



Backgrounder: Economic Vibrancy and Growth

How could OV be better supported to sustain existing small businesses and to encourage new business development?

Oakwood-Vaughan's business environment:

- In 2016 there were 77 stores located on Oakwood Avenue according to the [City of Toronto's Oakwood Village Economic Scan](#):
 - 29% Cafes, Restaurants, Bars, Fast Food (ethnically diverse offerings)
 - 15% Business + Professional Services (ex. law offices, accounting firms)
 - 7% Education (ex. private schools, dance studios, daycares, driving schools)
 - 15% Vacant
- A diversity of additional businesses can be found along Vaughan Road, including:
 - Cafes and restaurants
 - Retail stores
 - Offices and religious centres
 - Personal care (ex. hair salon) and dry cleaners
 - Grocery (ex. butcher shops & variety stores)
- Oakwood-Vaughan is also connected to the business community along Eglinton Ave W, which holds strong cultural ties to the Jamaican community. Businesses include:
 - Restaurants
 - Personal Care (ex. barbershops and salons)
 - Fashion
 - Grocery

Economic issues in Oakwood-Vaughan:

- Vacant and/or under construction store-fronts
- Perceived lack of selection and services in OV resulting in people having to leave OV for some purchases and loss of contributing to local economy
- Oakwood Ave is subject to Arts District Zoning
 - Amherst Ave is the northernmost boundary and the southernmost boundary nears Rogers Rd.

- While offering a unique cultural and economic opportunity, the Arts District Zoning has contributed to the fragmented pattern of commercial activity along Oakwood Avenue. Some storefronts have been converted into rental residences resulting in a lack of street cohesion and character while perhaps providing affordable housing.
- There are several mixed-use highrise developments, including 1801 Eglinton Ave W, which are expected to put significant pressure on affordable housing and commercial rents, and accelerate the effects of gentrification (higher costs of housing and reduction in cultural diversity as people leave the area) within the community.
 - While additional housing is needed there is increasingly a need for equitable and affordable housing options within the community.
- The Eglinton LRT, which is still under construction, has reduced foot traffic along Eglinton and is expected to put development pressure on the community.

Potentially Responsive Models/Strategies for economic issues:

- Economic Advisory Committee
- Buy Local/Shop Local Campaign
- ActiveTO
- Commercial Facade Improvement Program
- Include in the affordable housing development plan for OV a re-balancing of Oakwood Ave.'s and Vaughan Road's commerce-residential street front mix
- Business Development Centre

OV Community Plan: Questions for Exploration on economic growth in Our Community

1. What are some challenges local residents are faced with while shopping within Oakwood-Vaughan?
2. What are the strengths of OV's business community, and how might they be built upon?
3. What might be hindering the growth of the Oakwood-Vaughan business community?
4. What would Oakwood-Vaughan's commercial area look like in 10 years, if the business community was adequately supported?
5. How could the community better support Oakwood-Vaughan's diverse ethnic business offerings?
6. There are groups of OV stakeholders discussing other parts of our Community Plan. What connections do you see among Economic Vibrancy & Growth with the following topics:



Mobility & Movement OV

Green OV Cultural

Retention & Growth