

# **Final Report**

## **Town of St. Marys Community Based Strategic Plan**

**February 2010**



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## Executive Summary

Strategic planning is one of the most important tools that a community can use for effective economic development and to enable communities to constructively deal with change in a positive and beneficial way. Rather than simply reacting to change, municipalities can examine issues and concerns with a goal to creating a community that is both sustainable and vibrant, providing opportunities for business and economic growth, and a healthy lifestyle while at the same time protecting its social and cultural connections.

While economic development doesn't necessarily imply growth or expansion, it does imply change. The decisions made or not made will shape how a community will develop and prosper in the future. A community based strategic plan therefore, provides an overall vision for a community and guides decision making that will move a community towards its desired goals. The plan will also prioritize the management and use of the community's assets and its human, financial, physical and environmental resources.

At this time, the Town of St. Marys has embarked on the development of a Community Based Strategic Plan that will:

- Help to shape the community's future based on facts and trends;
- Provide structure for mutually accepted goals and a common agenda;
- Define the purpose of the community at large and its role in achieving stated goals; and
- Balance community goals and objectives with realistic local resources.

This plan - **Our St. Marys, Your Future** - charts a course that will enable the community to better capitalize on its strengths and assets and effectively position the community within the broader and regional economy. The plan includes: clear goals, strategies for implementation and methods to evaluate the progress on attaining the goals and in achieving our long term vision.

In the process of developing this strategy, the Town launched a broad base and highly successful communication effort in order to ensure that the vision reflected for the community is a collective vision. Stakeholder interviews were conducted with local politicians, community leaders and the business community. In addition, 3 focus groups, including a youth symposium, attracted approximately 50 people and more than 250 people participated in an on-line survey where they were asked why they live in St. Marys, what should be done to strengthen the local economy and what the key priorities are for the community in the future.

### Summary of Findings – Economic Analysis

A cornerstone to developing a community based strategic plan also requires an understanding of the town in terms of its strengths and assets – business base, labour force, quality of life etc. – as well as its growth and investment potential. The following points summarize some of the key findings associated with a review of the Town's current economic performance.

- The Town has experienced a population increase of 5.2% between 2001 and 2006. While this is lower than the rate of growth at the provincial level, it is far above the rate of growth that has been experienced in the County as a whole.
- Currently 50% of the population is of working age (25-64) but the 45-64 age group is showing the fastest rate of growth between 2001 and 2006 at 22.3% with the 15-24 age group growing at 11.2%. This suggests that the Town is comprised of older families.
- St. Marys also has a very high percentage of the population over 65 (18.4%) compared to either Stratford at 16.4% or the province at 13.6%.
- The town's labour force has increased by 10.3 % between 2001 and 2006 as compared to a population increase of 5.2%. This in turn has resulted in a high participation rate, suggesting that people seeking employment are able to secure it.
- Participation rate for women in the workforce is higher than that of the county and the province.
- Currently, the local labour force employment is dominated by occupations in Sales and Service (22.7%), Business, Finance and Administration (18.3%), Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators (16.7%) and Manufacturing (14.1%) suggesting a diverse local economy.
- A further consideration for the Town in the attraction and retention of business investment is the percentage of workers that are employed in creative occupations. At present, 25.6 % of the local labour force is employed in management occupations, educational and social services, business and finance, and health care practitioners. These types of workers represent higher income opportunities for the community as well as a better skilled workforce, higher rates of education and greater economic stability
- The importance of this to the community is reflected in a 50.9% increase in the number of households making in excess of \$100,000 and a 8.4% decrease in the number of households making less than \$30,000
- Taking into consideration current employment and business pattern results, there are four key sectors that offer the greatest potential for economic growth in the community:
  - **Manufacturing:** Employing 840 people in 2006, building on this sector is important for the future health of the community. Interestingly the core strength of this sector lies in processing agricultural goods into human and animal food products.
  - **Health Care and Social Assistance:** As the second largest employer in St. Marys, this sector is growing quickly with 430 employees. The concentration of employment is growing faster in St. Marys than in Ontario and is also attracting new business investment. The continued development and delivery of health care and other services to seniors will factor in St. Marys' economic and social sustainability.
  - **Agriculture and related activities:** One of the town's leading industry sectors in terms of overall employment and business concentration, agriculture business operations in St. Marys is focused on dairy cattle and milk production, mixed animal farming, hog and pig farming and beef cattle farming but also includes grain and vegetable farming all which could contribute to a strong food processing sector.
  - **Wholesale Trade:** this sector is experiencing rapid employment growth and employment growth in St. Marys is outperforming provincial growth in this sector. Fourth in employment by industry, this sector already employs 330 workers. Wholesale trade is closely linked to the agricultural sector and exemplifies the town as a regional centre with subsectors including farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment distributors, dairy and milk products wholesaler distributors and oilseed and grain wholesaler distributors.

## Summary of Findings – SWOT Assessment

A SWOT Assessment (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was completed using the results of the stakeholder consultation process and the findings derived from an extensive background analysis and review of current strategic initiatives.

The findings associated with this effort include:

### Strengths

- **Quality of Place**
- **Sense of Community**
- **Health Care Facilities**
- **Location and Access**
- **Recreation and Attractions**
- **Industrial Heritage**

### Weaknesses

- **Perceived Lack of Direction and Strategy**
- **Opportunities for Youth**
- **Availability of Serviced Industrial Land**
- **Lack of a Marketing and Promotion Strategy**
- **Attracting Skilled Workers**
- **Availability of Retail and Declining Downtown**

### Opportunities

- **Downtown Revitalization**
- **New Industries – the attraction of ICT and Green Economy industries**
- **The Hospital and Demand for Medical Services**
- **Youth-Oriented Programming**
- **Creative and Cultural Assets**
- **Tourism Development**
- **Sustained Growth**

### Threats

- **Structural Shifts in the Provincial and National Economies**
- **Lack of Unified Vision**
- **Demographic Polarization**

# The Town of St. Marys Community Based Strategic Plan

## OUR ST. MARYS, YOUR FUTURE

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### THE VISION:

*The Town of St. Marys will be a welcome and progressive community that celebrates and preserves its history while working to create a local economy that embraces new ideas and entrepreneurs.*

*Our downtown will be a primary destination for residents and visitors providing a wide range of retail shopping, events and festivals that celebrate the diversity and heritage of community.*

*Our commitment to being a sustainable community will be reflected in the range of employment opportunities, services and amenities that are based on the talent, interests and desires of our residents.*

The **GOALS, OBJECTIVES** and **ACTIONS** that comprise the strategic plan build on the issues and opportunities that emerged during the strategic planning process and capture the major themes that surfaced during the consultation phase of the plan.

The Town of St. Marys Strategic Plan is underpinned by 5 high level goals, intended to anchor and qualify all the actions in the plan. These goals also support the overall vision and desired outcomes of the strategic planning process.

The associated objectives articulate how the goals are to be achieved. The resulting actions direct the reader to essential issues that must be addressed in the short to medium term in order to ensure a viable and sustainable community in the future

The five goals and associated objectives are:

### **Goal 1: A Collaborative and Caring Community**

**Objective: To effectively engage our community and stakeholders in an ongoing discussion of community issues and interests.**

### **Goal 2: A Prosperous Local Economy**

**Objective: To encourage and support the creation of high value employment opportunities and provide leadership and direction in the creation of a sustainable local economy.**

### Goal 3: Efficient + Sustainable Infrastructure

**Objective: To provide the necessary and cost effective infrastructure that will ensure a high quality of life experience for St. Marys' residents.**

### Goal 4: A Strong + Vibrant Downtown

**Objective: To effectively position the downtown and central commercial district as a vibrant social and cultural business centre.**

### Goal 5: A Celebrated Place

**Objective: To enhance opportunities for local business growth and the attraction of new investment and entrepreneurs by effectively communicating the strengths and opportunities associated with living and working in St Marys.**

A more detailed discussion around the associated action steps is provided in Section 6 of the report.

Time spent in developing a community strategic plan will pay significant dividends to the Town of St. Marys as it will:

1. **Outline the steps to follow.** Strategic planning does not just happen. It requires the community to identify a number of intermediate steps to reach its final goals.
2. **Promote efficient use of scarce resources.** A significant amount of money, time, and people will be required to effectively implement a strategic plan and these limited resources must not be wasted. The plan will provide rationale for resource allocation.
3. **Improve coordination and collaboration.** Many programs, activities, groups, and stakeholders will be involved in the implementation effort and it is important that they not overlap or conflict. The plan will serve as a vehicle for communicating community and economic development activities and programming.
4. **Build consensus.** The public and the private sector must agree on the major issues involved. This will lead to support in implementing the plan.
5. **Increase public awareness.** Without public support, the implementation of a strategic plan will be difficult. It is important that the public understand the intent for the plan and how it will affect the community.
6. **Strengthen the community's competitive position.** A community with a strategy will not only be inherently more likely to succeed, it will appear more attractive to potential business or industry than a community without a plan.
7. **Encourage forward-thinking.** A strategy will encourage community leaders to think about the future and to not overlook opportunities for growth and development as they arise.

It must be acknowledged that Town Council is responsible for governing the municipality and for making the decisions that will affect the successful implementation of any strategy. The St. Marys Community Strategic Plan should be seen as a framework for making those decisions.

Once council has adopted the strategic plan, the town will begin the process of classifying the recommended actions from the standpoint of short, medium and long term goals. The 2010 budget process will also take into account the new strategic plan and will incorporate the short term goals as appropriate. From this perspective, the completion of the strategy is very timely for the community as it enables the implementation to begin in 2010.

## 1 Introduction

Strategic planning is one of the most important tools that a community can use for effective economic development and to enable communities to constructively deal with change in a positive and beneficial way. Rather than simply reacting to change, municipalities can examine issues and concerns with a goal to creating a community that is both sustainable and vibrant, providing opportunities for business and economic growth, and a healthy lifestyle while at the same time protecting its social and cultural connections.

While economic development doesn't necessarily imply growth or expansion, it does imply change. The decisions made or not made will shape how a community will develop and prosper in the future. A community based strategic plan, therefore, provides an overall vision for a community and guides decision making that will move a community towards its desired goals. The plan will also prioritize the management and use of the community's assets and its human, financial, physical and environmental resources.

This plan will set a course for the future of Our St. Marys – Your Future. Included here will be clear goals, strategies for implementation and methods to evaluate the progress on attaining the goals and in achieving our long term vision.

### 1.1 Purpose of the Report

A cornerstone to developing a strategic plan is an understanding of a community or region in terms of its assets – business base, labour force, quality of life, etc. – as well as its potential – emerging industries, presence of entrepreneurs, capacity for innovation, etc. To achieve this understanding, a comprehensive understanding of a community's economy is required. But community based strategic planning goes beyond economic development to explore sustainability, health and wellness, infrastructure requirements, service levels, governance, and quality of life.

The Town of St. Marys has decided to embark on the development of a Community Based Strategic Plan. Millier Dickinson Blais was contracted by the Town to prepare an innovative plan for the future development of St. Marys. St. Marys' Community Based Strategic Plan will:

- Help to shape the community's future based on facts and trends;
- Provide structure for mutually accepted goals and a common agenda;
- Define the purpose of the community at large and its role in achieving stated goals; and
- Balance community goals and objectives with realistic local resources.

It is also important to consider the context of recent activities undertaken by the Town in the areas of marketing, investment attraction and website enhancement. In 2009 the Town initiated a more formal approach to economic development including the creation of a Community Development Department and the strengthening of the economic development team. This has led to increased involvement in partnerships and activities that promote St. Marys as an excellent place to invest and work.

Initiatives in investment attraction include:

- membership in the Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance (SOMA) and the South West Economic Alliance (SWEA);

- working closely with the Business Improvement Area and Downtown Merchants Association in developing the downtown
- collaborating with Perth County Visitors Association, Shakespeare to the Shoreline and Stratford Tourism Alliance
- development of a brand and associated marketing materials;
- “small town – big opportunities” campaign;
- undertaking in-house economic research and investment profiles;
- compilation of investment land inventories and a business directory;
- updating of the Town’s website to incorporate Facebook and Twitter as social media marketing tools;
- business retention and expansion program; and
- the transition to departmental Business/Service Plans that align with the Town’s corporate vision (established through the strategic plan) and include measurements for success with the new Community Development Department being the first to complete an annual business plan. (For an example of these service plans and to view the marketing efforts of the community development and tourism offices refer to Appendix VII)

## 1.2 Approach

We believe the best visioning comes through participation and ownership. A result of effective community consultation is the community members feeling empowered to have influence over the final report and its implementation<sup>[1]</sup>. Implementation strategies that include citizen participation on joint policy/planning boards or placing community corporations in charge of aspects/areas of development can greatly empower citizens in achieving a long term community vision. For this reason, community consultation formed the backbone of our approach which included the following components:

1. A Background and Literature Review;
2. An Economic Base Analysis of the Town of St. Marys and surrounding area;
3. Community Consultation in the form of focus groups and stakeholder interviews and community survey;
4. A SWOT Assessment (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) to determine the key issues impacting the Town;
5. A Competitive Analysis that positions St. Marys relative to a select number of other Ontario communities;

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<sup>[1]</sup> Arnstein, Sherry (1969) A ladder of citizen participation

6. The Identification of Key Sectors and Opportunities for economic growth; and
7. A review of Economic Development Service Delivery Models and Budgeting.

The result is a participative community strategic plan that is both visionary and practical that positions the Town of St. Marys for the future.

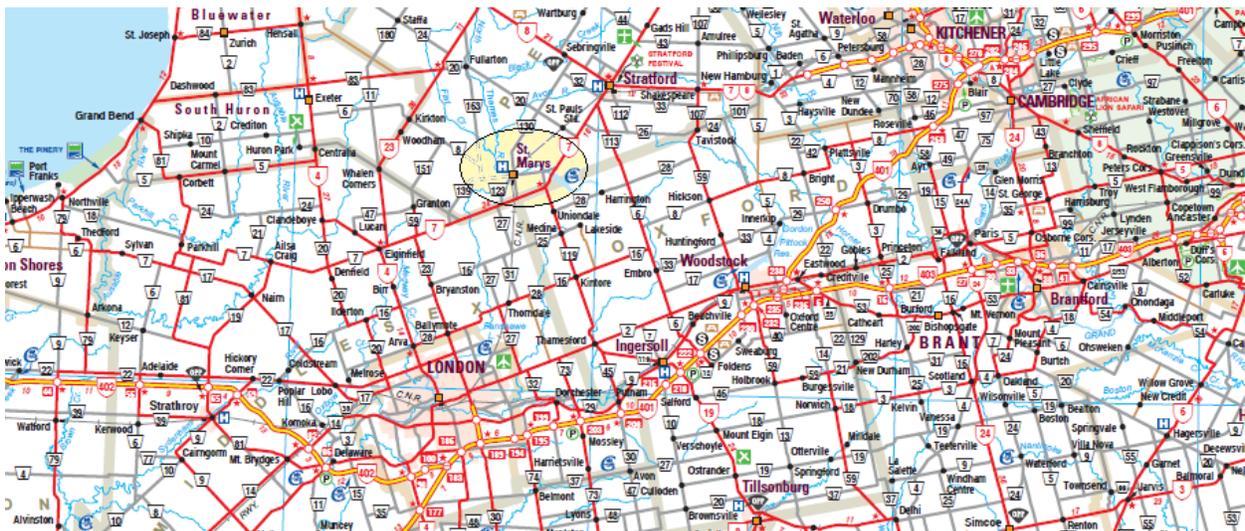
## 2 Economic Base Analysis

An important component in the development of a community strategic plan is identifying and capitalizing on a community's strengths e.g. demographic make-up, business base, labour force or quality of life considerations. The following discussion reviews some of the key economic indicators for the Town of St. Marys.

### 2.1 Location

Located on the banks of the Thames River, The Town of St. Marys is strategically located in south western Ontario with easy access to the 401 and the major urban centres of Detroit, Toronto, and Buffalo. Only 40km north of the City of London and 60km west of the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, the Town is also within easy reach of three universities, and minutes from the City of Stratford and the world renowned Stratford Festival, one of Ontario's primary summer tourist destinations. The town is rich in historic architecture and cultural assets which tell the story of and highlight the early importance of the town. Located at the junction of Oxford, Middlesex and Perth Counties, St. Marys is in the heart of Ontario's agricultural producing region.

Figure 1



Source: Ontario Ministry of Transportation, 2009

### 2.2 Population Growth

Population growth is a strong indicator of a community's sustainability and viability. According to the 2006 census, the Town of St. Marys has a population of 6,620 residents, an increase of 5.2% since 2001. This is considerably higher than both Perth County (0.9%) and Stratford (2.7%). By comparison, however, the Province of Ontario experienced population growth of 6.6% in the same period (see figure 2). While St. Marys appears to be growing much more quickly than the surrounding region, the region as a whole is experiencing growth rates markedly lower than the provincial average, which is to be expected in a predominantly rural area. St. Marys' population growth, however, may be due in part to its proximity to larger urban areas which is attractive to those looking to leave the experience of big city living for a more picturesque, small town atmosphere, as well as industry looking for a cost-effective business location. The diversity and strength of the local economy that has emerged as a result is discussed later in the report.

Figure 2: Population growth, St. Marys 2001-2006

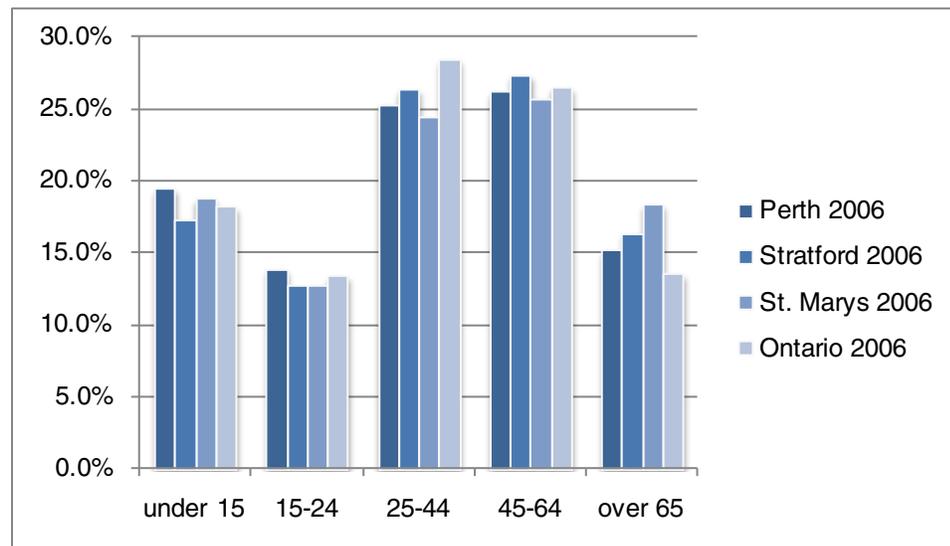
	Population 2001	Population 2006	Percentage Change 2001-2006
St. Marys	6295	6620	5.2%
Perth County	73675	74345	0.9%
Stratford	29670	30460	2.7%
Ontario	11410045	12160285	6.6%

Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2001 and 2006

### 2.3 Population by Age Structure

A review of the age structure of the population (figure 3) reveals that while St. Marys has high proportion of people over the age of 65 years, the fastest growing age cohort over the period 2001-2006 were those aged 45-64 years of age (22.3%). The second fastest growing age cohort were those age 15-24 years (11.2%), which would seem to suggest the presence of older families (see figure 4). The drop in the percentage of the population under the age of 15 years, while a concern, should be viewed in contrast to the performance of Perth County, the City of Stratford and the province as a whole. In this respect the town has posted a strong rate of growth which suggests that the decline (-1.2%) is part of a broader trend associated with an aging population. However, to maintain a strong rate of economic growth over the longer term, the town will need to ensure that it remains attractive and appealing to families and a younger workforce.

Figure 3: Demographic profile, St. Marys 2006



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006

**Figure 4: Changing population by age group, St. Marys 2001 to 2006**

	Total Population	<15 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	>65 years
2001	6295	1255	760	1700	1390	1170
2006	6620	1240	845	1615	1700	1215
Percentage Change	5.2%	-1.2%	11.2%	-5.0%	22.3%	3.8%

Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2001 and 2006

The following figure provides a further understanding of the socio-demographics trends in St. Marys as compared to surrounding communities. As noted previously, St. Marys has a significant percentage of its population over the age of 65; however, the rate of increase of this cohort has been low over the 2001-2006 periods (3.8%). What is important, however, is the number of the elderly in St. Marys that are living alone (figure 5), which in turn has implications on the range of community services and amenities that may need to be delivered as this portion of the population ages further. In much the same way as the youth in the community were consulted in this strategic planning process, it may be useful to directly engage this portion of the population, as well as those approaching retirement to determine their interests and requirements as they age. Generally speaking, today's retirees are far more active than previous generations, which could have implications for housing requirements as well as recreational pursuits and activities.

**Figure 5: Non family persons 65 years and over, St. Marys 2001 and 2006**

	Perth 2001	Stratford 2001	St. Marys 2001	Perth 2006	Stratford 2006	St. Marys 2006
Total number of persons 65 years and over	9695	4255	970	10265	4545	1085
Number of non-family persons 65 years and over	3390	1695	365	3310	1715	390
Living with relatives	285	120	25	245	115	15
Living with non-relatives only	80	45	0	45	35	0
Living alone	3030	1530	335	3020	1565	370
Number of family persons 65 years and over	6305	2560	615	6955	2830	690

Source: Statistics Canada community profiles, 2001 and 2006

Figure 6 illustrates the number of lone-parent families in the community. While the proportion of single parent families to the total population is lower in St. Marys than in both Stratford and Perth County, consideration must be given to the range of support networks and services available in the community, particularly as it relates to enabling the parent to access employment. This includes the availability of daycare and the opportunity to earn a living wage.

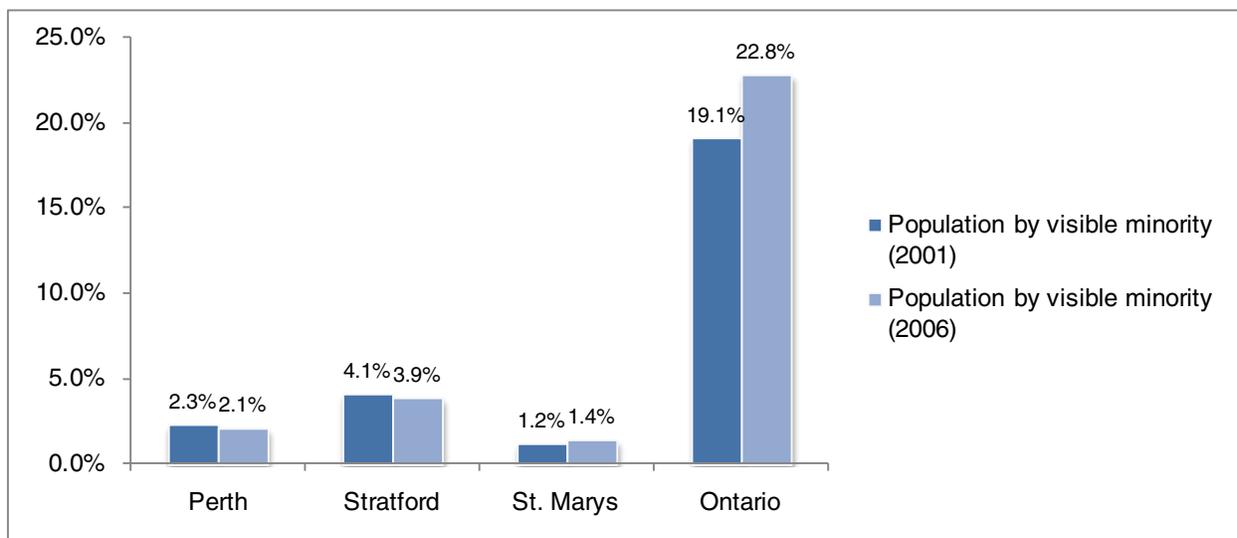
**Figure 6: Lone parent families, St. Marys 2001 and 2006**

	Perth 2001	Stratford 2001	St. Marys 2001	Perth 2006	Stratford 2006	St. Marys 2006
Total lone-parent families	2365	1285	195	2575	1475	200
Female parent	1925	1080	155	2030	1160	195
1 child	1185	605	120	1250	725	95
2 children	540	355	25	535	305	55
3 or more children	195	125	10	245	130	45
Male parent	440	205	35	545	315	10
1 child	220	115	10	395	235	10
2 children	170	80	25	125	65	0
3 or more children	50	10	0	25	10	0

Source: Statistics Canada community profiles, 2001 and 2006

The percentage of the population considered a visible minority remains low in St. Marys (figure 7). Foreign national migrants often bring with them high levels of education, a diverse set of skills and an entrepreneurial culture. Some studies have shown that immigrants are more likely to start their own business and generate employment in their adopted communities. However, strategies undertaken to attract immigrants need to consider the local perception and acceptance of visible minorities, particularly as it relates to cultural requirements. Other communities which have recruited foreign nationals for specific occupations (often health related) have been challenged to provide services or programming that enables the more effective integration of new Canadians into their community.

**Figure 7: Percentage population of visible minorities, St. Marys 2001 and 2006**



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles 2001 and 2006

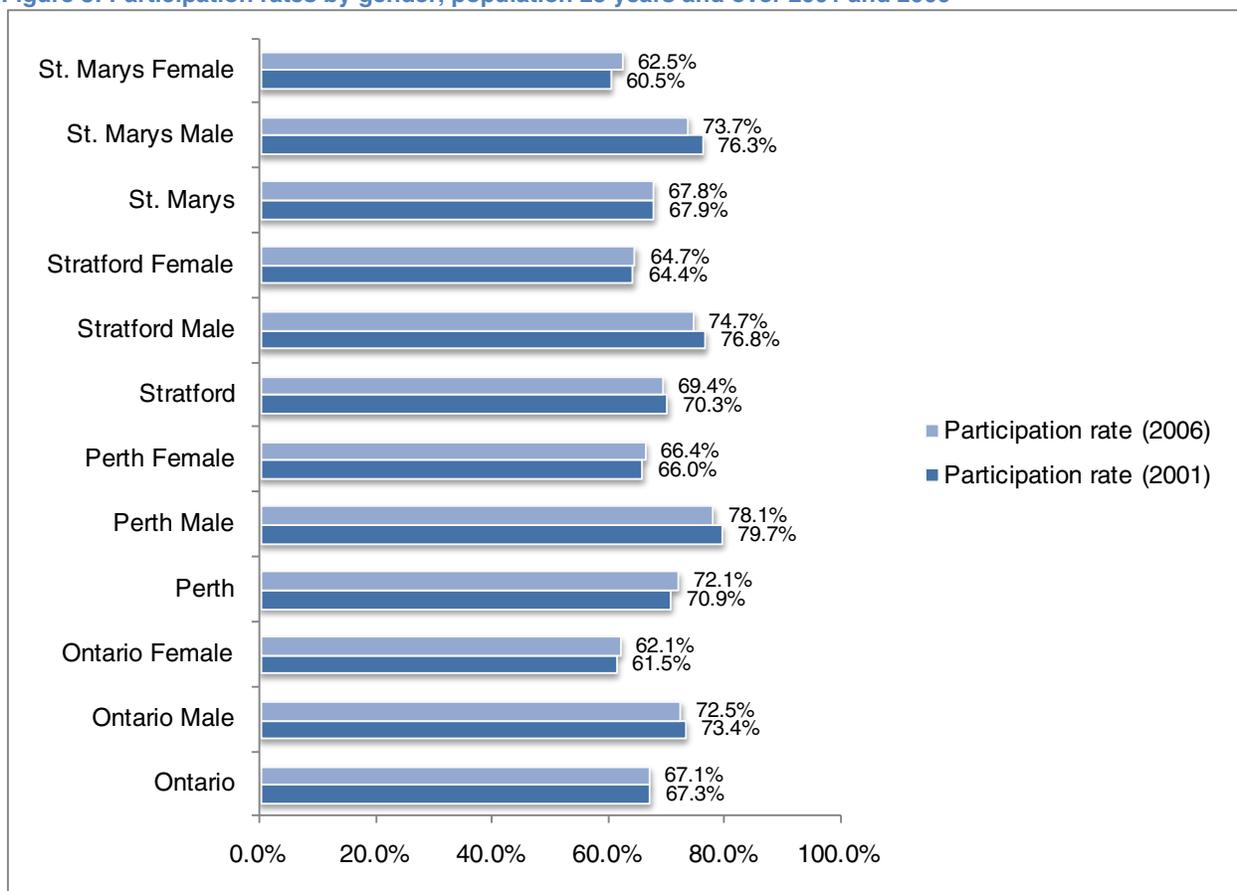
## 2.4 Labour Force Profile

Another factor indicating a community's economic health is labour force performance. Figure 8 shows the participation rates by gender for St. Marys, the surrounding region and Ontario for 2001 and 2006.

From 2001 to 2006 the size of the resident labour force increased by 10.3% which suggests the labour force is growing faster than the population as a whole, indicative of a strong local economy. However, in the same period, participation rates declined slightly indicating that not all those of age 25-64 years are working. This may also indicate a lifestyle choice. The declining participation rate is consistent with the experience in both Stratford and Ontario in general (figures 8). In contrast, Perth County participation rates for this age group increased slightly over the same period.

Figure 8 also suggests that the participation rates for both the local region and the broader provincial context are significantly higher for men than for women. However, in all jurisdictions participation rates for women are increasing. In St. Marys participation rates are comparatively lower for women in both 2001 and 2006 (figure 8) but increasing faster than all other jurisdictions. This corresponds with the town's demographic profile of older families. As children age beyond high school years more women enter the workforce.

**Figure 8: Participation rates by gender, population 25 years and over 2001 and 2006**

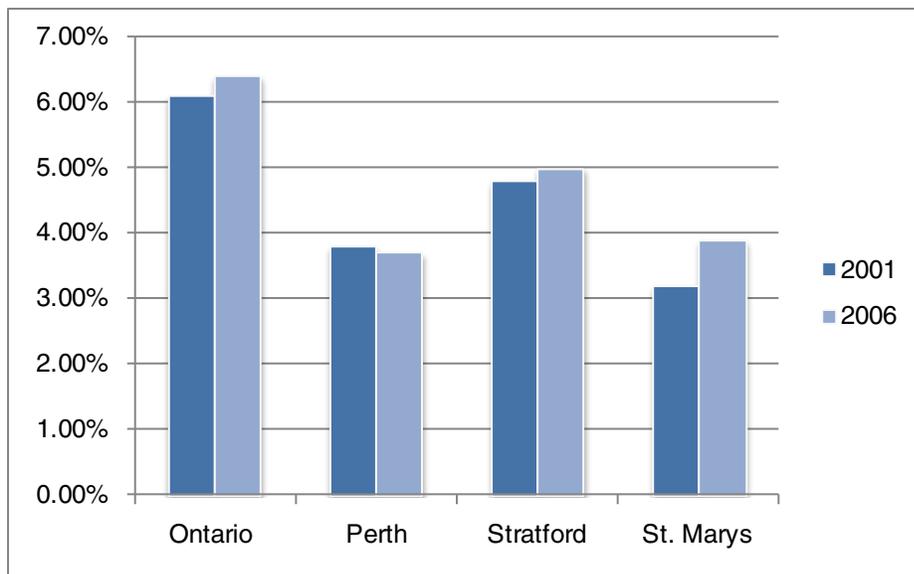


Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2001 and 2006

While participation rates in St. Marys are lower than in the surrounding region and province generally, the unemployment rates are also significantly lower (figure 9) reinforcing the notion that lifestyle choices have enabled people to withdraw from the workforce. However, unemployment did rise more quickly, from 2001 to 2006, in St. Marys than any other jurisdiction. Data projections for 2009 indicate the current unemployment rate has increased to over 7.5%. This jump in unemployment is likely due to the historic

job losses in the manufacturing sector. However, unemployment in St. Marys is still well below the provincial average.

**Figure 9: Unemployment rates population 25 years and over, St. Marys 2001 and 2006**



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2001 and 2006

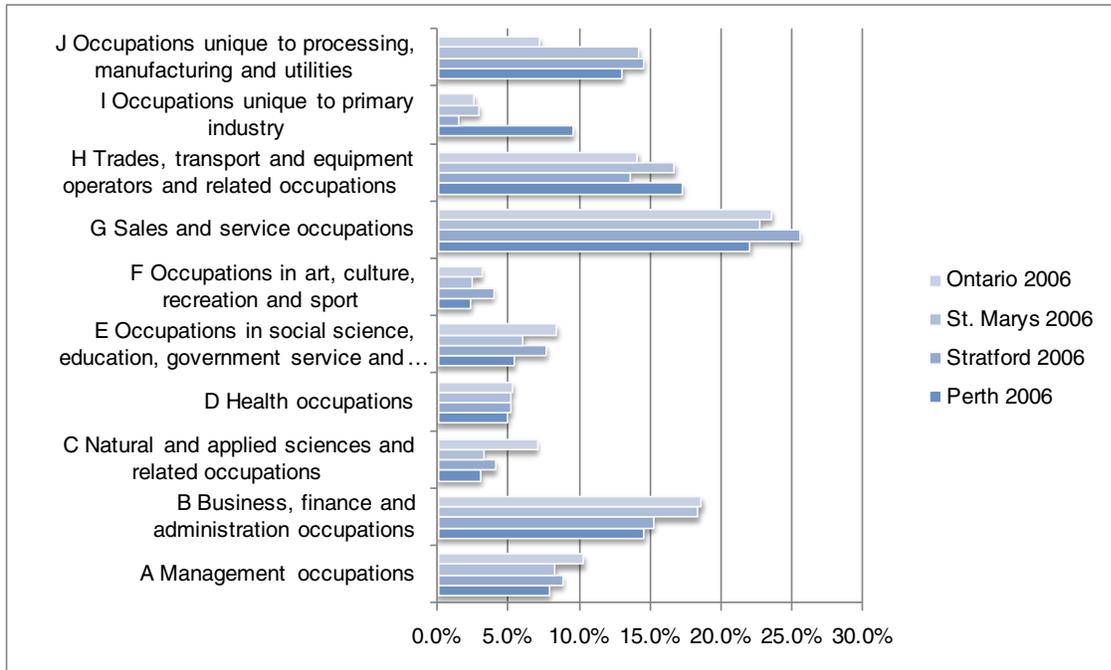
## 2.5 Labour Force by Occupation

In 2006, the town's labour force was comprised of 3,600 people, an increase of 10.1% over 2001. Occupations are defined by Statistics Canada National Occupational Categories (NOC) which are shown in Appendix I. Employment occupations are concentrated in 4 broad categories including sales and service (22.7%), business, finance and administration (18.3%), trades, transport and equipment operators (16.7%) and occupations unique to processing and manufacturing (14.1%). These broad categories account for 71.8% of all occupations in St. Marys (figure 10).

This same pattern of employment is reflected in both the regional and the provincial economies (figure 10) although St. Marys appears to have a regional comparative advantage in its concentration of workers in business, finance and administration. In discussing the labour force by occupation, consideration is given to the total workforce by sector, regardless of whether that individual worker is employed in St Marys. This approach is intended to demonstrate the diversity and skills capacity of the local workforce.

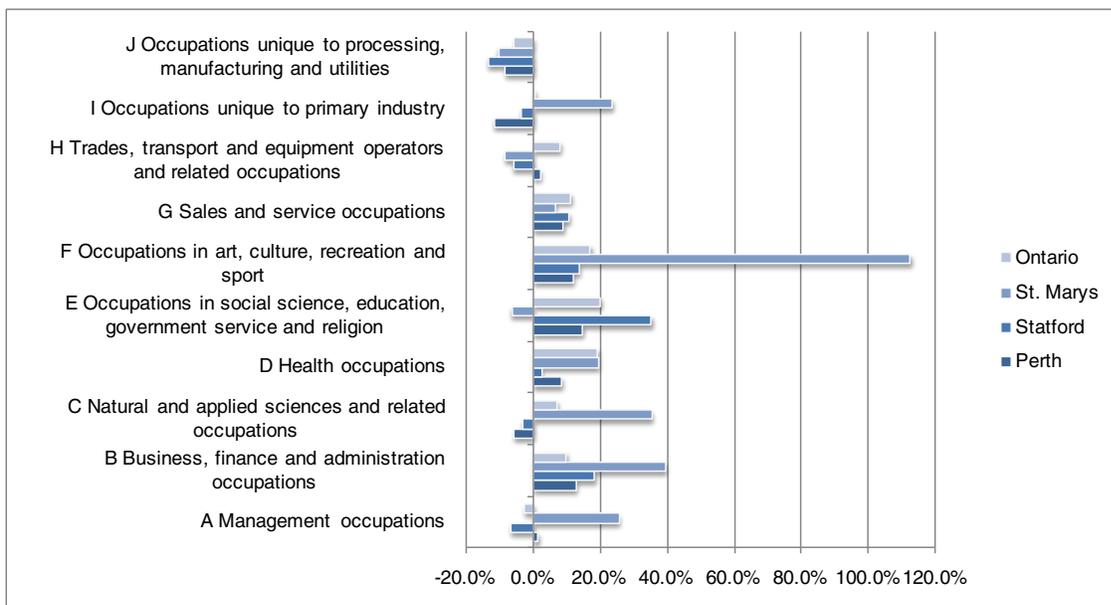
Figure 11 displays the percentage change in employment by occupation. While other jurisdictions have shown declines in management occupations, St. Marys has shown a considerable increase. St. Marys is also showing considerable increases in occupations related to art, culture, recreation and sport; natural and applied sciences; and business, finance and administration. In each of these categories, St. Marys is posting growth significantly higher than regional and provincial averages. Increases in health occupations have matched the provincial average. Contrary to other areas, St. Marys has had a decline in occupations related to social science, education, government service and religion. To more completely understand the impact of these increases on the town it is also useful to look at raw increase rather than percentage increase. Art, culture, recreation and sport as an example increased from 40 to 85 over the time period; suggesting that the increase is having a smaller impact than the percentage increase suggests.

**Figure 10: Employment by occupation, St. Marys 2006**



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006

**Figure 11: Percentage change in employment by occupation, St. Marys 2001 to 2006**



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006

## 2.6 Labour Force by Place of Work

In the preceding discussion, consideration has been given to labour force by occupation regardless of where they work. To effectively understand the strength of the local economy, consideration must also be given to where the local labour force is in fact working. The following commuter flow data for St. Marys reveals an interesting profile for the town. With 65% (figure 12) of the working population living in St. Marys working in St. Marys, the town is seen as having a strong local economy that supports a diverse range of employment opportunities. Given the proximity of the town to other larger centres such as Stratford and London, this percentage is quite high and higher than other communities proximal to larger centres. The second item points to the liveability of St. Marys. With 25% of the working population commuting to London and Stratford there is strong indication that St. Marys is a 'preferred' place to live. These people could be seeking residence in London or Stratford, yet have chosen to reside in St. Marys.

**Figure 12: Commuter flows by place of residence, St. Marys 2006**

Place of Residence	Place of Work	Total Commuters	Percentage Total
St. Marys	St. Marys	1910	65.5%
St. Marys	Stratford	535	18.4%
St. Marys	London	235	8.1%
St. Marys	Zorra	50	1.7%
St. Marys	Perth South	40	1.4%
St. Marys	East Zorra-Tavistock	40	1.4%
St. Marys	South Huron	30	1.0%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census products

Figure 13 reveals where the people working in St. Marys live. Looking at the data for people residing elsewhere and working in St. Marys reveals even more telling information. St. Marys is clearly functioning as a regional centre for employment particularly as it relates to people living in Perth County. The total working population residing in St. Marys is only 2,915 while 4,120 people actually work in the town. More than 50% of the people working in the Town live in neighbouring municipalities. It follows that if the Town is functioning as a regional centre of employment, it likely also serves as a centre for other services such as recreation, health and retail.

**Figure 13: Commuter flow by place of work, St. Marys 2006**

Place of Residence	Place of Work	Total Commuters	Percentage Total
St. Marys	St. Marys	1910	46.4%
Perth South	St. Marys	515	12.5%
London	St. Marys	375	9.1%
Stratford	St. Marys	225	5.5%
Zorra	St. Marys	205	5.0%
West Perth	St. Marys	175	4.2%
Thames Centre	St. Marys	160	3.9%
South Huron	St. Marys	150	3.6%
Lucan Biddulph	St. Marys	120	2.9%

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census products

### 2.6.1 Labour Force by Occupation: Creative Industries

An essential component in determining a community’s level of innovation or creativity is an understanding of the degree to which a workforce is skilled or specialized. These types of occupations are often referred to as the creative occupations or the ‘creative class’ of workers.

In the book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Professor Richard Florida details the significant societal and economic impact that the creative class of worker is having on both local and international economies and the shifts being made to attract and retain this type of workforce, as more and more economic developers realize the importance of this aspect of a workforce. He defines the creative class as including people in:

- science and engineering,
- architecture and design,
- education,
- arts, music and entertainment.

He also includes the broader group of creative professionals in:

- business and finance,
- law,
- health care and related fields.

As the various classes of workers that comprise an economy are defined on the basis of occupation, consideration must be given to the availability of occupation data from Statistics Canada; in particular the National Occupation Classification codes (NOCs)<sup>1</sup>. These classification codes have been matched against Dr. Florida’s occupational categories for the creative class of worker.

Based on this approach creative economy occupations in Canada are said to comprise<sup>2</sup>:

**Figure 14: Creative economy occupations**

Creative Economy Occupations	
Professional Occupations in Natural and Applied Sciences	Finance and Insurance Administration Occupations
Technical Occupations related to natural and Applied Sciences	Professional Occupations in Health
Teachers and Professors	Nurse Supervisors and Registered Nurses
Professional Occupations in Art and Culture	Technical and Related Occupations in Health
Technical Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	Judges, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, ministers of religion and policy and program

Source: Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 2002. Millier Dickinson Blais, 2009

In the 2009 report, *Ontario in the Creative Age*, Florida pushes this concept further by positioning creative occupations in the context of four additional broad kinds of work.

- **Creative occupations** – the growing number of workers who are paid to think. These include scientists and technologists, artists and entertainers, and managers and analysts.
- **Routine-service occupations** - where the work involves little autonomy occupations and is focused on the delivery of services, for example, food-service workers, janitors and clerks;

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix I for NOC definitions

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Appendix II for Creative Occupation definitions

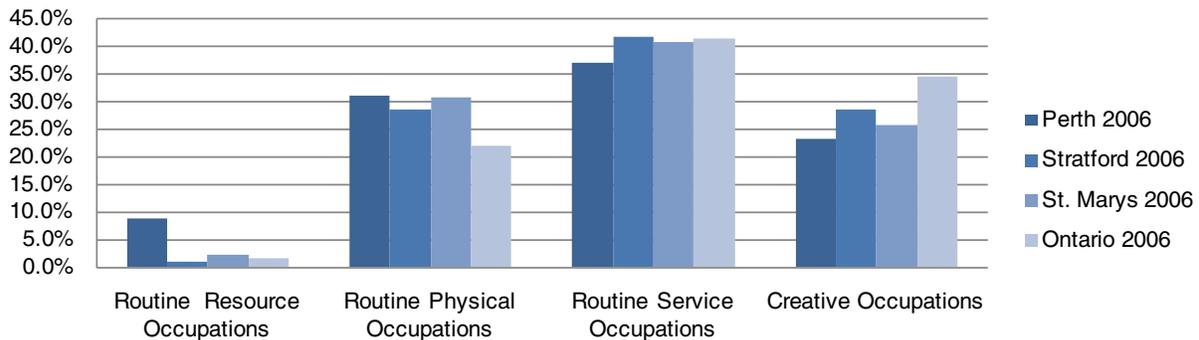
- **Routine-physical occupations** - consisting of people who use physical skills and carry out repetitive tasks (for example, tradespersons, mechanics, crane operators and assembly line workers);
- **Routine-resource occupations** - including mining, forestry and agriculture.

What is apparent from the creative occupational categories is their ability to cut across industry sector lines in a way that can impact both traditional and emerging industries and the degree to which these occupations translate to a well paid and highly skilled workforce. This is particularly true if one considers the skills needed for creative occupations are more heavily weighted towards **analytical<sup>3</sup>** and **social intelligence<sup>4</sup>** skills, both of which play a significant role in a knowledge driven economy.

In the Town of St. Marys 25.6% (figure 15) of the resident labour force is employed in creative class occupations as noted above. While this is considerably lower than the provincial average of 34.7%, growth in creative occupations is considerable. In fact, creative occupations growth in St. Marys is markedly higher than regional or provincial growth (see figure 16).

Comparatively, St. Marys fares well against Perth County, but not so against the City of Stratford, where there is a higher concentration of creative occupations, due in large part to the presence of the Stratford Festival and the resulting spinoffs that have been afforded that community. St. Marys' proximity to Stratford presents an opportunity to attract a higher percentage of these workers, given the right circumstances.

**Figure 15: Occupation by creative class, St. Marys 2006**

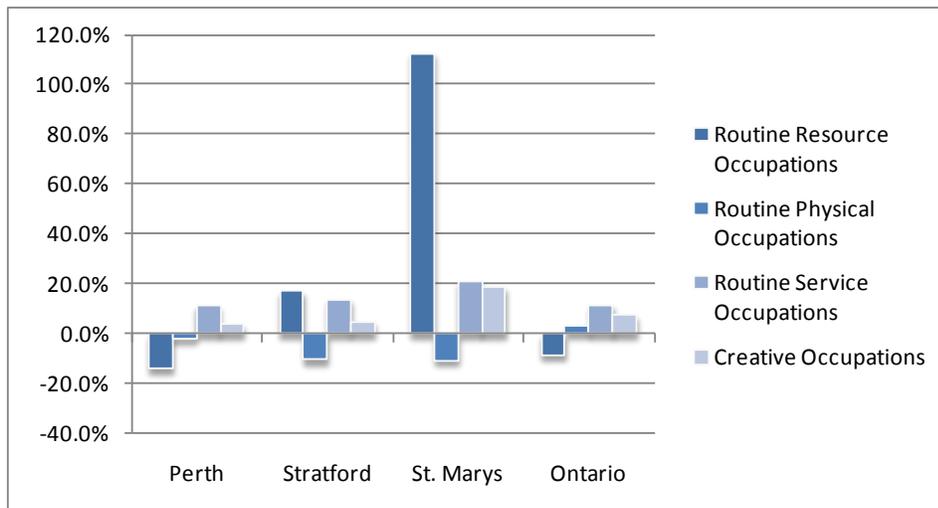


Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006

<sup>3</sup> Examples of occupations that require the highest level of **analytical thinking skills** include surgeons, biomedical engineers, dentists, accountants, plumber, art directors etc.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of occupations that require the highest level of **social intelligence skills** include psychiatrists, chief executives, marketing managers, lawyers, sports coach, film directors etc.

Figure 16: Change in occupation by creative class, St. Marys 2001 to 2006



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2001 and 2006<sup>5</sup>

In figure 17 we can see more clearly the trends in the creative occupations in St. Marys. There has been an increase in almost all creative class occupations, the exception being occupations in the social sciences. The highest level of employment and greatest increase in employment is found in Management occupations. The most notable percentage increase is in the occupations related to art, culture, recreation and sport.

Given that creative occupations often equate to higher wages and a more sustainable and skilled workforce, the growth of this sector of the economy has significant implications for the direction of the Town's economic development strategy. Throughout the consultation phase of the strategy it has been suggested that St. Marys benefits from a high 'quality of place' factor in the attraction of both residents and visitors giving rise to the notion that the community would have considerable appeal to workers in the so-called creative economy. Given the current demographic profile of the town and its reputation as a preferred place to live by area residents, more effort should be directed at promoting these factors to this target audience.

<sup>5</sup> Routine resource occupations increased from 40 to 85 in the time period.

**Figure 17: Labour force by creative occupation, St. Marys 2001 and 2006**

Occupation	St. Marys 2001	St. Marys 2006
Total All Creative Occupations	770	915
<b>A Management occupations</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>295</b>
A0 Senior management occupations	15	25
A1 Specialist managers	50	90
A2 Managers in retail trade, food and accommodation services	80	80
A3 Other managers, n.e.c.	85	100
<b>B Business, finance and administration occupations</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>135</b>
B0 Professional occupations in business and finance	45	60
B1 Finance and insurance administration occupations	70	75
<b>C Natural and applied sciences and related occupations</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>120</b>
C0 Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	20	35
C1 Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences	60	85
<b>D Health occupations</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>130</b>
D0 Professional occupations in health	15	40
D1 Nurse supervisors and registered nurses	65	80
D2 Technical and related occupations in health	35	10
<b>E Occupations in social science, education, government service and related</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>145</b>
E0 Judges, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, ministers of religion	75	65
E1 Teachers and professors	115	80
<b>F Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>90</b>
F0 Professional occupations in art and culture	20	45
F1 Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	20	45

Source: Statistics Canada community profiles, 2001 and 2006

## 2.7 Educational Attainment + Field of Study

The level of educational attainment or 'human capital' within a community is often used as a proxy for the capacity for innovation and entrepreneurial activity. Human capital is defined as an accumulation of skills and talents which manifests itself in the educated and skilled workforce of the region (Mathur, 1999). In the case of St. Marys, it may also be indicative of the type of resident that is being attracted to the community.

Figure 18 illustrates the highest level of education achieved for the residents of St. Marys. In these results, we can see 42.8% of the population has achieved some level of post secondary education compared to 51% at the provincial level. While the town is comparable to other areas in college and apprenticeship and trades education, the percentage of population that has not completed high school is higher than in the City of Stratford and much higher than the province. This may reflect the higher percentage of older residents in the community. The low levels of post secondary attainment at a university level and the high percentage of apprenticeship and trades education speaks to the town's manufacturing base. Due to changes in data collection methods by Statistics Canada, it is not possible to compare 2006 educational attainment with prior periods.

**Figure 18: Level of education in St. Marys, 2006**

	Perth 2006	%	Stratford 2006	%	St. Marys 2006	%	Ontario 2006	%
Total population 15 years and over by highest certificate, diploma or degree	58,955	100.0%	24,750	100.0%	5,310	100.0%	9,819,420	100.0%
<b>Secondary Education</b>								
No certificate, diploma or degree	17,910	30.4%	6,315	25.5%	1,485	28.0%	2,183,625	22.2%
High school certificate or equivalent	17,120	29.0%	7,370	29.8%	1,555	29.3%	2,628,575	26.8%
<b>Post Secondary Education</b>								
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	5,205	8.8%	1,985	8.0%	580	10.9%	785,115	8.0%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	11,495	19.5%	5,160	20.8%	1,040	19.6%	1,804,775	18.4%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	1,305	2.2%	615	2.5%	100	1.9%	405,270	4.1%
University certificate or degree	5,910	10.0%	3,305	13.4%	550	10.4%	2,012,060	20.5%

Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles 2006

However, when consideration is given to the range of programming or field of study completed (see figure 19), results reveal a strong presence of graduates and professionals in:

- Architecture, engineering, and related technologies (24.5%)
- Business, management and public administration (18.4%)
- Health, parks, recreation and fitness (15%)

These fields of study and the resulting occupations are captured in the definition of the creative economy and are a positive indicator of business and employment opportunities that may be present in the town and the in region.

**Figure 19: Post secondary education by field of study, population aged 25-64, St. Marys 2006**

	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of Total
	900	835	1735	
Education	25	75	100	5.8%
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	35	30	65	3.7%
Humanities	30	50	80	4.6%
Social and behavioural sciences and law	75	105	180	10.4%
Business, management and public administration	115	205	320	18.4%
Physical and life sciences and technologies	10	20	30	1.7%
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	30	35	65	3.7%
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	405	20	425	24.5%
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	40	20	60	3.5%
Health, parks, recreation and fitness	55	205	260	15.0%
Personal, protective and transportation services	90	75	165	9.5%
Other fields of study	0	0	0	0.0%

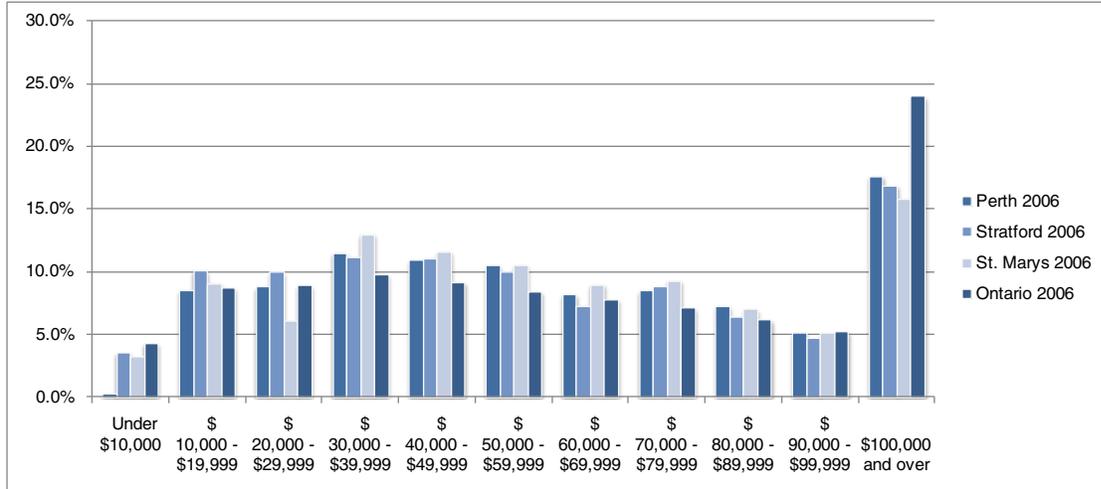
Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles 2006

## 2.8 Household Income

As noted previously in this report, creative occupations tend to command higher wages than routine service or routine physical occupations. Regions looking to increase the overall well being of their citizens need to consider the class of jobs and occupations being created and the incomes associated with those occupations.

Figure 20 suggests that the town has a higher percentage of income earners between \$30,000 and \$99,999 than any of the comparative regions but lags in the percentage of households earning \$100,000 or over.

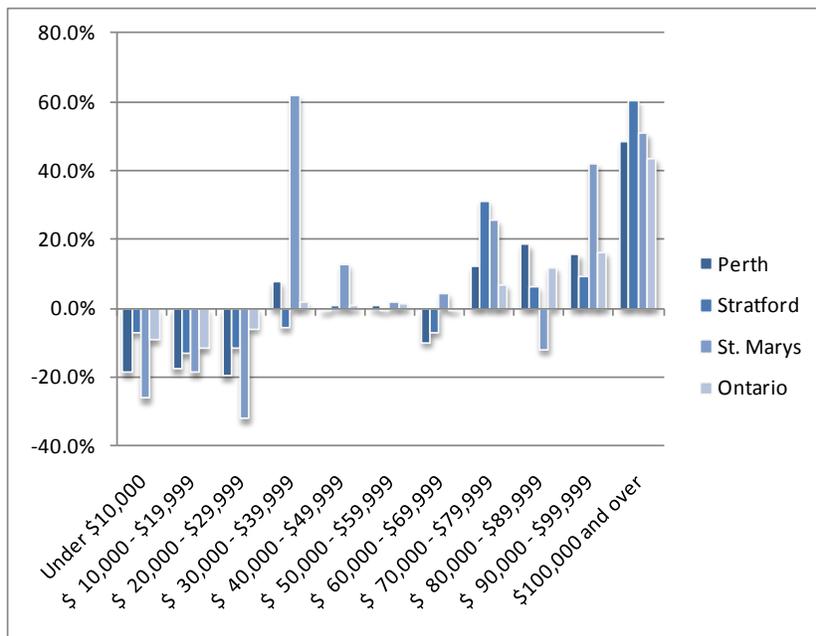
**Figure 20: Private household income by category, St. Marys 2005**



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006

More telling, however, is the rapid growth of household incomes at the higher end of the earning categories relative to the comparative jurisdictions, particularly as it relates to those households earning in excess of \$90,000. Figure 21 displays the percentage change of the number of households in each income category. With the exception of households earning \$80,000-\$89,999, St. Marys has seen incredible growth in households earning over \$70,000. Data projections for 2009 indicate the number of households in these higher income categories has remained relatively stable with continued increase of 10.1% in households earning over \$100,000.

**Figure 21: Percentage change in income by category, St. Marys 2001-2006**



### 3 Industry Sector Analysis

Southern Ontario has recently been challenged to maintain its competitive advantage and success in a global economy that has been characterized by a strong recession in the United States, high Canadian dollar, high prices for commodities such as oil and increasing competitiveness of overseas territories such as China and India. The industry sector analysis that follows has taken into consideration these broader trends in its review of local economic performance.

The growing impact of technology on business and industrial operations is redrawing the country's industrial base and opening up new opportunities for pharmaceutical crops, precision products from advanced manufacturing, and newly-branded local and regional products marketed via the Internet – markets that did not exist a few short years ago.

In addition, a different kind of high tech company is emerging, one that is oriented around the technology needs of local companies in other sectors of the economy such as manufacturing, retail trade, finance and real estate, business and professional services. Technology development companies are showing up in smaller regions, including cost-conscious firms, and entrepreneurs who simply prefer the lifestyle and improved quality of life offered by smaller urban and rural communities.

As the creative class theory takes hold, cities and city regions are set to become increasingly important in the future economy. Smaller centres such as St. Marys need to consider this shift in worker class along with resulting shifts in technologies when considering opportunities for economic growth and their position in this larger marketplace. With its proximity to London, Kitchener-Waterloo and the Western GTA, St. Marys also stands to benefit from an influx of new residents and new business investments. All of these considerations will need to be factored into determining the direction for the town's economic future.

#### 3.1 Location Quotients

In order to determine the level and degree of business and industrial specialization, thus the economic diversity that may be developing in the Town of St. Marys, location quotients ("LQ's") have been calculated to identify and measure the concentration of industry/business activity by major sector and sub-sector.

Location quotients are a commonly used tool in local/regional economic analysis. They assess the concentration of economic activities within a smaller area relative to the overarching region in which it resides. For the purposes of this study we have calculated location quotients that compare the Town of St. Marys' industry sector concentration relative to the Province of Ontario. We have also included the results associated with Perth County and the City of Stratford.

A location quotient greater than 1.0 for a given sector indicates a local concentration of economic activity as compared to the overarching region, the Province of Ontario, which may equate to a competitive advantage. Location quotients equal to 1.0 for a given sector suggest that the Town has the same concentration of economic activity as the overarching region. Finally, a location quotient of less than 1.0 indicates a concentration of economic activity that is less than the overarching region and may point to a gap or disadvantage in attracting this form of business or industry.

In theory, industrial or business concentration that is greater than the overarching regional average may represent the export base of the participating municipalities. Businesses that make up this export base may have chosen to locate in the area due to certain regional competitive advantages. These competitive advantages can be used to attract further investment in the future in the same or complimentary industries.

Definitions for individual sectors are based on the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) and are provided in Appendix III to this report.

Despite its size, the Town of St. Marys exhibits a high concentration of employment in the following sectors considered relevant to the growth of its local economy (figure 22):

- Management of companies and enterprises (LQ 2.15)
- Wholesale trade (LQ 1.95)
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (LQ 1.83)
- Manufacturing (LQ 1.70)
- Health care and social assistance (LQ 1.28)
- Other services (except public administration) (LQ 1.26)

Location quotients, however, cannot be used in isolation without looking at other data related to the industry. In the Town of St. Marys, as an example, management of companies and enterprises has the highest LQ but employs only 10 people. While the LQ indicates a competitive expansion and possibilities for the growth, the low absolute employment in the industry may be an indicator that it will not be generating significant employment in the near future. Manufacturing, Health care and wholesale trade, on the other hand, exhibit high LQ's and high employment indicating a critical mass to build from in generating further investment and employment. Figure 23 indicates visually how LQ's for industries in St. Marys changed from 2001 to 2006. Here we can see the most significant gains have been in agriculture, wholesale trade and health care.

In comparison to Perth and Stratford, two industry sectors stand out for St. Marys. St. Marys has a significant comparative advantage in wholesale trade. This sector has a high LQ of 1.95. In addition the LQ is rising (as it is in the province) and is experiencing significant employment growth (140 new jobs to 2006). St. Marys' strength in this sector is an indicator of a regional role played as a provider of goods and services to business and the population more generally. Health care and social assistance is also experiencing significant job growth (105 new jobs to 2006). Given the general aging of the population coupled with the demand likely to emerge from the surrounding region, employment growth in this sector will likely continue.

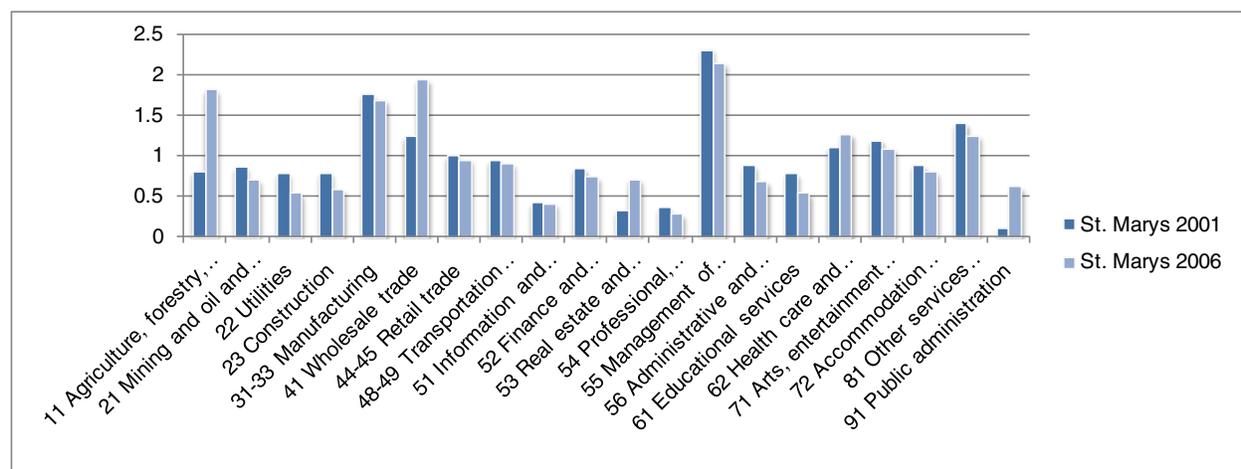
Similarities between St. Marys and the neighbouring municipalities (figure 24) can be seen in the importance of **manufacturing** (City of Stratford) and **agriculture** (Perth County). In general it could be suggested that the Town has developed a more diversified economy than either Perth County or the City of Stratford. This diversification is evidenced by the number of industries with high location quotients. This is a further sign of the economic health of the Town. Job losses that have occurred in the manufacturing sector can be attributed to broader trends, such as the rise in the Canadian dollar, rather than to a loss of competitive advantage. Also employment growth in other sectors has more than made up for these job losses. Further details on other subsectors in St. Marys are discussed in the next section covering business patterns data.

Figure 22: Location Quotients, St. Marys 2001 and 2006

Industry (NAICS)	2001		2006		2006	
	LQ	Classification	LQ	Classification	Employment	Change
55 Management of companies and enterprises	2.32	High	2.15	High	10	0
41 Wholesale trade	1.25	Medium	1.95	High	330	140
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0.81	Medium	1.83	High	115	60
31-33 Manufacturing	1.77	High	1.7	High	840	-110
62 Health care and social assistance	1.12	Medium	1.28	High	430	105
81 Other services (except public administration)	1.41	High	1.26	High	210	0
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.2	Medium	1.1	Medium	85	5
44-45 Retail trade	1.01	Medium	0.96	Medium	380	10
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	0.95	Medium	0.92	Medium	155	10
72 Accommodation and food services	0.89	Medium	0.81	Medium	185	0
52 Finance and insurance	0.84	Medium	0.75	Medium	130	-5
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	0.34	Low	0.72	Low	50	30
21 Mining and oil and gas extraction	0.87	Medium	0.71	Low	10	0
56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	0.89	Medium	0.69	Low	120	-5
91 Public administration	0.12	Low	0.62	Low	120	100
23 Construction	0.8	Low	0.59	Low	125	-20
22 Utilities	0.79	Medium	0.54	Low	15	-5
61 Educational services	0.79	Medium	0.54	Low	130	-30
51 Information and cultural industries	0.43	Low	0.42	Low	40	0
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	0.36	Low	0.29	Low	75	-10

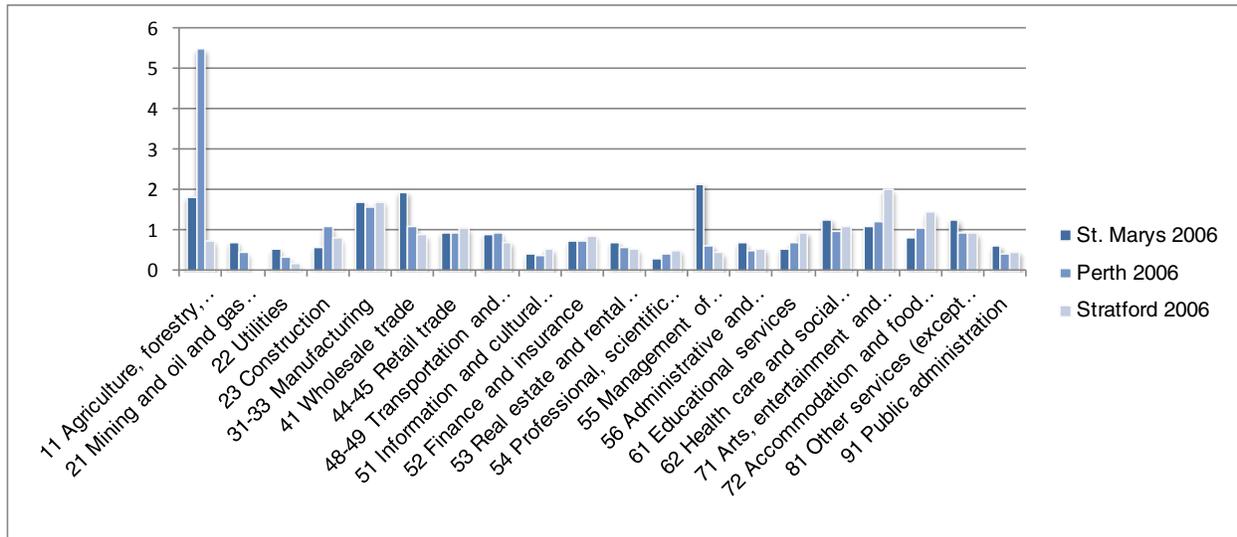
Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles 2001 and 2006

Figure 23: Change in Location Quotient, St. Marys 2001 to 2006



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles 2001 and 2006

Figure 24: Comparative Location Quotients, St. Marys 2006



Source: Statistics Canada Community Profiles 2006

In order to understand the potential for future economic growth and investment, consideration must also be given to the changing character of local businesses in the community over a similar period of time. The following section discusses this further.

### 3.2 Canadian Business Patterns Data

In addition to the results of the location quotient analysis, consideration has also been given to Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Pattern Data which provides a record of the total number of local business establishments by industry and size. Sources of information are updates from the Statistics Canada survey program and the Business Number registration source collected from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The business data collected for the town of St. Marys includes all local businesses which meet at least one of the three following criteria:

1. **Have an employee workforce for which they submit payroll remittances to CRA; or**
2. **Have a minimum of \$30,000 in annual sales revenue; or**
3. **Are incorporated under a federal or provincial act and have filed a federal corporate income tax form within the past three years.**

The Canadian Business Patterns Data records business counts by "Total", "Indeterminate", and "Subtotal categories". The establishments in the "Indeterminate" category include the self-employed, (i.e. those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners). A review of the results for the Town of St. Marys provides an understanding of the business growth or decline by North American Industry Classifications (NAICs) codes, the size of operations in terms of the number of employees and the historical performance of the sector over the period 2003-2008. This information, combined with the LQ analysis assists in refining the discussion of sector opportunities for the Town of St. Marys. Canadian Business Patterns collected data on a 6-digit NAIC level affording a detailed review of subsectors within each industry.

Figure 25 shows the 'total', 'indeterminate' and 'subtotal' business in St. Marys for 2008 and changes since 2003. As with the LQ analysis, it is important to look at those industries with high numbers of

business establishments as well as the change in the number of business establishments over time. Simply looking for the highest percentage increase can be misleading. The following sectors dominate in terms of the total number of businesses with employees in St. Marys (excluding the self employed).

- Retail Trade (12.7% of businesses) led by convenience, grocery and other general merchandise stores; new and used car dealerships; and florists and nurseries
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (11.8% of businesses) led by dairy cattle and milk production, mixed animal farming, hog and pig farming and beef cattle farming
- Construction (10.6% of businesses) led by residential building construction and electrical contractors
- Accommodation and Food and Beverage Services (10% of businesses) led by full service restaurants and limited service eating places
- Manufacturing (9.4% of businesses) led by animal food and wood household furniture manufacturing
- Other Services (except Public administration) (8.5% of businesses) led by religious organisations, general automotive repair and beauty salons
- Health Care and Social Assistance (7.6% of businesses) led by physicians and dentists offices

Overall the total number of firms across all industries increased from 821 to 854, an increase of 4% over the period. In addition, the number of self employed or cottage industry operations has increased by 5%, with much of that concentrated in the Finance and Insurance sector. Similar industries dominate the self-employed and cottage industries with the finance and insurance and real estate and rental and leasing being the exceptions. These two industries are second and fourth respectively in number of indeterminate business establishments. Figure 25 ranks St. Marys' industries by growth rate in total number of establishments from 2003 to 2008.

Research suggests that an overwhelming percentage of new investment is a result of companies already located in a community. For these reasons it is important for St. Marys to be aware of existing business and business formations in the community. Combining those sectors with the most number of businesses with the sectors showing the highest growth rate reveals the following sectors as those to be aware of:

- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- Manufacturing
- Accommodation and Food and Beverage Services
- Agriculture
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Transportation and Warehousing

Figure 25: Business establishments by size, St. Marys 2008

	Total	Total Change from 2003	Percentage Change from 2003	Indeterminate	Change from 2003	Subtotal	Change from 2003
<b>All Industries</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>523</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>8</b>
52 Finance and Insurance	46	24	109.1%	32	19	14	5
53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	64	20	45.5%	57	21	7	-1
72 Accomodation and Food and Beverage Services	40	9	29.0%	7	0	33	9
55 Managment of Companies and Enterprises	21	4	23.5%	18	6	3	-2
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	31	4	14.8%	6	2	25	2
48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	34	3	9.7%	22	4	12	-1
61 Educational Services	7	3	75.0%	5	2	2	1
31-33 Manufacturing	48	2	4.3%	17	3	31	-1
21 Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	1	100.0%	0	0	1	1
51 Information and Cultural Industries	4	1	33.3%	2	0	2	1
56 Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	19	1	5.6%	11	-1	8	2
22 Utilities	1	0	0.0%	0	0	1	0
91 Public Administration	1	0	0.0%	0	0	1	0
71 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	16	-1	-5.9%	10	-4	6	3
81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	48	-1	-2.0%	20	2	28	-3
54 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	53	-2	-3.6%	31	-7	22	5
23 Construction	70	-4	-5.4%	35	-9	35	5
41 Wholesale Trade	32	-6	-15.8%	13	0	19	-6
44-45 Retail Trade	63	-6	-8.7%	21	-4	42	-2
11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	255	-19	-6.9%	216	-9	39	-10

Source: Statistics Canada, Business Patterns Data, December 2008

Figure 26 Subtotal business establishments by size, St. Marys 2008

	Subtotal	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-199	200-499	500 +
	<b>331</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	39	31	6	1	1	0	0	0	0
21 Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
22 Utilities	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
23 Construction	35	23	7	3	0	0	2	0	0
31-33 Manufacturing	31	9	4	5	4	2	5	2	0
41 Wholesale Trade	19	4	5	5	3	0	2	0	0
44-45 Retail Trade	42	17	10	10	2	2	1	0	0
48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	12	7	3	0	2	0	0	0	0
51 Information and Cultural Industries	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
52 Finance and Insurance	14	3	4	4	3	0	0	0	0
53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
54 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	22	16	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
55 Managment of Companies and Enterprises	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
56 Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	8	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	0
61 Educational Services	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	25	13	7	1	0	3	1	0	0
71 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	6	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0
72 Accomodation and Food and Beverage Services	33	5	7	13	5	3	0	0	0
81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	28	19	6	3	0	0	0	0	0
91 Public Administration	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada, Business Patterns Data, December 2008

### 3.3 Creative Industries

Earlier this report discussed the presence of creative occupations in St. Marys understanding that creative occupations are likely to bring benefits to the community such as higher paying wages. Looking at the number of creative industries can also give an indication to the town's ability to attract creative occupations and skilled and creative workers. Figure 27 shows that in 2008 there was a total of 42 creative industry establishments in St. Marys, a decline of 3 from 2003<sup>6</sup>.

In St. Marys, most creative industries are self-employed or cottage-based industries. This category comprises 32 of the 42 establishments or 76% of all creative establishments. None of the creative industries employ more than 19 people. This implies that support to creative industries must be directed through entrepreneurial and small business support programs. St. Marys' strength in the creative industries is in business consulting (28.6% of establishments) and web and software development (19% of establishments). While St. Marys lost several establishments in the performing arts, the town has gained in artists and public relations. While the number of creative establishments is few and employment small compared to other industries, these industries play a role in some of the themes identified in the community consultations and appear in the priorities recommended in this report.

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<sup>6</sup> For a list of all creative industries please refer to Appendix IV

Figure 27: Creative Industries, St. Marys 2008

	2008						
	2003 Total	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	1-4	5-9	10-19
<b>Total All Creative Industries</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Advertising</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>					
541840 - Media Representatives	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
541850 - Display Advertising	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
541899 - All Other Services Related to Advertising	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Artists</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>					
711513 - Independent Writers and Authors	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Business Consulting</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>					
541611 - Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services	10	6	5	1	1	0	0
541612 - Human Resources Consulting Services	1	2	1	1	1	0	0
541619 - Other Management Consulting Services	2	4	2	2	2	0	0
<b>Design</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>					
541410 - Interior Design Services	2	2	2	0	0	0	0
541430 - Graphic Design Services	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Education</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>					
611610 - Fine Arts Schools	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>					
541330 - Engineering Services	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
541620 - Environmental Consulting Services	0	2	1	1	0	0	1
541690 - Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services	5	4	4	0	0	0	0
541710 - Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering and Life Sciences	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Film</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>					
512110 - Motion Picture and Video Production	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Games</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>					
339930 - Doll, Toy and Game Manufacturing	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
414460 - Toy and Hobby Goods Wholesaler-Distributors	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Performing Arts</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>					
711111 - Theatre (except Musical) Companies	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
711130 - Musical Groups and Artists	3	2	1	1	1	0	0
711319 - Sports Stadiums and Other Presenters with Facilities	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Photographic Services</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>					
541920 - Photographic Services	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Public Relations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>					
541820 - Public Relations Services	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Publishing</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>					
511110 - Newspaper Publishers	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
511120 - Periodical Publishers	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Web and Software</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>					
541510 - Computer Systems Design and Related Services	8	8	7	1	0	0	1

Source: Statistics Canada Business Patterns Data, 2003 and 2008

### 3.4 Industry Sector Opportunities

Taking into account total employment, change in employment, location quotients and business patterns data, the sectors offering the greatest potential in St. Marys include:

**Manufacturing:** employing 840 people in 2006, but experiencing falling employment and location quotients; building on this sector is important for the future health of the community. Interestingly the core strength of this sector lies in processing agricultural goods into human and animal food products. Leading in business establishments and employment are animal food manufacturing, poultry processing and several smaller businesses engaged in milk, butter, cheese, and dry and condensed dairy product, tortilla and salad dressing manufacturing.

**Health Care and Social Assistance:** is the second largest employer in St. Marys with 430 employees and growing quickly. This sector has a rising LQ indicating it is growing faster in St. Marys than in Ontario and is also experiencing business establishment growth. As discussed earlier in the demographics section, the development and delivery of health care and other services to seniors will factor in St. Marys' economic and social sustainability.

**Agriculture:** is the leading sector by business establishment<sup>7</sup> and has significant and rising employment and location quotient. Agriculture in St. Marys is focused on dairy cattle and milk production, mixed animal farming, hog and pig farming and beef cattle farming but includes grain and vegetable farming all of which could contribute to a strong food processing sector.

**Wholesale Trade:** is experiencing rapid employment growth and rising location quotient indicating employment growth is outstripping growth in the province. Fourth in employment by industry, this sector already employs 330. Wholesale trade is closely linked to the agricultural sector and exemplifies the town as a regional centre with subsectors including farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment distributors, dairy and milk products wholesaler distributors and oilseed and grain wholesaler distributors.

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<sup>7</sup> Note Statistics Canada data may capture establishments located outside the Town's boundaries that report an address in the Town of St. Marys.

## 4 Community Consultation + SWOT Assessment

While the Town of St. Marys' Community Strategic Plan has relied on data and statistical information to inform the planning process, the opinions and perspectives of local residents, business leaders, community stakeholders, politicians and municipal staff have also been taken into consideration. Community consultation is considered a vital component in the overall development of the planning process as it enables relevant and current assessment of the town's strengths and weaknesses, and gathers a broader understanding of goals and priorities of the community as a whole.

A comprehensive consultation process with the community was conducted between August and November 2009 that included stakeholder interviews, 3 community focus groups including one directed at the youth of the community and an online community survey that attracted more than 250 responses across all age groups. In all, more than 350 members of the community provided their opinions and observations on a vision for their community, the perceived strengths and weaknesses associated with living and working in St. Marys, as well as priorities they believe will sustain the viability of the community over the longer term.

In completing this consultation process participants were asked to comment on:

- What is your vision of an ideal community? What are some of the elements of the town that contribute to your idea of an ideal community?
- What does the town need to consider in creating a viable, sustainable community?
- What are the priorities for the community in the next 5 years?

Based on the consultation results, a SWOT assessment (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was developed that provides valuable insight and direction for the development of a sustainable Community Based Strategic Plan for the Town of St. Marys.

### 4.1 Strengths

Any successful strategic plan will identify and build upon the existing assets and strengths already present in a community, and use them to guide future economic growth. As such, this assessment begins with an inventory of the key elements upon which Town of St. Marys can build.

**Quality of Place:** With abundant natural beauty, stonework, heritage architecture, and extensive opportunities for leisure and recreation, St. Marys provides an excellent quality of life for its residents. Easy access to quality health care facilities, a growing and relatively low-cost housing market, and small-town feel further contribute to this environment. This high quality of life has been a key factor in attracting businesses and skilled workers as well as retirees.

**Sense of Community:** The frequently cited small-town character of St. Marys is another of its key strengths. The role of service clubs such as the Kinsmen in raising support and funding for the Pyramid Recreation Centre is but one example of the strong community spirit present in the Town. This tight sense of community contributes to a friendly, approachable and highly collaborative environment. Leveraging these connections can be of high importance in persuading the community to come together in support of new businesses, organizations, and other community improvement initiatives in the Town.

**Health Care Facilities:** A key asset in the town is the St. Marys Memorial Hospital, together with the Wellness Centre which opened in December of 2003. These medical facilities ensure easy access to quality care for the region's population, as well as health and fitness-related services and amenities. As the Town's retirement-age population continues to grow, this existing infrastructure will be of high value in

meeting increased need for health and long-term care. The Hospital also attracts skilled medical professionals and associated jobs, and thus functions as a key employment sector in the region as well.

**Location and Access:** St. Marys can enjoy the benefits of being a small town while still realizing the advantages associated with its proximity to two larger centres of Stratford and London and, to a lesser extent, Kitchener-Waterloo and the western GTA. In this way, it can act as a preferred destination for new residents who may retain employment in these larger markets. While the town is somewhat removed from Highway 401, a major truck shipping route, its access to Highway 7 and connections to the 401 make it accessible to major retail, supplier and consumer markets throughout Southwestern Ontario, with linkages extending further beyond. The Town is served by passenger and freight rail services, which includes VIA rail service, which is important for drawing visitors to the area.

**Recreation and Attractions:** St. Marys is perhaps best known outside the region as the home of the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame. The Town has managed to build upon this landmark to make recreation a key focus within the community. The recent completion of the Pyramid Recreation Centre, which houses two ice pads, an aquatic centre and other facilities, has added a hub for recreational activities to the area and represents a potential draw for tournaments and events. These attractions, in addition to the green space and active lifestyle among many of the residents, can act as a key attraction for visitors and residents alike.

**Industrial Heritage:** Despite a recent decline in manufacturing, both in the Town and throughout the regional economy, St. Marys retains a strong industrial heritage from which to spur new business development. St. Marys Cement remains an anchor business within the region, with clients throughout the Great Lakes region. The presence of this industrial character coupled with the strength of the region's agricultural community can be built upon to retain and attract firms from diverse sectors.

## 4.2 Weaknesses

The previous section outlined existing competitive advantages that the Town of St. Marys possesses. However, there are also a number of identified weaknesses that, if not properly considered, can constrain the economic growth prospects of the town. The following provides a consideration of these perceived disadvantages.

**Perceived Lack of Direction and Strategy:** Despite its many desirable features, there is recognition that St. Marys has little in the way of a cohesive guiding framework for business development and attraction, and sustainable economic growth and prosperity. As heavy industry has left the Town, a plan that looks to future trends and a diversification of the economic base will be necessary to ensure that the Town's prospects are greater than that of a bedroom community to London or Stratford.

**Opportunities for Youth:** Many of the public services in the Town are geared either to seniors, or younger children; there is little emphasis on community engagement, recreation, or employment for youth and teenaged citizens. Limited entry-level job opportunities, and the absence of a coordinated youth strategy, will not allow the Town to retain its young people and thus ensure a thriving future employment or entrepreneurial base and family environment. Many also recognized the other harmful consequences of a disengaged youth population, which can unfortunately lead to destructive and criminal behaviour.

**Availability of Serviced Industrial Land:** St. Marys is currently faced with a shortage of serviced industrial land to develop for new businesses. An ongoing dispute with Perth County over land at the south end of the Town is symptomatic of both the need for available land, and the need to improve Town-County relationships. Quality infrastructure and competitive-cost industrial land are necessary for potential business development.

**Lack of a Marketing and Promotion Strategy:** There is increasing recognition that communities need to effectively brand and market their assets outside of the community to attract businesses, investors, visitors and residents to the community. As shown above, St. Marys has many attractive assets from a quality of life and tourism standpoint. The Town needs to showcase these assets in a coordinated and focused way. This must be done in concert with other business development and promotion efforts, both within and outside of the Town. Part of this approach must involve identifying and promoting local success stories from the business community, such as the telecommunications company Quadro Communications. Another important element must be the embrace of new methods and technologies of communications, beginning with a stronger website presence and more effective integration of web 2.0 applications.

**Attracting Skilled Workers:** As the manufacturing industry has declined, high-paying and high-skilled jobs have become a target for communities pursuing economic growth agendas; as such, competition for these workers is extremely high. St. Marys has a limited presence in sectors such as information and communications technology (ICT) where these workers are employed; in addition, these workers can receive higher pay in larger centres. With few high-tech businesses and limited resources to train and educate skilled workers for these knowledge-intensive careers, St. Marys needs to consider a comprehensive workforce and education strategy to ensure it maintains a progressive and high-value employment base.

**Availability of Retail and Declining Downtown:** A limited diversity of options for retail, particularly for higher-order goods and services, drives a large amount of high-value consumption to the larger centres of Stratford and London. This problem goes hand-in-hand with the neglected state of the downtown, which has many closed storefronts, and thus leaves limited specialty options for local or visitor shopping. These vacancies affect the business tax revenue that the Town can accrue, which can affect its competitive position with regards to service expenditures or residential property taxes.

### 4.3 Opportunities

Other factors, both internal and external to a community, can have a significant bearing on the approach taken for a community strategic plan. These factors can include structural changes in the broader economy, demographic shifts, changing consumer preferences, etc. The following summarizes some of the key factors identified as leading opportunities in the formation of a community strategic plan.

**Downtown Revitalization:** An improvement in the appearance and economic direction of the downtown is a significant consideration for business development and investment, tourism prospects, and local consumption. Creating incentive programs and investing in aesthetic upgrades to draw business and people back to the downtown will have positive spill-over effects, not the least of which is encouraging the development of small businesses and creating a downtown that will be seen as more of a destination experience for both residents and visitors. St. Marys can look to best practices from other Ontario municipalities with successful downtowns, such as Elora and Port Perry, to inform this revitalization process.

**New Industries – ICT and Green Economy:** As mentioned above, the ICT sector represents a high-growth, high-skill area of the economy. The Town's proximity to Stratford, which is currently developing a digital media centre, and its continued build-out of fibre optic capability, leave it well-positioned to attract and support ICT-related businesses and workers. Furthermore, the Town can pursue value-added goods and services related to the agriculture industry, which retains a strong presence in the County and surrounding townships. By becoming a hub for processing, technology and retailing for this sector, new business opportunities can be created within the Town.

**The Hospital and Demand for Medical Services:** It has been well documented that the proportion of the labour force reaching retirement-age in the Town – and indeed, throughout Ontario – continues to rise. Not only will this produce workforce pressures, but it will also increase demand for health care and related facilities and services. The strong institutional presence of the St. Marys Memorial Hospital and Wellness Centre represents an opportunity to capitalize on this trend by attracting provincial and federal investment to expand service offerings and further develop health care as a viable and growing sector in the local economy. This can also serve to attract more high-skilled, high-wage professionals to the area.

**Youth-Oriented Programming:** These large-scale demographic shifts also point to a need to engage and educate youth, as they will need to comprise a significant and growing component of the local workforce in the coming years. A greater focus on youth-oriented programming and the exploration of a Youth Centre that could house recreation and leisure opportunities, wireless internet and computers, employment counselling and social meeting space will ensure productive outlets for local youth and increase the chances that they will identify with and reinvest in the future success of the Town.

**Creative and Cultural Assets:** St. Marys' extensive heritage buildings, theatre and music venues, and local artists are some of its key assets. These assets need to be developed and utilized to promote the town's character and quality of place, as they can themselves be significant drivers of tourism and economic development. There is increasing recognition within the economic development community that these creative assets – both venues and people – are important features in ensuring the attraction of talented people and businesses to a local economy. The municipality – indeed, the region - should pursue a cultural mapping exercise to identify the extent and character of their cultural and creative assets.

**Tourism Development:** In addition to cultural tourism, the Town can further leverage its aesthetic character and recreation and leisure facilities to expand its tourism sector. Building upon the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Pyramid Recreation Centre, St. Marys has the opportunity to become a destination point for recreation and sport-related events, tournaments, camps and conferences. Other local assets, including the museum, Grand Trunk trail, green spaces, bike and walking trails, and the Quarry, form a strong local tourism package centred upon culture and recreation. Riverfront property can also be used to host events and festivals, especially in the summer months, to draw investment and tourism spending to the town.

**Sustained Growth:** The town's growing appeal to early retirees and a skilled, professional class of worker provides an opportunity to ensure a sustained level of growth in the community. This is particularly evident in the enhancements and improvements that have been made to the historic housing stock, the increase in the number of small businesses and the ability of the town to invest in its recreation and health and wellness facilities. The town must ensure that it is focused on creating a community that will continue to appeal to this portion of the population by continuing to invest in its downtown, arts and cultural amenities and local infrastructure that supports business investment and development.

#### 4.4 Threats

In addition to capitalizing on potential opportunities, communities must effectively manage and respond to external threats to ensure continued economic prosperity. The following explains the key threats from both inside and outside the community that are facing the St. Marys economy.

**Structural Shifts in the Provincial and National Economies:** The current global economic downturn is continuing to have a significant effect on the regional, provincial and national economies in which St. Marys participates. Significant unemployment has been largely concentrated in the manufacturing sector, affecting the economic base of communities throughout North America. Business departures often lead to

a declining tax base, which adversely effects service provision and quality of place. St. Marys is similarly vulnerable. Manifold Data Projections predicts unemployment in the town has risen to 7.6% in 2009 from 3.9% in 2006. This is also evidenced by the closure of Dana Autoparts in 2008 putting 340 people out of work. In addition, the strong Canadian dollar negatively affects export markets, as well as the inflow of tourism and investment dollars from the United States. As the broader economy experiences limited growth, communities must be strategic in their approach to targeting sectors for business development and investment.

**Lack of Unified Vision:** The departure of major industry is a new reality for communities like St. Marys, and in their wake there is a void with regards to the Town's future economic base. Pursuing any one development path leaves the Town susceptible to economic shocks. A sustainable growth trajectory must be multi-faceted. It must leverage culture and heritage for tourism and small business development; ensure the capability to sustain and support the introduction of new industries through anticipatory service upgrades and business programs; and connect development to internal and external funding sources. Most importantly, it must pursue a unified, collaborative strategy for economic growth, to ensure that all efforts are focused and engaged on a common task.

**Demographic Polarization:** As the population ages, demands for services geared to seniors will continue to increase; at the same time, it becomes ever more necessary to engage youth in the community so that they will stay to live and work. Without adequate attention to expanding both the health and education resources in the Town, this disparity could be exacerbated and leave the Town in a vulnerable long-term position. The Town needs to be a live-work community for families and individuals of all socio-economic and demographic backgrounds if it is to maximize its potential.

## 5 Key Themes for Strategy

Based on the demographic and economic profile of the community that emerged from the background and literature, as well as the input received from local stakeholders and community leaders, five major themes emerge that provide the basis for a framework for the development of a Community Strategic Plan for the Town of St. Marys:

### 5.1 Theme One: The Protection of Community and Cultural Assets

The residents of the Town of St. Marys are justifiably proud of their town. The town possesses valuable community and cultural assets that positively impact on the quality of life and sustainability of the town and need to be protected. Core elements of this theme include:

- The residents recognize and value the municipal services and programs currently provided by the Town. The continued delivery and enhancement of relevant services and programs for youth, families and seniors are necessary to ensure a healthy and vibrant community and drive resident and business investment attraction.
- The town's living history as reflected in its architecture and strong ties to the rural community resonates with residents and visitors alike. The protection and repurposing of heritage buildings would contribute to the visual appearance of the town. Together with the town's proximity to the City of Stratford, there is potential to drive attendance for local theatre, arts and cultural events as well as investment in arts and culture programming. Stronger connections with the rural community will continue to drive investment in the creative industries.
- Key social infrastructure such as the hospital, library and high school are essential to future resident attraction. The preservation of these assets is a primary consideration in the social and economic sustainability of the town.

The elements of this theme are carried forward in the goals of ***a caring + collaborative community*** and ***efficient + sustainable infrastructure***.

### 5.2 Theme Two: The Need to Encourage Sustainable Growth

St. Marys is an independent town with a strong and diversified economic base. Traditional industry activities coupled with evidence of emerging industries provide the town with opportunities to ensure a diverse industrial mix and sustainable economic growth. Core elements of this theme include:

- Regional connections to the rural countryside are evidenced in the strength of the agricultural, wholesale and food processing industries. Building on these historical strengths, while responding to unique, emerging market opportunities will provide employment and business investment growth in the community.
- Small business and entrepreneurs play an important role in economic growth in the province and represent a significant opportunity for the town to drive new business growth. Local investment and employment gains can be realized by supporting these local businesses and nurturing entrepreneurial activities by providing needed hard and soft services e.g. telecommunication infrastructure, on-line business support services etc.

- Stratford is widely recognized as a cultural hub in southern Ontario. Improved collaboration with Stratford and area municipalities will enable the town to better capitalize on local and regionally based tourism potential.
- Post secondary education is becoming increasingly important in today's economy. Relationships need to be developed with educational institutions to realize the potential of digital media and information and communications technology, as well as the green economy.

The elements of this theme are carried forward in the goal of **a prosperous local economy**.

### 5.3 Theme Three: the Need to Develop a Stronger Local Retail Market

A vibrant downtown can be the centrepiece of a community's residential, cultural, commercial or recreational growth agenda. Healthy downtowns can function as vibrant tourism destinations, stimulate outside investment and contribute to a broader base of community economic prosperity. A lively downtown also builds community providing a focus for community special events, festivals and celebrations. A successful downtown can also be a significant local employer, attracting additional investment interest and increasing property tax revenue for a community. Core elements of this theme include:

- The downtown core is central to the character of the town. The heritage buildings represent an investment in local infrastructure that dates back more than 150 years. With many of the original structures still intact, the fine stone buildings and unique architecture contribute to a local character that is valued by residents and visitors and unique among downtowns in Ontario.
- Directing retail growth to the core while promoting incremental retail growth outside the core could encourage investment and retail activity in the downtown and assist with maintaining its distinctive character and appearance.
- The downtown area contains unparalleled cultural and historical assets along with beautiful waterways and parks. The protection of heritage elements and streetscapes combined with efforts to enhance the visual identity of the downtown including beautification efforts and historic conservation would encourage visitors and residents to make the downtown their preferred retail destination.

The elements of this theme are carried forward in the goal of **a strong + vibrant downtown**.

### 5.4 Theme Four: The Need to Enhance the Town's Quality of Place

Few small towns in Ontario can match St. Marys' combination of natural beauty and built heritage. Focusing and enhancing the quality of space in the town will further enhance the residential quality of life and visitor experience in the town. Core elements of this theme include:

- The town's green spaces and public walkways contribute to the walkability of the community, connecting residents to their waterfront, the downtown as well as neighbourhoods, public spaces and amenities. Efforts to extend and improve these systems are seen as strengthening the relationship between residents and the town they live in.
- The waterfront creates a natural gathering space and is a key feature in drawing residents and tourists to the central core area. Improved integration of the waterfront with the downtown and the continued beautification of the downtown area create opportunities for enhanced use of the area for festivals and events.

- The Town should ensure that surplus heritage buildings continue to contribute to the character of the town. Repurposing these buildings for uses that support the attraction of visitors and business investment would enliven the area and enrich the St. Marys experience.

The elements of this theme are carried forward in the goals of **a caring + collaborative community** and **efficient + sustainable infrastructure**.

### 5.5 Theme Five: The Need to Enhance the Town's Marketing Message

The Town of St. Marys has a lot to offer potential visitors, residents and business investors. A strong brand and a consistent marketing and promotional message that are focused on a targeted audience will help to raise the profile of the community and support a stronger local economy. Core elements of this theme include:

- The website is the Town's primary portal to the world. Enhanced web content that reflects the range of assets in the community such as tourism, business and industrial development, arts and culture, unique retail shopping together with authentic local stories has the potential to draw people and investment to the community.
- The town is an integral part of the broader region's cultural and creative tourism experience. Regional collaboration in tourism and investment attraction could increase the Town's ability to reach to its target audience.
- St. Marys has the disadvantage of being located off a main highway. Improved signage in and out of town could capture more of the travelling tourist.

The elements of this theme are carried forward in the goal of **a celebrated place**.

## 6 Our St. Marys, Your Future

Time spent in developing a community strategic plan will pay significant dividends to the Town of St. Marys as it will:

1. **Outline the steps to follow.** Strategic planning does not just happen. It requires the community or region to identify a number of intermediate steps to reach its final goals.
2. **Promote efficient use of scarce resources.** A significant amount of money, time, and people will be required to effectively implement a strategic plan and these limited resources must not be wasted. The plan will provide rationale for resource allocation.
3. **Improve coordination and collaboration.** Many programs, activities, groups, and stakeholders will be involved in the implementation effort and it is important that they not overlap or conflict. The plan will serve as a vehicle for communicating community and economic development activities and programming.
4. **Build consensus.** The public and the private sector must agree on the major issues involved. This will lead to support in implementing the plan.
5. **Increase public awareness.** Without public support, the implementation of a strategic plan will be difficult. It is important that the public understand the intent for the plan and how it will affect the community.
6. **Strengthen the community's competitive position.** A community with a strategy will not only be inherently more likely to succeed, it will appear more attractive to potential business or industry than a community without a plan.
7. **Encourage forward-thinking.** A strategy will encourage community leaders to think about the future and to not overlook opportunities for growth and development as they arise.

In preparing the Town of St. Marys Community Strategic Plan, we have built upon the positive initiatives that have been undertaken in the community in recent years, while at the same time responding to the shifting economic conditions and emerging trends in the broader regional and provincial economy that will positively position the community and its residents for future economic opportunity and growth.

The overarching **VISION** reflects the views of the community in terms of where it is headed and what it wants to see the Town achieve in the future.

It must be acknowledged that Town Council is responsible for governing the municipality and for making the decisions that will affect the successful implementation of any strategy. The St. Marys Community Strategic Plan should be seen as a framework for making those decisions.

Once Council has adopted the strategic plan, the Town will begin the process of classifying the actions from the standpoint of short, medium and long term goals. The 2010 budget will also take into account the new strategic plan and will incorporate the short term goals as appropriate. From this perspective, the timing of the strategic plan enables the community to begin its implementation in 2010.

## OUR COLLECTIVE VISION:

*The Town of St. Marys will be a welcome and progressive community that celebrates and preserves its history while working to create a local economy that embraces new ideas and entrepreneurs.*

*Our downtown will be a primary destination for residents and visitors providing a wide range of retail shopping, events and festivals that celebrate the diversity and heritage of community.*

*Our commitment to being a sustainable community will be reflected in the range of employment opportunities, services and amenities that reflect the talent, interests and desires of our residents.*

The **GOALS** and **ACTIONS** that follow build on the issues and opportunities that emerged during the strategic planning process and capture the five major themes that emerged.

### GOALS:

1. **A Collaborative and Caring Community**
2. **A Prosperous Local Economy**
3. **Efficient + Sustainable Infrastructure**
4. **A Strong + Vibrant Downtown**
5. **A Celebrated Community**

### Goal 1: A Collaborative and Caring Community

**Objective: To effectively engage our community and stakeholders in an ongoing discussion of community issues and interests.**

#### **Actions:**

- Prepare an annual community report for presentation and distribution to the community as a way to inform residents and business of the initiatives undertaken by the municipality
- Provide opportunities to engage with local residents, businesses, agencies and other levels of government for an ongoing discussion of community issues
- Effectively leverage technology to improve community connections
- Respond to the changing needs of the community by adapting services and programs to reflect all ages and interests
- Continue to improve pedestrian linkages between the downtown and the Town's neighbourhoods

- Establish a Youth Action Advisory Committee in an effort to engage with and respond to the needs of youth in the community

## **Goal 2: A Prosperous Local Economy**

**Objective: To encourage and support the creation of high value employment opportunities and provide leadership and direction in the creation of a sustainable local economy.**

### **Actions:**

- Acquire sufficient land for development in order to accommodate future residential and employment growth opportunities
- Build positive relationships with the existing business community in order to foster new business and employment opportunities
- Ensure that new and relevant commercial and retail development is encouraged to locate in the downtown
- Develop an agricultural industry partnership with farmers, agricultural stakeholders and government to maximize investment and business opportunities for agri-tourism, agri-business and food based manufacturing
- Encourage linkages between area educational institutions, business and government that strengthen and enhance the capacity of the local workforce
- Foster the development of creative cultural industries that more effectively leverage cultural assets in the development of a local tourism industry
- Develop an events and festivals strategy that promotes existing events and introduces new events that build on the history of St. Marys and the talent of its residents
- Partner with neighbouring communities to enhance economic development and tourism potential

### **Goal 3: Efficient + Sustainable Infrastructure**

**Objective: To provide the necessary and cost effective infrastructure that will ensure a high quality of life experience for St. Marys' residents.**

#### **Actions:**

- Provide water, wastewater and storm water systems in a reliable, efficient and affordable manner to local residents and businesses
- Plan for and promote energy efficient buildings, the use of renewable energy and water conservation by integrating alternate and green energy systems options for the Town's properties
- Identify improvements to the town's recycling efforts while pursuing other effective recycling activities
- Support a superior level of health care by ensuring that St. Marys Memorial Hospital is adequately resourced and provides a diversity of health care providers and services to local residents
- Effectively plan for, protect and enhance the Town's parks, green spaces and trail ways to ensure an attractive community and high quality public realm experience

### **Goal 4: A Strong + Vibrant Downtown**

**Objective: To effectively position the downtown and central commercial district as vibrant social and cultural business centre.**

#### **Actions:**

- Provide an attractive and well functioning streetscape in the downtown that will support the attraction of investment and reinforce the value of the Town's architectural and cultural heritage assets
- Support the designation of St. Marys' town centre as a historic conservation district as a way to ensure that its small town charm and role as a vibrant social and cultural business centre is maintained and enhanced
- Develop a downtown marketing strategy and business plan that will promote tourism, retail and business investment opportunities

- Provide appropriate financial incentives to attract business investment and re-development in the central commercial district
- Identify opportunities, while respecting the surrounding community, to more effectively integrate the Town's waterfront with the central commercial district by encouraging a broader range of events and festivals and improved access to the waterfront areas of the Town
- Establish a committee structure to implement a downtown vision and business plan

### Goal 5: A Celebrated Place

**Objective: To enhance opportunities for the local business growth and the attraction of new investment and entrepreneurs by effectively communicating the strengths and opportunities associated with living and working in St Marys.**

#### **Actions:**

- Initiate the development and implementation of a comprehensive Marketing + Branding Strategy for St. Marys that can be used as a business, workforce and visitor recruitment tool
  - Identify tactics for engaging advanced manufacturing operations, business creative industries, 2<sup>nd</sup> career entrepreneurs and baby-boomers
- Develop attractive gateways to the community and improve directional signage on streets and highways that promote the Town's features and attractions
- Identify opportunities for regional collaboration on economic development initiatives, particularly as it relates to future marketing/promotion activity and entrepreneurial development
- Develop a communications plan for engaging and informing local/regional business and industry, as well as community leaders as to the economic development activities and priorities of the Town

# Appendix I

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## National Occupation Classifications

Skilled Occupations (National Occupational Classification System, 2006)	
<b>Major Group 00 Senior Management Occupations</b>	<b>Major Group 62 Skilled Sales and Service Occupations</b>
001 Legislators and Senior Management	621 Sales and Service Supervisors
<b>Major Group 01-09 Middle and Other Management Occupations</b>	622 Technical Sales Specialists, Wholesale Trade
011 Administrative Services Managers	623 Insurance and Real Estate Sales Occupations and Buyers
012 Managers in Financial and Business Services	624 Chefs and Cooks
013 Managers in Communication (Except Broadcasting)	625 Butchers and Bakers
021 Managers in Engineering, Architecture, Science and Information Systems	626 Police Officers and Firefighters
031 Managers in Health, Education, Social and Community Services	627 Technical Occupations in Personal Service
041 Managers in Public Administration	<b>Major Group 64 Intermediate Sales and Service Occupations</b>
051 Managers in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	641 Sales Representatives, Wholesale Trade
061 Sales, Marketing and Advertising Managers	642 Retail Sales Persons and Sales Clerks
062 Managers in Retail Trade	643 Occupations in Travel and Accommodation
063 Managers in Food Service and Accommodation	644 Tour and Recreational Guides and Casino Occupations
064 Managers in Protective Service	645 Occupations in Food and Beverage Service
065 Managers in Other Services	646 Other Occupations in Protective Service
071 Managers in Construction and Transportation	647 Childcare and Home Support Workers
072 Facility Operation and Maintenance Managers	648 Other Occupations in Personal Service
081 Managers in Primary Production (except agriculture)	<b>Major Group 66 Elemental Sales and Service Occupations</b>
091 Managers in Manufacturing and Utilities	661 Cashiers
<b>Major Group 11 Professional Occupations in Business and Finance</b>	662 Other Sales and Related Occupations
111 Auditors, Accountants and Investment Professionals	664 Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Occupations
112 Human Resources and Business Service Professionals	665 Security Guards and Related Occupations
<b>Major Group 12 Skilled Administrative and Business Occupations</b>	666 Cleaners
121 Clerical Supervisors	667 Other Occupations in Travel, Accommodation, Amusement and Recreation
122 Administrative and Regulatory Occupations	668 Other Elemental Service Occupations
123 Finance and Insurance Administrative Occupations	<b>Major Group 72/73 Trades and Skilled Transport and Equipment Operators</b>
124 Secretaries, Recorders and Transcriptionists	721 Contractors and Supervisors, Trades and Related Workers
<b>Major Group 14 Clerical Occupations</b>	722 Supervisors, Railway and Motor Transportation Occupations
141 Clerical Occupations, General Office Skills	723 Machinists and Related Occupations
142 Office Equipment Operators	724 Electrical Trades and Telecommunication Occupations
143 Finance and Insurance Clerks	725 Plumbers, Pipefitters and Gas Fitters
144 Administrative Support Clerks	726 Metal Forming, Shaping and Erecting Trades
145 Library, Correspondance and Related Information Clerks	727 Carpenters and Cabinetmakers
146 Mail and Message Distribution Occupations	728 Masonry and Plastering Trades
147 Recording, Scheduling and Distributing Occupations	729 Other Construction Trades
<b>Major Group 21 Professional Occupations in Natural and Applied Sciences</b>	731 Machinery and Transportation Equipment Mechanics (Except Motor Vehicle)
211 Physical Science Professionals	732 Automotive Service Technicians
212 Life Science Professionals	733 Other Mechanics
213 Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Chemical Engineers	734 Upholsters, Tailors, Shoe Repairers, Jewellers and Related Occupations
214 Other Engineers	735 Stationary Engineers and Power Station and System Operators
215 Architects, Urban Planners and Land Surveyors	736 Train Crew Operating Occupations
217 Computer and Information Systems Professionals	737 Crane Operators, Drillers and Blasters
<b>Major Group 22 Technical Occupations Related to Natural and Applied Sciences</b>	738 Printing Press Operators, Commercial Divers and Other Trades and Related Occupations, n.e.c.
221 Technical Occupations in Physical Sciences	<b>Major Group 74 Intermediate Occupations in Transport, Equipment Operation, Installation and Maintenance</b>
222 Technical Occupations in Life Sciences	741 Motor Vehicle and Transit Drivers
223 Technical Occupations in Civil, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering	742 Heavy Equipment Operators
224 Technical Occupations in Electronics and Electrical Engineering	743 Other Transport Equipment Operators and Related Workers
225 Technical Occupations in Architecture, Drafting, Surveying and Mapping	744 Other Installers, Repairers and Servicers
226 Other Technical Inspectors and Regulatory Officers	745 Longshore Workers and Material Handlers
227 Transportation Officers and Controllers	<b>Major Group 76 Trades Helpers, Construction Labourers and Related Occupations</b>
228 Technical Occupations in Computer and Information Systems	761 Trades Helpers and Labourers
<b>Major Group 31 Professional Occupations in Health</b>	762 Public Works and Other Labourers, n.e.c.
311 Physicians, Dentists and Veterinarians	<b>Major Group 82 Skilled Occupations in Primary Industry</b>
312 Optometrists, Chiropractors and Other Health Diagnosing and Treating Professionals	821 Supervisors, Logging and Forestry
313 Pharmacists, Dietitians and Nutritionists	822 Supervisors, Mining, Oil and Gas
314 Therapy and Assessment Professionals	823 Underground Miners, Oil and Gas Drillers and Related Workers
315 Nurse Supervisors and Registered Nurses	824 Logging Machinery Operators
<b>Major Group 32 Technical and Skilled Occupations in Health</b>	825 Contractors, Operators and Supervisors in Agriculture, Horticulture and Aquaculture
321 Medical Technologists and Technicians (Except Dental Health)	826 Fishing Vessel Masters and Skippers and Fishermen/women
322 Technical Occupations in Dental Health Care	<b>Major Group 84 Intermediate Occupations in Primary Industry</b>
323 Other Technical Occupations in Health Care (Except Dental)	841 Mine Service Workers and Operators in Oil and Gas Drilling
<b>Major Group 34 Assisting Occupations in Support of Health Services</b>	842 Logging and Forestry Workers
341 Assisting Occupations in Support of Health Services	843 Agriculture and Horticulture Workers
<b>Major Group 41 Professional Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Services</b>	844 Other Fishing and Trapping Occupations
411 Judges, Lawyers and Quebec Notaries	<b>Major Group 86 Labourers in Primary Industry</b>
412 University Professors and Assistants	861 Primary Production Labourers
413 College and Other Vocational Instructors	<b>Major Group 92 Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities Supervisors and Skilled Operators</b>
414 Secondary and Elementary School Teachers and Educational Counsellors	921 Supervisors, Processing Occupations
415 Psychologists, Social Workers, Counsellors, Clergy and Probation Officers	922 Supervisors, Assembly and Fabrication
416 Policy and Program Officers, Researchers and Consultants	923 Central Control and Process Operators in Manufacturing and Processing
<b>Major Group 42 Paraprofessional Occupations in Law, Social Services, Education and Religion</b>	<b>Major Group 94/95 Processing and Manufacturing Machine Operators and Assemblers</b>
421 Paralegals, Social Services Workers and Occupations in Education and Religion, n.e.c.	941 Machine Operators and Related Workers in Metal and Mineral Products Processing
<b>Major Group 51 Professional Occupations in Art and Culture</b>	942 Machine Operators and Related Workers in Chemical, Plastic and Rubber Processing
511 Librarians, Archivists, Conservators and Curators	943 Machine Operators and Related Workers in Pulp and Paper Production and Wood Processing
512 Writing, Translating and Public Relations Professionals	944 Machine Operators and Related Workers in Textile Processing
513 Creative and Performing Artists	945 Machine Operators and Related Workers in Fabric, Fur and Leather Products Manufacturing
<b>Major Group 52 Technical and Skilled Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport</b>	946 Machine Operators and Related Workers in Food, Beverage and Tobacco Processing
521 Technical Occupations in Libraries, Archives, Museums and Art Galleries	947 Printing Machine Operators and Related Occupations
522 Photographers, Graphic Arts Technicians and Technical and Co-ordinating Occupations in Motion Pictures, Broadcasting and the Performing Arts	948 Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics Assemblers
523 Announcers and Other Performers	949 Other Assembly and Related Occupations
524 Creative Designers and Craftspersons	951 Machining, Metalworking, Woodworking and Related Machine Operators
525 Athletes, Coaches, Referees and Related Occupations	<b>Major Group 96 Labourers in Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities</b>
	961 Labourers in Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities

# Appendix II

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## Creative Occupations Defined

Creative Occupations	Type
<p><b>A0 Senior management occupations</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with establishing government policy and carrying out the functions of management through middle managers, in all levels of government and in industrial, commercial, or institutional organizations. Managing functions include: planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing, controlling, staffing, and formulating, implementing or enforcing policy. Supervising is not considered to be a management function.</p>	CC
<p><b>A1 Specialist managers</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with carrying out the functions of management in a specialized field such as finance, personnel, purchasing, sales, production, engineering or facility management within an industrial, commercial, professional or institutional organization in the private or government sectors. Managing functions include: planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing, controlling, staffing, and formulating, implementing or enforcing policy. Supervising is not considered to be a management function.</p>	CC
<p><b>A2 Managers in retail trade, food and accommodation services</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with carrying out the functions of management in restaurants and accomodation service businesses, such as hotels and resorts, and in retail stores. Managing functions include: planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing, controlling, staffing, and formulating, implementing or enforcing policy. Supervising is not considered to be a management function.</p>	CC
<p><b>A3 Other managers, n.e.c.</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with carrying out the functions of management not elsewhere classified. Managing functions include: planning, organizing, co-ordinating, directing, controlling, staffing, and formulating, implementing, or enforcing policy. Supervising is not considered to be a management function.</p>	CC
<p><b>B0 Professional occupations in business and finance</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with examining and analyzing accounting records; researching and analyzing financial performances of companies; selling stocks and bonds; providing professional services in human resources related to recruitment, labour relations and training; the analyses of management methods; and the advertising needs of companies.</p>	CC
<p><b>B1 Finance and insurance administration occupations</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with performing clerical and administrative tasks related to insurance and financial operations.</p>	CC
<p><b>C0 Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with conducting experimental and theoretical research into physical and life sciences, applying scientific knowledge in engineering and architectural projects, and designing systems which make use of electronic data processing equipment in industrial and commercial situations.</p>	CC
<p><b>C1 Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences</b> Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with providing technical support to professionals in science and engineering.</p>	CC

D0 Professional occupations in health	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with diagnosing and treating health problems in humans and animals and with providing related services such as pharmacy, nutrition, speech therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Occupations concerned with professional nursing care are classified in Major Group D1 - Nurse Supervisors and Registered Nurses.	
D1 Nurse supervisors and registered nurses	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with providing direct nursing care.	
D2 Technical and related occupations in health	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with providing technical support to professionals in medicine and health. Technologists and technicians that are supervisors are included in this major group	
E0 Judges, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, ministers of religion, and policy and program officers	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with the functioning of human society as it relates to law, psychology, social work, religion and economics.	
E1 Teachers and professors	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with teaching.	
F0 Professional occupations in art and culture	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with writing and editing; developing communications programs for organizations; providing translation services; producing programs in performing arts; singing, playing musical instruments, dancing or acting; producing original art by painting, drawing or sculpting; and setting up repositories for books, historical documents and artifacts.	
F1 Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	CC
Occupations in this major group are primarily concerned with entertaining; graphic art; designing interiors, clothing, theatrical sets; making patterns for textile products; producing handicrafts; operating cameras; laying out artwork; operating broadcasting equipment; operating audio recording equipment; providing support in the performing arts; participating in or officiating at sporting events; coaching athletes; and instructing in athletic or recreational programs.	

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University of Toronto, Millier Dickinson Blais Inc 2006

CC:Creative Class SC: Service Class WC: Working Class AC: Agriculture Class

# Appendix III

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## North American Industrial Classification (NAIC) System

## North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS)

### Sector Definitions

#### ***Agriculture, Forestry (NAICS 11)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in growing crops, raising animals, harvesting timber, harvesting fish and other animals from their natural habitats and providing related support activities.

Establishments primarily engaged in agricultural research or that supply veterinary services are not included in this sector.

#### ***Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction (NAICS 21)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in extracting naturally occurring minerals. These can be solids, such as coal and ores; liquids, such as crude petroleum; and gases, such as natural gas.

The term *mining* is used in the broad sense to include quarrying, well operations, milling (for example, crushing, screening, washing, or flotation) and other preparation customarily done at the mine site, or as a part of mining activity.

Establishments engaged in exploration for minerals, development of mineral properties and mining operations are included in this sector. Establishments performing similar activities, on a contract or fee basis, are also included.

#### ***Construction (NAICS 23)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in constructing, repairing and renovating buildings and engineering works, and in subdividing and developing land. These establishments may operate on their own account or under contract to other establishments or property owners.

#### ***Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of materials or substances into new products. These products may be finished, in the sense that they are ready to be used or consumed, or semi-finished, in the sense of becoming a raw material for an establishment to use in further manufacturing.

Related activities, such as the assembly of the component parts of manufactured goods; the blending of materials; and the finishing of manufactured products by dyeing, heat-treating, plating and similar operations are also treated as manufacturing activities.

Manufacturing establishments are known by a variety of trade designations, such as plants, factories or mills. Manufacturing establishments may own the materials which they transform or they may transform materials owned by other establishments. Manufacturing may take place in factories or in workers' homes, using either machinery or hand tools.

### ***Wholesale Trade (NAICS 41)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in wholesaling merchandise and providing related logistics, marketing and support services. The wholesaling process is generally an intermediate step in the distribution of merchandise; many wholesalers are therefore organized to sell merchandise in large quantities to retailers, and business and institutional clients. However, some wholesalers, in particular those that supply non-consumer capital goods, sell merchandise in single units to final users.

This sector recognizes two main types of wholesalers, that is, wholesale merchants and wholesale agents and brokers.

### ***Retail Trade (NAICS 44-45)***

The retail trade sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise.

The retailing process is the final step in the distribution of merchandise; retailers are therefore organized to sell merchandise in small quantities to the general public. This sector comprises two main types of retailers, that is, store and non-store retailers.

### ***Information and Cultural Industries (NAICS 51)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in creating and disseminating (except by wholesale and retail methods) information and cultural products, such as written works, musical works or recorded performances, recorded dramatic performances, software and information databases, or providing the means to disseminate them. Establishments that provide access to equipment and expertise to process information are also included.

The main components of this sector are the publishing industries (except exclusively on Internet), including software publishing, the motion picture and sound recording industries, the broadcasting industries (except exclusively on Internet), the internet publishing and broadcasting industries, the telecommunications industries, the internet service providers, web search portals, data processing industries, and the other information services industries.

### ***Finance and Insurance (NAICS 52)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in financial transactions (that is, transactions involving the creation, liquidation, or change in ownership of financial assets) or in facilitating financial transactions. Included are:

- Establishments that are primarily engaged in financial intermediation. They raise funds by taking deposits and/or issuing securities, and, in the process, incur liabilities, which they use to acquire financial assets by making loans and/or purchasing securities. Putting themselves at risk, they channel funds from lenders to borrowers and transform or repackage the funds with respect to maturity, scale and risk.
- Establishments that are primarily engaged in the pooling of risk by underwriting annuities and insurance. They collect fees (insurance premiums or annuity considerations), build up reserves, invest those reserves and make contractual payments. Fees are based on the expected incidence of the insured risk and the expected return on investment.
- Establishments that are primarily engaged in providing specialized services that facilitate or support financial intermediation, insurance and employee benefit programs.

In addition, establishments charged with monetary control - the monetary authorities - are included in this sector.

### ***Real Estate and Rental Leasing (NAICS 53)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in renting, leasing or otherwise allowing the use of tangible or intangible assets.

Establishments primarily engaged in managing real estate for others; selling, renting and/or buying of real estate for others; and appraising real estate, are also included

### ***Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (NAICS 54)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in activities in which human capital is the major input. These establishments make available the knowledge and skills of their employees, often on an assignment basis.

The main components of this sector are:

- legal services industries;
- accounting and related services industries;
- architectural, engineering and related services industries;
- surveying and mapping services industries;
- design services industries;
- management, scientific and technical consulting services industries;

- scientific research and development services industries;
- advertising services industries.

The distinguishing feature of this sector is the fact that most of the industries grouped in it have production processes that are almost wholly dependent on worker skills. In most of these industries, equipment and materials are not of major importance. Thus, the establishments classified in this sector sell expertise.

### ***Management of Companies and Enterprises (NAICS 55)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in managing companies and enterprises and/or holding the securities or financial assets of companies and enterprises, for the purpose of owning a controlling interest in them and/or influencing their management decisions.

They may undertake the function of management, or they may entrust the function of financial management to portfolio managers

### ***Educational Services (NAICS 61)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing instruction and training in a wide variety of subjects. This instruction and training is provided by specialized establishments, such as schools, colleges, universities and training centres.

These establishments may be privately owned and operated, either for profit or not, or they may be publicly owned and operated. They may also offer food and accommodation services to their students.

### ***Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing health care by diagnosis and treatment, providing residential care for medical and social reasons, and providing social assistance, such as counselling, welfare, child protection, community housing and food services, vocational rehabilitation and child care, to those requiring such assistance.

### ***Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (NAICS 71)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in operating facilities or providing services to meet the cultural, entertainment and recreational interests of their patrons. These establishments produce, promote or participate in live performances, events or exhibits intended for public viewing; provide the artistic, creative and technical skills necessary for the production of artistic products and live performances; preserve and exhibit objects and sites of historical, cultural or educational interest; and

operate facilities or provide services that enable patrons to participate in sports or recreational activities of pursue amusement, hobbies and leisure-time interests.

### ***Accommodation and Food Services (NAICS 72)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing short-term lodging and complementary services to travellers, vacationers and others, in facilities such as hotels, motor hotels, resorts, motels, casino hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation, housekeeping cottages and cabins, recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds, hunting and fishing camps, and various types of recreational and adventure camps.

This sector also comprises establishments primarily engaged in preparing meals, snacks and beverages, to customer order, for immediate consumption on and off the premises

### ***Public Administration (NAICS 91)***

This sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in activities of a governmental nature, that is, the enactment and judicial interpretation of laws and their pursuant regulations, and the administration of programs based on them.

Legislative activities, taxation, national defence, public order and safety, immigration services, foreign affairs and international assistance, and the administration of government programs are activities that are purely governmental in nature.

# Appendix IV

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## Creative Industries Defined

## Eastern Ontario Creative Economy Industry Categories and NAICS Codes

NAICS Codes	INDUSTRY CATEGORIES
<b>ADVERTISING</b>	
541810	Advertising Agencies
541830	Media Buying Agencies
541840	Media Representatives
541850	Display Advertising
541860	Direct Mail Advertising
541899	All Other Services Related to Advertising
<b>ARCHITECTURE</b>	
541310	Architectural Services
541320	Landscape Architectural Services
<b>ARTISTS</b>	
453920	Art Dealers
711511	Independent Artists, Visual Arts
711512	Independent Actors, Comedians and Performers
711513	Independent Writers and Authors
<b>BUSINESS CONSULTING</b>	
541611	Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
541612	Human Resources Consulting Services
541619	Other Management Consulting Services
<b>DESIGN</b>	
541410	Interior Design Services
541420	Industrial Design Services
541430	Graphic Design Services
541490	Other Specialized Design Services
<b>EDUCATION</b>	
611210	Community Colleges and C.E.G.E.P.s
611310	Universities
611410	Business and Secretarial Schools
611420	Computer Training
611430	Professional and Management Development Training
611610	Fine Arts Schools
<b>ENGINEERING</b>	
541330	Engineering Services
541620	Environmental Consulting Services
541690	Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services
541710	Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering and Life Sciences
541720	Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities
<b>FILM</b>	
512110	Motion Picture and Video Production
512120	Motion Picture and Video Distribution
512130	Motion Picture and Video Exhibition
512190	Post-Production and Other Motion Picture and Video Industries
<b>GAMES</b>	
334610	Manufacturing and Reproducing Magnetic and Optical Media
339930	Doll, Toy and Game Manufacturing
414460	Toy and Hobby Goods Wholesaler-Distributors

## Eastern Ontario Creative Economy Industry Categories and NAICS Codes

NAICS Codes	INDUSTRY CATEGORIES
	<b>HERITAGE</b>
712120	Historic and Heritage Sites
712130	Zoos and Botanical Gardens
712190	Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions
	<b>MARKETING</b>
541910	Marketing Research and Public Opinion Polling
	<b>MUSEUMS</b>
712111	Non-Commercial Art Museums and Galleries
712115	History and Science Museums
712119	Other Museums
813210	Grant-Making and Giving Services
	<b>MUSIC</b>
512230	Music Publishers
512240	Sound Recording Studios
512290	Other Sound Recording Industries
	<b>PERFORMING ARTS</b>
711111	Theatre (except Musical) Companies
711112	Musical Theatre and Opera Companies
711120	Dance Companies
711130	Musical Groups and Artists
711190	Other Performing Arts Companies
711311	Live Theatres and Other Performing Arts Presenters with Facilities
711319	Sports Stadiums and Other Presenters with Facilities
711321	Performing Arts Promoters (Presenters) without Facilities
711322	Festivals without Facilities
711329	Sports Presenters and Other Presenters without Facilities
711410	Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers and Other Public Figures
	<b>PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES</b>
541920	Photographic Services
	<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS</b>
541820	Public Relations Services
	<b>PUBLISHING</b>
511110	Newspaper Publishers
511120	Periodical Publishers
511130	Book Publishers
511140	Directory and Mailing List Publishers
511190	Other Publishers
519110	News Syndicates
	<b>RADIO &amp; TELEVISION</b>
515110	Radio Broadcasting
515120	Television Broadcasting
515210	Pay and Specialty Television
	<b>WEB &amp; SOFTWARE</b>
511210	Software Publishers
517210	Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)
518210	Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services
519130	Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals
519190	All Other Information Services
541510	Computer Systems Design and Related Services

Source: University of Toronto, Millier Dickinson Blais Inc., 2009

# Appendix V

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## Stakeholder Interview List

**The following individuals participated in the stakeholder consultation phase of the strategy**

Councillor Bill Mustard

Steve Cousins

Councillor Bill Osborne

Sue Hyatt

Mayor Jamie Hahn

Mimi Price

Councillor Gary Boyce

Candace O’Hearn

Councillor Don Van Galen

Mary Smith

Councillor Bruce Symons

Al Strathdee

Councillor Marg Luna

Leonard Hawkins

Robert Taylor

Julie Docker

Robert Staffen

Gord Strathdee

Elisabeth Martin

Gary Austin

Austin MacMurdo

Reid Dundas

Stephen McCotter

John Stevens

David Baxter

Marg McLean

Laura Payton

Andrew Williams

Scott MacKay

Chris Campbell

Tom Valcke

Ron MacKay

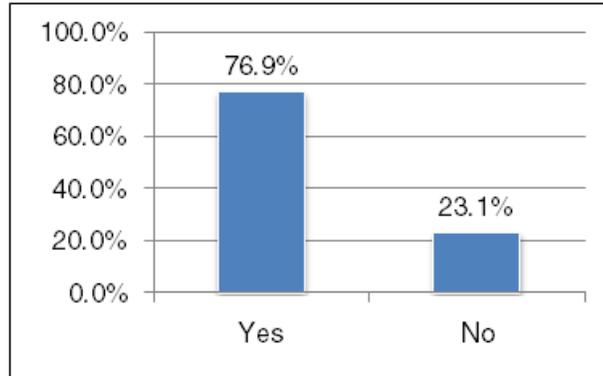
# Appendix VI

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## Community Survey Summary

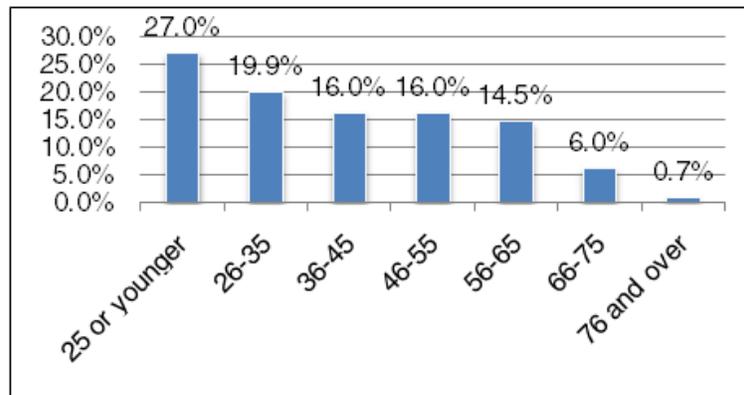
## St. Marys Survey Results

### 1. Are you a resident of St. Marys?

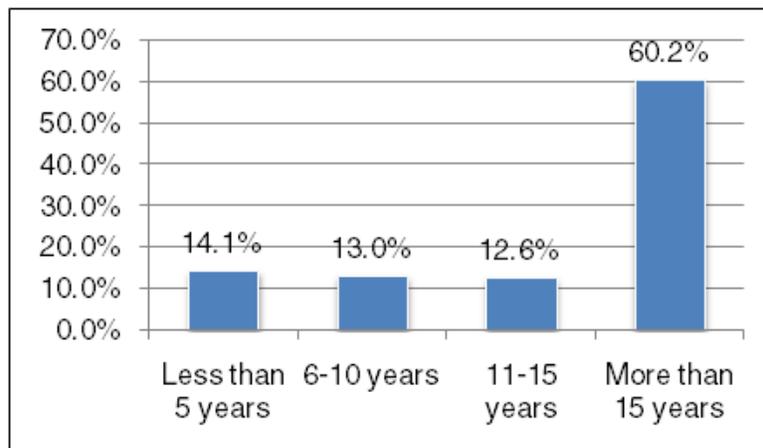


(see Question 3)

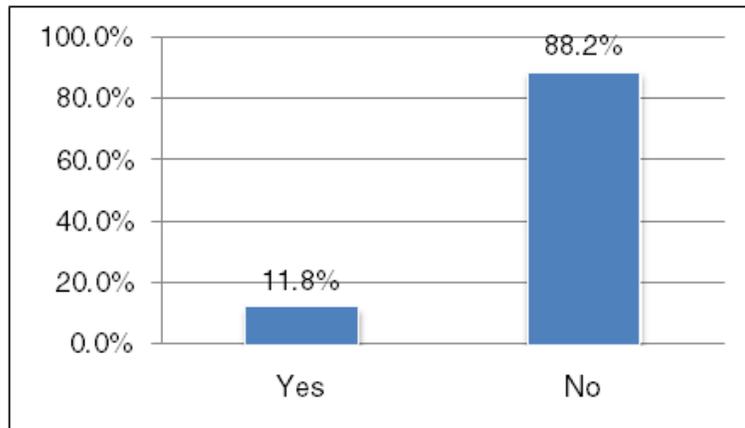
### 2. How old are you?



### 3. How long have you lived in the community?

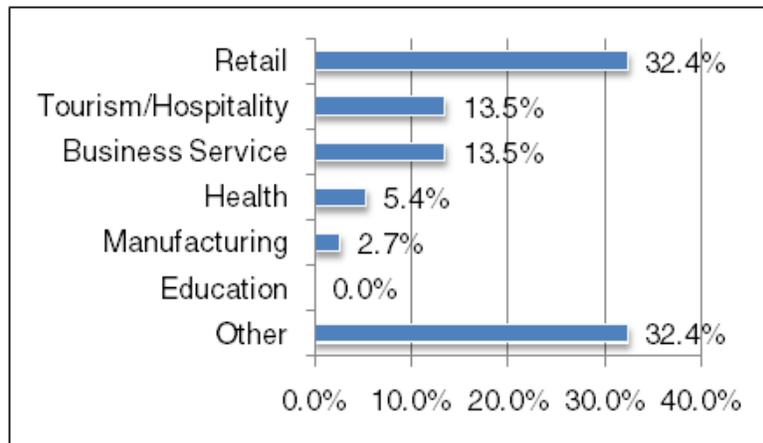


**4. Are you responding as a business owner?**



(see Question 5)

**5. If you are responding as a business owner, what type of business?**



**6. Why did you move to St. Marys?**

**Family/Work:** following a family member/spouse's work or business opportunity; many were born and never left, or are retired

**Amenities/Quality of Life:** small town feeling; visual appeal with heritage stonework architecture, river; walkable community; hospital, schools and recreational facilities

**Cost:** Lower cost of living than surrounding communities (London/Stratford), especially housing prices

## 7. What words would you use to describe St. Marys?

### POSITIVE:

**Quality of Life and Aesthetics:** small town, community; pretty, beautiful, scenic, stone buildings, picturesque, artistic; historical, quaint; comfortable, safe, quiet, humble, peaceful, homey; welcoming, relaxing, convenient, vital, lively

**Services and Amenities:** outstanding recreation/sports; services; hospital; accessibility; nice homes

### NEGATIVE:

Bad management, lack of planning; insular, conservative, haughty, backwards, 'old boys club', spoiled; expensive; empty/deteriorating downtown, limited prospects

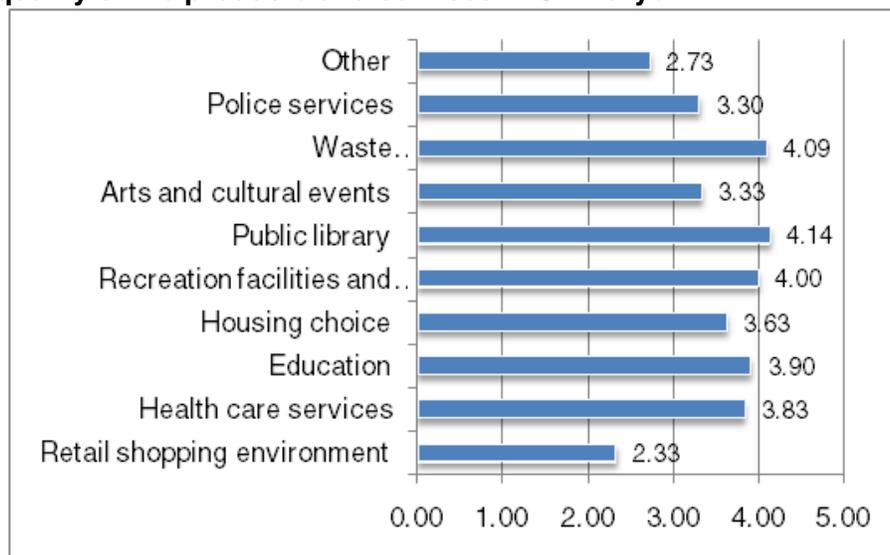
## 8. What are the best things about being a resident?

**Amenities and Services:** Recreation facilities, parks, walking trails, specialty shops, museum, Baseball Hall of Fame, schools, service clubs, library, churches, health care facilities/hospital, good seniors programs, beer tent weekend, music and theatre, scenery, heritage preservation

**Other Quality of Life:** Small town values, knowing the neighbours, friendly, community spirit and pride, quiet and relaxing, safety, clean, little traffic

**Location:** Access to larger centres (Stratford/London/Toronto); close to work; separated town status within county

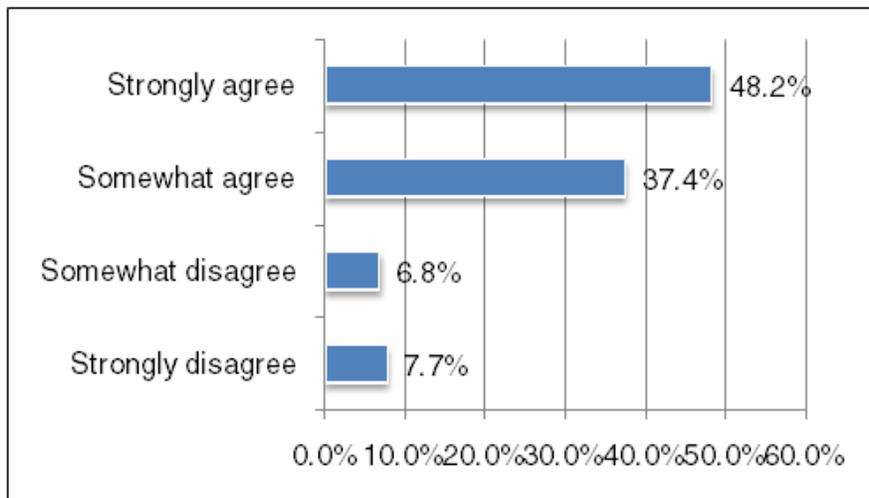
## 9. Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is 'not at all satisfied' and 5 is 'very satisfied'; please rate the quality of the products and services in St. Marys.



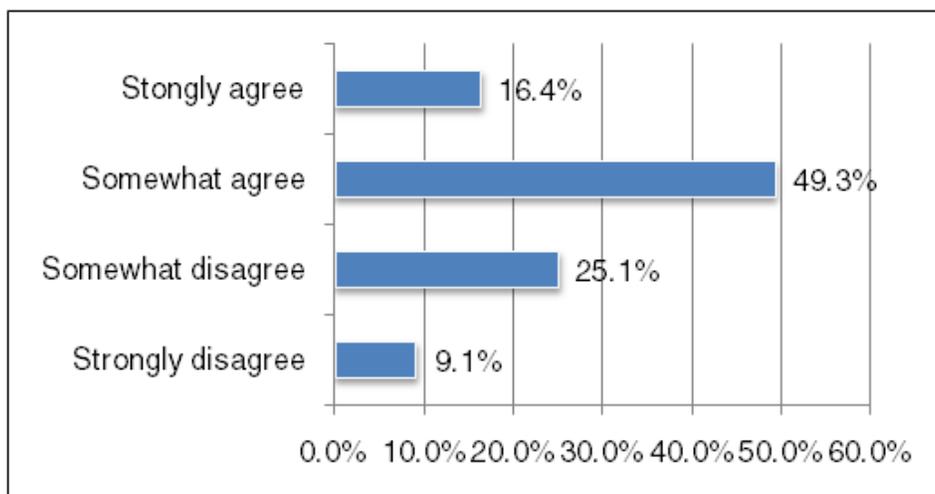
**10. If you are not a resident, what services do you access?**

Pyramid Recreation Centre, sports clubs, golfing, swimming, shopping (groceries/farmer’s market, retail, personal services), school/work, service centres (library, museum, banks), kids’ programs, festivals, church, friendship centre, train station, YMCA

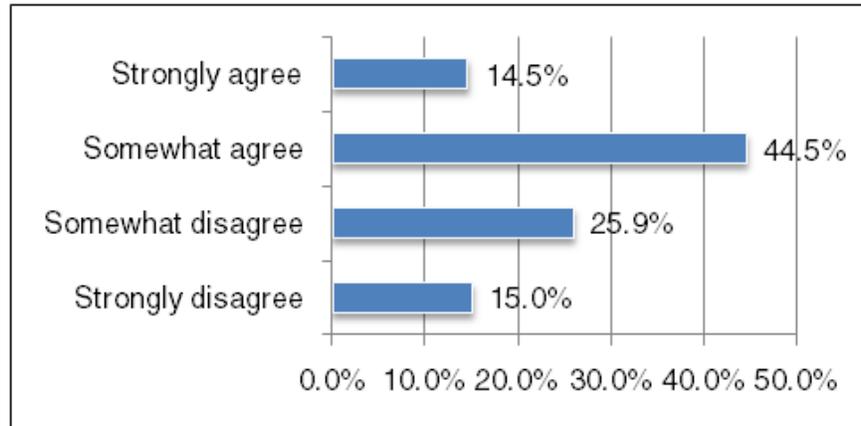
**11. Please indicate to what level you agree or disagree with the following statement: St. Marys needs to actively pursue industrial/commercial growth.**



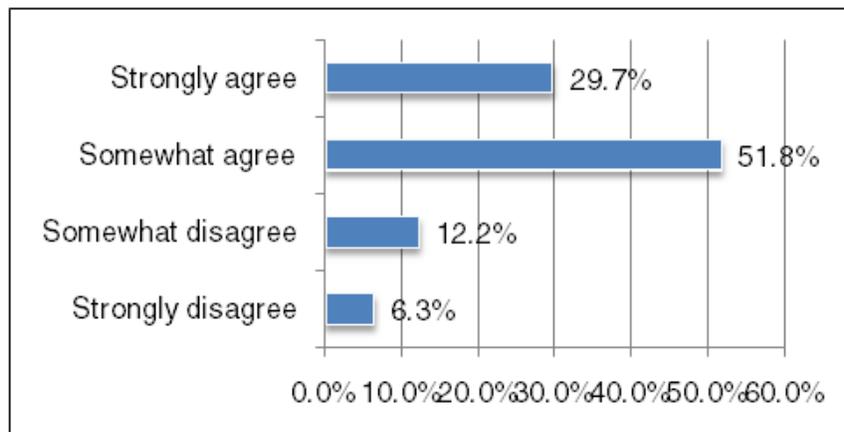
**12. Please indicate to what level you agree or disagree with this statement: St. Marys is a good location for a business to succeed.**



**13. Please indicate to what level you agree or disagree with the following statement: St. Marys needs to actively pursue residential growth.**



**14. Please indicate to what level you agree or disagree with the following statement: My community is welcoming to newcomers.**



**15. What words would you use to describe your vision for St. Marys 10 years from now?**

**Amenities and Services:** Expanded/vibrant downtown; increased recreational services and activity in sporting events; more choice and quality in education; more well-known attractions – becoming a tourist destination (‘Cooperstown North’/Hall of Fame); a truck bypass; maintain and expand the hospital; create designated bike lanes/paths, improve walking paths and trails, and expand park areas; maintain and preserve heritage buildings; more choice and volume of housing; greater arts/culture support; good seniors programs; improved infrastructure

**Quality of Life:** Back to basics – sustainable, slow growth; small and stable population; clean, vibrant and prosperous; welcoming, friendly, with an active community spirit; safe and inclusive

**Business/Demographic Position:** Increased commerce, industry and retail; more proactive and technological; a regional leader; achieve greater integration across age groups and retain youth; become more fiscally strong and self-sufficient

## 16. Where are the best opportunities for growth in St. Marys?

**Industry:** Industrial growth; local food production/food industry; IT and tech (leveraging developments in Stratford); green industry/environment; agriculture; professional home-based businesses and telecommuting; tourism (agri-tourism, festivals, heritage, rail, dining, Baseball Hall of Fame, recreation events); arts and culture sector; shopping, retail and downtown revitalization

**Services:** Daycare; education; maintaining health facilities/hospitals; improved infrastructure; facilities for growth in retirement/senior population; growth in residential development (all housing stock types)

**Other:** Greater regional co-operation; more space/land to grow, maintaining the aesthetic qualities of the town

## 17. What are the top 3 priorities for the town?

**Services:** Daycare; assisting seniors (housing, care); infrastructure (water, sewers, roads); performing arts centre; affordable housing; health care facilities; better policing (controlling drug problems); clean waterways, green attractions/space, library programming, keeping and improving hospital and essential services, multigenerational services

**Business and Development:** Financial management - reduce debt and control taxes; improve the downtown re: retail and shopping; economic diversification, independence and stability; attract industry to vacant buildings; support small/local businesses; tourism (Baseball Hall of Fame, outdoor stage, festivals and events); supporting agriculture; smaller, more responsible development and growth; increase employment

**Community Development:** Healthy, active involved community; courteous town staff; attracting younger families; intergenerational communication; maintain recreation; maintain downtown authenticity; celebrate community and increase loyalty; leadership; collaboration with area municipalities; keeping kids/residents active; controlling cost of living; compost/food program, and local food security

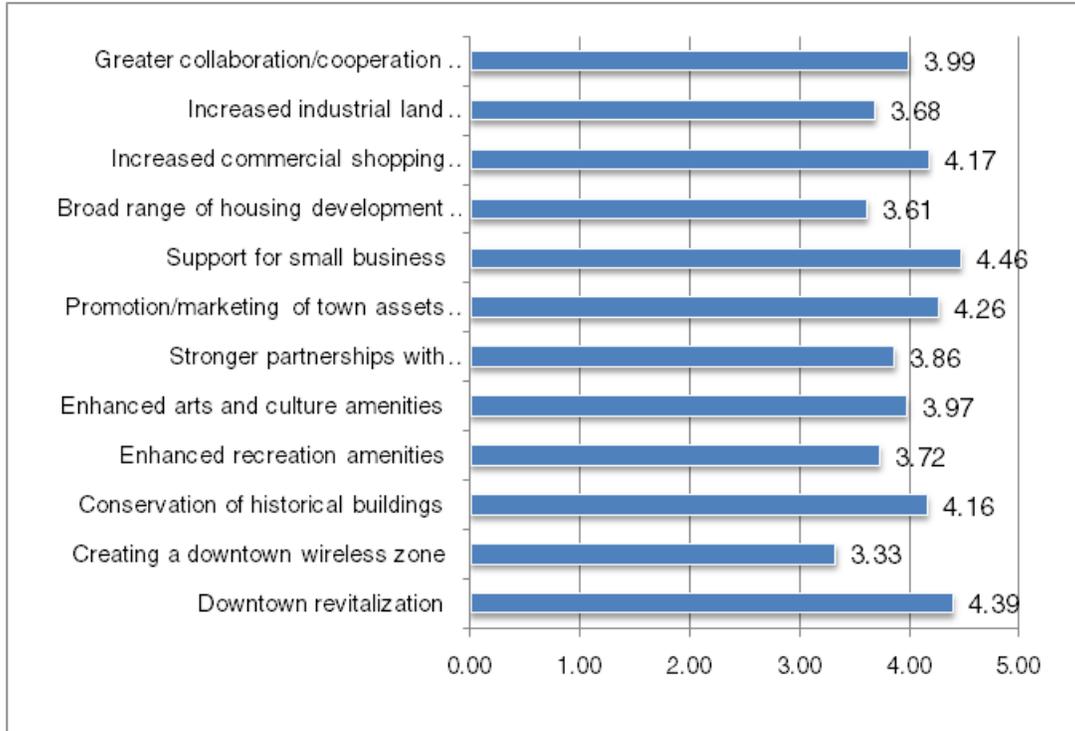
## 18. How can St. Marys be more sustainable?

**Economic:** Ensure fees cover service, to save for the future; bring services and staff in line with population/demand; maintain variety of local businesses; support employment opportunities, through BIA; pay off debts and have financial resources assessed by independent auditor; support a buy local strategy re: food, retail, etc.; keep retail open longer in evenings; increase grant awareness and access for businesses; don't over-regulate; increase business promotion; focus on year-round tourism; focus on making the local economy self-reliant and supportive; improve the website

**Environmental:** Balance human and natural environments; make sound environmental decisions; promote parks and gardens and reduce the environmental footprint; clean waterways and infrastructure; increase recycling

**Social/Quality of Life:** Focus on improvement over growth; revitalize downtown; focus on being a pedestrian community; communicate with residents; support all ages of the population; focus on education; encourage co-ops; nurture existing assets (businesses, attractions, etc.); access local knowledge where possible; focus on development for town as a whole

19. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'not important at all' and 5 being 'very important' please rank the following factors to the future growth of St. Marys.



# Appendix VII

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**Extraction from St. Marys 2009 Community Development Service Plan**

## **INTRODUCTION**

On behalf of Town Council, the Community Development Department will manage 5-program streams dedicated to achieving the department's mission. The strategic mission and guiding principles of the department form the foundation of this package. In the future it is our hope to align this Service Plan with St. Marys' Strategic Plan and Council's Strategic Priorities. Management shall be accountable and measured for the successful outcomes associated with each statement and this package in totality. Since the concept of "Service Plans" is new to St. Marys, this document will serve as our professional commitment for the timeframe of 2009-2010. Future Service Plans will be developed as 4 year plans that will be reviewed annually as part of the Budgeting/Service Plan process.

### **1.0 DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW**

#### **From Tourism to Community Development**

In the past, business development initiatives, from a budget perspective, have focused primarily on Tourism with some attention being paid to "Downtown Revitalization" and "Economic Development Commission" programs. One does not have to look far back in time to see how communities with non-diversified economies are being impacted by global economic trends, globalization, out-sourcing and off-shoring. In fact, St. Marys' is going through such a challenge right now.

Growing St. Mary's business community is an important part of building a sustainable and complete community. Although important, Tourism is not St. Marys' strongest economic sector. From a labour force perspective, there are a number of employment sectors within St. Marys' that provide significantly more return to the local economy. There are also other sectors that should be enhanced to ensure that St. Marys has a place in the economy of tomorrow.

During the fall of 2008 there was a considerable amount of discussion on the future direction of economic development initiatives for the Town of St. Marys. The "Growing the Core" discussions and the meeting of the Industrial EDC and Retail EDC highlighted a need to co-ordinate all economic development initiatives to benefit the entire community.

In order to position St. Marys as a key investment location and facilitate a sustainable economy, the Tourism Department will be re-tasked to focus on a broader "Community Development" portfolio. The Manager of Tourism will become the Manager of Community Development. The recently vacated position of "Tourism Coordinator" will be replaced with a "Community Development Officer". The department will have a wider mandate to position the Town to be more responsive to economic change – recover from the current downturn more

quickly and communicate opportunities and initiatives more effectively. This integrated approach to community development will involve other departments wherever possible to ensure Town resources focus on growing future opportunities.

### **St. Marys' Role as an Economic Generator**

The Town of St. Marys is a significant regional economic generator. According to Statistics Canada, in 2006, companies in St. Marys attracted 4,450 workers to the community every day. This is very interesting considering the fact that St. Marys' own labour force is 3,460 (people that live in St. Marys). St. Marys' role as an economic generator was impacted by the recent closure of Dana Industries Canada and staff reductions at several other facilities; St. Marys business and industrial profile must evolve to attract new types of businesses to the community.

### **Five Program Streams**

This Service Plan has identified that the Community Development Department will manage five program streams. These streams are as follows:

1. Investment Attraction
2. Investment Retention and Growth
3. Entrepreneurship
4. Tourism and Event Management
5. Communications and Marketing

These program streams will be defined in the "Performance Objectives" portion of the plan.

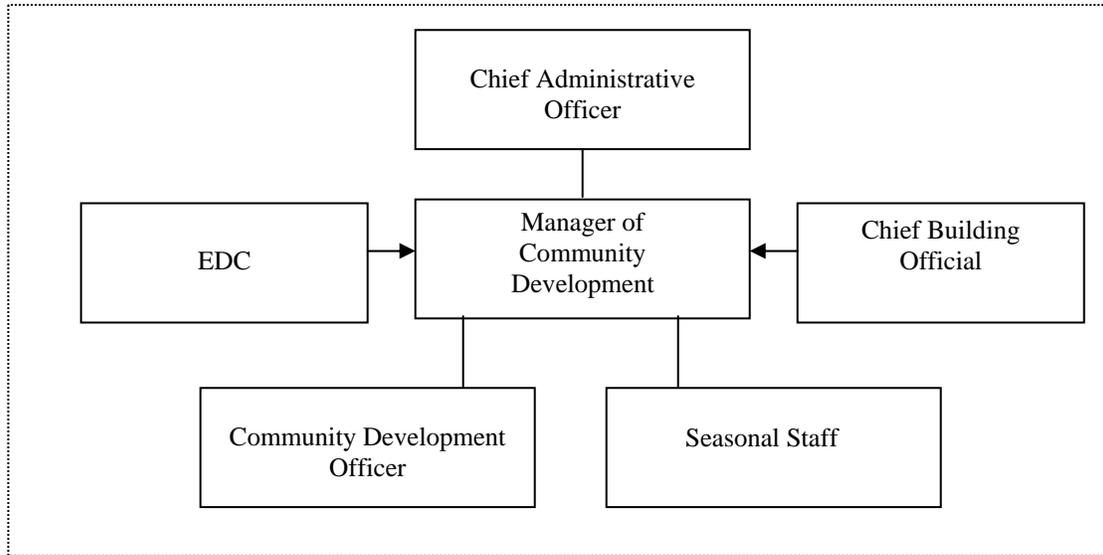
### **Financial Resources**

The Community Development Department will manage an operating budget of approximately \$221,085 (2009). The distribution target of the budget is approximately 50% labour and 50% program. This strategy provides for a healthy ratio allowing the department to be successful in achieving the Mission outlined in this Service Plan.

## Organizational Structure

The new Community Development Department is a free-standing department reporting to the Chief Administrative Officer. A Manager of Community Development manages the department. Figure 1 outlines the structure of the Department.

Figure 1: Organizational Structure

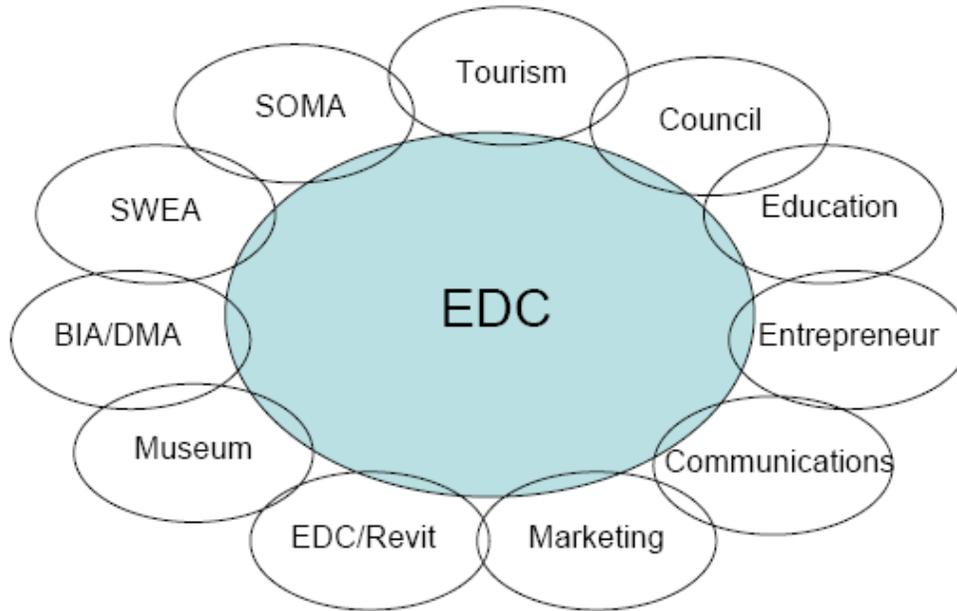


The Manager of Building, Planning, Economic Development and Facilities will be a strategic partner to the Community Development Department. These two departments will, along with other departments, work together on attracting new business and supporting existing businesses in St. Marys.

## Role of Public Participation/Consultation

Public participation has always been a crucial component of St. Marys' business strategy. As part of this re-organization, the existing Industrial and Retail Economic Development Committees (EDC's) will merge to become the new St. Marys' Economic Development Committee. Bringing these two groups together will increase interconnectivity and provide greater input to the Town and reduce any duplication. This restructured group will also be important in the process of developing St. Marys' Community Based Strategic Plan. The first duty of this new EDC is to develop a Terms of Reference for the new St. Marys Economic Development Committee. This group will continue to provide strategic advice on the Service Plan. This group will also work in sub-groups to support the initiatives of the Community Development Department.

## New EDC



### **Customer Service Based Technology**

To establish a mandate of excellence in customer service the department will utilize contact management software. This will ensure that all contacts are managed effectively and that follow-up is consistent. This system will also form the basis of a communications platform to ensure that all contacts receive newsletters, brochures, business information and positive messaging from the municipality. Over time this system be become more robust and become a key business tool in connecting St. Marys with its many influential clients.

### **Staff Training**

In order to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in this plan all staff will be offered a training objective program which outlines the skill enhancement sets required to: (1) maximize customer service and efficiency at current position; (2) commences skill development for advancement in areas outside of generally defined duties within the department; and (3) Maximizes knowledge of the organization and St. Marys as a place to invest and live.

## **2.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

### **Mission Statement**

As the community development, communication and marketing arm of the Town of St. Marys, the Community Development Department will manage St. Marys' local, provincial and national image as a place known for outstanding and effective municipal government; as an attractive Town to invest and conduct business; and as an active and safe community to live, prosper and have fun.

### **Customer Philosophy**

As a point of contact for many citizens, community groups, volunteers, businesses, elected officials and employees, staff of the Community Development Department offer and demonstrate the highest level of tolerance, temperament, professional appearance, and knowledge of Town services and products. We take pride in fulfilling the requirements of each client in an accurate, friendly and timely manner.

### **Customers Served**

#### Internal

1. Town
2. Council
3. Employees
4. Town Departments (Highly visible services)

#### External: Public

1. Community Groups
2. Citizens & Volunteers
3. News Media (General)
4. All levels of Government/Agencies

#### External: Business

1. Development Industry
2. Business and Industry Sector Associations
3. Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
4. National and Multinational Corporations
5. News Media (Business)

## Departmental Values

### Customer Service & Quality Values

1. Inbound inquiries are handled quickly and effectively by staff in a professional manner.
2. Staff creates an outstanding overall impression.
3. Staff is courteous & professional.
4. Staff greets and acknowledges customers and fellow employees in a courteous manner.
5. Staff cares about the public audiences they serve.
6. Staff demonstrates genuine concern for all public, fellow employees and target audiences they serve.
7. CAO/Clerk and Manager are available to customers, fellow employees and elected officials whenever needed.
8. Staff does their job efficiently.
9. Staff are willing to go the extra mile for customers, fellow employees and targeted audiences.

## 3.0 SUCCESSES

Performance management will be an important method of measuring the success of the Community Development Department.

### PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

The following departmental priorities are achieved through a pro-active series of programs designed to produce positive opportunities for the Town of St. Marys. Appendix A contains a comprehensive performance objective and measurement matrix guiding the department.

**Investment Attraction:** Create a prosperous local economy by encouraging and promoting desirable growth through the attraction of businesses which maximize employment, tax assessment and land-use opportunities for the Town of St. Marys.

**Investment Retention and Growth:** Enhance business opportunities to local businesses through supportive programs, professional development and growth assistance.

**Entrepreneurship:** Achieve greater self sufficiency as an economic location within Ontario by actively promoting local job growth through entrepreneurship and small business development programs offered at the Stratford/Perth Centre for Business.

**Tourism and Events:** Develop and/or enhance signature events to enhance community involvement and attract visitors to St. Marys. Partner with regional and provincial tourism associations to leverage the St. Marys tourism brand in a cost effective manner.

**Communications and Marketing:** Plan and deliver a consistent and exciting graphic style with clear, concise and correct key corporate/community messages designed for all internal and external print, broadcast and electronic mediums. Establish St. Marys' unique identity as a business friendly place to invest; as a place delivering outstanding and effective municipal services; and as an attractive and safe place to live

# Appendix VIII

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## Focus Group Summaries

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# TOWN OF ST MARYS

**STRATEGIC PLANNING  
FOCUS GROUP HIGHLIGHTS  
OCTOBER 14, 2009  
REVISION 0**

**Participants:**  
*See participant list*  
*In Association with:*  
**Queen's University Executive Decision Centre**  
**Facilitators: Erik Lockhart, Lauren Millier**  
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**E-mail: [elockhart@business.queensu.ca](mailto:elockhart@business.queensu.ca)**

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## Executive Summary

Attached are meeting proceedings from the Town of St Marys strategic planning focus groups held on October 14, 2009. The purpose of the sessions was to solicit input and advice from the broader community on the future of the Town. The group explored the following questions:

1. **Vision of the ideal community.** It is 2020. St Marys has achieved its goals and is recognized widely. What does it look like? What are some of the elements/characteristics of the Town? We know SM has been successful when....
2. **Priorities in next 2-4 years.** What does St. Marys need to do to achieve that vision?
3. **Barriers.** What constrains our ability to change?
4. **Role of the Town.** What is the role of the Town in addressing the above?

Below is an aggregated summary of the findings from the two focus groups.

<b>Ten year vision of the ideal community</b>
---

1. **Heritage preserved:** Preservation of historic buildings, cultural heritage and the Town retains its beauty in architecture with an emphasis on our history;
2. **Green space:** Lots of green space, trees, trails, bike paths, expand outdoor opportunities
3. **Viable, bustling downtown:** with many practical stores and more of a permanent pedestrian mall on water between Queen and Jones;
4. **Prime tourist destination point:** because of its beautiful architecture, arts community, Baseball Hall of Fame;
5. **Accessible health care:** active hospital, range of services;
6. **Full employment base** offering broad range of jobs;
7. **10,000+** population;
8. Mix of **Recreation and leisure** activities and programs for all age groups;
9. Strong **arts and culture infrastructure:** e.g. develop regular music series to promote arts in St Marys, regular series for families, community-building;
10. A place where people can **live, work and shop.**

<b>Priorities in next 5 years</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Economic development plan: business attraction and retention	12	12	<b>24</b>
2. Downtown revitalization including waterfront	14	6	<b>20</b>
3. Maintain all services & infrastructure	16		<b>16</b>
4. Marketing and promotions plan	4	10	<b>14</b>
5. Health care access	4	7	<b>11</b>
6. Greening of St Marys (Environmental awareness)	7	3	<b>10</b>

<b>Barriers to change</b>
---------------------------

- **Money:** Lack of budget and underfunding from Provincial and Federal Government
- **Attitudes:** lack of creative / innovative thinking and fear of change
- **Apathy, lack of understanding and cohesion:** inability, unwillingness of community to understand where tax \$\$ are going and the resulting tradeoffs
- **Lack of strategic plan and a shared vision** for the town about where it needs to go
- **Negative attitude** and buy in from leadership which filters to residents, property owners, landlords
- **Location** off the beaten path (i.e.: 401, closest 'large' airport is London, awkward rail location) to truly promote development

Editor's Notes:

- a. The notes in this Executive Summary provide a summary of the findings from each session. Given the variety in each focus group, the summary above should be considered directional in nature and is by no means a scientific comparison.
- b. The symbol // indicates that two similar ideas have been merged together.
- c. This document contains the meeting proceedings and is not intended as a "Final Report"

## 1.0 – Vision of the ideal community

**Step 1: Brainstorm.** Vision of the future. It is 2020. St Marys has achieved its goals and is recognized widely. What does it look like? What are some of the elements/characteristics of the Town? We know we have been successful when....

**Step 2: Prioritize.** What are the SEVEN most compelling elements of this future community?

### 1.1 - Group 1 (brainstorm & vote)

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 7)

Number of ballot items: 66

Total number of voters (N): 20

#### Total

- 9 1. 10,000 or so population //The population is no more than 10,000 and is made up of a cross section of young families and seniors. Young families are critical to future growth and development.
- 8 2. Lots of green space, trees, trails, bike paths
- 6 3. Active hospital ..Full service hospital
- 6 4. Full complement of recreation facilities
- 5 5. Accessible health care
- 5 6. Bustling downtown with many practical stores
- 5 7. Full employment in a broad range ..Broad range of jobs
- 5 8. Access to Via Train GO trains. Busy train route
- 5 9. Key destination for tourists because of its beautiful architecture and arts community. Particularly attracts tourists visiting Stratford.
- 4 10. Baseball Hall of Fame is destination for baseball fans and players from around the country
- 4 11. Work for all age groups
- 4 12. Environmentally aware; green buildings, green energy
- 4 13. Preservation of historic buildings, cultural heritage
- 4 14. Integrated cultural facility
- 3 15. Continued activities for senior population
- 3 16. Downtown - more of a permanent pedestrian mall on water between queen and Jones - no vehicles, lined with shops, umbrella tables chairs, gardens
- 3 17. Culturally diverse opportunities
- 3 18. Promote heritage buildings.
- 3 19. Leader in green technology ..Leaders in green technology and active
- 3 20. Complete health care services
- 2 21. Self-sufficient
- 2 22. Full range of housing available i.e. seniors etc
- 2 23. Much Better transportation infrastructure
- 2 24. Full education at all age range
- 2 25. The entire town will be serviced by high speed fiber optic telecommunications.
- 2 26. Active hospital with essential services/emergency in the Winter---we could concentrate on a specialty-drug/ rehab centre and become experts in this.
- 2 27. 15000 -20000 people because low crime, more space. Centrally located

- 2 28. Cultural opportunities, Historic, Youth orientated,
- 2 29. Tourist oriented
- 2 30. Built on our existing architecture, the downtown is revitalized and unique
- 2 31. More industry
- 2 32. Visual appealing town with walking trails-active
- 2 33. Busy Downtown
- 2 34. Environmental protection along Thames River and environmental consultation concerning use of the Flats and walking trails along Thames and Trout Creek. Erosion along the water banks is limited by enforcing speed-reduction laws concerning speed boats or any river craft is allowed to travel along the river and creek. Size of craft is restricted and motors. Use of environmentally-enhanced river plants and conservation techniques in regard to mammal, fish and other wildlife to ensure survival of rare species like softshell turtles. Work with environmental consultants. Rent out paddleboats for summer months.
- 1 35. Well maintained historic buildings, vistas
- 1 36. There will be modern commercial areas, not tourist with good retail and parking.
- 1 37. Wide range of housing for seniors, coupled with that for housing -- both in terms of affordability and style
- 1 38. Recreation centre for the area particularly in the areas of hockey and baseball.
- 1 39. Downtown stores are focused on arts of all kinds. Attractive to tourists. Stores have longer hours.
- 1 40. Strong youth programs and school activities
- 1 41. Access to many types of community information in varied formats
- 1 42. Parking
- 1 43. Diverse shopping
- 1 44. We will have a post office that delivers a level of service common to most other location instead of the current level of service.
- 1 45. Vibrant downtown core
- 1 46. Senior participation, engagement
- 1 47. A real sense of community spirit
- 1 48. Keep our high school
- 0 49. Welcoming atmosphere for visitors
- 0 50. Co
- 0 51. Skateboard park and bicycle ramp park for young people - more to do for young people who don't play hockey and baseball - inexpensive sports and theatre. Listen more to young people's needs to avoid vandalism.
- 0 52. A good place for tourists and residents to live
- 0 53. Creative planning
- 0 54. Better infrastructure to help kids
- 0 55. The down town will look like Banff, with quality retail directed at the tourist.
- 0 56. Facilities & downtown maintained in attractive manner
- 0 57. Road system for industry to by pass town main streets
- 0 58. A friendly community
- 0 59. Have 10% of Stratford visitors coming to town
- 0 60. Full complement of services on the town's behalf -- public works, etc
- 0 61. Walking, biking, active community
- 0 63. Access to bus
- 0 64. Positive lifestyle
- 0 65. The industrial area will be comprised of mainly high technology or high skilled businesses with 70% of the employees living in the K-W, Stratford or London areas.
- 0 66. Cooperate with Stratford with tourist attractions

## **1.2 – Group 1 (refinement into top ten)**

Note: the group took the top 21 (> 2 votes) and merged the similars into the following.

**1. 10,000 or so population //The population is no more than 10,000 and is made up of a cross section of young families and seniors. Young families are critical to future growth and development.**

- 8000-10,000 residents
- The population is no more than 10,000 and is made up of a cross section of young families and seniors. Young families are critical to future growth and development.
- Population should remain below 10,000-
- Continued population growth - approaching 10,000

**2. Lots of green space, trees, trails, bike paths**

**3. Environmentally aware; green buildings, green energy ...Leader in green technology ..leaders in green technology and active**

**4. Accessible health care - Active hospital ..full service hospital ..complete health care services**

**5. Full complement of recreation facilities (e.g. Skateboard parks, youth, etc.)**

**6. Bustling downtown with many practical stores ...downtown - more of a permanent pedestrian mall on water between queen and Jones - no vehicles, lined with shops, umbrella tables chairs, gardens**

**7. Full employment in a broad range ..broad range of jobs ...Work for all age groups**

**8. Access to Via Train GO trains. Busy train route**

**9. Key destination for tourists because of its beautiful architecture and arts community. Particularly attracts tourists visiting Stratford.**

- Baseball Hall of Fame is destination for baseball fans and players from around the country

**10. Preservation of historic buildings, cultural heritage**

**11. Continued activities for senior population**

**12. Integrated cultural/education infrastructure/facility: multiple access points to different cultural activities/groups (e.g. Art group, theatre group, movie hall etc)**

**13. Culturally diverse opportunities: access to different multi cultural activities**

### 1.3 - Group 2 (brainstorm & vote)

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 7)

Number of ballot items: 48

Total number of voters (N): 9

#### Total

- 5 1. Prime tourist destination point // St Marys as destination, i.e.: road trip distance from Toronto, London, Stratford, etc (esp. With less spending on big vacations)
- 4 2. Preservation of historic buildings, cultural heritage //retains its beauty in architecture and green space //widespread support for heritage initiatives and projects
- 4 3. Viable and diverse downtown
- 4 4. Lots of green space, trees, trails, bike paths //maintaining green spaces especially walking trails, expanding walking trails //expand outdoor opportunities and use (trail system, parks, and water)
- 3 5. Accessible health care - active hospital ...retains and improves health services
- 3 6. Emphasis on st marys history, support and develop museum
- 3 7. Balance between desired quality of life and the affordability of said life //mix of housing and services for all age groups and socio economic groups
- 3 8. Diverse demographics (young singles, families, seniors)
- 3 9. Develop regular music series to promote arts in st marys, regular series for families, community-building, using spaces already in existence!!!
- 2 10. Leisure programs for all age groups and not necessarily just sports, more emphasis on music
- 2 11. Strong schools, strong in arts and sports
- 2 12. Maintaining "small town" feel that welcomes newcomers
- 2 13. Broad employment base that attracts wide spectrum of individuals // Full employment in a.Broad range of jobs
- 2 14. Big population growth to be able to sustain a revitalized downtown core
- 2 15. Continuing education centre
- 2 16. As the population grows we see a growth in industry, a positive live- work relationship
- 2 17. Affordable housing
- 2 18. A place where people can live, work and shop
- 1 19. Continuation influx of pertinent people from large cities (Toronto, London)
- 1 20. Business, shopping and growth in downtown core
- 1 21. Creation of cultural plan
- 1 22. Use of alleys as artist communities, restaurants
- 1 23. Destination-retreat/conference centre
- 1 24. The youth return after post secondary education //having opportunities for young people to return after education //encouraging our youth
- 1 25. Technologically sound
- 1 26. Supports artists as well as sports enthusiasts
- 1 27. Walking distance to shops, services
- 1 28. Avoid growth for growth's sake, instead decide on a sustainable goal
- 1 29. Is concentrated, without suburbs dependent on cars
- 1 30. Inclusive community
- 1 31. Good infrastructure
- 0 32. Utilization of second floor space in downtown core
- 0 33. Walking history tours
- 0 34. Maintain and enhance small town feel

- 0 35. Maintains forward-thinking recycling and green agenda (attractive to young families)
- 0 36. More assisted living developed (looking ahead to aging boomer population, i.e.: great place to retire)
- 0 37. More encouragement for downtown landlords to offer reasonable rents to properties, maintain downtown vitality
- 0 38. More festivals through the summer
- 0 39. Remains a demographically varied population
- 0 40. In addition to hiking trails make our river and creek more available
- 0 41. Take advantage of our farming area for opportunities for tourist attraction and for food production industries
- 0 42. Full complement of recreation facilities (e.g. Skateboard parks, etc.)
- 0 43. Encouragement for industry (tax advantages? Financial assistance?? Support)
- 0 44. Cross generation understanding
- 0 45. Building strong awareness and thought leadership in agricultural/green initiatives
- 0 46. All businesses/public places accessible
- 0 47. 7000-9000 population

#### **1.4 – Group 2 (refinement into top ten)**

Note: the group took the top 18 (2 or more votes) and merged the similars into the following.
---

1. Prime tourist destination point // st marys as destination, i.e.: road trip distance from Toronto, London, Stratford, etc (esp. With less spending on big vacations)
2. Preservation of historic buildings, cultural heritage //retains its beauty in architecture //widespread support for heritage initiatives and projects ...emphasis on st marys history, support and develop museum
3. Viable and diverse downtown //big population growth to be able to sustain a revitalized downtown core
4. Lots of green space, trees, trails, bike paths //maintaining green spaces especially walking trails, expanding walking trails //expand outdoor opportunities and use (trail system, parks, water)
5. Accessible health care - active hospital ...retains and improves health services
6. Balance between desired quality of life and the affordability of said life //mix of housing and services for all age groups and socio economic groups
7. Diverse demographics (young singles, families, seniors)... Inclusive community
8. Leisure programs for all age groups and not necessarily just sports, more emphasis on music ... develop regular music series to promote arts in st marys, regular series for families, community-building, using spaces already in existence!!!
9. Strong schools, strong in arts and sports
10. Maintaining "small town" feel that welcomes newcomers
11. Broad employment base that attracts wide spectrum of individuals // Full employment in
  - a. Broad range of jobs ///As the population grows we see a growth in industry, a positive live-work relationship
12. Continuing education centre
13. A place where people can live, work and shop

## 2.0 – Priorities in next 3-4 years

Short term priorities (by 2013, we must do the following...).

**Step 1: brainstorm.** What exactly need to be our priorities in the next 3-5 years to move us toward that future state?

**Step 2: prioritize.** If we could only focus on FIVE of these in the next three years...

### 2.1 - Group 1

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 5)

Number of ballot items: 14

Total number of voters (N): 19

#### Total

- 16 1. Maintaining all services and infrastructure -- education, hospital, roads, water, etc.  
..Affordable Services, Housing, Support Services
- 14 2. Downtown revitalization-including waterfront to increase tourism as well as encouraging local shopping  
- clean up the downtown with a fresh coat of paint as a first step, followed by more intense repairs by landlords with assistance -
- 12 3. Economic development-retain current industry and attract new
- 11 4. Source industries in high tech or natural resources that are long term, higher paying , to compliment the general labour force that now exists  
- Attract non-traditional business: move away from traditional big automotive factories - focus on leading edge & environmentally focused technology
- 8 5. Education/Youth development - pride in our youth development
- 7 6. greening of St. Marys (environmental awareness coupled with green space/conservation, etc.)
- 4 7. Articulate the vision to all. Those in Town and out of town
- 4 8. Health care access (beyond hospital)
- 4 9. Attraction of forward-thinking municipal workers to create cutting-edge policy, etc. - contradict idea of small towns as ignorant backwaters
- 4 10. must avoid amalgamation/merging with others -> Retain our unique identity
- 3 11. Cultural mapping - build on the cultural/arts foundation that already exists
- 2 12. 55+ services/facilities/programs (<- aging population)
- 2 13. keep current residents happy via value for taxes paid; creates a sort of informal tourism department which attracts more residents

**Note: prior to voting, the group brainstormed ideas and then merged the similar items. Below in non-bold are the merged items. These items are ordered as they were originally brainstormed (i.e. not as they were ranked by the group). Items that did not have any ideas merged are not included.**

**2. Downtown revitalization-including waterfront to increase tourism as well as encouraging local shopping**

- clean up the downtown with a fresh coat of paint as a first step, followed by more intense repairs by landlords with assistance -
- revitalize and redevelop the downtown - beautification
- Downtown vitalization with focus on businesses that will attract tourists
- town centre
- Strengthen the downtown core thru Positive approach to business
- economic development throughout town, with a focus on making the downtown a practical place for residents to shop

### **3. Economic development-retain current industry and attract new**

- Industry for Jobs, Disposable Income
- Jobs attracting business and retaining business

### **6. Maintaining all services and infrastructure -- education, hospital, roads, water, etc.**

#### **..Affordable Services, Housing, Support Services**

- Infrastructure, esp. Hospitals/Medical Services, Roads, Water, Sewage
- We feel that the basic services now exist, fire, health care, high school - so assure that these services DONT leave
- Housing and planned development with community support
- Necessary structures to support jobs a) Police force B) health & Fitness Facilities C) Continuing schooling

## 2.2 – Group 2

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 4)

Number of ballot items: 13

Total number of voters (N): 12

### Total

- 12** 1. Development of Economic Development Plan (first determine what amount of development is wanted/needed, what is the impact of this development e.g. environment, housing, what are the infrastructure costs, maintaining and developing business in the downtown core)  
- Intensify our efforts in developing a broader industrial base ...Attracting new businesses/industry to invest in our community
- 10** 2. Development of Marketing Plan (how & what to promote St. Marys as a destination)  
- Tourism is a key component for promoting the Town. Redeveloping the Town website so it is visually appealing and engaging to people who are searching for a place to relocate or visit
- 7** 3. Health care is a priority
- 6** 4. Development and implementation of Cultural Plan (preservation of built heritage, festival & events, promote the arts)
- 6** 5. Downtown revitalization-including waterfront to increase tourism as well as encouraging local shopping
- 3** 6. Greening of St. Marys (environmental awareness coupled with green space/conservation, etc.) ...Green spaces thinking
- 3** 7. a communications strategy that allows people to understand and participate in the decisions made to create positive and cohesive community spirit
- 1** 8. Maintaining all services and infrastructure (roads, water etc)
- 0** 10. Greater efforts to recognize, appreciate and support the programs of the volunteers
- 0** 11. I think it is important to have a vision about where we are going. I feel that we have a lot of loose cannons shooting off in all directions. If somebody has the initiative to do something, the attitude is to let him do it without any concern on how it may affect somebody else.
- 0** 12. intergenerational integration and communication
- 0** 13. Not only the politicians but the public in general needs to recapture fiscal control

**Note: prior to voting, the group brainstormed ideas and then merged the similar items. Below in non-bold are the merged items. These items are ordered as they were originally brainstormed (i.e. not as they were ranked by the group). Items that did not have any ideas merged are not included.**

### 1. Development of Economic Development Plan

- an agreed agenda on growth/subdivisions, economic strategy and spending
- be prepared for economic changes such as the coming turnaround and environmental necessities (less use of cars)

### 3.0 – Implementation

After brainstorming, individuals were asked to identify the key actions that the City should take on in the next 2-3 years?

Criteria: High Impact and Realistic

Note: The group got a “preliminary agreement” on the priority activities.

The ideas were not merged before voting, so there are some redundancies.

#### 3.1 - Group 1

**PRIORITY: Maintaining all services and infrastructure -- education, hospital, roads, water, etc. ..Affordable Services, Housing, Support Services**

##### Key initiatives in next 18-24 months

1. Prioritize and commit to ensuring services are adequate for future - i.e. hospital
2. Allocate sufficient resources to keep all infrastructure working, lobby for additional share of funds to appropriate sources
3. Advocate at province/country on behalf of hospital, police, doctors, nurses
4. Be relentless in applying for funding for infrastructure, etc. To lessen the load on taxpayer

##### Beyond 24 months or already covered above

5. Lead, promote, facilitate
6. Identify current assets
7. Access higher level programs
8. Remain vigilant in regards to health care \$, education changes like school closures
9. Research cutting edge works techniques and implement
10. Developing a 20- year strategic plan to update all existing infrastructure that environmentally friendly while keeping the taxes low but extend the tax base by encouraging more development. Articulate the plan so people choose to live in our town
11. Consider creative solutions to health care that takes into consideration the lack of financial and human resources for sustaining a full service hospital
12. Keep up the pyramid centre programming, well done now
13. Perhaps utilize the puc reserve fund for larger projects

**PRIORITY: Downtown revitalization-including waterfront to increase tourism as well as encouraging local shopping**

##### Key initiatives in next 18-24 months

1. Implement a strategy for the development of the waterfront to enhance tourism
2. Facade improvements ...store front signs ...increase the allowances available to merchants/owners for facade improvement
3. Develop a pedestrian-only town square

##### Beyond 24 months or already covered above

4. Clean up the downtown with a fresh coat of paint as a first step, followed by more intense repairs by landlords with assistance

5. Landscape main street
6. Rebuild and relandscape main street, minimum property standards for building owners
7. Create focal points on the waterfront - sitting areas, gardens
8. Develop way for artists to show and sell in the downtown core
9. Take better advantage of the river front for both recreation and commercial use.
10. Assessment properties that are kept up to date should have lower assessments; why penalize people that improve their properties
11. Look at what successes other communities have had..port Perry, creemore.
12. Walkway within town through green spaces
13. Remove the stigma of level of difficulty to improve the facade - e.g. existing facade improvement program requires quotes, deadlines for completion, rules for sidewalk closure, red tape impedes repairs
14. Revitalize downtown-waterfront is important to promote. St. Marys is a beautiful walk able town that should be vibrant with activities monthly in our downtown core
15. Rerouting industrial traffic somehow to keep noise, dirt, chicken blood out of downtown - facilitating cafes, walking , extend life of roads downtown

**PRIORITY: Economic development-retain current industry and attract new**

- Source industries in high tech or natural resources that are long term, higher paying , to compliment the general labour force that now exists
- Attract non-traditional business: move away from traditional big automotive factories - focus on leading edge & environmentally focused technology

**Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Provide more land for industrial and commercial development. ...finalize a shared services agreement of some sort between town and township to encourage new development
2. Partner with surrounding areas to provide unique experiences - new business opportunities and promote this strategy. ...Partner with Stratford ...take advantage of new Stratford institute; spinoff jobs

**Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

3. Clearly understand the types of needs of potential industry (e.g. Greenfill etc.)
4. Attract companies with environmentally leading edge technology/products
5. Attract new "Green Industries"
6. Being more aware of the "next generation" of jobs and in what fields they will be located
7. Increase resources to promote commercial benefits of the town.
8. Have an inventory of serviced land (inc. Broadband) for commercial development of all types
9. Shared services/ extension of services/ joint marketing of available resources
10. Commit to a development strategy
11. Contact companies offering franchises not currently represented in STM
12. Market St.Marys as an option to target industries
13. Make it easy for new industry to locate to St.Marys
14. Develop creative solutions for attracting new types or emerging business
15. Capitalize on regional development activities
16. Pair up with Stratford to get a GO station/terminal in Stratford; car-sharing program to ST. Marys to make day tourism more logical (like how GO train was running rides to Niagara falls from T.O. this summer)
17. Encourage retail to have the basics - supply, hours

**PRIORITY: Education/Youth development - pride in our youth development****Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Encourage and improve on youth involvement in town activities/planning - i.e. This process
2. Further develop the youth centre with a wide complement of activities; much like how the friendship centre focuses on the 55+ with a large range of activities, the same could be done for youth

**Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

3. Provide tax incentives for volunteers assisting youth
4. Develop youth focused programs to be offered thru the pyramid centre
5. Increase services / facilities available for youth
6. Find opportunities to celebrate our youth rather than focusing on how to manage the "problem"
7. Provide facilities for their social and creative expression(i.e. music venue, computer lab)
8. Find a budget to have police presence in the high school
9. Develop a skate board park at Cadzow
10. Move away from thinking policing is the way to manage our youth
11. Support our local schools---formulate plans that encourage school/home/recreational /cultural/senior center together. Promote activities
12. Encourage the development of youth leaders in the community
13. Partner with college or university to provide offsite learning in St. Marys

**PRIORITY: greening of St. Marys (environmental awareness coupled with green space/conservation, etc.)****Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Maintain the walking trails i.e. cut the weeds ...link up the grand trunk walking trails ...further development of trails -- paving graveled areas, better signage, lighting, etc.
2. Increase parks allowance in official plan for new housing/industrial developments

**Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

3. Redevelop and promote public vegetable gardens; parks could plant fruit trees as part of a "free fruit" initiative
4. Update quarries (fishing and swimming quarry)
5. Take our current facilities beyond their current borders/walls
6. Town-wide green roof or solar panel initiative; some kind of funding available for people who desire to do so
7. Set up or join with car pool organization to improve persons per vehicle
8. Enhance, add and complete the excellent beginnings on the trail system.
9. Clean up trout creek
10. More walkways which link green areas and Thames river, bicycle lanes (more emphasis on non automobile based access)
11. A leader in green-contests to make us a community other communities come to for ideas
12. Public transportation like mobility service for all

### 3.2 – Group 2

**PRIORITY: Development of Economic Development Plan (first determine what amount of development is wanted/needed, what is the impact of this development e.g. environment, housing, what are the infrastructure costs, maintaining and developing business in the downtown core)**

- Intensify our efforts in developing a broader industrial base ...Attracting new businesses/industry to invest in our community

#### **Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Clarify the amount of growth we want and need v the costs of the development
2. Distribution of investment packages -- proceed with a mass mail out on investment packages to potential business/industry to try to attract them to our community
3. Partner with surrounding areas to provide unique experiences - new business opportunities and promote this strategy. ...take advantage of new Stratford institute; spinoff jobs

#### **Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

4. Revisit community development plan/make sure decisions that were made are supportable - where do you want new families to live?
5. Provide more land for industrial and commercial development. ...finalize a shared services agreement of some sort between town and township to encourage new development
6. Define community vs. business vs. industrial space
7. Determine priorities of citizens. We need to know what people want.
8. Town should create a list of unutilized assets such as unused stores, factories, buildings. Attempt to market them.

**PRIORITY: Development of Marketing Plan (how & what to promote St. Marys as a destination) ... Tourism is a key component for promoting the Town.**

#### **Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Website redesign. Could be used as a marketing/promotional tool. ... Redeveloping the Town website so it is visually appealing and engaging to people who are searching for a place to relocate or visit ... Using other interactive web2.0 tools to reach audiences to get message out
2. Study other successful destination small towns, i.e.: Elora, to use successful marketing tools and strategies to steal their business.
3. Determine who our audience is and what they want.

#### **Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

4. Promote the many attractions St. Marys has available. Nobody knows that the Canadian baseball hall of fame is located here. We need to get the word out so more people will come to visit.
5. Find non-internet tools to engage non web families
6. Larger Heritage Festival -- too many lulls in the action
7. Integrating some of the smaller festivals into larger one
8. Better use of the flats

9. Publicize more widely i.e.: magazines, newspapers, reach demographics with relevant technology (i.e.: web 2.0)
10. We need to offer more opportunities. E.g. Culture, shopping, leisure, parks, etc
11. Support integration of non-town owned assets into the town promotions. Cbhall, Clock Tower, baseball diamonds, soccer events, hockey.
12. Field of Dreams - home plates stuck in the ground from all over the world from baseball fans.
13. Parade downtown for Hall of Fame day.
14. Link to Stratford and London tourism
15. Support festivals, celebrations,
16. The world dog-paddle championship - need I say more? Yes. Two divisions - people and dogs. People by age, dogs by breed and weight.
17. Support 2010 Homecoming ensuring its success and return of alumni.

<b>PRIORITY: Health care</b>
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**Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. ONGOING: Making sure that we have a viable hospital: maintain doctor incentives, fight for 24/7 Emergency by lobbying Huron Perth Hospital Alliance
2. Lobby the government for funding for Rural Emergency Wards.
3. Develop reasonable expectation of health care for a community this size. // Change perceptions -- some people feel they've already "lost" healthcare; build awareness of great services

**Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

4. Develop plan to serve growing, diverse population with full medical needs, i.e.: (here's a basic one to develop population) deliver babies.
5. Better access to Clinic doctors (no appointments)
6. Stronger focus on rehabilitation
7. Keep good basic health care and emergency care available,
8. Support fund raising activities for Hospital operations.
9. Ensure that we recruit and make welcome the medical staff we will need in the future with retirements
10. Fitness competition against other communities.

<b>PRIORITY: Development and implementation of Cultural Plan (preservation of built heritage, festival &amp; events, promote the arts)</b>
--

**Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Complete assessment of what St. Marys has to offer.
2. Find ways to market our Storytelling Festival better. It is one of the best in Canada, yet still isn't growing. Maybe persuade Stuart McLean to appear.
3. Allocate money for culture (music, art, history) similar to way money is spent on sports/recreation perhaps in proportion to the % of the population that participates

**Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

4. Turning the old Valu-Mart into a cultural centre - it has parking, a marquee and lots of space.
5. Youth involvement of a plan
6. Invite photographers and artists to St. Marys for one-day workshops.
7. Implement a heritage conservation district and market it. Preserve our unique downtown core and market it.
8. We need to bring awareness to the value of culture.
9. Encourage local talent by providing suitable venues such as The Flats during summer.
10. Engage citizens of St. Marys in their own culture. Make it relevant to them.
11. Support existing cultural activities such as Heritage Days.

**PRIORITY: Downtown revitalization-including waterfront to increase tourism as well as encouraging local shopping**

**Key initiatives in next 18-24 months**

1. Reassess previous Downtown & Community Revitalization Plan and continue to implement it at a faster rate.
2. ?? Support downtown focus by limiting outside downtown growth.

**Beyond 24 months or already covered above**

3. Get Elton John to buy the Opera House and restore it to its former glory and put on concerts every weekend. Grand Ol' Opry North.
4. Implement a strategy for the development of the waterfront to enhance tourism
5. Facade improvements ...store front signs ...increase the allowances available to merchants/owners for facade improvement //Storefronts should maintained especially when empty to present clean, pleasing streetscape/facade to visitors.
6. Develop a pedestrian-only town square
7. Run excursions from Stratford by train or small bus for a few hours
8. Make all stores wheelchair accessible
9. Make it walk able but make sure that parking is available and perhaps a trolley on weekends from one end to the other
10. Help new business ventures get started -- help with writing business plans/getting loans etc
11. Encourage more use of Rice lake, e.g. Boat regatta, rowing or kayak club
12. Encourage people to shop downtown with things like the coupon booklet and perhaps prizes if something worn was bought in St. Marys
13. Convince downtown merchants that a heritage designation is not a bad thing.
14. Proper Web Site to promote Downtown businesses

## 4.0 – Barriers to change

What constrains our ability to change? (Barriers, obstacles, impediments)  
Note: these are not ranked

### 4.1 – Group 1

1. Money
2. Taxes; we make it they take it
3. World economic environment
4. Creative planning ...foresight ... Innovative thinking ... Nothing, we can do this. Our thinking limits us! ... Fear of change ...municipality constrained by traditional thinking
5. Strategic plan ... A lack of a shared vision for the town about where it needs to go.
6. Positive attitude and buy in from leadership which filters to residents, property owners, landlords
7. Location -- off the beaten path (i.e.: 401, closest 'large' airport is London, awkward rail location) to truly promote development
8. Ability to make ourselves known as a leader in Ontario; we need to sell this community ... Need to identify our unique point of differentiation
9. Getting everyone of the interest groups in town to have the same priorities

### 4.2 – Group 2

1. People themselves ..Attitude .... Lack of cohesion in the population because of lack of understanding (where tax \$\$ are going, tradeoffs) ...Community ability to build a shared pool of understanding and common goals embraced by all, i.e. Deal constructively with disagreements and conflict
2. Lack of focus, lack of identity, citizen apathy. ...Non involvement by the public
3. Competition from other communities
4. Municipal election -- changing priorities ...conflicting priorities with limited tax dollars
5. Underfunding from Provincial and Federal Gov.

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# TOWN OF ST. MARYS

**STRATEGIC PLANNING  
YOUTH SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS  
NOVEMBER 4, 2009  
REVISION 1**

**Participants:**  
*See participant list*  
*In Association with:*  
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## Executive Summary

Attached are meeting proceedings from the Town of St. Marys strategic planning focus groups held on November 4, 2009. The purpose of the sessions was to solicit input and advice from youth on the future of the Town. The group explored the following questions:

1. Vision of the ideal community. What does it look like? If you could design a place to live, what would it include? What are some of the elements/characteristics of the Town?
2. Strengths and Weaknesses about living in St. Marys
  - a. What is good?
  - b. What is bad?
3. Priorities in next 2-4 years. What does St. Marys need to change? What would you like to see in St. Marys?
4. Youth Centre. What would it offer? Look like? Promotions?

<b>Vision.</b> My ideal community includes:
---

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Large downtown with better variety of stores</li> <li>2. Public places to hang out</li> <li>3. Walking and biking trails</li> <li>4. Youth involvement in town events and activities</li> <li>5. Dog park</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. More funding for high school</li> <li>7. Indoor sports that are affordables</li> <li>8. Stronger hospital</li> <li>9. Outdoor stage</li> <li>10. A better fair</li> <li>11. Ball fields</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

<b>Current State of St. Marys</b>
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**Strengths**

- Clean, appealing with nice surroundings
- Great recreation complexes
- Friendly: We know everyone and it is a small town
- Ongoing effort to improve the town.
- feels like a safe place
- Good place to raise children

**Weaknesses**

- Down town: the stores suck!
- Geared towards children, and elderly.
- Opportunities for teenagers are limited.
- Drug culture due to perceived "boredom" ..not enough things for youth to do
- Hard to get a job in town
- Little opportunity for kids not involved in mainstream sports

<b>If I were Mayor I would implement the following:</b>
---

1. Improve public areas (i.e. Walking trails, biking, hiking, board park, outdoor stage, etc..)
2. Make the town more eco friendly ... Look into a "green" town approach, renewable resources, improved recycling programs
3. Help downtown core
4. Landscape - nicer green areas, flowers, trees etc...
5. More money towards high school ...make an improvement to the high school
6. Create more programs geared at teenagers: not just local league teams
7. Try to create more job opportunities
8. Police presence: Have more officers patrol downtown on foot and back into the high school
9. Help the high schools and not let them come to the high school because we don't have enough space barley for the amount of people now ...the grade 7/8 s

## 1.0 – Vision of the ideal community

Imagine your ideal town. What does it look like? If you could design a place to live, what would it include? What are some of the elements/characteristics of the Town?

### 1.1 - Brainstorm & vote

What are the SEVEN most important items (to you)

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 7) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 49

Total number of voters (N): 17

#### Total

- 7 1. more opportunities for youth - athletic, social, community involvement
- 6 2. dog park
- 5 3. walking trails
- 5 4. biking trails
- 5 5. stronger hospital
- 4 6. more stores pending clothing rather than candles flowers picture frames etc..
- 4 7. ball fields
- 4 8. outdoor stage
- 4 9. more funding for high school
- 4 10. cooking classes
- 4 11. weight training for youth at a low cost
- 4 12. indoor sports that are affordable for students
- 4 13. Public Places to hang out
- 3 14. skateboard park
- 3 15. more clothing stores
- 3 16. A better fair
- 3 17. WEEKLY CONCERTS OR ACTIVITIES IN THE TOWN FOR TEENS
- 3 18. better variety of stores
- 3 19. biking lane on the road
- 3 20. better outdoor pool
- 3 21. youth involvement in town events and activities
- 3 22. larger downtown with better stores
- 2 23. A wide variety of job options.
- 2 24. Building growth that goes up instead of taking up land.
- 2 25. more up to date youth center
- 2 26. networking opportunities between all demographics
- 2 27. A mall providing a multitude of different stores.
- 2 28. more attractions to the downtown area
- 2 29. parks to walk through with a river and a bike trail
- 2 30. more festivals
- 2 31. fast food chain // A Burger King
- 2 32. lots of recreation and places to shop for needed things

- 2 33. more park space //Parks
- 1 34. more people, more things for jobs, and more funding, more things that draw people to our area
- 1 35. better athletic department at high school
- 1 36. If I was the mayor I would implement more Community Service programs that help the community i.e.: St. John Ambulance, Jr. EMS (for youth interested in Medical), Let young youth 16 and up to join the local fire dept.
- 1 37. leisure services department for youth
- 1 38. more people!
- 1 39. A good library.
- 1 40. we need more money so that we can use it on things we need
- 1 41. more open land
- 1 42. a variety of restaurants //sit down restaurants
- 1 43. more places to go on the weekends
- 0 44. more trails
- 0 45. a strip mall
- 0 46. floor hockey nights
- 0 47. social services
- 0 48. more organized sports

## 1.2 – Refinement into top ten

Note: the group took the top 22 (> 2 votes) and merged the similars into the following and picked his/her top six

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 6) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 16

Total number of voters (N): 19

### Total

- 16 1. larger downtown with better stores .. better variety of stores ... more clothing stores ... more stores selling clothing rather than candles flowers picture frames etc..
- 12 2. Public Places to hang out
- 12 3. walking and biking trails ...biking lane on the road
- 12 4. youth involvement in town events and activities ... WEEKLY CONCERTS OR ACTIVITYS IN THE TOWN FOR TEENS
- 10 5. dog park
- 10 6. more funding for high school
- 8 7. indoor sports that are affordable for students
- 7 8. stronger hospital
- 6 9. outdoor stage
- 4 10. A better fair
- 3 11. ball fields
- 3 12. weight training for youth at a low cost
- 2 13. better outdoor pool
- 2 14. cooking classes
- 1 15. skateboard park

## 2.0 – Current state assessment of St. Marys

Thinking about St. Marys in November 2009:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is good (advantages, benefits etc)</li> <li>• What is bad (disadvantages, drawbacks etc.)</li> </ul>



### 2.1 - Vote

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 8) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 26

Total number of voters (N): 17

#### Total

- 15 1. S: clean and appealing ...nice surroundings Very scenic. ..very pretty
- 15 2. W: down town area lacking (amenities, stores, etc..) ... A narrow variety of stores. ..not very many good stores downtown .the stores suck!  
- the stores we have you could go to London Stratford...to shop for cheaper then you could purchasing some items down town...
- 12 3. S: has a great recreation complexes e.g. good arena
- 12 4. W: Geared towards children, middle aged people, and the elderly. Opportunities for teenagers are limited. ..nice place to grow up until you turn 14
- 10 5. S: We know everyone and it is a small town ...friendly town
- 8 6. W: drug culture due to perceived "boredom" ..not enough things for youth to do
- 7 7. S: There is an ongoing effort to improve the town.
- 7 8. W: hard to get a job in town ..no jobs for youth
- 7 9. W: little opportunity for kids not involved in mainstream sports ... not enough athletics - hockey or bust ...to much hockey not enough other sports in town
- 6 10. W: high school has no funding for text books, sports equipment and the arts department ..high school needs more money same with the public schools which should be able to hold the grade 7/8
- 6 11. W: too many hair salons, not enough youth appealing
- 5 12. S: feels like a safe place
- 5 13. S: good place to raise children
- 4 14. S: you can travel anywhere in five minutes ..can't get lost
- 4 15. S: beer tents great!!!
- 3 16. S: Many Community service programs (e.g. library, ambulance, Leo club etc.)
- 3 17. W: No movie theatre
- 3 18. W: The fair is pathetic
- 2 19. S: a good high school
- 1 20. S: ball hall
- 1 21. W: no dog park
- 0 23. S: good place to vacation
- 0 25. W: not enough antique stores
- 0 26. W: Too many hills.

## **2.2 – Strengths**

- 15 1. S: clean and appealing ...nice surroundings Very scenic. ..very pretty
- 12 3. S: has a great recreation complexes e.g. good arena
- 10 5. S: We know everyone and it is a small town ...friendly town
- 7 7. S: There is an ongoing effort to improve the town.
- 5 12. S: feels like a safe place
- 5 13. S: good place to raise children

## **2.3 – Weaknesses**

- 15 2. W: down town area lacking (amenities, stores, etc..) ... A narrow variety of stores. ...not very many good stores downtown .the stores suck!  
- the stores we have you could go to london/stratford...to shop for cheaper then you could purchasing some items down town...
- 12 4. W: Geared towards children, middle aged people, and the elderly. Opportunities for teenagers are limited. ..nice place to grow up until you turn 14
- 8 6. W: drug culture due to perceived "boredom" ..not enough things for youth to do
- 7 8. W: hard to get a job in town ..no jobs for youth
- 7 9. W: little opportunity for kids not involved in mainstream sports ... not enough athletics  
- hockey or bust ...to much hockey not enough other sports in town
- 6 10. W: high school has no funding for text books, sports equipment and the arts department ..high school needs more money same with the public schools which should be able to hold the grade 7/8
- 6 11. W: too many hair salons, not enough youth appealing

### 3.0 – If you were the Mayor, in the next three years...

Priorities in next 2-4 years. What does St. Marys need to change? What would you like to see in St. Marys?

If you were the Mayor and you could change/implement/do THREE things...

Vote on top SIX... if we could only do SIX of these, what would you suggest...

#### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 6) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 18

Total number of voters (N): 18

#### Total

- 18 1. improve public areas (i.e. walking trails, biking, hiking, skateboard park, outdoor stage, etc..) .. - construct a walking/biking trail throughout the town
- 13 2. make the town more eco friendly ... Look into a "Green" town approach, renewable resources, and improved recycling programs. ...change splash pad so that it reuses water
- 12 3. help downtown ...improve downtown core (business section) ..Direct more business to downtown stores, and away from big box stores in and out of town.
- 10 4. Landscape - nicer green areas, flowers, trees etc...
- 8 5. more money towards high school ...make an improvement to the high school
- 8 6. Create more programs geared at teenagers. ... more youth activities like sports and not just local league teams
- 7 7. try to create more job opportunities ...help grow industrial sector ...
- 6 8. Police presence... have more officers patrol downtown on foot ...put a police officer back into the high school
- 6 9. help the high schools and not let them come to the high school because we don't have enough space barley for the amount of people now ...the grade 7/8 s
- 5 10. get more clothing stores and stores geared towards youth and not so much the elderly
- 3 11. try to set a youth advisory board (PLEASE MAKE JUDY LISTEN TO THIS!) only teenagers allowed
- 2 12. get more people so that we can have abettor variety of opportunities ... I would - get more people to come to st.marys so that we could hold more stores
- 2 13. improve health care e.g.: EMS/SJA
- 2 14. look at the summer sports opportunity i.e. ball diamonds for mens\ladies slo-pitch
- 2 15. more land for growth for housing and park space
- 1 17. ask community for their input on the changes
- 1 18. Bury more power lines in public areas of town

## **4.0 – Youth Centre**

### **4.1 – Brainstorm (Appearance, Promotion, Programs)**

#### **Appearance... What would it look like?**

2. APP: modern with things that people like
3. APP: Posters
4. APP: Open Concept Ideas
5. APP: trendy - lots of windows - showcase local youth art
6. APP: Natural Light
7. APP: nice clean modern
8. APP: lounge like..many small group like set ups ..modern lounge and clean
9. APP: stage
10. APP: a room right outta IKEA
11. APP: wireless internet
12. APP: It should be colourful, modern, have things for every type of teenager (athletic, creative, etc..)
13. APP: no cost team tournaments i.e. dodge ball
14. APP: lounge with a variety of activities
15. APP: murals on walls, done by local students
16. APP: fitness sessions for low cost or free
17. APP: quiet so that students can go there and do homework and its still relaxing for them
18. APP: an area where you can come with own computer
19. APP: Environmentally Friendly
20. APP: Posting board for Job Opportunities, Volunteer Opportunities, Etc.
21. APP: Curved furniture. Somewhat futuristic.
22. APP: large space
23. APP: study/relaxing area AND entertainment/chat/hangout area
24. APP: 2 stories, counseling for youth having troubles with drugs etc.
25. APP: different outside design
26. APP: make it relaxing and a nice place to go after school like homework groups
27. APP: place to do homework
28. stuff we need

#### **How would you promote it? so that everyone knows about the Youth Centre and the programs?**

2. P: Event Nights
3. P: make flyers and/or put the info into something teens would see!
4. P: announcements at high school
5. P: posters and stuff at the high school
6. P: Get a few students interested, they will tell their friends, and so on...
7. P: big opening night activity
8. P: cool posters, graffiti's murals, FACEBOOK, etc
9. P: facebook group
10. P: big BRIGHT sign
11. P: TV commercials, radio
12. P: stickers
13. P: tattoos
14. P: announcements at the schools

15. P: say that there are cool things if we get cool things
16. P: just peers to convince you to go with them
17. P: tell more people and repaint the building because looks bad

**What would it have? Youth Centre - changes, additions (what would it have so that you and your friends would go there?)**

2. WiFi
3. Musical program
4. Fitness offering
5. computers
6. Pool table
7. Foos ball
8. Movie night.
9. DJ System
10. Video games.
11. Instruments
12. plenty of opportunities
13. opportunities
14. coffee/tea for purchase
15. A small collection of borrow-able books.
16. things for teens
17. Community Emergency Response Team
18. cost free tournaments of mini sports or other stuff
19. Trips to out of town programs every so often. Ex, Lazer Quest
20. new types of items
21. games
22. internet Cafe.
23. xbox
24. movie nights
25. ps3
26. some sort of food for sale
27. something cool
28. darts!
29. lazer tag or paintball
30. food for sale
31. free yoga for teens
32. open and closed areas for privacy workshops...
33. baked goods (eg, cookies, tarts, etc)
34. guitars, amps, drums ....area for kids to jam
35. rules and regulations thats allows everyone to be part of a group!!
36. computers

## 4.2 – Vote

What are the FIVE most important in each category?

- Appearance
- Promotion
- Activities

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 15) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 80

Total number of voters (N): 17

### Total

- 14 1. P: cool posters, graffiti's murals, FACEBOOK, etc
- 9 2. P: make flyers and/or put the info into something teens would see!
- 9 3. P: Event Nights
- 9 4. computers
- 9 5. WiFi
- 8 6. P: announcements at high school
- 8 7. APP: lounge like..many small group like set ups ..modern lounge and clean
- 8 8. Fitness offering
- 8 9. APP: It should be colourful, modern, have things for every type of teenager (athletic, creative, etc..)
- 7 10. Musical program
- 7 11. APP: trendy - lots of windows - showcase local youth art
- 7 12. Pool table
- 6 13. P: big opening night activity
- 6 14. Movie night.
- 6 15. APP: study/relaxing area AND entertainment/chat/hangout area
- 6 16. P: big BRIGHT sign
- 6 17. some sort of food for sale
- 6 18. coffee/tea for purchase
- 5 19. APP: wireless internet
- 5 20. APP: Environmently Friendly
- 5 21. APP: nice clean modern
- 5 22. P: facebook group
- 4 23. Video games.
- 4 24. APP: murals on walls, down by local students
- 4 25. APP: lounge with a variety of activities
- 4 26. APP: make it relaxing and a nice place to go after school like homework groups
- 4 27. P: Get a few students interested, they will tell their friends, and so on...
- 4 28. P: TV comerchals, radio
- 4 29. APP: modern with things that people like
- 3 30. Trips to out of town programs every so often. Ex, Lazer Quest
- 3 31. internet Cafe.
- 3 32. APP: no cost team tournaments i.e dodge ball
- 3 33. P: posters and stuff at the highschool
- 3 34. APP: Posters

- 3 35. P: say that there are cool things if we get cool things
- 2 36. cost free tournaments of mini sports or other stuff
- 2 37. A small collection of borrow-able books.
- 2 38. baked goods (eg, cookies, tarts, etc)
- 2 39. ps3
- 2 40. guitars, amps, drums ....area for kids to jam
- 2 41. movie nights
- 2 42. APP: Natural Light
- 2 43. APP: quiet so that students can go there and do homework and its still relaxing for them
- 2 44. P: stickers
- 2 45. APP: Posting board for Job Opportunities, Volunteer Opportunities, Etc.
- 2 46. APP: different outside design
- 2 47. APP: Open Concept Ideas
- 2 48. P: just peers to convince you to go with them
- 2 49. P: announcements at the schools
- 1 50. Instruments
- 1 51. APP: Curved furniture. Somewhat futuristic.
- 1 52. APP: place to do homework
- 1 53. APP: 2 stories, counseling for youth haveing troubals with drugs etc.
- 1 54. DJ System
- 1 55. APP: large space
- 1 56. Community Emergency Responce Team
- 1 57. APP: an area where you can come with own computer
- 1 58. P: tell more people and repaint the building becauset looks bad
- 1 59. APP: fitness sessions for low cost or free
- 1 60. APP: a room right outta ikea
- 1 61. APP: stage
- 1 62. something cool
- 1 63. free yoga for teens
- 1 64. open and closed areas for privacy workshops...
- 1 65. rules and regulations thats allows everyone to be part of a group!!
- 0 66. opportunities