunities.
- Continually evaluate commercial office needs and opportunities for mixed-use development, including new growth areas: Milton Education Village, Derry Green, Agerton Employment Area, Trafalgar Corridor, and the Major Transit Station Area (Mobility Hub).

PRIORITY 1.4

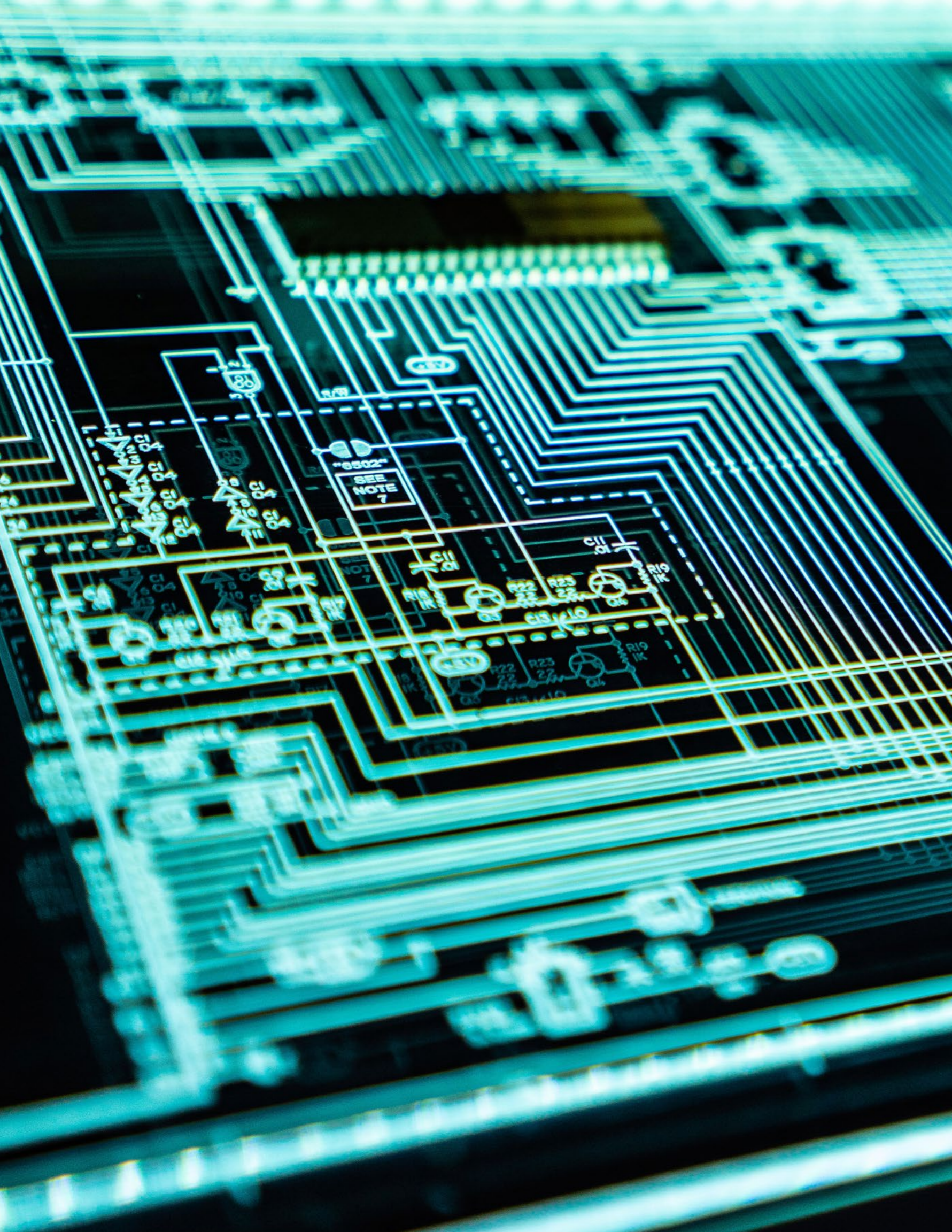
Advise on land use and infrastructure policies to support cluster development.

Milton has unique community assets, available industrial land, and a built environment that is ripe for business expansion and growth. The Town should ensure that appropriate infrastructure and land use policies are in place to support cluster development and business expansion in strategic locations. Analysing how existing policies align with business needs will reveal any gaps and enable Milton to streamline development opportunities.

ACTIONS

- Partner with Town of Milton Development Services and Milton Economic Development Advisory Committee (MEDAC) to maintain and evaluate development assets: land, infrastructure, and incentives.
- Advise key stakeholders on development policies to support economic growth and align with cluster needs.

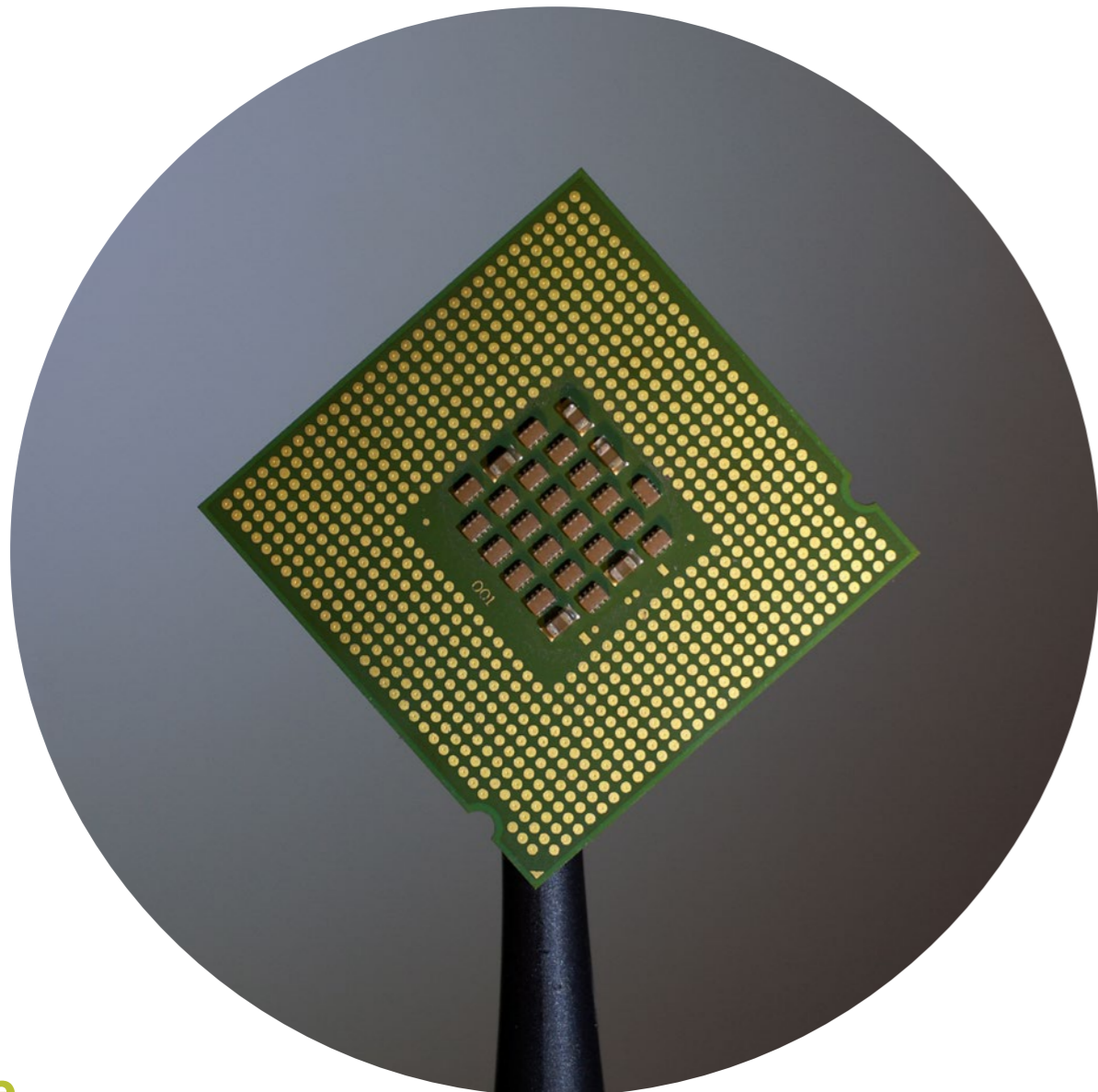




GOAL 2

Bolster Milton's Start-Up Ecosystem To Drive Future Competitiveness

New businesses capitalize on emerging economic opportunities and absorb the workforce of declining sectors and firms. Milton needs to encourage new business starts in a variety of sectors while continuing to support its existing clusters. Embracing tech startups and small businesses of all stripes will enable the Town to achieve its economic development goals of talent attraction and retention. To this end, Milton must leverage the resources of its anchor university partners to catalyze their research, particularly as it relates to Green Innovation and climate. Creating an innovation district for Milton's Education Village can help centralize Milton's efforts to incubate new firms and create a self-supporting entrepreneurial ecosystem.



The Evidence

- Milton is home to over 3,500 businesses. Nearly 70% are micro businesses (fewer than five employees), which points to Milton's thriving entrepreneurial community.
- About one in four businesses in Milton is in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector, a share that is 90% higher than the national average. The share among micro businesses is even greater at one in three.
- Many of Milton's micro businesses are specialized in computer systems design and related services.
- Milton has a high employment rate (74%) for graduates from physical and life sciences and technologies instructional programs.

Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- **Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses Assisted**—counting the number of small businesses that participated in the small business programs offered by Milton and its partners





PRIORITY 2.1

Establish “Innovation Collective,” an initiative to support scalable and technology-focused startups.

Building and scaling an entrepreneurial ecosystem requires a comprehensive approach. Milton and its partners can build networks that connect startups to investors and customers and make it easier for new enterprises to find the resources they need to grow. Creating an “Innovation Collective” will provide Milton with a collaborative effort that supports scalable enterprises within the Town’s target sectors.

ACTIONS

- Identify and convene an advisory working group to support the exploration of “Innovation Collective.”
- Explore new best practices for cluster-focused startup initiatives across Canada and the U.S.
- Build relationships with venture capital organizations within the GTA and throughout Ontario and Canada.
- Support startup/innovation community events such as pitch competitions and networking sessions.
- Advise Milton’s Town Council on development policies to support economic growth and align with cluster needs.

PRIORITY 2.2

Develop and execute an innovation district strategy for the Milton Education Village (MEV), positioning it as an entrepreneurial hub.

Milton and its anchor partners have made significant strides in the planning and early development of the Milton Education Village (MEV). This dynamic urban village will connect entrepreneurs, bringing together leading academic institutions, outdoor recreational opportunities, views of the Niagara Escarpment, state-of-the-art research and design facilities, and environmentally conscious urban design. Likewise, it will be essential for the Town and its partners to understand the need and desires of students and faculty in Milton as the strategic planning process advances. Public-private collaboration is now needed to fully integrate the development of an innovation

district strategy for MEV into the Town’s broader economic development and programming efforts.

ACTIONS

- Utilize and expand the existing MEV working group to help guide innovation district planning.
- Catalog innovation district best practices across North America, focusing on programming and placemaking efforts.
- Explore retaining a firm to develop an innovation district plan for the MEV.

PRIORITY 2.3

Collaborate to offer training and capacity-building assistance for Milton's small businesses.

Growth isn't always easy for small businesses. Capacity-building initiatives can help Milton's small businesses overcome challenges as they grow into medium- and large-sized businesses while also helping to ensure that they remain in Milton. Likewise, enterprises that can scale also have a stronger opportunity to gain access to more customers and government procurement dollars and contracts. The Halton Region Small Business Centre and others are collaborators in this work. Their efforts need to be aligned with the Town's target clusters and the broader economic development strategy while continuing to focus on up-to-the-minute business needs in a rapidly changing environment.

ACTIONS

- Continue to offer small business programming specific to COVID-19 recovery.
- Support and promote the small business resources and trainings offered by the Halton Region Small Business Centre.
- Provide ongoing updates regarding provincial and local resources to Milton's small businesses.
- Explore the resources needed to expand the physical presence of the Halton Region Small Business Centre in Milton.

PRIORITY 2.4

Partner with Milton's anchor institutions to develop the Town's Green Innovation cluster.

Milton has more than 1,703 Green Innovation businesses, accounting for 14% of all enterprises in the Town. The fast-growing sector is forecasted to add an additional 400 jobs by 2028. By partnering with its anchor institutions in Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College—both of which have significant expertise in green enterprises and sustainable technologies—Milton can significantly increase the number of sustainable jobs created and profitable enterprises scaled and developed within the sector.

ACTIONS

- Collaborate with anchor partners and federal and provincial government entities to guide Milton's Green Innovation cluster development.
- Build a relationship with university commercialization and tech-transfer officials to identify scalable Green Innovation enterprises and connect them with resources.
- Champion, in concert with business partners, the successes of Green Innovation enterprises in Milton.





GOAL 3

Build Milton As A Premier Destination For Diverse Talent

Talent is the single most important consideration that drives company location decisions. Having a deep base of highly skilled workers creates virtuous cycles of new business formation and new business attraction, bringing in more talented workers in the process. Now, in an era of remote work, white collar professionals are enjoying a significant degree of choice in their personal locational choices. To attract and retain these workers, Milton must articulate the value of its community amenities and quality of place. In addition, the Town must collaborate with its colleges and universities, economic development partners, and private sector to create a unified, full-continuum talent development strategy that will train and upskill the kinds of workers Milton's local economy needs: knowledge workers, skilled professionals in advanced manufacturing and logistics, and others.



The Evidence

- With 36% of residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher, Milton has one of Ontario's most educated talent pools to draw from.
- Milton leads all communities in the attraction of educated residents—its share of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher grew by 55% in the last five years.
- One in three Milton residents boasts skills in management, finance, or business.
- Milton is fastest growing in health- and science-related occupations; its share of residents with these skills grew by 58% and 54%, respectively, since 2015.

Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- Level of Educational Attainment—measuring Milton's skilled workforce, including degrees and certificates
- Increase in Share of Residents 25-34 Years of Age—tracking the growth in attracting young, prime workforce talent to Milton





PRIORITY 3.1

Engage Milton's colleges and universities to align educational and upskilling offerings with business and workforce needs.

Skills and training programs must align with target clusters. Milton's target sectors—especially those in Green Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing—are quite technical. Close collaboration between public- and private-sector partners is essential to ensure that workers are being trained to fulfill the precise needs of local companies. Wilfrid Laurier University, Conestoga College, Peel Halton Workforce Development Board, and others are key partners in this effort.

ACTIONS

- Leverage existing workforce collaborations among Milton's universities and colleges and private-sector employers.
- Explore, in partnership with colleges, new training offerings tied to target clusters: certificates, badging, and executive education.

PRIORITY 3.2

Develop a hybrid work and talent strategy to draw and retain tech-savvy and skilled talent to Milton.

It's expected that more than 25% of the workforce will work remotely, with another 25% having the option to do so. Milton boasts several place advantages. First, it is located in the heart of one of the world's leading technology clusters in the Toronto-Waterloo Innovation Corridor. Second, it has the transportation advantage of being located along the 401 and close to the airport and having access to an extensive transit network. And with its reputation as an amenity-rich community, Milton can leverage location and quality of place to attract hybrid and remote workers and retain skilled talent. Doing so will require Milton and its partners to develop a talent strategy that promotes its community assets while also creating a way for talent to connect with one another. Building mechanisms to

increase social capitalism is an essential element of economic development, especially in an era in which communities are competing for talent.

ACTIONS

- Continue to assess and understand the needs of Milton's creative class and hybrid workforce.
- Support the Milton Chamber of Commerce in enhancing networking opportunities for Milton's creative class.
- Ensure the needs of Milton's hybrid workers are considered in the development new growth areas, including the of Milton Education Village, Trafalgar Corridor, Agerton, and Mobility Hub.

PRIORITY 3.3

Invest in placemaking initiatives to enhance Milton as an inviting home for local talent.

Placemaking is the deliberate shaping of an environment to facilitate social interaction and improve a community's quality of life. According to the Project for Public Spaces, "placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm to maximize shared value." An aligned, systematic placement plan—generated by a collaboration among the Milton Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA), and the Town's Culture Division—will enable the Town of Milton to transform

underutilized spaces into platforms for authentic engagement and community building.

ACTIONS

- Catalogue underutilized spaces throughout Milton, understanding ownership, potential uses, and limitations.
- Develop a systematic placemaking program that includes selection criteria, funding plans, and marketing approaches.
- Pilot the placemaking program, evaluate impact, and demonstrate impact and scale.

PRIORITY 3.4

Promote destination experiences—both urban and rural—for current and prospective Milton residents.

Milton needs a strategy for curating and promoting urban and rural "destination experiences." Doing so will position the Town to attract and retain talent, drive economic development, and encourage local investments in new restaurants, brewpubs, recreational activities, festivals and events, and more. Town economic development officials will need to work directly with stakeholders in the cultural and recreational sectors to identify the best experiences and local characters to highlight with this strategy.

ACTIONS

- Support the creation of an inventory of Milton's destination assets: cultural and recreational amenities, music, art, food, breweries, and more.
- Collaborate with Hamilton, Halton, Brant Regional Tourism Association, Milton Chamber of Commerce, DBIA, Town of Milton Culture Division, and other partners to package and promote Milton as a destination.
- Develop curated destination experiences for Milton residents; test ideas on social media.





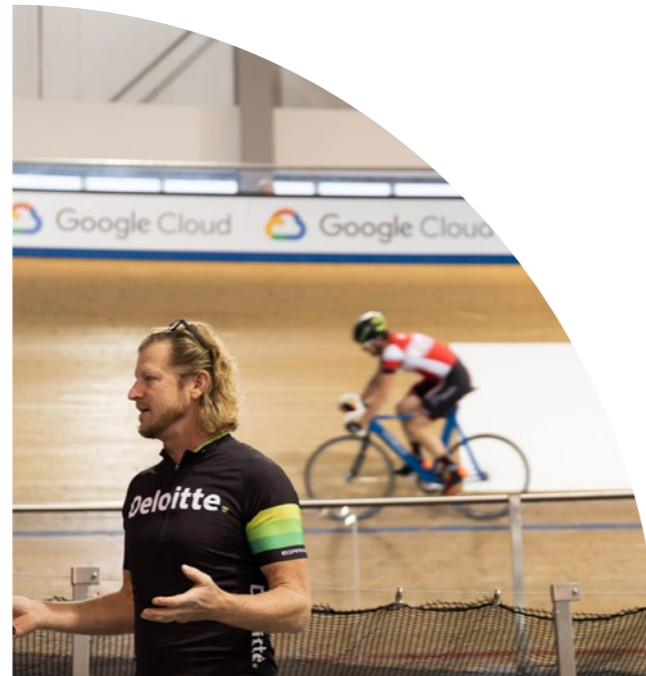
GOAL 4

Define And Promote Milton's Brand For New Economic Development

A significant element of economic development is community promotion: telling a story that creates an attractive brand identity for business, capital investment, and prospective residents. It's up to Milton to convince new talent, entrepreneurs of all kinds of businesses, site selectors, and investors to choose its fine community over any other in the Greater Toronto Area or Ontario. Prioritizing efforts to elevate its reputation will enable Milton to attract those seeking a better place to live, to work, or to build a company. The Town's long-term economic development success depends on it.

The Evidence

- Quality of place is an important economic driver that attracts investment, talent, and visitors. In fact, research has shown that quality of place indicators are more strongly correlated with the economic prosperity of an area than traditional economic factors such as tax rates and affordability of place.
- Branding helps communities, towns, cities, and destinations distill and articulate their unique strategic positioning and differentiating characteristics. Resonance's research has demonstrated the importance of marketing and communicating to attract firms, talent, and visitors to communities. A strong brand will help Milton compete in the global marketplace.
- A well-articulated place-branding strategy strengthens a community's sense of place because it aligns the language and messages created for and by businesses, community, and visitors.
- In its natural environment and outdoor activities, Milton has an important strength to promote.
- Milton's engagement on social media is limited, trailing peers for the number of Facebook check-ins and Instagram hashtags.



Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- Unique Visitors to Milton's Economic Development Website—measuring interest in Milton as a town to live, work, and visit
- E-Newsletter Open Rate—tracking the effectiveness of e-newsletters in informing and engaging audiences





PRIORITY 4.1

Develop a sub-brand to support Milton's economic development efforts.

The difference is in the details. Milton needs to fully define its value proposition for investment, talent attraction, and resident engagement as it relates to economic development. Creating a sub-brand that builds on Milton's "A Place of Possibility" messaging will position the Town to play up its unique strengths and differentiate itself from its peers. Once created, the sub-brand should be deployed across all platforms with targeted messaging that helps each audience make the easy decision to Choose Milton.

ACTIONS

- Create a Choose Milton brand and messaging platform.
- Refresh Milton's economic development digital presence, in concert with its new identity and messaging.

PRIORITY 4.2

Market Milton's target clusters, including those with FDI potential, to gain investment.

Marketing and communication are critical to both business attraction and expansion. Now that industry clusters have been clearly defined, the Town of Milton must proceed to market and promote the clusters' strengths and advantages. A focus on cluster development should drive all of Milton's promotional materials, websites, policies, and advocacy with messaging that's tailored to industry audiences and stakeholders.

ACTIONS

- Hire a full-time marketing professional to support Milton's economic development efforts.
- Prepare industry investment marketing portfolios (brochures and videos) for each sector.
- Build a standalone attraction website that promotes real estate assets, data, and tools of interest to site selectors.

PRIORITY 4.3

Implement a marketing plan to engage stakeholders, including business leaders, policymakers, and partners.

Economic development is diverse in its stakeholders. Milton's economic development team needs a holistic communication strategy that engages a wide array of stakeholders: policymakers, business owners, talent, and community members among them. The strategy must include effective tactics for communicating Milton's economic development successes. Doing so will help bring stakeholders together to understand the impact of economic growth and why it matters to so many in the community.

ACTIONS

- Develop and execute a communication plan for updating Milton stakeholders on impact, metrics, and activities.
- Host, in collaboration with partners, an annual economic development convening.
- Design, publish, and promote an annual report.

PRIORITY 4.4

Celebrate Milton's business and entrepreneurial success stories.

At the core of a thriving community is the celebration of its businesses. With the telling of its story, Milton and its economic development partners can illustrate the wide array of diverse enterprises, small businesses, and entrepreneurs that have found success in this desirable community. By showcasing Milton businesses of all sectors, types, and sizes, the Town rolls out the welcome mat to a new array of enterprises and entrepreneurs.

ACTIONS

- Create a systematic means for communicating entrepreneurial and start-up successes: website, blogs, social media, and direct emails.





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XXX RESONANCE

Town of Milton

Five-Year Economic Development
Strategy and Action Plan

FEBRUARY 2022





Milton—A Place of Possibility:
Where urban meets rural,
businesses prosper, entrepreneurs
innovate, and a complete
community thrives.

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Executive Summary

Milton is a balanced community with a dynamic and modern urban centre that is positioning itself as a strong innovation hub. The fast-growing Town is ready for an economic development plan that considers the changing local and regional dynamics: a plan that prioritizes business attraction, retention, and expansion; employment; and potential industry sector targets.

Key insights:

- **Milton has a fast-growing population.** Milton is home to 136,000 residents. The 19% increase since 2015 is three times the provincial growth rate.
- **Milton is an international community.** Almost four in ten Milton residents are immigrants. The 51.2% increase since 2015 is more than six times the growth rate of immigrants in the Toronto region.
- **Milton has highly skilled talent.** Milton’s share of residents with a bachelor’s or higher is 50% greater than the national average, an increase of 55% since 2015. Milton also has a competitive advantage in science-related, management, and business and finance occupations; it is fastest growing in health- and science-related occupations.
- **Milton has a thriving entrepreneurial community.** Milton has a high share of micro businesses, where nearly seven in ten Milton businesses have fewer than five employees.
- **Milton is a high-income community.** Milton’s median household income (\$116,942) is 50% higher than the national average, and the town boasts a high homeownership rate: nearly nine in ten residents are homeowners.

Four target industries offer a strong foundation for Milton’s Economic Development Strategy:

1. **Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services.** Milton’s business profile is targeted toward a knowledge-based economy, where Milton’s Professional Services industry is supported by an increasingly established academic and professional knowledge ecosystem. Milton’s Innovation Village (MEV) is critical to this sector.
2. **Green Innovation.** Given Milton’s pride in and stewardship of its local natural environment, Green Innovation is a strategic and opportunistic sector. Green Innovation is anchored by Milton’s computer systems design services, residential building construction and engineering services, and education programmes in Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University.
3. **Advanced Manufacturing.** Manufacturing is a significant export sector and will continue to be a top employer in machinery manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, and food manufacturing. Milton has a workforce strength in mechanical, electrical, and electronics assemblers, as well as in machine operators.



4. **Transportation and Logistics.** Milton's Transportation and Logistics sector is key, with a focus on supporting lean manufacturing, e-commerce, and globalized trade. Opportunities also exist in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, blockchain, and crowd-sourced fleets.

Milton's Economic Development Strategy will set forth a plan for achieving sustainable enterprise and job creation, innovation growth, talent development, and quality of place enhancements. As such, it has four goals:

1. Grow and cultivate Milton's export clusters to foster prosperity.
2. Bolster Milton's start-up ecosystem to drive future competitiveness.
3. Build Milton as a premier destination for diverse talent.
4. Define and promote Milton's brand for new economic development.

The following report describes Milton's Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan and includes the Competitive Market Assessment (Appendix A) and Stakeholder Engagement (Appendix B) that serve as the foundation for the plan. The Town of Milton has also commissioned MDB Insights to perform a Target Cluster Analysis (Appendix D) that evaluates the areas of opportunity for the Town. The different research exercises have laid a strong foundation for the strategy.



Economic Development Strategy

A key tenet of community economic development is flexibility. Plans and strategies need to evolve in response to changing economic conditions, new challenges, and new opportunities. However, the most successful strategies retain a set of core values and principles that can adapt with the times. Without a high-level strategy rooted in core values, economic development efforts become reactive and inconsistent. This report will help Milton generate a flexible, resilient economic development strategy that will guide the efforts of the Town and its partners over the next five years.

For this strategy to succeed, Milton will need to collaborate with numerous partners and organizations toward common goals. Public and private entities are partners in economic development efforts and must be at the Town's table together from day one. All of the key stakeholders in Milton must achieve consensus on the Town's vision, values, opportunities, and objectives; develop a toolkit to recognize opportunities as they arise; and immediately act on these opportunities.

Once goals and objectives are clearly defined and agreed upon, the assigned stakeholders must begin work to execute their respective roles in the broader strategies. Many of these actions will appear minor without the overall context of the plan, but together they will chart the course for a more prosperous future for Milton.

The intent of this strategy is to provide action items for several partners who are working toward the same goals. This is a flexible document that will be shaped as opportunities arise. It is important to annually revisit the document to determine where progress is being made and which areas are deficient. It will be necessary to evaluate the strategy in year three and update it in year five to keep pace with rapid changes in the economy.

The plan below begins by laying out the guiding principles upon which this analysis is based, following best practices in urban economic development. The plan then offers four broad goals, with specific evidence explaining each goal's importance and key priorities. An Implementation Plan that includes suggested action items, key partners, and metrics is provided as Appendix C.



VISION

Milton—A Place of Possibility: Where urban meets rural, businesses prosper, entrepreneurs innovate, and a complete community thrives.

VALUES

Milton has the following values:

- **A PLACE OF POSSIBILITY.** We advance economic prosperity and opportunity for all Milton residents and enterprises.
- **A COMPLETE COMMUNITY.** We envision Milton as a complete community where residents can live, work, learn, and engage.
- **FUTURE-DRIVING INNOVATION.** We invest in an innovative ecosystem that will ensure Milton's future competitiveness.
- **A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW.** We foster resiliency through responsible development and protection of Milton's rural environment and recreational amenities.
- **A WELCOMING HOME.** We celebrate and promote Milton's diversity of people, cultures, and businesses.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Six guiding principles serve as a framework to structure the development and implementation of the strategy:

- **EXPORT CLUSTER-DRIVEN APPROACH.** Follow an export cluster approach to drive economic growth and long-term prosperity. Decades of economics research have demonstrated that industry clustering is essential for competitiveness, innovation, and economic growth. An economic development strategy must align the assets of a cluster with its industry needs, including workforce training, infrastructure development, and government regulations.
- **A FOCUS ON INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.** Foster an innovative start-up ecosystem to create a community that is not only "complete" but also "smarter." Milton must encourage and support new business starts in a variety of sectors, including tech start-ups and small businesses of all stripes. New businesses contribute to economic development by capitalizing on new economic opportunities and absorbing the workforce of declining sectors and firms.



- **PRIVATE-SECTOR AND ANCHOR ENGAGEMENT.** Engage private-sector and anchor partners to advance the Town’s economic development goals. With limited staffing resources, Milton cannot accomplish its goals alone—it will need to leverage its relationships with private-sector and anchor partners to achieve economic growth.
- **BALANCED DEVELOPMENT.** Advance economic development initiatives that balance prosperity, job creation, sustainability, and livability. Milton’s economic development goals cannot be the Town’s singular focus. They must synchronise with the Town’s ethos, values, and quality of place.
- **QUALITY OF PLACE.** Embrace and promote Milton’s quality of place, recreational and natural assets, and access to the GTA, all of which make the Town a desirable destination for talent. Continually advancing and leveraging these community treasures will both attract and retain valuable talent.
- **EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING.** Milton must invest in resources to tell its story. Effective economic development hinges on a community’s ability to communicate its competitive advantages and assets. The story must be designed to reach a diverse array of stakeholders and audiences: talent, investors, policy makers, partners, and community members.



GOAL 1: GROW AND CULTIVATE MILTON'S EXPORT CLUSTERS TO FOSTER PROSPERITY

To be able to compete in today's economy, the Town of Milton must build a more resilient economy with diverse, high-growth sectors. Economic development strategies must be able to adapt to changing circumstances, just as companies and governments must be able to rapidly change course in response to unforeseeable economic challenges.

Milton can play to its strengths by supporting its large and many small businesses in established clusters like Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (PSTS); Green Innovation; Advanced Manufacturing; and Transportation and Logistics. These sectors provide jobs up and down the income and education spectrum, meaning their growth can contribute to social equity and upward mobility. A sector strategy seeks to help grow the business ecosystem rather than privilege a specific firm or sub-sector, ultimately making the local economy more competitive, dynamic, and successful.

The Evidence

The Town of Milton commissioned MDB Insights to perform a Target Cluster Analysis that evaluates the areas of opportunity for the town. This analysis is the essential foundation for supporting all business attraction, expansion efforts, foreign-direct investment, and incentives, as well helping to shape a narrative that resonates with new enterprises, site-selectors, and talent. The target clusters have been matched with Milton's local labour force skill set to ensure that business attraction efforts provide local employment opportunities.

According to the findings of this assessment, Milton's cluster strategy should be centered on four sectors:

- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (PSTS)
 - The PSTS businesses account for 19% of all businesses.
 - The sector is projected to grow by 306 jobs from 2021 to 2028.
- Green Innovation
 - Green Innovation businesses account for 14% of all businesses.
 - The sector accounted for 10% of all Milton jobs in 2021.
- Advanced Manufacturing
 - Milton's 5,424 manufacturing jobs accounted for 12% of jobs in 2021.
 - Manufacturing jobs are projected to grow by 393 jobs from 2021 to 2028.
- Transportation and Logistics
 - The Transportation and Logistics businesses account for 11% of all businesses.
 - Milton had 3,972 Transportation and Logistics jobs in 2021 (8% of jobs).

For detailed definitions of the clusters, please see Appendix D.



Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- New Businesses—tracking Milton's attraction and expansion of new businesses
- New Businesses by Cluster—tracking Milton's attraction of new businesses within its competitive industries
- Jobs Created—tracking total employment
- Jobs Created by Cluster—tracking cluster development and expansion
- Square Footage of Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) Development—monitoring development in Milton
- Non-Residential Assessment Rate—ensuring a balance between commercial and residential development

Priority 1.1: Design and implement a cluster-focused business retention and expansion initiative.

Through the development of a systematic, tailored business retention and expansion program, Milton can support existing businesses while simultaneously appealing to new businesses with a value proposition that demonstrates the Town's economic competitiveness. Roundtable discussions will enable new and existing businesses to come together to co-create strategies and initiatives that promote cluster growth, maintain consistent engagement, and track progress.

Actions

- Host cluster working groups in partnership with Milton Chamber to identify opportunities and challenges, adding clusters as resources or staffing permits.
- Implement a comprehensive business visitation plan for Milton's target clusters, identifying expansion opportunities and workforce and supply chain needs.
- Report key findings systematically and annually to drive policy needs.
- Identify and create appropriate support programs for each cluster.

Priority 1.2: Execute a site-selector engagement and lead generation strategy for Milton's core industries.

Lead generation and site selection are critical aspects of town-partner relations and a high priority for economic development. Milton's business attraction plan must include a focused site-selection strategy. Site selectors—particularly those conducting searches for global headquarters and knowledge-based industries—play an outsized role in short-listing and, ultimately, finalizing location. Emphasising local investment opportunities and continually building relationships with this target audience is key.



Actions

- Incorporate site-selector engagement with all targeted market visits and campaigns.
- Partner with Halton Region, Ontario Investment Office, and other site-selector and RFP initiatives.
- Build a target site-selection list and develop a bi-annual community outreach.

Priority 1.3: Support the development of Milton’s new growth areas and facilitate investment opportunities aligned with target sectors.

Real estate/site development is a major factor in economic development. Milton’s efforts in this area are augmented by the expertise and advising it offers to investors, developers, and companies. It is important that Milton build on these values and continue to pursue development that supports its economic growth and clusters. In addition, it is critical for Milton to consider how it can build competitive advantage by leveraging its vision for a complete community to attract investment; this includes a diverse and higher density mix of housing options, amenities, and employment areas.

Actions

- Collaborate with the Town of Milton Development Services to identify and map potential redevelopment opportunities.
- Serve as trusted advisors to businesses and investors on real estate/commercial development and redevelopment transactions.
- Partner with commercial real estate brokers (including engaging with organizations like ULI, SIOR, NAIOP) and others to highlight and market new commercial development opportunities.
- Continually evaluate commercial office needs and opportunities for mixed-use development, including new growth areas: Milton Education Village, Derry Green, Agerton Employment Area, Trafalgar Corridor, and the Major Transit Station Area (Mobility Hub).

Priority 1.4: Advise on land use and infrastructure policies to support cluster development.

Milton has unique community assets, available industrial land, and a built environment that is ripe for business expansion and growth. The Town should ensure that appropriate infrastructure and land use policies are in place to support cluster development and business expansion in strategic locations. Analysing how existing policies align with business needs will reveal any gaps and enable Milton to streamline development opportunities.

Actions

- Partner with Town of Milton Development Services and MEDAC to maintain and evaluate development assets: land, infrastructure, and incentives.
- Advise key stakeholders on development policies to support economic growth and align with cluster needs.



GOAL 2: BOLSTER MILTON'S START-UP ECOSYSTEM TO DRIVE FUTURE COMPETITIVENESS

New businesses capitalize on emerging economic opportunities and absorb the workforce of declining sectors and firms. Milton needs to encourage new business starts in a variety of sectors while continuing to support its existing clusters. Embracing tech startups and small businesses of all stripes will enable the Town to achieve its economic development goals of talent attraction and retention. To this end, Milton must leverage the resources of its anchor university partners to catalyze their research, particularly as it relates to Green Innovation and climate. Creating an innovation district for Milton's Education Village can help centralize Milton's efforts to incubate new firms and create a self-supporting entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The Evidence

- Milton is home to over 3,500 businesses. Nearly 70% are micro businesses (fewer than five employees), which points to Milton's thriving entrepreneurial community.
- About one in four businesses in Milton is in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector, a share that is 90% higher than the national average. The share among micro businesses is even greater at one in three.
- Many of Milton's micro businesses are specialized in computer systems design and related services.
- Milton has a high employment rate (74%) for graduates from physical and life sciences and technologies instructional programs.

Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses Assisted—counting the number of small businesses that participated in the small business programs offered by Milton and its partners

Priority 2.1: Establish "Innovation Collective," an initiative to support scalable and technology-focused startups.

Building and scaling an entrepreneurial ecosystem requires a comprehensive approach. Milton and its partners can build networks that connect startups to investors and customers and make it easier for new enterprises to find the resources they need to grow. Creating an "Innovation Collective" will provide Milton with a collaborative effort that supports scalable enterprises within the Town's target sectors.

Actions



- Identify and convene an advisory working group to support the exploration of “Innovation Collaborative.”
- Explore new best practices for cluster-focused startup initiatives across Canada and the U.S.
- Build relationships with venture capital organizations within the GTA and throughout Ontario and Canada.
- Support startup/innovation community events such as pitch competitions and networking sessions.
- Advise Milton’s Town Council on development policies to support economic growth and align with cluster needs.

Priority 2.2: Develop and execute an innovation district strategy for the Milton Education Village (MEV), positioning it as an entrepreneurial hub.

Milton and its anchor partners have made significant strides in the planning and early development of the Milton Education Village (MEV). This dynamic urban village will connect entrepreneurs, bringing together leading academic institutions, outdoor recreational opportunities, views of the Niagara Escarpment, state-of-the-art research and design facilities, and environmentally conscious urban design. Likewise, it will be essential for the Town and its partners to understand the need and desires of students and faculty in Milton as the strategic planning process advances. Public-private collaboration is now needed to fully integrate the development of the innovation district strategy for MEV into the Town’s broader economic development and programming efforts.

Actions

- Utilize and expand the existing MEV working group to help guide innovation district planning.
- Catalog innovation district best practices across North America, focusing on programming and placemaking efforts.
- Explore retaining a firm to develop the MEV district plan.

Priority 2.3: Collaborate to offer training and capacity-building assistance for Milton’s small businesses.

Growth isn’t always easy for small businesses. Capacity-building initiatives can help Milton’s small businesses overcome challenges as they grow into medium- and large-sized businesses while also helping to ensure that they remain in Milton. Likewise, enterprises that can scale also have a stronger opportunity to gain access to more customers and government procurement dollars and contracts. The Halton Region Small Business Centre and others are collaborators in this work. Their efforts need to be aligned with the Town’s target clusters and the broader economic development strategy while continuing to focus on up-to-the-minute business needs in a rapidly changing environment.

Actions



- Continue to offer small business programming specific to COVID-19 recovery.
- Support and promote the small business resources and trainings offered by the Halton Region Small Business Centre.
- Provide ongoing updates regarding provincial and local resources to Milton's small businesses.
- Explore the resources needed to create a physical presence of the Halton Region Small Business Centre in Milton.

Priority 2.4: Partner with Milton's anchor institutions to develop the Town's Green Innovation cluster.

Milton has more than 1,703 Green Innovation businesses, accounting for 14% of all enterprises in the Town. The fast-growing sector is forecasted to add an additional 400 jobs by 2028. By partnering with its anchor institutions in Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College—both of which have significant expertise in green enterprises and sustainable technologies—Milton can significantly increase the number of sustainable jobs created and profitable enterprises scaled and developed within the sector.

Actions

- Collaborate anchor partners and federal and provincial government entities to guide Milton's Green Innovation cluster development.
- Build a relationship with university commercialization and tech-transfer officials to identify scalable Green Innovation enterprises and connect them with resources.
- Champion, in concert with business partners, the successes of Green Innovation enterprises in Milton.



GOAL 3: BUILD MILTON AS A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR DIVERSE TALENT

Talent is the single most important consideration that drives company location decisions. Having a deep base of highly skilled workers creates virtuous cycles of new business formation and new business attraction, bringing in more talented workers in the process. Now, in an era of remote work, white collar professionals are enjoying a significant degree of choice in their personal locational choices. To attract and retain these workers, Milton must articulate the value of its community amenities and quality of place. In addition, the Town must collaborate with its colleges and universities, economic development partners, and private sector to create a unified, full-continuum talent development strategy that will train and upskill the kinds of workers Milton’s local economy needs: knowledge workers, skilled professionals in advanced manufacturing and logistics, and others.

The Evidence

- With 36% of residents holding a bachelor’s degree or higher, Milton has one of the most educated talent pools to draw from.
- Milton leads all communities in the attraction of educated residents—its share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher grew by 55% in the last five years.
- One in three Milton residents boasts skills in management, finance, or business.
- Milton is fastest growing in health- and science-related occupations; its share of residents with these skills grew by 58% and 54%, respectively, since 2015.

Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- Level of Educational Attainment—measuring Milton’s skilled workforce, including degrees and certificates
- Increase in Share of Residents 25-34 Years of Age—tracking the growth in attracting young, prime workforce talent to Milton

Priority 3.1: Engage Milton’s colleges and universities to align educational and upskilling offerings with business and workforce needs.

Skills and training programs must align with target clusters. Milton's target sectors—especially those in Green Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing—are quite technical. Close collaboration between public- and private-sector partners is essential to ensure that workers are being trained to fulfill the precise needs of local companies. Wilfrid Laurier University, Conestoga College, Peel Halton Workforce Development Board, and others are key partners in this effort.



Actions

- Leverage existing workforce collaborations among Milton's universities and colleges and private-sector employers.
- Explore, in partnership with colleges, new training offerings tied to target clusters: certificates, badging, and executive education.

Priority 3.2: Develop a hybrid work and talent strategy to draw and retain tech-savvy and skilled talent to Milton.

It's expected that more than 25% of the workforce will work remotely, with another 25% having the option to do so. Milton boasts several place advantages. First, it is located in the heart of one of the world's leading technology clusters in the Toronto-Waterloo Innovation Corridor. Second, it has the transportation advantage of being located along the 401 and close to the airport and having access to an extensive transit network. And with its reputation as an amenity-rich community, Milton can leverage location and quality of place to attract hybrid and remote workers and retain skilled talent. Doing so will require Milton and its partners to develop a talent strategy that promotes its community assets while also creating a way for talent to connect with one another. Building mechanisms to increase social capitalism is an essential element of economic development, especially in an era in which communities are competing for talent.

Actions

- Continue to assess and understand the needs of Milton's creative class and hybrid workforce.
- Support the Milton Chamber of Commerce in enhancing networking opportunities for Milton's creative class.
- Ensure the needs of Milton's hybrid workers are considered in the development of Milton Education Village, Trafalgar Corridor, and more.

Priority 3.3: Invest in placemaking initiatives to enhance Milton as an inviting home for local talent.

Placemaking is the deliberate shaping of an environment to facilitate social interaction and improve a community's quality of life. According to the Project for Public Spaces, "placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm to maximize shared value." An aligned, systematic placement plan—generated by a collaboration among the Milton Chamber of Commerce, the DBIA, and the Town's Culture Division—will enable the Town of Milton to transform underutilized spaces into platforms for authentic engagement and community building.

Actions

- Catalogue underutilized spaces throughout Milton, understanding ownership, potential uses, and limitations.



- Develop a systematic placemaking program that includes selection criteria, funding plans, and marketing approaches.
- Pilot the placemaking program, evaluate impact, and demonstrate impact and scale.

Priority 3.4: Promote destination experiences—both urban and rural—for current and prospective Milton residents.

Milton needs a strategy for curating and promoting urban and rural “destination experiences.” Doing so will position the Town to attract and retain talent, drive economic development, and encourage local investments in new restaurants, brewpubs, recreational activities, concerts, and more. Town economic development officials will need to work directly with stakeholders in the cultural and recreational sectors to identify the best experiences and local characters to highlight with this strategy.

Actions

- Support the creation of an inventory of Milton's destination assets: cultural and recreational amenities, music, art, food, breweries, and more.
- Collaborate with Hamilton, Halton, Brant Regional Tourism Association, Milton Chamber of Commerce, DBIA, Town of Milton Culture Division, and other partners to package and promote Milton as a destination.
- Develop curated destination experiences for Milton residents; test ideas on social media.



GOAL 4: DEFINE AND PROMOTE MILTON'S BRAND FOR NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A significant element of economic development is community promotion: telling a story that creates an attractive brand identity for business, capital investment, and prospective residents. It's up to Milton to convince new talent, entrepreneurs of all kinds of businesses, site selectors, and investors to choose its fine community over any other in the Greater Toronto or Ontario region. Prioritizing efforts to elevate its reputation will enable Milton to attract those seeking a better place to live, to work, or to build a company. The Town's long-term economic development success depends on it.

The Evidence

- Quality of place is an important economic driver that attracts investment, talent, and visitors. In fact, research has shown that quality of place indicators are more strongly correlated with the economic prosperity of an area than traditional economic factors such as tax rates and affordability of place.
- Branding helps communities, towns, cities, and destinations distill and articulate their unique strategic positioning and differentiating characteristics. Resonance's research has demonstrated the importance of marketing and communicating to attract firms, talent, and visitors to communities. A strong brand will help Milton compete in the global marketplace.
- A well-articulated place-branding strategy strengthens a community's sense of place because it aligns the language and messages created for and by businesses, community, and visitors.
- In its natural environment and outdoor activities, Milton has an important strength to promote.
- Milton's engagement on social media is limited, trailing peers for the number of Facebook check-ins and Instagram hashtags.

Evaluation Metrics

The following metrics should be tracked to assess impact:

- Unique Visitors to Milton's Economic Development Website—measuring interest in Milton as a town to live, work, and visit
- E-Newsletter Open Rate—tracking the effectiveness of e-newsletters in informing and engaging audiences

Priority 4.1: Develop a sub-brand to support Milton's economic development efforts.

The difference is in the details. Milton needs to fully define its value proposition for investment, talent attraction, and resident engagement as it relates to economic development. Creating a sub-brand that builds on Milton's "Place of Possibility" messaging will position the Town to play up its unique strengths and differentiate itself from its peers. Once created, the sub-brand should be deployed



across all platforms with targeted messaging that helps each audience make the easy decision to Choose Milton.

Actions

- Create a Choose Milton brand and messaging platform.
- Refresh Milton's economic development digital presence, in concert with its new identity and messaging.

Priority 4.2: Market Milton's target clusters, including those with FDI potential, to gain investment.

Marketing and communication are critical to both business attraction and expansion. Now that industry clusters have been clearly defined, the Town of Milton must proceed to market and promote the clusters' strengths and advantages. A focus on cluster development should drive all of Milton's promotional materials, websites, policies, and advocacy with messaging that's tailored to industry audiences and stakeholders.

Actions

- Hire a full-time marketing professional to support Milton's economic development efforts.
- Prepare industry investment marketing portfolios (brochures and videos) for each sector.
- Build a standalone attraction website that promotes real estate assets, data, and tools of interest to site selectors.

Priority 4.3: Implement a marketing plan to engage stakeholders, including business leaders, policymakers, and partners.

Economic development is diverse in its stakeholders. Milton's economic development team needs a holistic communication strategy that engages a wide array of stakeholders: policymakers, business owners, talent, and community members among them. The strategy must include effective tactics for communicating Milton's economic development successes. Doing so will help bring stakeholders together to understand the impact of economic growth and why it matters to so many in the community.

Actions

- Develop and execute a communication plan for updating Milton stakeholders on impact, metrics, and activities.
- Host, in collaboration with partners, an annual economic development convening.
- Design, publish, and promote an annual report.

Priority 4.4: Celebrate Milton's business and entrepreneurial success stories.

At the core of a thriving community is the celebration of its businesses. With the telling of its story, Milton and its economic development partners can illustrate the wide array of diverse enterprises, small businesses, and entrepreneurs that have found success in this desirable community. By



showcasing Milton businesses of all sectors, types, and sizes, the Town rolls out the welcome mat to a new array of enterprises and entrepreneurs.

Actions

- Create a systematic means for communicating entrepreneurial and start-up successes: website, blogs, social media, and direct emails.



Appendix A: Community Competitive Assessment

The following information provides a current snapshot of community and economic conditions in Milton that provide direction regarding strategic actions. These data points can serve as a point of reference to gauge the Town's competitive advantages or weaknesses.

For context and comparison, this analysis compares Milton to 14 Canadian communities (three of which are part of the Halton Region), whose size, demographics, and economics are similar to the Town or offer policies and practices that the community can look to for best practices: Barrie, ON; Belleville, ON; Burlington, ON; Guelph, ON; Halton Hills, ON; Hamilton, ON; Oakville, ON; Oshawa, ON; Peterborough, ON; Waterloo, ON; Windsor, ON; Quebec, QC; Saskatoon, SK; Winnipeg, MB.

Over 40 metrics were collected for the Town of Milton and the benchmarking communities. The metrics fall into the following six categories: People and Diversity, Talent, Economic Vitality, Innovation, Equity, and Quality of Place.

The methodology for the benchmarking analysis revolves around the use of three main fundamental tools: the calculation of shares, growth rates, and location quotients. The calculation of shares/ratios helps us view the figures as part of the whole and creates a common basis for comparison between benchmark communities. Growth rates allow us to assess the change in a certain value over time. By definition, they express the recession or expansion of a particular variable. In all cases, a five-year time span is chosen.

In order to assess the concentration or dominance of a certain community characteristic (e.g., share of millennial population, share of immigrants, etc.) or industry competitiveness, location quotients are calculated. The location quotients use the Canadian national value as a benchmark. In this sense, a value higher than one demonstrates a concentration/specialization relative to the Canadian norm, while a value lower than one indicates that the particular characteristic is under-represented in Milton. The assessment also provides comparisons to the provincial averages when appropriate. Benchmarks and metrics were selected in partnership with the Economic Development and Tourism staff.

For purposes of this project and given that the currently available census data dates back to 2016, Resonance partnered with Polaris Intelligence to provide 2020 geo-demographic data. Using the latest census data, Polaris Intelligence uses enhanced cohort survival methods, collaborative filtering



techniques, and structural coherence techniques to develop accurate estimates of demographic variables, while preserving the coherence structure in the census data.

KEY INSIGHTS

Fast-growing community.

Milton's population growth ranks first among the peers. The Town of Milton is home to 135,947 residents: a 19.3% increase since 2015. This growth rate is three times the provincial growth rate during the same period.

Growing more diverse.

More than 79,000 immigrants are residents of Milton. They represent 37.6% of Milton's population, a share that is 60% more than the Canadian average. This is a 51.2% increase since 2015; a rate that is more than six times that of the Toronto region.

Educated talent pool.

Educational attainment levels in Milton are very high, where 27.7% of residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher; a share that is 50% larger than the Canadian average, and which has grown by 55.0% since 2015.

High labour participation.

Almost 8 in 10 Milton residents are actively working. The labour force participation rate in Milton is 75.8%, which is higher than both the national (65.1%) and provincial (64.9%) labour force participation rates.

Slow growing incomes.

Milton's median household income is growing the slowest among peers; 10% slower than the national average. Moreover, median individual incomes are growing at a slow rate; 8.9% increase since 2015 – ranking 14th among the peer communities.

Home ownership.

Milton boasts a high homeownership rate but has the highest share of home-burdened residents among peers; 8 in 10 own homes; 23.0% are cost burdened.

Gender wage disparity.

Men earn, on average, \$23,842 more than women; this is larger than the national (\$21,000) and provincial (\$19,000) gender wage differences. However, female incomes in Milton are growing at a faster rate than male incomes.

Poverty, equity, and community.

Only 9.2% of residents are low-income status. This rate, however, has increased from 6.4% in 2015.

Promoting Milton.

Milton's social media and online promotional efforts are limited.

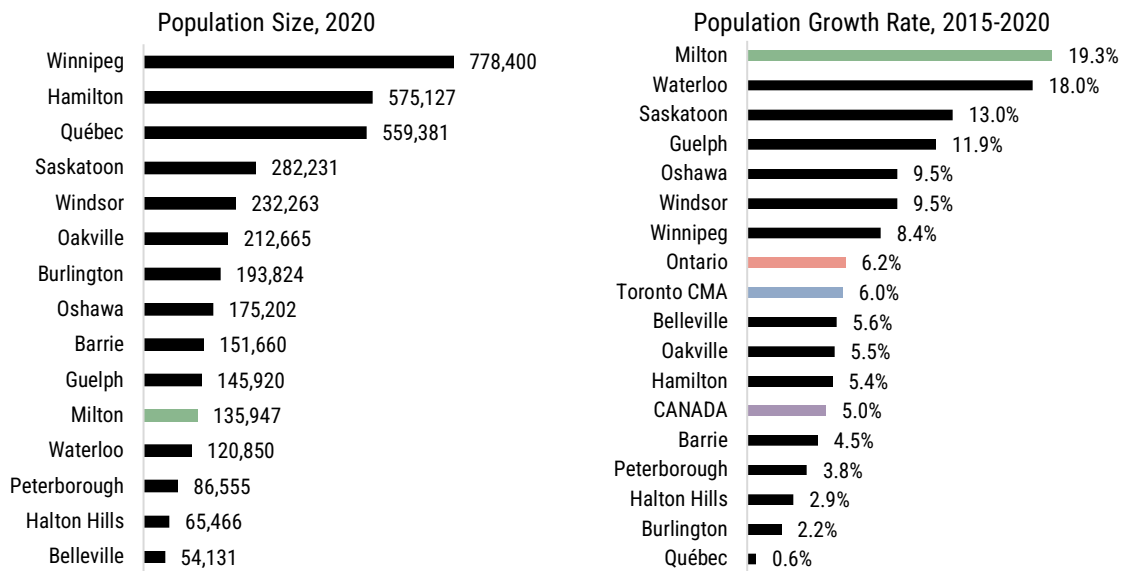


PEOPLE AND DIVERSITY

The Census Subdivision (CSD) of Milton is home to 135,947 residents. The following outlines the key takeaways from the analysis of Milton’s population and demographics:

Fast-growing population

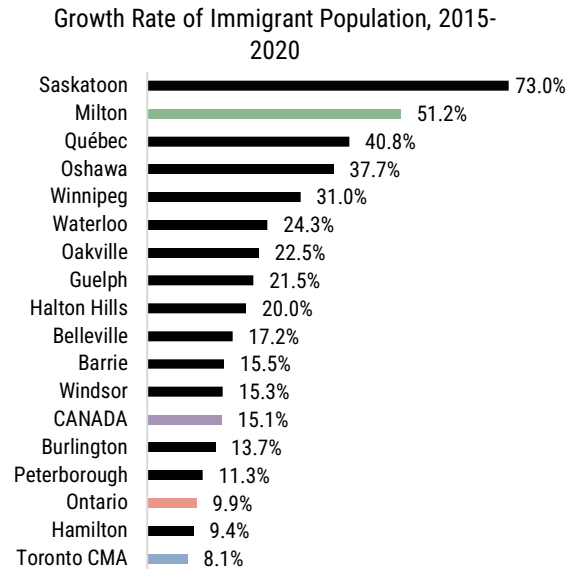
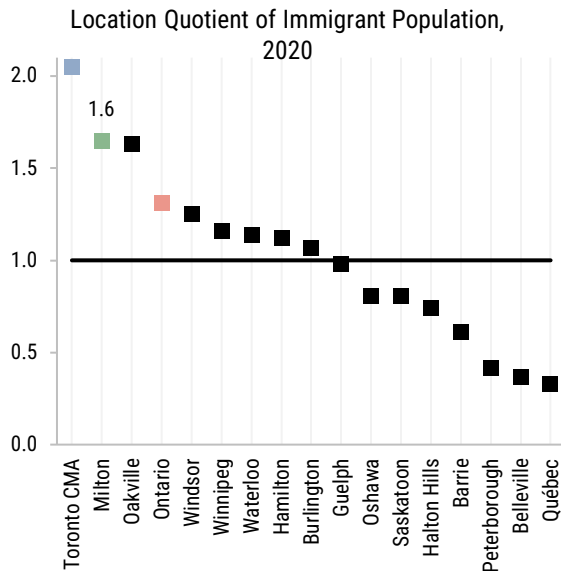
Over the past five years, Milton’s population increased by 19.3%. This growth rate is three times the provincial rate, and is the highest among the benchmarks.





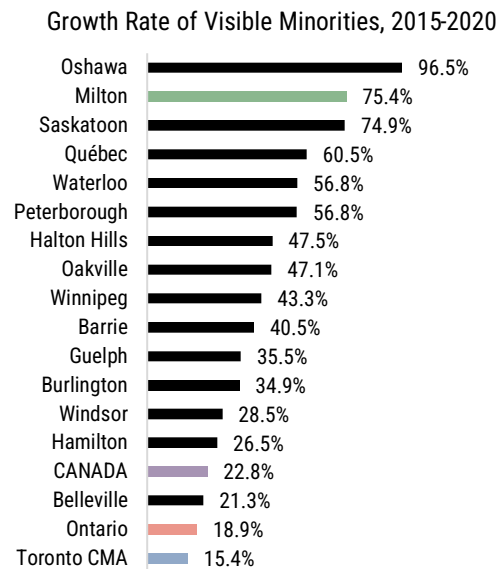
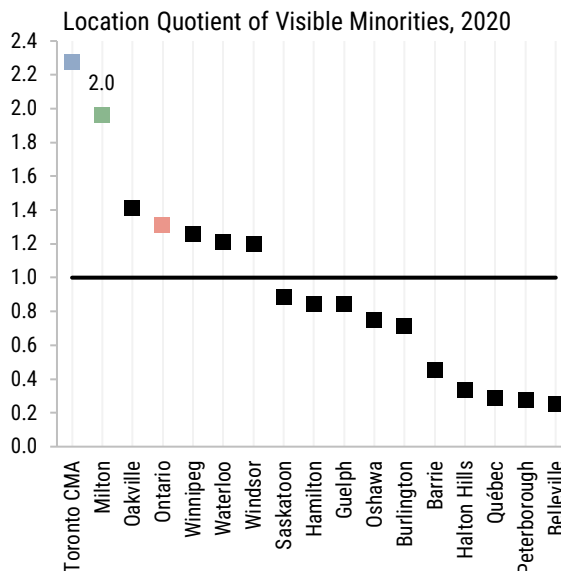
Growing immigrant population

Immigrants make up 37.6% of Milton’s population — a share that is 60% higher than the national average. The immigrant population saw a 51.2% increase since 2015; a rate which is more than six times that of the Toronto region.



Growing visible minorities

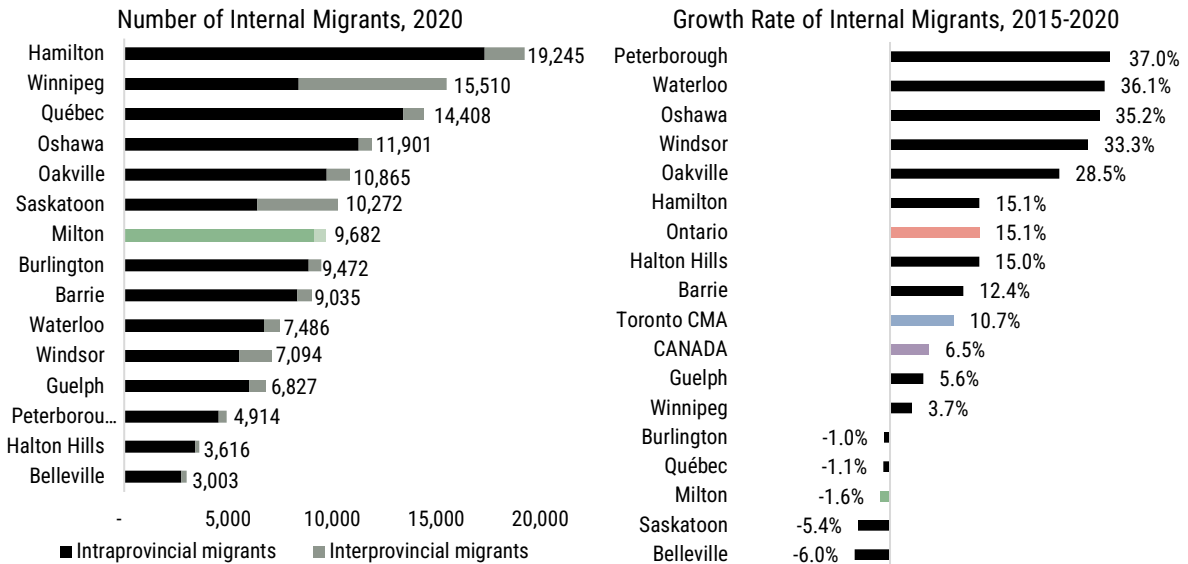
Almost 44.1% of Milton’s residents are visible minorities. Milton’s visible minorities population (60,016) is two times the national share, and it increased in the last five years by 75.4%, a rate that is more than three times the national growth rate.





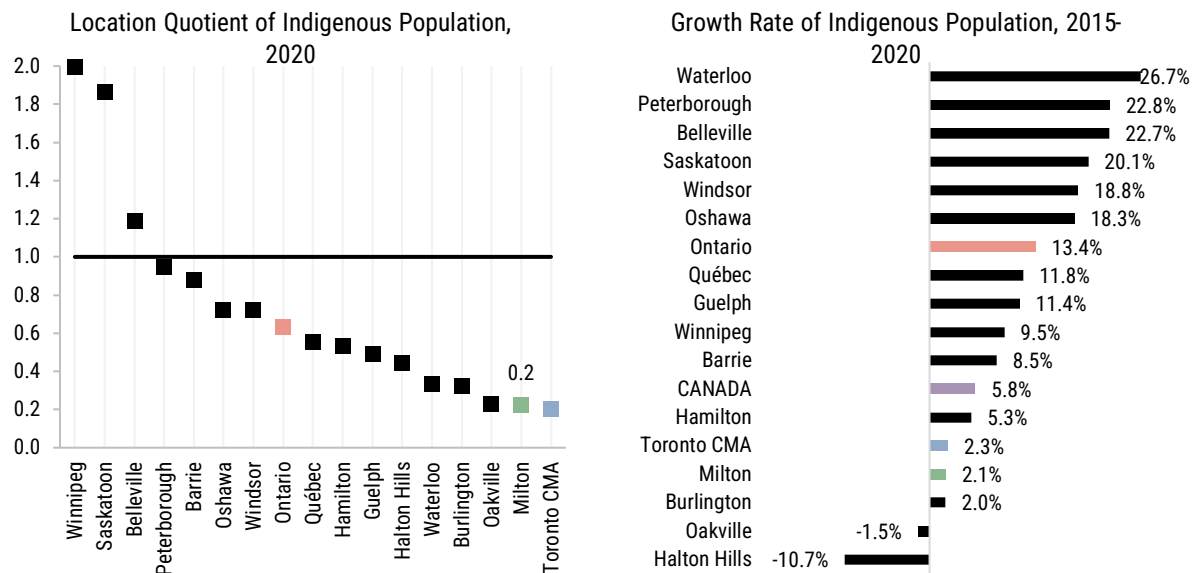
High internal migration

Around 7.1% of Milton residents are internal migrants, a share that is the highest among the benchmarks. The majority (94.4%) are intraprovincial migrants (from other areas in Ontario). The number of internal migrants, however, decreased by 1.6% since 2015.



Small Indigenous population

Milton's indigenous population (1,885 residents) is 80% smaller than the national average.





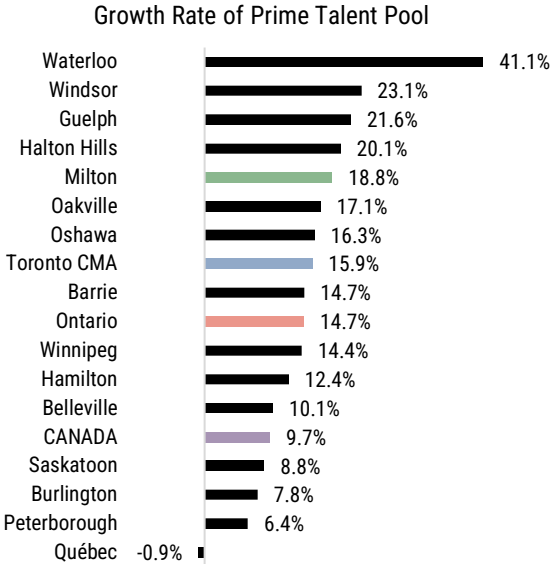
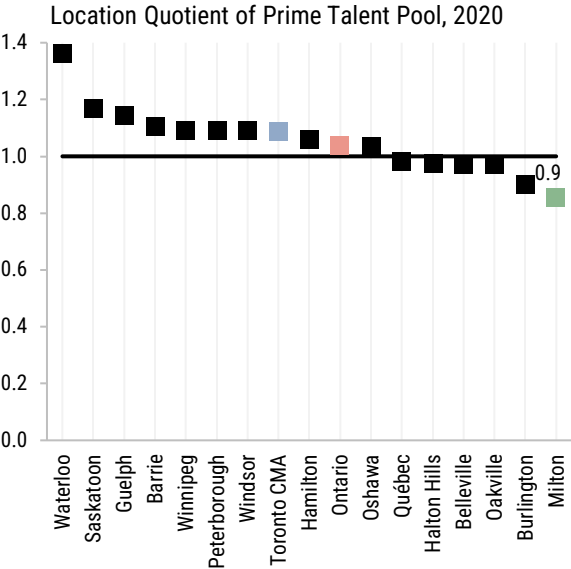
TALENT

Workforce capabilities are paramount to the core objectives of economic development: business growth and worker prosperity. Milton talent is generally centered on science and management occupations. Among its peers, Milton has one of the most educated talent pools to draw upon and leads all communities in the attraction of educated residents. The following are key takeaways about Milton’s various talent metrics:

Growing share of prime talent pool

Milton has a 17.1% share of young adults (between 20 and 34 years of age). This share is 10% smaller than the national average and represents an 18.8% increase since 2015.

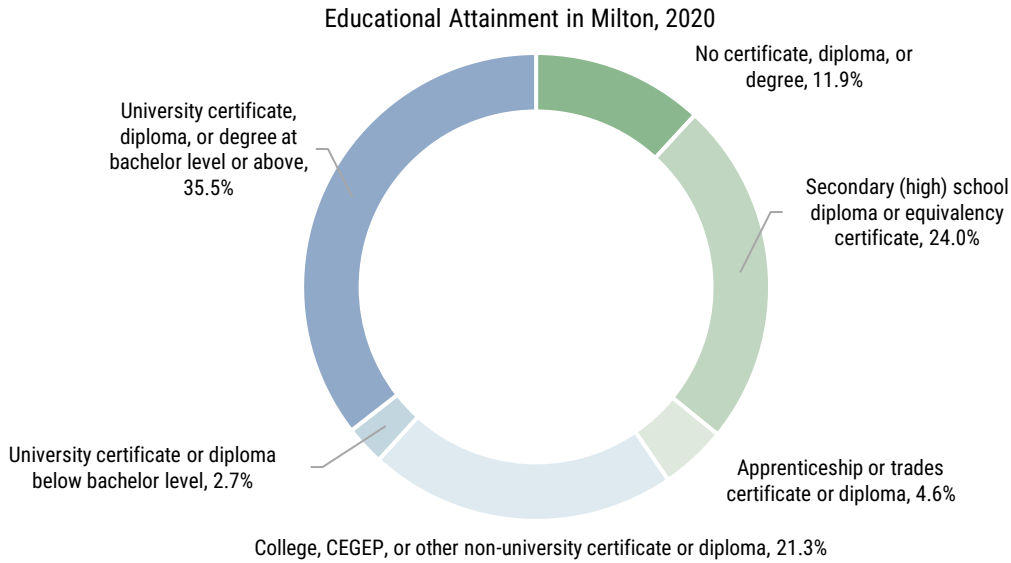
The population group 0 to 14 years of age is 45% larger than the national average, and the population group 35 to 49 years of age is 38% larger than the national average.



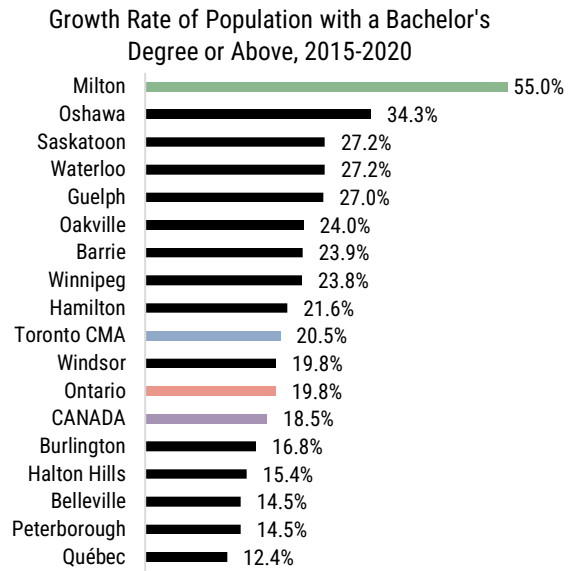
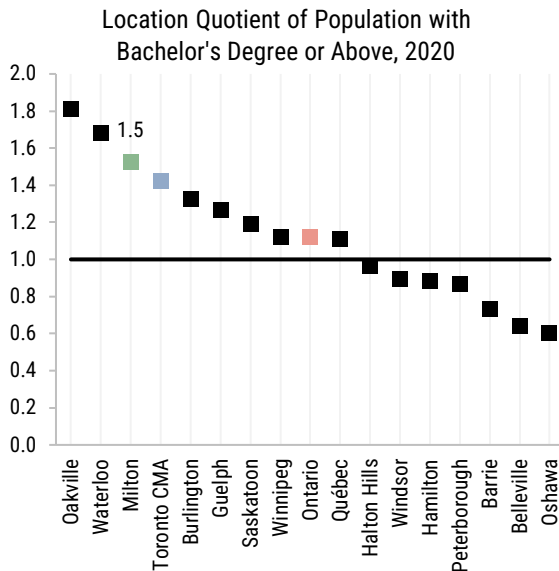


Educational attainment in Milton

Only 11.9% of Milton residents have no education. This share is 40% lower than the national average.



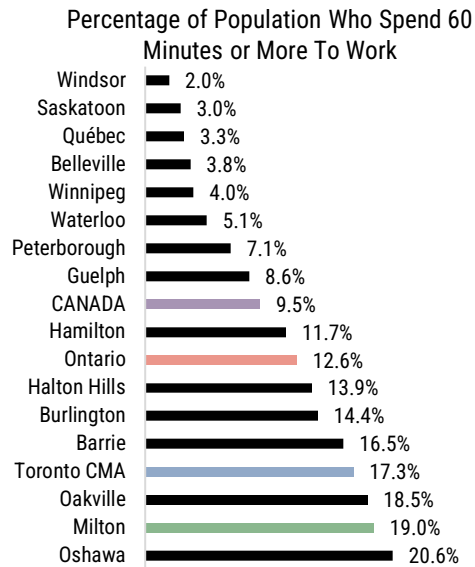
Almost 35.5% of Milton residents have a Bachelor’s degree or higher; a share that is 50% higher than the national average, and that has grown by 55.0% in the last five years.





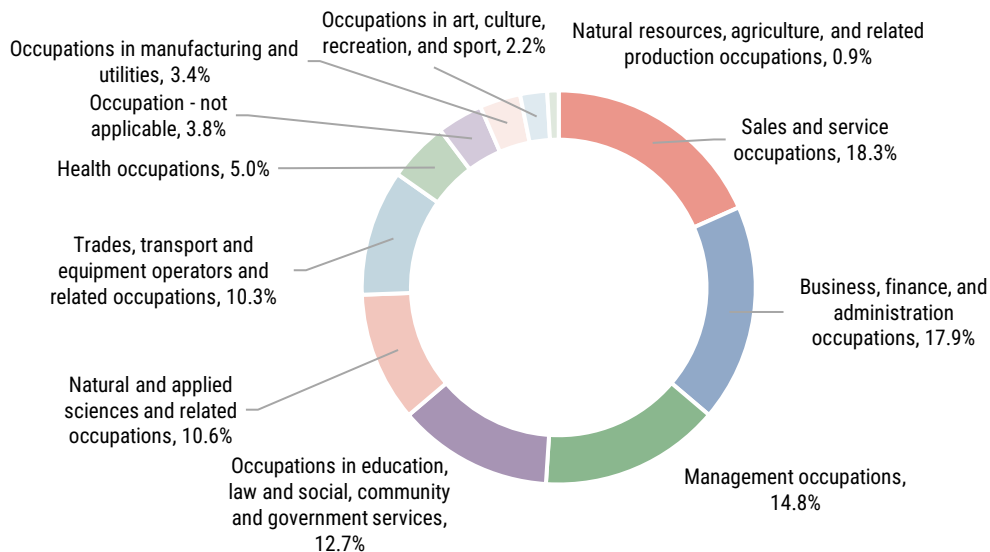
Talent Concentration in Milton

Almost two in ten Milton residents spend more than an hour to get to work, and more than half (60.3%) spend more than 30 minutes to get to work, indicating that Milton is a popular residence for workers in neighbouring areas.



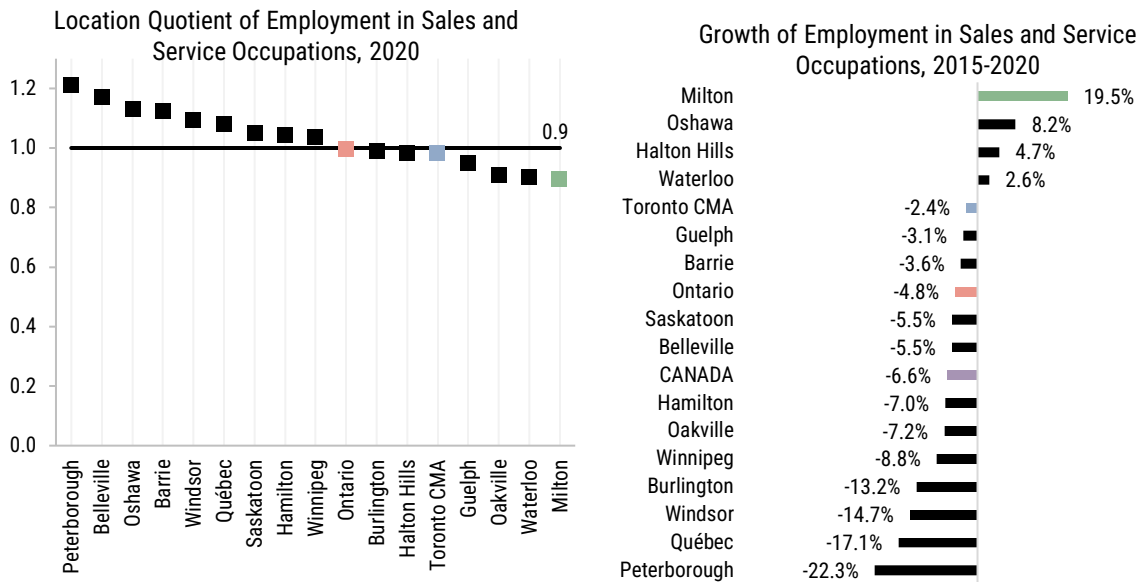
Major occupations in Milton

Almost one third of Milton residents have skills in management, finance, and business.

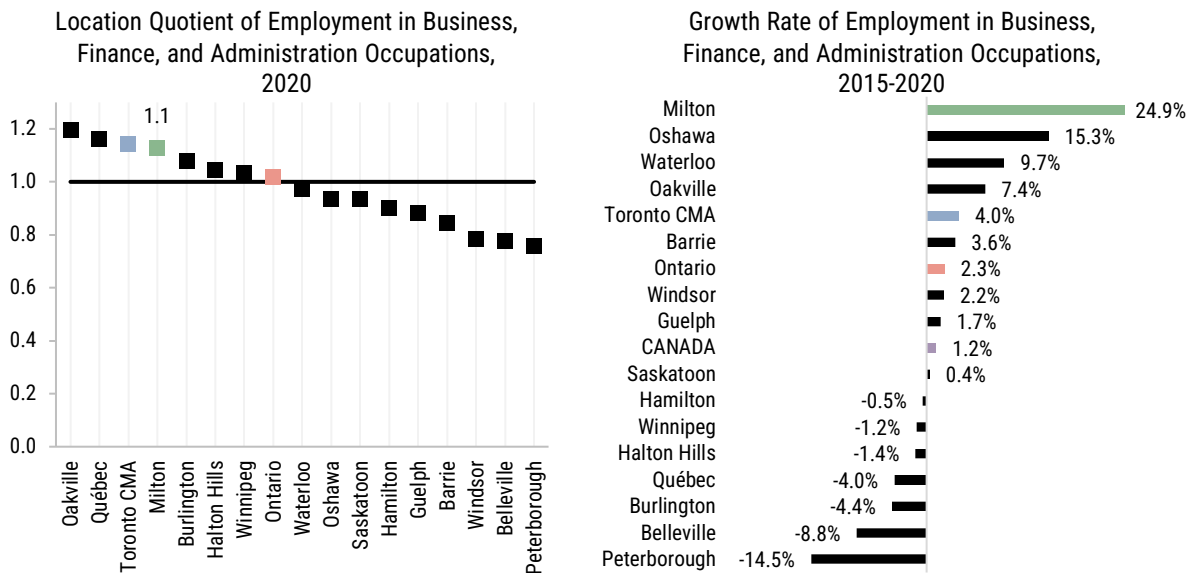




Almost 14,500 Milton residents have skills in sales and service, a share that is 10% less than the national average, and that has increased by 19.5% over the last five years.

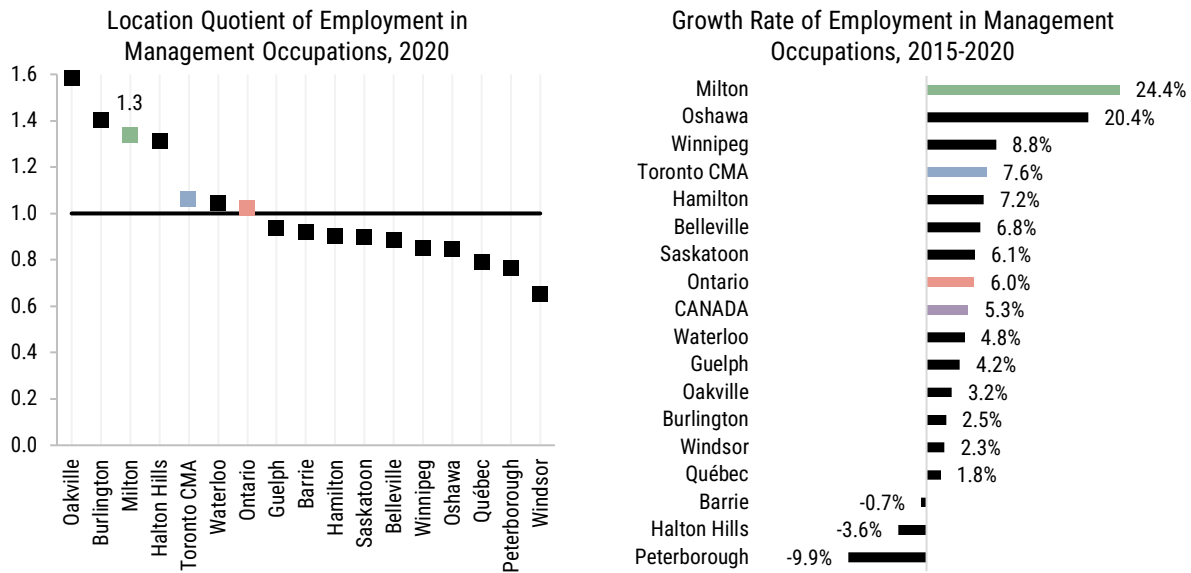


Almost 14,100 Milton residents have skills in business and finance, a share that is 10% higher than the national average.

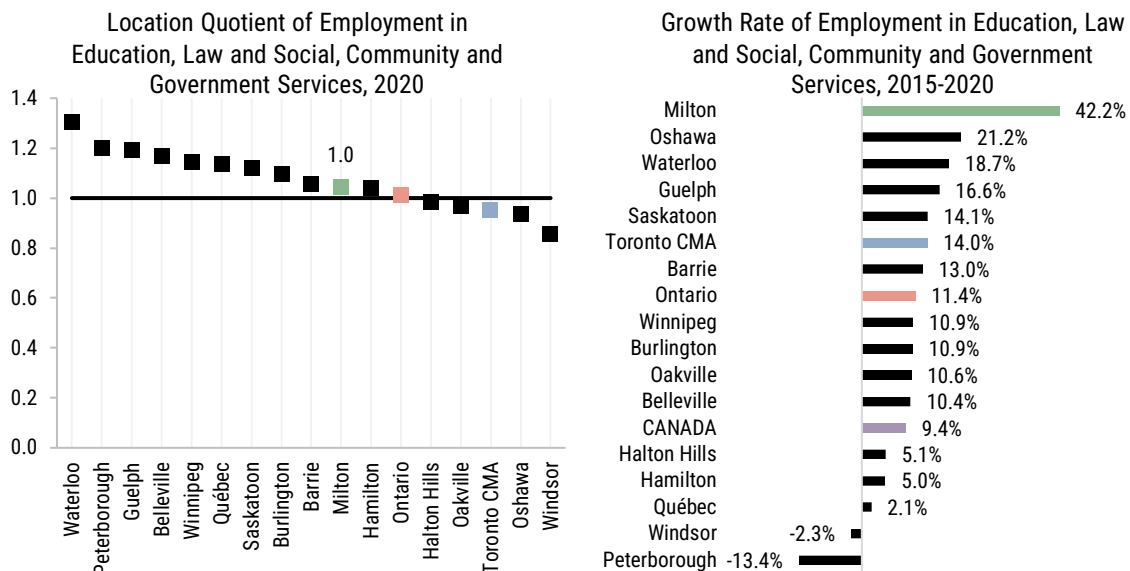




Around 14.8% Milton residents have skills in management, a share that is 30% higher than the national average, and that has grown by 24.4% in the last five years.

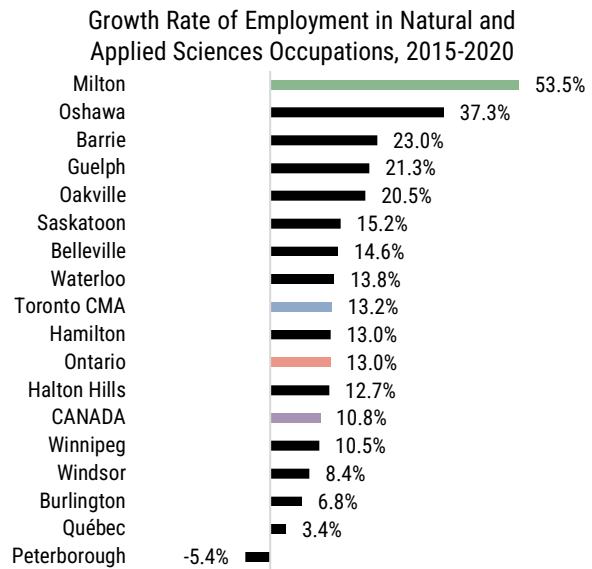
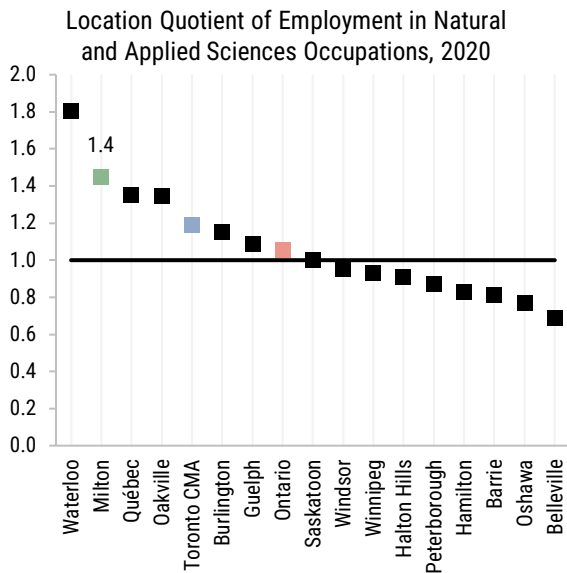


Nearly 10,000 of Milton residents have skills in education, law and social, community and government services, a share that is equivalent to the national average, and that has seen significant growth (42.2%) since 2015.

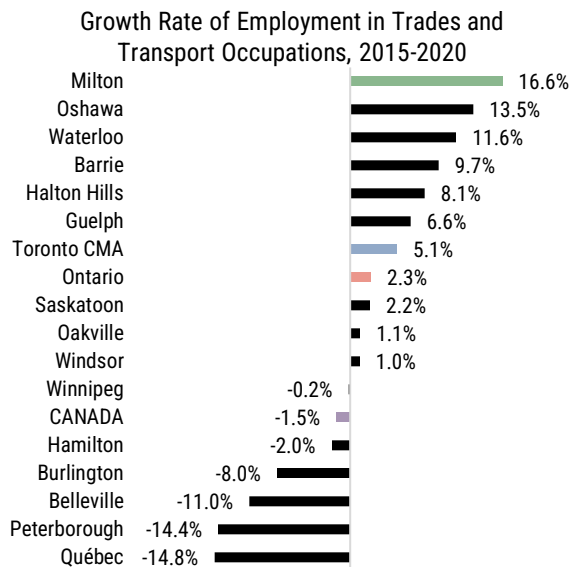
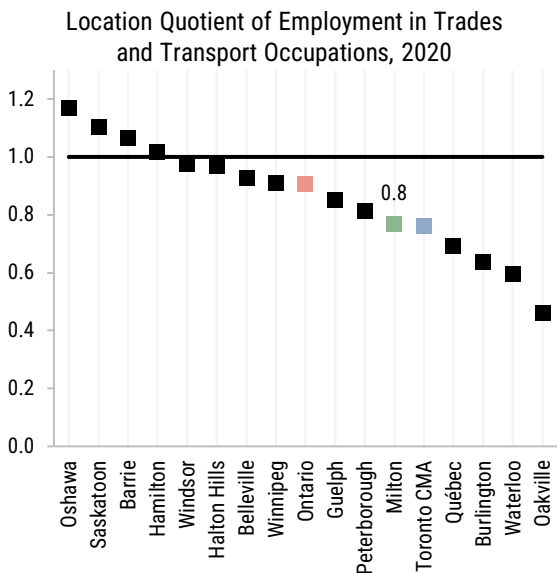




Milton's share of residents with science skills (10.6%) has increased by 53.5% since 2015. This share is 40% higher than the national and provincial averages.

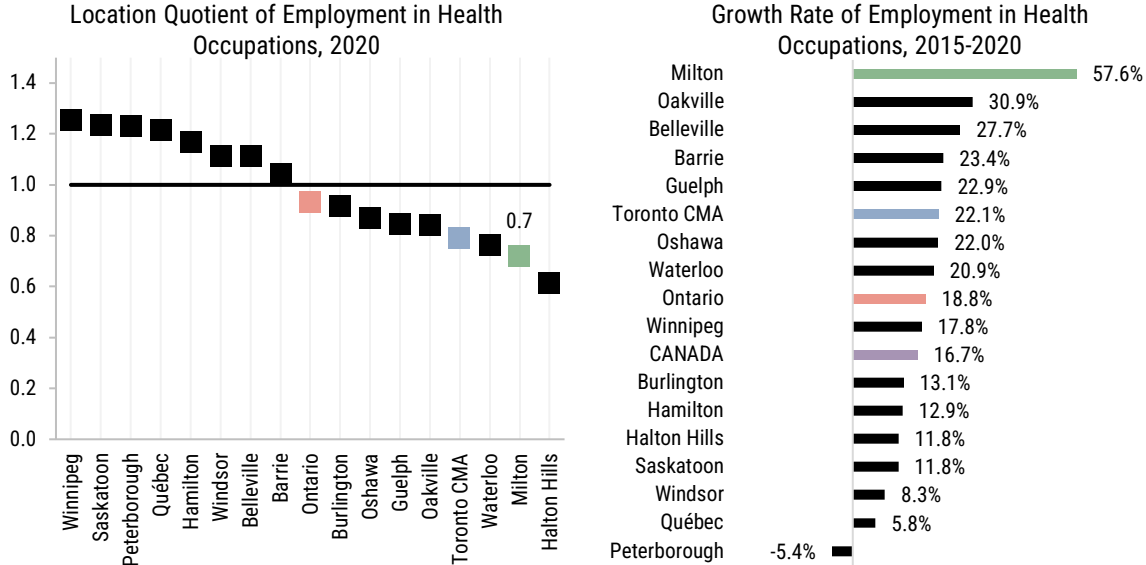


Milton's share of residents with trades and transports skills is 20% lower than the national average, and has increased by 16.6% since 2015.

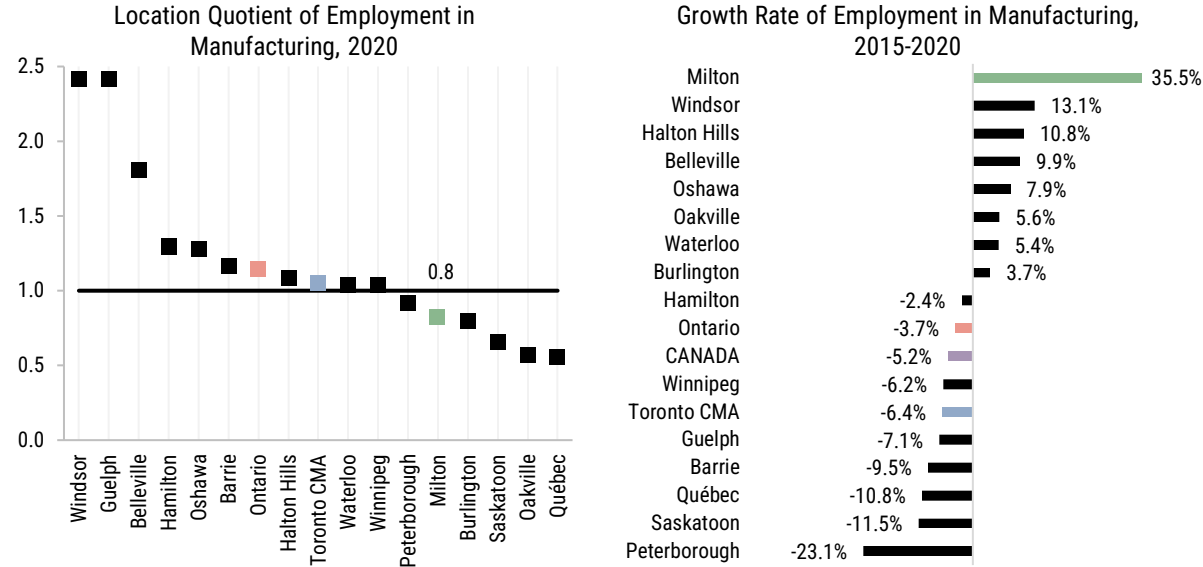




Milton’s share of residents with skills in health is 30% lower than the national average,; however, this skill set has increased 57.6% since 2015.

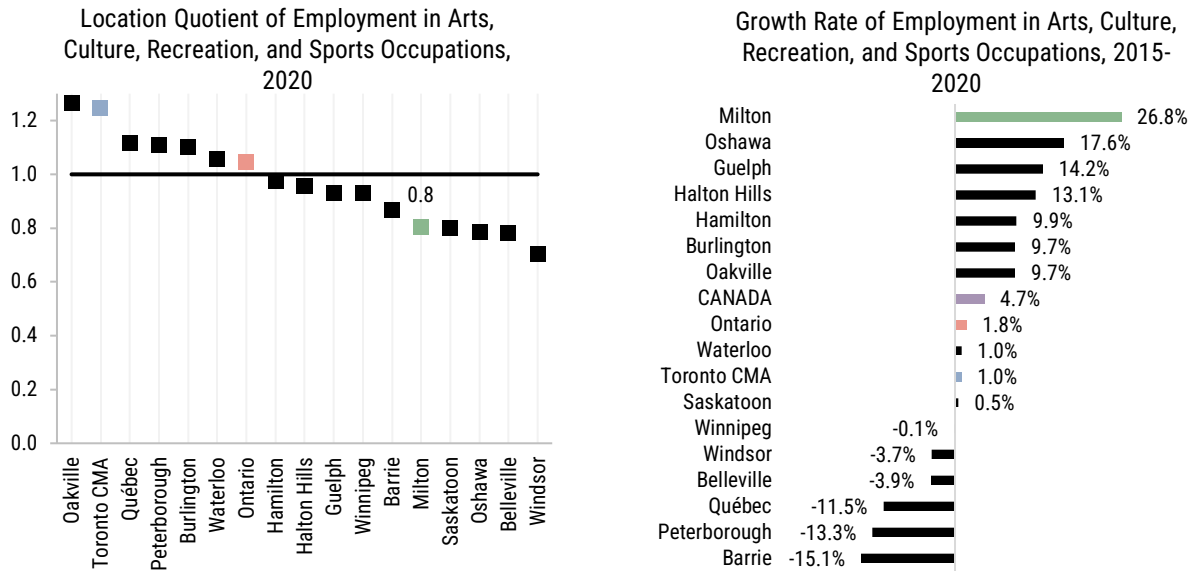


Milton’s share of residents with skills in manufacturing (3.4%) is 20% lower than the national average, however, it has increased by 35.5% in the last five years.

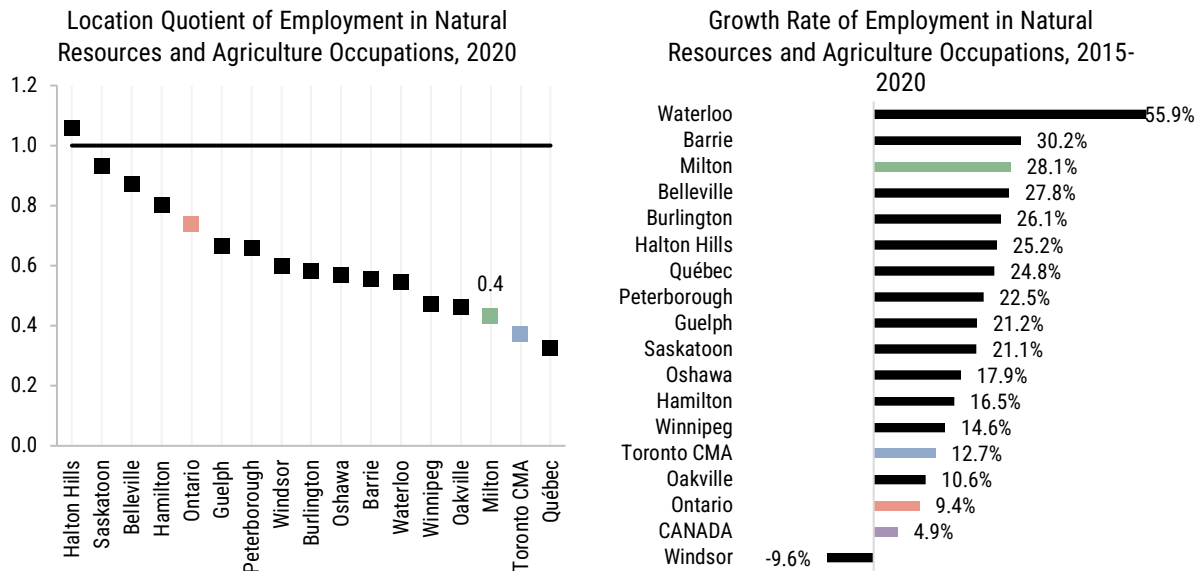




Almost 1,750 Milton residents have skills in arts and culture, a share that is 20% lower than the national average and has increased by 26.8% since 2015.



Finally, Milton's share of residents with skills in natural resources and agriculture (0.9%) is 70% lower than the national average, but has grown by 28.1% since 2015.



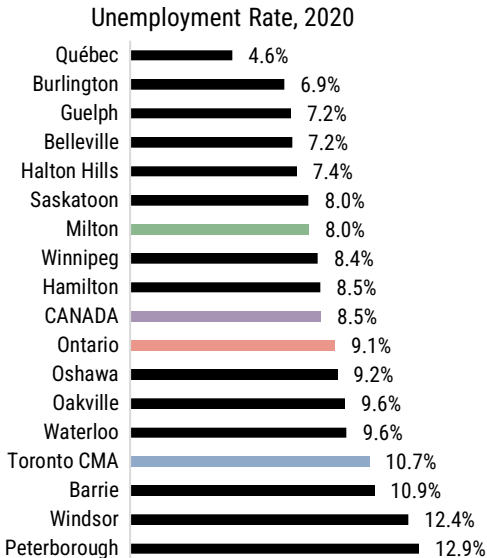
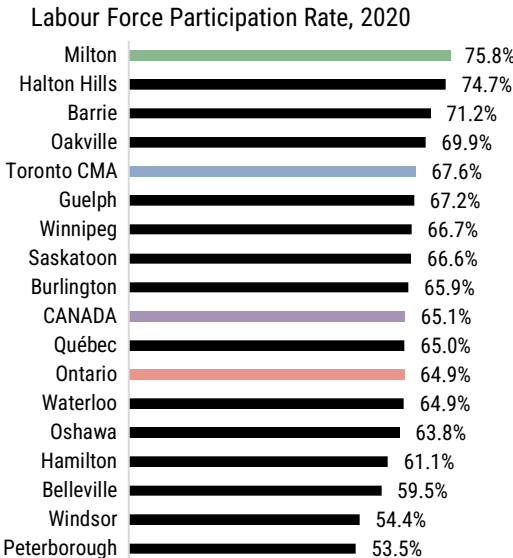


ECONOMIC VITALITY

Research has found that it is the clusters of talent and skills that drive long-run growth and prosperity. There are three broad skill sets that drive today’s economy: knowledge, service, and working sector. For Milton, a competitive advantage lies in the town’s knowledge sector. A detailed analysis is presented below:

High Labour Force Participation

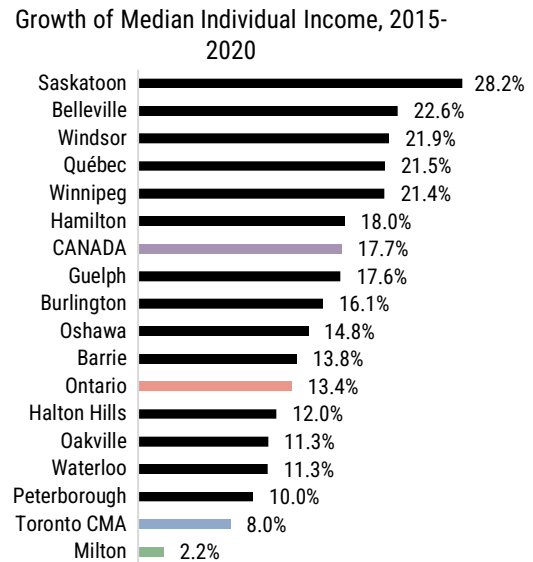
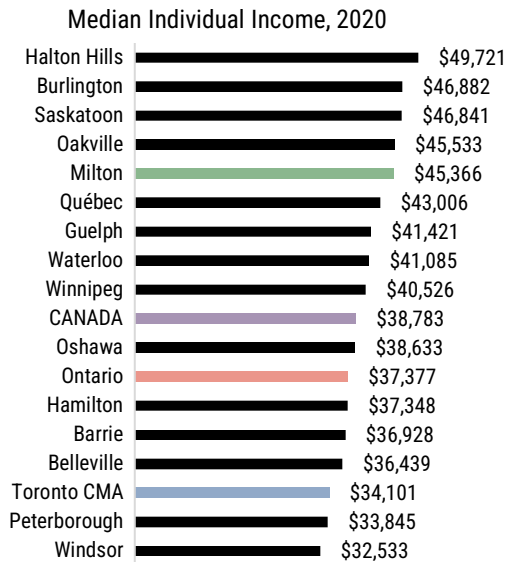
Approximately 103,000 individuals comprise the Town of Milton’s labour force. That’s a participation rate of 75.8%, above the national average (65.1%), the provincial average (64.9%) and all peer communities. The unemployment rate is at 8.0% which is lower than the national (8.5%) and provincial (9.1%) averages.





Slow-growing Median Incomes

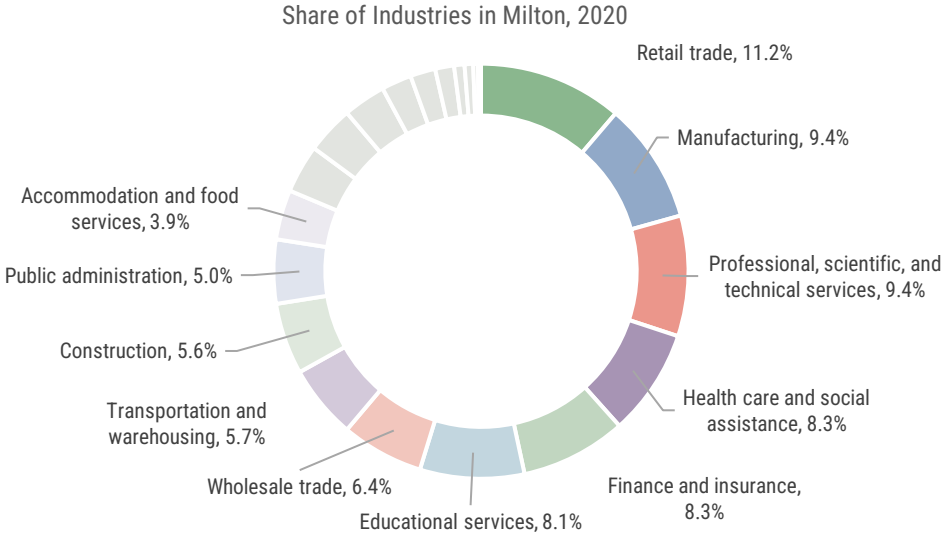
Over the last 5 years, median incomes grew by 2.2% comparable with 13.4% on the provincial level. The median individual income is now at \$45,366, which is 21.4% higher than the provincial median income and 17.0% higher than the national median income.



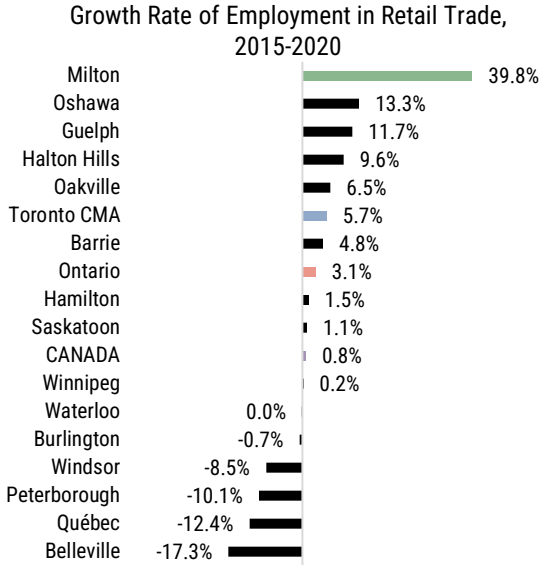


Major Industries in Milton

Retail trade, manufacturing, and professional services are the 3 largest employment industries for Milton residents. Together, these four industries employ almost third (30.0%) of Milton residents.

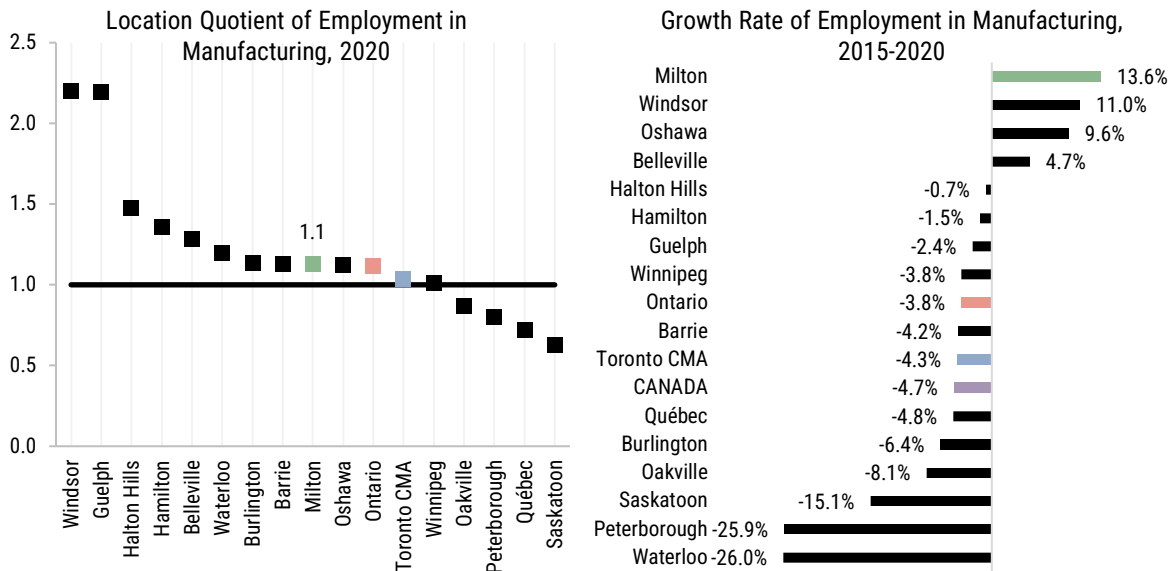


Approximately 11.2% of Milton residents (8,895 workers) are employed in retail trade. This share is equivalent to the national average. Employment in this sector has grown by 39.8% from 2015 to 2020.

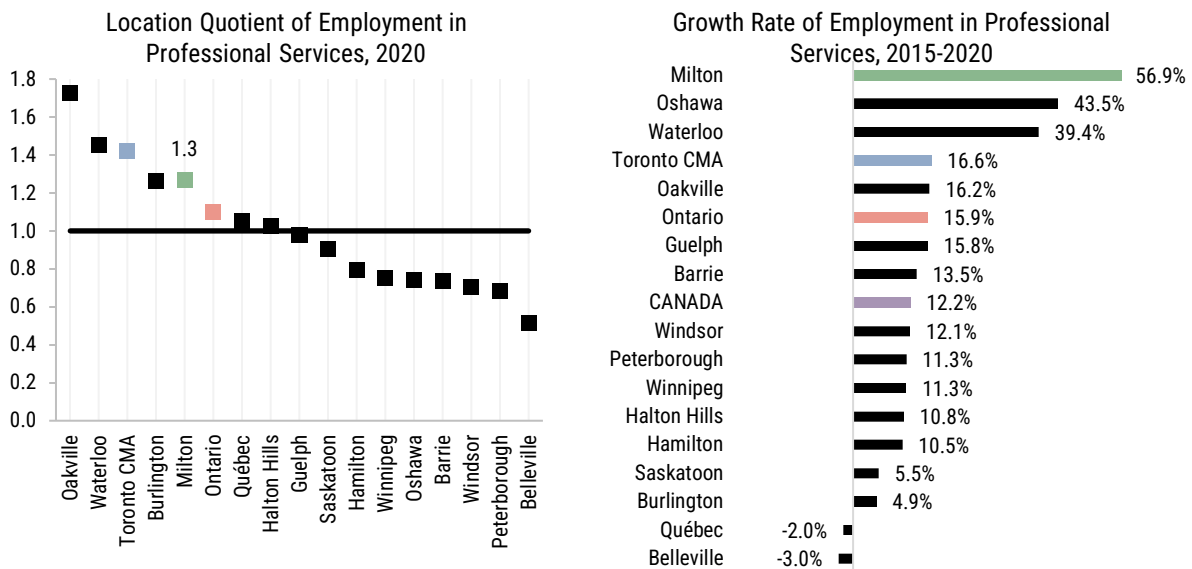




The share of employment in manufacturing is 10% higher than the national average (9.4%). Employment in this sector has grown by 13.6% over the last 5 years.

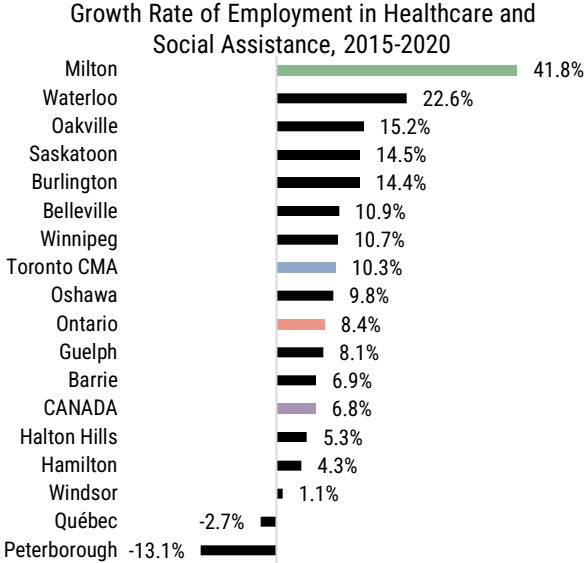
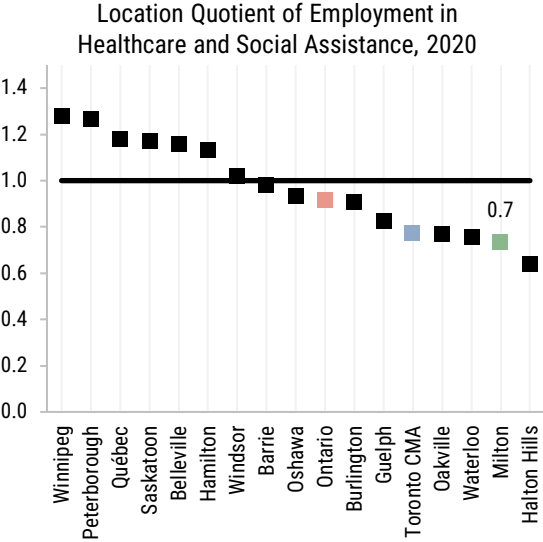


The share of employment in professional services is 30% higher than the national average. Approximately 1 in 10 Milton residents are employed in professional services, an increase of 56.9% since 2015.

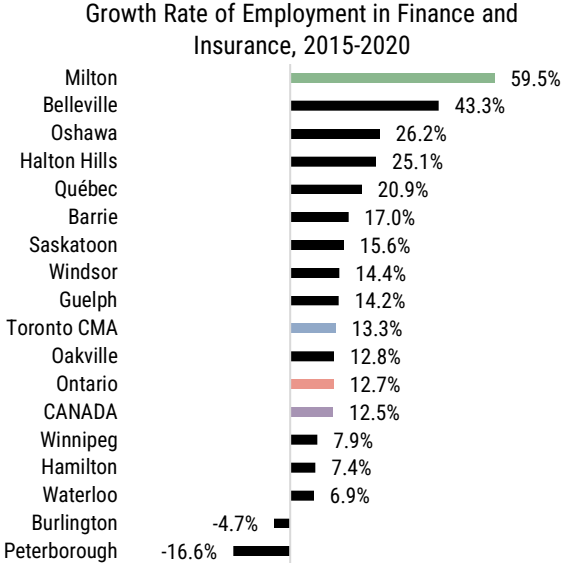
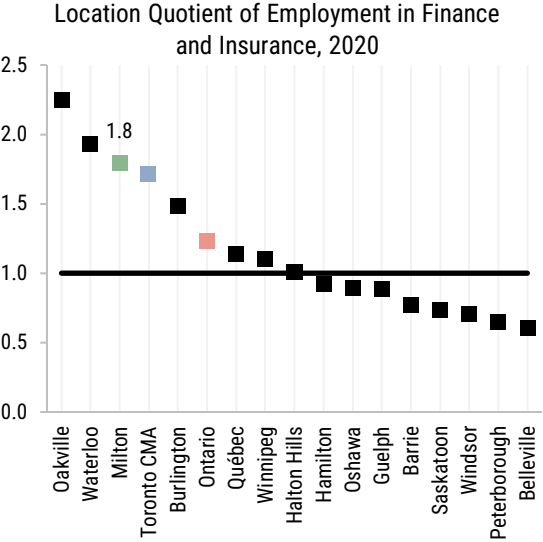




Milton’s employment in healthcare and social assistance is 30% lower than the national average. This sector employs 8.3% of Milton residents (6,578 workers); a growth of 41.8% since 2015. Further growth is expected in this sector with the Schlegel development on the Milton Education Village and educational programming in Conestoga College.

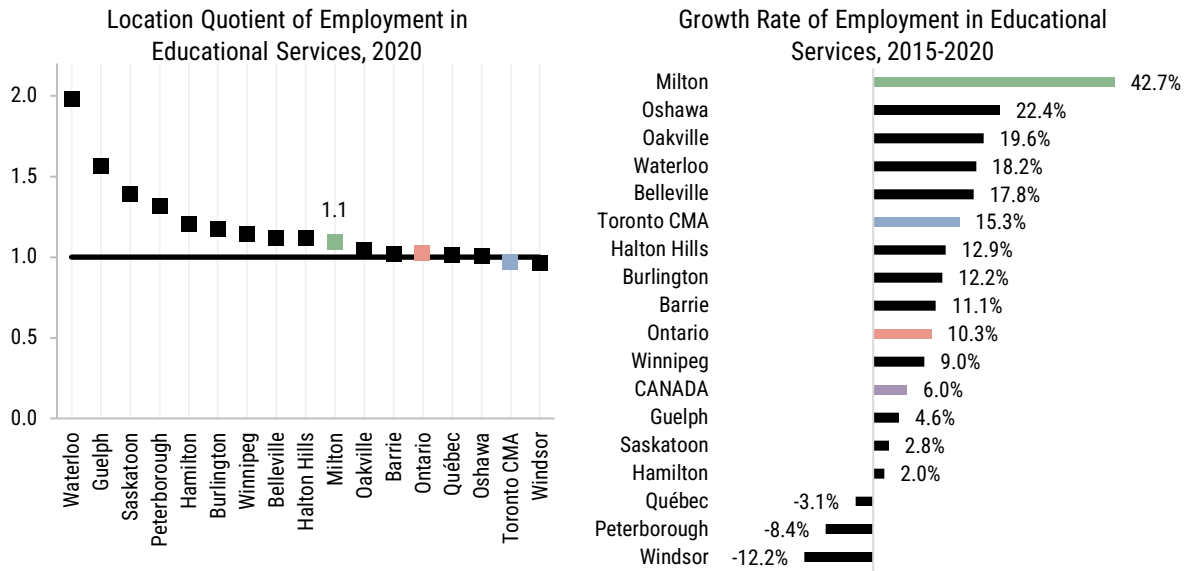


The share of employment in finance and insurance is 80% higher than the national average. Approximately 8.3% Milton residents are employed in finance and insurance, an increase of 59.5% since 2015.





Milton’s employment in educational services is 10% higher than the national average; employment has increased by 42.7% since 2015. This is expected to further increase with new campuses from Laurier University and Conestoga College.



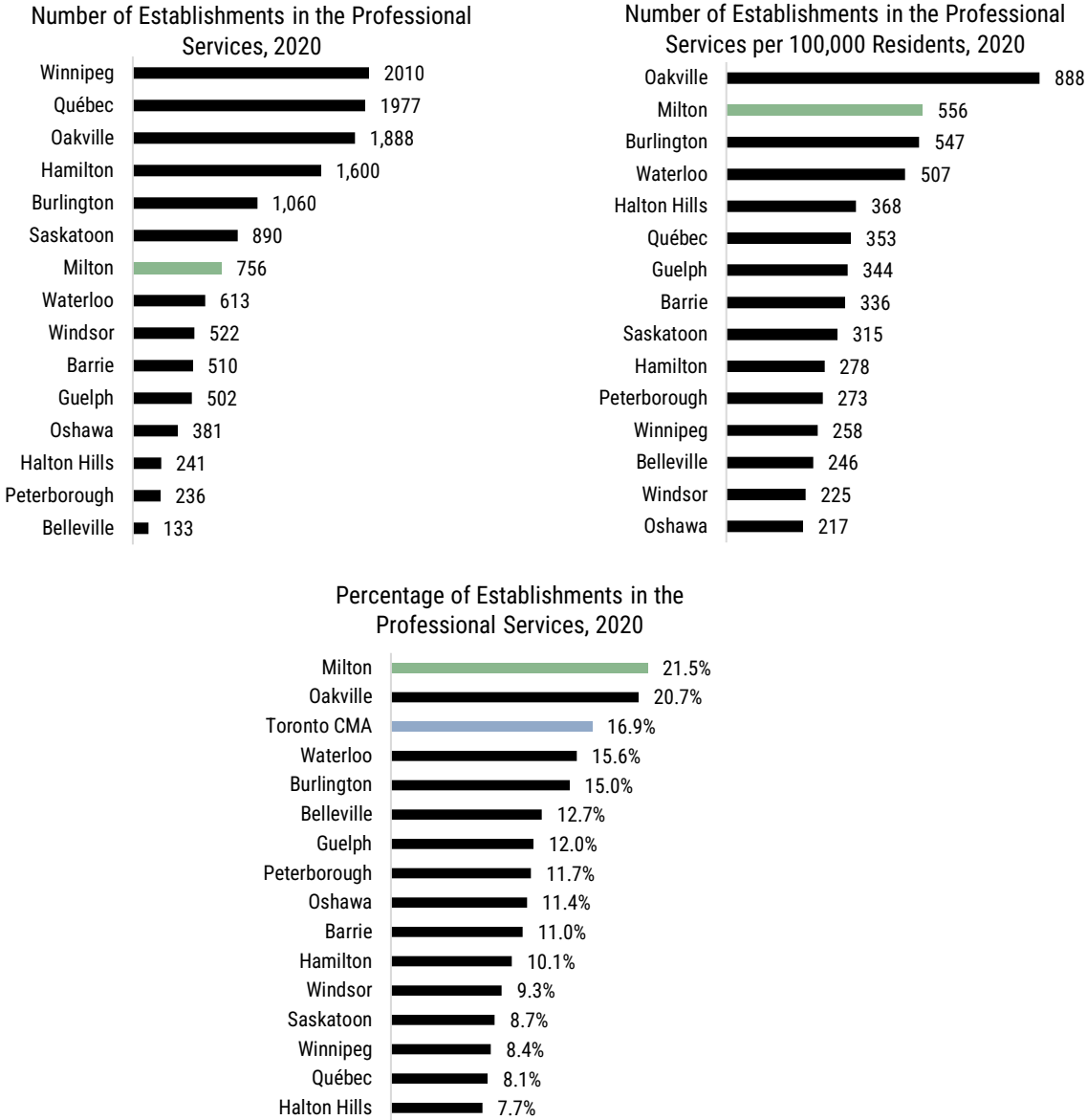


INNOVATION

One of the major benefits of innovation is its contribution to economic growth. The strength of the ecosystem to produce new ideas and companies in Milton is presented in the analysis below:

Establishments in the professional services sector

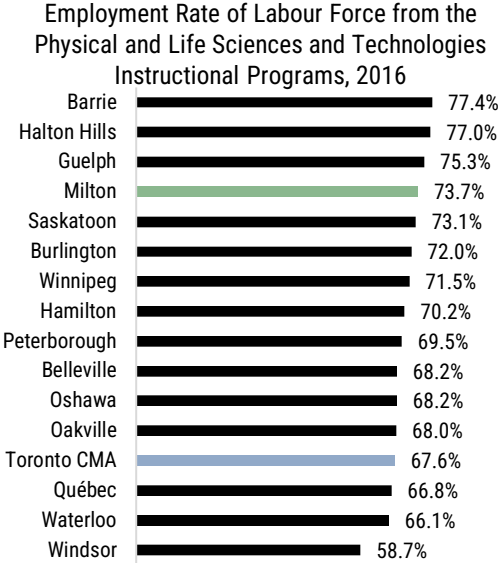
Milton has 756 establishments (with employees) in the professional, scientific, and technical services. This represents 21.5% of all Milton establishments in the sector. It ranks second among the benchmarks for the number of establishments in the professional services per resident. Most establishments in the professional, scientific, and technical services sector are in Computer systems design and related services (45% of total), and Management, scientific, and technical consulting services (20% of total).





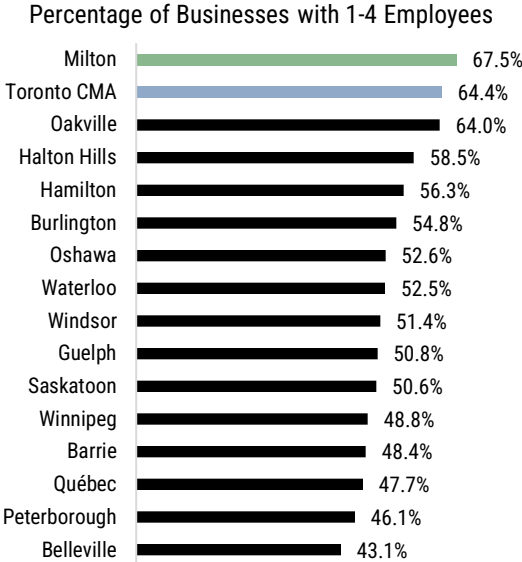
Employment of graduates from technology-related programs

Milton has the fourth highest employment rate for graduates of physical and life sciences and technologies instructional programs. It is a place where scientific and technical talent look for employment.



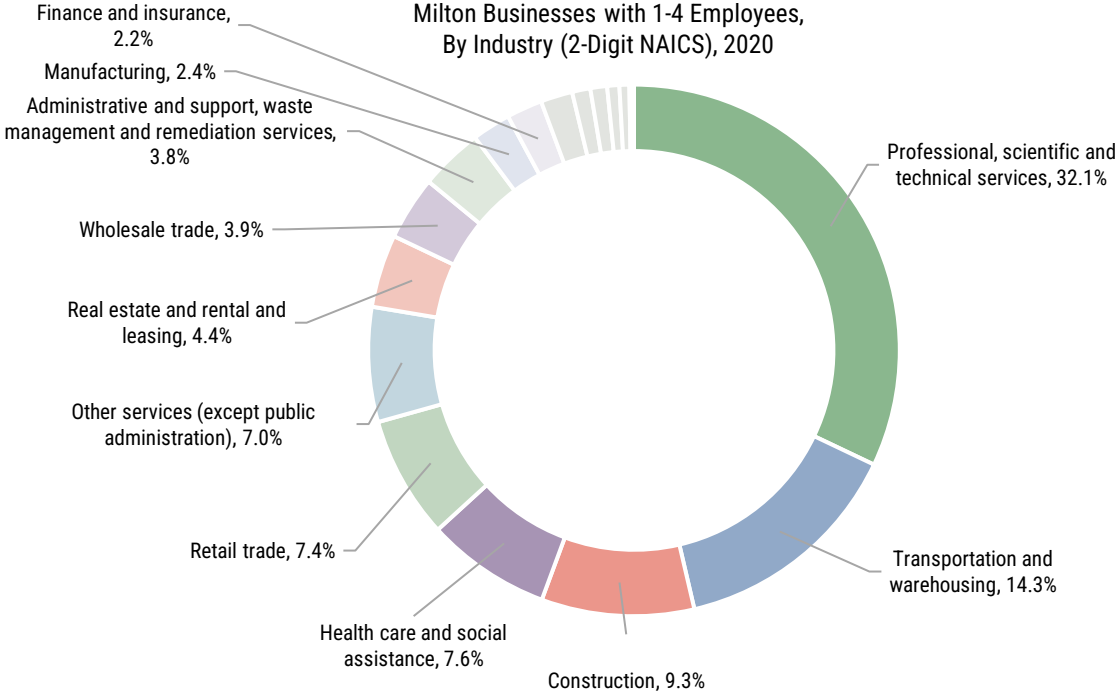
Small Businesses in Milton

Almost seven in ten Milton businesses are micro-enterprises (1-4 employees).

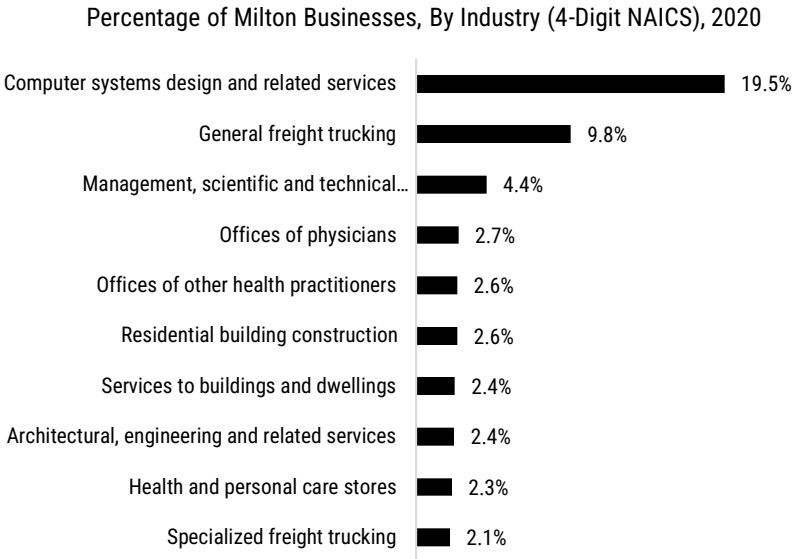




Looking at small businesses data by major industry (2-digit NAICS), around one third of them are in professional services (32.1%).



A more detailed analysis (by 4-digit NAICS) shows that the largest number of small businesses are in computer systems design and related services (within the professional services sector).



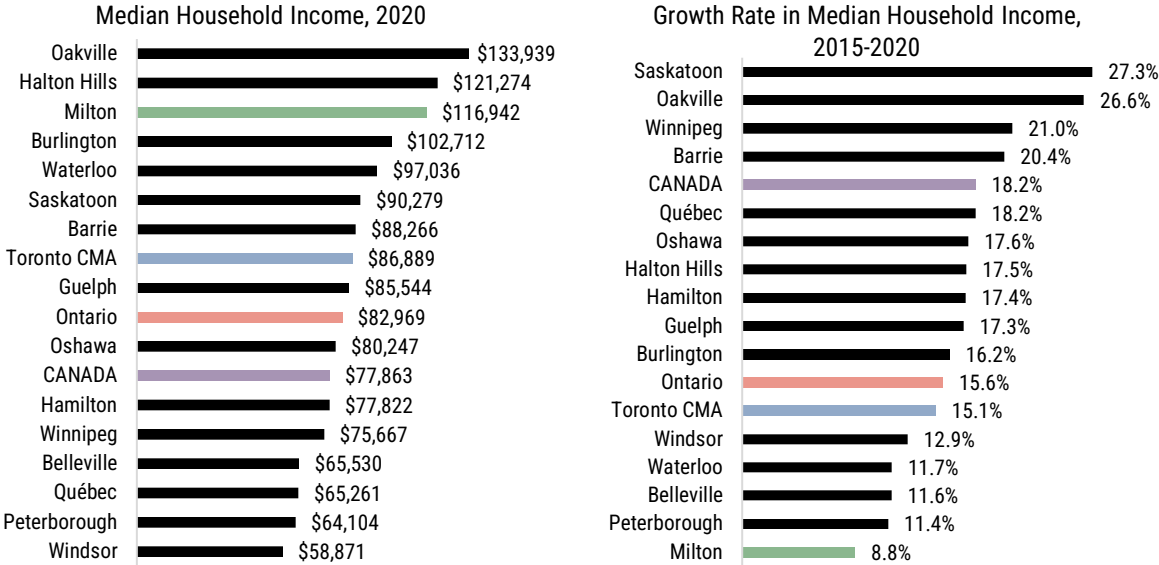


EQUITY

Equity evaluates who benefits from growth within an area. Research has found that greater economic equity enables more people to engage at a higher level and add value in ways that help the economy perform better overall. A closer look at equity in Milton is presented in the analysis below:

High but slow-growing median household income

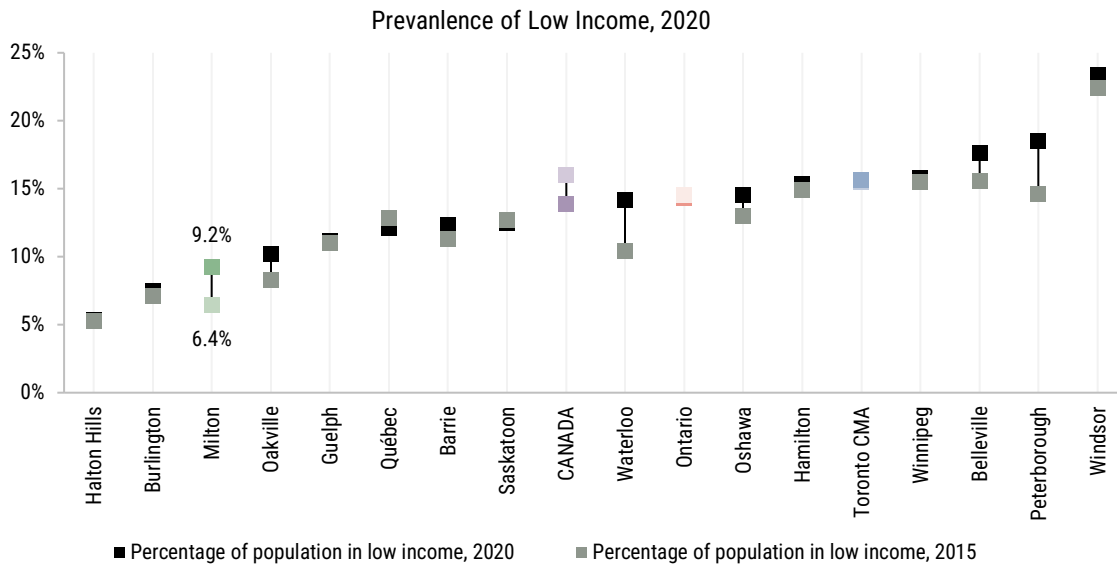
The median household income in Milton is 50% higher than the Canadian average, and ranks third among the benchmarks (\$116,942). However, it is growing slower than the Canadian average and all benchmarks, with only an 8.8% growth since 2015.





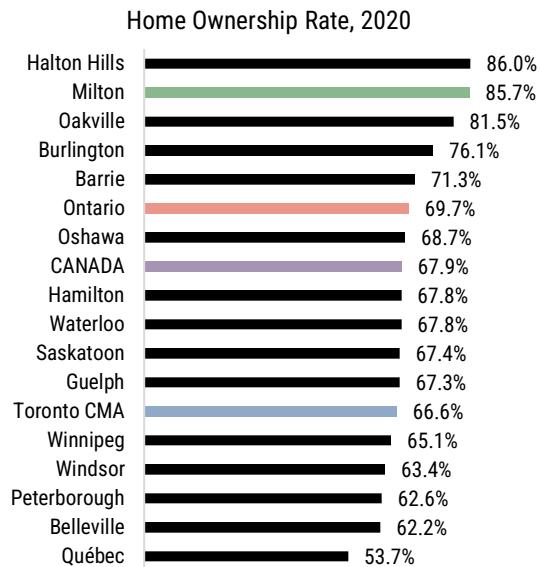
Low but increasing poverty rate

Only 9.2% of residents are low-income status, a higher share than in 2015 (6.4%).



Home ownership

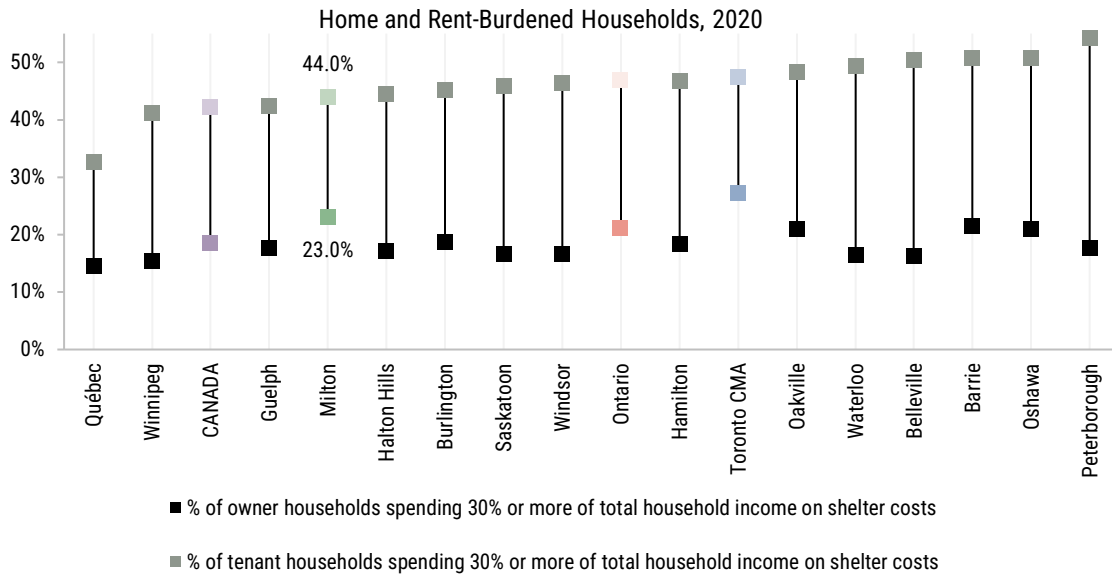
Nearly nine in ten Milton residents are homeowners.



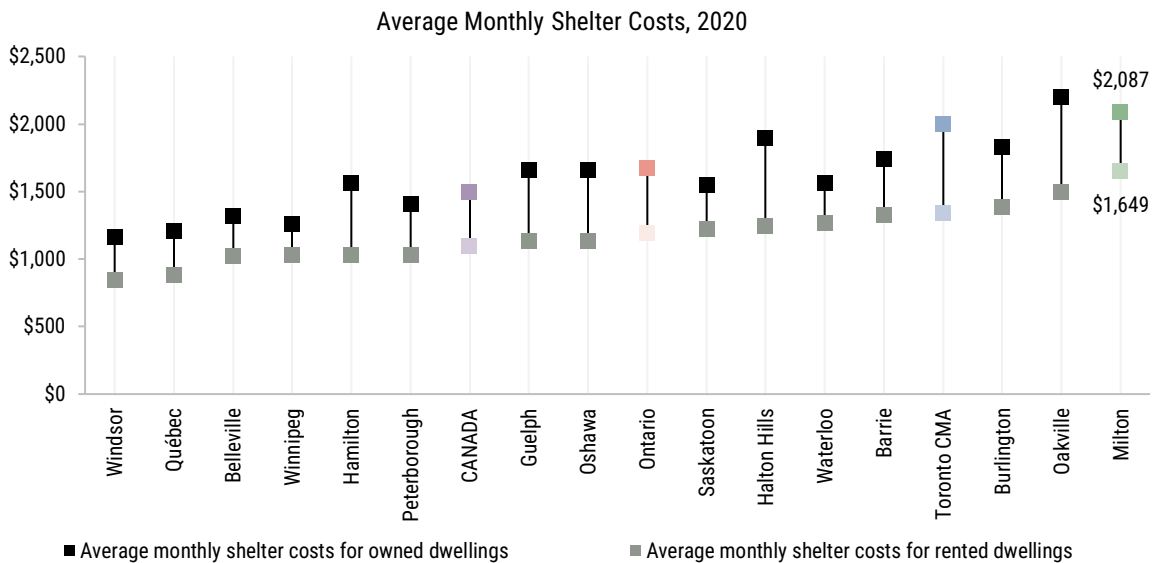


Housing costs

Less than half (44.0%) of renters in Milton are rent-burdened, while 23.0% of owners are home-burdened, ranking fifth and last among peers, respectively.



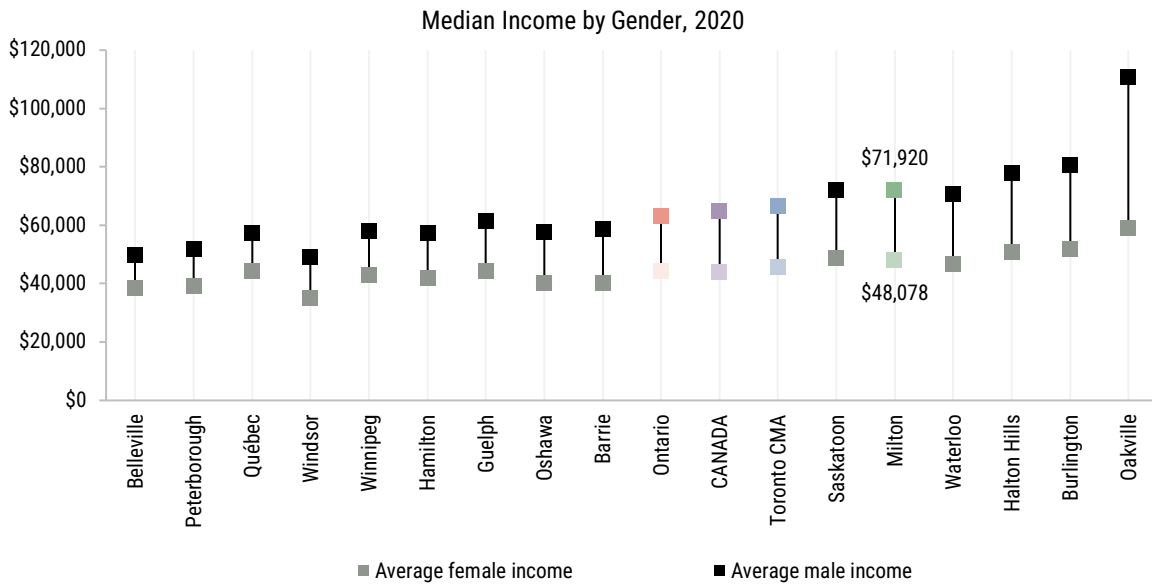
Housing costs are also expensive for both owners and renters, with a \$438 difference between monthly costs for both.





Gender wage gap

Milton's gender wage gap is \$23,842 which is higher than both the national and provincial wage gaps.



However, female incomes in Milton are growing at a faster rate than male incomes.



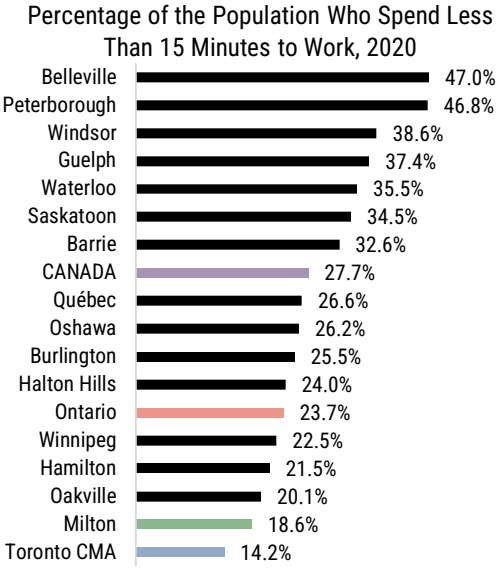
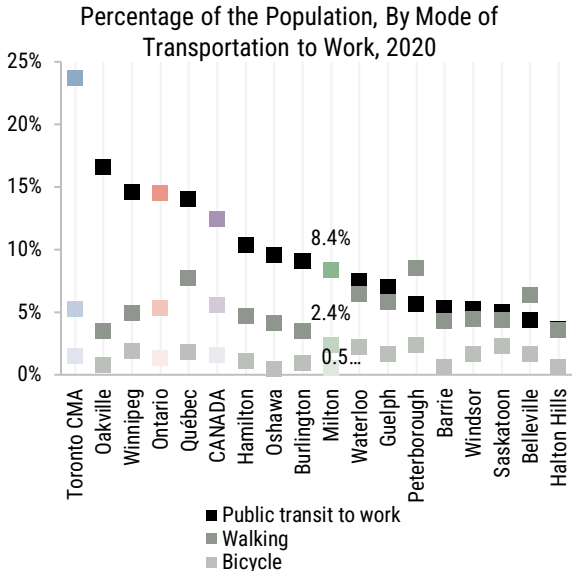


QUALITY OF PLACE

Quality of place is an important factor in attracting and retaining talent, population growth and resilience, and attracting new business and investment. A closer look at the quality of place in Milton is presented in the analysis below:

Short commutes

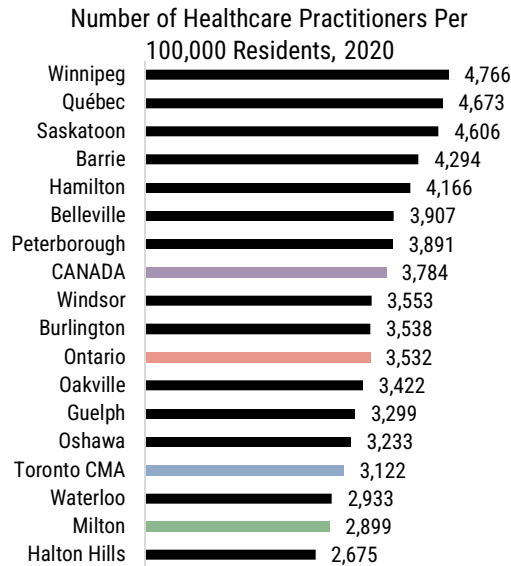
A small portion of Milton residents (18.6%) spend less than 15 minutes to work, which is an indicator that most residents work in other areas of the Toronto Metropolitan Area. However, typical of Ontario communities of the same size, only 8.4% of residents take public transportation to work, and despite the Velodrome, only 0.5% of residents bike to work.





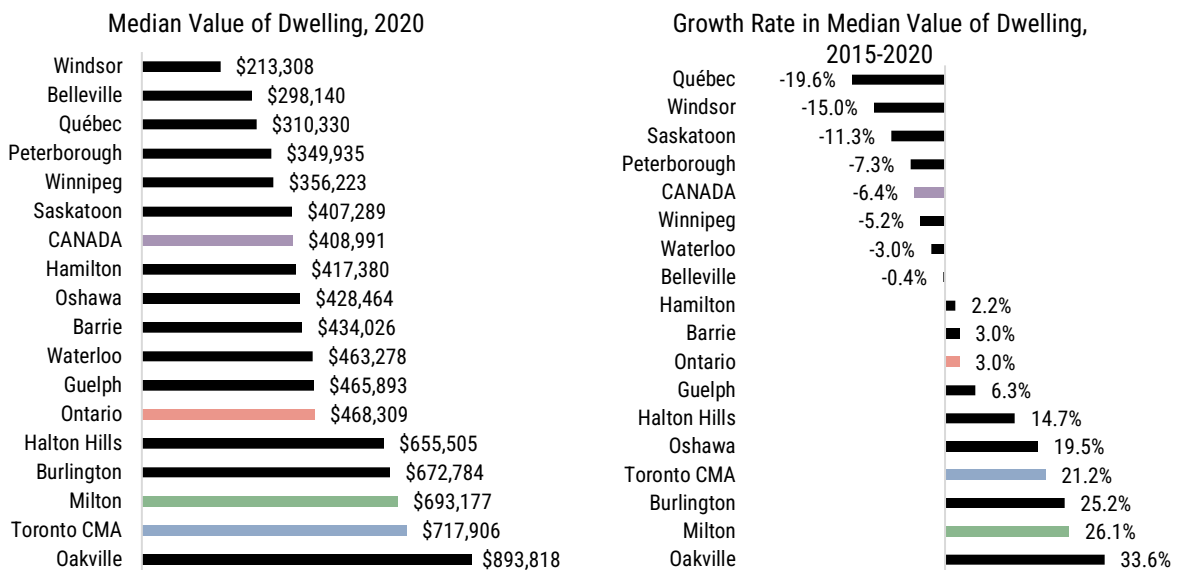
Healthcare

Milton has 2,899 healthcare practitioners per 100,000 residents. This is lower than both the national and provincial averages.



Housing Prices

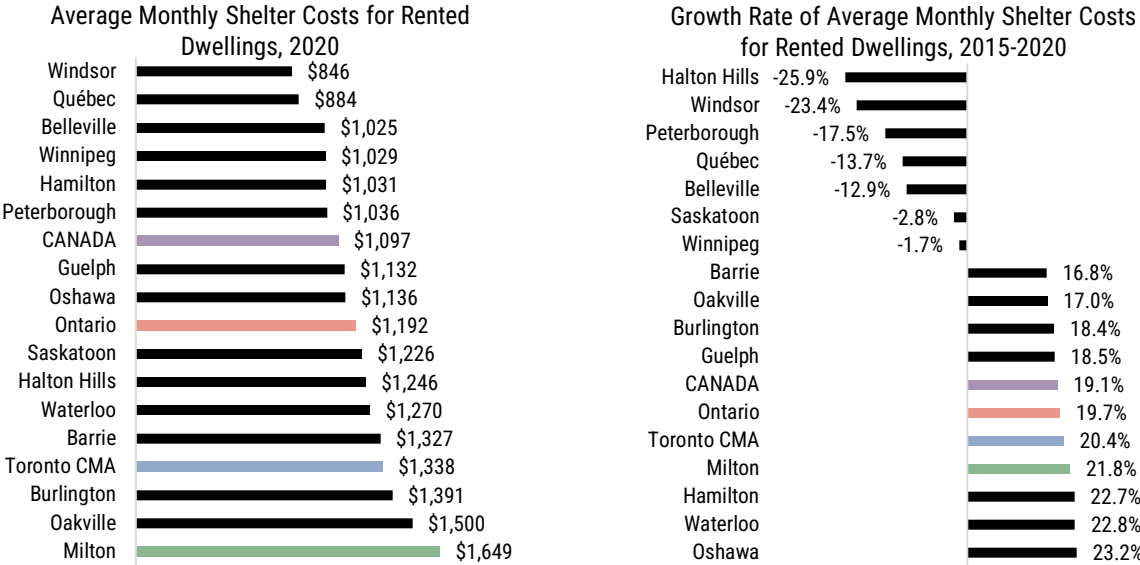
Milton's median housing value is \$693,177 on par with the Toronto region; however, the value has increased at an even faster rate than Toronto (26.1%).





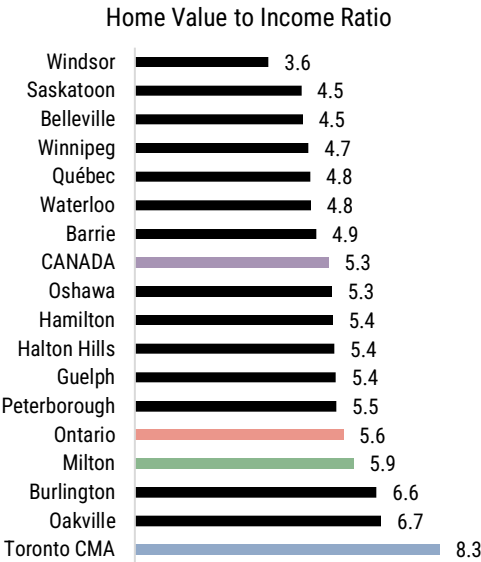
Rental Costs

An average tenant in Milton spends \$1,649 per month; the highest rent among the benchmarks. This is a 21.8% increase since 2015; a growth rate which is comparable with that of the Toronto region.



Home Value to Income Ratio

The price of a home in Milton is almost six times the median household income, ranking 13th among the benchmarks.

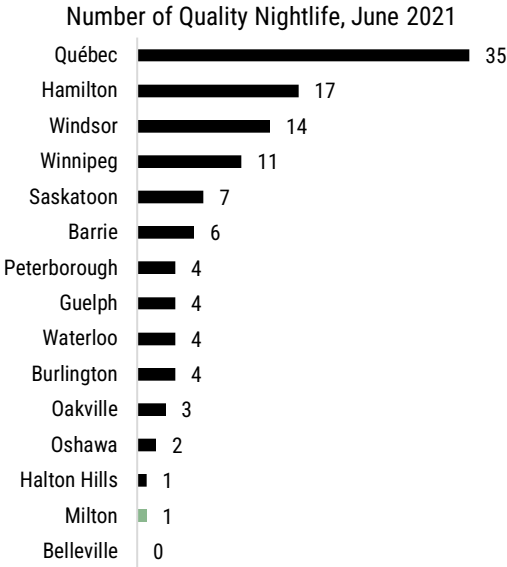
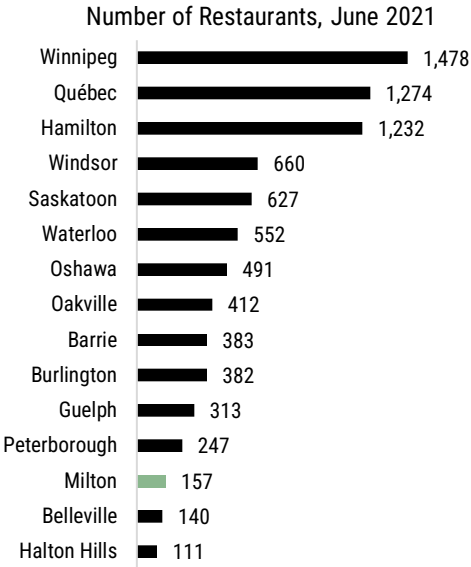
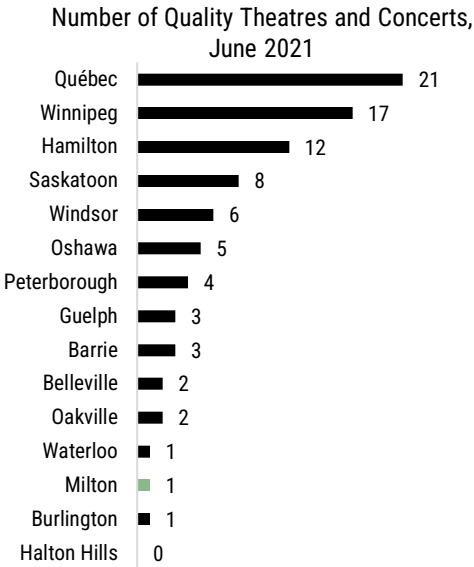
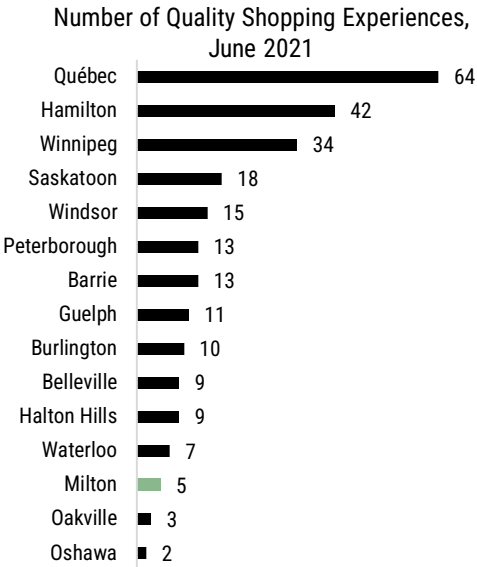




Tourism Amenities

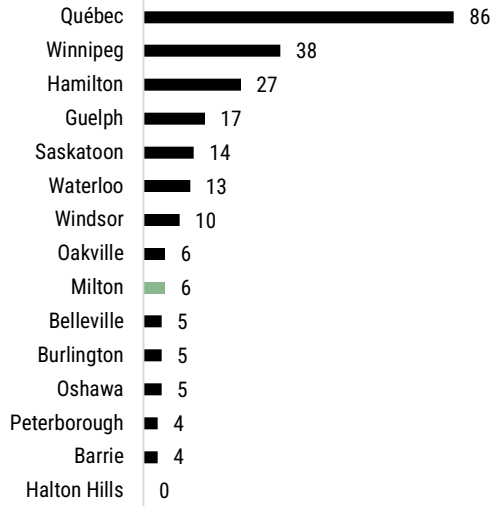
This sub-section shows data that was mined from TripAdvisor to count the number of quality experiences/establishments in the different experiential categories (e.g. outdoor activities, nightlife, dining, etc...). To integrate a “quality” element in these counts, we only include experiences with a star rating of 4 or more.

Milton needs to encourage destination assets to promote themselves on TripAdvisor and online platforms.

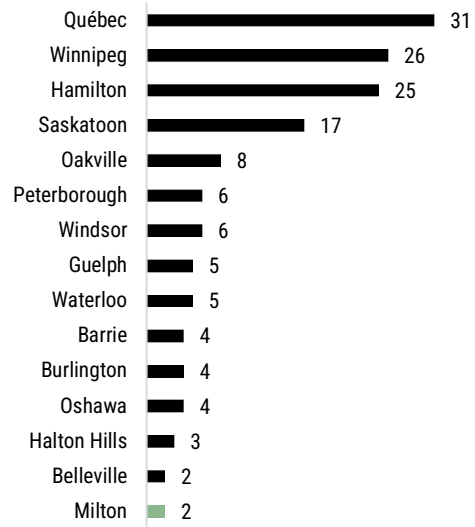




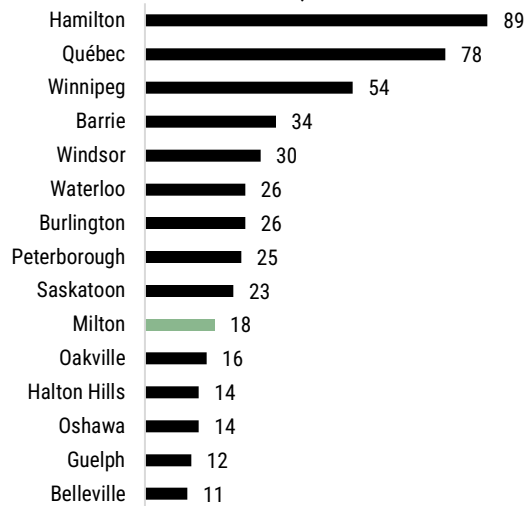
Number of Quality Sights and Landmarks, June 2021



Number of Quality Museums, June 2021



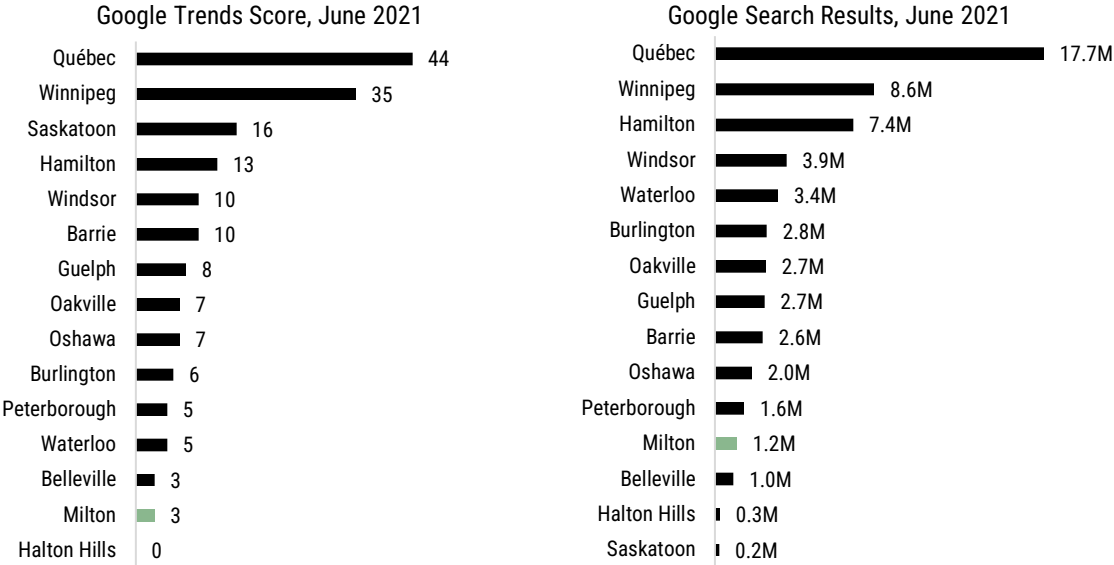
Number of Quality Nature and Parks, and Outdoor Activities, June 2021



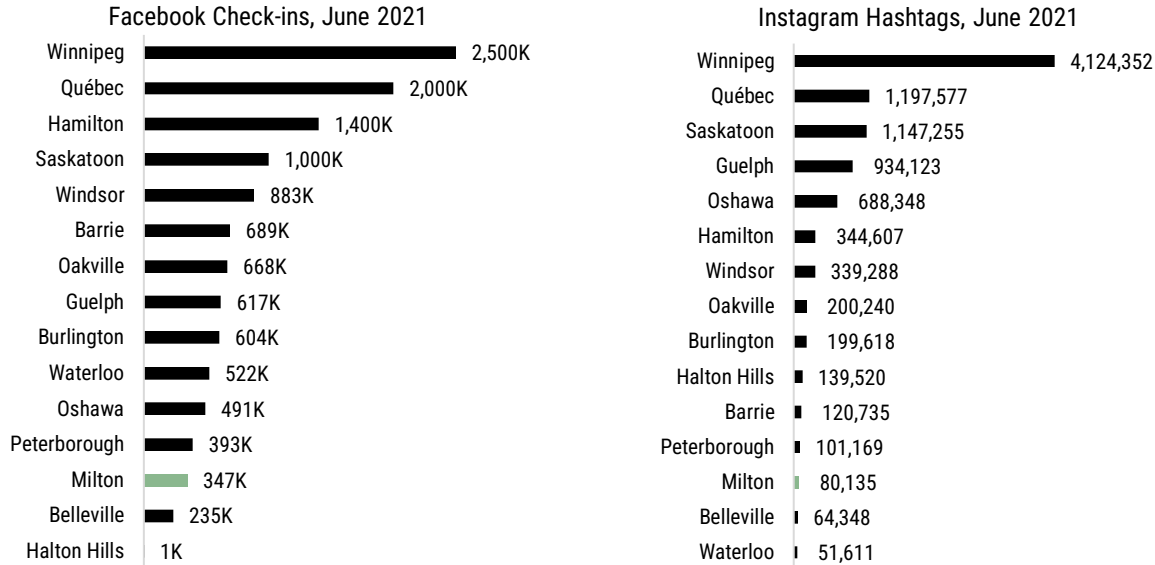


Online promotional efforts

Milton is trailing peers in terms of news trends and availability of online content, as measured by the Google Trends score and Google search results. Promotional efforts are currently being provided through the Digital Main Street Program to encourage online engagement.

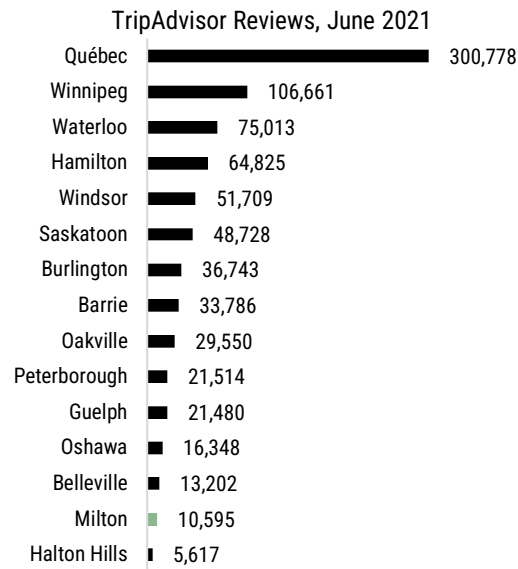


Engagement on social media is relatively limited. For Facebook check-ins, the data is reflective of check-ins to the “Town of Milton” as a Google maps location, and for Instagram data, the hashtag “#miltonontario” was used.





Milton ranks near the bottom of its peers for TripAdvisor reviews. This highlights the need to encourage establishments to list themselves on TripAdvisor and encourage residents and visitors to review their experiences.





Appendix B: Stakeholder Engagement

While a data assessment helps determine an area’s competitive advantages, opportunities, and challenges, an economic development strategy must be co-authored by the community it intends to serve.

By providing a platform for community members to share their expertise and new ideas, we hope to generate a universal understanding of economic opportunity among public, private, and governmental partners. This process of convening local stakeholders is reflective of the Town of Milton’s mission to build meaningful relationships between industry players, service providers, residents, non-profit organizations, and economic development partners.

The roundtable discussions with the following groups represent the beginning of a long-term effort to foster community engagement. To arrive at a firm understanding of Milton’s many assets and challenges, the Town of Milton, in partnership with Resonance Consultancy, hosted a series of discussions on a detailed list of topics; more than 85 business (both urban and rural), community and government representatives participated in the conversation.

The Town also conducted a community survey to help inform the economic development plan, which was answered by 178 respondents - mostly residents - and gathered their opinion around life in Milton to be able to identify key opportunities for growth and improving quality of place.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Town conducted a community survey which was hosted on Let’s Talk Milton, the community engagement platform. It was answered by 178 respondents, 95.5% of which are Milton residents, and 42.7% of which have been living in Milton for more than 10 years.

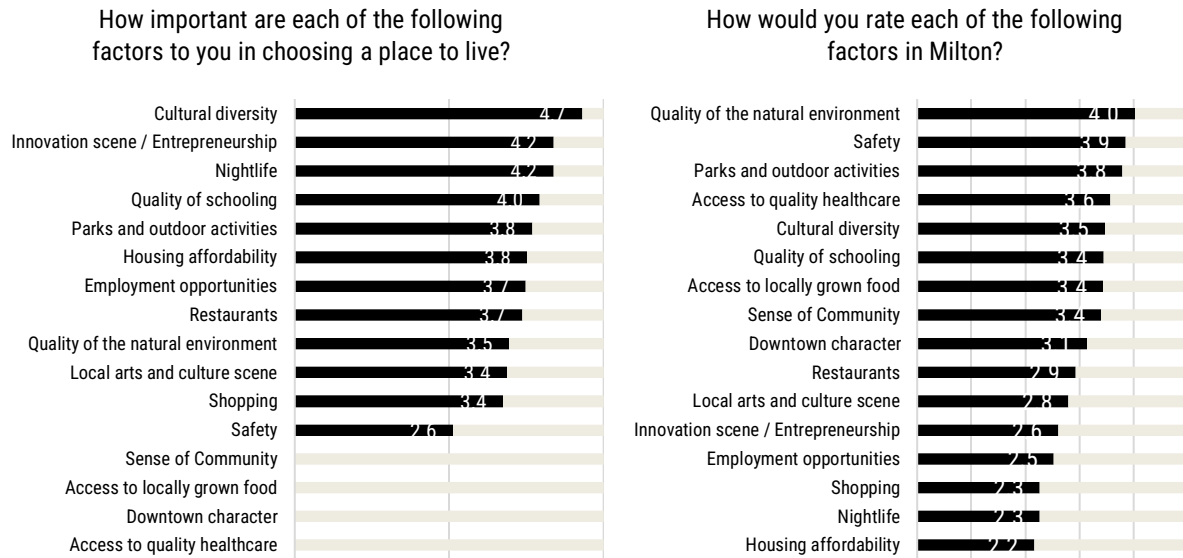
The largest age group represented in the survey were 36-45 year old residents (29.2%), followed by the 26-35 age group (22.5%). Almost 4 in 10 survey respondents were White (41.4%), followed by South Asians (15.1%). Married individuals with children made up more than half of the survey respondents (53.9%), followed by married people with no children (27.0%). As for education and employment levels, 73.0% of the respondents had a college/university degree or above, and the majority (67.4%) were employed full-time.

When asked why did they choose to live/stay in Milton, the four main reasons came to be that Milton is a good place to raise a family, is affordable, its quality of natural environment, and the accessibility/proximity to Toronto.

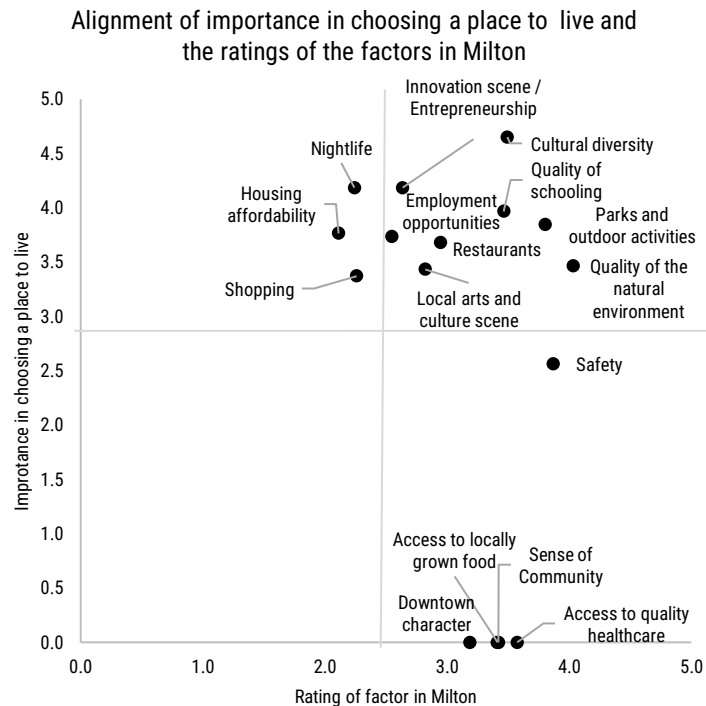
Respondents also identified the four main factors that are important for them in a place to live as cultural diversity, the innovation scene/entrepreneurship, nightlife, and quality of schooling, and when



asked to rank the same factors in Milton, the top ranking factors were the quality of the natural environment, safety, parks and outdoor activities, and access to quality healthcare.



Comparing the answers of the respondents to both questions, we can see that Milton has an opportunity in improving its shopping and nightlife, and housing affordability is important for residents, but isn't particularly a strength in Milton.





Respondents were asked what is the first thing that comes to mind when they think of Milton as a place to live and many of the terms were very positive: “peaceful”, “community”, “family”, and “quiet”. Nevertheless, the word “crowded” was mentioned a few times, as well as “boring”.





ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS AND INTERVIEWS: LESSONS LEARNED

As noted above more than 85 Milton residents, business owners, elected officials, economic development partners, university leaders and more, participated in a series of roundtable discussions.

Discussions addressed an array of issues: growing an entrepreneurial ecosystem, promoting the Town’s quality of place, engaging local anchor institutions to drive development, positioning Milton as a place ideal for young professionals and more.

From these discussions, the following takeaways emerged as key themes and takeaways and have helped to the Economic Development Strategy and Action plan:

A Complete Community

While many in Milton consider the community to be a bedroom suburban/ rural bedroom community, Milton is becoming more of a “complete community” – where residents can live, work, and play. Development investments include the Milton Education Village, Trafalgar Corridor, and other areas.

Thriving Small Business Ecosystem

Milton has a thriving entrepreneurial community, but many entrepreneurs are solo (or small enterprises). Nearly 70% of all businesses in Milton are micro-enterprises (1-4 employees), pointing to a high level of entrepreneurship and one that could have greater impact on the community if provided the appropriate resources to grow.

Need to Scale

Milton must be more deliberate in helping enterprises scale. By making a commitment to capacity-building initiatives – business planning, succession planning, financial literacy and more – Milton can create additional job and wealth creation opportunities in the community and help its local small businesses.

Locational Advantage

With its access to the GTA, Milton boasts a geographical and transportation advantage. This is a significant quality of place factor that should be emphasized in efforts to attract and retain both talent and outside investment.

Remote Work Opportunity

With the COVID-19 pandemic, companies have embraced remote work as a talent management and retention strategy. It is estimated that more than 50% of the workforce will have an opportunity to work remotely, either full-time or part-time. There’s enormous potential for remote work in Milton but a strategy is needed. This must include a plan for connecting workers to one-another and building out a remote work ecosystem to keep highly skilled remote workers living in Milton.



Diversity is a Strength

Milton is a diverse, welcoming community – an advantage for economic development today, especially in an era where companies are seeking a multi-cultural workforce and talent is betting on communities that embrace inclusion. Milton’s diversity must be a central pillar in its economic development storytelling in the future.

Engaged Colleges and Universities

Milton’s colleges and universities (i.e. Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College) are engaged partners who want to forge an even deeper collaboration, from cluster development and workforce training to the continued support for the large-scale development efforts like the Milton Education Village. As a growing community, Milton is fortunate to have colleges and universities who are supportive of the Town’s efforts to build out a more robust approach to economic development, driven by innovation and an emerging number of export-focused industry clusters.

Placemaking Needed

As all economic development strategies in the past, Milton has not invested in placemaking initiatives, those strategies that help to facilitate social interaction and improve a community’s quality of life. As noted by the Project for Public Spaces, “lacemaking helps to strengthen the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value.” As Milton looks to attract and retain more educated, skilled talent in the community, especially young professionals, the Town will need to make placemaking investments, helping to actively programme and animate areas throughout the community through partnership development and initiatives.

A Balanced Approach

Balancing sustainability, livability and prosperity was seen as critically important across all discussions. To ensure widespread support throughout the town, it will be essential for Milton to advance economic development initiatives that balance prosperity and sustainability together.

Appendix C: Action Plan

| Goal/ Objective/ Action | Metrics/ Outcomes | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Partners |
|---|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------------------|
| GOAL 1: GROW AND CULTIVATE MILTON'S EXPORT CLUSTERS TO FOSTER PROSPERITY. | Jobs Created (Total and by Cluster); 3-Year and 5-Year: Economic Impact Analysis | | | | | | |
| Priority 1.1: Design and implement a cluster-focused business retention and expansion initiative. | Businesses Reached; Cluster Roundtables | | | | | | Milton Chamber of Commerce |
| Host cluster working groups, in partnership with Milton Chamber, to identify opportunities and challenges [adding clusters as resources/ staffing permits]. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Implement a systematic business visitation plan for Milton's target clusters, identifying expansion opportunities and workforce and supply chain needs. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Annually systematically report key findings to drive policy needs. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Identify and create appropriate support programs for each cluster. | | | | X | X | X | |

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|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Priority 1.2: Execute a site-selector/ broker engagement and lead generation strategy for Milton's core industries. | Annual Business Leads Serviced; RFPs Responded; Site selectors Touched (In-Person and Electronically) | | | | | | Halton Region; Ontario Investment Office |
| Incorporate site selector engagement with all targeted market visits and campaigns. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Partner with Halton Region, Ontario Investment Office and others site-selector and RFP initiatives. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Build a target site-selection list and develop a bi-annual community outreach. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Priority 1.3: Support the development of Milton's new growth areas and facilitate investment opportunities aligned with target sectors. | Number of Developers/ Major Employers Assisted on Real Estate Needs | | | | | | Town of Milton Development Services; CI Real Estate Brokers (SIOR and NAIOP) |
| Collaborate with the Town of Milton Development Services to identify and map potential redevelopment opportunities. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Serve as trusted advisor to businesses and investors on real estate/ commercial development and redevelopment transactions. | | X | X | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Partner with commercial real estate brokers (including engaging organizations like ULI, SIOR, NAIOP) and others to highlight and market new commercial development opportunities. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Continually evaluate commercial office needs, and opportunities for mixed used development, including new growth areas: Milton Education Village, Derry Green, Agerton Employment Area, Trafalgar Corridor, and the Major Transit Station Area (Mobility Hub). | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Priority 1.4: Advise on land use and infrastructure policies to support cluster development. | Policies Advised | MEDAC and Town of Milton Development Services | | | | | |
| Partner with Town of Milton Development Services and MEDAC to maintain and evaluate development assets: land, infrastructure and incentives. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Advise key stakeholders on development policies to support economic growth and align with cluster needs. | | X | X | X | X | X | |

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|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| GOAL 2: BOLSTER MILTON'S STARTUP ECOSYSTEM TO DRIVE FUTURE COMPETITIVENESS. | New Start-Ups and Small Businesses; Technology Talent; Venture Capital Spin-Outs of Universities; Entrepreneurs Promoted | | | | | | Federal/Provincial Funding Partnerships (FEDDEV); Invest Halton; HalTech; MEV Landowners Group; Halton Region Small Business Centre; Wilfrid Laurier University; Conestoga College |
| Priority 2.1: Establish "Innovation Collective" an initiative to support scalable and technology-focused startups. | Entrepreneurs Participating in Various Programs | | | | | | Federal/Provincial Funding Partnerships (FEDDEV); Invest Halton; HalTech and Anchor Partners |
| Identify and convene an advisory working group to support the exploration of "Innovation Collaborative." | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Explore new best practices for cluster-focused startup initiatives across Canada and the U.S. | | | X | X | | | |
| Build relationships with venture capital organizations within the GTA and throughout Ontario and Canada. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Support startup/ innovation community events such as pitch competitions and networking sessions. | | | | | X | X | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Advise Milton's Town Council on development policies to support economic growth and align with cluster needs. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Priority 2.2: Develop and execute an innovation district strategy for the Milton Education Village (MEV), positioning it as an entrepreneurial hub. | Development and Implementation of Strategy | | | | | | Anchor Partners and MEV Landowners Group |
| Utilize and expand the existing MEV working group to help guide innovation district planning. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Catalog innovation district best practices across North America, focusing on programming and placemaking efforts. | | | X | X | | | |
| Explore retaining a firm to develop a MEV district plan. | | | | | | X | |
| Priority 2.3: Collaborate to offer training and capacity building assistance for Milton's small businesses. | Small Businesses Reached; Participating in Various Support Programs | | | | | | Halton Region Small Business Centre |
| Continue to offer small business programming specific to COVID-19 recovery. | | X | | | | | |
| Support and promote the small business resources and trainings offered by the Halton Region Small Business Centre. | | X | X | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Provide ongoing updates to Milton's small businesses about provincial and local resources. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Explore the resources needed to create a physical presence of the Halton Region Small Business Centre in Milton. | | | | | | X | |
| Priority 2.4: Partner with Milton's anchor institutions to develop the Town's Green Innovation cluster. | Number of Enterprises Reached and Participating | | | | | | Wilfrid Laurier University; Conestoga College |
| Collaborate anchor partners and federal and provincial government entities to guide Milton's green innovation cluster development. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Build a relationship with university commercialization and tech-transfer officials to identify scalable "green innovation" enterprises and connect them with resources. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Champion, in concert with business partners, the successes of "green innovation" enterprises in Milton. | | | | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| GOAL 3: BUILD MILTON AS A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR DIVERSE KNOWLEDGE WORKERS | Educational Attainment Level; Share of Creative Class; Increase in Share of 25 to 34 Residents | | | | | | Milton Chamber of Commerce; DBIA; Town of Milton Culture Division; Laurier; Conestoga; Halton Peel Workforce Development Board; Conservation Halton; Halton Region (Eco Dev/ Tourism); Hamilton, Halton, Brant Regional Tourism Association |
| Priority 3.1: Engage Milton's anchors to align educationa and upskilling offerings with business and workforce needs. | Number of Working Group Meetings; Number of Workforce/ Certificate/ Training Programs Created | | | | | | Laurier; Conestoga; Halton Peel Workforce Development Board; Other Anchors |
| Leverage existing workforce collaborations among Milton's anchors and private-sector employers. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Explore, in partnership with anchors, new training offerings tied to target clusters: certificates, badging, and executive education. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Priority 3.2: Develop a hybrid work and talent strategy to draw and retain tech-savvy and skilled talent to Milton. | Networking and Gathering Events Held | | | | | | Milton Chamber of Commerce |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Continue to assess and understand the needs of Milton's creative class and hybrid workforce. | | | X | X | | | |
| Support the Milton Chamber of Commerce in enhancing networking opportunities for Milton's creative class. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Ensure the needs of Milton's hybrid workers are considered in the development of Milton Education Village, Trafalgar Corridor, and more. | | | | | X | X | |
| Priority 3.3: Invest in placemaking initiatives to enhance Milton as an inviting home for local talent. | Number of Placemaking Installations | | | | | | Milton Chamber of Commerce; DBIA; Town of Milton Culture Division |
| Catalogue underutilized spaces throughout Milton understanding ownership, potential uses and limitations. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Develop a systematic placemaking program that includes selection criteria, funding plans, and marketing approaches. | | | | X | X | X | |
| Pilot placemaking program, evaluate impact, demonstrate impact. and scale. | | | | | X | X | |
| Priority 3.4: Promote destination experiences – urban and rural – for current and prospective Milton residents. | Number of Experiences Created and Promoted via Social Media Channels | | | | | | Milton Chamber of Commerce; DBIA; Town of Milton Culture Division; Conservation Halton; Halton Region (Eco Dev/ Tourism); |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| Support the creation of an inventory of Milton's destination assets: cultural and recreational amenities, music, art, food, breweries, and more. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Collaborate with Hamilton, Halton, Brant Regional Tourism Association, Milton Chamber of Commerce, DBIA, Town of Milton Culture Division and other partners to package and promote Milton as a destination. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| Develop curated destination experiences for Milton residents; test ideas on social media. | | | X | X | X | X | |
| GOAL 4: DEFINE AND PROMOTE MILTON'S BRAND FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | Unique Visitors to Milton's Economic Development Website; Social Media Followers (Various Channels); E-Newsletter Open Rate | | | | | | Town of Milton Strategic Communications; Toronto Global; Halton Region; Silicon Halton |
| Priority 4.1: Develop a sub-brand to support Milton's economic development efforts. | Creation of an Economic Development Brand | | | | | | Town of Milton Strategic Communications |
| Create a Choose Milton brand and messaging platform. | | | X | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Refresh Milton's economic development digital presence, in concert with new identity and messaging. | | | X | X | | | |
| Priority 4.2: Market Milton's target clusters, including those with FDI potential, to gain investment | Cluster Profiles Created and Distributed; Website Created | | | | | | Town of Milton Strategic Communications; Toronto Global; Halton Region |
| Hire a full-time marketing professional to support Milton's economic development efforts. | | X | | | | | |
| Prepare industry investment marketing portfolios (brochures and videos) for each sector. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Build a standalone attraction website that promotes real estate assets, data, and tools of interest to site selectors. | | | | | | X | |
| Priority 4.3: Implement a marketing plan to engage stakeholders, including business leaders, policymakers and partners. | Annual Meeting Attendees; Annual Report Distributed; Various Communication Metrics | | | | | | Town of Milton Strategic Communications |
| Develop and execute a communication plan for updating Milton stakeholders on impact, metrics and activities. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Host, in collaboration with partners, an annual economic development convening. | | X | X | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Design, publish and promote annual report. | | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Priority 4.4: Celebrate Milton's business and entrepreneurial success stories. | Number of Entrepreneurs and Startups Promoted Annually | | | | | | Toronto Global; Halton Region; Silicon Halton |
| Create a systematic means for communicating entrepreneurial and startup successes: website, blogs, social media, and direct emails. | | X | X | X | X | X | |



Town of Milton

Investment Attraction Research Project Report



December 2021





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Investment Attraction Research Project Report Appendices (under separate cover)

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About this Report

The report is divided into the following sections and provides the following insights.

- **Section 1 Introduction** – presents the key objectives for the study and describes the process undertaken to inform the Town of Milton Investment Attraction Research Project Report.
- **Section 2 Situational Analysis** – introduces key investment attraction trends and considerations for the Town of Milton and an assessment of the town’s performance against a wide range of socio-economic indicators considered relevant to the investment attraction framework. Key business and industry sectors that provide the highest opportunities for Milton are also presented here.
- **Section 3 Target Sector FDI Analysis** – building on the business and industry trends analysis, this section explores target sector opportunities for the Town, including national and international business investment opportunities.
- **Section 4 Milton’s Target Sectors and SWOT Analysis** – the target sector profiles, and stakeholder engagement results are synthesized to develop a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis focusing on sector-specific conditions.
- **Section 5 Proposed Strategic Directions and Tactics** – focuses on domestic and international investment attraction tactics.



Executive Summary

The Investment Attraction Research Project Report prepared for the Town of Milton summarises key research findings and recommends strategies to support future investment attraction activities for the Town of Milton. The Town commissioned the research project to fulfil the CanExport Community Investment Fund requirements to enhance industry and market research.

The Project was launched in May 2021 and completed in two interconnected phases. An overview analysis provided key insights into the economic factors anticipated to influence future investment attraction activities, particularly the export-based employment sectors across the GTHA and Halton Region. It also highlighted Milton's competitive advantage relative to other GTHA communities and informed international investment attraction programming opportunities. Consultations were key to the process; one-on-one telephone interviews with select businesses and industry partners helped validate the research and provided insight into the community's current assets, efforts to support the growth of identified target sectors, and key selling messages to inform market positioning for the Town. These analyses serve as Appendices to this Investment Attraction Research Project Report.

The Town of Milton in undertaking the Investment Attraction Research Project focussed efforts to explore economic and market trends and sector data that play a key role in informing the strategic planning initiatives needed to target local and international markets of focus.

The findings of this Project provides the foundational background needed to support future investment attraction activities. It also enables the Town to explore the feasibility of international business development functions as an economic development opportunity for Milton.

As part of Canada's Innovation Corridor, Milton's geographic position provides the opportunity to leverage and respond to broad investment trends. Milton is situated in the middle of this zone and benefits from having a well-educated talent pool, a diverse population speaking over 130 different languages, access to a 400 series highway and an expanding economy with strengths in goods-producing and service sectors. Significant growth is anticipated for the town, including over 2.4M sq ft. of industrial and flexible office spaces, the planned build-out of the Milton Education Village (MEV) site, ongoing investments to improve Milton's active transportation and the continued revitalization of Milton's Downtown Business Area. Plans for the MEV include opening an on-site transit hub to serve the needs of students, faculty, and the tenants and clients of the college, university, and related office/commercial facilities.

Milton's education and occupational profile suggest a favourable environment for knowledge-based sectors. Quantifying Milton's knowledge economy through the Creative Index suggests that Milton ranked 5th on the Talent Index and is ahead of communities including Mississauga and Burlington. Milton's Talent Index score can be attributed to strengths in the share of the labour force with a post-secondary degree and share of the labour force with a post-secondary degree in the fields of science, arts, or business¹.

The sectors were determined using a targeted approach that analysed factors including alignment with

¹ It should be noted that the labour force may or may not work/seek employment in Milton



provincial and regional markets; potential and types of sectors to be attracted to the broader region; existing economic drivers, top employers, and core businesses; current and future growth potential of sector and sub-sectors and differentiators including sector expertise, specialization, and new products/approaches.

A further review of the sector-based FDI into the United States and Ontario provided insights into opportunity sectors for Milton. Sectors that align and provide the highest opportunities for Milton include:

- Software and IT sector Investments
- Industrial equipment/advanced manufacturing
- Transportation and warehousing
- Automotive

Recruitment zones for recommended sectors are key as they highlight key markets for Milton to target.

- The biggest recruitment zones for Transportation, warehousing and logistics² worldwide are the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Germany.
- The biggest recruitment zones for Advanced Manufacturing³ worldwide are the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Switzerland.
- The biggest recruitment zones in Professional services⁴ are the United States, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Germany and Spain.
- The biggest recruitment zones in Cleantech⁵, specifically wastewater systems, energy efficiency technology and engineering services worldwide, are the United States, the United Kingdom, China, France, Germany and Israel.

Based on the employment growth trends, industry clusters and export opportunities, Milton is well-positioned to focus investment attraction efforts on five target sectors, namely,

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
- **Transportation and Logistics**
- **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services**
- **Clean Technology (Cleantech)**
- **Creative Industries (Digital Technologies)**

Considering the objectives of the Project, strategic directions and tactics are highlighted to help propel Milton forward onto the regional, national and global stages. These practices can be adopted in whole or in part dependent upon resource availability and the extent to which Milton wishes to undertake a comprehensive FDI attraction in the future. Any effort to enhance investment readiness will not be wasted as it will support both a proactive and reactive approach to investment attraction and is likely to strengthen the case for other economic development efforts such as talent attraction and workforce development. Considerations for Milton are broadly defined in five key areas, namely:

- Planning and land use considerations to continually recognize the importance of Employment Areas, recognize the nature and requirements of the knowledge-based sectors, explore CIPs to incentivize

² Transportation and Warehousing NAICS 48-49

³ C2ER: Engineering Intensive Manufacturing NAICS

⁴ Professional, Scientific and Technical Services NAICS 54

⁵ NAICS 221310, 333414, 334512, 334513, 334515, 334519, 541330, 562910



higher-order employment around the town's GO Stations, and advance the Milton Education Village plan in Milton.

- Data considerations to showcase Milton's target sectors and sub-sectors, develop investor-focused marketing materials and an online inventory of available land, building and office and commercial sites and spaces
- Investment attraction tactics and considerations that focus on creating a multi-touch marketing campaign, customizing outreach approach for each company, sector-based lead generation program and branding Milton Education Village as an innovation district designed to accelerate the development of a knowledge-based economy
- Workforce Considerations to support program development and investment attraction, drive research into commercialization and entrepreneurship through partnerships with Laurier University and Conestoga College and partnerships with key stakeholders and businesses to understand and support their ongoing workforce needs.
- Milton can begin expanding its network and FDI attraction efforts by attending key events, including Logistics CIO Forum, Supply Chain Event, Commercial UAV Expo, World Water-Tech Innovation Summit, and Automate. Building connections with organizations including Next Generation Manufacturing Canada, Automate Canada, AMPA Canada and Ontario Water Consortium is also key.

Key performance metrics to track FDI Projects

- **# of new foreign investments and value**
- **# of jobs created**
- **# of re-investments and disinvestments**
- **New projects being tracked**



1. Introduction

The Investment Attraction Research Project Report prepared for the Town of Milton summarises key research findings and recommends strategies to support future investment attraction activities for the Town of Milton. The report also explores international business development programming feasibility and timing as an economic development opportunity for the Town.

The research project was completed to fulfil the requirements of funding from the CanExport Community Investment Fund to enhance industry and market research for the Town. The project is part of a phased plan to develop a strategic framework for future investment attraction activities.

The key objectives of the Investment Attraction Research and Analysis Project are to:

- Highlight current economic and market trends and sector data that inform investment attraction activities.
- Explore Milton's educational, business, workforce and community assets that create a competitive advantage and inform future strategic planning to target international markets of focus
- Identify new opportunities for workforce development and business attraction
- Provide case study data to justify key focus areas, trends and industries
- Create targets and recommendations for sector-focused local and international investment attraction tactics
- Identify market and data gaps for a future Milton FDI Strategy Project and further research project work

The Investment Attraction Research and Analysis Project was launched in May 2021 (Phase I) and completed in two interconnected phases, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Phase II - Background Research and Analysis provided an overview analysis of the macro-economic factors anticipated to influence future investment attraction activities, particularly the export-based employment sectors across the GTHA and Halton Region. A micro-economic trend analysis was also conducted to illustrate Milton's competitive advantage relative to other GTHA communities and inform international investment attraction programming opportunities. One-on-one telephone interviews with select businesses and industry partners helped validate the research. They provided insight into the community's current assets, efforts required to support the growth of identified target sectors and key selling messages to inform market positioning for the Town. The results of these analyses serve as Appendices to this Investment Attraction Research Project Report and include:

- Macro-Economic Trends focussed on Provincial, GTA and Halton Region growth trends; an updated community profile for Milton showcasing socio-economic factors such as demographics, household income, housing availability and affordability, education attainment and diversity; an employment and occupation trends analysis; and business climate and industry clusters including export industries. **(Appendix A)**
- Labour demand and supply analysis through Vicinity Jobs. **(Appendix B)**
- Quantifying Milton's knowledge economy through the use of a creative index. **(Appendix C)**



- Target Sector Profiles for each of Milton’s proposed target sectors, namely, Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation & Logistics, Professional Scientific and Technical Services, Digital Media & Creative Industries and Clean-Technology. **(Appendix D)**
- Target Sector FDI analysis **(Appendix E)**
- Summary of observations and key insights that emerged through business and partner interviews. **(Appendix F)**

Phase III – Milton Investment Attraction Research Project synthesizes the planning, research, and analysis undertaken to provide the Town of Milton with this Research Report.

Figure 1: Investment Attraction Research Project Process





2. Situational Analysis

2.1 Investment Attraction Trends and Considerations

As per the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Investment Trends Monitor⁶, global foreign direct investment (FDI) collapsed by 42% in 2020, declining from \$1.5 trillion in 2019 to an estimated \$859 billion in 2020. FDI flows to North America fell by 46% to \$166 billion, with declines witnessed in all forms of FDI; mergers and acquisitions, greenfield projects and cross-border project finance deals⁷. Canadian FDI flows dropped by 49% or \$31 billion, of which \$12 billion can be attributed to FDI flows from the United States, which remains Canada's top investment partner⁸.

As economies grapple with and continue to realize the significant economic impact of COVID-19, economic weakness and risks to sustainable recovery are predicted well into 2021⁹. While the global economy is expected to recover, and GDP, capital formation and trade is projected to resume growth, the recovery will be hesitant and uneven as investors remain cautious in committing to overseas assets. The latest pandemic wave, the pace and roll-out of vaccination programmes, fragile macroeconomic situations in major emerging markets, and global policy uncertainty are expected to affect economic recovery further.

Despite this, Canada is well-positioned for recovery due to the 14 active free trade agreements, offering access to 1.5 billion consumers across 51 countries¹⁰. The new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement reinforces Canada's strong economic ties with the United States and Mexico¹¹. As per the State of Trade 2021, Canada ranks second, after the United States, among the 25 countries on the 2021 FDI Confidence Index, maintaining its ranking from the previous year¹². Ontario is a key player in the investment attraction space and is the top Canadian province for FDI attraction. Within North America, Ontario was second only to Arizona as the region's leading hub for capital investment¹³. The province saw investment increase by 109% from 2019 to \$7.6bn and attracted the largest amount of jobs in the country. This can be attributed, in part, to a \$1.5bn investment from UK-based Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and a \$1.4bn investment from US-based Ford¹⁴.

COVID-19 has also accelerated ongoing macro-investment trends whereby entire sectors are 'catalyzing innovation' and reconfiguring themselves for emerging ideas and new applications¹⁵. Key examples include investments in artificial intelligence, Blockchain, data storage and cloud computing; disruption in healthcare and pharmaceuticals; proliferation of electric and autonomous vehicles and innovation in waste management, recycling, energy efficiency, and energy storage. As global value chains were disrupted, industries concentrated regionally and within sectors. For instance, the EU and US intensified efforts to build domestic capacity and nearby regional supply chains in the semiconductor sector.

⁶ UNCTAD. Investment Trends Monitor. January 2021.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Global Affairs Canada. 2021. State of Trade 2021 - A Closer Look at Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

⁹ UNCTAD. Investment Trends Monitor. January 2021.

¹⁰ <https://www.investcanada.ca/programs-incentives/canadas-free-trade-agreements>

¹¹ <https://www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/cusma-aceum/index.aspx?lang=eng>

¹² Global Affairs Canada. 2021. State of Trade 2021 - A Closer Look at Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

¹³ Fdiintelligence. 2021. THE fDiREPORT 2021.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The Brookfield Institute. 2021. Yesterday's Gone: Exploring the future of Canada's labour market in a post-COVID world.



COVID-19 also highlighted the extent to which the world's economies are interconnected and the importance of investment diversification to build connections and allow Canadian businesses to take advantage of opportunities in fast-growing markets¹⁶. Canada's inward FDI sources are now more geographically diverse, with Europe and Asia accounting for the larger share of FDI stock¹⁷. This is particularly relevant as the Made in America Tax Plan announced in early 2021¹⁸ may impact U.S. investment in Canadian companies. While the proposal is still in its early stages, the Plan could make venture capital financings for Canadian portfolio companies more challenging. Another key investment trend is the focus on STEM FDI, which seeks to capture high-value cross-border investments in sectors with higher STEM inputs¹⁹. Globally, software and IT services ranked as the top sector within STEM for FDI project numbers. The US was the largest recipient of STEM FDI in 2020, receiving 15% of all STEM-related FDI projects, while Canada received 3.4%²⁰.

As part of Canada's Innovation Corridor, Milton's geographic position provides the opportunity to leverage and build on these broad investment trends. With a population of almost 8 million residents, more than three million jobs, and 64% of Ontario's Gross Domestic Product, Canada's Innovation Corridor is an interconnected economic zone of 34 municipalities stretching from Waterloo in the west to the Greater Toronto Area, Hamilton, and Durham Region to the east²¹. Milton is situated in the middle of this zone and benefits from having a well-educated talent pool, a diverse population speaking over 130 different languages, access to a 400 series highway and an expanding economy with strengths in goods-producing and service sectors.

As Milton focuses on an investment attraction agenda, efforts need to be strategic and focused on attaining return on investment. A successful investment attraction program builds on the community's unique existing and emerging competitive advantages, centred on key sectors and sites, and aligns with regional and provincial targets. It centres on attracting business investment through carefully thought-out tactics that incorporate business-friendly policies, ensuring the availability of investment-ready land and buildings, building out its post-secondary presence, marketing the community and fostering a corporate culture that actively supports investment. In addition to pursuing new investment, investment attraction could also be focussed on the results that could emerge from Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) efforts. BR+E often shows a higher investment return than pursuing new investment, particularly foreign investment; studies have suggested that over 80% of new jobs and investments in a community come from existing businesses. The scope of the Town's investment attraction framework should be focussed on the most viable investment opportunities and targeting sectors and sub-sectors that offer the greatest return on investment. Investment attraction programming also needs to ensure that institutional structures are streamlined, making land selection, acquisition, and development approvals easy for investors. An accurate and searchable inventory of available land and buildings, including shovel-ready land, adequate infrastructure, employment land to satisfy both current needs and future demand, is needed. In addition, real-time data and resources to monitor and evaluate progress are central to success.

¹⁶ Global Affairs Canada. 2021. State of Trade 2021 - A Closer Look at Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ <https://www.osler.com/PDFs/Resource/en-ca/Reading-the-tea-leaves-President-Biden-s-Made-in-A.pdf>

¹⁹ Fdiintelligence. 2021. THE fDiREPORT 2021.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Toronto Region Board of Trade. September 2020. Shaping Our Future: A Playbook for Rebooting and Reimagining the Regional Economy in Ontario's Innovation Corridor.



2.2 Milton's Economic Profile and Growth Trends

Milton's current economic profile is described below and includes key insights from the macro-economic trends, economic baseline and industry trends, labour supply and demand analysis and Milton's knowledge economy described in Appendices A to C. It should be noted that this information should be updated with the release of forthcoming Canadian census data in 2022/2023.

Strategic partnerships and a favourable climate for growth

Milton has seen significant growth in recent years due to its strategic location and broad employment market and through targeted efforts by the Town to secure investment and support local businesses. The town saw ICI expansions in 2019²², including DSV's head office and a logistics warehouse in Derry Green Business Park, with approximately 500,000 sq. ft. of industrial office and warehouse facilities currently under development and other industrial and office development sites in Derry Green Business Park and the 401 Business Park.

Like many communities across the GTA, however, Milton is looking to transition from traditional economic development programming to include efforts that support innovation and entrepreneurship, workforce development, partnerships with industry and education providers, and place-making that supports the attraction and retention of a skilled resident population. Attracting high-value job growth and employers and developing small businesses and incubators in multiple sectors is a strategic goal for Milton, as evidenced in the Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018.

Milton's strategic partnerships include Laurier University connecting with Crozier & Associates to support stormwater management research; Milton Education Village (MEV) Innovation Centre's partnership with Tech Data to enable artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security and Internet of Things (IoT) expertise and partnerships with Haltech Regional Innovation Centre to provide ongoing support and advisory services to Milton businesses across a variety of sectors. The Town's development of the MEV Innovation Centre as a modern, planned hub for innovators, education, and knowledge-based employment further indicates the community's anticipated trajectory and represents a catalytic change for the community over the coming years.

Significant growth is anticipated for the town, including over 2.4M sq ft. of industrial and flexible office spaces and the planned build-out of the Milton Education Village site. It also includes ongoing investments being made by the Town and Metrolinx to improve Milton's active transportation with service enhancements to the downtown Milton GO Station area, upgrades to road infrastructure, additional parking amenities and the continued revitalization of Milton's Downtown Business Area. Plans for the MEV include opening an on-site transit hub to serve the needs of students, faculty, and the tenants and clients of the college, university, and related office/commercial facilities.

As of 2020, Milton was home to over 135,947 residents and 10,908 business establishments. It is part of an expanding regional economy, representing 22.4% of the Halton Region's population. Over the next five years, Milton's population is projected to grow by a further 20%, adding 27,472 new residents. In the long-term, Milton is projected to witness a higher percentage growth when compared to Halton Region and the province, adding a total of 58,510 new residents (43% growth) to 2030. The largest age group by share of the population in Milton were children (0 to 14 years of age), representing 23%, followed by a mid-working prime (35 to 44 years of age) at 18%. The share of these groups is

²² Milton Economic Development. 2019. Annual Report.



comparatively higher in Milton than the region and the province, and evidence of the appeal of Milton to young families.

Growth is anticipated across all major industry sectors

Milton's employment base in 2021 comprises approximately 46,789 jobs. Before the impact of COVID-19, employment in Milton grew by 5,789 jobs from 44,192 jobs in 2016 to 49,981 jobs in 2019. Employment is expected to recover with an annual growth rate of 1% to 50,476 jobs through 2028. This translates to an additional 3,687 jobs from 2021 to 2028. Oakville accounted for most of Halton Region's jobs at 39%, followed by Burlington at 36% and Milton at 16%.

From 2016 to 2020, most employment growth was accommodated in office-based job growth at 13%, followed by industrial-based growth at 7%. Job growth is projected over the 2021 to 2025 period for both industrial and office-based employment at 5% and 6%, respectively.

The largest employment sectors in Milton include retail trade and manufacturing, each accounting for 12% of all industry jobs (by place of work). Wholesale trade accounts for 9% of all jobs, followed by transportation and warehousing (8%), educational services (8%) and professional, scientific, and technical services (7%). Historically the fastest-growing employment sectors include transportation and warehousing, manufacturing, administration and support, waste management and remediation, education, healthcare, and professional, scientific, technical services.

The major occupations (by place of work) in Milton include NOC 64 sales representatives and salespersons in wholesale and retail trade, accounting for 5.7% of total occupations, followed by NOC 21 professional occupations in natural and applied sciences (5.5%) and NOC 75 transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations (5%). NOC 217 Computer and information systems professionals were the majority occupations under NOC 21 professional occupations in natural and applied sciences, accounting for 1,777 jobs (69% of all NOC 21).

As per the December 2020 Canadian Business Counts data, Milton was home to 10,908 business establishments, of which 70% (7,629 business) were categorized as self-employed establishments, and the remaining 3,279 were businesses with employees. Considering the businesses with employees, the following sectors exhibit the highest proportion of business establishments:

- Professional, scientific, and technical services – 756 businesses (23% of total)
- Transportation and warehousing – 372 businesses (11% of total)
- Retail trade – 341 businesses (10% of total)
- Health care – 301 businesses (9% of total)
- Construction – 285 businesses (9% of total)

Out Commuting is a Key Characteristic of Milton's labour force

Milton is a net exporter of workers as approximately 42% of the town's labour force (33,675 residents) commute out of the census subdivision to work in surrounding communities. The most significant resident export occurs in the finance and insurance sector, followed by professional scientific and technical services and retail trade.

In contrast, Milton imports approximately 18,115 people to work in its commercial and industrial sectors. Manufacturing, retail trade and educational services are the top three sectors that attract the



greatest workers. The significant volume and growing inflow of blue-collar and general labour can be attributed to the growth of large industrial operations and warehouse/logistics operations that choose to locate in Milton.

Sectors focused on skilled talent, including professional, scientific, and technical services, and finance and insurance industries attract talent to a lesser degree. Milton has a low proportion of residents who work in professional, scientific, and technical services. This suggests that talent in these fields is more likely to seek employment opportunities outside Milton. Milton's current commuting patterns exhibit the commuting imbalance that typically occurs in a suburban bedroom community.

Milton has a clear dependency on cars; as per the 2016 census, 83% of employed labour force commute in their vehicle²³. Given the income levels attached to some employment opportunities, gaps in public transit can place an additional burden on workers and businesses alike, as the local housing supply is seen as expensive and unaffordable. This creates a worker retention problem among local companies that depend on the commuting workforce. Furthermore, stakeholders observed that Milton employers are increasingly dependent on temp agencies to recruit and fill general labour positions.

Milton profile is trending toward knowledge-based community

Milton's education and occupational profile suggest a favourable environment for knowledge-based sectors. 64% of Milton's labour force 15 years or older have a post-secondary degree and is ranked second highest²⁴, ahead of Richmond Hill, Burlington, Toronto, and Mississauga. Furthermore, 69% of Milton's post-secondary degree-holding labour force focuses on science and engineering fields, health, art and humanities, or business.

Knowledge workers²⁵ make up 52% of Milton's total workforce. While Milton ranks comparatively lower in the proportion of knowledge workers²⁶, they work within knowledge industries in the community, suggesting opportunities to grow knowledge-based sectors. High-technology-oriented workers make up 10% of Milton's total workforce, while Markham leads at 18%, followed by Toronto at 14%. High-technology occupations are those that require a scientific knowledge base to perform their main duties, are unrelated to primary industries, and involve the use of high technology equipment.

Quantifying Milton's knowledge economy through the Creative Index (Appendix C) suggests that Milton ranked 5th on the Talent Index ahead of communities including Mississauga and Burlington. Milton's Talent Index score can be attributed to strengths in the share of the labour force with a post-secondary degree and share of the labour force with a post-secondary degree in the fields of science, arts, or business²⁷. Markham, Toronto, Oakville, and Richmond Hill show a higher score and rank on the Talent Index, indicating that they have capitalized on talent-related industries and have a more diverse industry base that attracts all types of skills. Milton is also well-positioned to capitalize on its ability to attract immigrants and visible minorities based on its Tolerance Index score. Milton currently ranks 3rd and is ahead of communities including Brampton and Mississauga.

²³ Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

²⁴ Milton is benchmarked to peer communities including Toronto, Richmond Hill, Markham, Oakville, Kitchener-Waterloo, Mississauga, Hamilton, Milton, Guelph, Brampton, Burlington, Vaughan and the GTHA.

²⁵ Assessed at NOC 1-digit, NOC 0-NOC 5

²⁶ The city of Toronto leads knowledge occupations at 65% followed by Richmond Hill at 62% and Markham at 61%. Knowledge occupations in Milton are well below the GTHA at 59%.

²⁷ It should be noted that the labour force may or may not work/seek employment in Milton



Milton ranked 3rd on the Technology Index²⁸ compared to peer communities when considering the percentage of all employee-based STEM establishments (29%) and the concentration of all employee-based STEM establishments as a factor of Ontario (LQ 1.40). Milton's Technology Index is comparable to Markham and higher than Burlington, Mississauga, and Toronto. Oakville ranks highest as a destination for the STEM sector.

Overall scoring shows that Milton ranks 5th on the Creative Index. Milton's creativity index is comparable to Toronto's and is higher than Mississauga, Brampton, and Vaughan. With the concentration of talent, the diversity of the population bringing new perspectives and ideas, and the growing concentration of high-tech firms, Milton is in a strong competitive position to attract investment and support economic growth. The development of Milton's Innovation Village (MEV), approved by the provincial government in June 2021, will ensure that Milton continues to focus on science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) fields, create new opportunities to attract young talent and further increase the local pipeline of knowledge workers.

Sales and Service Occupations show Demand

Milton's labour demand was determined by extracting information from publicly available online job postings through the Vicinity Jobs platform²⁹. This information can help local EDO's, labour market experts and policymakers understand companies' short-term hiring plans and the factors influencing these plans.

Job demand reporting in 2020 identified a total of 3,480 job postings in Milton. Furthermore, job demand in the town decreased by 17% compared to 2019. The decrease in job postings directly results from the job market disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigation measures to slow the spread of the virus. Milton experienced a smaller decline compared to Ontario, which saw a 25% decline in job postings during the same period.

Retail jobs accounted for the highest number of job postings in Milton. Transportation, warehousing, and manufacturing also show many job postings. In terms of occupational demand, during 2020, sales and service occupations were in the highest demand. This occupational category also experienced the largest decline in job postings compared to 2019 (-251 job postings – 31% decline).

Development of Employment Land to Accommodate Growth

The preparation of an Investment Attraction Strategy by necessity must consider the land use policy framework affecting a community and the availability of serviced, high-quality employment land to accommodate expected growth.

The Town of Milton discusses its employment areas within several documents, including Milton Councils' 2051 Vision and the "Build Possibility – Future Urban Structure". Through the Halton Region's "Halton Balanced" Official Plan update, five growth concept scenarios were reviewed by the Town of Milton. This review process suggested that the Town of Milton could not move ahead with any growth scenario that did not include expanding the Town's employment land supply.

In responding to the Region, Milton has noted that the Town "can accommodate in-demand, large scale stand-alone warehousing and logistics industrial buildings in key locations within Milton's white belt

²⁸ It should be noted that the Technology Index as calculated only considers the % and concentration of employee-based STEM firms. It does not consider other factors such as start-up environment, R&D and commercialization, digitization, or automation capabilities.

²⁹ The platform employs the Data Warehouse and Reporting Engine to monitor "real-time" labour market information (LMI). It identifies current job openings and cross-references it against databases containing information about local employers and communities.



fronting 400 series highways”. Development of the white belt as community and employment areas is necessary to meet Milton’s population growth-to- jobs ratio of 2:1. The latter ratio is higher than that allocated by the Region; however, it seeks to address the significant labour out-migration occurring, as detailed earlier in this report and retain and grow employment within the municipality.

Milton is home to 760 net ha (1,875 net acres) of developed employment lands (68% of developed employment lands located in North Halton). Overall land absorption for the Region has been highest within the industrial sector at 77%, and nearly two-thirds of vacant employment lands (2,214 net ha or 5,470 net acres) are located in North Halton. 961 net ha (2,375 net acres) of this vacant employment lands are within Milton

Employment Areas in Milton include the Highway 401 Industrial/Business Park and Derry Green Business Park. The strongest economic growth within the Region in the last ten years was in the Milton 401 Industrial/Business Park³⁰. However, the business park is full capacity with several large national and multinational corporations. Most opportunities in the 401 Business Park remain lease-only spaces.

Some planned Employment Areas located in Milton include Milton Education Village, Southwest Milton, Agerton Employment Area, and the Milton 401 Industrial Business Park Expansions Lands. In addition, many Employment Areas in North Halton offer significant greenfield opportunities to accommodate development over the short, medium, and longer-term. This includes Derry Green Business Park and Premier Gateway Business Park, Agerton Employment Area, Milton Education Village, Southwest Milton, and Milton 401 Industrial/Business Park Expansion Lands.

The town has over 2M sq. ft. of inventory existing in Derry Green and another 6.5M sq. ft. in the pipeline, meeting the demand for the next 6 to 8 years and bringing between 2,000-4,800 jobs to the community³¹. Furthermore, Milton is expected to see approximately one to two million sq. ft. of industrial office and distribution warehousing developments in Derry Green per year over for the next six years.

Industry Sector Requirements and Opportunities to Accommodate Growth

Like much of the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton, Halton Region has undergone significant growth in recent years as regional economies have transitioned away from goods production towards service delivery. Additional pressures from increased automation and robotics are impacting existing jobs and casting into question future labour demand. Broader economic shifts were evolving before COVID-19; however, the global pandemic has accelerated changes to places of work, labour and skills shortages and the emergence of unpredicted sectoral employment shifts. Growth pressure and the transitioning of the economy have placed new pressures on employment lands in terms of servicing, built form and transportation/transit access. Milton Economic Development has recognized the ongoing trend within the office market whereby companies focus on a hub-and-spoke model³². This may allow companies to shed some of their excess downtown office space favouring smaller physical locations in suburban settings that reduce commute times and overhead costs.

One of the biggest current challenges in attracting knowledge-based companies to Milton is that the community only has about 417,000 sq. ft. of existing office inventory and very little vacancy of high-

³⁰ Halton Region’s 2020 Investment Readiness and Employment Lands Study

³¹ Town of Milton. Council Workshop notes

³² In a hub-and-spoke model, workers could move among their home (remote office), the main head office (i.e., “hub”) and a number of satellite offices and/or coworking spaces (i.e., “spokes”) closer to where workers reside.



quality newly constructed office space for lease – which creates problems in attracting investments with tight timelines for relocation. The Town has taken steps to address office space gaps, including the recent approval of a 5-storey (60K sq. ft.) class A office building in High Point. The space will be ready for occupancy within two years and presents a unique opportunity in the office development market for Milton.

There is a role for the Town of Milton to work with local landowners to respond to the economic shifts taking place and facilitate the emergent sectors' growth. The MEV will play a significant role as a model for developing future employment lands. Its mixed-use and complementary uses within the village setting are expected to be in high demand.

Based on current projections, the Town of Milton will continue to experience demand for developments in the town's industrial office and warehousing areas; however, many of these new developments are at capacity or pre-leased. Future growth opportunities will come from leveraging the STEM workforce and examining a shift in uses within future employment lands, particularly for office or mixed-use inventory.

2.3 Determining Milton's Target Sectors

Building on the economic trends analysis (Appendices A to C), a central aspect of this project was a high-level assessment of Milton's industry sector performance, talent base, location requirements, competitive advantages, and alignment with provincial and regional targets. The sector analysis was also informed by the opinions and thoughts of a select number of key businesses and stakeholders. Milton's target sector profiles are provided in Appendix D, and the consultation insights are detailed in Appendix F. Target sectors for Milton were determined by analyzing the following factors:

- Alignment with provincial and regional markets
- Potential and types of sectors to be attracted to the broader region
- Existing economic drivers, top employers and core businesses
- Current and future growth potential of sector and sub-sectors
- Differentiators including sector expertise, specialization and new products/approaches

This targeted approach enables an understanding of where Milton sits relative to its surrounding markets and what may differentiate Milton from these communities. Once the target sectors are determined, the town can more effectively position itself for investment attraction.

Alignment with regional markets and target sectors

Over the past several decades, the provincial economic base, as measured by G.D.P. output, has been transitioning from goods-producing sectors (i.e. manufacturing and primary resources) to services-producing sectors. This has been led by strong growth in sectors such as finance and insurance, professional, scientific and technical services, and educational services, more commonly described as the knowledge-based and creative economy sectors. This shift is reflected in the province's top sectors for FDI attraction, including software & IT services, business services, communications, industrial equipment, and financial services.



As illustrated in the figure below, targeted investment attraction focuses on many GTHA communities. Several of these communities also focus on FDI attraction as part of their economic development efforts. Toronto Global, an arm’s length organization that focuses on FDI attraction and represents the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) municipalities internationally, also takes a sector-based approach to its business investment opportunities. Target sectors include advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, digital media & games, film & TV, financial services, food and beverage processing, life sciences, and technology. It is understood that these sectors tend to cluster in urban environments due to supply chain links and similar businesses, excellent educational facilities, talented labour force, well-developed infrastructure including transit and broadband and a favourable business climate and quality of life.

Figure 2: Target Sector focus for GTHA communities

| Community | Target Sectors |
|---------------|--|
| Halton Hills | Food & Beverage, Financial Services, Technology, Life Sciences, Advanced Manufacturing and Professional Services |
| Guelph | Advanced Manufacturing, Agri-Innovation, Cleantech and ICT |
| Burlington | Advanced Manufacturing, Biomedical & Life Sciences, Clean Technologies, Food & Beverage, ICT and PSTS |
| Richmond Hill | PSTS, Finance & Insurance, Information & Culture and Health |
| Oakville | Professional & Financial Services, Digital Media, ICT & Film, Life Sciences and Advanced Manufacturing |
| Vaughan | Advanced Manufacturing, Arts & Culture, Construction, FIRE, Food & Beverage, Professional & Business Services, Technology, Tourism, Transportation & Warehousing and Wholesale Trade |
| Markham | ICT, Life Sciences, Information, Entertainment & Cultural Industries, Finance & Insurance |
| Hamilton | Advanced Manufacturing, Agribusiness & Food Processing, Creative Industries, FIRE, Goods Movement, ICT & Digital Media, Life Sciences and Tourism Industry |
| Brampton | Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Innovation & Technology and Food & Beverage |
| Mississauga | ICT, Financial Services, Advanced Manufacturing and Life Sciences |
| Toronto | Aerospace, Design, Film, Fashion/Apparel, Financial Services, Food & Beverage, Life Sciences, Technology, Tourism and Green Tech |



Transportation and warehousing, PSTS and waste management and remediation services are growth sectors

Milton's top employers are in manufacturing, food processing, wholesale and retail trade, healthcare, utilities and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services. A majority of the businesses have an export focus, including Magna Cosma Body and Chasis Systems (927 employees), Gordon Food Service (900 employees) and Modatek Systems (830 employees)³³.

An evaluation of the employment growth potential for each of Milton's economic sectors was determined using the Carvalho classification system³⁴ (results are illustrated in Figure 3).

- Transportation and warehousing is a driving sector for Milton, meaning that the community is highly specialized in this sector, that it is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally
- Accelerating sectors for the town include PSTS, admin & support, waste mgmt. & remediation services and accommodation and food services. The community is neither highly-specialized nor under-specialized in this sector. The sector is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally
- Finance and insurance is a rising sector, meaning that the sector has a relatively low proportion of local employment but will likely increase due to growth in this sector, which is growing provincially and growing at an even higher rate locally
- Manufacturing is an evolving sector indicating high local sector specialization, which grew provincially at a slower rate than overall growth; local growth exceeded provincial growth in this sector

³³ 2020 Halton Region Employment Survey.

³⁴ The Carvalho classification system was used to identify the growth potential for each economic sector. Within the system, there are 12 descriptive categories, ranging from the greatest potential—driving—to the least potential—marginal. The calculation is based on a combination of the location quotient and the calculations of the shift-share analysis.



Figure 3: Milton Employment Growth Sectors, Carvalho Classification System, 2021 to 2028

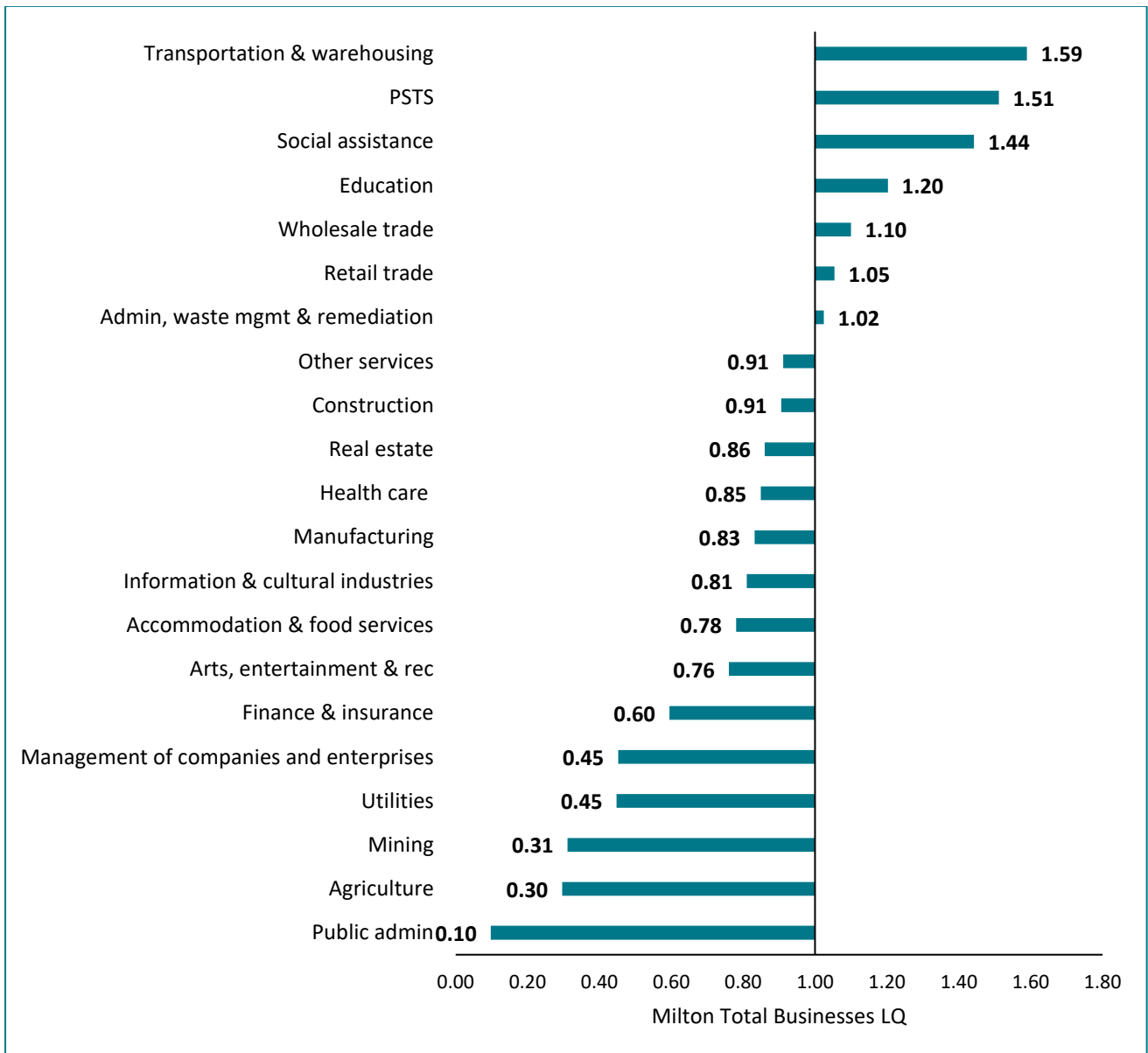
| Description | 2021 Location Quotient | Ind. Mix Effect | Competitive Effect | Category |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Transportation and warehousing | 1.66 | 35 | 236 | Driving |
| Admin & support, waste mgmt. & remediation svcs. | 1.18 | 14 | 218 | Accelerating |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 0.96 | 70 | 58 | Accelerating |
| Accommodation and food services | 0.79 | 21 | 111 | Accelerating |
| Finance and insurance | 0.51 | 25 | 57 | Rising |
| Management of companies and enterprises | 0.25 | 6 | 9 | Rising |
| Wholesale trade | 2.07 | -85 | 87 | Evolving |
| Manufacturing | 1.41 | -145 | 255 | Evolving |
| Retail trade | 1.07 | -141 | 78 | Transitional |
| Educational services | 1.05 | -15 | 176 | Transitional |
| Construction | 0.92 | -98 | 33 | Transitional |
| Other services (except public administration) | 0.91 | -30 | 75 | Transitional |
| Public administration | 0.91 | -103 | 172 | Transitional |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 0.79 | -27 | 33 | Transitional |
| Utilities | 0.51 | -3 | 7 | Moderate |
| Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | 0.11 | -2 | 15 | Moderate |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation | 1.34 | 13 | -4 | Promising |
| Social assistance | 0.96 | 33 | -7 | Yielding |
| Health care | 0.55 | 225 | -35 | Modest |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 0.74 | -60 | -45 | Marginal |
| Information and cultural industries | 0.51 | -8 | -5 | Marginal |

Source: EMSI Analyst, 2021



Location Quotients (L.Q.s) were used to identify and assess the relative strength of industry sectors in Milton relative to the Province of Ontario. As illustrated in, Milton's economy comprises a diverse mix of concentrated clusters, including transportation and warehousing, PSTS, educational services and wholesale trade. The concentration of businesses in retail trade, administrative and support, waste management and remediation services, and health care is on par with the province.

Figure 4: Milton Industry Clusters, December 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, December 2020



Manufacturing is a key Export Sector for Milton

A further consideration in assessing Milton's economy is the role and impact of its export-based industries. The latest data (2017) indicated that Milton industries exported \$7.9 billion in goods and services while spending \$7.7 billion on importing goods and services. While this makes Milton a net exporter, the difference in net exports and imports is only \$0.2 billion, suggesting opportunities to build out local and regional supply chains.

Manufacturing is the top exporter for the community, representing 55% of all exports at \$4.3 billion. This was followed by wholesale trade at 10% (\$762 million). High-technology sectors, namely, PSTS and information and culture, accounted for \$168 million and \$69 million in exports, respectively. Non-traditional exporting industries, including education and health care, added \$427 million exported dollars (5% of all exported dollars) into Milton's economy. The majority of exports in the health care sector can be attributed to the medical device market.

Considering Milton's import/export capabilities, almost all major sectors show that imports exceed exports, indicating gaps in current supply chain capabilities, whether local or regional. High-technology sectors imported over \$461 million worth into their industries, while education and health care together imported \$703 million. Manufacturing is the only major sector where exports exceed imports. However, the sector still imports 43% of goods and services at \$3.2 billion, suggesting opportunities to grow the local/regional supply chains and reduce dependency on imported products and services for the sector.

Milton's Target Sectors

Based on the employment growth trends, industry clusters and export opportunities, Milton is well-positioned to focus efforts on five target sectors, namely,

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Transportation and Logistics
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- Clean Technology (Cleantech)
- Creative Industries (Digital Technologies)

Figure 5 illustrates Milton's economic base and sector strengths using four measures: (a): employment growth sectors identified through the Carvalho classification system, (b): anticipated job changes by industry sector from 2021 to 2028, (c): industry clusters based on Provincial LQ's and (d): export-based industries.

Transportation and warehousing rank high in all measures, as does PSTS. Advanced Manufacturing is a key opportunity sector for the town based on export capabilities (focused on high-value components and consumer products, including food) and Ontario's continued competitiveness in this sector. It should also be noted that elements of administrative and support, waste management and remediation services, utilities, manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, PSTS and education form key inputs to the Clean Technology sector and related supply chain opportunities. The emergence of the Clean Technology sector (Cleantech) may be a key strategic differentiator for the town given the planned post-secondary investment and focus on engineering and planetary health and should form part of its unique value proposition. Creative Industries (specifically Digital Technologies) are considered a 'stretch target' for the community and require specific and targeted efforts to define, support and grow the sector.



Section 4 Milton’s Target Sectors and SWOT Analysis builds on these key data findings and details the SWOT analysis focusing on sector-specific conditions.

Figure 5: Determining Milton’s Target Sectors

| Employment Growth Sectors | Job Change by Industry Sector | Industry Clusters | Export opportunities | Suggested Target Sectors |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation and warehousing ▪ Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services ▪ PSTS ▪ Accommodation and food services ▪ Finance and insurance ▪ Wholesale trade ▪ Manufacturing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation and warehousing ▪ Manufacturing ▪ Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services ▪ Education ▪ Health care ▪ PSTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation and warehousing ▪ PSTS ▪ Educational services ▪ Wholesale trade ▪ Retail trade ▪ Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manufacturing ▪ Wholesale trade ▪ Transportation and warehousing ▪ Education ▪ PSTS ▪ Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced Manufacturing ▪ Transportation and Logistics ▪ PSTS ▪ Clean Technology ▪ Creative Industries (Digital Technologies) |



3. Target Sector FDI Analysis

Building on the sector evaluation, this section of the report provides a deeper understanding of the pattern of FDI investments in Milton, Ontario, and the United States to identify FDI opportunities for the Town and further refine the Town's target sectors. Key trends are presented here. For a full target sector FDI analysis, see Appendix E.

3.1 Target/Niche Industry FDI Opportunities

Sector-based FDI into the United States and Ontario's Municipalities

Total investments into the United States over the last 5 years account for 26,721 projects. Examining the key industries, business services, and corresponding subsectors³⁵ accounts for the most projects, followed by software and IT and financial services and corresponding subsectors³⁶. In terms of project type, the majority of investments in the United States are new (20,291 projects in the last 5 years), while 6,123 account for expansion projects. The key determinants that companies rank for their investments in the United States are proximity to markets or customers (39%), skilled workforce availability (35%) and domestic market growth (20%).

Industries that have experienced growth in establishment numbers and employment in the U.S. over the last 5 years are in four key clusters.

- Clean technology-based industries including electric power generation, solar power generation, wind electric power generation and storage battery manufacturing
- Life sciences focussed on R&D, biotechnology R&D and manufacturing, including medicinal and botanical manufacturing, biological product manufacturing, electromedical and electrotherapeutic apparatus manufacturing, analytical laboratory instrument manufacturing and surgical and medical instrument manufacturing.
- Professional services, specifically internet publishing and broadcasting, software publishers, data processing and hosting and custom computer programming.
- Industrial equipment manufacturing, in material handling, robotics, and automation

Total investments into Ontario from 2016 to June 2021 account for 806 projects. Software, IT services, and corresponding subsectors account for most of these investments, followed by business services, communications, real estate, and industrial equipment. Within these key industries, highly-rated clusters include ICT and electronics, followed by professional services, creative industries, financial services, and transport equipment.

In terms of project type, most investments into Ontario are new (603 projects in the last 5 years), while 190 were expansion projects. The key determinants that companies rank for their investments in Ontario are skilled workforce availability (39%), proximity to markets or consumers (38%) and domestic market growth (22%). The United States is the biggest investor into Ontario, and key states include

³⁵ legal services and rental and leasing services

³⁶ software publishers, retail banking and corporate and investment



California, New York, Washington, and Michigan. Other key investor regions include the Southeast (UK), Ile-de-France (France), and Kanto (Japan). Toronto is the biggest recipient of FDI, accounting for 457 projects, followed by Mississauga (59) and Ottawa (39).

Sectors that Align and Provide highest Opportunities for Milton

A further review of the established projects in Ontario provides insights into opportunity sectors for Milton. Recent examples of investments that align with Milton’s target sectors are detailed in the figure below.

Figure 6: Sectors that Align and Provide Highest Opportunities for Milton

| Sectors | Example Investments |
|---|--|
| Software and IT sector Investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verily Life Sciences, a subsidiary of Alphabet, opened a healthcare engineering, data science, and product development site in Kitchener in June 2021. In June 2021, U.S.-based Yanka Industries made its first overseas investment, establishing an engineering hub in Waterloo. In May 2021, US-based Soothsayer Analytics opened an IT solutions office for the manufacturing, healthcare, automotive, supply chain, and retail sectors in the Windsor-Essex region. |
| Industrial equipment/advanced manufacturing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S.-based Exyn Technologies, a developer of aerial and ground-based robot systems to autonomously navigate and collect data, opened an office in Sudbury in January 2021. In June 2020, Mexico-based Grupo Eltromex, which provides integrated solutions for industrial manufacturing, opened a new office in Windsor. In May 2020, U.S.-based RM Machinery (RMM), an authorized distributor of sheetfed offset presses manufactured and web offset presses manufactured, opened a new office in Mississauga. |
| Transportation and warehousing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S.-based United Parcel Services, a logistics specialist, opened new 3,720 sq m logistics facilities in Kanata in 2018. In October 2018, New York-based Ruby Has, which offers e-commerce order fulfilment, shipping, and logistics services for online retailers, opened a new location in Mississauga. In August 2018, U.S.-based logistics company XPO Logistics opened a new last-mile distribution hub in Toronto. |
| Automotive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany-based automotive company Porsche AG was to open a new parts distribution centre in Toronto in April 2018. In 2017, Hong Kong-based Johnson Electric expanded its production capacities in Ontario, Canada. In August 2016, Ventra Plastics, a division of Ventra Group that operates as a subsidiary of US-based Flex-N-Gate, expanded its facility in Peterborough. |



Sector-based FDI into Milton

Milton ranks 17th in Ontario for FDI, accounting for 4 projects tracked by fDimarkets. 3 projects are in transportation and warehousing. These include:

- In November 2018, Denmark-based logistics company DSV opened its new, larger Canada head office and logistics complex in Milton. The 102,195 sq.m. complex houses a warehouse, 3-floor administrative office and 800 staff.
- In October 2018, US-based Seldat Distribution, an end-to-end supply chain and staffing solutions provider, opened a new warehouse. The 9,925 sq.m. facility serves customers in the country.
- In October 2016, Genco, a logistics services provider that operates as a subsidiary of US-based Federal Express, opened a new warehouse for healthcare manufacturers in Milton. The 37,160 sq.m. space stores and distributes healthcare products.
- The solar installation company Soventix Canada, a subsidiary of Germany-based Soventix, established two solar power projects in March 2016.

3.2 Key Recruitment Zones

The following section explores recruitment zones for recommended sectors worldwide and in the United States.

- The biggest recruitment zones for Transportation, warehousing and logistics³⁷ worldwide are the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Germany. Established clusters in the United States are California, Texas and Florida, and emerging zones include Arizona, North Carolina and Maryland.
- The biggest recruitment zones for Advanced Manufacturing³⁸ worldwide are the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Switzerland. Established clusters in the United States are California, Texas and Florida, and emerging zones include Arizona, Missouri, Tennessee and Virginia.
- The biggest recruitment zones in Professional services³⁹ are the United States, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Germany and Spain. Established clusters in the United States are California, Texas, Florida, and New York, and emerging zones include Utah, North Carolina and Arizona.
- The biggest recruitment zones in Cleantech⁴⁰, specifically wastewater systems, energy efficiency technology and engineering services worldwide, are the United States, the United Kingdom, China, France, Germany and Israel. Established clusters in the United States are California, Texas, Florida and New York, and emerging zones include North Carolina, Oregon and Utah.

³⁷ Transportation and Warehousing NAICS 48-49

³⁸ C2ER: Engineering Intensive Manufacturing NAICS

³⁹ Professional, Scientific and Technical Services NAICS 54

⁴⁰ NAICS 221310, 333414, 334512, 334513, 334515, 334519, 541330, 562910



3.3 Regional Supply Chain considerations

One way to support existing regional businesses is to strengthen their regional supply chain. A supply chain analysis focuses on industries that can serve both local companies in a more cost or time-efficient manner and create new local assets to supply national growth sectors. By understanding the leakages from a community or region and trends in supply chains across the nation, the community or region can begin to make strategic decisions about the types of industries it should seek to attract, retain, and help expand.

As a rule, the more complex the product or service, and the more service and maintenance it requires, the more valuable physical proximity to the supply chain company becomes. At the same time, not all supply chain companies fit well within a region and have their locational needs considered. For smaller local markets, supply chain companies may also have to explore opportunities in the wider region or be heavily export-oriented, seeing the local market instead as a testbed than a major customer.

Alternatively, there might be opportunities for younger companies offering products or services with less widespread adoption or market reach. These would also be considered good targets for "grow your supply chain" initiatives. With the right support, these local companies can turn into growth companies supplying a much wider or international market.

Targeting supply chains can present just one-off projects to strengthen existing clusters. However, when these industries already offer a regional strength, a stronger value proposition exists for targeting the sectors more broadly. Industries' outputs currently being purchased primarily from outside Milton with at least \$10,000,000 in estimated purchases include motor vehicle body manufacturing, electrical equipment and component manufacturing, HVAC manufacturing, architectural and engineering services.

3.4 Outreach Tactics

Overall, given that COVID-19 has impacted the flow of FDI, it is important to consider how this may affect the execution of outreach. While it is true that there have been fewer greenfield projects since March 2020, a multi-pronged approach is essential to cover all bases and ensure the maximum output for outreach campaigns. This could include enhancing the potential for connections through multi-touch campaigns to maximize effectiveness and highlighting Milton's specific value proposition through benchmarking data with competitor regions. Calling potential leads is recommended as key for direct outreach. Tradeshows over the last 2 years have declined; as such, priority should be given to virtual meetings. However, as attendance increases, targeted market missions should be considered in 2022.

Outreach tactics may require contextualization within sectoral trends to capitalize on these techniques. In terms of attraction efforts, regions attracting investments in the transportation and warehousing sector (which has been a booming sector during the pandemic) have had proximity to their customer base and highway, airport, and port access. A steady workforce supply is also critical in this sector because while big players may be seen as an asset to a region, it may be difficult to supply labour to new players. Second, advanced manufacturing and cleantech have seen more and more traction over the last year. Tradeshows have remained online in this industry, with in-person events predicted for early 2022. Though a growing industry, professional services are pivoting towards a remote model. Over time, this means that flexible office space/shared space at a central location will be a key facet in attracting investments in this sector.



4. Milton's Target Sectors and SWOT Analysis

A targeted engagement process was undertaken with a select number of key businesses and industry partners to inform the report's sector analysis and recommendations. One-on-one telephone interviews sought input on the potential role of the Town of Milton in mobilizing talent and entrepreneurial development in Milton, satisfaction with the current business environment, specific business growth sectors that could be served from or attracted to Milton, and challenges and opportunities associated with sector growth.

Consultation and data insights were used to develop a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) assessment of Milton's target sectors. The SWOT assessment will assist Milton to identify its strengths and weaknesses in each target sector, inform strategic planning and positioning for future growth, and improve the perception of potential investors from within and outside the community.

The SWOT for each target sector is presented below.

4.1 Advanced Manufacturing

Manufacturing will continue to be a sector focus for Ontario, with industrial processes becoming more capital/technology-intensive and automated. The highly competitive nature of the manufacturing sector will require production to be increasingly cost-effective and value-added. For Milton, manufacturing is a significant export sector and will continue to be a top employer in machinery manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing and food manufacturing. Milton needs to consider ongoing trends in this sector, including navigating economic disruptions similar to COVID-19, investing in digital technologies as they are important enablers, increasing supply network visibility and greater workforce agility⁴¹. Lean manufacturing will continue to impact the nature and built form of employment lands, requiring integrated operations and on-site manufacturing on larger sites, often in a "campus-style" setting.

Manufacturing in Milton is an evolving sector, with machinery and fabricated metal comprising most of the industry in Milton. While FDI in this sector has been historically low, industrial equipment and other manufacturing processing have traction. In addition, Milton's workforce strength in mechanical, electrical and electronics assemblers, and machine operators have the potential to attract general automation and electric vehicles components supported by a workforce of over 600. Electrification of the automotive industry is a big trend in Ontario and North America in general, with over 330 FDI investments from 2015 and onwards. Milton's assets in the software and computer systems designs industry could be leveraged to fill the market gap within industry 4.0 and automation technology. Milton can do this by positioning itself as a high-tech hub that can absorb Tier 2 suppliers in automation or IoT to the manufacturing sector. Examples of companies in this space include Gescan Ontario, an industrial automation company, and PBS Systems, specialising in technical software for the automotive services industry. Finally, the *IoT Foundry* Business Innovation Lab in the *Milton* Education Village Innovation Centre (MEVIC) is an incubator and lab that has been essential to building Milton's IoT ecosystem.

Supply chain leakages in the automotive sector and non-ferrous metal processing stand out for Milton's

⁴¹ Deloitte. 2021. Manufacturing Industry Outlook. Source: <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/energy-and-resources/articles/manufacturing-industry-outlook.html>



advanced manufacturing sector. It is important to monitor future developments in the sector geared towards software development and automation, to fill these market gaps. Milton is already armed with strong computer system designs and the scientific and consulting services sector that can help its manufacturing industry integrate industry 4.0 solutions. However, attracting talent in software development to Milton will be needed if manufacturing in Milton is to reach its projected growth by 2028. Orienting the sector towards building an ecosystem to attract global players will be key to Milton’s success. For example, Oakville’s Mechatronics Simulation and Demonstration Centre in Oakville and partnership with Seneca College and Siemens Canada are important anchoring assets in the region that Milton can exploit as part of its wider ecosystem.

| Advanced Manufacturing Sector SWOT | |
|---|---|
| Strengths | Opportunities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic location in the Golden Horseshoe west of Mississauga with rail, road and air access only 1 hour from the Canada-U.S. border 30 minutes from Waterloo, 30 minutes from the Toronto Pearson International Airport, and 40 minutes from Toronto’s downtown core. ▪ Proximity to universities and colleges including University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph, Humber College, Seneca College, George Brown College, Mohawk College, and Sheridan College. Collectively graduating 118,220 students a year. ▪ Laurier University regards the MEV campus as a catalyst for encouraging creative collisions between business, academic and government partners that lead to innovation, opportunities, and economic growth. ▪ Available sites with lower land and utilities cost compared to urban neighbours. ▪ Milton has a significant concentration of advanced manufacturing labour (5,424 jobs) projected to add 393 additional jobs by 2028. ▪ There are 228 manufacturing businesses in Milton with concentrations in Machinery manufacturing and Fabricated metal product manufacturing. ▪ Regional institutions have various centres focused on applied research and training in the sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cluster development opportunities between companies, academia and applied researchers, including the Milton Education Village (MEV) Innovation Centre and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning that could strengthen the innovation ecosystem, drive business-related R+D, support future post-secondary programming. ▪ The strategic partnership between MEV and Tech Data, the world’s leading end-to-end distributor of technology products, services and solutions, could provide global expertise in artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security and the Internet of Things (IoT). Rapid real-time analytical capabilities of IoT technology can benefit the existing manufacturing of complex equipment in the region. ▪ Manufacturing imported \$3.2 billion, suggesting that the sector may have gaps and thus opportunities to grow the local and regional supply chains to reduce the dependence on importing products and services. ▪ Strong existing metal fabrication clusters and existing supply chains can pivot to complimentary markets ▪ The federal government permits immediate write-off of the full cost of manufacturing or processing goods to spur the adoption of advanced technologies. ▪ Specific industries include transportation equipment manufacturing, food manufacturing, and fabricated medical product manufacturing |



Advanced Manufacturing Sector SWOT

- Manufacturing is the top exporter for the community, representing 55% of all exports at \$4.3 billion.
- A complementary hub of Transportation & Logistics firms.
- Manufacturing is a significant export sector and will continue to be a top employer in machinery manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing and food manufacturing.
- Milton has a high concentration of STEM industries.
- 4,040 (2016) manufacturing workers commute out of Milton
- Improve awareness of Provincial and Federal export development and business development opportunities.
- Milton’s workforce strength in mechanical, electrical and electronics assemblers, and machine operators, have the potential to attract general automation and electric vehicles components supported by a workforce of over 600.
- Milton’s assets in the software and computer systems designs industry can be leveraged to fill the market gap within industry 4.0 and automaton technology.

| Weaknesses | Threats |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shortage of general labour local skilled trades workers and local service providers, e.g., gasfitters, electricians, plumbers, forklift drivers, millwrights, plumbers. ▪ Difficult to find available industrial/office building space for rent/purchase in Milton. ▪ Lack of software developers and mechanical engineers with knowledge of “Additive Manufacturing” (3D printing). ▪ Businesses are experiencing a crisis in attracting and retaining entry-level staff due to a lack of affordable housing and dependence on commuting by car. ▪ Supply chain leakages in the automotive sector and non-ferrous metal processing stand out for Milton’s advanced manufacturing sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced manufacturing is a major target sector for competitor communities. ▪ The immigrant population in Milton is below the GTHA average, indicating other regional communities are more attractive to new immigrants and talent. ▪ Lean manufacturing will continue to impact the nature and built form of employment lands, requiring integrated operations and on-site manufacturing on larger sites in a “campus-style” setting. ▪ A lack of talent in software development in Milton will be needed if manufacturing in Milton is to reach its projected growth by 2028. |

4.2 Transportation and Logistics

Demand in the goods movement sector is anticipated to continue across the GTHA, particularly in locations where available employment lands have strong connectivity to regional transportation infrastructure (i.e. regional trade hubs, intermodal facilities and 400 series highway access). In addition, the evolution of the sector in recent years, with a focus on supporting lean manufacturing, e-commerce,



and globalized trade, suggests that transportation and logistics remain a key sector for Milton even if the Town is not actively targeting new investment. Lean manufacturing emphasises more frequent and smaller deliveries by truck transport. Distribution centres are becoming more automated, allowing for vertical storage. E-commerce sales are also anticipated to significantly impact the logistics sector's employment growth and land demand. Fulfilment centres will also continue to be in demand, particularly as customers increasingly seek faster delivery times. There is also continued demand for loading bays and dedicated return centres (which supports the growth of reverse logistics).

Opportunities exist for Milton to understand and leverage ongoing trends in the sector, including artificial intelligence (AI), automation, Blockchain and crowd-sourced fleets. Machine learning and AI technologies are being adopted in the logistics sector for route optimization, which helps in reducing the costs of shipping and aids in profit generation. Blockchain enables more efficient and cost-saving business operations for transportation and logistics companies, resulting in faster payment and dispute resolution, processing and administration costs.

Transportation and warehousing is a key driving force for the Milton economy. In terms of FDI investment since 2015, North America has been the recipient of over 1,500 projects in freight and distribution services. 9% of these projects have been in the software and internet publishing space, including automation technology that results in more efficient and greener logistics practices (fDimarkets). Examples of anchor companies in this space include CNMilton, which supplies the GTHA area, DSV, a logistics and supply chain company and has launched a partnership to operate commercial drones to move customer cargo to and from their Milton headquarters Drone Delivery Canada (DDC). Finally, Traffic offers 3PL Service, including dry cargo logistics, fresh logistics, specializing and warehousing.

Companies that offer technical and specialized expertise, especially in the distribution of industrial goods and equipment, have also been trending and aligning with Milton's manufacturing and assembly expertise. The increased demand for efficiency for logistics and transportation that offer smart solutions in urban centres has driven the drones and urban logistics sector, with nearly 70 projects being established from 2015 in North America (fDimarkets). Therefore, Milton may also be an opportunity to fill the market gap in emerging technology within the transportation and warehousing sector.

Milton currently has a strong transportation and warehousing ecosystem, with over 1,200 companies making up 12% of total establishments, making it an attractive region for investment in the larger transportation sector. Milton is also well positioned in terms of its workforce, with transportation equipment workers accounting for 1,930 workers and computer systems design and related services (2,325 jobs), architectural, engineering, and related services (1,216 jobs). The combination of warehousing space, a strong transportation sector with a niche in software development and engineering put the region in good stead to take advantage of growing trends in drones and automated delivery logistics. To achieve this will require leveraging computer systems designs assets for the transportation sector.



Transportation & Logistics (T&L) Sector SWOT

| Strengths | Opportunities |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic location west of Mississauga with rail, road (401, 407) and air (Pearson) supporting the transportation of goods and workforce. ▪ Hub of T&L businesses (1,269) with specialization in General Freight Trucking (577) and Specialized Freight Trucking (134). ▪ High Concentration of (T&L) workforce (3,972 jobs) with specialization in general freight trucking (1,212 jobs), warehousing and storage (563 jobs), Freight transportation arrangement (300 jobs). ▪ Proximity to universities and colleges including University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph, Humber College, Seneca College, George Brown College, Mohawk College, and Sheridan College. Collectively graduating 118,220 students a year. ▪ Available sites with lower land and utilities cost compared to urban neighbours. ▪ Complementary manufacturing and wholesale trade sector concentrations. ▪ Milton is projected to add 478 T&L jobs by 2028. ▪ Milton had successfully attracted T&L FDI: Seldat Distribution, Genco, DSV. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accelerated by the pandemic, growth in online retail will drive T&L globally. ▪ The growth of the local T&L market as a result of reshoring supply chains brought on by pandemic-influenced challenges, particularly involving essential goods. ▪ The sector imports \$1.5M in Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing, suggesting opportunities to attract this investment. ▪ New proposed CN Intermodal facility. ▪ Cluster development opportunities between companies, academia and applied researchers, including the Milton Education Village (MEV) Innovation Centre and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning. ▪ The strategic partnership between MEV and Tech Data, the world’s leading end-to-end distributor of technology products, services, and solutions, brings global expertise in artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security, and the Internet of Things (IoT). ▪ Milton has a high concentration of STEM industries. ▪ 2,115 (2016) T&L workers and 2,640 (2016) Warehousing workers out of Milton. ▪ Adoption of new logistics technologies (A.I. and robotics). ▪ Companies that offer technical and specialized expertise, especially in distributing industrial goods and equipment, have been trending and aligning with Milton’s manufacturing and assembly expertise. ▪ There is an opportunity for Milton to fill the market gap in emerging technology within the transportation and warehousing sector. |
| Weaknesses | Threats |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shortage of general labour local skilled trades workers and local service providers, e.g., | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equifax Business Failure Risk Score indicated 4 businesses in Milton in wholesale trade are at high risk. |



- gasfitters, electricians, plumbers, forklift drivers, millwrights, plumbers.
- Businesses are experiencing a crisis in attracting and retaining entry-level staff due to a lack of affordable housing and dependence on commuting by car.
- Equifax Business Failure Risk Score indicated 5 companies in T&L at average or high risk.
- The immigrant population in Milton is below the GTHA average, indicating other regional communities are more attractive to new immigrants and talent.
- Difficult to find appropriate office space.

4.3 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (PSTS)

This sector consists of establishments primarily engaged in activities where human capital and technical knowledge are the major input. Growth in PSTS is generally tied to infrastructure and business investment, energy development and information & communications technology (ICT) industries⁴². Increased use of technology spurs computer systems design, sustained real estate and construction activity drives demand for architecture, engineering and design services, and businesses always require legal, financial, sales and accounting services.

Given that Milton's business profile is trending toward a knowledge-based economy, targeted efforts could support the growth of the knowledge-based and creative economic sectors, including clean technology and digital media and digital technologies, thereby taking better advantage of the resident workforce. In addition to increased investment in infrastructure projects, partnerships with academic institutions to focus on engineering and computing programs, there will also be a need for targeted workforce development to attract and retain highly skilled professionals, scientists, engineers, and experts with administrative, legal and regulatory knowledge. Milton's Innovation Village (MEV) is critical to the success of this effort as it fosters an innovative environment through the provision of modern office and teaching spaces, collaboration spaces, networking opportunities, business resources and services, and entrepreneurial programs and training.

Professional and financial services are the biggest FDI sector in Ontario. The commuter proximity of Milton to the Greater Toronto Area while providing cost efficiency is one of the region's biggest draws. In Milton, professional services are oriented towards manufacturing, given the region's economic makeup. Financial services and insurance stand out within professional services with FDI investments to Ontario, representing over 60 projects since 2016. While office space and commuting patterns favouring other cities in the Greater Toronto region are barriers, Milton continues to have a strong value proposition.

Milton's PSTS industry is supported by an increasingly established knowledge ecosystem and strategic partnerships between MEV and Tech Data. Milton continues to offer cost-effectiveness, but the lack of existing and new office space is a barrier to entry for FDI projects. However, growing niches in insurance could be a potential market that Milton can further explore as the region's growing professional services companies have been in this sector. Examples of anchor companies in insurance include ISB Global Services, which offers insurance document sourcing and background screening services and M.B. Plumpton Insurance Consultants, which provides insurance brokerage services.

⁴² Job Bank. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services: Ontario 2016-2018.



Professional Scientific and Technical Services (PSTS) SWOT

| Strengths | Opportunities |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic location in the Golden Horseshoe west of Mississauga with rail, road and air access only 1 hour from the Canada-U.S. border 30 minutes from Waterloo, 30 minutes from the Toronto Pearson International Airport, and 40 minutes from Toronto’s downtown core. ▪ Proximity to universities and colleges including University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph, Humber College, Seneca College, George Brown College, Mohawk College, and Sheridan College. Collectively graduating 118,220 students a year. ▪ Laurier University regards the MEV campus as a catalyst for encouraging creative collisions between business, academic and government partners that lead to innovation, opportunities, and economic growth. ▪ 29% of Milton’s employee-based businesses are STEM-based firms, indicating the community is a destination in the region. The proportion of STEM firms is greater than Markham, Burlington and Mississauga. ▪ Low business risk, only 4 companies noted at average risk by Equifax Business Failure Risk Score (BFRS). ▪ There is a large concentration of professional, scientific, and technical services jobs at 3,427; projected to add 306 jobs by 2028. ▪ Large concentration of PSTS businesses (2,298) with specialization in Computer systems design and related services (1,028 businesses) and Management, scientific and technical consulting services (462 businesses) ▪ Milton ranked 5th on the Talent Index and is ahead of communities including Mississauga and Burlington. Milton’s Talent Index score can be attributed to strengths in the share of the population with a post-secondary degree and share of the population with a post-secondary degree in the fields of science, arts, or business. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accelerating subsectors in PSTS include admin & support, waste mgmt. & remediation services and accommodation and food services. ▪ Workforce concentrations in Computer systems design and related services (2,325 jobs), Architectural, engineering, and related services (1,216 jobs) and Management, scientific and technical consulting services (1,125 jobs). ▪ Cluster development between companies, academia and applied researchers, including the Milton Education Village (MEV) Innovation Centre and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning. ▪ The strategic partnership between MEV and Tech Data, the world’s leading end-to-end distributor of technology products, services and solutions, will bring global expertise in artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security and the Internet of Things (IoT). ▪ Access to a wide variety of quality-of-life amenities and Milton’s rail passenger service, highway access and broadband network support remote worker attraction. ▪ Milton has a high concentration of STEM industries. ▪ Laurier University will offer a Computer Science program in 2022 (now virtual). ▪ Conestoga College has long term plans for a School of Business that will address demand by international students. ▪ 3,040 PSTS workers commute elsewhere to work (2016). ▪ Approved 5-storey (60K sq. ft.) class A office building in High Point presents a unique opportunity in office development. However, the space will only be ready for occupancy in two years |



Professional Scientific and Technical Services (PSTS) SWOT

- Milton ranks 5th on the Creative Index. Milton’s creativity index is comparable to Toronto’s and is higher than Mississauga, Brampton, and Vaughan. Milton leads among comparable communities with 71% female labour force participation.

| Weaknesses | Threats |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The sector is neither highly specialized nor under-specialized. ▪ Many small businesses and commuters make it difficult to engage with the sector. ▪ Lack of new office space in Milton and planned office space coming online only in 2 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hi-tech sectors imported over \$461M while only exporting \$237M, suggesting gaps in local and regional supply chains, which could hamper their ability to export goods and services beyond Canada. ▪ The immigrant population in Milton is below the GTHA and higher than Oakville, Kitchener-Waterloo (KW) and Hamilton. ▪ Oakville and Burlington continue to develop as hubs for this type of employment and investment. |

4.4 Clean Technology

The Cleantech sector includes two broad categories, namely, environmental goods and services (clean electricity, nuclear power generation, biofuels and primary goods, and waste management and remediation services), and clean technology goods and services (manufactured goods, scientific and research and development services, construction services, and support services). Cleantech is a fast-growing global business sector that reduces negative environmental impacts through significant energy efficiency improvements, the sustainable use of resources, or environmental protection activities. Given Milton’s pride in and stewardship of its local natural environment, a focus on fostering Cleantech related businesses and attracting Cleantech investments to Milton is both strategic and opportunistic.

Ontario is a global leader in the clean technology space with economic contributions amounting to \$25.4 billion in GDP, 134,000 employees and 5,000 companies⁴³. Responsible energy management and green innovation are key focuses for Milton, as evidenced by the 2018 Community Energy Plan and partnership with Conestoga College and Laurier University to build a new academic campus that will showcase research and educational programming in this sector. The Laurier University engineering department will focus on environmental sustainability, environmental technology, and related software engineering, while Conestoga College has an existing cleantech-focused engineering program, albeit not in Milton. For Milton, leading sectors of opportunity include engineering, cleantech, energy management, and environmental sciences.

Milton is home to a growing cleantech ecosystem that is anchored by its computer systems design services, residential building construction and engineering services. As a relatively new sector, in terms

⁴³ <https://www.investontario.ca/cleantech>. <https://www.investontario.ca/cleantech>.



of FDI to North America, the sector has accounted for 27 projects since 2015 (fDimarkets). A growth sector across the continent, Milton is well-poised to support local demand in this sector by orienting its ecosystem and assets to respond to wider trends. Specifically in Ontario, wastewater management, green buildings, and energy efficiency (including IoT) stand out as key trends.

Milton’s growing cleantech industry is supported by over 1,200 architectural, engineering, and related services, strong workforce designs, as well as an electric power generation, transmission and distribution workforce made up of 400 workers and over 100 workers in electronics. Within this, a growing subsector in water management is being propelled by the Centre for Watershed Research to be established and water conservation companies such as Smart Watering Systems. Milton is already on its way to filling a key supply chain leakage in the development industry (HVAC) through Laurier University’s launch of a new School of Engineering at MEV with a focus on cleantech and environmental engineering to foster new development in clean and green tech, and sustainability.

Examples of companies beginning to establish a cleantech ecosystem include smart building and energy efficiency is supported by anchor companies such as ROCKWOOL International, a manufacturing company that focuses on environmental protection and green development initiatives. STT Enviro, which engineers and supplies environmental and industrial products and services and Air Separation Technologies, an HVAC company that provides dust collectors and industrial air filtration and control systems. Finally, Eaton Electricals offers electrical systems for power quality, distribution, and control as well as hydraulics components.

| Clean-Technology Sector SWOT | |
|---|--|
| Strengths | Opportunities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic location in the Golden Horseshoe west of Mississauga with rail, road and air access only 1 hour from the Canada-U.S. border 30 minutes from Waterloo, 30 minutes from the Toronto Pearson International Airport, and 40 minutes from Toronto’s downtown core. ▪ Complementary and growing concentrations of Clean Technology sub-sector jobs, including Advanced manufacturing, PSTS and T&L. ▪ Areas of specialization: Computer systems design and related services (except video game design and development), Residential building construction, Engineering services Specialized design services. ▪ Proximity to universities and colleges including University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph, Humber College, Seneca College, George Brown College, Mohawk College, and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cluster development opportunities between companies, academia and applied researchers, including the MEV Innovation Centre and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning ▪ A strategic partnership between MEV and Tech Data, the world’s leading end-to-end distributor of technology products, services and solutions, will bring global expertise in artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security and Internet of Things (IoT) ▪ Access to a wide variety of quality-of-life amenities and Milton’s rail passenger service, highway access and broadband network support remote worker attraction. ▪ The Plastic product manufacturing sectors imported \$5M a year, and Architectural, engineering and related services imported \$8.3M a year, indicating opportunities in the supply chain. |



Clean-Technology Sector SWOT

- Sheridan College. Collectively graduating 118,220 students a year.

 - Laurier University regards the MEV campus as a catalyst for encouraging creative collisions between business, academic and government partners that lead to innovation, opportunities and economic growth.
 - Milton has a high concentration of STEM industries.
 - Milton ranked 5th on the Talent Index and is ahead of communities including Mississauga and Burlington. Milton’s Talent Index score can be attributed to strengths in the share of the population with a post-secondary degree and share of the population with a post-secondary degree in the fields of science, arts, or business.
 - Milton ranks 5th on the Creative Index. Milton’s creativity index is comparable to Toronto’s and is higher than Mississauga, Brampton, and Vaughan. Milton leads among comparable communities with 71% female labour force participation.
- Laurier University plans to launch a new School of Engineering at MEV focusing on cleantech and environmental engineering, focusing on “Planetary Health”, the intersection of human and environmental health. The investment by Laurier represents a once in a generation opportunity to shape a community brand and target investment/businesses in this field.
 - The proposed CN Intermodal facility could be an asset for Clean Technology.
 - Laurier University is working on a new research proposal to establish a “Centre for Watershed Research”, which could be housed within MEV.
 - Laurier University researchers are working with a local engineering firm to support a research project for stormwater management. New methods to be piloted next year in Derry Green Business Park in collaboration with private-sector landowners.
 - Milton is well-poised to fill the market gap in this sector by orienting its ecosystem and assets to respond to market trends in wastewater management, green buildings, and energy efficiency (including IoT).

| Weaknesses | Threats |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of understanding in the market of the definition of Clean Technology, many firms in the region use or support clean technologies but do not see themselves in the definition. ▪ There is currently no large well recognized Clean Technology Firms in the Town. ▪ The Town does not have a reputation as a centre for Clean Technology. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The immigrant population in Milton is below the GTHA and higher than Oakville, Kitchener-Waterloo (KW) and Hamilton. ▪ Hi-tech sectors imported over \$461M while only exporting \$237M, suggesting gaps in local and regional supply chains, which could hamper their ability to export goods and services beyond Canada. ▪ Many GTAH communities are targeting cleantech investment. As Laurier University looks to develop relationships/partnerships across the region, Milton will need to be actively engaged with its business community and economic development partners to ensure the investment is effectively leveraged locally. |



4.5 Creative Industries (Digital Technologies)

Globally, there is a growing trend towards the emergence of the creative industries, focusing on digital technologies as the next large contributor to economic growth and wealth in a community. These industries are a sub-sector of the broader knowledge-based economy and often focus on culture and social development as tactics to foster job growth in a community. Recent research indicates that creative industries (digital technologies) are steadily becoming a key asset for economic developers trying to pitch their communities.

Digital Media plays a significant role in the creative industries, promoting the mutual combination of communications, broadcasting and computer information systems and the digital interactive media consolidation and industry convergence. The digital economy is accelerating and driven by five technologies, Virtual and augmented reality, Artificial intelligence, 5G mobile, 3D printing and Blockchain.

As part of Canada’s Innovation Corridor, Milton is well-positioned to capitalize and build on the digital media and creative industries by leveraging strengths in manufacturing, ICT and PSTS, which form key inputs to the sector. Most GTHA communities focus on creative industries, including Toronto, Hamilton, Markham, Oakville, and Richmond Hill. The sector is identified as a ‘stretch target’ for the community and requires specific and targeted efforts to define, support and grow the creative sector.

| Digital Media & Creative Industries (DM&CI) SWOT | |
|--|--|
| Strengths | Opportunities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic location in the Golden Horseshoe west of Mississauga with rail, road and air access only 1 hour from the Canada-U.S. border 30 minutes from Waterloo, 30 minutes from the Toronto Pearson International Airport, and 40 minutes from Toronto’s downtown core. 23% of Milton businesses are high-tech, indicating the community is a destination in the region. The proportion of high-tech firms is greater in Milton than the Burlington, Richmond Hill, Markham, and Mississauga. Proximity to universities and colleges including University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph, Humber College, Seneca College, George Brown College, Mohawk College, and Sheridan College. Collectively graduate 118,220 students a year. Laurier University regards the MEV campus as a catalyst for encouraging creative collisions between business, academic and government partners that lead to innovation, opportunities and economic growth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to a wide variety of quality-of-life amenities and Milton’s rail passenger service, highway access and broadband network support remote worker attraction. The DM&CI sector has concentrations in graphic design services, motion picture and video production, architectural services, and advertising agencies. Cluster development opportunities between companies, academia and applied researchers, including the Milton Education Village (MEV) Innovation Centre and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning. The innovation hub at MEV will include tech transfer, commercialization and pure research functions. A strategic partnership between MEV and Tech Data, the world’s leading end-to-end distributor of technology products, |



Digital Media & Creative Industries (DM&CI) SWOT

- Knowledge workers make up 52% of Milton’s total workforce, while technology-oriented workers make up 10%.
- 64% of Milton’s population 15 years or older have a post-secondary degree.
- Milton ranked 4th on the Creative Index comparable to Toronto and higher than the GTHA average.
- Milton has 144 Arts, entertainment and recreation businesses and Information and cultural industries, 135 businesses.
- Milton leads among comparable communities with 71% female labour force participation.
- Out of 13 comparable communities, Milton ranked 5th on the talent index score ahead of the GTHA, indicating the town has capitalized on talent-related industries and a more diverse industry base that attracts all types of skills.
- services and solutions, to bring global expertise in artificial intelligence (AI), cyber security and Internet of Things (IoT)
- 1,110 (2016) ICT workers commute out of Milton to work, suggesting a lack of local employment opportunities.

| Weaknesses | Threats |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Milton is only expected to add 11 new ICT jobs by 2028. ▪ There is a lack of awareness of the DM&CI sector in Milton. ▪ Lack of affordable housing and car dependency has led to higher wage rates, turn-over and growing reliance on temp agencies to fill positions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The immigrant population in Milton is below the GTHA and higher than Oakville, Kitchener-Waterloo (KW) and Hamilton. ▪ Milton’s workforce ranked 2nd on the Technology Index. Higher than the GTHA average and ranks higher than Burlington, Richmond Hill, and Markham. Oakville ranks highest as a destination for the hi-tech sector. ▪ Lack of start-up culture ‘vibe’. |



5. Proposed Strategic Directions and Tactics

The following section highlights strategic directions and tactics that can help propel Milton forward onto the regional, national and global stages. These practices can be adopted in whole or in part dependent upon resource availability and the extent to which Milton wishes to undertake a comprehensive FDI attraction in the future. Any effort to enhance investment readiness will not be wasted as it will support both a proactive and reactive approach to investment attraction and is likely to strengthen the case for other economic development efforts such as talent attraction and workforce development.

Planning and Land Use Considerations

- As identified in the Halton Region 2020 Investment Readiness and ELS study, continue to recognize the importance of Employment Areas in accommodating knowledge-based sectors and higher-order employment in addition to traditional industrial sectors.
 - Ensure O.P. policies allow for a degree of flexibility and nimbleness that enables a rapid response to disruptive factors. It is challenging to specify the type and nature of planning policies required to accommodate the changing nature of employment and knowledge-based sectors.
- Building on the [2017 Land Base Analysis](#), undertake an employment lands strategy to identify and assess the provision for commercial, community, and institutional uses within Employment Areas.
- Review the feasibility of a Community Improvement Plan to incentivize higher density non-residential development around the town's GO Stations
- Continue to advocate with Halton Region that the Town's white belt lands be brought into the urban boundary
- Work with Halton Region to have the Milton/401 Industrial Park Expansion Lands serviced.
- Consider servicing requirements of target industries through the land development process and identify best-suited areas to target industries in marketing materials.
- Consider the development of investment incentive programming to attract target industries.
- As identified in the Halton Region 2020 Investment Readiness and ELS study, work in collaboration with the Region to plan and advance Greenfield Innovation Districts, including the Milton Education Village in Milton, in accordance with the market opportunities.

Data Considerations

- Build on Milton's online [data hub](#) tool to showcase Milton's target sectors and sub-sectors and existing business support systems. In addition to being a marketing tool and a critical input to an investment agenda, the data will ensure that existing firms are aware of key service providers and local/regional supply chain linkages.
- Develop investor-focused marketing materials in target sectors. Align these more specific attraction materials to larger regional campaigns. Work with Halton Region to leverage economies of scale to market Milton and build business relationships beyond the GTHA.



- Develop an online inventory of available land, building and office and commercial sites and spaces and profile them on the Town's website ([data hub](#)).

Investment Attraction Tactics and Considerations

- Create a multi-touch marketing campaign in a variety of formats across different mediums.
 - This includes websites that highlight unique selling points on a sectoral basis, local success stories, calls to action and benchmarking data; webinars that showcase lead generation activity and drive traffic to economic development website; telephone campaigns for promotion and outreach; email campaigns that drive traffic to the website and social media and content marketing that utilises automated emails, banners, search engine marketing, pay per click and re-targeting.
- Customise outreach approach for each company, including contacting relevant leads with a compelling and targeted pitch, using multiple avenues of outreach, i.e., phone, email, and LinkedIn and following up on outreach.
 - Engage existing businesses in investment attraction/FDI targeting activities.
- Initiate a sector-based lead generation program that focuses on lead nurturing and building and maintaining effective and strategic relationships with individuals who may not be ready to expand or could present as ideal prospects in the future.
 - Nurturing tactics could include gathering information about the prospect and educating the prospects for Milton; gaining an intrinsic understanding of the prospect's needs and objectives; positioning Milton as a trusted advisor to prospects and a reliable source of support and information; and building awareness and promoting Milton's unique offerings.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date ecosystem inventory with information related to the number of foreign-owned companies by sector, the number of Canadian companies by sector, level of export activity, business support services, labs, incubators and innovation support.
- Ensure all data collected from lead generation activities are stored in a Client Relationship Management program to track progress, ensure follow-up, and maintain organizational intelligence connected to Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) programming.
- Develop a robust profile for each of the town's employment areas showcasing transportation access, power supply and internet speed, and associated development and operating costs.
- Work with the property owners to effectively brand the Milton Education Village as an innovation district designed to accelerate the development of a knowledge-based economy of the future in Milton.

Workforce Considerations

- Leverage the flexible Joint Intellectual Property Policy of Laurier University and Conestoga College to drive research into commercialization and entrepreneurship.
- Develop a labour market information database to support program development and investment attraction.



- Work in partnership with Peel Halton Workforce Development Group (PHWDG) and the Centre for Skills Development to develop initiatives that provide opportunities for the evolving knowledge-based economy, training and retraining for the workforce and support industry's skills needs.
- Implement a sector-based Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program that includes regular engagement with local businesses about their ongoing workforce needs.

Events, Associations and Key Performance Measures

- Milton can begin expanding its network and FDI attraction efforts through attending the following events and building connections with the following organisations.
 - Events
 - i) Logistics CIO Forum: North America, Austin, Texas, November 2021
 - ii) Supply Chain Event, Paris, France, November 2021
 - iii) Commercial UAV Expo, Amsterdam, Netherlands, December 2021
 - iv) AHR Expo, Las Vegas, USA, January 2022
 - v) World Water-Tech Innovation Summit, London, UK, February 2022
 - vi) Automate, Detroit, USA, June 2022
 - vii) Automatica, Munich, June 2022
 - viii) Cloud Computing World Expo, TBD, October 2022
 - ix) Drone Expo, London, UK, October 2022
 - x) Insurance AI and Innovative Tech, TBD, USA, 2022
 - Associations
 - i) Next Generation Manufacturing Canada
 - ii) Automate Canada
 - iii) AMPA Canada
 - iv) Ontario Water Consortium
 - v) Ontario Environment Industry Association
 - vi) Vector Institute for Artificial Intelligence
 - vii) Information Technology Association of Canada
- Focus on key performance metrics to track FDI Projects to include:
 - Number of new foreign investments, number of jobs created, and (where possible) the value of these investments.
 - Number of new investments announced in the previous quarter and previous 12 months,
 - Number of jobs created, and (where possible) the value of these investments.



- Number of re-investments and disinvestments announced in the previous quarter and previous 12 months, number of new (or lost) jobs, and (where possible) the value of these re-investments and disinvestments.
- New projects being tracked
- Projects that are, for practical purposes, frozen (i.e., no decision is expected for at least two years) or dead (i.e., the investor has decided not to invest)

