



Business Breakthrough *Guide*

Local, regional, provincial and federal programs, services and supports for businesses in Haldimand County.

Welcome!

Whether you are dreaming up business ideas, building momentum, growing your team, or stepping into legacy-level impact...

There is a treasure chest of support available right here in Haldimand County that most business owners don't know is available to them.

That's why we built this Business Breakthrough Guide.

Think of it as your go-to playbook with direct links to the transformational programs, networks and opportunities you can plug into today. Many of the most valuable resources are completely free and waiting for you to take advantage of them.

Treat this guide as your:

- **Library:** so you always know where to turn for answers
- **Map:** to understand your stage and the path ahead
- **Cheat sheet:** with the exact people and programs that can help, right now

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Consider our team a support system you can lean on as you navigate the resources within this guide, and make decisions about your next moves in your business.

We're here to help!

Haldimand County Economic Development & Tourism

Web: businesshaldimand.ca

Email: opportunity@haldimandcounty.ca

Phone: 905-318-5932

Your Stage of Business

Whether you are just starting out or looking to scale, understanding your current stage of business can help you find the right resources to support your next steps.

Explore

You are exploring an idea, validating market potential, or early planning.

Indicators You're In This Stage:

- Business is in the idea stage
- You're doing market research
- Minimal operations
- No revenue (or very little)

Hot Tip: Talk to potential customers and test your idea before investing too much time or money.

Establish

You have launched and are building foundations for sustainability.

Indicators You're In This Stage:

- You have a registered business
- Early sales demonstrating viability
- Building systems
- Limited team or solo

Hot Tip: Focus on cash flow and building strong relationships with customers and partners.

Grow

You are expanding operations, reaching more customers, and increasing revenue.

Indicators You're In This Stage:

- Growing your team
- Increasing revenue
- Expanding market presence
- Optimizing systems for scale

Hot Tip: Invest in your team and processes to support sustainable growth while developing your skills as a leader.

Expand

You are scaling your business through new markets, products, or locations.

Indicators You're In This Stage:

- High growth
- Multiple revenue streams
- Strong leadership
- Exploring new opportunities.

Hot Tip: Plan strategically and build a scalable infrastructure to support expansion.

RESOURCES

Business Advisory & Mentorship

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Haldimand County Economic Development		Information on local business support, municipal programs, funding, and economic development initiatives.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Boundless Business Accelerator		Not-for-profit regional innovation accelerator offering structured programs, expert mentorship, and resources to help startups and scale-ups grow.	Grow Establish Expand
Boundless Business Consulting		One-on-one advisory services to help businesses overcome challenges, identify growth opportunities, and scale with confidence. Tiered packages and fractional CXO support available.	Grow Expand
Brantford-Brant Business Resource Centre (BRC)		Part of Ontario's Small Business Enterprise Centre network, providing free business advice, workshops, and access to funding programs.	Explore Establish Grow
Business Impact Program		Fully funded, two-year program offering hands-on, one-on-one mentorship and expert guidance for innovative startups beyond idea stage.	Grow Establish
FedDev Ontario - Small Business Services		Provides information, tools, and personalized guidance to small businesses in Southern Ontario.	Explore Establish Grow
Grand Erie Business Centre (GEBC)		A local non-profit business development organization serving Haldimand County and the Township of West Lincoln, offering consultation, support, advice, and business loans (up to about \$300,000).	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Growth Accelerator Program		Cohort-based program providing mentorship, training, and resources to scale businesses.	Grow Expand

RESOURCES

Business Advisory & Mentorship *Continued*

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Haldimand County Public Library – Business Services		Free access to business resources, meeting spaces, workshops, and expert guidance for entrepreneurs.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Innovation Factory		Regional innovation centre offering advisory services, mentorship, and support for Indigenous entrepreneurs.	Explore Establish Grow
Investment Readiness Course		Focused on preparing early-stage companies for raising capital (angel investors, VCs, M&A).	Grow Expand
Ontario Small Business Advisory Centres		Free one-on-one business advisory services and guidance for Ontario small businesses and entrepreneurs.	Explore Establish Grow
Rhyze® Up!		Acceleration for women-founded scale-up entrepreneurs across Canada delivered through mentorship, project implementation, and coaching.	Explore Establish Grow

RESOURCES

Business Planning & Operations

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
BDC Balance Sheet Template		Free, downloadable template to track assets, liabilities, and equity.	Explore Establish Grow
BDC's Entrepreneurs Toolkit		Free articles, tools, and templates for business planning, finances, and operations.	Explore Establish Grow
Business Benefits Finder		Customizable search tool for government programs, funding, and support eligibility.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Small Business Centres Ontario - Growth Bundle		An online bundle of resources, courses, and tools to support small business growth.	Grow Establish
Succession Ontario		Planning hub providing resources and guidance for business owners preparing to sell, transfer, or transition.	Expand
Think Local Business Resource Tool Kit		Directory of tools, resources, and local services in Grand Erie and Elgin-Middlesex-Oxford regions.	Explore Establish Grow Expand

RESOURCES

Business Start-Up & Youth

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
10 steps to start a business in Ontario		Government of Ontario guide outlining essential steps for starting a business.	Explore Establish
2SLGBTQIA+ Entrepreneurship Resource Guide		Resource page developed in collaboration with CGLCC and Startup Canada presenting a curated entrepreneurship guide for 2SLGBTQIA+ founders.	Explore Establish Grow
Concept Catalyst		Designed for early-stage entrepreneurs who are ready to validate their idea, refine their business model, and build a strong foundation for growth.	Explore Establish
Entrepreneurship funds and resources for people under 30		Government funding programs, resources, and supports to help youth start and grow a business.	Explore Establish
Founders Fast Track		Curriculum covering customer development, pitch preparation, funding strategies, and mentorship for businesses past proof of concept.	Grow Establish
Futurpreneur		A national non-profit providing young entrepreneurs with financing, mentorship, and startup resources.	Explore Establish
Haldimand County - Start A Business Web Page		Step-by-step guidance for starting a business in Haldimand, including permits, licenses, and local contacts.	Explore Establish
Starter Company Plus Grant Program		Successful candidates may be eligible to receive a grant of up to \$5,000 in addition to mentoring, training and one-on-one business coaching.	Explore Establish Grow
Summer Company		For students 15–29: provides startup funds, free training, and mentorship to launch a summer business.	Explore Establish
Youth Entrepreneurship Guide		Guidance on the basics of starting a business and government programs available to young entrepreneurs in Ontario.	Explore Establish

RESOURCES

Export & International Trade

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Calendar of International Trade Programs and Events		Information about upcoming trade missions and exhibitions for Ontario businesses looking to export outside Canada.	Grow Expand
CanExport Innovation		Grants and contributions up to \$75,000 for R&D partnerships with foreign partners.	Grow Expand
Export Assistance		Government support and resources to expand businesses into global markets and increase exports.	Grow Expand
Export Development Canada (EDC)		Provides financing, insurance, loan guarantees, and market intelligence to help companies enter new markets.	Grow Expand
International Trade and Investment Offices		Connects with Ontario's suppliers and research organizations through business matchmaking and trade missions.	Grow Expand
Tariff Resources		Federal programs and resources assisting businesses and workers navigating trade and market changes.	Grow Expand

RESOURCES

Grants, Loans & Financing

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)		A bank dedicated exclusively to entrepreneurs, offering financing, advisory services, and growth resources.	Grow Establish Expand
Desjardins GoodSpark Grants - Momentum Fund		Grant program that funds small business projects with a strong community impact. (Applications open periodically.)	Grow Establish
FedDev Ontario		Funding for growing or established businesses in Southern Ontario to scale, innovate, and expand into new markets.	Grow Establish Expand
Haldimand County - Community Improvement Plans (CIP's)		Provides financial incentives to businesses and landowners for property upgrades in designated downtown cores and rural zones.	Grow Establish Expand
Ontario Government Funding		Searchable directory of current Government of Ontario business grants, loans, and financial assistance.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Rise Small Business Lending Program		Low-interest microloans (up to \$10,000) and 12-month mentorship for entrepreneurs facing barriers to traditional financing.	Explore Establish Grow
Southwest Ontario Development Fund		Provides conditional grants or interest-free loans to businesses expanding in the region while creating jobs.	Grow Establish Expand

RESOURCES

Grants, Loans & Financing *Continued*

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Telus #StandWithOwners Program		National program supporting entrepreneurs with funding, technology, and visibility. Applications open at select times.	Grow Establish
The Canada Small Business Financing Program (CSBFP)		Government-backed loan program partnering with lenders to provide small business financing up to \$1.15M for establishment or expansion.	Grow Establish Expand
Women's Enterprize Organizations of Canada (WEOC)		Supporting Canada's women entrepreneurs with loans of up to \$50,000 and wrap-around services.	Grow Establish

RESOURCES

Hiring & Workforce Development

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Canada Summer Jobs Wage Subsidy		Wage subsidies for hiring youth aged 15-30 for summer work experience.	Grow Establish Expand
Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG)		Government funding program providing training grants for employers (up to 50–83% of costs, max \$15,000/trainee).	Grow Establish Expand
Co-op at Mohawk College		Co-op recruitment program with student placements, plus Co-operative Education Tax Credit details.	Grow Establish Expand
Grand Erie Jobs		Tools to research Grand Erie's labour market, find local data, and develop HR recruitment strategies.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Indeed for Employers		Platform to post job openings, search candidate resumes, and connect with qualified talent.	Grow Establish Expand
LinkedIn Talent Solutions		Recruitment tools to find, attract, and hire qualified candidates through professional networking.	Grow Establish Expand
Ontario Job Bank		Free job posting and candidate matching platform for Ontario employers.	Grow Establish Expand
Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)		Work-experience program to hire and train youth apprentices with financial support and mentoring resources.	Grow Establish Expand

RESOURCES

Hiring & Workforce Development *Continued*

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
SOAR Community Services		Employment Ontario services assisting Haldimand County employers with hiring, job postings, screening, job fairs, and incentives.	Grow Establish Expand
Sponsor An Apprentice		Toolkit and guidance for sponsoring an apprentice, including responsibilities and financial incentives.	Grow Establish Expand
Student Job Bank		Connects youth with part-time and seasonal job opportunities.	Grow Establish
Workopolis Recruiter		Talent recruitment tools and job postings to streamline candidate hiring.	Grow Establish Expand

RESOURCES

Innovation, R&D & Sector Support

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
AgrilInnovate Program		Federal funding for innovative agricultural technologies and processes that improve competitiveness and sustainability.	Grow Expand
Foodpreneur Advantage		A regional program supporting food entrepreneurs with resources, training, and community connections.	Explore Establish Grow
Innovation Funding		Government funding opportunities for innovative business projects, research, and technology development.	Grow Expand
Intellectual Property Inventory Checklist		Curated checklist for inventors and innovators to understand different types of IP and actions to consider.	Explore Establish Grow
Ontario Creates		Enables creative industry companies to increase productivity, build scale, mitigate risks, and access international markets.	Grow Establish Expand
Ready 4 Market (R4M)		Co-invests with angel and other investors in early-stage Ontario-based start-ups with competitive IP commercializing transformative technologies.	Grow Establish
Rural Ontario Development Program		Cost-share grants (up to 35%, max \$10,000) for small brick and mortar businesses in rural Ontario with 1-20 employees.	Grow Establish
Scientific Research and Experimental Development Program (SR&ED)		Tax incentives (income deductions and ITCs) to encourage businesses to conduct R&D in Canada through deductions and investment tax credits.	Grow Establish Expand

RESOURCES

Haldimand County Chambers & BIA's

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Caledonia BIA		Improving downtown areas through beautification and events.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Caledonia Regional Chamber of Commerce		Local chamber of commerce supporting business growth through events, programs and advocacy.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Cayuga & District Chamber of Commerce		Local chamber of commerce supporting business growth through events, programs and advocacy.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Dunnville BIA		Improving downtown areas through beautification and events.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Dunnville Chamber of Commerce		Local chamber of commerce supporting business growth through events, programs and advocacy.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Hagersville BIA		Improving downtown areas through beautification and events.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Hagersville Chamber of Commerce		Local chamber of commerce supporting business growth through events, programs and advocacy.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Jarvis Board of Trade		Local board of trade supporting business growth through events, programs and advocacy.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Selkirk Chamber of Commerce		Local chamber of commerce supporting business growth through events, programs and advocacy.	Explore Establish Grow Expand

RESOURCES

Local Community & Networking

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
BRC - Email Newsletter		Email newsletter from BRC covering upcoming events, workshops, and program deadlines.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Groundswell Coworking		Norfolk & Haldimand coworking hub offering memberships, masterminds, events, and strategic business support.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Haldimand Biz Hive		Local grassroots networking group with regular meetups for entrepreneurs.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Haldimand County - Economic Development Email Newsletter		Email newsletter sharing new resources and funding opportunities for Haldimand businesses.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Local Networking Events		Annual networking events including Small Business Week Breakfast and Business Symposium.	Explore Establish Grow Expand

RESOURCES

Market Research & Intelligence

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Business Data Lab, Canadian Chamber of Commerce		Tools and insights on Canadian business conditions, trends, and data.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Canadian Business – Market Research Articles		Practical articles and guides on conducting market research, understanding customers, and testing business ideas.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
FedDev - Intro to Market Research		A guide to understanding and applying market research in your business strategy.	Explore Establish
Google Trends		Tool to explore search trends to identify opportunities and gauge market demand.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Haldimand County Community Profile		Contains information on local demographics, labour force, real estate, education, etc.	Explore Establish Grow
IBISWorld Industry Research		In-depth industry research reports with statistics, trends, and competitive analysis.	Grow Expand
My Main Street Community Profiles		Provides community market profiles (2022) and consumer spending behaviors specific to local towns.	Explore Establish Grow
Ontario's Southwest Visitor Insight Reports		Traveller and visitor insight reports to understand visitor motivations and priorities.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Statista		Global market data, industry reports, and consumer insights across diverse industry sectors.	Explore Establish Grow Expand

RESOURCES

Marketing & Digital Presence

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Business Profile on Google		Free business listing on Google Search and Maps to reach local customers.	Grow Establish
Digital Main Street		Training, support, and occasional funding to help small businesses build or improve their online presence.	Grow Establish
Digital Service Squad - Workshop Videos		Free YouTube library of practical digital “how-to” tutorials for entrepreneurs at any stage.	Explore Establish Grow
Foodland Ontario		Free logo usage and promotional materials to identify Ontario-grown and made food products.	Grow Establish Expand
Google Analytics		Website traffic tracking and analytics tool with over 50 reports for marketing strategy.	Grow Establish Expand
Haldimand County Tourism and Business Supports		Local marketing, tourism, and business development support for regional businesses.	Explore Establish Grow
Meta for Business		Free tools and guides to reach customers on Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Messenger.	Grow Establish Expand
Ontario's Southwest - Marketing Resources		Tourism marketing opportunities including high-quality photography and social media features.	Grow Establish Expand

RESOURCES

Regulatory & Compliance

Resource Name	QR Code	Description	Stages of Business
Biz Pal		An online service that generates a list of required permits/licenses across government levels to reduce red tape.	Explore Establish Grow
Business Licences & Permits		Information and guidance on municipal permits, business licences, and local operating regulations.	Explore Establish
Grand Erie Public Health		Public health services and regulations for businesses, including food premises, inspections, and workplace safety. Formerly Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Grand Erie Public Health - Business Application Form		A required form for certain business types to ensure compliance with public health and safety regulations in Haldimand–Norfolk.	Explore Establish
Haldimand County - Zoning Regulation		Information on zoning bylaws, land use, and development approvals needed for business operations in Haldimand.	Explore Establish Grow Expand
Ontario Business Registry		An online portal where businesses can register, incorporate, file returns, and update corporate information.	Explore Establish
Service Canada - Business Services		Federal guidance on hiring, payroll, workplace standards, and government business services.	Grow Establish Expand
Taxation Guide		Guide providing an overview of different taxes that may affect your business and information on tools, programs, and services.	Explore Establish Grow

To Your Success

You've just uncovered over 100 business resources available to Haldimand County business owners and entrepreneurs - covering a wide range of industry and stage of business.

Now, you have an opportunity to leverage them. Click the links provided to be taken directly to each resource's web page, and start reaching out to the people and team's administering them.

And remember, the Economic Development & Tourism team here at Haldimand County is here to help you figure out where to start or go next.

Here's how you can reach us:

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