

**AN ACTION PLAN: MOVING BARRIE'S ECONOMY FORWARD**

OCTOBER 2012

# CREATIVE THINKERS WERE INVITED, INNOVATIVE IDEAS IS WHAT WE GOT.



The ideas were **bold** and **innovative**. The strategies and action plans were **insightful**, **realistic** and shared the threads of a **common vision**.

The City of Barrie's first Ideas in Motion interactive business event held on June 14, 2012 attracted over 200 of Barrie's most creative business leaders from a cross section of Barrie's economy. The event was focused on innovative thinking and idea design related to key economic development opportunities for Barrie. The purpose was to engage the business community, have them grapple with the challenges due to

the current economic situation and then to work to co-design possible solutions. Drawn from a multitude of individual ideas and discussions, 5 key priorities were developed each with subsequent ideas and action plans.

Moving Barrie's economy forward will require action by many organizations working together to produce results and the support of our partners and business leaders to effect change and generate results.

So, let's set the stage on how we can continue to move Barrie's economy forward by turning the **ideas into motion**.

Attract  
people &  
business

Better  
place to  
work & live

identify  
City's  
strengths

better  
paying jobs  
for residents

Bring a  
University  
Downtown

sustainable  
economy

Focus on  
the labour  
market

elevate the  
standard of  
living

develop  
ne

Marketing,  
Barrie is a  
destination  
community

elevate the  
standard of  
living

DIVERSITY

encourage  
investment

Improve  
Quality  
of life

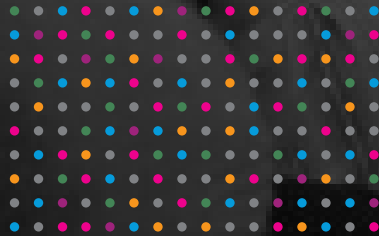
Grow  
the local  
economy

assist local  
businesses

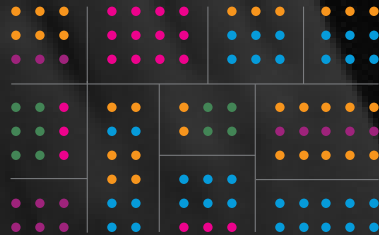
Involve  
community

## THE PROCESS

FIRST, WE GATHERED YOUR IDEAS



THEN, SHAPED THE IDEAS INTO THEMES



RESULTING IN 5 KEY PRIORITIES



*Ideas that represent  
ways that Barrie can  
become the best place  
to do business*


# 01

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

*Ideas to align and  
connect Barrie's  
business support  
infrastructure and  
services to enhance  
economic development*

# 02

## ALIGNMENT



*Ideas for harnessing  
the talent of those who  
can best improve and  
change Barrie to achieve  
solid economic vitality*

03

**BUSINESS  
AMBASSADORS**

*Ideas to create  
capacity in education  
and to better meet  
the skills training and  
labour needs of future  
businesses in Barrie*

04

**UNIVERSITY  
READY**

*Ideas for promoting  
and presenting Barrie  
to businesses, workers  
and families around  
the world*

05

**OUR  
IDENTITY**

# 01 OPEN FOR BUSINESS

How do we remove roadblocks so that new and existing businesses thrive? How do we improve customer service and reduce red tape in City Hall? What do we do to make things easier for businesses to thrive in Barrie?

We need to engage our strongest advocates and partners to help the City of Barrie build a strong economic future.

Through this collaboration, create a cross organization team within City Hall with a mandate to balance business needs with community objectives, improve processes and reduce barriers.

The synchronization of our efforts with a common purpose and streamlined services will result in a customer based culture that is business friendly and create a one stop shop for future investors and businesses in Barrie.

## MAIN IDEAS

1. Establish “Open for Business Team” to improve processes and reduce barriers to make Barrie the easiest place to do business.

# ACTION PLAN

		2012	2013	2014	2015
STEP 1	Develop a cross departmental “ <i>Open for Business</i> ” team for all functions that support new and existing businesses	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
STEP 2	Develop, market and promote a survey for businesses to identify areas of improvement with greatest short term impact	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
STEP 3	Develop action plans based on input from the business survey with a focus on customer service	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
STEP 4	Undertake review and improvements for all city processes that have an impact on business development	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

INITIATION TO  
COMPLETION  
Q1  Q3  
Q2  Q4

# 02 ALIGNMENT

How do we best provide economic development services? Are there opportunities to combine the efforts of various organizations to increase our capacity to provide a more refined and aligned Economic Development Service Delivery Model?

The City of Barrie needs to move forward with one voice – a strong, common, consistent message so that each contributor to Economic Development is working together to achieve the same goal.

We need to increase capacity and reduce duplication in the way we deliver services. Our current economic service delivery model needs to incorporate better collaboration and partnering among those who have the tools and can help us build the foundation for economic growth.

From economic development, business development, downtown redevelopment, to tourism and entrepreneurship acceleration, we would be able to capitalize on our strengths and leverage individual and collective expertise to build confidence among investors and increase results by working in collaboration, and pooling resources where appropriate. All with the common goal of providing business support services to encourage business growth, retention, attraction, expansion and relocation.

## MAIN IDEAS

1. Increase internal capacity through economic development service alignment in order to capitalize on all economic opportunities for the city.
2. Provide one window service delivery for economic development business services to increase investor and community confidence in doing business in Barrie.



## ACTION PLAN

		2012	2013	2014	2015	
STEP 1	Focus economic development efforts on current strategic priorities that are achievable and results based					INITIATION TO COMPLETION Q1  Q3 Q2  Q4
STEP 2	Review current structure and resourcing of the City's Economic Development Office to capitalize on strengths and focus on priority actions					
STEP 3	Explore a broader Economic Development Service Delivery Model with an expanded mandate that would bring together all the key foundations for successful economic development including business development, Greater Barrie Business Enterprise Centre, Culture, Downtown and Tourism					
STEP 4	<p>Establish a strong business synergy centre through corporate/public/private partnership that is focused on promoting and supporting business start-ups</p> <p>Collaborate with all business support services to explore a single access framework that supports and promotes innovation and entrepreneurship and creates a successful environment for business start-ups</p>					

# 03 BUSINESS AMBASSADORS

What is it like to do business in Barrie? How can we raise our business profile locally, nationally and internationally? Who can act as our agents of change and best tell the story of growing a business in Barrie?





















The City of Barrie needs to raise our profile as a place where businesses want to locate by promoting Barrie's business advantages and lifestyle opportunities economically, socially and culturally. Business Ambassadors could play an important role in promoting Barrie by telling their story based on experiences. Our current businesses are our best marketers.





Business Ambassadors have played a role in the City's economic development strategy in the past and this is the right time in our community to re-engage our business leaders who demonstrate a keen interest in the growth of our community.

## MAIN IDEAS

1. Engage leaders from key business sectors to promote economic opportunities within Barrie.
2. Build and implement a sustainable business ambassador model with ongoing support from the city.

## ACTION PLAN

		2012	2013	2014	2015
STEP 1	Research other community best practices that leverage Business Ambassadors				
STEP 2	Create a focus group of business leaders to help to determine the best approach and scope for an Ambassador program				
STEP 3	Build and implement a sustainable business ambassador model with ongoing support from the city				
STEP 4	Recruit and engage leaders from key business sectors as Ambassadors to promote opportunities within Barrie				
STEP 5	Develop Barrie's story and empower our business leaders to be the agents for our community				

INITIATION TO  
COMPLETION  
Q1   Q3  
Q2   Q4

# O4 UNIVERSITY READY

What does an innovative collaboration to foster student success in the 21st century learning environment look like? How can we get bright minds to come together on the same campus from high school through College and University, to business start up?

The City of Barrie is a university ready city, and the perfect place for a satellite university campus. A growing city of over 140,000 with growth projections of over 210,000 by 2031, Barrie is ready for a university in our downtown to serve our younger-than-provincial-average population. A Master Site Plan has been completed and land has been assembled in public ownership for an exciting site in our City Centre.

Barrie is one of Canada's largest cities without a University campus and we have the commitment of \$14M from Barrie City Council to help demonstrate that we are university ready.

## MAIN IDEAS

1. Advocacy for a University in Barrie to address local labour market shortages and provide opportunities for local students.
2. Joint RFEI and RFP for developing partners for the Centre of Excellence in Education.

ACTION PLAN

		2012	2013	2014	2015
STEP 1	ADVOCACY FOR A UNIVERSITY IN BARRIE <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continued meetings with Provincial Government</li><li>Testimonial Video to further the Case for why Barrie needs a University</li><li>Prepare a formal Business Case for a University in Barrie</li></ul>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
STEP 2	Develop a list of major skills training shortages from local Businesses; work with post secondary institutions to develop a comprehensive plan for education that addresses local labour market gaps	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
STEP 3	Issue RFEI with the Simcoe County District School Board for partners in the rebuild of Barrie Central Collegiate and Centre of Excellence in Education	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
STEP 4	Provincial Announcement of the Process re: Satellite University Campuses	TO BE DETERMINED BY PROVINCE			
STEP 5	Issue RFP for Centre of Excellence in Education	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

INITIATION TO COMPLETION  
Q1  Q3   
Q2  Q4

# 05 OUR IDENTITY

Who are we and more importantly what can we be? What would potential business leaders see in Barrie?

The way we present our community to businesses, workers and families impacts our brand as a City and as a place to begin or expand a business.

Barrie needs a clearly established vision and mission for economic development which includes a brand strategy implementation plan and the necessary tools/resources for adaptation by staff and external partners will help us define what is great about our community. We need a business identity that is defined by more than just logos and wordmarks, but by people's experience with

doing business in Barrie, their belief in our City to grow and expand their business and what the City stands for.

We know we have what it takes to compete, but a clearly defined identity will help us expand our business base and build community wealth because others will then know what we already do.

## MAIN IDEAS

1. Create a brand strategy that will become the single rallying point for our business community.
2. Identify what Barrie is and define the economic vision and mission.
3. Develop a brand strategy implementation plan.

# ACTION PLAN

		2012	2013	2014	2015	
STEP 1	<b>DEFINING GREAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Obtain budget approval from Council</li><li>Create Barrie Branding Project Team</li><li>Define scope of project, budget and desired outcomes</li><li>Define target markets and complete a competitive analysis</li><li>Develop vision and mission for the City of Barrie Economic Development department</li></ul>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	INITIATION TO COMPLETION Q1 <div></div> <div></div> Q3 Q2 <div></div> <div></div> Q4
STEP 2	<b>BARRIE'S BRAND STRATEGY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Hold community engagement sessions to further refine, develop and value proposition statements</li><li>Integrate brand into the foundation of all communications materials</li><li>Develop tools and messaging that will allow business leaders and the City to promote the economic development brand</li></ul>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	
STEP 3	Rollout and Implementation	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	

# MOVING FORWARD

The questions were asked and our business community overwhelmingly responded with ideas and concepts that resulted in five priorities that will be the focus of the City of Barrie's Economic Development Strategy from 2012-2015.

In addition to focus on Open for Business, Alignment, Business Ambassadors, University Ready, and Our Identity, the Economic Development office will also focus their actions based on current strategic priorities that are achievable and consistent with the existing Economic Development Strategy because improvement must start at home. These include:

- **CLUSTERS**

- Manufacturing (*support and maintenance*)
- SME's (*support and maintenance*)
- Data warehousing and security (*research*)
- Health and Wellness (*research*)

- **LAND SALES**

Review and amend current land sales policies and practices

- **FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT**

Focus and refine FDI program based on experience from China mission

- **CORPORATE VISITATION**

Review program to set clear objectives and outcomes to ensure alignment with clusters

- **MARKETING**

Collaborative strategy between Economic Development and Communications to refine and focus advertising and marketing mediums in support of business development

Implementation over the next 3-4 years is critical to the growth of our local economy.

We will continue to report on an ongoing basis to Council and the business community on our progress.

A sincere appreciation is extended to the business community for their support and for their input on how we can move Barrie's economy forward. We are committed to making this plan work and putting these **ideas into motion.**



## JUNE 14, 2012 EVENT

During our Ideas in Motion event on June 14, 2012, attendees were invited to participate in a live Twitter feed. Our moderators posted discussion topics while attendees provided feedback and ideas throughout the day via their smartphones. Here is a brief look at what was shared...



Cross collaboration between city departments #ideasinmotion



Provide incentive for small businesses, and entrepreneurs to want to 'start-up' #ideasinmotion



Barrie needs a clear brand identity #ideasinmotion



Our hope is that City Hall embrace change and new ideas and support creative innovation #ideasinmotion

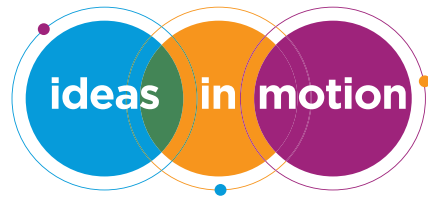


Barrie residents are the best sales team the city can have #ideasinmotion



We need City sponsored liaison to connect college co-ops to companies and students #ideasinmotion





*The City of*  
**BARRIE**