

What you need to know:

What is an Eco Industrial Park?

An Eco Industrial Park (EIP) is a type of industrial park where a group of businesses locate together on a common property with a focus on increasing economic gains, while minimizing environmental impact to the community at large. Unlike regular industrial parks, which may have a limited focus on the environmental impact of its tenants' businesses, EIPs propagate both economic gains as well as sustainable practices as a function of their business strategy.

Green features such as environmentally friendly site design and layout and sustainable infrastructure assist stakeholders involved in the EIP to minimize waste and pollution, reduce stormwater runoff, increase energy efficiency to meet economic targets and environmental goals.

History: From Industrial Ecology to Eco Industrial Park

Industrial ecology, the blend of environmental sciences, engineering, business and policy, is the catalyst for today's eco industrial park model. The prevailing notion behind industrial ecology is that systems can work together with their surroundings instead of in isolation. When put into context of an eco industrial park, a symbiosis occurs where one company's waste can be the source of another company's raw material and a means to reap economic and environmental benefits for all parties involved.

A well known example of industrial ecology in practice, is located in [Kalundborg, Denmark](#). Established in the 1960s, Kalundborg evolved over several decades to a network of businesses that exchanged energy and waste and mutually benefitted from each others byproducts.

Eco Industrial Parks in Action

Around the globe, several examples of EIPs are underway or operational in [China](#), [Singapore](#), Sweden, Finland, Brazil and the [United States](#). In Canada, examples include [TaigaNova](#) in Fort McMurray, Alberta, the Burnside Eco Industrial Park in Halifax, Nova Scotia, The Bruce Energy Centre in Tiverton, Ontario and [Innovista](#) in Hinton, Alberta.

The Hinton EIP, for instance, is a greenfield development that was planned, designed and developed to benefit its tenants and the greater [Hinton community](#). Features of Hinton include implementing environmentally sustainable measures such as using 40% less roads, and incorporating a [storm water management facility](#) on the property.

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Pearson Eco-Business Zone, Toronto

Toronto is home to an eco industrial park that assists companies streamline operating costs in conjunction with reducing their environmental impact.

Launched in [2008](#), the Pearson Eco-Business Zone was created with the goal of increasing eco-business activity, greening the practices of existing businesses and attracting eco-friendly businesses to the area. The project is situated in the Toronto Pearson International Airport region, an area of covering 12,000 hectares of industrial and commercial land and home to over 12,500 businesses and 355,000 employees.

The Pearson Eco-Business Zone, a partnership between three municipalities, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, offers companies the opportunity to join [Project Green](#) programs, to receive training on how to adopt and implement green initiatives and to benefit from resources to support green endeavours that impact environmental performance.

Businesses participating in Project Green span sectors including manufacturing, professional services, transportation, warehousing and hospitality. Currently, there are 600 companies signed up as participants in the program with another 400 involved as partners and 100 as ambassadors.

Report Sources and Additional Information

Eco Industrial Parks can provide businesses from all sectors the opportunity to locate their company among a collection of complementary firms or industries that work together toward a common end goal- reducing their operating or input costs through sustainability.

For more information on Eco Industrial Parks and further reading on resources cited in this article, please refer to the links below.

- Indigo Development: <http://www.indigodev.com/index.html>
- Partners in Project Green: <http://www.partnersinprojectgreen.com/>
- Industrial Ecology: From Theory to Practice: http://newcity.ca/Pages/industrial_ecology.html
- Research Triangle Institute: <http://www.rti.org/pubs/case-study.pdf>
- Eco-Industrial Development Primer (Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Science): http://environment.research.yale.edu/documents/downloads/0-9/106eip-cels_exercise1.pdf
- Camden Country Green Industrial Park Feasibility Study: http://www.efc.unc.edu/projects/Camden_Report_Final.pdf
- Eco Industrial Solutions: <http://www.ecoindustrial.ca/index.html>