

Whitby number one Ontario for business

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Brooklin Town Crier

Whitby is the best city for business in Ontario and seventh in Canada, according to a top 25 list posted last July on PROFITguide.com.

PROFITguide.com is an online source for up-to-date and reliable business information, boasting 30 years of service to the Canadian business world. Its annual list, 'Canada's Best Places for Business', provides a ranking of the top 25 cities across the country. Cities are ranked based on how business-friendly their governments are, balance of costs in the areas, and how the local markets are projected to grow.

The site states that Whitby is seeing a population growth of 1.29 per cent and has nearly 5.5 million people living within a one hour commute. But what does Whitby's high ranking mean for Brooklin, currently home to about 22,000 with expectations of hitting over 56,000 by 2031?

Deputy Mayor Derrick Gleed feels it helps with the town's current plans to grow the presence of business in the community. "It just adds to the fact that Brooklin is a very favourable place to invest money," he says.

In 2014, local government began to develop a vision for the community, referred to as the master plan. That vision has led to goals, including the creation of a "main-street feel" on Baldwin Street, a range of transportation options, improved traffic flow and more.

"The focus right now is the downtown," says Gleed, "and that hinges on our ability to gain control of Baldwin Street from the province."

Moving forward, Whitby continues to grow its star on the map of Canada with the recent announcement of the expansion of Flanagan Foodservices. This alone will bring over 100 jobs to the area.

"The challenge for Brooklin," says Gleed, "is the fact that when you talk about investment in business, the town of Whitby has more on-stream employment land. This means lands that are on the marketplace right now that corporations can invest in.

"Brooklin will have more employment land coming on-stream as we proceed with the master plan."

With the completion of highway 407, traffic through the area has increased and so has the opportunity for commercial expansion. Although land near the recently expanded highway has not yet become available for marketing, that is only a few years away.