

West Grey

Economic Development Handbook



The Natural Choice

Welcome

Welcome to West Grey

"On behalf of our committee — and all of the businesses and residents of wonderful West Grey — I would like to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome. Our goal is to encourage you to relocate your business or professional office to West Grey, expand your West Grey business or perhaps even start a new one! We are a business-friendly community — now more than ever — and we want to convey that through this publication and our municipal web site. You can also get information about the benefits of business in West Grey by speaking with members of our business community, economic development committee or other local business organizations, such as the Durham Business Improvement Association, West Grey District Chamber of Commerce and Saugeen Economic Development Corporation."

Mr. Bev Plume, Chair of the Economic Development Committee

West Grey

West Grey is a unique area in which to live, work and play. We are fortunate to enjoy a superb quality of life; thanks to a region filled with natural splendors, a vibrant cultural community of performing and visual arts, a rich heritage, and excellent schools, recreation and medical facilities.

We invite you to visit us for a guided tour of wonderful West Grey — talk with our Economic Development Committee members about the many business opportunities, visit our shops and galleries, meet local business owners to discuss the benefits of doing business in West Grey.



Home to Business

Businesses in West Grey are also fortunate to have excellent information and services available through the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation – a community-based, non-profit organization funded by Industry Canada. At the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation you can access an inventory of locally available low-cost industrial and commercial land, a searchable business directory and a complete Community Profile of demographic information about West Grey.

Benefits of Business in West Grey

- Low property taxes compared to other similar municipalities
- Business-minded municipal council
- Inventory of low-cost industrial and commercial land
- Low construction costs in comparison to other parts of Ontario
- Training and employment assistance
- Well-trained work-force
- Low cost labour
- Inexpensive residential housing

Principles

Economic Diversification

A diversified economy is a sustainable economy. In order to maintain and strengthen our economic base, our mission is to attract new businesses to the community. To do this, the municipality is focusing on enhancing the business environment and infrastructure.

Retaining Existing Businesses

A key factor in our economic strategy is to retain the existing businesses within our community. We understand that expansion of existing businesses will prove to be the most effective method for the creation of additional employment.

Business Environment

We strive to understand and respond to the needs of the business community. Additionally, we recognize the importance of maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for the employers and the employees by encouraging high quality educational facilities, diverse recreational opportunities, affordable housing, access to excellent health care facilities and a variety of cultural/social activities.

Utilizing Community Assets

Community assets are those items that set the community apart – the Municipality of West Grey is dedicated to building upon these assets for the benefit of the existing and future business community.

Business Contacts

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The Municipality of West Grey Economic Development Committee 2004

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The Municipality of West Grey is the largest municipality, by area, in the County of Grey at 90,000 hectares. It has a population of approximately 12,000.

Location/ Transportation

West Grey is located in southwestern Ontario in some of the prime farmland areas of Grey County.

Within two hours of Highways 400 & 401; within a half hour of commercial harbour facilities in the City of Owen Sound.

The area is served by the Saugeen Municipal Airport – our key to the provincial airport network – offering quality service to both recreational and commercial traffic. The airport is jointly owned by a number of municipalities, including West Grey. The runways are capable of servicing and accommodating small to mid-size corporate jets and larger commuter-type turbo-prop aircraft. The airport offers Canada Customs clearance on an as-needed basis.



Fast Facts

Communications Technology

West Grey is served by Bell Canada and Wightman Telephone Company which both have the technology and communication infrastructure to compete nationally and internationally.

Internet is available in the area from several ISPs, including Bell and BMI Internet. All residents of West Grey have access to the Internet without having long distance charges. High-speed connection is available in many areas of West Grey.

Television/Radio/Newspapers

Persona offers cable TV service to the area. Additionally, the New NX from London and CKCO from Kitchener both report on local news in the area.

Two radio broadcasters serve the area: CKNX from Wingham and Bayshore Broadcasting from Owen Sound. Both have AM and FM offerings.

The Durham Chronicle is the local weekly newspaper reporting on West Grey. Local news of West Grey is also reported in the Hanover Post and in the Owen Sound Sun Times – a daily newspaper serving the Grey-Bruce region.

Emergency Services

West Grey operates three fire stations and has its own municipal police force providing police protection 24 hours per day.

Business Community

Neustadt Springs Brewery

"We love the relaxed village pace of life," brewery owner Val Stimpson says. She and her husband, Andy, operate Neustadt Springs Brewery. The award-winning stone brewery is said to be the oldest original operating brewery building in Ontario.



Val and Andy emigrated with their family from England in 1995. After two years of researching the different communities that the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade Business Immigration Section had suggested, they discovered Neustadt.

When they saw the beautiful stone building that started life in 1859 as a brewery: "It was just perfect," Val says, "Even though it ended up taking us ten months to actually get it organized and ready to open — it was well worth it."

The massive stone structure is not only a working brewery it doubles as a tourist attraction with pre-arranged tours into the caverns deep under the building. Neustadt Springs Brewery has won many awards over the years including Gold and Silver Medals in both the Beer World Cup 2004 and the 2004 Canadian Awards. This award-winning beer is sold throughout Ontario – in Ottawa, Toronto and London for example, and can be purchased on the premises.

"West Grey is a lovely place to live," Andy says, "we enjoy the quality of life for ourselves and our family — and for our business, we enjoy reasonable property taxes and easy commuting to the major trading centres in Southern Ontario and the adjacent border states."

Business Community

Business Community



Jaekel Manufacturing

"I'm very pleased to see that the new Municipality of West Grey is making economic development a priority," Kevin Jaekel, owner of Jaekel Manufacturing in Durham says. "I have done a lot of travelling on business in the past, I've seen a lot of North America and Durham

is a great place to live and work."

Jaekel Manufacturing began in 1998 in Kevin Jaekel's home garage. Today, Jaekel Manufacturing, which builds special purpose machinery and dies for national and international operations as well as local companies, employs six people in a busy shop in Durham's industrial park. Jaekel Manufacturing produces a wide variety of custom projects from auto part fabrications to woodworking tools and equipment.

Jaekel estimates that approximately 70 percent of his work comes from customers within a 50 km radius and he anticipates that a focused economic development effort will make this local market even larger in coming years. One local customer, for example, is the award-winning Durham Furniture. Jaekel recently produced a large assembly unit for them that will increase their efficiency while meeting Durham Furniture's high standard of craftsmanship.

Kevin Jaekel anticipates Jaekel Manufacturing expanding into producing computer-driven machinery and more sophisticated equipment. Another area he would like to expand into is the actual production of parts, instead of only building the machines that make the parts. Plant expansion would be necessary to accommodate the new venture, something he planned for when he purchased the land in the industrial park, by having the option to purchase neighboring land.

Thistlewood Timber Frame Homes

Scott A. Murray, president and founder of Thistlewood, and his team of timberwrights are dedicated to a time-honored timber frame construction method, using traditional tools and techniques. In both 2001 and 2002 Thistlewood Timber Frame Homes was awarded a National Award for the Best Home in Canada by the Canadian Home Builder's Association.

Thistlewood employs 40 people and completes approximately 25 to 30 projects each year. Frame homes are shipped around the world to sites such as Colorado, California, Florida, Quebec, Alberta, England, Scotland and Japan. Since 1982, they have designed and crafted more than 400 custom-built homes around the world.

"Being in West Grey is a lifestyle decision. The benefits of a rural setting are appealing to me personally, no traffic to fight, the natural environment right outside my door and transportation to major markets is very good – the roads are excellent. A rural setting also suits the type of work we do – with heritage homes."

"The business has grown when it felt right, not according to a pre-existing plan," Murray says. The most recent growth was the construction of a new shop. "It gives us needed extra space and has increased our building efficiency," he says. Murray has recently launched a new business, Vintage Woodcraft Inc, crafting furniture, stairs, flooring and millwork out of reclaimed wood.

"The municipality of West Grey has been very supportive of our business, they've been helpful in promoting the area generally and in realizing the impact of bringing new business and assisting in the expansion of existing business."



Business Community



Johnny K Sports

Winning a Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award for business excellence a few years ago didn't clinch John Kollias's business success, but he says: "It makes me want to come to work everyday – it spurs me on to keep doing well. I come to work everyday and have fun."

Work for John is retailing sports equipment and clothing and outfitting sports teams with equipment and uniforms. His shop specializes in hockey, golf, soccer and baseball clothing and equipment. He is also the creator of a line of clothing and ball caps called The Fourth Line. "I trademarked the name and logo in 1997 and I sell it to other stores also. Success for me is to see it in the stores, it's my passion, my idea and I made it happen. It's very satisfying to see NHL players, for example wearing it on TV during an interview."

A few years ago, Kollias bought a building on the main street of Durham and moved his business. The new location is bigger, at 3000 square feet, and brighter and has excellent retail windows: "windows are key in retail and with these ones I can create real depth and interest," Kollias says. "In retail, it's also important to move things around in the store and I like to regularly try new things," he says. For instance, he has increased his women's and men's clothing lines with Columbia and Point Zero fashions for casual wear. "Women's clothing has been good. A mom will come in with her son to buy hockey equipment and see a Columbia ski jacket for herself."

Kollias, who moved to Durham with his family when he was in high school, says he personally enjoys small town life. "I know my neighbours and customers – even those that come from neighbouring towns – and it's a great place to raise a family."

Business Community

Riversong Gallery

For artist Gary McLaughlin and his wife, writer and author, Pat Crocker, the fast-paced life of downtown Toronto got traded in for bucolic river walks and foraging for wild mushrooms many years ago. "Pat had a PR firm – now that's a stressful business – and I had a studio – a bit bohemian – right on Yonge St. – then we bought a little log cabin, just outside of Mt. Forest, for weekends and soon we made the permanent move," McLaughlin says.



McLaughlin, is the quintessential Canadian illustrator. He has done work for Harlequin Romance novels – all those steamy book covers – and for Canadian Tire and Tim Horton's – picture apple-cheeked lads playing pond hockey.

In June 2003, McLaughlin and Crocker opened Riversong Gallery which will soon to be joined by a Riversong Café. The gallery exhibits the work of five to seven resident artists, plus McLaughlin's own work and mounts a themed show once a year. At the 2004 show opening – A River Runs Through It – about 150 guests arrived to see the work of over 100 artists – it was a heck of a party, McLaughlin says.

The 970 square foot gallery is operated by McLaughlin and the resident artists throughout most of the year, but is closed from January through March. Crocker, whose office is above the gallery, writes magazine articles and cook books – her specialty is cooking with natural ingredients.

McLaughlin also has his studio in the gallery. "I'm the only artist working in the gallery and people enjoy being able to poke their heads in and see what I'm working on." These days he is busy with portraits and commissions, many of them historical town murals. "One just seems to lead to another," he says of the murals.

Business Community



Speke Klein

"The people of West Grey and especially our business neighbours are very welcoming, very friendly and helpful," says Tomas Klein who, with his wife and business partner, Robin Speke, moved their contemporary furniture design and manufacturing firm from near Guelph to Durham's industrial park one year ago.

The couple discovered West Grey when they were invited by friends for a weekend studio tour in the area a few years ago. "West Grey has a lot going for it," Klein says, "inexpensive land, easy accessibility to Toronto and the airport and full services including major couriers and trucking companies – it's rural without being isolated."

"The industrial park was the perfect option for us," Klein says, "the services were all here, with three-phase electrical, easy access for shipping trucks and to highways, we have 5,000 square feet that we couldn't afford to have built for the price we bought." The manufacturing shop is on the main floor and the offices are upstairs in the two-storey building.

The couple have operated their business for six years and sell hardwood furniture – benches, chairs, cabinetry, tables – to small boutique shops in major urban centres across North America. "We sell about 80 percent into the US, into cities such as LA and New York," Robin Speke says. She handles the sales and marketing for the firm and Tomas, her husband and business partner, is in charge of production. "We currently have 28 different products, with variations," she explains, "We produce on demand and rarely have inventory in stock," Speke says.

At a recent trade show for contemporary furniture in New York, Speke Klein won a Craftsmanship Award. The show, the International Contemporary Furniture Fair, is the largest show of its kind in North America.

Business Community

West Grey Premium Beef Inc



West Grey Premium Beef Inc opened in the summer of 2003 by three partners – two beef farmers and one retailer. "We make a good fit because together we know how to grow beef and we know how to retail beef. Now we are learning how to wholesale it," Peter Knipfel, the retailer in the partnership, says.

George Maxwell and Doug Calhoun, the beef farmers in the partnership have feedlots in neighbouring Bruce County. All of the partners appreciate their excellent West Grey location. "We sell throughout Ontario and can easily access all of our markets from here. Guelph is just down Highway 6 – we sell to the GTA, Barrie, Thunder Bay and of course, in Grey-Bruce. We also get good tourist traffic here for our retail store."

The main focus of the business is wholesaling boxed meat to butcher shops, grocery stores and restaurants. West Grey Premium Beef is a participant in the Ontario Corn Fed Beef program. "It's a branded quality assurance program developed by corn growers, beef producers and the government," West Grey Premium Beef manager, Chet Calhoun says. "Because we grow the product we can guarantee consistent quality. We can even custom grow what retailers or restaurants want."

"Starting this business. . .expanding the building, we had to work with the Municipality of West Grey," Knipfel says. "They were fantastic to deal with, the council and municipal staff made it very easy for us through the severances, the rezoning, the site plans. . .They are very encouraging to business."

Durham Art Gallery

The Durham Art Gallery is a non-profit centre serving artists and art audiences in Grey-Bruce Counties. As well as regular exhibitions of local, national and international work, the Gallery offers regular musical performance events, a film festival, computer access and workshops. For more information visit the Gallery or its web site, www.durhamart.on.ca or call (519) 369-3692.

West Grey Public Library System

West Grey operates libraries in Durham, Elmwood, Neustadt and Ayton. More information is available from the main library in Durham at (519) 369-2107 or online at www.westgreylibraries.com

Schools

West Grey has two public elementary schools, one separate elementary school (JK-Gr8) and an independent/alternative elementary school. Secondary school students are bused to John Diefenbaker School in Hanover or Grey Highlands Secondary School in Flesherton. French immersion is available in Flesherton and Hanover.

Churches

Alsfeldt United Church - <i>Ayton</i>	Queens Bush Rural Ministries - <i>Durham</i>
Bentinck Baptist Church - <i>Elmwood</i>	Revealed Word Tabernacle - <i>Allan Park</i>
Glenelg Centre Baptist Church - <i>Priceville</i>	St. Paul's Lutheran Church - <i>Neustadt</i>
Crawford United Church - <i>Elmwood</i>	St. Peter's Catholic Church - <i>Ayton</i>
Durham Baptist Church - <i>Durham</i>	St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church - <i>Neustadt</i>
Durham Presbyterian Church - <i>Durham</i>	Trinity Lutheran Church - <i>Ayton</i>
Foursquare Gospel Church - <i>Durham</i>	Trinity Anglican Church - <i>Durham</i>
Jehovah's Witness - <i>Hanover</i>	United Church - <i>Elmwood</i>
Knox United Church - <i>Durham</i>	Victory Fellowship Baptist Church - <i>Hanover</i>
Neustadt Baptist Church - <i>Neustadt</i>	St. John's Lutheran Church - <i>Elmwood</i>
Neustadt Christian Fellowship - <i>Neustadt</i>	St. Peter's & St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church - <i>Durham</i>
New Tribes Mission of Canada - <i>Durham</i>	
Presbyterian Church - <i>Ayton</i>	

Health Care

South Bruce Grey Health Centre-Durham (formerly Durham District Memorial Hospital) was formed with a merger of hospitals located in Chesley, Walkerton and Kincardine. The Durham site offers 29 beds and provides a number of local medical services including 24hr emergency services, access to specialized clinics, laboratory, diagnostic, and electrodiagnostic imaging, physiotherapy and nutritional counselling.

Additional Health Care Services

A new walk-in medical clinic is soon to open in Durham. Operating out of Owen Sound, Para-Med Home Health Care services all of Grey and Bruce counties. It offers private nursing, homemaking, childcare, acquired brain injury care and lifeline services.

The Victorian Order of Nurses, based in Owen Sound, provides a variety of home support services including mother and infant care, palliative and supportive care, insurance services, intravenous therapy and private duty (shift) nursing.

Bruce, Grey and Huron Disability Transportation Network provides transportation for the physically challenged and the elderly using 14 vans and one 40 passenger bus equipped with hydraulic lifts.

Dental, chiropractic and physiotherapy, in addition to many alternative therapies, are available in West Grey.

Retirement Homes and Communities

Rockwood Terrace, in Durham, is a 100-bed long-term care facility owned and operated by the County of Grey and the Province of Ontario. It offers 24-hour registered nursing supervision and medical care in a home-like setting. There is also a long-term care facility in Markdale. Serenity and Abbeyfield House are retirement living communities in Durham. There are three residential retirement communities in Chesley, two others in Hanover and one in Ayton.

Service Clubs

West Grey is well served by a wide variety of community service organizations such as local chapters of the Agricultural and Horticultural Societies, the Kinsmen & Kinettes, the Lions & Lioness, Masons, Optimists, Rotary Club and the Royal Canadian Legion & Legion Ladies Auxiliary.

Recreation & Community Facilities

West Grey's organized recreational needs are largely serviced by the communities of Durham, Ayton, Elmwood, Markdale, Neustadt and Hanover. Each of these communities offers a **Community Centre Complex** and numerous organized sports teams for all ages, including hockey, ringette, baseball and soccer. Additionally, many centres have Halls available for small, community events.

The recent development of the **Durham Community Activity Centre** provides residents with a full range of services, such as an extensive selection of weight and aerobic training equipment, whirlpool tub and spa and fitness classes - all under the supervision of trained and enthusiastic instructors. There is also a **Curling Club in Durham**.

Excellent year round trails systems are available in winter for snowmobilers and cross-country skiers and in summer for hikers and cyclists. And, for golfers, there are several courses and driving ranges in the area.



The **Durham Conservation Area**, stretches approximately two miles along the Saugeen River. The park offers playgrounds, wash-rooms, two sandy beaches - roped off for swimming - and **McGowan's Falls** with a picnic pavilion. Kayakers and canoeists are often seen practicing their sport above the Falls. There are also 200 sites available for overnight camping. This area offers an extensive hiking and nature trail system, accessing the beautiful scenery of the **Saugeen River Valley**.

Mills, built by pioneers to harness the water power, still exist in many spots in West Grey. A particularly good example is the Rocky Mill, built of stone, one of the most photographed in Ontario. It can be seen from Highway 6 on the west side of the Highway, north of the Town of Durham. Traverston Mill is another good example of a pioneer mill. This wooden three-storey structure perched on the banks of the Rocky Saugeen is now a dwelling.



The famous **Welbeck Sawmill**, a major hardware and lumber store, is a favourite for woodworkers looking for specialty tools and rare woods. On any given day you'll find Mennonite buggies parked beside sleek vehicles from out of town or local farmer's pickup trucks. Tours are given, by appointment, of the water powered shingle mill.

The **Welbeck Woodcrafters Expo** (formerly the Durham Wood Show). This event takes place in early August and shows a wide variety of woodworking tools, machinery and wooden crafts. There are craft vendors, more than 15 company display booths with company reps on hand, horse drawn wagon rides, a shingle mill tour and lots of home improvement features.



Events & Attractions



The **Durham Herb Fair** is held every June at the Durham Town Hall alongside the sparkling Saugeen River. Along with live music, vendors offer crafts, herbs, flowers and vegetables. An excellent source for native wildflowers, cultivated garden plants, grasses and ferns, shrubs, flowering vines, herbs and heirloom vegetables. Crafts people offer quality products that include functional baskets, hand-decorated pots, natural soaps, garden sculpture, bird houses, feeders and innovative flower containers.

Rural Gardens Tour – Grey and Bruce counties invite you to share the rare and diverse garden experiences of our private country gardens. These gardens are members of a network throughout Grey and Bruce: each is unique. Some offer other facilities such as hiking trails; several offer plants for sale; others organically grown produce. www.ruralgardens.ca

Autumn Leaves Studio Tour
A free and self-directed annual tour in October. It offers close ups of rustic, contemporary, classic, Celtic, traditional, Art Nouveau and funky creations against a backdrop of country lanes, waterfalls, fields of mown hay and exquisite autumn foliage. Studios include a forge, weavers, potters, dried flower artistry, glass blowing and sculpture gardens.

www.warehamforge.ca/leaves



Events & Attractions

Just around the corner...

Nearby Mount Forest, Markdale and Hanover all offer additional cultural and community events and attractions.

For example:

- **Varney Speedway's** high bank paved oval – don't miss "the train" nights. (Just south of Durham)
- **Hanover Raceway** with the sulkies and parimutuel betting provides summer excitement with the accompanying **Hanover Raceway Slots** making it year round fun. (Just west of Durham)
- **Saugeen Valley Conservation** Headquarters, on 213 acres south of Hanover, maintains a wildlife sanctuary open to the public year round with nature trails, ponds teeming with fish and a picnic spot.



West Grey Economic Development

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Photos by Telfer Wegg

