

WELCOME TO GRAVENHURST



Community Snapshot



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GRAVENHURST

GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA



Culture and Entertainment

Celebrating our culture is a priority. We are proud of our many cultural focal points, like the Gravenhurst Opera House, the Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre and Bethune Memorial House and Museum. There are also many exciting events happening all year long!



Recreation

Outdoor living is a big part of our way of life. Our lakes, parks and trails aren't just beautiful they also create a network of active transportation and recreational opportunities. Gravenhurst, and Muskoka pride themselves on being a four-seasons destination and have a variety of indoor and outdoor offerings for any age and fitness level.



Shopping

Gravenhurst provides a unique shopping experience, whether it be in Historic Downtown Gravenhurst or at the picturesque Muskoka Wharf, you can find artisan galleries, to home décor, to fashion boutiques and delicious eats, Gravenhurst has something for every shopper. Between May and October visit the Farmer's Market, showcasing upwards of 90 vendors during the summer months.





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Location and Connectivity

Geographically, Gravenhurst is centrally located in Ontario. We are the “Gateway to Muskoka” region and the first community into Northern Ontario. Our economy is growing, and as a result providing amazing opportunities in a wide variety of sectors. Connections are not only vehicular, but also through Air, Rail and Fibre supply lines.

Affordability

Gravenhurst’s housing costs are not as high as people perceive, offering a variety of price points. Whether you are looking for a large estate lot or an easy maintenance condo, housing in Gravenhurst will get you great value for your dollar. Commercial/Industrial land and building costs are also much lower than those similar in larger urban areas.



Lifestyle

An decrease in commute times and lower volumes of traffic enhance time spent relaxing and enjoying life with family and friends. The unique mix of retail, outdoor recreation and cultural events provides plenty of options, allowing for a more relaxed work-life balance.

Quality Education

We are served by the Trillium Lakelands District School Board and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board. Various private and alternative education facilities are available in the region. Gravenhurst also puts you in close proximity to area post-secondary institutions like Georgian College and Lakehead University, providing a variety of undergraduate and Master’s programs and a qualified workforce eager to find jobs.





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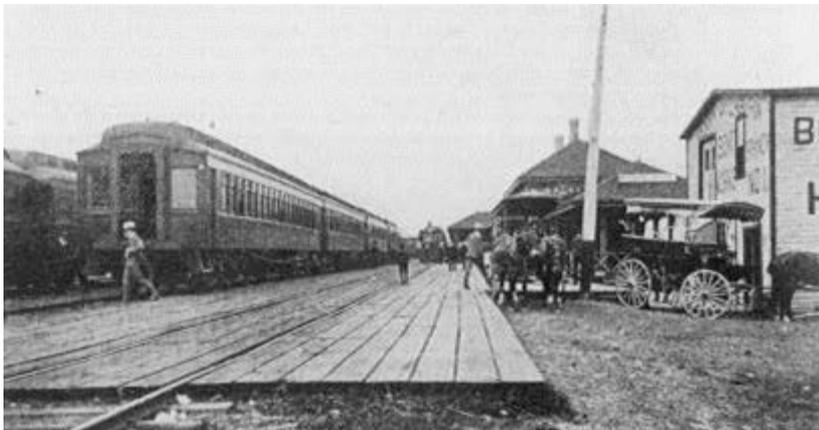
GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA

Gravenhurst has a rich and exciting history and is now home to many of Muskoka's most recognized cultural assets, including the Gravenhurst Opera House, Muskoka Wharf and the Bethune Memorial House and Museum.

The Town began in the lumber trade becoming prosperous and flush with sawmills and lumberyards. This brought the railway and steamships which in turn welcomed the first tourists to Muskoka.

In 1887, fire destroyed most of Gravenhurst's buildings in the center of town. Most of the older buildings that remain today were built after this time. In the same year, Gravenhurst was incorporated as a town.

In 1896, Gravenhurst became a haven for tuberculosis patients. As doctors prescribed plenty of fresh air and quiet relaxation, several hospitals and sanatoriums were built along the shore of Lake Muskoka.



Shortly, before the patients flocked here in the 1880's, a house at the corner of John St. and Hughson St. was built as the manse for the Presbyterian Church. Reverend Bethune's son Norman was born here in 1890.

Norman Bethune went on to become a surgeon and achieved great recognition in the medical world for his invention of medical tools like mobile blood transfusion units, developed as part of his work overseas. For his pioneering ways, Bethune was hailed as a hero, here and around the world, including China.



Location...

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GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA

Known as the “Gateway to Muskoka”, Gravenhurst is the first stop in our region for thousands of seasonal residents from Southern Ontario, in addition to national and international visitors.

Gravenhurst feeds into both main highways in Muskoka, with direct access to Muskoka Road 169 and Highway 11. Muskoka Road 169 runs northwest to Parry Sound, and southeast to Hwy 11, which runs north to Huntsville and through to North Bay, and south to Barrie through to Toronto and the US boarder within 3-4 hours.

Surrounded by natural beauty created by the dozens of lakes, rivers and streams, and located just a short drive away from many Provincial Parks and Conservation Areas. Gravenhurst’s location in Muskoka provides year-round entertainment and outdoor recreation opportunities.

The Muskoka Airport is located in Gravenhurst, making us accessible by air. It is an official Canada Customs Airport of Entry, and is used by charter companies, corporate flights, and recreational flyers.

Proximity to Major Centers

- Barrie — 75 Kms (45 mins)
- Toronto — 183 Kms (2 hrs)
- North Bay — 177 Kms (95 mins)
- Newmarket — 147 Kms (2 hrs)





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It is often thought that living in Muskoka is unattainable, but it's not! Small towns give more bang for you buck when it comes to housing. Why not choose a town that offers so much more. This is a perfect place to live whether you're young and single, newly retired or have a family.

Gravenhurst is home to 3 public elementary schools, a high school, and the Adult Education Training Center. proximity to post-secondary institutions means students can stay at home longer and reduce educational costs.

Gravenhurst has a healthy average household income of **\$80,805**. The average income per person is **\$42,569**.

Gravenhurst homes are valued at an average of **\$457,067** while a condominium is assessed at an average of **\$251,813**. Average Rental Rate for Residential Property are approximately **\$910/Month**.

The assessed values in Gravenhurst are lower on average than the surrounding area, making Gravenhurst an ideal location for your next home. In addition to lower cost of housing Gravenhurst has many unique amenities to offer.

Between 2016 and 2017, property values saw an increase of **15.4%** as a result of the inflated Toronto and GTA markets. More people are moving north making Gravenhurst a great place to invest too.

As Gravenhurst grows, additional and more diverse housing will be needed. Core intensification and mixed-use developments are encouraged. Many properties in Gravenhurst are prime for redevelopment for live-work and multi-rental units throughout the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods.



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GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA



More than simply physical beauty, Gravenhurst embodies the Live-Work Lifestyle. Quality of life is just one of the many advantages of being located here.

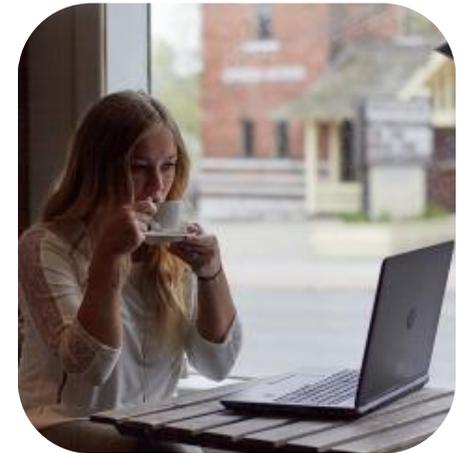
You can telecommute! The short travel time to Toronto allows creative class workers to easily be in office when needed or enjoy all the sites and events of the big city. Living in Gravenhurst and working in Toronto is easier and more popular than you think.

Lower costs of living also translates into more disposable income to do what you love, and enjoy your extra time.

Gravenhurst has become particularly attractive to young professionals. Muskoka Young Professionals meets monthly, connecting you with like minded individuals, while Rotaract Muskoka gives young professionals the opportunity to participate in their community.

Gravenhurst's provides year-round entertainment and recreation opportunities.

- Kayaking, canoeing, boating and swimming on dozens of lakes.
- Weekend camping get-away at local Provincial Parks and Conservation Areas
- Sunset cruises
- World class golfing
- Hiking, skiing and snowshoeing trails totaling 37.5 km
- 400 kms of groomed snowmobile trails
- Stunning recreation centre with skate park and arena
- Live shows and concerts





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Gravenhurst's population has grown steadily year after year and currently sits at **12,936**. In addition to a year-round population, there is a sizeable seasonal population base of **25,183**.

On a regional level, Gravenhurst is part of the District of Muskoka, which is experiencing a growth rate of **1.0%**. Gravenhurst is the third largest community in the District, both for permanent and seasonal populations.

	Gravenhurst	Muskoka
Current Population	12,936	61,010
Seasonal Population	25,183	145,050
2020 Projections	13,025	72,984
2025 Projections	13,615	77,755



30% of the population is between the ages of 20 and 44 years old and Gravenhurst's average resident age is **48**, proving that Gravenhurst is the right choice no matter your stage of life!

Trends have begun to show an increase number of young professionals choosing the area. Since 2010, the **87%** of new residents came to Gravenhurst from within the province.

"There are a lot of talented people up here, who have either organically grown up in the area or they have moved here away from the city for reasons similar to the reason I did."

- **Graham Porter**, CEO Thumbprint Education Systems





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Tourism worldwide accounts for **\$90.3 billion** in spending each year, Tourism business accounts for **39%** of all of the businesses located within Gravenhurst. Located in the Muskoka region, one of the strongest tourism brands in the country, While the summer season dominates the tourism calendar, winter opportunities are becoming more sought after each year.

Gravenhurst sees over **4 Million** Visitors each year and has six distinctive core attractors that present investment and product enhancement opportunities:

- The Resort Experience
- Small Town Experience
- The Cottage Experience
- Outdoor Recreation
- Water-based Features & Activities
- Arts, Culture & Heritage Experiences

Support for the tourism sector comes from strong collaboration between our local Tourism management and marketing organizations like the Chamber of Commerce.



“Gravenhurst is an entrepreneurial playground. We were lucky enough to host 50 shows in 2015 with 60% being sold out. Michelle and I are grateful to be able to work and live in such a wonderful community in Muskoka. Dreams do come true.”

- **Peter Swanek**, Owner—Peter’s Players





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GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA

Entrepreneurs and investors can take advantage of the internationally recognized “Muskoka” brand and leverage the millions of visitors each year to build their client base.

Tourism Investment Opportunities

- Tourism experiences for niche markets (i.e. agri-tourism, motor coach tour travellers, LGBTQ travelers, senior travel, family fun)
- Festivals and events, specifically in the shoulder seasons (October – May),
- Recreational adventure experiences (i.e. cycling, canoeing/kayaking, equestrian, snowshoeing)
- Tourist destination attractions (i.e. Non-Motorized water toy rentals, indoor/outdoor bath house & spa, indoor waterpark, zip lines, escape room, night club, themed accommodations, etc.)
- Leverage existing arts, cultural, events and entertainment assets through collaboration and packaging tourism products.



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Central location, picturesque landscapes, a large seasonal population, growing permanent resident base and economy, direct access to major transportation connections for national and international distribution, mixed with the low cost of doing business makes Gravenhurst a great place to do business.

Business Boom...

Gravenhurst has a competitive commercial tax rate at **1.86%** and in some cases is lower than our neighbours and other similar sized municipalities. With an industrial tax rate of **1.98%**, we are well below the Ontario average. The Town also offer **Zero** municipal Commercial and Industrial Development Charges and an extensive Community Improvement Grant Program to assist with costs of construction and beautification.

Having recent investment into the fibre optic network and a sought after work-live balance lifestyle, Gravenhurst makes the ideal location for telecommuting. Proximity to both Barrie and Toronto, Gravenhurst is never more than a few hours away for when an in-person presence is needed. Telecommuting can lead to greater productivity, help address skilled labour shortages, and reduce a business' carbon footprint.

Since 2016, **30** new businesses have opened in Gravenhurst but opportunity for further investment has been identified through the Retail Gap Analysis project.

Success is often a combination of many factors. Gravenhurst is affordable with Commercial Building Average Rental Cost of **\$12/Sq. Ft.**

“Craft brewing is an interesting mix of retail, merchandising and industrial production all under one roof. We could have set up in some industrial park but the high traffic and high visibility of Downtown Gravenhurst brings a lot of walk up traffic... When we started we had a five-year plan. Now we've learned that we should've only gone with a two year plan, because we've already passed our projections for Year Five!

- **Sam Corbeil**, Co-founder and Brewmaster—Sawdust City Brewing Co.





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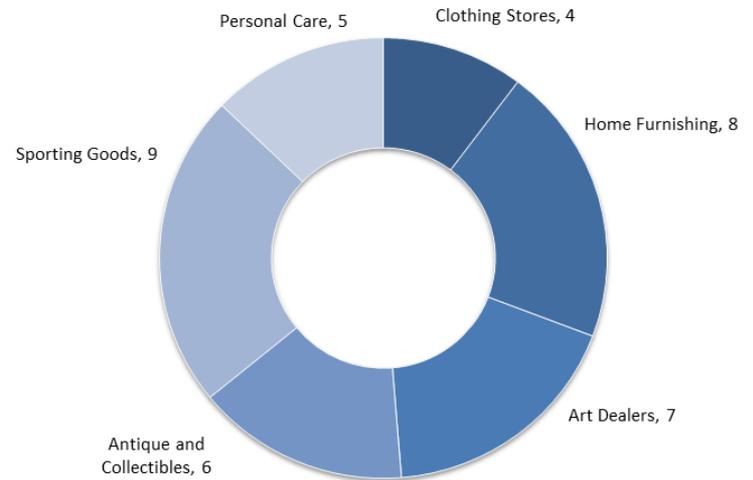
GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA

Retail accounts for **21%** of all businesses in Gravenhurst. We have become a destination for regional residents and day trippers looking for essentials or unique home décor and fashion items.

Gravenhurst's quaint downtown has just completed a revitalization project seeing both municipal and provincial funding go towards improving its look. Downtown not for you? The Muskoka Wharf is home to more destination retail including home wares, soaps, and collectibles

Gravenhurst is an ideal location for specialty retail and food businesses. With a number of unique stores and boutique shops, there is a strong mixed market waiting for business owners who can offer one of a kind products.

Whether you are selling clothing, tasty eats or becoming part of the antique and eclectic district popping up in Downtown Gravenhurst, you will find natural partnerships. A strong local shoppers base paired with a large quantity of seasonal residents and visitors means Gravenhurst is an ideal location for your next retail business opportunity.



“Business during the winter months has increased dramatically over the years. So many cottages are insulated and have plumbing so they can be used year round. Downtown businesses are more adaptable and coordinated to meet the needs of off-season consumers.”

- Penny Varney, Board of Directors, Arts at the Albion





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Consumers are looking for affordable and unique products and services and will pay a bit more for better quality, especially if it's food related. A Retail Mix and Gap Analysis was completed and provides insight into local consumer habits and needs. **Learn more at gravenhurst.ca/shoplocal**

Retail Investment Opportunities

- Build new retail stores within existing clusters (i.e. antiques, clothing, home furnishings).
- Ethnic foods and fine dining (i.e. sushi, seafood, Indian, Portuguese, fusion, gluten/nut free, farm to table, etc.).
- Create new retail concepts that will fill existing gaps that Gravenhurst is currently without (i.e. Shoe store, book store, health food store, gym, movie theater, etc.).
- Develop new retail concepts that would attract locals and visitors (i.e. Eat and shop, shop and play, pop-up shops).
- Collaborative approaches to retail targeting specific tourist groups (i.e. Bethune Memorial House souvenirs, tourism based products).
- Leverage existing perceptions of the area through 'cottage experience' retailing.





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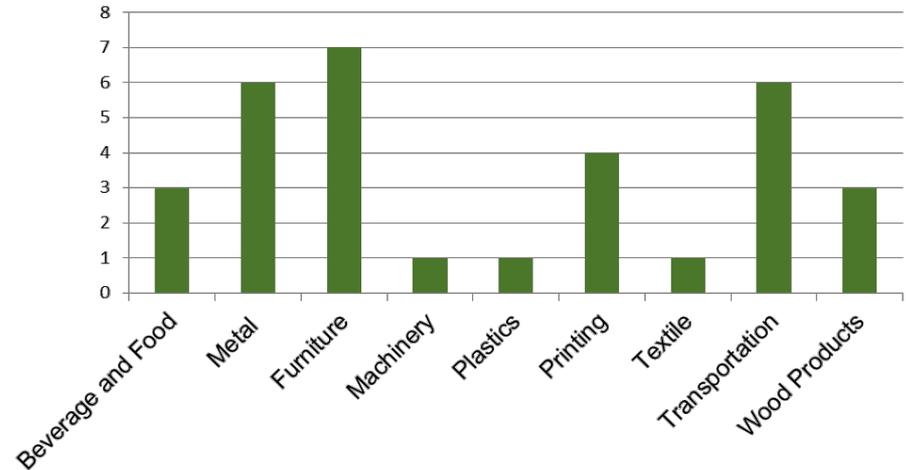
GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA

Whether it's food and beverage production, metal, wood or textiles, there are excellent cluster opportunities in Gravenhurst in the light, medium manufacturing and the construction sectors.

Highway 11 corridor offers quick and easy access to major transportation lines in all directions, including direct routes to the Greater Toronto Area and Canada/US boarder.

Our airport industrial area boasts many light manufacturers with close proximity to air, rail, and truck service.

The Gravenhurst Industrial Park has commercial and industrial space and is home to a full range of manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation, and warehousing businesses to support your operations.



Local post-secondary institutions are investing in skill trades development to support the manufacturing and construction industry.

Gravenhurst and Muskoka also have a number of Employment Service organizations to assist in finding qualified workers.



The Town offers an official welcome and ribbon cutting ceremony to help boost your opening.



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Consumers want fresh and healthy ready to consume products, they want local jobs and skilled and trustworthy local craftsman. Gravenhurst has an abundance of lands zoned to support industry and trade.

Industrial, Agriculture & Skill Trade Investment Opportunities

- Enhance or support current sector clusters (i.e. aviation, beverage production, construction)
- Create new local agri-food offerings (i.e. fruits, vegetables, livestock, eggs, microgreens, artisan cheeses, exotic meat, tropical green houses, candy or chocolate, honey, maple syrup)
- Create new small to mid-size industrial operations (grain mill, textiles, construction materials, Ice block production, testing and quality control labs, sports equipment)
- Leverage existing transportation routes and regional/provincial supply chains and industry.





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Gravenhurst's employment base growth rate is higher than the provincial average, at **1.6%** during the last five year period.

Gravenhurst supports a qualified and diverse workforce. The vast majority of our residents are educated and highly-skilled. **59%** of the population aged 25-64 has some form of post-secondary education. This lends to the resulting strong numbers of workers in skilled trades, business, finance and management.

Nearby educational institutions like Georgian College and Lakehead University are providing qualified employees to local firms looking for co-op students, interns, and graduates. Muskoka has also seen an increase of other graduates moving to the area.

Gravenhurst is the third largest community in the District, both for permanent and seasonal populations. The ideal location combined with a steady population increase continues to create a demand for new businesses and services.



- Business
- Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Graduate, Doctorate and Post Grad Certificates available



- Electrical Engineering
- Gold and Silver Smithing
- Mechanical Engineering
- Welding Techniques
- Training and Skills upgrading available





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Gravenhurst is part of **FedNor** and the **Eastern Ontario Development Fund** which provide funding to the municipality for business related programs but also can provide dollars to businesses in the area to assist in growth.

We are encouraging redevelopment and re-purposing of existing, under-utilized buildings by **removing Commercial and Industrial Development Charges**.

Town Council approved a zero municipal Development Charges (DC) rate for non-residential developments and the District of Muskoka significantly reduced non-residential DC's to further assist new or expanding businesses. These reductions give Gravenhurst a competitive advantage and saves developers thousands of dollars in development costs.



- Residential Rehabilitation / Conversion Grant
- Façade Improvement Grant
- Signage Grant
- Accessibility / Building or Fire Code Upgrade Grant
- Planning / Design Study / Drawing Grant
- Landscaping Improvement Grant
- Heritage Restoration Grant
- Heritage Property Tax Relief Grant
- Planning & Building Fees Grant
- Property Tax Increment Grant

The Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Program aims to help business owners and operators improve their property through 12 grant categories. *Learn more at gravenhurst.ca/cip*



GRAVENHURST

GATEWAY TO MUSKOKA

HISTORY

PEOPLE

SUCCESS

CONNECTIONS

OPPORTUNITIES

CREATIVITY

TOURISM

THE AIRPORT

DOWNTOWN

COTTAGE LIVING

Where do you picture for yourself? Discover what Gravenhurst has to offer!

We are committed to being **the** Muskoka destination as a clean, green, intelligent and sustainable community that strives for innovation. The Town of Gravenhurst demonstrates accountability, collaboration, integrity, respect, service excellences, and wisdom to residents, visitors, and businesses alike. Discover the unforgettable Gateway to Muskoka!

WWW.GRAVENHURST.CA



@Gateway2muskoka