

VERSION 1.0
JANUARY 9, 2018

Town of Niverville
Economic Growth Strategy



Niverville
WHERE YOU BELONG

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TOWN OF NIVERVILLE
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ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY

Niverville’s Economic Growth Strategy is intended as a document for municipal politicians and staff to help build upon the Town’s aggressive business development plan.

OBJECTIVE

Niverville’s economic growth strategy is intended as a document to help build upon the Town’s aggressive business development plan. The goals are to create growth strategies and policies surrounding both Industrial and Commercial business, and where possible residential growth and resident retention.

SOAR ASSESSMENT

The Town reached out to business and community leaders to perform a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results) assessment to get a better idea of what the commercial and industrial sectors of Niverville are strong at and where they should be heading. Then to determine what steps need to be taken to ensure the Town achieves its goals.

STRENGTHS

What can we build on? What are we most proud of? What makes Niverville unique?

Some of the assets Niverville currently has that it can build upon include:

- New High School (Sept 2019)
- Community Resource Centre Concept
- Promotion (trade shows)
- Labour Pool (size, education)
- Age of Niverville
- History
- Public Safety
- Tourism (wetlands)
- Ability to improve density in all types of zoning
- Health Centre
- Entrepreneurship
- Cost of Employment
- Collaboration with Neighbouring RM’s
- Small Town Feel
- Niverville Business Park

What should Niverville be proud of?

- Progressive Town
- It's People
- Small Town Feel
- Old Tyme Country Fair
- Artistic Community
- History
- Safety
- Trades Industry
- Household Income
- Birth Rate
- Heritage Centre Complex
- Volunteerism
- Community Leaders
- Mennonite Landing
- Service offering
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Beautification of Town

What makes Niverville unique?

- Maintaining the small town feel despite size
- Service base present (complement of full-service industries)
- Lower congestion
- Greater value for money
- Demographics (population size, age, earnings, education)
- Healthcare Accessibility

What is Niverville proud of?

- Friendliness
- Safety
- Age of Community Residents
- Old Tyme Country Fair
- Fastest Growing Community Status
- Interaction with Neighbours
- Being a hub community
- Volunteerism
- History of Community
- Small Town Feel
- Local business development
- Schools

- Wedding Centre (five venues within 10 minutes)
- Local business involvement in community
- Public Safety
- Labour Market
- Being on the edge of influence from Winnipeg

What are the economic development strengths of the following groups:

Town Council / Staff

- Building of relational equity within the business community
- Work with the business community in fostering new & expanding industry / business
- Business park development

- Development of key services: education, recreation, healthcare
- Creation of a positive atmosphere
- Development of infrastructure to support business
- Be a resource to investors
- Keeping red tape out of development

Chamber of Commerce

- Policy leaders with Council to develop incentives and improve local business climate

- Networking of the business community to drive new partnerships

Private Enterprise

- Leaders in profit driven opportunities
- Take on risks and can be rewarded if successful
- Finding investors / partnerships
- Retail will come from this group

OPPORTUNITIES

What are our best probable future opportunities? How can we reframe perceived challenges to be opportunities?

What are Niverville's best probable future opportunities for commercial industrial growth?

- Expansion of certain areas in established businesses
- Transfer company located in Niverville
- Full access to transportation (mid-Manitoba trade corridor)
- Import / export business
- Diversity within business offerings (e.g. restaurants)
- Manufacturing
- Retail will come without assistance
- Business Park – lays infrastructure for development
- Agri-business
- Hotel
- Warehouse space

What are Niverville's challenges?

- Lack of direct access to Highway 75
- RTAC road restrictions
- Distribution / export market & routing
- Property taxes
- Business tool availability
- Stuck in our way
- Closed for business due to a lack of support
- Location to Winnipeg
- Engaging youth to stay in Niverville
- Lack of available building space
- Market saturation in some areas
- Ability to effectively market outside of Town
- Lack of paved access to business park
- Main Street beautification needed on east-end
- Residential properties along Main Street
- Need for additional daycare
- Public transit for city residents to work in Niverville
- Lack of schooling options – French immersion

How can Niverville reframe our challenges to become opportunities?

- Further development within the Niverville Business Park
- Further marketing of the available labour pool offerings
- Connecting new businesses with a business promotion package (e.g. access to advisors, accountants, lawyers, etc...)
- Increase relationship between Chamber and Business Owners
- Willingness of employees to drive to Niverville
- Flex hours
- Selling of travel cost savings
- Focus on Wedding market
- Focus on youth (through development of jobs, recreational opportunities)
- Lobby for infrastructure improvements (RTAC, curb & gutter)
- Getting St Adolphe to drive to Niverville instead of Winnipeg
- Small business kick-start assistance programs
- Communication with business leaders

- Studying similar community's strengths and struggles
- Combined marketing effort for the region (Ritchot & Niverville)
- Social media marketing plan

ASPIRATIONS

What are we deeply passionate about? What does our preferred future look like?

What is Niverville deeply passionate about?

- Community
- Small Town
- Pointing out Flaws
- Wetlands – connection to Mennonite Landing
- Education & daycare
- Being progressive

What does Niverville's future look like?

- Needs to have sustainable / thought out growth in all sectors
- Large growth based upon positive reviews from current residents
- Good – council has been listening to the needs of the business community
- Need to think big towards a city not a Town mentality
- Don't try to catch up to Steinbach – will not occur
- Transition between the old and the new Niverville generations
- Reaching a critical mass
- Advantages of not being as far away from Winnipeg
- Good momentum – school & Community Resource Centre
- Challenges due to location to Winnipeg
- Technological nodal – hub market – offering of professional services
- Ability to get people to work and live in the community rather than just living here
- Need to ensure small-town feel is kept

RESULTS

What measures will indicate we are on track to achieving our goals?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ # of Businesses in Niverville | ✓ Employment growth |
| ✓ Population Growth | ✓ Increase in commercial tax base |
| ✓ # of New Businesses in Niverville | ✓ Sustainable growth / expectations |
| ✓ Re-Investment by Existing Businesses in Niverville | ✓ Industrial park developed |
| ✓ Access to Large Businesses | ✓ Organic growth |
| ✓ More pavement | ✓ Increased Main Street Business presence |
| ✓ Development of Business Statistics Bank (# of employees, sales, sectors, pay scale of jobs) | ✓ Commercial growth west of tracks |

LOCAL BUSINESS GAP ANALYSIS

The Town and Chamber of Commerce have completed a review of existing retail and services offered in Niverville. The Town has created a listing of potential gaps in the offerings of Niverville, that should be sustainable in a Town of this size.

LONG LIST OF GAPS IN NIVERVILLE'S OFFERING

What gaps exist in Niverville's business offerings?

- Main Street services: lounge / bar, bowling alley, concert venue, retail
- Manufacturing
- Farm Implements
- Hi-tech Sector
- Retail
- Information Technology
- Transfer company (satellite of Landmark Transfer?)
- Office space / business centres
- Arts – lack of theatre, community space
- Professional services (current offering saturated in clients)
- Pet services
- Leasable space
- Hotel
- Tourism
- Daycare

What roadblocks cause these gaps?

- Service gaps along Main Street (residential properties)
- Accessibility of Main Street challenges (beautification / sidewalk program improving this)
- Proximity to Winnipeg (easy access to Costco)
- Schools, new high school will reduce the roadblock
- Competitive sports, Community Resource Centre will address
- Transfer company
- Loss of high paying oil jobs with decline in crude oil pricing
- Lack of Main Street construction
- Lack of assistance / guidance to those wanting to start a business
- Capital
- Lack of empowerment to make timely decision at Town office

SHORT-LIST OF GAPS IN NIVERVILLE'S BUSINESS OFFERING

The Town tested long-list against the following criteria with ~10 business & community leaders:

Is there a location or space for this type of business?

- Niverville Business Park
- Main Street Residential Properties
- Aging Main Street Commercial Properties
- Low Density Properties (re-zoning or increased density)

Does the business type fit in Niverville's brand/image?

- Approach / develop relationships with Niverville business to lead to expansions to stay within brand
- Need to find the right owners / franchise owners for Niverville
- Focus on investment in local entrepreneurs
- Desire from residents for options / choices
- Franchises will employ local keeping youth in Niverville
- Challenges with Town growth beyond 15,000 population to keep small town feel
- No big brands will come on their own and cannot be managed due to proximity to Winnipeg market

Will the areas of growth compliment the current offering or cause change?

- Change will never occur overnight need to see gains / benefits over a sustained period of six months to a year
- It will engage youth employment
- It will help to bridge the gap between old and new Niverville
- Compliment current offering and provide service from birth to death

What type of business would be the catalyst for next growth spurt?

- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Tourism
- Internal Growth / Development
- Office Space
- Technology-based Business
- Health education centre
- Transition senior condo living with fine dining and social activities provided on site

BEST OPPORTUNITIES TO FILL NIVERVILLE'S BUSINESS GAPS

After reviewing the long-list of opportunities, this strategy has defined the five most likely areas for Niverville to fill gaps within its offering. These offerings should help promote Niverville as more than a bedroom community outside of Winnipeg and reinforce Niverville as a hub in southeastern Manitoba.

1. Main Street services: lounge / bar, bowling alley, concert venue, retail

In 2017, Niverville saw the first new building construction with the addition of new office/tenant space. Throughout the interview process, numerous people brought up the progress of the beautification of Main Street. However, it was pointed out the challenges Main Street still brings with it – the inclusion of residential properties and the lack of destinations to bring foot traffic along Main Street.

The Town should focus on the continued re-development along Main Street to improve the walkability and to improve upon the commercial density to make Main Street into an attraction for people to visit. The inclusion of more retail options, family based activity options, and improved evening services should make the central business district an actual *business* district within Niverville and the hub of activity those involved in the process hope it will become.

2. Manufacturing

With the development of the industrial lands known as the Niverville Business Park, Niverville now has the capacity to pursue and bring to the community medium-sized industries. The participants in the research phase of this strategy all pointed to the need to develop a manufacturing business/sector within the community.

The Town, in conjunction with private entrepreneurs, should work on marketing and networking with key growth industries on selling Niverville as the place to open up. The marketing strategy should focus on the availability of affordable land, the available & educated labour pool, and the reduced cost of that labour pool when compared against communities closer to or within Winnipeg.

3. Leasable Space

Niverville currently has a lack of options when it comes to available building space. The Town needs to work with private developers to expand the options available to potential businesses. Leasable space should include a variety of options: retail / store front, warehouse, office and compounds.

With Niverville being such an attractive and growing community within the province, the need to find private investors willing to build square footage is key in developing the business community. The needs of today's entrepreneur are immediate access to space, and currently Niverville does not have that space to offer. Once an inventory is available, a listing should be maintained by the Town and the Chamber of Commerce to be able to provide to interested parties when requesting available space.

4. Tourism

Currently, Niverville has a passive tourism market – the Town has an active wedding market with multiple venues in close vicinity to the town, however no attractions. Tourism is a spin-off industry and the Town should focus on development of the Wetlands into a regional tourist attraction.

Niverville should also market our historical / educational potential through development of the Mennonite Landing site. This can then be worked into the Wetlands and Crow Wing Trail to become a tourist attraction and educational stop for field trips from Hanover School Division.

Council should also consider an accelerated investment in our youth and recreational activities. The construction of the Community Resource Centre will bring increased visitors into our community from afar for a facility capable of hosting high level sports, tournaments and trade shows. The possibility of creating a regional tourist attraction within Hespeler Park should also be considered to increase traffic at already constructed assets, such as the sport fields and splash pad.

5. Hotel

The development of a tourism based industry within Niverville as noted in the previous point leads into the need for Niverville to have a hotel to host those coming into the community. Niverville has a lack of accommodation for those attending weddings, sporting events or working within the town.

The potential to create a hotel is aided by the potential growth of Niverville as a healthcare hub for southeastern Manitoba with the possible upcoming construction of the MRI clinic on the Heritage Centre lands.

ACTION PLAN

This section lays out specific and tangible initiatives for the Town to undertake. The time periods and roll-out will be discussed in the following section.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

The strategy will focus on the five key areas identified through the gap analysis:

1. Main Street Development

- a. Main Street Design Standards
To provide consistency in appearance, feel and look of Main Street
- b. Incentive to Remove Residential Properties on Main Street
To remove the gaps along Main Street and improve the walkability / foot traffic in the central business area.
- c. Façade Improvement Grants

- To encourage updating of existing buildings along Main Street to meet new Design Standards.*
- d. Continued Investment in Main Street Beautification
To improve walkability and look of Main Street – through investment in new sidewalks and beautification projects.
2. Manufacturing
 - a. Development of Marketing Materials
Materials that focus on the advantages Niverville has over other communities near Winnipeg.
 - b. Increased Spending on Networking / Sponsorship of Manufacturing Groups
Improve face time and awareness of Niverville to manufacturing companies outside of the region.
 3. Leasable Space
 - a. Increased Promotion of Niverville’s Business Incentive Grant
To kick-start growth and improve the profitability of partially occupied buildings to increase space and raise vacancy rate in short-term.
 - b. Development of Leasable Space Database
To have database for leads enquiring about the availability of space.
 4. Tourism
 - a. Finish Construction on Wetlands
To become a regional tourist attraction for one of a kind decommissioning of an old lagoon.
 - b. Undertake Conceptual Design of Hespeler Park Playground
To design a regional park that will bring in families from neighbouring communities to spend the day in Niverville.
 - c. Construction of Community Resource Centre
To create Niverville as a rural destination for high-level competitive sports teams and provincial tournaments and trade shows.
 - d. Development of Mennonite Landing
To create educational opportunities for our youth to learn about the regions history within Niverville.
 5. Hotel
 - a. Development of Marketing Materials
To attract investors on the advantages and why Niverville is a hub in southeastern Manitoba.
 - b. Development of Tourism / Healthcare Markets
To improve viability to potential investors on why Niverville needs a hotel.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS NEEDING TO CONTINUE TO BE FOSTERED

The Town of Niverville needs to partner with the Niverville Chamber of Commerce and, through it, business leaders and with other community leaders to ensure the economic growth and well-being of the Town.

The Town is not an entity that will or should compete with the business community. It, the Niverville Chamber of Commerce and the business community must work in unison to present an accessible, fair and vibrant economic opportunity to investors both local and afar.

ROLE OF NIVERVILLE

The Town's role in the economic development of the Town and the region is to sell the community. The Town should be a wealth of knowledge on the process of starting up a new business in the community and the available property / land to make such a business flourish.

The Town should undertake marketing the Town through major public events such as the Black & Gold Gala and to use these events as an opportunity to show investors what the town of Niverville is about. Niverville also needs to market the Town outside of the region – through the joining of business organizations and / or sponsorship of conferences outside of the community.

The Town should establish a Business Enhancement Committee under Town Council in conjunction with the Niverville Chamber of Commerce. This Committee would be responsible for providing expertise to start-up businesses within the community. The committee could provide accessibility to administrators within key organizations such as the Chamber and the Town to help work through any paperwork required to start up a new business.

The Town of Niverville has reviewed the need and the cost of an Economic Development Officer (EDO) every year or two. At this time the budget constraints of the Town deem a full-time EDO position to be beyond the financial constraints of the Town. However, the Town should review this every two to three years to keep up to date on the changing climate and financial realities of the Town. It would be a recommendation of this report that the Town needs to utilize current resources within the Town office to put a stronger emphasis on commercial & industrial development / policies within the Town of Niverville to foster a strong, vibrant business atmosphere.

This business atmosphere should be fostered through the continued use of incentives. The Town should review and work with the Chamber of Commerce on development of financial incentives to attract business to Niverville. The Business Incentive Grant has been widely applauded by the business community as a great step to reward those risks taken by private enterprise in expanding or starting new business / construction within Niverville.

The final recommendation of this strategy towards the Town's role in economic development is the building of the infrastructure of the Town to foster growth. Throughout the interview process, the Town was applauded for the foresight and decision making in accomplishing the construction of a new high school within Town. The panel of interviewee's saw the advantage a new school provides to the residents of Niverville and will be the beginning of a new period of growth within Niverville. Those interviewed also expressed the desire for Council to push forward with the construction of the Community Resource Centre campus on arena lands. The ability to provide an advantage to Niverville over other Towns and Rural Municipalities is key to be able to retain the labour pool advantage we currently experience and to attract new people and businesses to further define Niverville as a hub to southeastern Manitoba.

ROLE OF OTHER PARTIES

The Niverville Chamber of Commerce and the Town will work together as the Business Enhancement Committee (a Council committee) to establish the Business Mentorship Council of the Town of Niverville. The Business Enhancement Committee will develop a list of candidates and determine the mandate of the Business Mentorship Council for approval by Town Council. The Business Enhancement Committee will oversee the work done by the Business Mentorship Council which could include such people as accountants, entrepreneurs, capital investors, lawyers and business owners.

The Chamber will also assist in the administration of a database showing available space within town for potential businesses moving into Niverville. The Chamber will also meet with Town staff and Council on a regular basis to present new and fresh concepts of policy that the Town should consider that would improve the business culture and environment within Niverville.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

PRIORITIZING ACTION ITEMS

To foster economic development within the Town of Niverville, the following are initial action items:

- **Development of a Business Enhancement Committee**
This can be implemented in the short-term with minimal cost. This will help spur the growth of entrepreneurial business and provide a knowledge base to those investing in the community.
- **Development of Design Standards for Main Street**
And a policy on Main Street Residential properties to assist in the development of a true central business corridor.
- **Development of Innovative Marketing Materials**
Aimed at selling the community to the region and beyond. The ability to translate the *Where You Belong* tagline to the business community needs to be a key initiative in driving business growth within the community.

TIMELINE FOR ACTIONABLE ITEMS BY TOWN

Main Street Development

<i>Design Standards</i>	May 2018
<i>Main St Residence Policy Passed</i>	May 2018
<i>Façade Improvement Grant Program Kickoff</i>	2019
<i>Main Street Beautification</i>	On-going

Manufacturing

<i>Development of Marketing Materials</i>	March 2018
<i>Sponsorship & Networking</i>	Summer 2018

Leasable Space

<i>Promotion of Business Incentive Grant</i>	2018
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Tourism

<i>Completion of Wetlands</i>	2019
<i>Conceptual Design Hespeler Playground</i>	Spring 2018
<i>Completion of Community Resource Centre</i>	2020
<i>Development of Mennonite Landing</i>	2021

Hotel

<i>Development of Marketing Materials</i>	March 2018
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TIMELINE FOR ACTIONABLE ITEMS BY OTHER PARTIESChamber of Commerce

Business Enhancement Committee / Business Mentorship Council

Responsibilities & Candidates to Council June 2018*Announcement of Council* August 2018

Policy

Draft Incentive to Remove Main St Residences April 2018*Draft Façade Improvement Grant Program* 2019

Leasable Space

Development of Space Database 2019**CRITERIA TO MEET ACTIONABLE ITEMS**

The actionable items will not be deemed completed until Niverville Town Council has accepted and ratified policies, construction and / or new programs.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS WITH TARGET DATES**COUNCIL PRIORITIES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Actionable Target	Participants	Estimate Budget
Business Enhancement Committee	Chamber & Town Staff	5,000
Town Marketing Materials	Town Staff & Consultant	25,000
Sponsorship & Networking	Town Staff & Key Business Leaders	25,000
Main Street Residence Policy	Chamber & Town Staff	25,000
Main Street Façade Program	Chamber & Town Staff	25,000

TOWN FINANCIAL EXPENDITURES

Show anticipated annual commitments being requested for the next five years to be included as part of the Financial Plan.

- 2018: \$ 100,000.00
- 2019: \$ 150,000.00
- 2020: \$ 175,000.00
- 2021: \$ 175,000.00
- 2022: \$ 175,000.00

2019 – addition of funding for Main Street Façade Program and Main Street Residence Program.

Funding for Wetlands, Hespeler Playground, Community Resource Centre and Mennonite Landing to come out of reserve budgets.

CONCLUSION / SUMMARY

The positivity surrounding the momentum that exists within our business leaders must be contagious. The future of Niverville is bright in their minds if we continue down the path the Town and Chamber has taken over the last few years and, in particular the last twelve months.

The business community is excited about a focus on business in the last year of this Council and that there will be a continual focus given to the needs of business in developing a healthy and sustainable community.

With some key partnerships needing to be confirmed on projects like the Community Resource Centre, the business community feels that Niverville will achieve its goals and continue to prosper into the future with strategic investment in infrastructure.

STRATEGY SIGN-OFF

The undersigned have read and understand the role and goals of municipal government helping to grow the local economy.

Myron Dyck	Mayor		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
John Funk	Deputy Mayor		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
Nathan Dueck	Councilor		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
Kevin Stott	Councilor		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
Chris Wiebe	Councilor		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
G. Jim Buys	Town Manager		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
Eric King, CPA CGA	Business Manager		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date
Mel Buhler	President Niverville Chamber of Commerce		2018-01-09
Print First and Last Name	Title	Signature	Date