



Mississippi
Mills

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2031 AND BEYOND

A MM2048 Project

www.mississippimills.ca/EcDev

Prepared by:

Economic Development Department
Municipality of Mississippi Mills

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of the Plan

The Mississippi Mills Economic Development Strategic Plan provides a framework to guide economic growth and resilience toward 2048, aligned with the community's MM2048 vision.

This plan outlines a first phase of actions for 2026–2031, designed to build the foundation for long-term economic prosperity.

Purpose and Scope

This strategic plan establishes a clear economic vision for Mississippi Mills, identifying key sectors, strategic priorities, and targeted actions to foster a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable local economy.

The plan is informed by extensive public engagement, including Public Information Centres (PICs), stakeholder consultations, and community feedback gathered through interactive boards and surveys.

Importantly, the actions identified for 2026–2031 are intended to position the community for continued success beyond the plan period, supporting the broader MM2048 vision.

Community-Driven and Collaborative

Led by the Municipality and supported by a wide range of stakeholders; including local businesses, educational institutions, community organizations, and residents, the plan emphasizes collaboration.

The Municipality's role will evolve throughout implementation, acting as a leader, facilitator, collaborator, supporter, and advocate, depending on the objective and context.

Strategic Alignment

The plan aligns with the Mississippi Mills Council's 2023–2027 Strategic Plan, which prioritizes:

- Safe and Sustainable infrastructure and services
- Connected and Engaged communities
- Prosperous and Resilient local economies
- Inclusive and Accessible opportunities
- Accountable and Transparent governance

Economic Vision

Mississippi Mills will be a thriving hub of innovation, culture, and community, where economic development is inclusive, environmentally responsible, and deeply rooted in local identity.

Through a phased and adaptive approach, the actions undertaken between 2026 and 2031 will lay the groundwork for long-term economic prosperity leading to 2048 and beyond.



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DATA SOURCES



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DATA SOURCES

The development of the Mississippi Mills *Economic Development Strategic Plan* was guided by a combination of extensive community engagement and robust data analysis, ensuring that the goals, actions, and outcomes reflect both local aspirations and economic realities.

Public Information Centres (PICs)

Two PICs were held in spring 2025 as part of the MM2048 initiative:

- April 30, 2025 – John Levi Community Centre, Almonte
 - Focus: Updates on master plans including Economic Development, Official Plan Amendments, and infrastructure strategies.
- June 16, 2025 – Stewart Community Centre, Pakenham
 - Focus: Community feedback on rural vitality, tourism, and sector-specific strategies.

Both events featured interactive boards, mapping exercises, and direct engagement with municipal staff and consultants. While attendance numbers were not published, the sessions were widely promoted and generated valuable input that directly informed the strategic goals and implementation framework.

MM2048 Engagement Boards

Community input gathered through MM2048 boards highlighted priorities such as:

- Supporting local artisans and makers
- Improving signage and wayfinding
- Enhancing cultural programming
- Investing in infrastructure and broadband



Business Survey Summary

A targeted business survey collected 99 responses across all three wards:

- Almonte – 52
- Ramsay – 28
- Pakenham – 19

Respondents represented a wide range of sectors, including retail, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, health care, home-based businesses, and trades. The survey provided statistically relevant insights into business challenges, growth plans, and support needs.

Demographic and Labour Market Data

Census data and regional labour reports informed projections for population growth, workforce participation, and sector-specific employment trends. These data points helped shape strategies for housing, infrastructure, and workforce development.

Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) Sector Data

To support the emerging Long-Term Care and Seniors Living strategy, the Municipality incorporated sector-wide data and economic impact research from the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA). OLTCA's provincial modelling provided insight into:

- projected demand for long-term care beds
- workforce needs for PSWs, nurses, and support staff
- the economic contribution of LTC as a major employer
- the role of LTC development in rural economic resilience

This information strengthened the evidence base for local LTC planning and helped align municipal strategies with provincial trends and demographic realities.

Financial Information Return (FIR) Data

The FIR is an annual report submitted by Ontario municipalities to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It provides standardized financial data on revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities, and reserves. FIR data is useful for assessing municipal fiscal health, comparing trends, and supporting evidence-based planning.

SWOT Analysis

A comprehensive review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was developed using stakeholder feedback, survey results, OLTCA sector data, and municipal information. This analysis guided the identification of strategic priorities and sector-specific actions.

KEY GOALS AND OUTCOMES



KEY GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The Mississippi Mills Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines a set of strategic goals and desired outcomes that reflect the community's values, priorities, and aspirations for long-term prosperity. These goals are informed by public engagement through MM2048, including feedback from Public Information Centres (PICs), and align with the Municipality's broader strategic direction.

These seven goals are:

1. Strengthen Key Economic Sectors
2. Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth
3. Celebrate Community Identity and Culture
4. Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness
5. Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce
6. Enhance Branding and Promotion
7. Advance Environmental Sustainability

1

GOAL: STRENGTHEN KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

Goal: Support and grow foundational sectors that drive local employment, innovation, and long-term economic resilience.

Outcomes:

- **Health Care Sector Strengthened:** Advocate for improved access to health care facilities and professionals, and work with regional partners to attract and retain health care workers. Support wellness-oriented businesses such as fitness centers and clinics through promotion and planning tools.
- **Long Term Care and Seniors Living Sector Expanded:** Support the attraction and growth of long-term care and seniors-living facilities that generate stable employment, strengthen local service capacity, and contribute to the community's long-term economic resiliency.

- **Tourism Sector Expanded:** Support marketing campaigns to highlight local attractions, collaborate with operators to expand accommodations (e.g., boutique hotels, B&Bs), and encourage new attractions and support festivals through planning and partnerships.
- **Agriculture & Rural Businesses Supported:** Promote agri-tech innovation, advocate for improved rural infrastructure (e.g., internet, transportation), and support agritourism and on-farm diversified uses to facilitate direct-to-consumer sales through local campaigns.
- **Downtowns & Small Businesses Revitalized:** Continue to enhance streetscapes and public spaces, advocate for affordable commercial space, streamline permitting processes, and support joint marketing and networking initiatives.
- **Commercial Vitality Through Mixed-Use Development:** Continue to remove barriers to residential development in commercial areas to increase foot traffic, expand local customer base in a walkable radius, support/encourage longer business hours, and strengthen the overall economic performance of commercial districts.
- **Manufacturing & Niche Food Production:** Promote investment in employment areas, support food innovation and value-added production, and facilitate workforce development through partnerships with educational institutions.
- **Industrial & Construction Sectors Activated:** Explore Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentives for large employers and industrial developments, align zoning and planning policies with employment growth, and support trades through workforce development and recognition programs.
- **Home-Based Enterprises Celebrated:** Provide resources for business planning and marketing, advocate for improved broadband access, modernize zoning requirements, and promote home-based businesses through local campaigns and recognition.





2

GOAL: STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXISTING BUSINESSES AND SUPPORT THEIR GROWTH

Goal: Build lasting relationships with local businesses by improving communication, delivering targeted support, and fostering long-term growth through engagement, data, and recognition.

Outcomes:

- **Business Engagement Strategy Developed:** Create and implement a structured approach to regularly engage with local businesses, including surveys, roundtables, and one-on-one visits to understand their needs, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Program Launched:** Establish begin to plan for a BR+E to identify at-risk businesses, support expansion plans, and connect businesses with relevant resources and funding opportunities. Support Lanark County through their BR&E process, implement and action findings.
- **Business Registry Process Launched:** Develop and promote a voluntary business registry to better understand the local business landscape, improve communication, and tailor support programs.
- **Business Support Resource Hub Created:** Develop an online and physical resource center that consolidates information on grants, training, mentorship, and other supports available to local businesses.
- **Annual Business Health Report Published:** Collect and analyze data on business performance, workforce needs, and sector trends to inform policy and program development.
- **Business Recognition and Promotion Enhanced:** Continue to recognize and celebrate business longevity through existing awards programs, while investigating additional ways to celebrate and promote local business success (e.g., spotlight features, social media campaigns, local media partnerships).
- **Business Networking and Education Opportunities Expanded:** Increase access to meaningful networking and learning opportunities for the local business community through continuing regularly delivered events that strengthen connections, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration.



3

GOAL: CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Goal: Promote a strong sense of place by honoring local heritage and fostering cultural expression.

Outcomes:

- Continued investment in interpretive signage at historical and cultural sites.
- Leverage the cultural heritage of downtown Almonte as a Heritage Conservation District to support placemaking, tourism, and economic vitality.
- Increased inclusion and visibility of newcomer cultures within community events and programming.
- Regular hosting and support for community led festivals, events, and markets.
- Increased visibility and support for Indigenous history and contributions.
- Continued growth in creative industries and local arts initiatives.

4

GOAL: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENT READINESS

Goal: Ensure Mississippi Mills is equipped to support sustainable growth and attract investment.

Outcomes:

- Continued advocacy for broadband and transportation infrastructure.
- Serviced and accessible employment lands available and planned for the future (including both municipal land and private land).
- Alignment with planning policies to support rural vitality, evolution of rural villages.
- Streamlined development processes and removal of barriers for development.
- The Municipality's rural land base is well utilized to support a diverse range of employment uses with low water and servicing requirements, accommodating businesses that benefit from large parcels, flexible land configurations, and rural operating environments.



5

GOAL: DEVELOP A SKILLED AND RESILIENT WORKFORCE

Goal: Align workforce development with local industry needs and future opportunities.

Outcomes:

- Strong partnerships with educational institutions and training providers, including pathways for PSWs, nurses, and geriatric-care workers.
- Increased youth engagement in entrepreneurship, employment, and health-care career exploration.
- Workforce strategies that support diversity, inclusion, and newcomer participation across all sectors.
- Additional childcare spaces, either private or municipally operated, to enable workforce participation.
- Improved access to workforce housing and transportation options for key sectors such as long-term care, health care, and service industries.

6

GOAL: ENHANCE BRANDING AND PROMOTION

Goal: Position Mississippi Mills as a premier destination to live, work, and invest.

Outcomes:

- Cohesive branding strategy that reflects local identity.
- Increased visibility through tourism marketing and “shop local” campaigns.
- Stronger online presence and digital engagement for local businesses
- The Municipality’s diverse land base is seen as a competitive advantage over neighbouring fully serviced communities. Mississippi Mills offers a mix of serviced and unserviced land options. For employment uses with low water requirements, unserviced lands provide opportunities for lower land acquisition costs, reduced development charges, and greater flexibility in site design.

7

GOAL: ADVANCE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal: Promote eco-conscious economic development and stewardship of natural resources.

Outcomes:

- Recognition of businesses adopting sustainable practices.
- Support for green infrastructure, eco-tourism opportunities and climate-resilient agriculture.
- Integration of environmental goals into business and land-use planning.



ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



ALIGNMENT WITH MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Mississippi Mills *Economic Development Strategic Plan* is deeply aligned with the Municipality's **2023–2027 Strategic Plan**, which outlines five guiding principles to shape all municipal initiatives. These principles—**Safe and Sustainable, Connected and Engaged, Prosperous and Resilient, Inclusive and Accessible**, and **Accountable and Transparent**—are reflected throughout the economic development strategy.

SAFE & SUSTAINABLE

The plan supports sustainability through:

- Advocacy for broadband and transportation infrastructure improvements.
- Promotion of green infrastructure, eco-tourism opportunities and climate-resilient agriculture.
- Support for eco-friendly business practices and energy conservation. These initiatives align with the Municipality's Climate Action Plan and commitment to environmental stewardship.

WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, ACTIVE & HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Inclusivity is embedded in the plan's goals:

- Workforce development strategies focus on youth, equity, and access to training.
- Cultural initiatives celebrate Indigenous history and diverse community voices.
- Infrastructure improvements aim to enhance accessibility in public and commercial spaces.





MODERN, EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

Communication is a fundamental component to efficient and effective municipal operations. This means that community engagement is central to the plan’s development and implementation:

- Public Information Centres (PICs) and interactive boards informed strategic priorities.
- Cultural programming, festivals, and heritage signage foster civic pride and participation.
- Branding and wayfinding initiatives enhance community connectivity and identity.



SUPPORT A VIBRANT & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

Inclusivity is embedded in the plan’s goals:

- Workforce development strategies focus on youth, equity, and access to training.
- Cultural initiatives celebrate Indigenous history and diverse community voices.
- Infrastructure improvements aim to enhance accessibility in public and commercial spaces.



ACCOUNTABLE & TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE

The plan includes clear metrics and a phased implementation framework:

- Defined roles for the Municipality (leader, facilitator, collaborator, supporter, advocate).
- Transparent reporting and performance measurement.
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and feedback loops to ensure responsiveness and accountability.



ALIGNMENT WITH MM2048

The Mississippi Mills *Economic Development Strategic Plan* is deeply aligned with the broader *MM2048* initiative and the *2023–2027 Strategic Plan*, both of which set the foundation for sustainable, inclusive, and forward-looking growth across the municipality.

MM2048 Integration

MM2048 is a comprehensive planning framework guiding Mississippi Mills through the next 25 years of growth. It encompasses themes such as **How We Grow**, **How We Prosper**, **How We Fund**, and **How We Flow**, each addressing critical aspects of municipal development. The *Economic Development Strategic Plan* supports *MM2048* by:

- **Identifying economic opportunities** across sectors including agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and creative industries.
- **Recommending strategic priorities and actions** that foster investment readiness, business retention and expansion, and workforce development.
- **Supporting infrastructure planning**, including employment lands, broadband expansion, and transportation solutions.
- **Promoting managed growth** that respects heritage, culture, and the environment—core values of *MM2048*.



VISION & MISSION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES



VISION AND MISSION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Vision Statement

Mississippi Mills envisions a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable economy that celebrates its unique heritage, fosters innovation, and enhances the quality of life for all residents. The community will thrive through collaboration, creativity, and responsible growth, becoming a destination to live, work, invest, and explore.

Mission Statement

To lead and collaborate with stakeholders in implementing strategic actions that promote economic growth, resilience, and prosperity across all sectors of the community. The Municipality will act as a **leader, facilitator, collaborator, supporter, and advocate**, depending on the objective and context, ensuring that economic development is community-driven and future-focused

Guiding Principles

These principles for the *Economic Development Strategic Plan* reflect the values of both the *2023–2027 Strategic Plan* and the *MM2048* initiative:

Safe and Sustainable

We commit to environmentally responsible growth, infrastructure investment, and climate-conscious business practices that ensure long-term community well-being.

Connected and Engaged

We foster meaningful engagement with residents, businesses, and organizations, ensuring that economic development reflects community input and builds civic pride.

Prosperous and Resilient

We support a diverse and adaptable economy by investing in key sectors, promoting entrepreneurship, and preparing for future challenges and opportunities.

Inclusive and Accessible

We ensure that economic opportunities are available to all, regardless of age, ability, background, or location, and celebrate the cultural richness of our community.

Accountable and Transparent

We uphold integrity and openness in decision-making, planning, and implementation, with clear metrics and regular reporting to the public.



COMMUNITY PROFILE



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Mississippi Mills is a unique blend of urban charm and rural beauty, located in the heart of Lanark County. The municipality encompasses the historic town of Almonte, the villages of Pakenham, Blakeney, Clayton, Appleton, and picturesque rural farmlands, offering a rich tapestry of heritage, culture, and natural landscapes.

Geographic and Strategic Location

Situated just 20 minutes from Kanata and 40 minutes from downtown Ottawa, Mississippi Mills benefits from proximity to major urban centres while maintaining its small-town character. This strategic location supports both commuter lifestyles and local enterprise, making it an attractive destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

Community Character

Mississippi Mills is recognized for:



Its natural and architectural beauty



A high quality of life



A strong sense of community and cooperation



Deep respect for heritage and the environment

The community is home to heritage homes, quiet residential streets, prosperous farms, and rolling countryside, offering a lifestyle that balances tranquility with opportunity.

Economic Diversity

The local economy is characterized by:



Unique retailers and
artisan businesses



A growing manufacturing
and niche food sector



A vibrant tourism industry
rooted in culture, history,
and outdoor recreation



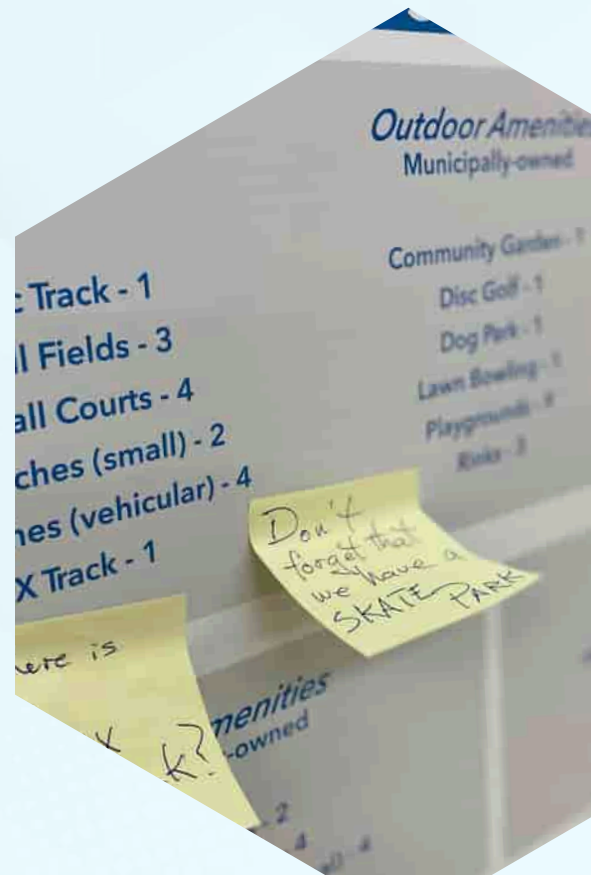
A supportive environment
for small and home-
based businesses

Mississippi Mills also hosts world-class artists and puppeteers, reflecting its commitment to creative industries and cultural expression.

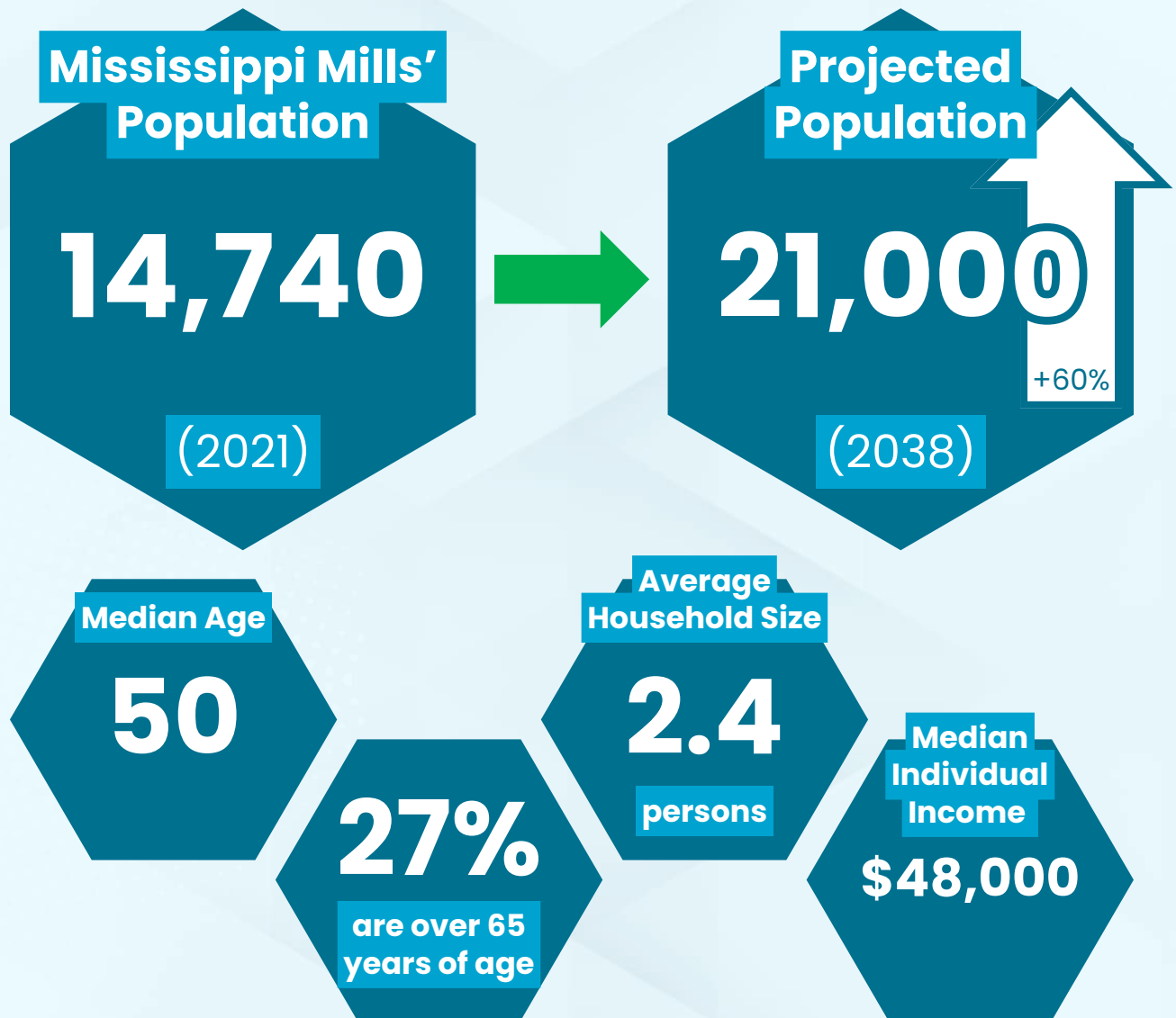
Growth and Planning

Under the *MM2048* initiative, Mississippi Mills is planning for sustainable growth over the next 25 years. This includes:

- Infrastructure expansion (e.g., water, wastewater, transportation)
- Investment in employment lands and housing
- Strategic financial planning to support long-term service delivery
- Community engagement through Public Information Centres (PICs) and stakeholder collaboration



Demographics and Data



Mississippi Mills has a population of approximately 14,740 (2021 Census), with projections estimating growth to over 21,000 by 2038—a 60% increase from 2018. Almonte, the largest urban settlement, is expected to absorb most of this growth due to its full municipal servicing. The community has a median age of 50, with nearly 27% of residents aged 65 and over, indicating a mature population. Household sizes average 2.4 persons, and the majority of dwellings are single-detached homes. The median individual income is \$48,800, and a high proportion of residents live in married or common-law households. These trends highlight the need for strategic planning in housing, infrastructure, and services to support a growing and evolving population.

FORECASTED POPULATION GROWTH

Mississippi Mills Population Projections

Projection Period	Estimated Population - Almonte	Estimated Population Growth - Almonte	Estimated Population - Mississippi Mills	Estimated Population Growth - Mississippi Mills
Existing (2021 Census)	6,098	N/A	14,740	N/A
Short-Term (2023-2028)	8,030	32%	17,455	18%
Mid-Term (2028-2038)	11,047	81%	21,309	45%
Long-Term (2038-2048)	13,550	122%	25,173	71%

Source: Population Projection for 2048 for Economic Development Vision, Prepared by J. L. Richards



Lanark County Relative Population Growth

Relative Growth	Lanark County Lower-Tier Municipalities	Population Growth (2021-2051)
#1	Carleton Place	81.9%
#2	Mississippi Mills	68.5%
#3	Perth	59.1%
#4	Beckwith	48.9%
#5	Lanark Highlands	42.2%
#6	Drummond / North Elmsley	40.9%
#7	Montague	34.4%
#8	Tay Valley	30.1%

Source: Growth Management Study, 2023
Prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

Historic Ontario Relative Population Growth

Relative Growth	Municipality	Population Growth (2016-2021)
#1	Carleton Place	17.6%
#2	Oshawa	17.0%
#3	Mississippi Mills	12.0%
#4	Vaughan	11.3%
#5	Brampton	10.6%
#6	Kitchener	9.8%
#7	Ottawa	8.9%
#8	Barrie	8.4%

Source: 2023 Roll Return Fact Sheet
Prepared by Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC)



ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Mississippi Mills boasts a diverse and resilient economy rooted in its unique blend of rural heritage and urban proximity. Located in Lanark County and just minutes from Ottawa, the municipality benefits from strategic access to major markets while maintaining a strong local identity. The economy is shaped by a mix of traditional sectors, creative industries, and emerging opportunities.

Key Economic Sectors

- **Small Business & Retail:** The backbone of Mississippi Mills' economy includes a vibrant network of independent retailers, artisan shops, and service providers. These businesses contribute to the town's character and support local employment.
- **Manufacturing & Niche Food Production:** A growing manufacturing base includes niche food producers and light industrial operations, many of which are expanding due to available employment lands and supportive infrastructure planning.
- **Agriculture:** The Municipality is home to prosperous farms and agricultural enterprises, with a focus on sustainable practices and local food initiatives.
- **Tourism & Culture:** Tourism is a vital economic driver, supported by heritage architecture, festivals, outdoor recreation, and a thriving arts scene. Mississippi Mills is known for its world-class puppeteers, musicians, and visual artists.
- **Construction & Health Care:** Regional labour market data highlights construction and health care as top employment sectors, reflecting both population growth and aging demographics.

Labour Force & Employment

Mississippi Mills has a labour force of approximately 7,295 people, with an employment rate of 55.9% and a participation rate of 60.4%. The unemployment rate stands at 7.6%, slightly above the provincial average, but reflective of seasonal and rural employment dynamics.

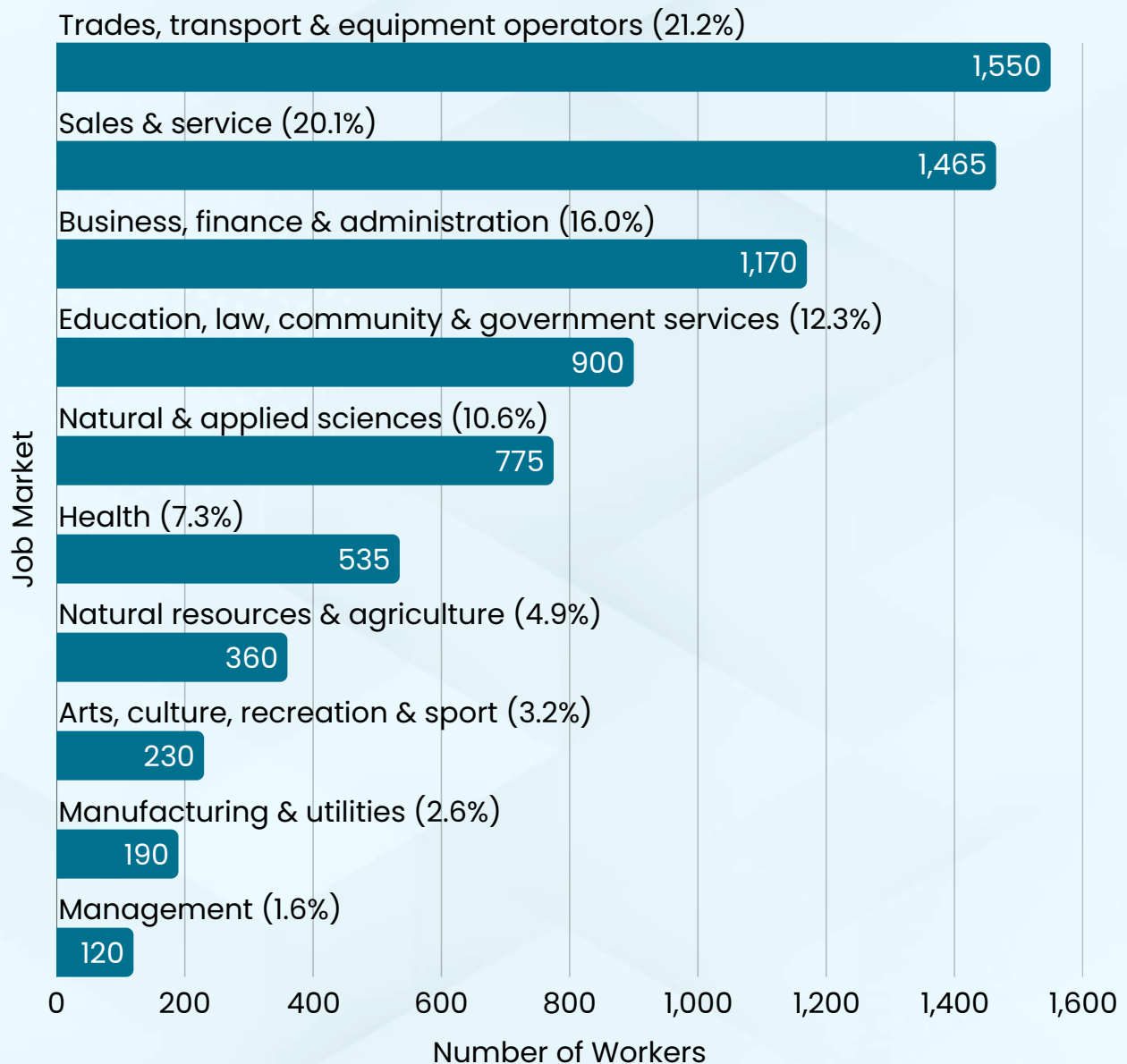
Most residents commute by car, with peak travel times between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., and about 1,250 people work locally.

Occupation Sectors (by Major Category)

Top sectors (2021):

1. Trades and transport – the largest with 21.2%
2. Sales and service – next largest at 20.1%
3. Business, finance and administration – 16.0%

MISSISSIPPI MILLS WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS (2021 CENSUS)



Income & Business Environment

The median individual income is \$48,800, and the median household income is approximately \$100,000.

The Municipality supports a healthy mix of home-based businesses and commercial enterprises, with real estate and construction among the largest industries by business count. Public administration and health care also play key roles in local employment.

Growth & Investment

Under the MM2048 initiative, Mississippi Mills is planning for significant growth, with population projections reaching over 21,000 by 2038. This growth is supported by investments in infrastructure, housing, and employment lands. Strategic planning includes:

- Expansion of water and wastewater systems
- Development of serviced industrial and commercial lands
- Support for creative industries and tourism
- Broadband and digital infrastructure improvements

Mississippi Mills is well-positioned to attract new investment while preserving its unique character and quality of life. The municipality's commitment to sustainable development, community engagement, and economic diversification ensures a strong foundation for future prosperity.

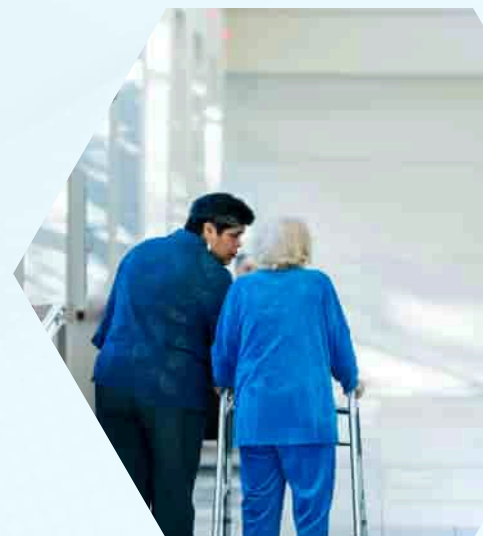
Long-Term Care Employment and Economic Impact

Long-term care is a significant and growing component of Ontario's health care system and local economic development landscape. Industry estimates suggest that each long-term care bed supports significant staffing and related economic activity through both direct care positions and indirect employment impacts.

According to the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA), Ontario's long-term care sector employs more than 100,000 people across nursing, personal support work, food services, maintenance, administration, recreation, and allied health professions.

The sector also generates substantial broader economic benefits. OLTCA estimates that long-term care homes contribute approximately 166,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs across Ontario and generate more than \$12.4 billion in annual GDP impact province-wide.

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As Ontario’s population continues to age, demand for long-term care services is expected to increase significantly. OLTC projects that demand for long-term care spaces will rise by an average of 38% across Ontario between 2019 and 2029, resulting in a need for more than 30,000 additional long-term care spaces across the province.

The expansion and modernization of long-term care facilities creates additional economic benefits through construction activity, professional services, supply chain spending, and long-term skilled employment opportunities. In rural and small urban communities, long-term care homes can serve as important institutional employers while helping residents remain in their communities as they age.

Commercial Land (in CAD)

CVA*	Municipal Taxes	Education Taxes	Total Commercial Taxes	PILs**
\$76,512,382	\$818,581	\$673,490	\$2,053,795	\$252,384

***Current Value Assessment (CVA):** This is the assessed market value of all commercial properties in that municipality.

****Payments-in-Lieu (PIL):** amounts paid by certain properties (often government-owned or exempt from regular taxation) instead of standard property taxes.

Small Commercial Base

Mississippi Mills’ CVA of commercial properties (\$76.5M) is the lowest among five comparable municipalities: North Grenville, Loyalist, Carleton Place, and Arnprior.

Additionally, the Municipality’s total commercial taxes (\$2.05M) is modest compared to Carleton Place (\$5.83M) and North Grenville (\$4.09M).

Municipality	Mississippi Mills	Carleton Place	North Grenville
Total Commercial Taxes	\$2,050,000	\$5,830,000	\$4,090,000

High PILS Relative to CVA

A PILS of \$252,000 is significant for a municipality with a small commercial footprint, such as Mississippi Mills. This indicates a presence of government or institutional properties that do not or cannot pay regular taxes.

Tax Mix

Education taxes (\$673,000) represent about 33% of total commercial taxes, similar to other municipalities.

Commercial Share of Total Taxable Assessment

This section quantifies how much of total taxable assessment (CVA) is in the commercial class. Expressed in an percentage, this is calculated as:

$$\text{Commercial Class \%} = \frac{\text{Commercial CVA}}{\text{Total Taxable CVA across all classes}}$$

Payments-in-Lieu (PIL) and exempt properties are excluded from the denominator.

Year	Commercial CVA	Total Taxable CVA	Commercial Share (%)	Notes
2023	\$78,203,582	\$2,262,529,918	3.46%	From 2023 assessed values by class; PIL/exempt excluded.

Economic Development Municipal Reserves

The Economic Development Reserve Funds have been earmarked to support future strategic economic development initiatives within the municipality.

These funds can be used to advance priorities that strengthen the local economy, support community growth, and respond to emerging opportunities, including serving as seed funding for the potential purchase and development of industrial or commercial lands when needed.

Maintaining these reserves has put the municipality in a strong position to respond proactively to economic development opportunities and support long-term economic sustainability and competitiveness.

	EcDev	Bus. Park	Total
Balance forward	\$561,813	\$201,595	
Sale of Registry Office	\$383,809		
Sale of 31 Frank Davis	\$122,742		
Sale Adelaide Menzies		\$1,146,630	
Sale Bus. Park		\$385,010	
Current Overall Balance	\$1,242,369	\$1,783,235	\$3,025,603
Total committed	\$174,004	\$50,000	\$224,004
Total Available	\$1,068,364	\$1,733,235	\$2,801,599

SWOT ANALYSIS



SWOT ANALYSIS

Using the feedback collected via the business survey conducted, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was done to identify the Municipality's strategic position and its viable next steps.

Strengths

(characteristics of Mississippi Mills that gives it an advantage over others)

- **Diverse Economic Base:** Includes agriculture, retail, manufacturing, tourism, and creative industries.
- **Flexible Land Base:** Availability of unserviced employment lands provides cost-competitive development opportunities for uses with low water requirements.
- **Strong Community Identity:** Businesses and residents value heritage, culture, and environmental sustainability.
- **Proximity to Ottawa:** Strategic location supports commuter lifestyles and access to urban markets.
- **Locally Owned Businesses:** High proportion of long-established, locally operated businesses with deep community ties.
- **Supportive Community:** Businesses report strong local support and a welcoming atmosphere.s aligns with provincial trends, strengthening the case for local LTC and seniors-living development.
- **Agricultural Innovation:** Farms are adopting new technologies (e.g., robotic milking, high-efficiency evaporators) with support from initiatives like Agri-Tech Innovation.
- **Tourism Assets:** Rich cultural offerings, heritage architecture, and outdoor recreation attract visitors.
- **Strong Regional Support Network:** Local and regional organizations—including Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, the Lanark County Tourism Association, the Chamber of Commerce, and sector-specific partners—provide high-quality programming, advocacy, and collaboration that strengthen business growth and community development.
- **LTC Economic Contribution Potential:** Long-term care is part of a \$12.4-billion provincial economic engine, indicating strong sector stability and long-term viability for local job creation and service growth. Hospital and existing seniors living and LTC facilities creates a skilled workforce in health that can be leveraged to other facilities.
- **Alignment With Local Demographics:** An aging population in Mississippi Mills aligns with provincial trends, strengthening the case for local LTC and seniors-living development.

Weaknesses

(characteristics that place Mississippi Mills at a disadvantage relative to others)

- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Challenges with municipal services, building permits, and infrastructure support, especially in Pakenham and Ramsay. Commercial / industrial land that is developable is in short supply. The Municipal business park has limited supply with no land identified for future employment lands owned by the Municipality.
- **Limited Commercial Space:** High rental costs and lack of available space hinder business expansion.
- **Connectivity Issues:** Poor internet and cell service in rural areas affects business operations and growth.
- **Workforce Challenges:** Difficulty hiring and retaining employees, especially for small and seasonal businesses.
- **Awareness and Engagement:** Limited awareness of support organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and inconsistent engagement with municipal staff.
- **Low Current Value Assessment for commercial properties** compared to other similar and neighbouring municipalities
- **Workforce Housing & Transportation Gaps:** LTC and seniors' care facilities rely on PSWs, nurses, dietary staff, and support workers—roles often filled by lower-wage employees who may struggle with Mississippi Mills' limited affordable housing and lack of transit options.
- **Labour Shortages:** Ontario's LTC sector faces ongoing staffing challenges, especially PSWs and nurses, which may limit the ability to attract new LTC development without local workforce supports.
- **Limited Local Training Pipelines:** No local post-secondary programs for PSWs or geriatric care, requiring workers to commute or relocate.





Opportunities

(elements in the environment that Mississippi Mills could use to its advantage)

- **Business Expansion:** Many businesses plan to grow, hire, and expand physical space in the next five years.
- **Collaboration & Networking:** Strong interest in joint marketing, mentorship, and resource sharing among businesses.
- **Support for Newcomers:** Potential to attract and retain new residents and entrepreneurs with improved housing and services.
- **Tourism Development:** Opportunities to expand accommodations, attractions (e.g., roller rink, festivals), and agritourism.
- **Sustainability & Innovation:** Businesses are eager to adopt eco-friendly practices and innovative business models.
- **Sector Diversification:** Interest in new business types such as diverse ethnic restaurants, wellness centers, and ghost kitchens.
- **Rural Commercial and Industrial Zones Expansion:** ready availability of large pieces of land that can suit a variety of employment uses that require large land area or separation distances from other uses which can thrive in the rural areas or benefit from adjacency to settlement areas.
- **Rural diversification of land use possibilities:** through modifications to OPA 28 by adding supporting policies to the Official Plan and updates to the Zoning By-law
- **Growing Demand for Seniors' Care:** Provincial waitlists (50,000+ people) demonstrate sustained demand for long-term care, positioning Mississippi Mills to benefit from future investment in seniors' housing and care facilities. Attract sector specific suppliers.

Threats

(elements in the environment that could cause trouble for Mississippi Mills)

- **Rising Costs:** High cost of doing business, including rent, utilities, and compliance, may deter new ventures.
- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Significant infrastructure investment required to prevent stalling growth.
- **Digital Divide:** Lack of reliable internet and mobile service could limit competitiveness and innovation in some parts of the Municipality.
- **Housing Affordability:** Limited affordable and attainable housing may impact workforce attraction and retention.
- **External Competition:** Businesses may look outside the municipality (e.g., Carleton Place) for support and networking, weakening local cohesion.
- **Commercial Rental Pressures:** The growing high cost of commercial rental inventory in Mississippi Mills—considering location and other challenges—may be out of sync with market realities, discouraging new businesses and straining existing ones.
- **Provincial Competition for LTC Investment:** Municipalities across Ontario are actively competing to attract new LTC beds and seniors' housing projects tied to the province's 58,000-space expansion.
- **Workforce Instability:** Province-wide staffing shortages in LTC—especially PSWs—could limit the ability of new or existing facilities to operate at full capacity.
- **Demographic Pressure:** Rapid growth in the 85+ population may outpace local service capacity, increasing pressure on municipal supports and health-care infrastructure.
- **Reputational Risk:** If local housing and transportation challenges may cause Mississippi Mills to be viewed as a less competitive location for LTC operators and health-care employers.



STRATEGIC ACTIONS BY KEY GOAL



1

GOAL: STRENGTHEN KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

Mississippi Mills is committed to fostering a diverse and resilient economy by supporting key sectors that reflect the community's strengths, values, and future potential. The following sector-specific strategies align with the *MM2048* vision and address the needs identified through stakeholder engagement and survey feedback.



HEALTH CARE

Health care is a vital sector in Mississippi Mills, both as a provider of essential services and a source of stable employment. Survey responses highlight the need for expanded medical services, including additional doctors and specialized providers. The municipality will:

- Advocate for improved access to health care facilities and professionals.
- Work with regional partners to attract and retain health care workers.
- Support wellness-oriented businesses such as fitness centers and wellness clinics through promotion and planning tools.
- Recognizing the potential of internationally trained professionals, the Municipality will explore ways to support their integration into the local health care workforce.
- Consider Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Incentive Programs:
 - An Accessibility Improvement Program to help healthcare providers upgrade facilities for seniors and people with disabilities.
 - Offer Tax Increment Equivalent Grants for new or expanded healthcare facilities to offset increased property taxes.
 - Explore incentives for workforce housing development targeted at attracting and retaining healthcare professionals.

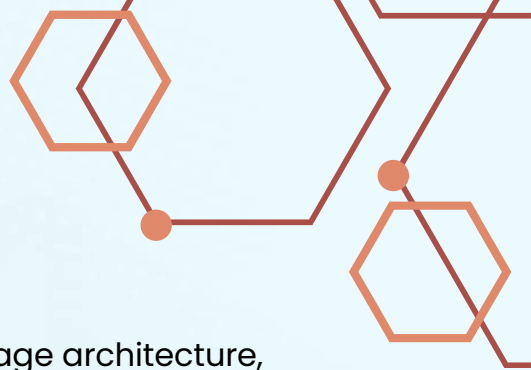


LONG TERM CARE & SENIORS LIVING

A sub-category of healthcare, long-term care and seniors living facilities contribute significantly to local economies through job creation, construction investment, and ongoing operational spending. As the population ages and demand for care increases, Mississippi Mills is well positioned to support growth in this sector. The municipality will:

- Monitor provincial long-term care demand projections to identify opportunities for new or expanded facilities that could generate stable, year-round employment.
- Recognize long-term care and seniors living developments as economic drivers, supporting both service delivery and local job creation across health care, food services, maintenance, and administration.
- Work with provincial ministries, private operators, and community partners to attract investment in new long-term care beds, supportive housing, and seniors living options.
- Explore the use of Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentives to support the development or expansion of long-term care and seniors housing, including accessibility upgrades, facility modernization, and staff housing options.
- Support workforce development initiatives that help recruit and retain personal support workers, nurses, and other care staff, including pathways for internationally trained professionals.
- Promote partnerships between long-term care operators and local businesses, strengthening local supply chains for food, maintenance, transportation, and contracted services.
- Encourage age-friendly community planning, ensuring that seniors living facilities are integrated into walkable, connected neighbourhoods with access to services, recreation, and transportation.
- Highlight the sector's economic and social contributions through data-driven communication that reflects its role in community stability, employment, and quality of life.

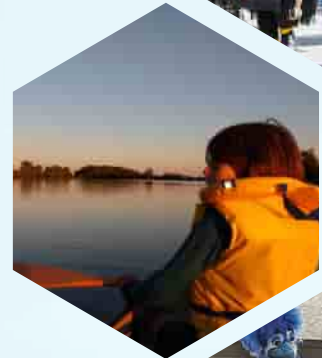




TOURISM

Tourism is a cornerstone of the local economy, driven by heritage architecture, cultural events, outdoor recreation, and artisan businesses. Businesses emphasized the importance of attracting visitors and enhancing the tourism experience. Strategic actions include:

- Continue collaborating with Lanark County Tourism, the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO), and the Lanark County Tourism Association to strengthen regional marketing, enhance visitor experiences, and ensure local tourism operators benefit from coordinated promotion, training, and sector support.
- Support marketing and promotional campaigns to highlight local attractions.
- Encourage new attractions (e.g., day spa, festivals) and enhance existing assets through planning and community partnerships.
- Investigate the development of a CIP to offer grants or tax incentives for accommodation development, including boutique hotels, B&Bs, and short-term rental conversions.
- Promote Cycle Tourism to internal and external audiences, use data-based messaging to help locals understand the economic value of welcoming and investing in cyclists.
- Encourage local businesses to become bike-friendly by providing amenities such as racks, signage, and rest areas, especially in downtown and tourism zones.
- Diverse cultural experiences and newcomer-led businesses will be encouraged as part of a broader tourism strategy that reflects the evolving identity of Mississippi Mills.
- Promote farm-to-table dining opportunities and culinary options that feature local ingredients.
- Collaborate with local museums (Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Mill of Kintail / Naismith & McKenzie, North Lanark Regional Museum) to position Mississippi Mills as a leading heritage and cultural tourism destination.
- Develop a cohesive “Stories of Mississippi Mills” narrative highlighting internationally significant residents (R. Tait McKenzie, Dr. James Naismith)
- Support joint tourism product development with museums (e.g., museum passport expansion, themed itineraries, events, and trails).
- Enhance promotion of museums as “anchor attractions” within regional tourism marketing and visitor experiences.

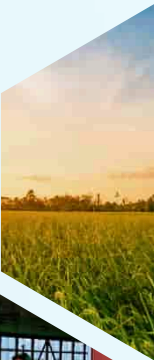




AGRICULTURE & RURAL BUSINESSES

Agriculture remains a foundational sector, with farms contributing significantly to the local economy and embracing innovation. Insights from the agriculture survey show strong interest in sustainability and technology adoption. The municipality will:

- Advocate for continued support of Agri-Tech initiatives and farm innovation.
- Work with provincial and federal partners to improve rural infrastructure, including internet and transportation.
- Promote agritourism and direct-to-consumer sales through local campaigns and business development support.
- Develop a CIP to offer grants for converting farm spaces into agri-tourism venues (e.g., tasting rooms, event barns, farm stays) and to support signage, parking, and accessibility upgrades for visitor-friendly farm experiences.
- Provide funding for marketing and branding of agri-tourism destinations.
- Offer incentives (potentially through CIP) for renewable energy installations (e.g., solar panels, geothermal systems) on farms.
- Newcomer farmers and food producers will be encouraged and supported through programs that help them start, grow, and market their businesses within the local agricultural economy.
- Continue to strengthen the Municipality's relationship with the Almonte Farmers' Market by encouraging increased participation from Mississippi Mills-based farms and food producers. Collaborate on outreach, vendor recruitment, and promotional efforts to ensure local agricultural businesses are well represented and supported.





DOWNTOWNS & SMALL BUSINESSES

Downtown cores in Almonte, Pakenham, and Ramsay are vibrant hubs for retail, food services, and community life. Survey feedback emphasized the importance of supporting local entrepreneurs and improving commercial space availability. Key actions include:

- Enhance streetscapes and public spaces to attract foot traffic and improve the visitor experience.
- Advocate for affordable commercial space and streamline municipal permitting processes.
- Support joint marketing and networking among small businesses through partnerships with chambers and business associations.
- Explore partnerships with downtown businesses and tourism stakeholders to establish accessible public washroom facilities in Almonte—either through shared-use agreements or the development of a standalone municipal facility.
- Improve wayfinding signage in downtown areas to help visitors navigate local shops, attractions, and amenities—supporting both tourism and business visibility.



MANUFACTURING & NICHE FOOD

Mississippi Mills is home to a growing number of manufacturers and niche food producers. These businesses benefit from proximity to Ottawa and access to employment lands. The strategic plan will:

- Promote investment in serviced industrial lands through planning and infrastructure development.
- Work with economic development partners to support food innovation and value-added production such as the recently completed abattoir feasibility study that was completed by the Municipality and provided to the local OFA chapter. This work was a response to local concerns raised about lack of timely and local access to a Provincially licensed abattoir. This resulted in long wait times, transportation costs and lack of local access to local meat products.
- Facilitate workforce development by collaborating with educational institutions and training providers.
- Explore the creation of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) that offers incentives—such as reduced planning and permit fees—for large employers or developments exceeding a certain square footage threshold.
- Temporary use of vacant lands in business park until permanent development takes place, such as parking to support other events, food truck venue, bathrooms, and other uses.

INDUSTRIAL & MANUFACTURING

While Mississippi Mills currently has a limited number of industrial and manufacturing businesses, this sector presents a significant opportunity to increase employment and grow the commercial tax base through larger facilities and long-term investment. To support and attract industrial development, the municipality will:

- Promote investment in employment lands through infrastructure planning and targeted outreach – planning for development of municipal land or purchase of other lands. Using reserve funds for Economic Development and Industrial Park.
- Explore the creation of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) that offers incentives—such as reduced planning and permit fees—for large employers or developments exceeding a certain square footage threshold.
- Collaborate with regional economic development partners to identify and attract suitable industrial tenants.
- Support workforce development through partnerships with colleges, training providers, and employment services.
- Ensure zoning and planning policies are aligned with industrial growth and site readiness.



HOME-BASED ENTERPRISES

Home-based businesses are a vital part of the local economy, offering flexibility and fostering entrepreneurship. Survey responses show strong interest in mentorship, planning support, and digital infrastructure. The Municipality will:

- Provide resources and referrals for business planning, marketing, and training.
- Advocate for improved broadband access to support remote work and digital commerce.
- Celebrate and promote home-based enterprises through local campaigns and recognition programs.
- Update zoning and other planning tools to remove barriers to establish home-based businesses.



CONSTRUCTION & TRADES

Construction and skilled trades continue to be a vital and growing sector in Mississippi Mills, driven by ongoing residential development and anticipated population growth. This sector offers well-paying, skilled employment opportunities close to home and plays a key role in shaping the built environment and supporting local economic resilience. To support and grow this sector, the municipality will:

- Recognize construction and trades as a strategic employment sector and include them in workforce development and business support initiatives.
- Collaborate with local builders, contractors, and tradespeople to identify challenges and opportunities, including permitting processes, infrastructure needs, and workforce shortages.
- Explore partnerships with educational institutions and training providers to support apprenticeships, certifications, and career pathways in the trades.
- Consider a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) or similar incentive program that reduces planning and permit costs for developments that contribute significantly to employment or involve buildings over a certain size threshold.
- Promote local trades and construction businesses through municipal campaigns, directories, and recognition programs.
- Ensure planning policies and zoning regulations support a range of housing types and construction activity, including infill, multi-unit, and affordable housing projects.
- Work with Algonquin College and regional employment services to support newcomers entering the trades through certification, retraining, and skills integration programs, helping to address labour shortages and build local capacity.

By supporting the construction and trades sector, Mississippi Mills can help ensure that growth is managed sustainably while maximizing local employment and economic benefits.



CULTURAL INDUSTRIES (INCLUDING FILM)

Mississippi Mills is home to a vibrant creative sector, including visual artists, musicians, puppeteers, filmmakers, and cultural organizations. The community's natural beauty, heritage architecture, and artistic talent have organically attracted film productions and cultural attention. These industries contribute to the local economy, tourism, and community identity. To support and celebrate this sector, the Municipality will:

- Continue to implement and improve the municipal film policy, ensuring that film productions are welcomed and supported with clear processes, timely communication, and access to municipal resources.
- Engage with local artists, galleries, and cultural producers through collaborative initiatives and sector-specific roundtables to identify opportunities for growth and support.
- Leverage the recreation mapping from the Community Services Master Plan (CSMP) to include, identify and promote creative assets such as studios, galleries, and performance spaces.
- Feature local artists and cultural producers in municipal storytelling, tourism campaigns, and digital platforms to increase visibility and celebrate community creativity.
- Use municipal grants and programs to support community-led cultural events and festivals, including film screenings, art walks, and performances that showcase local talent and foster civic pride.

See also Plan Goal 3 : Celebrate Community Identity and Culture



2

GOAL: STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXISTING BUSINESSES AND SUPPORT THEIR GROWTH

Business Engagement and Registration

Mississippi Mills is home to a diverse and growing business community, with approximately 1,400 businesses according to the latest census data. While recent surveys—such as the Business Survey Summary—have yielded statistically relevant and insightful responses, these represent only a small portion of the total business population. This highlights a key challenge: without a formal business registration system, it is difficult to maintain an accurate inventory of businesses, understand their evolving needs, and communicate effectively.

To address this, the Municipality recommends launching a **Business Registration Program**. This initiative is not a licensing system, but a proactive step toward building stronger relationships with local businesses.

The program will enable the Municipality to:

- Establish a voluntary business registry to better understand and support the local business landscape
- Improve outreach and emergency communication
- Support planning and economic development initiatives
- Promote businesses through targeted campaigns and visibility efforts

The program will begin with a free registration period for existing businesses (2025–2026), followed by

a modest fee structure starting in 2027. Businesses that are members of the Carleton Place and District Chamber of Commerce will continue to receive free registration, encouraging participation in a regional business network.

The Municipality recognizes the value of strong external partners in supporting business success. Chambers of Commerce play a vital role in:

- Advocacy and representation
- Networking and mentorship
- Business promotion and visibility
- Access to training and resources
- Community leadership and collaboration

Mississippi Mills will continue working with the Carleton Place and District Chamber of Commerce to expand outreach and services within the Municipality. This partnership will help ensure that businesses of all types—retail, agricultural, home-based, and industrial—benefit from the support and opportunities a Chamber can provide.

In addition to continuing the Business Awards Program, which celebrates longevity and contributions to the community, the Municipality will explore new ways to recognize and promote local business success. This may include spotlight features, social media campaigns, and partnerships with local media to share stories of innovation, resilience, and growth.

3

GOAL: CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Mississippi Mills is a community deeply rooted in its heritage, natural beauty, and creative spirit. Its identity is shaped by a blend of small-town charm, rural vitality, and a strong sense of place that resonates across its historic downtowns, scenic countryside, and vibrant cultural landscape.

Cultural Foundations

The Municipality delivers a range of community-focused services—including childcare, recreation, and cultural programming—that form the social fabric of Mississippi Mills.

These services are designed to foster inclusion, support lifelong learning, and celebrate the community's diverse cultural expressions. The Community Services Master Plan emphasizes the importance of public art, heritage conservation, and age-friendly programming as essential components of community well-being and identity.

As the community grows, cultural programming will continue to evolve to reflect and welcome diverse populations, including newcomers and immigrant families.

Heritage & Built Environment

Mississippi Mills is home to over 175 designated and listed heritage properties, including the Almonte Heritage Conservation District. These assets reflect the town's origins as a 19th-century mill community and contribute to its picturesque townscape and river-based cultural landscape. The Municipality supports heritage conservation through grants, tax relief programs, and planning tools that protect and enhance these historically significant areas.

Creative & Artistic Expression

The community is known for its thriving arts scene, which includes world-class puppeteers, musicians, writers, and visual artists.

Cultural activities—from festivals and performances to artisan markets and exhibitions—play a vital role in shaping the local economy and enriching community life.



Community Values

Mississippi Mills residents consistently express pride in their community's welcoming nature, cooperative spirit, and commitment to sustainability.

These values are reflected in public engagement efforts, local business support, and collaborative planning initiatives. The community's identity is not only preserved through its built heritage and cultural programming but also actively shaped by its people—who bring knowledge, creativity, and care to every aspect of civic life.

Continued efforts to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment will help ensure that newcomers feel connected and engaged in the cultural life of the community.

Strategic Alignment

The Economic Development Strategic Plan aligns with the MM2048 vision by recognizing culture as a driver of prosperity, social cohesion, and tourism.



4

GOAL: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENT READINESS

Mississippi Mills is actively planning for sustainable growth and economic resilience through strategic infrastructure investments and policies that support business development and investment attraction. The municipality's approach aligns with *MM2048's* "How We Grow" and "How We Prosper" pillars, ensuring that infrastructure expansion is coordinated with economic priorities and community values.

Strategic Actions

Serviced Employment Lands

The municipality is preparing for significant population and employment growth, with projections indicating a 60% increase by 2038. To support this, Mississippi Mills will:

- **Invest in employment lands**, particularly in Almonte, where full municipal services are available but also on rural land where land can be more affordable for businesses who don't require all services.
- **Planning for infrastructure expansion**, including water, wastewater, and transportation systems, to accommodate new industrial and commercial development.
- **Working with regional and provincial partners** to ensure land use planning and servicing align with long-term economic goals.

Digital Infrastructure

Survey results consistently identified internet speed and cell service as major barriers to business growth, especially in rural areas. To address this, the municipality will:

- **Advocate for improved broadband and mobile connectivity**, particularly in underserved areas.
- **Collaborate with telecom providers and upper-tier governments** to expand digital infrastructure and support remote work and digital commerce.
- **Continue to support initiatives and partnerships** such as the EOWC broadband initiative.

Transportation & Mobility

Mississippi Mills' strategic location near Ottawa makes it attractive for commuters and businesses. To enhance mobility and access:

- **Transportation planning under MM2048** includes road upgrades, active transportation networks, and improved connectivity between urban and rural areas.
- **Support for goods movement and logistics** will be considered in future infrastructure investments to facilitate manufacturing and agricultural distribution.

Investment Readiness

To attract and retain investment, Mississippi Mills is focused on:

- **Streamlining municipal processes**, including permitting and approvals, to reduce barriers for new and expanding businesses.
- **Providing clear and accessible information** about available lands, zoning, and development opportunities (now online!).
- **Supporting business planning and expansion** through partnerships with local organizations, chambers, and economic development agencies.

Sustainable Infrastructure

Infrastructure planning is guided by principles of environmental sustainability and climate resilience. This includes:

- **Incorporating green infrastructure** and low-impact development practices.
- **Supporting energy-efficient buildings and operations** through incentives and education. (potential CIP)
- **Aligning infrastructure investments** with the community's values around heritage preservation and environmental stewardship.



Land Use Planning – Employment Areas

A strategically located supply of Employment Areas is essential to supporting long-term economic growth and diversification in Mississippi Mills. As the Municipality prepares for projected growth forecasted under MM2048, planning for employment in both serviced and unserved areas will be critical to ensuring economic competitiveness while minimizing land use conflicts.

Policy Context

The Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS), issued under the authority of the Planning Act, provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting planning matters be consistent with policy statements issued under the Act.

The PPS requires that at the time of creating a new official plan and each official plan update, sufficient land be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of at least 20 years, but not more than 30 years, informed by provincial guidance. The 'mix of land uses' refer to residential and employment areas.

The PPS, 2024 defines Employment Areas as follows:

“Employment Area: means those areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, research and development in connection with manufacturing, goods movement, associated retail and office, and facilities. An employment area also includes areas of land described by subsection 1(1.1) of the Planning Act. Uses that are excluded from employment areas are institutional and commercial, including retail and office not associated with the primary employment use listed above.”

While the PPS establishes the requirement to plan for sufficient Employment Areas over the long term, it does not prescribe how those lands are to be distributed between serviced and unserviced areas.

Land Use Compatibility Considerations

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) D-6 Guideline provides direction on land use compatibility between the industrial uses that make up an Employment Area and sensitive land uses. The Guideline categorizes industrial uses into three classes (Class I, II, and III) based on intensity and potential impacts related to noise, odour, dust, and vibration. The

higher the Class, the greater the separation distances and influence areas required; larger parcels are typically necessary to adequately accommodate higher-impact uses while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Strategic Actions

Recognizing that the current supply of municipally owned, serviced employment lands in Almonte does not meet the provincial definition of employment lands and is therefore insufficient to address future requirements.

There are opportunities beyond Almonte’s limits to provide industrial lands that may not require municipal water and sewer and are better suited in rural areas where compatibility can be easily achieved.

This plan recommends the strategic and timely acquisition of additional land to ensure the municipality remains investment-ready. Maintaining a diverse supply of industrial and commercial lands is critical to supporting business growth, attracting investment, and remaining competitive.

To support long-term employment growth while maintaining land use compatibility, the Economic Development Strategic Plan recommends that the Municipality complete an **Employment Area Review** that will include the following:

- **Review of Existing Employment Areas:**
 - Undertake a municipality-wide review to assess the current supply, distribution, and function of Employment Areas across both serviced and unserviced lands.
 - Distinguish between industrial uses, employment generating non-industrial uses, and non-conforming uses in Employment Areas, including the identification of lawfully established uses permitted to remain.
- **Assess Employment Area Needs Over the Long Term:**
 - Confirm whether existing Employment Areas are sufficient to accommodate projected employment growth over a 20- to 30-year planning horizon.
 - Evaluate employment land needs by use, considering density assumptions, land consumption rates, and market trends.
- **Incorporate Market and Economic Analysis into Land Use Planning:**
 - Conduct macro-economic, regional market, and sector trend analysis to inform Employment Area planning and policy decisions.
 - Identify target sectors and industry clusters and align Employment Area planning with site selection requirements, infrastructure needs, and land availability.
- **Apply a Land Use Compatibility Framework:**
 - Assess existing Employment Areas through a land use compatibility lens, considering proximity to sensitive land uses and consistency with MECP D-6 guidelines.
 - Identify locations where higher-impact industrial uses may be accommodated while minimizing conflicts through appropriate parcel sizing, separation distances, buffering, and site design.
- **Identify Opportunities for Employment Area Protection and Refinement:**
 - Identify lands that may be appropriate for redesignation or removal where existing uses are no longer aligned with the provincial definition of Employment Areas, while prioritizing the protection of employment function.
 - Protect contiguous and strategically located Employment Areas with access to goods movement corridors and key infrastructure.
- **Establish Clear Policy Directions for Employment Areas:**
 - Develop and recommend updated Employment Area policies for the Community Official Plan that clarify the long-term vision, land use structure, and role of different Employment Areas within the Municipality.
 - Provide recommended direction on the management of non-conforming uses, conversions, removals, and potential future Employment Area expansions.

5

GOAL: DEVELOP A SKILLED AND RESILIENT WORKFORCE

A skilled, resilient, and locally engaged workforce is essential to the long-term economic sustainability of Mississippi Mills. As the municipality prepares for significant growth under MM2048, workforce development has emerged as a strategic priority—requiring collaboration across sectors, levels of government, and educational institutions.

Local Workforce Characteristics

Mississippi Mills has a labour force of approximately 7,295 people, with a participation rate of 60.4% and an employment rate of 55.9%. The majority of businesses employ between 1 and 10 people, often in a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal roles. Survey results indicate challenges in hiring and retaining staff, particularly in retail, agriculture, and tourism sectors.

As the population grows, attracting and integrating newcomers into the workforce will be key to addressing labour shortages and supporting sectoral resilience.

Municipal Role in Workforce Planning

The Municipality's Human Resources Strategic Plan outlines internal workforce goals, including succession planning, leadership development, and recruitment strategies.

These principles also inform broader economic development efforts, as the municipality:

- **Advocates for regional workforce development initiatives** that address skill gaps and support local employment.
- **Collaborates with educational institutions and training providers** to align programming with employer needs.
- **Supports youth engagement and retention**, recognizing the need to counteract out-migration and aging demographics.
- **Encourages inclusive workforce strategies** that support newcomer employment and community integration.



Regional Collaboration

Lanark County's Labour Market Planning Report highlights acute skilled worker shortages in sectors such as health care, manufacturing, agriculture, and professional services.

Mississippi Mills will:

- **Work with Lanark County and Valley Heartland** to support regional labour market strategies.
- **Promote local career pathways** through job fairs, mentorship programs, and employer engagement.
- **Support inclusive workforce initiatives**, including rural community inclusion and newcomer integration.
- **Strengthen partnerships with regional settlement agencies** to help newcomers access training, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Workforce Innovation & Resilience

MM2048 emphasizes the importance of preparing for future workforce needs through proactive planning. Key strategies include:

- **Identifying emerging industries and occupations**, such as digital economy roles and creative sector jobs.
- **Encouraging flexible work models**, including remote work and home-based enterprises.
- **Supporting lifelong learning and upskilling**, especially for small business owners and entrepreneurs.
- **Promoting workforce adaptability** through programs that support diverse talent, including immigrants and underrepresented groups.

Strategic Actions

To strengthen workforce development, the *Economic Development Strategic Plan* recommends:

- **Advocating for expanded training and employment services** in partnership with Employment Ontario and local colleges.
- **Facilitating employer networks and sector-specific roundtables** to share best practices and identify common challenges.
- **Supporting youth and newcomer employment programs** to build a more inclusive and future-ready workforce.



6

GOAL: ENHANCE BRANDING AND PROMOTION

To position Mississippi Mills as a premier destination for investment, entrepreneurship, and lifestyle by enhancing its economic identity and promotional efforts across key audiences.

Mississippi Mills offers a compelling mix of natural beauty, heritage charm, creative energy, and economic opportunity. However, survey feedback and stakeholder engagement reveal a need for more targeted branding and promotional efforts that speak directly to potential investors, new residents, and visitors. Businesses expressed interest in coordinated marketing, improved visibility, and storytelling that reflects the community's strengths and aspirations.

Strategic Actions

To strengthen branding and promotion in support of economic development, the Municipality will:

- Develop a distinct economic development brand that highlights Mississippi Mills' advantages for business growth, investment, and quality of life.
- Collaborate with local businesses, tourism operators, and regional partners to create unified messaging and promotional campaigns.
- Advocate for regional investment attraction efforts through partnerships with Lanark County, Valley Heartland, and Ontario East Economic Development.
- Enhance digital marketing tools, including a dedicated economic development web portal, business directory, and investment profiles.
- Promote success stories and local entrepreneurship through storytelling, video content, and social media outreach.
- Support event-based promotion such as business showcases, open houses, and investment tours that highlight available properties and community assets.





Target Audiences

- Prospective Businesses & Investors: Emphasize available serviced lands, supportive municipal processes, and proximity to Ottawa.
- New Residents: Showcase lifestyle benefits, housing options, and community amenities.
- Visitors & Tourists: Highlight cultural attractions, artisan businesses, and outdoor recreation as part of a vibrant local economy.

Performance Indicators

- Increased business inquiries and investment leads
- Growth in web traffic and digital engagement
- Uptake of promotional partnerships and campaigns
- Positive shifts in external perception of Mississippi Mills as a place to live, work, and invest



7

GOAL: ADVANCE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Strategic investment and promotion of environmentally responsible infrastructure and economic development initiatives will help position Mississippi Mills as a leader in sustainable economic growth.

Mississippi Mills will foster a culture of environmental responsibility by supporting and recognizing businesses that adopt sustainable practices. To advance eco-conscious economic development, the Economic Development Strategic Plan recommends:

- Establishing measurable criteria and benchmarks for a municipal green business recognition program.
- Identifying and prioritizing shovel-ready green infrastructure projects for funding and investment attraction.
- Developing partnerships with agricultural organizations and tourism operators to advance climate-resilient and eco-tourism initiatives.
- Creating clear sustainability guidelines and optional checklists for businesses and developers.
- Aligning municipal incentives and approvals processes with environmental and climate objectives.

Performance indicators will track progress in advancing sustainable business practices, green infrastructure investment, eco-tourism and agricultural initiatives, and the integration of environmental considerations into municipal planning and economic development activities.



ACTION PLAN



ACTION PLAN

Project Prioritization and Phasing

To ensure effective implementation of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, Mississippi Mills will prioritize actions based on their potential impact, feasibility, and alignment with community needs and available resources.

Project phasing will follow the updated timeline:

- **Short-Term** Actions (2026–2027)
- **Medium-Term** Actions (2028–2029)
 - Expand and institutionalize programs such as BR+E, CIP incentives, and infrastructure upgrades. This phase will emphasize sector growth, workforce development, and investment readiness.
- **Long-Term** Actions (2030 and beyond)

Projects are assessed and phased using the following criteria:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Does the project support MM2048 and municipal strategic priorities?
- **Community Impact:** Will the project benefit a broad range of residents and businesses?
- **Resource Availability:** Are funding, staffing, and partnerships in place or attainable?
- **Readiness and Timing:** Is the project ready to proceed, or does it require further planning or approvals?
- **Scalability and Sustainability:** Can the project grow over time and be maintained long-term?

This framework will guide annual work plans, budget allocations, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that implementation remains responsive, transparent, and results-driven.

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

2026-2027

Focus: Foundation building, quick wins, and pilot initiatives.

Strengthen Key Economic Sectors

- Identify and promote suitable sites for long-term care and seniors-living development.
- Collaborate with the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) to access sector data, advocacy support, and connections to potential operators.
- Strengthen collaboration with Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, and the Lanark County Tourism Association to coordinate regional marketing and training.
- Support tourism operators in accessing regional programs, grants, and training opportunities.
- Develop collaborative museum tourism strategy and integrated storytelling (iconic residents, mills, rural heritage)
- Support sustainability and operations of museums through partnerships and advocacy
- Promote agri-tech innovation and support agritourism development.
- Continue to enhance streetscapes and public spaces in downtowns.
- Promote investment in serviced industrial lands and support food-innovation businesses.
- Explore CIP incentives for industrial and large-employer development.
- Provide resources for home-based business planning and marketing.

Business Retention & Expansion

- Launch a structured Business Engagement Strategy (surveys, roundtables, visits).
- Begin to develop a formal BR+E program.
- Launch a voluntary Business Registry.
- Develop a Business Support Resource Hub (online + physical).
- Publish the first Annual Business Health Report.
- Continue delivering and expand recurring business networking and education events.

Community Identity & Culture

- Continue investment in interpretive signage.
- Support community-led festivals, events, and markets.
- Increase visibility of Indigenous history and contributions.
- Support newcomer-led cultural programming and events.

Infrastructure & Investment Readiness

- Acquire additional commercial/ industrial land to fit the definition of employment land
- Advocate for broadband and transportation improvements.
- Advance planning for serviced employment lands.
- Align planning policies to support rural vitality and village evolution.
- Streamline development processes.

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Land Use Planning – Employment Areas

- Review existing Employment Areas.
- Assess Employment Area needs over the long term.
- Incorporate market and economic analysis into land use planning.
- Apply a land use compatibility framework.
- Identify opportunities for Employment Area protection and refinement.
- Establish clear policy directions for Employment Areas.

Workforce Development

- Strengthen partnerships with educational institutions and training providers.
- Support youth entrepreneurship and employment initiatives.
- Begin assessing workforce housing needs, including LTC-related housing gaps.
- Support development of additional childcare spaces.

Branding & Promotion

- Develop a cohesive branding strategy.
- Expand tourism marketing and shop-local campaigns.
- Improve digital presence for local businesses.

Environmental Sustainability

- Recognize businesses adopting sustainable practices.
- Support eco-tourism and climate-resilient agriculture.
- Integrate environmental goals into business and land-use planning.



MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS

2028-2029

Focus: Program expansion, infrastructure development, and policy alignment.

Strengthen Key Economic Sectors

- Advocate to the Province for new LTC bed allocations and supportive housing options.
- Explore CIP incentives for LTC and seniors-living development (accessibility upgrades, facility expansion, workforce housing).
- Develop partnerships between LTC operators and local businesses to strengthen supply chains.
- Expand accommodations and new tourism attractions through planning and partnerships.
- Support agritourism venues through CIP tools (tasting rooms, event barns, farm stays).
- Improve wayfinding signage in downtowns and tourism zones.
- Support workforce development for manufacturing, trades, and niche food production.

Business Retention & Expansion

- Expand the Business Registry and Resource Hub based on user feedback.
- Implement BR&E programs
- Deliver sector-specific roundtables (tourism, agriculture, LTC, manufacturing).
- Strengthen joint marketing and networking through regional partners.

Community Identity & Culture

- Grow creative industries and cultural programming.
- Expand newcomer-focused cultural and tourism experiences.

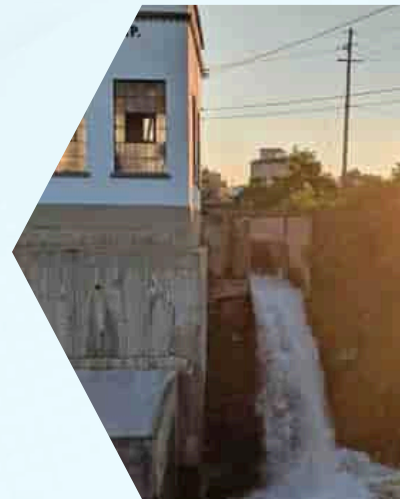
Infrastructure & Investment Readiness

- Advance infrastructure projects supporting employment lands.
- Implement improvements to development processes based on user feedback.
- Explore transportation solutions for LTC and health-care workers.

Workforce Development

- Develop training pathways for PSWs, nurses, and geriatric-care workers with regional institutions.
- Support workforce housing initiatives for key sectors (LTC, health care, service sector).
- Promote youth and newcomer workforce programs.

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Branding & Promotion

- Strengthen regional tourism branding through partnerships with Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, and LCTA.
- Promote Mississippi Mills as a destination for LTC investment and seniors-living development.

Environmental Sustainability

- Support renewable-energy adoption in agriculture and rural businesses.
- Promote green infrastructure in commercial and industrial development.



LONG-TERM ACTIONS

2030 and beyond

Focus: Sustained growth, evaluation, and strategic refinement.

Strengthen Key Economic Sectors

- Attract a new long-term care or seniors-living campus to Mississippi Mills.
- Support expansion of existing LTC facilities as demand grows.
- Continue expanding tourism infrastructure and regional partnerships.
- Advance industrial and manufacturing growth through long-term land-use planning.

Business Retention & Expansion

- Maintain a mature BR+E program with ongoing data collection and reporting.
- Continue evolving the Business Resource Hub and networking ecosystem.

Community Identity & Culture

- Sustain long-term investment in cultural assets, creative industries, and newcomer-led initiatives.

Infrastructure & Investment Readiness

- Complete major infrastructure expansions supporting employment lands and growth areas.
- Maintain long-term alignment of planning policies with economic development needs.

Workforce Development

- Maintain strong training pipelines for health care, trades, manufacturing, and creative sectors.
- Ensure long-term workforce housing availability.

Branding & Promotion

- Maintain a strong, recognizable Mississippi Mills brand across tourism, investment, and community identity.

Environmental Sustainability

- Continue advancing climate-resilient agriculture, green infrastructure, and sustainable business practices.



IMPLEMENTATION PHASES



ABBREVIATED IMPLEMENTATION CHART

This chart summarizes the implementation phases of the Mississippi Mills Economic Development Strategic Plan. Actions are grouped by strategic goal and categorized into **short-term** (2026–2027), **medium-term** (2028–2029), and **long-term** (2030 and beyond) timeframes.

Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030 and beyond)
Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene sector roundtables • Promote serviced employment lands • Begin outreach to trades and builders • Develop and implement CIP incentives • Strengthen partnerships with Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, and LCTA • Identify and promote sites for LTC and seniors-living development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote CIP • Expand tourism accommodations and attractions • Promote agritourism and niche food production • Facilitate partnerships for food innovation and niche manufacturing • Advocate for new LTC bed allocations and supportive housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor sector growth and adapt strategies • Support long-term industrial and construction expansion • Attract a new LTC or seniors-living campus • Support expansion of existing LTC facilities • Continue regional collaboration for investment and tourism promotion

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Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030 and beyond)
Strengthen Key Economic Sectors (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with OLTCA for data, advocacy, and operator connections Support tourism marketing campaigns and seasonal events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore CIP incentives for LTC and seniors-living development Improve signage and wayfinding Support partnerships between LTC operators and local suppliers 	
Support Existing Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch Business Registry (free period) Develop Business Engagement Strategy Create Business Support Resource Hub Continue and expand business networking and education opportunities Continue Business Recognition Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement BR+E Program Publish Annual Business Health Report Introduce registration fee structure Expand recognition programs and promotional campaigns Deliver sector-specific roundtables (tourism, agriculture, LTC, manufacturing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and refine BR+E and registry programs Institutionalize recognition and promotion Maintain and grow the Business Support Hub

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Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030–2031 & beyond)
Celebrate Community Identity and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue investment in interpretive signage • Support community-led festivals, events, and markets • Increase visibility of Indigenous history and contributions • Support newcomer-led cultural programming and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow creative industries and cultural programming • Expand newcomer-focused cultural experiences and tourism offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustain long-term investment in cultural assets and programming • Continue supporting creative industries and cultural sector growth • Maintain and expand newcomer-led cultural initiatives

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Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030–2031 & beyond)
Infrastructure & Investment Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire additional commercial industrial land to meet projected employment land needs • Complete an Employment Land Review • Continue to Advocate for broadband and mobile upgrades • Identify priority employment lands • Continue streamlining permitting processes • Continue infrastructure upgrades within Almonte to support growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin infrastructure upgrades for employment lands • Align zoning with industrial and housing growth • Improve signage and wayfinding • Explore transportation solutions for LTC and health-care workers • Continue with required multi-year studies to support large infrastructure investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete major infrastructure projects • Expand digital access to all areas • Integrate green infrastructure

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Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030–2031 & beyond)
Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with schools/colleges for trades and entrepreneurship Support youth employment initiatives Begin assessing workforce housing needs, including LTC workforce housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for expanded training and certification programs Promote inclusive workforce strategies (newcomers, rural inclusion) Develop training pathways for PSWs, nurses, and geriatric-care workers Support workforce housing initiatives for key sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish long-term education partnerships Support lifelong learning and upskilling Maintain strong training pipelines for health care, trades, and manufacturing

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Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030–2031 & beyond)
Branding & Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop economic development brand • Launch web portal • Share local success stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch regional investment campaigns • Host business showcases and tours • Expand digital marketing • Strengthen regional tourism branding with Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, and LCTA • Promote Mississippi Mills as a destination for LTC and seniors-living investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and evolve branding strategy • Measure promotional impact • Continue regional collaboration

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Strategic Goal	Short-Term (2026–2027)	Medium-Term (2028–2029)	Long-Term (2030–2031 & beyond)
<p>Advance Environmental Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize businesses adopting sustainable practices • Support eco-tourism and climate-resilient agriculture • Integrate environmental goals into business and land-use planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support renewable energy adoption in agriculture and rural businesses • Promote green infrastructure in commercial and industrial development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue advancing climate-resilient agriculture and eco-tourism • Expand green infrastructure and sustainable business practices • Maintain integration of environmental considerations in planning and economic development



PROJECT LIST WITH COST ESTIMATES



EXPANDED ACTION/ PROJECT LIST

This chart summarizes the implementation phases of the Mississippi Mills Economic Development Strategic Plan. Actions are grouped by strategic goal and categorized into **short-term** (2026–2027), **medium-term** (2028–2029), and **long-term** (2030–2031) timeframes.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
1	Establish an Internal Economic Development Implementation Team (cross-departmental).	Strengthen Economic Development Leadership, Governance, and Performance	Short-Term	TBD
2	Develop a 5-year resourcing and funding strategy (staff + capital).	Strengthen Economic Development Leadership, Governance, and Performance	Short-Term	TBD
3	Develop an Economic Development Performance Framework (KPIs + annual dashboard).	Strengthen Economic Development Leadership, Governance, and Performance	Short-Term	TBD
4	Acquire additional industrial/commercial lands.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Short-Term	TBD
5	Complete a fulsome Employment Land Review.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Short-Term	TBD
6	Launch a Business Registration Program (free period 2026–2027).	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Short-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
7	Develop and promote a Business Engagement Strategy (surveys, roundtables).	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Short-Term	TBD
8	Begin planning and seek funding for the Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) Program.	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Short-Term	TBD
9	Create the Business Support Resource Hub (online and physical).	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Short-Term	TBD
10	Continue the Business Recognition Program and pilot new recognition formats (e.g., social media spotlights).	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Short-Term	TBD
11	Convene sector-specific roundtables (e.g., agriculture, tourism, trades).	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Short-Term	TBD
12	Promote existing serviced employment lands to industrial prospects.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Short-Term	TBD
13	Begin outreach to construction and trades businesses to identify workforce and permitting needs.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
14	Support tourism marketing campaigns and seasonal events.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
15	Implement Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentives.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
16	Advocate for broadband and mobile connectivity improvements.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Short-Term	TBD
17	Identify priority employment lands for servicing and promotion.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Short-Term	TBD
18	Continue streamlining development and permitting processes.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Short-Term	TBD
19	Partner with local schools and colleges to promote trades and entrepreneurship.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Short-Term	TBD
20	Identify and promote suitable sites for long term care and seniors living development.	Support Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
21	Support youth employment initiatives and mentorship programs.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Short-Term	TBD
22	Develop a distinct economic development brand.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Short-Term	TBD
23	Develop collaborative museum tourism strategy and integrated storytelling	Support Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
24	Launch a dedicated economic development web portal.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Short-Term	TBD
25	Support sustainability and operations of museums through partnerships and advocacy	Support Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
26	Begin collecting and sharing local business success stories.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Short-Term	TBD
27	Collaborate with the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) for sector data, advocacy, and operator connections.	Support Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
28	Strengthen collaboration with Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, and the Lanark County Tourism Association.	Support Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
29	Continue and expand recurring business networking and education events.	Support Key Economic Sectors	Short-Term	TBD
30	Support newcomer led cultural programming and events.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Short-Term	TBD
31	Publish an Annual Economic Development Report Card (Council + public).	Strengthen Economic Development Leadership, Governance, and Performance	Short/Medium-Term	TBD
32	Begin assessing workforce housing needs, including LTC workforce housing.	Workforce Development	Medium-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
33	Implement the BR+E Program with regular reporting.	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Medium-Term	TBD
34	Launch the Annual Business Health Report.	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Medium-Term	TBD
35	Introduce modest fee structure for business registration (2027).	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Medium-Term	TBD
36	Expand recognition programs and promotional campaigns.	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Medium-Term	TBD
37	Implement Community Improvement Plan (CIP) incentives.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Short/ Medium-Term	TBD
38	Support expansion of accommodation and attractions in tourism.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Medium-Term	TBD
39	Promote agritourism and direct-to-consumer agriculture initiatives.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Medium-Term	TBD
40	Facilitate partnerships for food innovation and niche manufacturing.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Medium-Term	TBD
41	Begin infrastructure upgrades for employment lands (water, wastewater, roads).	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Medium-Term	TBD

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#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
42	Align zoning and planning policies with industrial and housing growth.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Medium-Term	TBD
43	Improve signage and wayfinding in downtown and tourism areas.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Medium-Term	TBD
44	Support regional workforce strategies with Lanark County and Valley Heartland.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Short/ Medium-Term	TBD
45	Expand training and certification programs in trades and agriculture.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Medium-Term	TBD
46	Promote inclusive workforce initiatives (newcomers, rural inclusion).	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Medium-Term	TBD
47	Launch coordinated regional investment attraction campaigns.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Medium-Term	TBD
48	Host business showcases and investment tours.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Medium-Term	TBD
49	Expand digital marketing and video storytelling efforts.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Medium-Term	TBD
50	Advocate for new LTC bed allocations and supportive housing options.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Medium-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
51	Explore CIP incentives for LTC and seniors living development.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Medium-Term	TBD
52	Support partnerships between LTC operators and local suppliers.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Short/Medium-Term	TBD
53	Explore transportation solutions for LTC and health care workers.	Infrastructure & Investment Readiness	Medium-Term	TBD
54	Develop training pathways for PSWs, nurses, and geriatric care workers.	Workforce Development	Medium-Term	TBD
55	Strengthen regional tourism branding with Lanark County Tourism, OHTO, and LCTA.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Medium-Term	TBD
56	Promote Mississippi Mills as a destination for LTC and seniors living investment.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Medium-Term	TBD
57	Conduct a formal Strategic Plan Review and Update (e.g., 2029/2030).	Strengthen Economic Development Leadership, Governance, and Performance	Long-Term	TBD
58	Evaluate and refine the BR+E and registry programs.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
59	Maintain and grow the Business Support Hub.	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Long-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
60	Institutionalize expanded business recognition and promotion as annual municipal initiatives.	Strengthen Relationships with Existing Businesses and Support Their Growth	Long-Term	TBD
61	Monitor and adapt CIP programs based on uptake and impact.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
62	Support long-term growth in industrial, construction, and niche food sectors.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
63	Continue evolving sector strategies based on market trends and feedback.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
64	Complete major infrastructure projects supporting employment lands.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Long-Term	TBD
65	Expand digital infrastructure to all rural areas.	Improve Infrastructure and Investment Readiness	Long-Term	TBD
66	Integrate green infrastructure and sustainability into all new developments.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Long-Term	TBD
67	Establish long-term partnerships with post-secondary institutions.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Long-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
68	Support lifelong learning and upskilling programs for small business owners.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Long-Term	TBD
69	Monitor workforce trends and adjust strategies accordingly.	Develop a Skilled and Resilient Workforce	Long-Term	TBD
70	Maintain and evolve branding strategy to reflect community growth.	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Long-Term	TBD
71	Measure and report on promotional impact (web traffic, investment leads).	Enhance Branding and Promotion	Long-Term	TBD
72	Continue regional collaboration for investment and tourism promotion.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
73	Attract a new LTC or seniors living campus to Mississippi Mills.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
74	Support expansion of existing LTC facilities as demand grows.	Strengthen Key Economic Sectors	Long-Term	TBD
75	Support strong training pipelines for health care, trades, manufacturing, and creative sectors.	Workforce Development	Long-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
78	Develop and implement an Interpretive Signage Program across key cultural and heritage sites.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Short-Term	TBD
79	Provide funding and coordination support for community-led festivals, events, and markets.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Short-Term	TBD
80	Develop initiatives to increase visibility and education around Indigenous history, culture, and contributions.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Medium-Term	TBD
81	Establish a Creative Industries Development Program to support artists, cultural producers, and creative businesses.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Medium-Term	TBD
82	Expand cultural tourism offerings through curated experiences, events, and partnerships with local creators.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Medium-Term	TBD
83	Establish a long-term funding and partnership model to sustain cultural assets, programming, and creative industries.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Long-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
84	Expand inclusive cultural programming to reflect diverse and growing populations, including newcomers and underrepresented groups.	Celebrate Community Identity & Culture	Long-Term	TBD
85	Establish a Green Business Recognition Program with measurable sustainability criteria and annual awards.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Short-Term	TBD
86	Support the development and promotion of ecotourism initiatives in partnership with local businesses and tourism organizations.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Short-Term	TBD
87	Develop and implement sustainability guidelines and voluntary checklists for businesses and developers.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Short-Term	TBD
88	Encourage and support renewable energy adoption in agriculture and rural businesses through incentives and partnerships.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Medium-Term	TBD
89	Develop incentive programs to promote green infrastructure in commercial and industrial development projects.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Medium-Term	TBD

Table continues on next page.

#	Project Name	Strategic Direction	Budget Year	Cost Est.
90	Advance climate-resilient agriculture initiatives through partnerships with agricultural organizations and funding programs.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Long-Term	TBD
91	Support widespread adoption of sustainable business practices through education, incentives, and recognition programs.	Advance Environmental Sustainability	Long-Term	TBD

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI) DASHBOARD



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI) DASHBOARD

The following Key Performance Indicators provide a clear, measurable framework for monitoring progress on the Economic Development Strategic Plan. These indicators support transparency, annual reporting, and evidence-based decision-making, and align with the plan's strategic goals and outcomes.

These indicators can be used for:

- **Annual Reporting:** Incorporated into the *Annual Business Health Report*.
- **Council Updates:** quarterly reports and staff reports to supports budget decisions and priority setting.
- **Public Communication:** Help to demonstrates progress toward MM2048 and the *Strategic Plan*.
- **Adaptive Management:** Helps staff adjust actions based on real-time data.

1

GOAL: STRENGTHEN KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

Indicators and what they measure

New LTC or Seniors-Living Beds in Development

Progress on attracting LTC investment and meeting demographic needs.

Tourism Accommodations & Attractions Added

Growth in visitor-serving businesses and experiences.

CIP Uptake

Number and value of CIP applications across sectors.

Agritourism & On-Farm Diversification Projects

Growth in rural and agricultural economic activity.

Industrial/ Manufacturing Investment Leads

Inquiries, site visits, and conversions related to employment lands.

2

GOAL: STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXISTING BUSINESSES AND SUPPORT THEIR GROWTH

Indicators and what they measure

Business Registry Participation

Number and percentage of local businesses registered annually.

BR+E Engagement

Number of BR+E visits, follow-ups, and actions completed each year.

Resource Hub Usage

Website analytics, downloads, inquiries, and in-person visits.

Business Networking Participation

Attendance at networking events, workshops, and roundtables.

Business Recognition Activities

Number of businesses recognized or featured annually.

3

GOAL: CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY & CULTURE

Indicators and what they measure

Cultural & Community Events Supported

Number of festivals, markets, and cultural programs assisted.

Newcomer-Led or Indigenous-Led Initiatives

Inclusion and representation in community programming.

Creative Sector Participation

Growth in arts, culture, and creative-industry activity.

4

GOAL: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENT READINESS

Indicators and what they measure

**Serviced
Employment Land
Availability**

Acres of land ready
for development.

**Development
Process Timelines**

Average time for
permits, zoning,
and approvals.

**Broadband & Mobile
Coverage Improvements**

Percentage of
rural areas with
improved
connectivity.

**Wayfinding &
Signage
Enhancements**

Number of
installations
completed.



5

GOAL: DEVELOP A SKILLED AND RESILIENT WORKFORCE

Indicators and what they measure

Training Partnerships
Established

Number of collaborations with colleges, schools, and training providers.

Youth Participation in
Employment &
Entrepreneurship Programs

Engagement levels in youth-focused initiatives.

Workforce Housing
Initiatives Advanced

Progress on housing solutions for LTC, health care, and service workers.

Transportation
Solutions Explored or
Implemented

Improvements supporting worker mobility.



6

GOAL: ENHANCE BRANDING & PROMOTION

Indicators and what they measure

**Economic
Development
Website Traffic**

Visits, page views,
and engagement
trends.

**Investment Leads
Generated**

Number of
inquiries and
conversions.

**Tourism Marketing
Reach**

Social media
engagement,
campaign
impressions, and
visitor inquiries.

**Shop Local
Campaign
Participation**

Business and
community
engagement
levels.

7

GOAL: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Indicators and what they measure

**Businesses Adopting
Green Practices**

Number of
businesses
implementing
sustainability
initiatives.

**Eco-Tourism Projects
Supported**

Growth in
environmentally
focused tourism
offerings.

**Green Infrastructure
Integration**

Number of
developments
incorporating
sustainable
design.

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Successful implementation of the Mississippi Mills Economic Development Strategic Plan will require collaboration with a diverse network of partners. These organizations bring expertise, resources, and community connections that are essential to advancing economic growth, workforce development, sector support, and investment readiness.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERS

- **Canadian Career Academy**
 - Employment services, training programs, and workforce development support.
- **Carleton Place & District Chamber of Commerce**
 - Advocacy, networking, business support, and promotion of local enterprises.
- **Downtown Business Organizations** (e.g., Almonte & Pakenham informal business networks)
 - Support for small businesses and joint marketing initiatives.
- **Valley Heartland CFDC**
 - Business financing, advisory services, and regional economic development collaboration.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- **Algonquin College**
 - Skilled trades training, entrepreneurship programs, and workforce alignment.
- **University of Ottawa**
 - Research partnerships, innovation support, and student engagement.
- **Carleton University**
 - Economic research, policy development, and community-based projects.



destination
ALMONTE



uOttawa



Carleton
University



BUSINESS AND ADVISORY SERVICES

- **Small Business Advisory Centre** (Smiths Falls, Lanark County)
 - Business planning, mentorship, and startup support for entrepreneurs and home-based businesses.



GOVERNMENT AND SECTORAL PARTNERS

- **Lanark County & Ontario East Economic Development**
 - Regional planning, investment attraction, and infrastructure advocacy.
- **Employment Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Agri-business (OMAFRA) Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs (MRA)**
 - Workforce programs, agri-tech support, and rural business development.
- **Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI)**
 - Infrastructure Advocacy.
- **Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA)**
 - Sector data, advocacy for system improvements, and connection to key partners and operators.



IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT PARTNERS

- **Lanark & Renfrew Immigrant Settlement Services (LRISS)**
 - Provides direct support to newcomers including settlement assistance, language training, and community integration services.
- **Local Immigration Partnership – Lanark & Renfrew (LIP)**
 - Coordinates strategic planning and collaboration among local organizations to improve outcomes for immigrants and foster inclusive economic development.



APPENDICES



APPENDICIES

- **Appendix A:**
 - Commercial Property Comparison
- **Appendix B:**
 - Current Commercial Listings Comparison
- **Appendix C:**
 - Information Presented for Public Engagement
- **Appendix D:**
 - Business Survey Summary



APPENDIX A

Commercial Property Comparison

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY COMPARISON REPORT

This report provides a comparative overview of commercial property assessments and taxation across five Ontario municipalities: Mississippi Mills, Carleton Place, Arnprior, North Grenville, and Loyalist Township. Data includes Phase-In Taxable Assessment (CVA), Municipal Taxes, Education Taxes, Total Taxes, and Payments-in-Lieu (PILS) for commercial properties. 2024 FIR data is not yet available for North Grenville or Loyalist Townships.

Commercial Property Data Summary

Municipality	CVA (CAD)	Municipal Taxes (CAD)	Education Taxes (CAD)	Total Taxes (CAD)	PILS (CAD)
Mississippi Mills	\$76,512,382	\$818,581	\$673,490	\$2,053,795	\$252,384
Carleton Place	\$194,482,182	\$2,692,581	\$1,712,854	\$5,833,244	\$111,980
Arnprior	\$91,737,624	\$1,558,344	\$810,510	\$3,055,345	\$119,647
North Grenville (2023)	\$183,280,968	\$1,509,527	\$971,842	\$4,094,243	\$129,047
Loyalist Township (2023)	\$63,182,800	\$759,858	\$504,641	\$1,820,508	\$2,244,861

CVA: Current Value Assessment for commercial properties, expressed in Canadian dollars. This is the assessed market value of all commercial properties in that municipality.

PILS (CAD): Payments-in-Lieu of Taxes — amounts paid by certain properties (often government-owned or exempt from regular taxation) instead of standard property taxes.

KEY INSIGHTS OF DATA

- Carleton Place has the highest commercial CVA among the group.
- Loyalist Township shows a smaller CVA but a very large PILS amount (\$2.24M), indicating significant government or institutional properties.
- Carleton Place remains strong in total taxes collected.
- Mississippi Mills and Arnprior maintain mid-range positions.

MISSISSIPPI MILLS SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

CVA (CAD)	Municipal Taxes (CAD)	Education Taxes (CAD)	Total Taxes (CAD)	PILS (CAD)
\$76,512,382	\$818,581	\$673,490	\$2,053,795	\$252,384

CVA: Current Value Assessment for commercial properties, expressed in Canadian dollars. This is the assessed market value of all commercial properties in that municipality.

PILS (CAD): Payments-in-Lieu of Taxes — amounts paid by certain properties (often government-owned or exempt from regular taxation) instead of standard property taxes.

Small Commercial Base

Current Value Assessment for commercial properties \$76.5M (lowest among the five municipalities: North Grenville, Loyalist, Carleton Place and Arnprior).

Total commercial taxes: \$2.05M, which is modest compared to Carleton Place (\$5.83M) and North Grenville (\$4.09M).

High PILS Relative to CVA

PILS: \$252K is significant for a municipality with a small commercial footprint.

Indicates presence of government or institutional properties that do not pay regular

Tax Mix

Education taxes (\$673K) represent about 33% of total commercial taxes, similar to other municipalities.

Commercial Share of Total Taxable Assessment

This section quantifies how much of total taxable assessment (CVA) is in the commercial class. Percentage calculated as: Commercial CVA ÷ Total Taxable CVA across all classes.

Payments-in-Lieu (PIL) and exempt properties are excluded from the denominator.

Year	Commercial CVA (CAD)	Total Taxable CVA (CAD)	Commercial Share (%)	Notes
2023	\$78,203,582	\$2,262,529,918	3.46%	From 2023 assessed values by class; PIL/exempt excluded.

APPENDIX B

Current Commercial Listings Comparison

Commercial Land Listings by Municipality (Surrounding Mississippi Mills, ON)

Community	Location / Description	Size	Zoning / Type	Price (CAD)	Price per Acre (CAD)	Serviced (Yes/No)	Municipal Owned (Yes/No)
Mississippi Mills	Frank Davis Street	1–1.48 ac	Employment (E-1)	\$179,900–199,900	\$122,000–199,900	Yes	Yes
	31 Industrial Drive	1.149 ac	Industrial / Serviced	\$245,000	\$213,200	Yes	No
	267 Christian Street	22 acres	Industrial/ Development	\$1,700,000	\$77,272.73	Potentially	No
	27 Mill Street	10,473 sq ft (~0.24 ac)	Commercial	\$1,099,000	\$4,579,167	Yes	No
	112 Cedar Hill Side Road	2.44 acres	Rural Commercial (C5-13-H)	\$179,900	\$73,729.51	No	No
Arnprior	?? Perth Rd	TBD	Industrial	TBD		No	No
	247 Russett Drive	10.5 ac	Highway Commercial	\$760,000	\$72,400	Likely Yes	No
	31 Staye Court Drive	1.56 ac	Mixed-Use / Commercial Corridor	\$1,531,000	\$981,400	Yes	No
	10 Staye Court Drive	1.14 ac	Highway Corridor	\$1,495,000	\$1,311,400	Yes	No
	130 Industrial Avenue	1.46 ac	Industrial (M2)	\$410,000	\$280,800	Likely Yes	No
Carleton Place	7 Smythe Road	0.96 ac	Development Parcel	\$649,000	\$676,000	Yes	No
	31 Townline Road	0.30 ac	Commercial	\$649,900	\$2,166,300	Unsure	No

Community	Location / Description	Size	Zoning / Type	Price (CAD)	Price per Acre (CAD)	Serviced (Yes/No)	Municipal Owned (Yes/No)
Carleton Place	342 Townline Rd W	0.867 acres	Industrial	\$250,000	\$288,300	Yes	No
	McNeely Ave (Pt Lt 15 Con 10)	14.5 ac	Large-Scale Development	\$5,500,000	\$379,300	Yes	No
North Grenville	262 County Rd 44, Kemptville	1.20 ac	C3 Commercial	n/a	n/a	Unsure	No
	2559 County Rd 43, Kemptville	1.15 ac	C3 Commercial (Vacant Land)	\$1,500,000	n/a	Unsure	No
	0 Ryan's Well Drive, Kemptville	4.25 ac	C5 Commercial Enterprise Zone	n/a	n/a	Unsure	No
	18 Precision Drive, Kemptville	1.40 ac	C5 Commercial (Vacant Land)	n/a	n/a	Unsure	No
	County Rd 19 – Parcel A, Kemptville	13.41 ac	C5 Business Enterprise Zone	n/a	n/a	Unsure	No
	County Rd 19 – Parcel B, Kemptville	6.38 ac	C5 Business Enterprise Zone	n/a	n/a	Unsure	No
McNab / Braeside	632-648 Van Buren St.	31.82 acres	Commercial business enterprise	\$4,999,999	\$157,124.45	Water	No
	000 ARNPRIOR DRIVE McNab / Braeside	10.5 Acres	High Commercial	\$800,000	\$76,190.48	No	No

Community	Location / Description	Size	Zoning / Type	Price (CAD)	Price per Acre (CAD)	Serviced (Yes/No)	Municipal Owned (Yes/No)
Loyalist Township	Loyalist East Business Park – Vacant Land Parcels	.5 to 8.5 acres	Light Industrial (M1)	\$149,900–649,000	n/a	Yes	Yes
	150 MAIN STREET Loyalist (Odessa), Ontario	1.136 ac	Commercial	\$645,000	\$568,662	Yes	No
Town of Greater Napanee	Richmond Industrial Park	Lots starting at 2.0 acres, with a total of 94 acres +/- available for immediate development	Industrial	\$220,00–\$2,461,600	\$110,000 to \$80,000	Yes	Yes

APPENDIX C

Information Presented for
Public Engagement

Economic Development Strategic Plan for Mississippi Mills Cultivating Growth in a Picturesque Community

The Municipality of Mississippi Mills is a dynamic and picturesque community located in Eastern Ontario, Canada, encompassing a blend of historic charm, vibrant culture, and natural beauty. Known for its heritage architecture and stunning landscapes, the municipality is home to thriving rural and urban areas, including the town of Almonte and the village of Pakenham. The Ramsay ward contains smaller communities of Clayton, Appleton, and Blakeney. Mississippi Mills boasts a strong sense of community, rooted in its agricultural heritage, innovative spirit, and dedication to sustainability.

With a diverse economy spanning small businesses, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and creative industries, Mississippi Mills is strategically positioned to foster economic growth and resilience. The municipality's commitment to preserving its natural and cultural assets while nurturing economic vitality reflects the values of its engaged and resourceful residents. This strategic plan aims to chart a course for sustainable development, ensuring that Mississippi Mills continues to flourish as a dynamic and welcoming place to live, work, and invest.



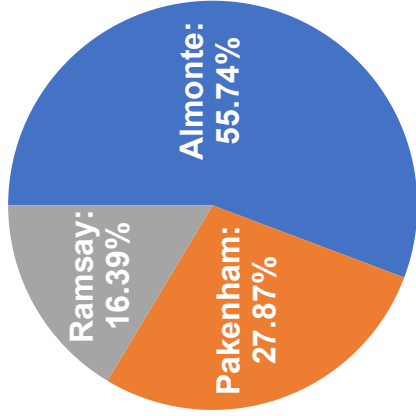
Business Survey

To support the Municipality’s economic development needs and inform our Economic Development Strategic Plan for 2025-2029, we launched the Municipality of Mississippi Mills Business Survey in 2024. The survey aimed to gather insights from existing business owners and operators who are invested in Mississippi Mills, emphasizing the importance of two-way communication to build an effective partnership between local businesses and the Municipality.

The survey was divided into two parts: Part A, which included the main survey for all businesses, and Part B, which focused on sector-specific questions. The data collected through the survey was intended to educate decision-makers at all levels of government, identify trends requiring urgent attention, and plan future economic development strategies and programs. Personal information provided by respondents was kept confidential.

The survey received responses from various wards, including Almonte, Pakenham, and Ramsay, with a diverse mix of businesses such as retail trade, accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance, and professional, scientific, technical services, agriculture, and forestry, fishing and hunting. Business sizes ranged from small operations with 1-4 employees to larger establishments with over 100 employees.

The results of the survey were statistically significant, indicating a meaningful association between the wards and business types. This valuable information helped shape the Municipality’s approach to supporting local businesses and fostering economic growth.



Mix of Businesses

- Retail trade: 14
- Accommodation and food services: 8
- Health care and social assistance: 7
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting: 7
- Professional, scientific, technical services: 6
- Manufacturing: 5
- Other services: 5
- Arts, entertainment and recreation: 5
- Construction: 4
- Real estate and rental and leasing: 3
- Educational services: 2
- Information and cultural industries: 2
- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services: 2
- Transportation and warehousing: 1
- Finance and insurance: 1

Sizes of Businesses (# of Employees):

- 1-4 employees: 34 businesses
 - 17 businesses
- 5-9 employees: 10 businesses
 - 10 businesses
- 10-19 employees: 4 businesses
 - 4 businesses
- 20-29 employees: 1 business
 - 1 business
- 30-49 employees: 1 business
 - 1 business
- 100-299 employees: 1 business
 - 1 business

Business Survey Key Observations

Economic Development Vision:

- Common themes for the economic future of Mississippi Mills include prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and environmental sustainability.
- Businesses emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, attracting visitors, and growing in a way that fits the community.



Business Characteristics:

- Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
- A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community.



Employment:

- The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
- There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.



Challenges and Barriers:

- Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
- Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.



Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.



Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.



Summarized Business Survey Observations

Advantages of Doing Business in Mississippi Mills:

- Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
- Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.

Disadvantages:

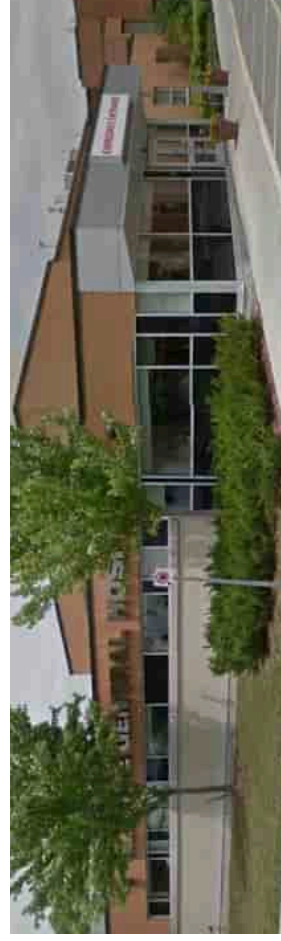
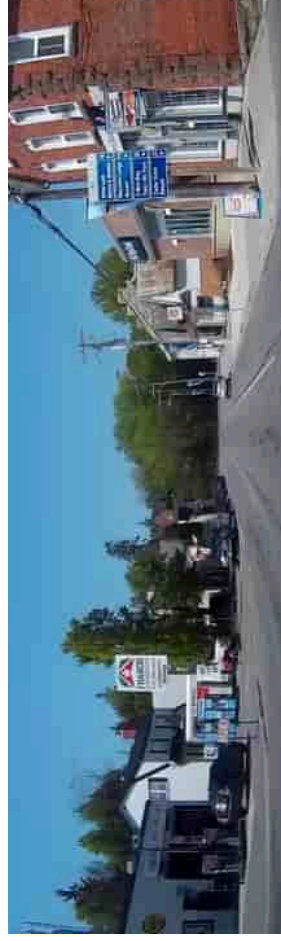
- Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
- Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in Pakenham.

Desired Improvements:

- Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
- More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
- Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

Conclusion

The survey results highlight a community of businesses that are deeply rooted in Mississippi Mills, with a strong desire to grow and support each other. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.



Observations Regarding the Future (based on survey responses)

Based on the survey responses, we can deduce several trends and insights about the future of businesses in the Municipality of Mississippi Mills over the next five years:

Business Growth and Expansion
Expansion Plans: Many businesses plan to expand their operations, hire more employees, and increase their physical space. This indicates a positive outlook for business growth and economic development in the municipality.

- **Stability:** A significant number of businesses intend to remain stable, focusing on maintaining their current operations and market position.

Employment Trends

- **Full-time Employment:** There is a steady demand for full-time employees, with businesses looking to hire more staff to support their growth and expansion plans.
- **Part-time and Seasonal Employment:** Part-time and seasonal employment will continue to play a crucial role, especially in sectors like retail, agriculture, and tourism. Businesses will rely on flexible staffing to meet fluctuating demand.

Challenges and Barriers

- **Internet Speed and Infrastructure:** Are significant challenges for businesses, especially in rural areas. Addressing these issues is crucial for business growth and attracting new enterprises.
- **Municipal Services:** Businesses face difficulties with municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support. Streamlining these processes and improving communication with businesses is essential for fostering a supportive business environment.

Community and Support

- **Positive Community Impression:** Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business. The supportive and welcoming nature of the local population is a significant advantage.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** There is a strong desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses. Creating opportunities for networking and resource-sharing will help businesses thrive.

Desired Improvements

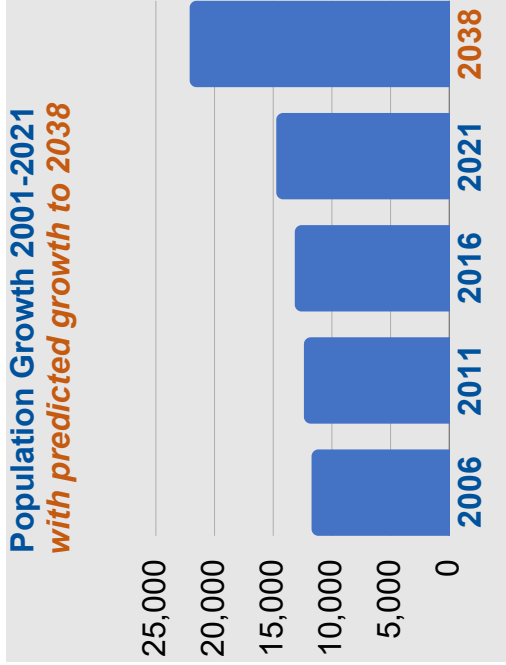
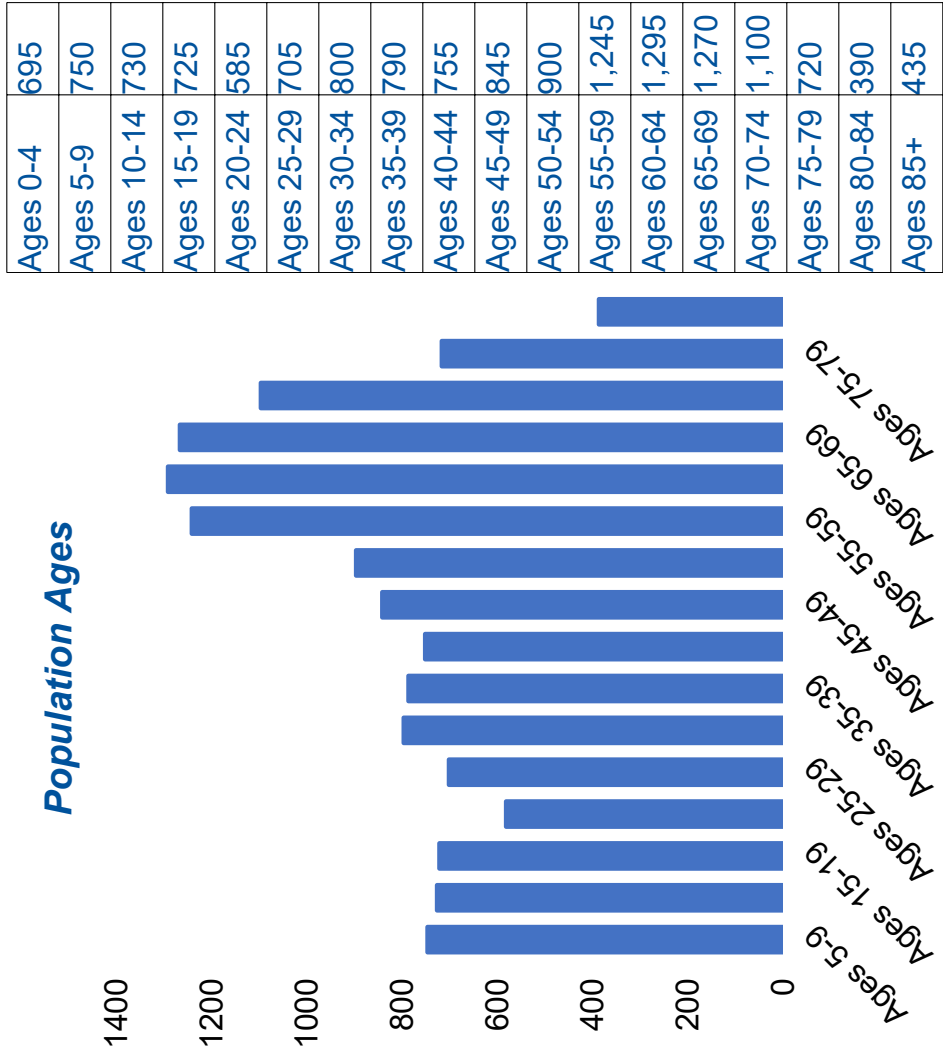
- **Affordable Housing and Commercial Space:** Businesses seek more affordable housing and commercial space to support their growth and attract new talent. Addressing these needs will be vital for sustaining economic development.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** Increased marketing and promotional efforts are needed to attract visitors and new businesses to the municipality. Enhancing the visibility of local businesses will drive economic growth.

Future Outlook

- **Sustainability and Resilience:** Businesses emphasize the importance of environmental sustainability and resilience. Adopting sustainable practices and building resilient operations will be key priorities for the future.
- **Innovation and Adaptation:** Businesses are looking to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions. Embracing new technologies and business models will be essential for staying competitive.

Growth, Jobs and Workforce

Mississippi Mills is poised for substantial growth in its employment opportunities and labor force over the coming decades, reflecting its projected population expansion from an estimated 15,126 in 2022 to 22,122 by 2038. This population increase is fueled by factors such as urban boundary expansions, housing developments, and migration trends within Lanark County, which will drive demand for skilled workers and diversify the labor market. These developments provide an ideal foundation for fostering economic growth, attracting new industries, and enhancing workforce capacity, ensuring the municipality remains vibrant and economically resilient in the future.



Population & Investment Attraction
 Population is the sum of births plus in-migration, and it signifies the total market size possible in the area. This is an important metric to measure their economic health and investment attraction. **Businesses also use this as a metric for market size when evaluating startup, expansion or relocation decisions. Which means a growing population makes good business sense for someone considering our community.**

Observations on

Demographics

Statistics Canada Census 2021

Mississippi Mills is a small, close community with about 14,740 people. Many families earn a good income, with most making around \$100,000 a year, which helps the local economy grow. However, most of the population is older (the median age is 50), which means fewer young workers in the future as people retire. In 2021 when the data was collected were approx. 410 people visible minorities, adding valuable skills and culture to the community.

To keep growing, Mississippi Mills will need to attract young families and workers. This could be done by building affordable homes, offering job training, and creating activities and services for both younger and older people. The town has a solid base to work from, but careful planning is needed to make sure it stays vibrant and successful.



Labour Force Data

Statistics Canada Labour Market Survey Data 2025

Mississippi Mills has a diverse labor force, with strengths in trades, transport, sales, and service occupations, as well as business and finance roles. The municipality has seen steady growth in population and employment opportunities, contributing to a positive labor force outlook.



Statistics Canada defines the **labour force** as the civilian, non-institutional population aged 15 years and older who, during the survey reference week, were either employed or unemployed

The Participation Rate is a key labor market indicator that measures the proportion of the working-age population (typically aged 15 and older) that is actively involved in the labor force. This includes individuals who are either **Employed or Unemployed but Actively Seeking Work**.

This metric helps gauge the level of economic activity and workforce engagement in a given area.

For MM 60 out of 100 working-age individuals are either employed or looking for work.

Employment: Refers to individuals who are currently working, either full-time or part-time, in paid positions or self-employment. It includes those actively engaged in economic activities.

Unemployment: Refers to individuals who are not working but are actively seeking employment and are available to work. It excludes those who are not looking for work or are unable to work.

Largest Industry by Occupation: This refers to the industry employing the highest number of workers in specific roles or job categories. For example, it might highlight industries with the most accountants, engineers, or healthcare professionals.

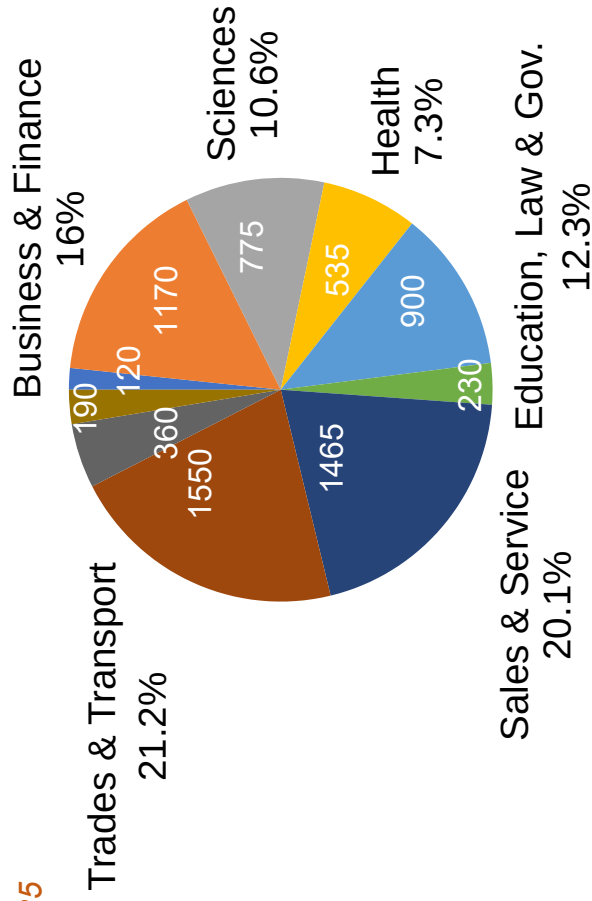
Largest Industry by Labour Force: This focuses on the total number of people involved in an industry, including both employed and unemployed individuals actively seeking work within that sector. It provides a broader view of the industry's workforce size.

Mississippi Mills Labour Force Data

Labour Force by Occupation

Statistics Canada Labour Market Survey Data 2025

Art & Sports	230
Business & Finance	1,170
Education, Law & Government	900
Health	535
Management	120
Manufacturing	190
Natural Resources	360
Sales & Service	1,465
Sciences	775
Trades & Transport	1,550

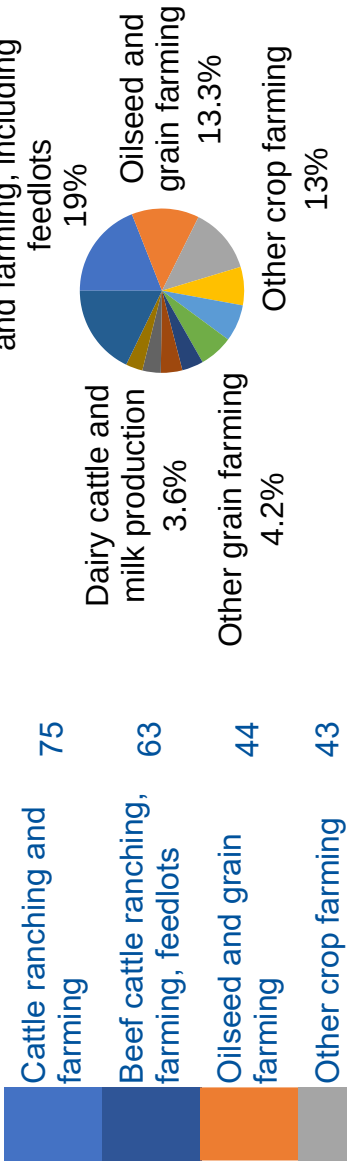


The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is a standardized framework used to classify businesses and industries. Here's a breakdown of the sectors you mentioned and what they typically include:

1. Arts and Sports (NAICS 71): Includes performing arts, spectator sports, heritage institutions, and recreational industries.
2. Business and Finance (NAICS 52): Encompasses financial institutions, insurance companies, and investment services.
3. Education, Law, and Government (NAICS 61, 91): Covers educational services, public administration, and legal services.
4. Health (NAICS 62): Covers healthcare services like hospitals, clinics, nursing care facilities, and social assistance services.
5. Management (NAICS 55): Focuses on the management of companies and enterprises, including holding companies.
6. Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33): Encompasses industries involved in producing goods, from food and textiles to machinery and electronics.
7. Natural Resources (NAICS 11, 21): Covers agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.
8. Sales and Services (NAICS 44-45, 72): Includes retail trade, accommodation, and food services.
9. Sciences (NAICS 54): Focuses on professional, scientific, and technical services, including research and development.
10. Trades and Transport (NAICS 48-49): Includes transportation services like trucking and warehousing and trade industries such as wholesale and retail.

Agriculture in Mississippi Mills

According to Statistic Canada's Agricultural Data there are 203 Farms operating in Mississippi Mills



Other Farming 59 (categories with values less than 10 farms)	Count
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	7
All other miscellaneous crop farming	7
Corn farming	6
Nursery and tree production	6
Poultry and egg production	6
Sheep and goat farming	5
Animal combination farming	5
Chicken egg production	4
Sheep farming	4
Apiculture	3
Vegetable and melon farming	1
Other vegetable (except potato) and melon farming	1
Other food crops grown under cover	1
Combination poultry and egg production	1
All other poultry production	1
Goat farming	1

Cattle Ranching and Farming:

This is a broad category that includes all types of cattle farming, such as raising cattle for beef, dairy, or other purposes. It encompasses both beef cattle ranching and dairy cattle production, as well as operations that may not fit neatly into one specific subcategory.

Beef Cattle Ranching and Farming, Including Feedlots:

This is a more specific subset of cattle farming focused on raising cattle for beef production. It includes feedlot operations, where cattle are fattened before slaughter, and may also involve raising cattle for dairy herd replacements.

Dairy Cattle and Milk Production:

This category is exclusively for operations focused on milking dairy cattle and producing milk or dairy products. It does not include beef cattle or feedlot operations.

Cattle ranching and farming	75
Beef cattle ranching, farming, feedlots	63
Oilseed and grain farming	44
Other crop farming	43
Hay farming	25
Soybean farming	24
Other animal production	22
Other grain farming	14
Horse and other equine production	14
Dairy cattle and milk production	12
Maple syrup and products production	11
Other farming	59

This Census of Agriculture data was collected in 2021 and released throughout 2022 and 2023

Agriculture in Mississippi Mills

Agriculture in Mississippi Mills is a cornerstone of the local economy and community, with several notable aspects based on available data:

- Farm Diversity:** The municipality hosts a variety of farms, including crop production (like hay, grains, and oilseeds) and livestock farming (such as cattle, dairy, and poultry). This diversity supports both local food systems and broader agricultural markets.
- Land Use:** Agricultural land is primarily used for crops, hay, and pasture, reflecting the rural character of the area. Efforts like the Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) helped to identify prime agricultural areas for sustainable development.
- Economic Challenges:** Issues such as a shortage of meat processing facilities and skilled labor impact the agricultural sector.
- Direct Sales:** Some farms engage in direct sales to consumers, fostering local food systems and strengthening community ties.
- Sustainability:** Programs promoting renewable energy and succession planning for farms highlight the municipality's focus on long-term agricultural sustainability.

Number of Farms by Total Farm Area

Under 10.00 acres	9
10.00 to 69.99 acres	45
70.00 to 129.99 acres	42
130.00 to 179.99 acres	23
180.00 to 239.99 acres	19
240.00 to 399.99 acres	28
400.00 to 559.99 acres	19
560.00 to 759.99 acres	6
760.00 to 1,119.99 acres	8
1,120.00 to 1,599.99 acres	3
1,600.00 to 2,239.99 acres	1



Mississippi Mills Agricultural Industry

Agriculture is a significant industry for Mississippi Mills by comparison labour force numbers by comparison is relatively low which may be the result of several factors:

- 1. Automation and Technology:** Modern agricultural practices often rely on machinery and technology, reducing the need for a large workforce compared to traditional methods.
- 2. Part-Time and Seasonal Work:** Many agricultural jobs are seasonal or part-time, which might not be fully captured in labor force statistics.
- 3. Small-Scale Farming:** Mississippi Mills has a mix of small-scale farms, which may employ fewer workers compared to large commercial operations.
- 4. Demographic Trends:** An aging population and fewer younger workers entering the agricultural sector can contribute to lower labor force numbers.
- 5. Economic Diversification:** While agriculture is important, other industries like manufacturing, trades, and services may employ a larger share of the workforce, overshadowing agriculture in labor statistics. These factors combined could explain why the labor force numbers for agriculture seem lower despite its importance to the local economy.

Benefits of Encouraging Agri-Tourism

Agri-tourism merges agriculture and tourism, offering visitors immersive experiences on farms, ranches, and vineyards. It plays a crucial role in supporting rural economies by:

- **Diversifying Income:** Provides supplementary income for farmers through activities like farm stays, crop-picking, and seasonal events¹
- **Promoting Sustainability:** Encourages eco-friendly practices and educates visitors on sustainable agriculture.
- **Strengthening Local Economies:** Stimulates surrounding businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and shops, creating jobs and reducing migration to cities.



Niche Food Manufacturing

Mississippi Mills is home to a thriving community of niche food manufacturers who have made significant contributions to the local economy and beyond. Among these are **Hummingbird Chocolate**, renowned for its award-winning bean-to-bar chocolate; **Dairy Distillery**, which transforms unused milk sugar into the innovative Vodka vodka; and **Healthy Food Technologies (HFT)**, famous for their low-fat doughnuts. **Equator Coffee Roasters** brings fair trade, organic coffee to the region, while local maple producers continue the tradition of crafting high-quality maple syrup. The craft beer scene is vibrant with breweries like **Cartwright Springs** and **Base Camp**. The region also has hops production & processing facilities, essential for brewing. These businesses not only highlight the diversity and innovation within Mississippi Mills but also underscore the area's commitment to quality, sustainability, and community engagement.



Benefits of Encouraging & Supporting Niche Food Manufacturing

- 1. Economic Diversification**
 - **Job Creation:** Niche food manufacturing can create specialized jobs, contributing to local employment and economic stability.
 - **Revenue Generation:** These businesses can generate significant revenue by catering to specific market demands, boosting the local economy.
- 2. Support for Local Agriculture**
 - **Utilization of Local Produce:** Niche food manufacturers often use locally sourced ingredients, supporting local farmers and reducing transportation costs.
 - **Strengthening Supply Chains:** By creating a direct link between local agriculture and food manufacturing, the supply chain becomes more resilient and efficient.
- 3. Innovation and Sustainability**
 - **Product Innovation:** Niche manufacturers can introduce unique and innovative products, attracting consumers looking for specialty items.
 - **Sustainable Practices:** These businesses can adopt sustainable practices, such as organic production and eco-friendly packaging, aligning with consumer preferences for environmentally responsible products.
- 4. Community Engagement**
 - **Local Identity:** Niche food manufacturing can enhance the community's identity by promoting local flavors and traditions.
 - **Educational Opportunities:** These businesses can offer educational programs and workshops, fostering community engagement and awareness about local food production.
- 5. Tourism and Marketing**
 - **Agri-Tourism:** Niche food manufacturers can attract tourists interested in local food experiences, boosting tourism and related businesses.
 - **Branding and Marketing:** Unique products can enhance the region's brand, making Mississippi Mills a destination for high-quality, specialty foods. By focusing on niche food manufacturing, Mississippi Mills can leverage its agricultural strengths, promote sustainability, and enhance economic resilience.

Looking Ahead Agricultural Sustainability

Based on available data and survey results, here are some potential actions that could be used to cultivate a supportive environment for agricultural businesses, ensuring the future prosperity and sustainability of agriculture in Mississippi Mills.

1. Promote Farm Diversity

- Support various types of farming to strengthen local food systems.

2. Optimize Land Use

- Encourage sustainable land practices to protect agricultural areas.

3. Address Economic Challenges

- Advocate for local processing facilities and skilled labor training.

4. Enhance Direct Sales

- Promote direct sales from farms to consumers.

5. Foster Sustainability

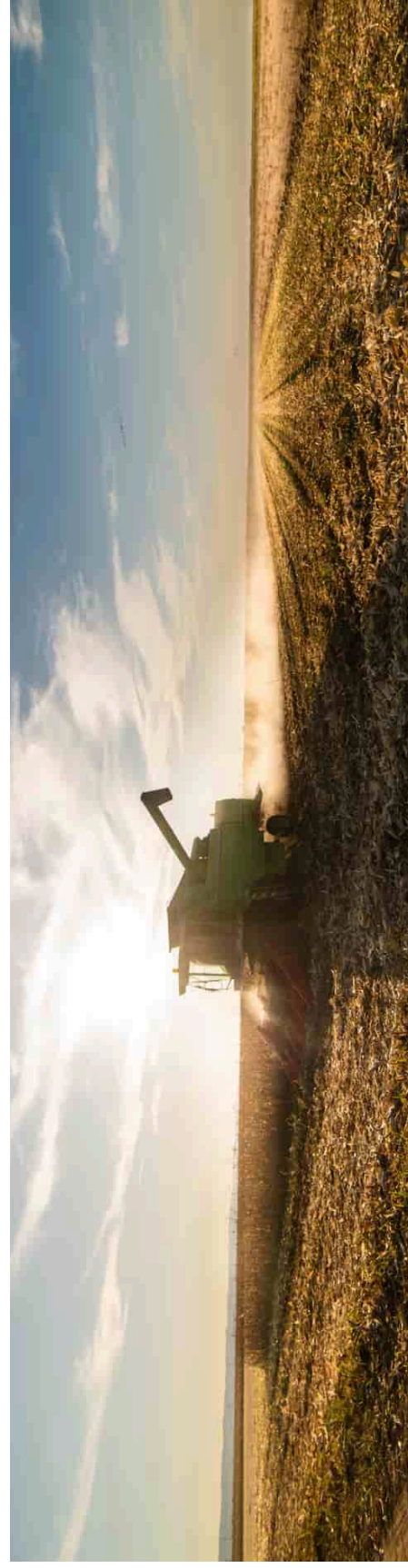
- Encourage renewable energy use and succession planning on farms.

6. Improve Infrastructure

- Explore enhanced internet and streamline municipal services.

7. Support Innovation

- Advocate for agricultural technology and research.



Business Support Organization Landscape

Mississippi Mills lacks a formal Business Improvement Area (BIA) organization, with the Almonte BIA disbanded in 1999 and no official re-establishment since. Informal groups such as Pakenham Business and Tourism Association (PBTA) and Destination Almonte Association support local businesses. PBTA fosters community engagement in Pakenham, while Destination Almonte, recently renamed to include Association, collaborates on events and promotion of Almonte as a tourist destination, despite lacking formal governance.

While these informal groups contribute to the local economy, the lack of a formal BIA means no dedicated funding or municipal partnership for business initiatives. This presents an opportunity for Mississippi Mills to explore re-establishing a BIA.

The Mississippi Mills Chamber of Commerce disbanded in 2015 after unsuccessful efforts to strengthen its operations. With too few members to sustain paid staff, it struggled to demonstrate value and recruit new members. This further underscores the absence of a structured organization for coordinated business improvement efforts.

The Carleton Place Chamber of Commerce, with around 30 Mississippi Mills members, is working to expand its influence further, benefiting both communities. Mississippi Mills businesses gain access to networking, advocacy, and support programs, while the Chamber strengthens its membership and advocacy capacity. Promoting Chamber benefits to Mississippi Mills businesses could enhance regional economic resilience and cooperation.

Distinct and Important Roles

A **Chamber of Commerce** and a **Business Improvement Area (BIA)** serve distinct but complementary roles within a rural municipality, each contributing to economic development in unique ways.

A **Chamber of Commerce** is a broad, membership-based organization representing businesses of all types across the municipality. Its role is to advocate for the collective interests of the business community, provide networking opportunities, and offer services such as training programs, marketing support, and policy advocacy. Chambers often work to attract investment and foster economic growth on a regional scale, making them particularly beneficial for rural areas seeking to strengthen ties with nearby urban centers. Their wide-ranging focus supports diverse sectors, from agriculture to retail, creating a unified voice for businesses.

A **BIA**, is a more localized entity focused on a specific geographic area, such as a downtown core or commercial district. Its primary aim is to beautify, promote, and enhance the designated area to drive traffic, sales, and community engagement. BIAs are funded through a levy on local businesses within the area and often concentrate on events, streetscaping, and tourism initiatives to make the area a hub of activity. For rural municipalities, a BIA can revitalize town centers, attract visitors, and encourage local spending, complementing the broader advocacy work of the Chamber of Commerce.

Together, these organizations contribute to a thriving business environment by addressing both macro-level economic growth and micro-level community revitalization. Let me know if you'd like further details or insights!

Tourism, Culture and Economic Development

Tourism and cultural promotion play a significant role in driving economic growth and enriching the community of Mississippi Mills. By leveraging its unique blend of heritage, natural beauty, and recreational opportunities, the town can attract visitors, stimulate local businesses, and provide meaningful employment.

Recreational activities, including cycling, kayaking, and trail exploration, are a cornerstone of Mississippi Mills' appeal. Promoting these activities supports the local economy by attracting visitors who spend money on rentals, guided tours, and related services. Employment opportunities arise in areas like outdoor instruction, equipment maintenance, and eco-tourism ventures.

The combined efforts to promote tourism and culture strengthen Mississippi Mills' economic resilience. These initiatives not only drive revenue but also encourage entrepreneurship, develop a robust job market, and create a network of interconnected businesses. By enhancing the town's cultural and recreational identity, Mississippi Mills continues to foster pride among residents while drawing visitors who contribute to its prosperity. It's a virtuous cycle of growth rooted in heritage and community.

The Unique Charm and Impact of Tourism & Culture as an Economic Driver in Mississippi Mills

Almonte's historic downtown and vibrant arts scene create a welcoming atmosphere that attracts tourists. Festivals, galleries, and boutique shops celebrate local culture and drive the economy by creating jobs in retail, hospitality, and event management. Promoting Almonte as an artistic hub enhances its reputation and brings long-term financial benefits.

Pakenham's recreational assets, like skiing at Mount Pakenham, fishing, and the iconic Five Span Stone Bridge, make it a hotspot for outdoor enthusiasts. Promoting these attractions boosts tourism and supports local businesses such as inns, restaurants, and equipment rentals. This fosters community identity and creates tourism-based employment opportunities.

The rural charm of Mississippi Mills, with its picturesque villages, gorgeous landscapes, hiking trails, and agritourism, offers visitors a taste of country life. Farms, farmgate stands, and bed-and-breakfasts benefit from tourism, boosting the rural economy and reinforcing cultural heritage. This encourages further investment and job creation.

The Vital Role of Artists to Mississippi Mills Economy

Artists play a vital role in enriching rural economies by fostering creativity, cultural identity, and community engagement. Mississippi Mills is a vibrant hub for working artists, evident through seasonal art tours and organizations like the Almonte Area Artists Association and the Almonte Potters Guild. These events and groups showcase the incredible talent within the community, attracting visitors and boosting local businesses. Local art galleries in Almonte further highlight the importance of art in the region, providing spaces for artists to exhibit their work and for residents and tourists to appreciate and purchase unique pieces. The presence of these artists and galleries not only enhances the cultural landscape but also contributes significantly to the economic vitality of Mississippi Mills.

Importance of a Strong Sense of Place to a Rural Economy

A strong sense of place in a rural community is not only valuable for its cultural and social cohesion but also serves as a powerful driver of economic development and opportunity. When a community embraces its identity through public art, local events, cultural activities, and a deep appreciation of its people and history, it creates an inviting atmosphere that attracts businesses looking for authenticity and connection.

Businesses are drawn to communities with a well-defined sense of place because it fosters engagement, loyalty, and a thriving customer base. Local shops, restaurants, and tourism-focused enterprises benefit from the pride residents and visitors take in experiencing the area's unique character. For example, events celebrating local culture or history not only strengthen community ties but also draw tourism dollars, further supporting small businesses.

Moreover, a community that values its heritage while welcoming new people and ideas creates fertile ground for innovation and entrepreneurship. New businesses and investors are more likely to choose such a community as their location, knowing they can contribute to and benefit from an active and interconnected local economy. This bolsters job creation, diversifies the economic landscape, and supports long-term prosperity.

In Mississippi Mills, the sense of place shaped by Almonte's artistic vibrancy, Pakenham's recreational charm, and rural areas' agritourism potential becomes a magnet for both businesses and visitors, reinforcing economic resilience while maintaining the community's distinct values and identity. It's an ecosystem where cultural appreciation translates directly into economic growth and opportunity.



Themes that focus on economic development while fostering a sense of place, making the community more attractive to businesses and residents alike.

Cultural Heritage and Identity

- **Leveraging Local History:** Developing heritage tourism initiatives that highlight the region's historical sites and traditions can attract visitors and boost local businesses.
- **Supporting Local Artisans:** Creating marketplaces or online platforms for local crafts and products can enhance the region's unique identity and stimulate economic activity.

Community Engagement and Participation

- **Inclusive Economic Planning:** Engaging residents and businesses in economic development plans ensures that initiatives align with local needs and drive growth.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Encouraging collaboration between local businesses and government can lead to innovative projects that benefit the economy.

Public Spaces and Infrastructure

- **Developing Attractive Public Spaces:** Investing in parks, plazas, and community centers can make the area more appealing to residents and visitors, increasing foot traffic for local businesses.
- **Improving Infrastructure:** Enhancing transportation and connectivity can facilitate commerce and attract new businesses to the region.

Sustainable Development

- **Eco-Friendly Business Practices:** Promoting sustainability among local businesses can attract environmentally conscious consumers and investors.
- **Local Food Movement:** Supporting local agriculture and food markets can create jobs and keep money circulating within the community.

Economic Diversification

- **Supporting Small Businesses:** Providing grants, training, and resources for startups and small businesses can diversify the economy and create new job opportunities.
- **Promoting Tourism:** Developing tourism-related activities and attractions can generate revenue and showcase the region's unique qualities.

Looking Ahead Tourism & Culture Promotion

Mississippi Mills has a wealth of opportunities stemming from its vibrant cultural heritage, recreational assets, and scenic rural landscapes. Existing informal groups and community efforts showcase strong grassroots engagement and enthusiasm for supporting local businesses.

However, challenges such as the absence of formal governance structures, limited resources, and seasonal fluctuations highlight the need for a more coordinated approach. By building on its strengths and addressing these weaknesses, Mississippi Mills can craft targeted strategies to enhance tourism, economic growth, and regional collaboration, as outlined in the themes and opportunities above.



The following broad themes offer a foundation for building sustainable tourism and cultural strategies for Mississippi Mills.

- **Unified Promotion:** Highlight cultural, recreational, and rural attractions to establish a cohesive regional identity that appeals to visitors.
- **Collaborative Efforts:** Strengthen partnerships between local groups and regional organizations to amplify impact.
- **Infrastructure Enhancements:** Invest in visitor-friendly amenities to improve accessibility and experiences.
- **Year-Round Engagement:** Develop diverse events and activities to attract visitors throughout the year.
- **Supporting Rural and Recreational Assets:** Leverage agritourism and outdoor activities as key economic drivers.
- **Regional Networking:** Promote stronger ties with neighboring business networks to expand advocacy and growth opportunities.

NEXT STEPS: Stakeholder Groups

Three Key Questions

These questions will provide valuable insights to shape our comprehensive **Economic Development Plan**.

1. *What are the biggest challenges your business faces in this community?*
 - This is help identify common obstacles and areas where the municipality can provide support or make improvements.
2. *What opportunities do you see for growth and development in the local economy?*
 - Help us understand the potential for expansion to further guide strategic investments and initiatives and foster economic growth.
3. *What resources or services would be most beneficial to help your business thrive?*
 - Hearing business needs and preferences, will allow the municipality to tailor support programs and policies effectively.

We're looking for business owners from the following sectors to attend a two-hour stakeholder session.

- Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Construction/Trades
- Healthcare & Related Services
- Tourism, Culture & Recreation
- Retail
- Large Employers
- Professionals

Are you interested in being attending a 2-hour stakeholder session in May 2025?



Community Economic Development Strategies

The following is list of realistic, cost-effective strategies designed to support economic development while maintaining a strong **SENSE OF PLACE**. Vote towards continued investment if the action is already something already do that you hope to see continue.

[USE THE STICKERS PROVIDED TO CHOOSE YOUR TOP 3 STRATEGY CHOICES.](#)

Support Local Artisans and Makers: Organize seasonal artisan markets or pop-up events in public spaces to showcase local talent.

Celebrate Local History: Install interpretive signage at key historical sites and collaborate with local historians or heritage groups.

Host Community Festivals: Facilitate small-scale cultural events that highlight local traditions, music, and food.

Foster Local Partnerships: Work with local businesses and community organizations on shared initiatives like beautification projects or business promotions.

Youth & Volunteer Programs: Support youth engagement and volunteer days to build community pride and leadership.

Enhance Public Spaces: Improve parks, trails, and downtown streetscapes with benches, planters, and public art.

Advocate for Infrastructure Improvements: Municipalities can advocate to upper-tier governments for broadband, transit, or road improvements.

Support Local Food Initiatives: Facilitate farmers markets, community gardens, or local food events to promote sustainability and local agriculture or public events.

Encourage Green Practices: Share information and recognize businesses that adopt eco-friendly practices (e.g., energy efficiency, waste reduction).

Support Small Businesses: Promote local businesses through “shop local” campaigns and help connect them with provincial or federal funding programs.

Encourage Creative Industries: Provide space or support for local artists, musicians, and creators through community centers or public events.

Wayfinding and Signage: Develop consistent, locally themed signage to help people navigate and connect with the community.

Cultivating the Future: Sustainable Agriculture in Mississippi Mills

Our strategic plan will include strategies and actions designed to support a sustainable and prosperous future for Mississippi Mills Agricultural businesses. Based on your knowledge of the industry challenges help us prioritize our plan.

USE THE STICKERS PROVIDED TO CHOOSE YOUR TOP 3 POTENTIAL ACTIONS.

Promote Farm Diversity

- Support various types of farming and farmland use to strengthen local food systems.

Foster Sustainability

- Encourage renewable energy use and succession planning on farms.

Optimize Land Use

- Encourage sustainable land practices to protect agricultural areas.

Improve Infrastructure

- Explore enhanced internet and streamline municipal services.

Enhance Local Sales

- Promote direct sales from farms to consumers.
- Develop Local MM Brand for Agri Product.

Support Innovation

- Advocate for agricultural technology and research.

Address Economic Challenges

- Advocate for local processing facilities and skilled labour training.

Sustaining and Expanding Mississippi Mills' Busy Construction Industry

Mississippi Mills can strengthen its already robust construction sector by fostering workforce development, business engagement, regulatory efficiency, and sustainable practices. These strategies aim to ensure continued growth, innovation, and long-term success.

USE THE STICKERS PROVIDED TO CHOOSE YOUR TOP 3 POTENTIAL ACTIONS.

<p>1. Partner with schools and trade organizations to promote apprenticeships and skilled trades careers.</p>	<p>4. Collaborate with neighboring municipalities to expand opportunities and advocate for sector-wide initiatives.</p>
<p>2. Support local contractors and suppliers through networking opportunities and business development initiatives.</p>	<p>5. Highlight completed projects that successfully incorporated local businesses to showcase their contributions to the community.</p>
<p>3. Encourage local businesses to participate in municipal projects by promoting bidding opportunities and offering support in the application process.</p>	<p>6. Incentivize energy-efficient building practices and support sustainable construction methods.</p>

USE THE STICKERS PROVIDED TO CHOOSE YOUR TOP 3 POTENTIAL ACTIONS.

The Healthcare Industry

When it comes to healthcare, lower-tier municipalities play a vital, behind-the-scenes role in supporting their communities.

While they may not directly manage hospitals or clinics, they are champions of advocacy, promotion, and support. They help spread awareness about local health initiatives, encourage healthy lifestyles, and ensure residents have access to essential services. Their impact might not always be front and center, but their efforts—like pushing for better healthcare funding, promoting wellness programs, and supporting local providers—help create a stronger, healthier community.

Although indirect a municipality's role can be crucial in shaping the overall well-being of their residents.

1) Advocate and collaborate with educational institutions to develop community-specific courses.

2) Partner in the development of strategies to attract and retain healthcare workers (recruitment)

3) Launch public awareness campaigns to educate residents about available healthcare services and encourage utilization.

4) Foster partnerships between healthcare providers, local businesses and government agencies to create a supportive network for healthcare services.

5) Promote healthcare as a key component of economic resilience, ensuring the community can withstand economic fluctuations and maintain essential services. Highlight the potential for job creation within the healthcare sector, emphasizing the variety of roles available and the importance of healthcare to the local economy.

6) Advocate for expand services for the aging population, including home care and assisted living.

7) Work with partners to develop community health & recreation programs focused on preventive care and chronic disease management to improve the overall health of the aging population.

Enhancing Tourism and Cultural Vitality in Mississippi Mills

Aiming to strengthen Mississippi Mills' identity and visitor experience. Collectively, these strategies seek to boost tourism, foster local partnerships, and celebrate the area's cultural and natural assets.

USE THE STICKERS PROVIDED TO VOTE FOR TOP 3 POTENTIAL ACTIONS CHOICES.

- 1. Unified Promotion**
Develop and promote a cohesive regional brand that highlights Mississippi Mills' cultural, recreational, and rural attractions through coordinated marketing and digital platforms.
- 2. Collaborative Efforts**
Establish a MM tourism and culture advisory group to foster partnerships among local organizations and regional stakeholders for shared planning and promotion.
- 3. Infrastructure Enhancements**
Invest in accessible, visitor-friendly infrastructure—such as signage, amenities, and trails—to enhance the overall tourism experience.
- 4. Year-Round Engagement**
Create a diverse, seasonal calendar of events and experiences that attract visitors throughout the year, including indoor and outdoor offerings.
- 5. Supporting Rural and Recreational Assets**
Leverage agritourism and outdoor recreation by developing themed experiences that connect visitors with local farms, trails, and natural landscapes.
- 6. Regional Networking**
Strengthen ties with neighboring municipalities and tourism networks to share resources, advocate collectively, and expand regional tourism opportunities.

APPENDIX D

Results and Observations from Business Survey

BUSINESS SURVEY GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Survey Participants:** The survey includes responses from a variety of businesses located in different wards of Mississippi Mills, including Almonte, Pakenham, and Ramsay.
- **Business Types:** The businesses surveyed span multiple industries such as retail trade, health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, agriculture, manufacturing, and professional services.

Key Observations

1. Economic Development Vision:

- Common themes for the economic future of Mississippi Mills include prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and environmental sustainability.
- Businesses emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, attracting visitors, and growing in a way that fits the community.

2. Business Characteristics:

- Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
- A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community.

3. Employment:

- The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
- There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.

4. Challenges and Barriers:

- Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
- Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.

5. Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.

6. Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

- **Advantages of Doing Business in Mississippi Mills:**
 - Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
 - Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.
- **Disadvantages:**
 - Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
 - Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in Pakenham.
- **Desired Improvements:**
 - Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
 - More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
 - Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

CONCLUSION

The survey results highlight a community of businesses that are deeply rooted in Mississippi Mills, with a strong desire to grow and support each other. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.



SUMMARY PAKENHAM BUSINESS SURVEY RESPONSES:

General Information

- **Total Responses:** 17 businesses from Pakenham participated in the survey.
- **Business Types:** The businesses include a mix of agriculture, retail trade, accommodation and food services, health care, and other services.

Key Observations

1. **Economic Development Vision:**
 - Businesses in Pakenham emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, attracting visitors, and growing in a way that fits the community.
 - Common themes for the economic future include prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and environmental sustainability.
2. **Business Characteristics:**
 - Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
 - A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community.
3. **Employment:**
 - The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
 - There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.

4. Challenges and Barriers:

- Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
- Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.

5. Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.

6. Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.

Specific Feedback

• Advantages of Doing Business in Pakenham:

- Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
- Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.

• Disadvantages:

- Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
- Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in Pakenham.

• Desired Improvements:

- Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
- More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
- Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

CONCLUSION

The feedback from Pakenham businesses highlights a community that values its local support and is committed to growth and sustainability. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.

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SUMMARY OF ALMONTE BUSINESS SURVEY RESPONSES

General Information

- Total Responses: 37 businesses from Almonte participated in the survey.
- Business Types: The businesses include a mix of retail trade, health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, professional services, manufacturing, and other services.

Key Observations

1. Economic Development Vision:

- Businesses in Almonte emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, attracting visitors, and growing in a way that fits the community.
- Common themes for the economic future include prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and environmental sustainability.

2. Business Characteristics:

- Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
- A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community.

3. Employment:

- The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
- There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.

4. Challenges and Barriers:

- Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
- Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.

5. Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.

6. Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.

Specific Feedback

• Advantages of Doing Business in Almonte:

- Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
- Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.

• Disadvantages:

- Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
- Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in Almonte.

• Desired Improvements:

- Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
- More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
- Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

Conclusion

The feedback from Almonte businesses highlights a community that values its local support and is committed to growth and sustainability. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.

SUMMARY OF RAMSAY SURVEY RESPONSES

General Information

- Total Responses: 10 businesses from Ramsay participated in the survey.
- Business Types: The businesses include a mix of agriculture, construction, health care, professional services, and other services.

Key Observations

1. Economic Development Vision:

- Businesses in Ramsay emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, ensuring the benefits of growth are evenly shared, and growing in a way that fits the community.
- Common themes for the economic future include prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and environmental sustainability.

2. Business Characteristics:

- Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
- A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community.

3. Employment:

- The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
- There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.

4. Challenges and Barriers:

- Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
- Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.

5. Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.

6. Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.

Specific Feedback

- **Advantages of Doing Business in Ramsay:**
 - Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
 - Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.
- **Disadvantages:**
 - Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
 - Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in Ramsay.
- **Desired Improvements:**
 - Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
 - More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
 - Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

CONCLUSION

The feedback from Ramsay businesses highlights a community that values its local support and is committed to growth and sustainability. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.

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AGRICULTURE

General Information

- **Total Responses:** 10 agriculture businesses participated in the survey.
- **Business Types:** The businesses include dairy farming, cash crops, organic farming, maple products, and agritourism.

Key Observations

1. **Economic Development Vision:**
 - Agriculture businesses emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, ensuring the benefits of growth are evenly shared, and growing in a way that fits the community.
 - Common themes for the economic future include environmental sustainability, historical/cultural connection, and resilience.
2. **Business Characteristics:**
 - Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
 - A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community.
3. **Employment:**
 - The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
 - There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.
4. **Challenges and Barriers:**
 - Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
 - Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.

5. Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.

6. Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.

Specific Feedback

• Advantages of Doing Business in Agriculture:

- Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
- Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.

• Disadvantages:

- Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
- Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

• Desired Improvements:

- Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
- More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
- Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

CONCLUSION

The feedback from agriculture businesses highlights a community that values its local support and is committed to growth and sustainability. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.

Let's compare the feedback from agriculture businesses with other sectors based on the survey results:

General Information

• Total Responses:

- Agriculture: 10 responses
- Other Sectors: 61 responses

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Economic Development Vision

- **Agriculture:**
 - Emphasis on environmental sustainability, historical/cultural connection, and resilience.
 - Importance of supporting local business owners and ensuring the benefits of growth are evenly shared.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar emphasis on prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and environmental sustainability.
 - Focus on attracting visitors and growing in a way that fits the community.

Business Characteristics

- **Agriculture:**
 - Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location.
 - Significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar trend of locally owned and operated businesses with one location.
 - Many businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability.

Employment

- **Agriculture:**
 - Small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
 - Mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar employment patterns with small numbers of employees.
 - Mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment.

Challenges and Barriers

- **Agriculture:**
 - Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
 - Difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar challenges with internet speed, competition, and cost of doing business.
 - Additional challenges with municipal services and infrastructure.

Community and Support

- **Agriculture:**
 - Positive impression of the community as a place to do business.
 - Desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Generally positive impression of the community.
 - Similar desire for collaboration and joint marketing efforts.

Future Plans

- **Agriculture:**
 - Plans to expand or remain stable in the near future.
 - Interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar plans to expand or remain stable.
 - Interest in support for business planning, marketing, and training.

Advantages of Doing Business

- **Agriculture:**
 - Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
 - Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar advantages with strong community support and attractive setting.

Disadvantages

- **Agriculture:**
 - Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
 - Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar disadvantages with commercial space and municipal services.

Desired Improvements

- **Agriculture:**
 - Better internet and cell phone service, especially in rural areas.
 - More affordable housing and commercial space.
 - Increased marketing and promotional efforts.
- **Other Sectors:**
 - Similar desired improvements with internet, housing, and marketing.

CONCLUSION

The feedback from agriculture businesses is quite similar to other sectors in terms of challenges, advantages, and desired improvements. Both groups value the strong sense of community and support from local residents, but face challenges with infrastructure, municipal services, and the cost of doing business. There is a shared interest in collaboration, joint marketing efforts, and support for business growth and sustainability.

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RETAIL SECTOR SURVEYS:

General Information

- **Total Responses:** 15 retail businesses participated in the survey.
- **Business Types:** The businesses include a mix of general retail stores, specialty shops, and food and beverage retailers.

Economic Development Vision:

Retail businesses emphasize the importance of supporting local business owners, attracting visitors, and growing in a way that fits the community. Common themes for the economic future include prosperity, historical/cultural connection, and vibrancy.

Business Characteristics:

Many businesses are locally owned and operated with one location. A significant number of businesses have been in operation for over 10 years, indicating stability and long-term commitment to the community

1. Employment:

- The majority of businesses have a small number of employees, typically ranging from 1 to 10.
- There is a mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, with some businesses experiencing difficulties in hiring and retaining employees.

2. Challenges and Barriers:

- Common challenges include internet speed, competition, and the cost of doing business.
- Some businesses report difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support.

3. Community and Support:

- Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business, with many noting the supportive and welcoming nature of the local population.
- There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses.

4. Future Plans:

- Many businesses plan to expand or remain stable in the near future, with some looking to hire more employees or increase their physical space.
- There is interest in receiving support for business planning, marketing, and training.

Specific Feedback

• Advantages of Doing Business in Retail:

- Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
- Attractive setting and proximity to Ottawa, which helps in attracting visitors and customers.

• Disadvantages:

- Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
- Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in retail areas.

• Desired Improvements:

- Better internet and cell phone service, especially in retail areas.
- More affordable housing and commercial space to support business growth.
- Increased marketing and promotional efforts to attract visitors and new businesses.

CONCLUSION

The feedback from retail businesses highlights a community that values its local support and is committed to growth and sustainability. While there are challenges, particularly related to infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is positive, with businesses looking forward to a prosperous and sustainable future.

CHAMBER FEEDBACK

General Sentiment

- **Awareness:** Some businesses are not aware of the Chamber of Commerce or its activities. This indicates a need for better communication and outreach to ensure all businesses are informed about the Chamber's role and benefits.
- **Engagement:** A few businesses mentioned that they are members of the Carleton Place & District Chamber of Commerce, suggesting that some businesses in Mississippi Mills may be looking outside the municipality for support and networking opportunities.

Positive Feedback

- **Supportive Community:** Businesses that are aware of the Chamber of Commerce generally view it as a supportive entity that can help with networking, marketing, and business growth.
- **Collaboration:** There is a desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses, which the Chamber of Commerce could facilitate.

Areas for Improvement

- **Visibility and Communication:** There is a need for the Chamber of Commerce to increase its visibility and improve communication with local businesses. Ensuring that all businesses are aware of the Chamber's activities and how they can benefit from membership is crucial.
- **Inclusivity:** Some businesses feel that the Chamber of Commerce should be more inclusive and ensure that all types of businesses, including home-based and small enterprises, are represented and supported.

Desired Actions

- **Events and Networking:** Businesses expressed interest in more events and networking opportunities organized by the Chamber of Commerce. These events can help businesses connect, share resources, and collaborate on joint initiatives.
- **Advocacy and Support:** There is a need for the Chamber of Commerce to advocate for local businesses, particularly in addressing challenges related to municipal services, infrastructure, and commercial space availability.

CONCLUSION

The survey responses indicate that while there is some positive sentiment towards the Chamber of Commerce, there is also a need for increased visibility, better communication, and more inclusive support for all types of businesses. By addressing these areas, the Chamber of Commerce can play a more significant role in fostering a collaborative and thriving business community in Mississippi Mills.

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND STAFF FEEDBACK

General Sentiment

- **Awareness and Interaction:** Some businesses have interacted with Municipal staff and council, while others have not had much contact. This indicates varying levels of engagement and awareness among businesses.

Positive Feedback

- **Supportive Community:** Businesses that have interacted with Municipal staff and council generally view them as supportive and helpful. There is appreciation for the efforts made by the Municipality to support local businesses.
- **Community Engagement:** Some businesses noted positive experiences with community engagement initiatives and the support provided by Municipal staff in organizing events and promoting local businesses.

Areas for Improvement

- **Visibility and Communication:** There is a need for Municipal staff and council to increase their visibility and improve communication with local businesses. Ensuring that all businesses are aware of the Municipality's activities and how they can benefit from them is crucial.
- **Inclusivity:** Some businesses feel that the Municipality should be more inclusive and ensure that all types of businesses, including home-based and small enterprises, are represented and supported.

Desired Actions

- **Advocacy and Support:** There is a need for Municipal staff and council to advocate for local businesses, particularly in addressing challenges related to municipal services, infrastructure, and commercial space availability.
- **Streamlining Processes:** Businesses expressed a desire for more streamlined processes, particularly related to building permits and infrastructure support. Simplifying these processes can help businesses operate more efficiently and reduce costs.

Specific Feedback

- **Advantages of Municipal Support:**
 - Strong sense of community and support from local residents.
 - Efforts made by the Municipality to promote local businesses and organize community events.
- **Disadvantages:**
 - Limited availability of commercial space and high rental costs.
 - Challenges with municipal services and infrastructure, particularly in certain areas.
- **Desired Improvements:**
 - Better communication and outreach from Municipal staff and council.
 - More inclusive support for all types of businesses.
 - Streamlined processes for building permits and infrastructure support.

CONCLUSION

The survey responses indicate that while there is some positive sentiment towards Municipal staff and council, there is also a need for increased visibility, better communication, and more inclusive support for all types of businesses. By addressing these areas, the Municipality can play a more significant role in fostering a collaborative and thriving business community in Mississippi Mills.

FUTURE

Based on the survey responses, we can deduce several trends and insights about the future of businesses in the Municipality of Mississippi Mills over the next five years:

Business Growth and Expansion

- **Expansion Plans:** Many businesses plan to expand their operations, hire more employees, and increase their physical space. This indicates a positive outlook for business growth and economic development in the municipality.
- **Stability:** A significant number of businesses intend to remain stable, focusing on maintaining their current operations and market position.

Employment Trends

- **Full-time Employment:** There is a steady demand for full-time employees, with businesses looking to hire more staff to support their growth and expansion plans.
- **Part-time and Seasonal Employment:** Part-time and seasonal employment will continue to play a crucial role, especially in sectors like retail, agriculture, and tourism. Businesses will rely on flexible staffing to meet fluctuating demand.

Challenges and Barriers

- **Internet and Infrastructure:** Internet speed and infrastructure support remain significant challenges for businesses, particularly in rural areas. Addressing these issues will be crucial for enabling business growth and attracting new enterprises.
- **Municipal Services:** Businesses face difficulties related to municipal services, such as building permits and infrastructure support. Streamlining these processes and improving communication with businesses will be essential for fostering a supportive business environment.

Community and Support

- **Positive Community Impression:** Businesses generally have a positive impression of the community as a place to do business. The supportive and welcoming nature of the local population is a significant advantage.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** There is a strong desire for more collaboration and joint marketing efforts among local businesses. Creating opportunities for networking and resource-sharing will help businesses thrive.

Desired Improvements

- **Affordable Housing and Commercial Space:** Businesses seek more affordable housing and commercial space to support their growth and attract new talent. Addressing these needs will be vital for sustaining economic development.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** Increased marketing and promotional efforts are needed to attract visitors and new businesses to the municipality. Enhancing the visibility of local businesses will drive economic growth.

Future Outlook

- **Sustainability and Resilience:** Businesses emphasize the importance of environmental sustainability and resilience. Adopting sustainable practices and building resilient operations will be key priorities for the future.
- **Innovation and Adaptation:** Businesses are looking to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions. Embracing new technologies and business models will be essential for staying competitive.

CONCLUSION

The survey responses indicate a positive outlook for businesses in the Municipality of Mississippi Mills over the next five years. While there are challenges to address, such as infrastructure and municipal services, the overall sentiment is optimistic. Businesses are committed to growth, collaboration, and sustainability, which will drive economic development and create a thriving business community.

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OTHER BUSINESSES NEEDED

Several survey respondents provided suggestions for other businesses that could benefit Mississippi Mills or offered to make connections. Here are some key points:

Suggested Businesses

1. Retail and Food Services:

- **Grocery Stores:** There were multiple suggestions for more affordable grocery stores, such as a Giant Tiger or a Farm Boy, to provide better options for local residents.
- **Ethnic Restaurants:** Some respondents suggested adding more ethnic restaurants to diversify the food options available in the community.
- **Specialty Shops:** Suggestions included a music store, a kayak/paddleboard rental shop, and a store for eco-friendly products.

2. Health and Wellness:

- **Fitness and Wellness Centers:** There were suggestions for more fitness centers, yoga studios, and wellness centers to cater to the growing demand for health and wellness services.
- **Medical Services:** Some respondents mentioned the need for more medical services, such as additional doctors and specialized health care providers.

3. Tourism and Recreation:

- **Tourist Attractions:** Suggestions included adding more tourist attractions, such as a roller rink or a local pool, to enhance the recreational options for both residents and visitors.
- **Accommodation:** There were mentions of the need for more overnight accommodations, such as small hotels or bed and breakfasts, to support tourism.

Offers to Make Connections

- **Collaborative Efforts:** Several respondents expressed interest in working cooperatively with other businesses in the community. This includes joint marketing efforts, cross-referrals, and collaborative events.
- **Networking and Mentorship:** Some business owners offered to mentor new businesses or provide networking opportunities to help them establish and grow in the community.
- **Resource Sharing:** There were offers to share resources, such as marketing materials, training programs, and business planning support, to help other businesses succeed.

CONCLUSION

The survey responses indicate a strong sense of community and a willingness to support the growth and development of Mississippi Mills. By leveraging these suggestions and offers for collaboration, the municipality can create a more vibrant and diverse business environment that benefits both residents and visitors.

UNIQUE INSIGHTS

While the survey responses were generally focused on common themes such as business growth, community support, and infrastructure challenges, there were a few interesting, unexpected, or unique insights:

Unique Business Ideas

- **Roller Rink:** One respondent suggested adding a roller rink as a new recreational facility in Mississippi Mills. This idea stands out as a unique attraction that could draw both residents and visitors.
- **Ghost Kitchens:** Another respondent mentioned the need for shared kitchen spaces or ghost kitchens. This concept could support food entrepreneurs and small businesses by providing affordable, flexible kitchen facilities.

Community and Inclusivity

- **Equity and Diversity:** Some businesses highlighted the importance of creating a more inclusive and welcoming community for equity-seeking groups. There were suggestions for more diversity training and support for businesses to adopt inclusive practices.
- **Support for Newcomers:** A few respondents emphasized the need for better support and resources for newcomers to the community, including affordable housing and access to local services.

Collaboration and Networking

- **Joint Marketing Efforts:** Several businesses expressed a strong interest in joint marketing and promotional efforts. This collaborative approach could help businesses reach a wider audience and create a more cohesive business community.
- **Mentorship Programs:** There were offers from experienced business owners to mentor new entrepreneurs and provide guidance on business planning and growth. This mentorship could be valuable for fostering a supportive and thriving business environment.

Infrastructure and Services

- **Municipal Services:** Some businesses provided detailed feedback on their experiences with municipal services, including challenges with building permits and infrastructure support. There were calls for more streamlined processes and better communication from municipal staff.
- **Internet and Cell Service:** The need for improved internet and cell phone service was a recurring theme, particularly in rural areas. Businesses highlighted the impact of connectivity issues on their operations and growth potential.

Unexpected Insights

- **Environmental Sustainability:** A few businesses emphasized the importance of environmental sustainability and expressed a desire to adopt more eco-friendly practices. This focus on sustainability reflects a growing trend towards environmentally conscious business operations.
- **Community Events:** There were suggestions for more community events and festivals to attract visitors and create a vibrant local culture. These events could help boost the local economy and foster a sense of community pride.

CONCLUSION

- The survey responses revealed a range of interesting, unexpected, and unique insights that highlight the diverse needs and aspirations of businesses in Mississippi Mills. By addressing these insights and fostering collaboration, the municipality can create a more dynamic and inclusive business environment that supports growth and sustainability.

CREDITS

Project Leadership

Municipality of Mississippi Mills Economic Development Department

Strategic Plan Development

Prepared in collaboration with:

- Municipal staff
- Mississippi Mills Council
- Local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Community organizations
- Educational and institutional partners
- Residents and community participants

Community Engagement

This plan was informed through:

- Public Information Centres (PICs)
- Stakeholder consultations
- Community surveys
- Interactive engagement boards
- Public feedback sessions

Strategic Alignment and Support

Special acknowledgement to the contributors supporting the Municipality's:

- MM2048 Vision
- 2023–2027 Council Strategic Plan
- Economic development and community resilience initiatives

Photography and Visual Content

Images, maps, graphics, and visual assets provided by:

- Municipality of Mississippi Mills
- Local photographers and community contributors
- Tourism and economic development promotional resources

Data and Research Sources

Data and background research informed by:

- Statistics Canada
- Municipal planning documents
- Community engagement findings
- Regional and provincial economic development resources
- Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used to support research, and comparative analysis, during the preparation of this plan.

Appreciation

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