

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Planning and Economic Development
April 7, 2022

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner

Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 Update

1. Recommendation

The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade, ventureLAB and the local municipalities for information.

2. Summary

This report provides an update on implementation of the Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 to date. It also highlights outcomes from some programs targeted at providing COVID-19 relief and gives a program outlook for the remainder of 2022.

Key Points:

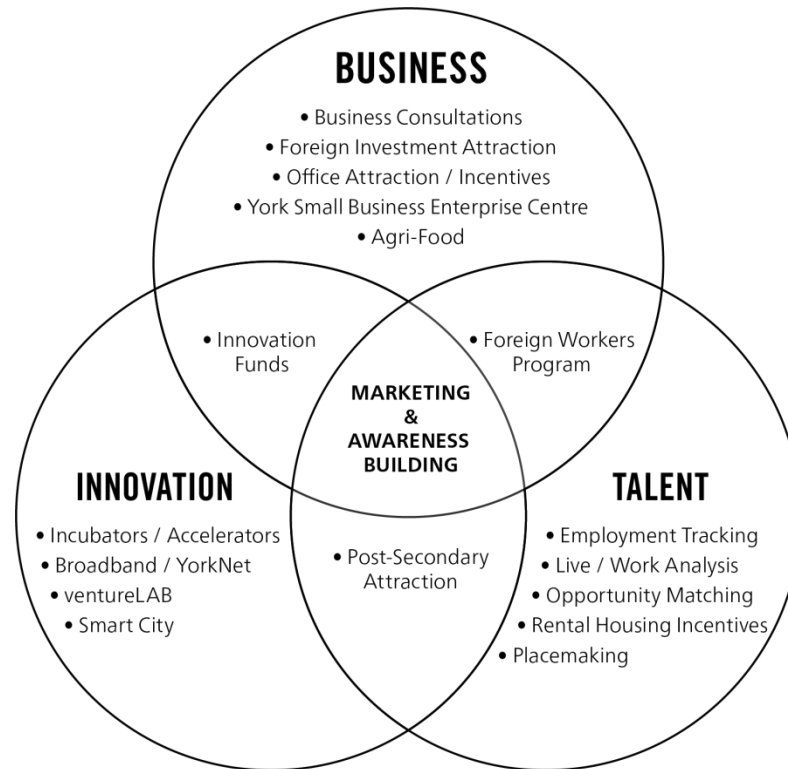
- The Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 is progressing well with activities initiated in all 20 actions areas
- Core services focused on business advisory, enabling innovation and talent support are having an impact
- The economy is rebounding and unemployment is nearing pre-pandemic levels; however there are still challenges with labour shortage in some sectors

3. Background

York Region's Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 focuses on Business, Innovation and Talent

The [York Region Economic Development Action Plan \(EDAP\) 2020-2023](#) was approved by Council in 2019 and focuses on Business advisory services, Innovation and Talent support, depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 Areas of Convergence



The document contains 20 action items which set the stage for growing the Region's economy. It provides a backdrop for supporting businesses and was the basis for collaboration as the pandemic hit.

The COVID-19 pandemic dominated the economic development landscape over the last two years

The pandemic has dominated the attention of economic development practitioners globally, nationally and locally since 2020. This focus was necessary as quick decisive responses were needed to ensure that adequate measures were implemented to help businesses and residents alike.

Federal and Provincial governments provided the lion's share of financial support for the business community. At the local and regional levels, the response was also swift, with a variety of initiatives primarily targeting sectors most impacted. This support was provided by a range of stakeholders collaborating through the Business Recovery Support Partnership approved by Council in [April 2020](#) to gather input and provide insight and advice.

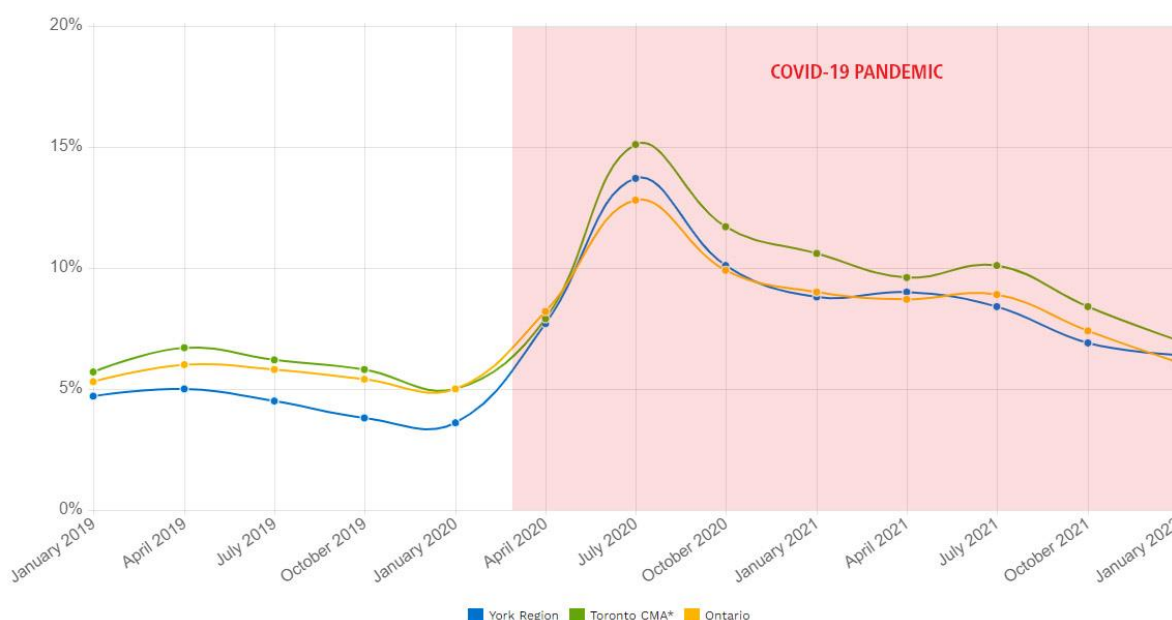
Although significant effort was targeted at providing support to businesses during the pandemic, core business advisory services and other programming continued to be delivered. The York Small Business Enterprise Centre continued to deliver the Starter Company Plus program and reintroduced the Summer Company program in the Region's

northern six municipalities. Advisory and talent support was also provided to the more established businesses in collaboration with partners across the Region.

Economic indicators demonstrate the economy and businesses continue to rebound despite challenges

At the outset of 2021, unemployment in York Region was 8.8%, on par with the Provincial average. The unemployment rate trended downward throughout the year ending at 6.0%, approaching the pre-pandemic level of 5.5% in March of 2020, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Unemployment Rates (%) 2019 to 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, 3-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality; *CMA – Census Metropolitan Area

There were however reports of labour shortages in certain industries. This was due to a complex set of variables ranging from wage concerns to pandemic subsidies, being laid off and rehired multiple times and pandemic burnout. This was most noticeable in low paying jobs in certain industries, primarily accommodations and food services. According to the Statistics Canada December 2021 [Labour Force Survey](#), between December 2019 and December 2021, employment in sales and services occupations fell by 6%, a larger decline than for any other major occupational group. Jobs in sales and service fell by 1.8 percentage points to 22.1% while jobs in natural and applied sciences and related occupations grew by 1.1 percentage points to 9.2% and by 0.9 percentage points to 17.1% in business, finance and administration. Reports also pointed to employees moving to higher paying jobs in other industries.

Nationally, Statistics Canada [Survey on Business Conditions](#) in Q4 2021 indicated that businesses expect to face challenges related to the workforce. Statistics Canada reported that recruiting skilled employees was expected to be an obstacle for over 35% of businesses.

The largest concern was in businesses in accommodations and food services followed by manufacturing. In addition, shortage of labour force was expected to be an issue for over 32% of businesses. York Region businesses were not immune. Of the 139 York Region business respondents to the survey, 22.8% indicated a shortage of labour and 25.5% cited recruiting skilled employees as a concern in the three-month outlook.

That said, almost 69% of York Region respondents indicated no plans to sell or close the business in the next twelve months while the remaining 31% were unsure. It is encouraging to note that over 60% of respondents reported a somewhat optimistic outlook over the next 12 months.

4. Analysis

The Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 is well underway

There are 20 action items in the Economic Development Action Plan, seven related to business advisory support, six in innovation support and seven for talent support. While these are identified as separate items, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive and in fact, activities in one will often have an impact on the other two pillars. Throughout 2021, work centred on not just responding to the pandemic but also on recovery and resilience, using the framework of the Economic Development Action Plan as a guide.

At the start of 2022 all the actions in the Economic Development Action Plan have been initiated. Twelve of the 13 "ongoing" items have been started or are incorporated into core operations while five of the seven actions with targeted end dates have been completed. This is summarized in Attachment 1.

Highlights include best in class service delivery of marketing, research, advisory support and innovation. Marketing and communication services leveraged the award-winning York Link platform to consolidate information and share key messages. This approach facilitated communication with a broad audience while allowing for targeted consumption of messages. This was a significant opportunity for increased marketing during development of the Economic Development Action Plan. York Link became a central feature in pandemic related communication, hosting timely information for businesses.

From January 2020 to December 2021, business engagement through yorklink.ca generated approximately 107,000 visits and over 176,000 total page views, an increase of over 65% in traffic compared to the previous two years. The York Link dedicated social media channels experienced similar growth and by the end of 2021 and had over 26,000 followers and over 1.1 million content views (impressions) annually.

More details of outcomes of the Economic Development Action Plan are provided in the sections below. The Year in Review document included as Attachment 2 provides a broader picture of outcomes from the Action Plan and the business community.

The Business Recovery Support Partnership continues to assist businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic

In response to the pandemic, Council approved the Business Recovery Support Partnership in [April 2020](#). Updates on the work done by the Business Recovery Support Partnership were reported in a Council memo on [January 2021](#) and Economic Development Update report in [June 2021](#). The Business Recovery Support Partnership continued to be a major vehicle for collaboration on COVID-19 related business support in 2021. Recent outcomes include:

- [Accelerate Business Recover Hub](#) led by the Aurora Chamber in collaboration with all the Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade in the Region as well as York University. Funding provided leveraged over \$460,000 from the Provincial government that will benefit up to 350 entrepreneurs and businesses.
- Completion of the \$500,000 COVID-19 small business funding program where nearly 100 small businesses benefited through either Community Improvement Plan programs or the four Small Business Enterprise Centres.

Business advisory services were initially focused on the pandemic in 2020 and expanded back to broader support in 2021

Business retention, expansion and attraction advisory services targeted established companies in knowledge-based industry and leveraged regional economies of scale. These services include economic/business research and a network of external partners to augment and extend the reach of local-municipal corporate call programs. Advisory support to small businesses and entrepreneurship services in York Region's northern six municipalities are delivered through the York Small Business Enterprise Centre. All business advisory services were migrated to online delivery once the pandemic was declared.

In 2020 and through early 2021, direct-to-business advisory services focused primarily on supports related to business continuity and recovery in the face of pandemic-related restrictions. As the economy began to reopen, programs were increasingly focused on growth needs of the local business community, as well as new businesses looking to locate in York Region. Over 1,500 business advisory consultations were delivered to both small and established businesses between January 2020 and December 2021. This includes 59 Starter Company Plus participants and nine students in the Summer Company program. These activities help contribute to the facilitation of over 3,000 jobs in the Region as well as the continued retention of existing jobs. Staff also supported business advisory initiatives undertaken by local municipalities and engaged Toronto Global in its mandate to attract Foreign Direct Investment to the Greater Toronto Area and York Region.

Collaboration on post pandemic support led to release of a white paper with business and government recommendations on supply chain resilience

The increased focus on post pandemic resilience led to the development of a white paper titled [Building Supply Chain Resilience](#) in collaboration with Supply Chain Canada and the Supply Chain Alliance. The study was conducted through a series of interviews with 30

manufacturers in the automotive, food & beverage, life sciences, building materials and electronics/electrical sectors across the Region.

The purpose of the study was three-fold:

1. Identify and assess the impact of COVID-19 on York Region manufacturers
2. Outline preliminary high-level recommendations and best practices for manufacturers to address both current and future supply chain resilience issues in the event of continued COVID-19 economic uncertainty or similar major market disruption in the future.
3. Outline high-level recommendations and best practices for municipal and upper-tier government economic development stakeholders to facilitate local manufacturing supply chain resilience in the event of continued COVID-19 economic uncertainty or similar major market disruption in the future.

It provided nine recommendations for businesses and eight recommendations for all levels of government to deal with unexpected events and risk in supply chains now and in the future.

The City of Vaughan organized a [cyber security workshop](#) for manufacturers based on one of the recommendations. The report was downloaded hundreds of times and used by Toronto Global to support the launch of the Supply Chain Onshoring Resilience and Expansion program.

An auto-tech study provided meaningful outcomes and insights that are now being leveraged to assist companies and promote Regional strengths

Another project with a post pandemic lens initiated in 2021 was an auto-tech cluster study to investigate York Region strengths in the auto-tech sector. The study revealed that the Region is home to one of the largest and most comprehensive auto-tech clusters in North America and is the largest in Canada. A particular strength is automotive innovation, with Canada's largest automotive innovation hub - General Motors Canadian Technical Centre, and other auto-tech research and development/technical centres such as Magna International and Multimatic. Significant recent investments in the auto-tech space include Tesla in Richmond Hill further expanding into Markham with the first branded Tesla Canada manufacturing facility in Canada, and Multimatic selected to produce the next generation Ford Bronco.

The Region is well positioned in areas like connected and autonomous vehicles with a large sub-sector of leading software companies, and electronics design capability. Being the second largest Information and Communications Technology hub in Canada supports the shift from a traditional automotive sector to the auto-tech of today and tomorrow.

York Region is also home to Canada's largest independent automotive parts and electronics manufacturing cluster, as well as the Global Headquarters of three of the five largest Canadian automotive parts companies. The report highlighted a

comprehensive and well-balanced auto-tech cluster made up of more than 250 establishments, and a capacity for growth given the talent that is present.

The first Regional promotional initiative was launched in March targeting US companies for foreign direct investment via [Site Selection's](#) printed and digital magazine. Site Selection is a leading publication for professional site selectors. Highlights and key results from the study were shared with local-municipal economic development offices and other stakeholders to collaborate, promote, and continue growing the booming auto-tech sector.

Innovation related initiatives help local and national businesses

Innovation is a fundamental source of economic growth and York Region ranks amongst the largest innovation hubs in Canada. The Action Plan identifies the Region as an enabler of initiatives that support innovation across all sectors. Entrepreneurs in York Region benefit from public innovation agencies including York University's YSpace, Seneca HELIX and ventureLAB as well as several private entities. Through a presence on the Board at ventureLAB and Advisory Boards at Seneca HELIX and the Food and Beverage Accelerator the Region was able to impact program development and delivery.

ventureLAB, as the Region's primary innovation partner from 2011 to 2020, supported over 4,000 jobs in the community as reported in [April 2021](#). In 2020 the Region engaged ventureLAB to manage the \$100,000 annual Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund. Since this fund was launched, 18 businesses and 4 community organizations have directly benefitted from this program. In [November 2021](#), Council approved \$1.5 million over 5 years from the Innovation Investment Fund to expand the Hardware Catalyst Initiative (HCI) delivered by ventureLAB. The HCI is regarded as Canada's first incubator focused on semiconductor companies and was mobilized with nearly \$10 million from the Federal government. This expansion will target foreign investment and support 145 jobs. Details of the collaboration with ventureLAB are provided in the ventureLAB 2021 Results Report on this agenda.

Collaboration on innovation activities with academic institutions has been through York University's YSpace and Seneca HELIX. Through the [York Region Food and Beverage Accelerator](#), delivered in partnership with YSpace, 20 businesses were able to expand distribution networks to nearly 450 new stores and increased sales by \$900,000 in two years. The partnership with Seneca HELIX supported its fifth-annual Summer Institute which focuses on addressing real-world issues faced by health care providers. Other partners included Southlake Regional Health Centre, ventureLAB, Humber College, George Brown College and Kingbridge Centre. The program hosted 60 participants since 2020.

Talent attraction, development and retention activities are yielding positive results

Competition for talent has been a priority for business leaders in the knowledge-based economy. From small and medium-sized enterprises to multinational corporations this competition has been even more visible during the pandemic.

Multiple initiatives were implemented over the last two years targeting businesses and job seekers alike. Notable initiatives include:

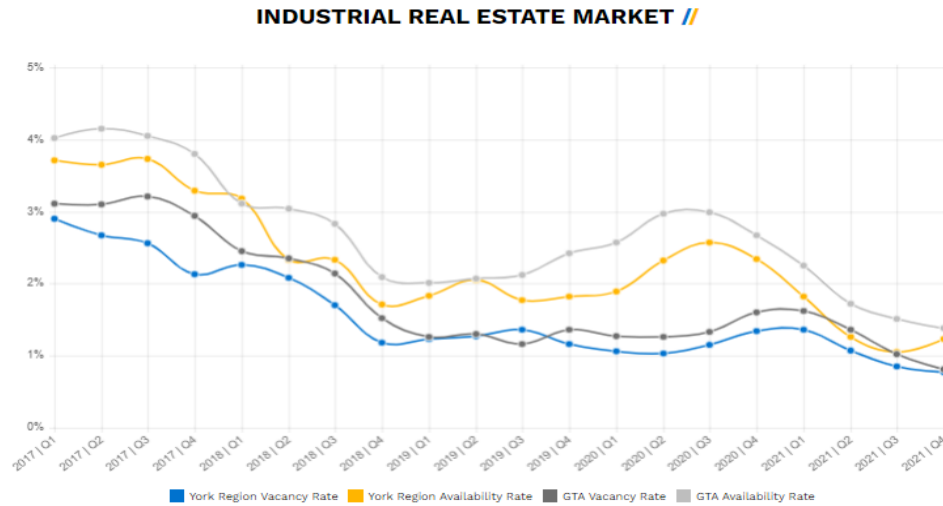
- A virtual Masterclass session at the 2021 Collision from Home conference leveraging the award-winning York Link platform. This was the second most attended Masterclass at the conference with over 140 attendees.
- Assisting several businesses secure highly skilled international talent for key positions as a designated referral partner for Federal Government's Global Skills Strategy programs. Referrals to this program supported the creation of hundreds of new jobs in York Region since 2018.
- With the leadership of the Workforce Planning Board of York Region, integrating the ['Work in York' job board](#) and [Talent Map Tool](#) into York Link. This provides employers and job seekers with information on jobs available in York Region.
- Supporting several employer roundtable sessions delivered by York University. More than 40 business from across the Region participated.

Increased development activity and lower industrial vacancy and availability rates indicate promising economic activity within the Region

In 2021, the Region received 2,050 new development applications and pre-consultations, a 24% increase compared to 2020. These applications included a total of 14,045 proposed residential units. As of December 2021, the Region's [housing supply](#) had an estimated 29,000 draft approved units awaiting construction. The Region will continue to experience strong growth as these applications proceed to registration and construction. The 2021 Annual Development Activity Summary Report on this agenda provides details and comparisons with previous years.

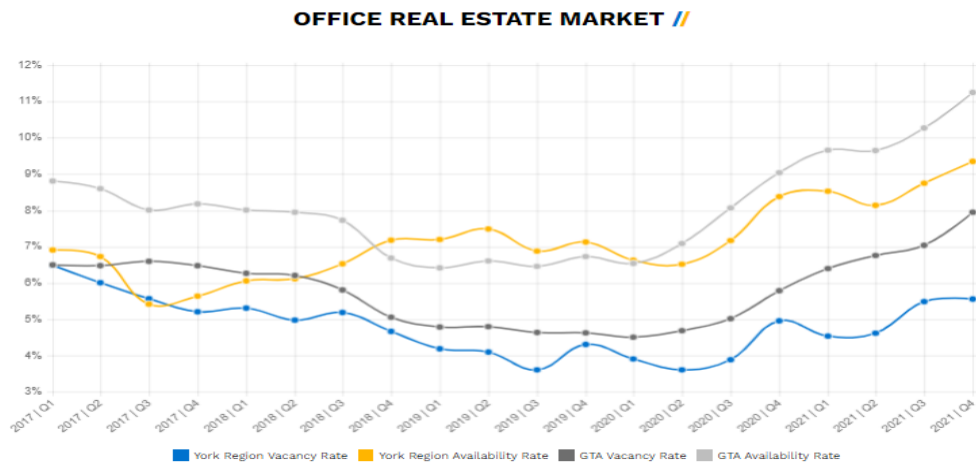
A York Region analysis revealed that vacancy rates and availability rates in the industrial real estate market, already at 10-year lows, trended even lower in 2021 ending at 0.77% and 1.2%. In the office real estate market however, vacancy and availability rates increased from 3.6% and 6.5% in Q2 2020 to 5.5% and 9.3% respectively in Q4 2021. This is likely partially attributable to businesses revisiting space needs after being thrust into remote work scenarios. In both the industrial and office markets, vacancy and availability rates in York Region fared well compared to the GTA average of 0.8% and 1.4% (industrial) and 7.8% and 11.3% (office). Figures 4 and 5 show vacancy and availability rates from 2017 – 2021 in industrial and office marks respectively.

Figure 4
Vacancy and Availability Rates in Industrial Market (%) 2017-2021



Source: CoStar

Figure 5
Vacancy and Availability Rates in Office Market (%) 2017-2021



Source: CoStar

Innovation, business and job growth continue to be fundamental to the Region's economic recovery and success

York Region is the third largest business centre in Ontario and a top destination for business, talent, and investment. The Region is home to:

- Canada's second largest cluster of information and communications technology companies
- Canada's largest automotive parts and electronics manufacturing cluster

- Ontario's second highest number of financial and professional services firms
- Two of the GTAs three 'employment megazones' that have the highest concentration of jobs outside Toronto's downtown core

With 54,000 businesses providing over 600,000 jobs, business and job growth are fundamental to economic vitality and quality of life. Attracting and retaining a variety of high-quality jobs across a broad range of sectors promotes economic resilience and helps ensure residents in York Region have the opportunity to work and thrive where they live. Council's efforts through the Housing Affordability Taskforce to help improve affordable housing options continues to be important.

Partnerships will continue to be instrumental in delivering the remaining action items in the 2020-2023 Economic Development Action Plan. Joint initiatives in 2022 will include COVID-19 business recovery support, marketing campaigns at Collision 2022, promotional activities around talent attraction and an expanded foreign direct investment marketing framework. There will also be more sector development promotion including autotech, agri-food and hardware through the HCI.

5. Financial

Costs associated with program delivery are included in the approved 2022 Planning and Economic Development Branch budget, except the Innovation Investment Fund which was approved by Council and established as a corporate reserve account. The Planning and Economic Development budget and Innovation Investment Fund will be used to leverage funding from other levels of government and other public and private partners to maximize results and economic impact.

6. Local Impact

Local municipalities are key delivery partners of the Region's Economic Strategy program. The goals and actions developed in the Economic Development Action Plan 2020-2023 are designed to complement local strategies and initiatives. The Region and local economic development offices meet regularly throughout the year and work together on program development and delivery. These meetings also facilitate alignment on messaging as well as joint client servicing when appropriate.

7. Conclusion

York Region is an attractive place for residents and businesses to locate and invest. The Region, in partnership with local municipalities and other economic delivery partners, has made an impact on this success through business supportive programs. The 2020-2023 Economic Development Action Plan is in the third year of execution and is well under way with a significant number of initiatives completed. The attached 2021 Year in Review

document highlights economic activity and the impact of York Region programs on business and job growth in the community.

For more information on this report, please contact Jonathan Wheatle, Director of Economic Strategy at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71503. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP
Chief Planner



Dino Basso
Commissioner of Corporate Services

Approved for Submission:



Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

March 24, 2022
Attachments (2)
13658123

Supporting Business

Action Item #	Description	Lead Responsibility /Partners	Performance Indicators and/or Expected Outcomes	Timing	Status
1.	Continue to deliver direct-to business consultation services to companies across the Region to support business growth and sector/cluster development in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High growth knowledge-based companies Small business start-up and growth services in the Northern Six communities of the Region through the Small Business Enterprise Centre 	Economic Strategy/local municipalities/Provincial government & other SBEC's in the Region	Minimum number of annual business engagements (800)	Ongoing	Implemented – over 1,500 in 2 years. There was a slight dip in core consultations due to the pandemic however there was increased support through the BRSP
2.	Undertake an enhanced York Link marketing campaign to promote high value business growth and place making, particularly in the Region's Centres and Corridors and priority employment lands	Economic Strategy	Minimum % increase in York Link social media followers across channels	Ongoing	Implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 56% increase in website visits 10% increase in social media followers
3.	Undertake targeted marketing of office development opportunities in Centres and Corridors with a focus on financial incentives	Economic Strategy/Finance	Number of developers engaged; new/expanded office buildings as outcome	Through 2022	To be revisited - started in 2020 but suspended due to COVID-19. To be revisited in 2022-23
4.	Undertake a broader, marketing focused foreign direct investment program , enhancing collaborative efforts of Toronto Region municipalities with York Region digital marketing and targeted selective awareness building activities, domestic and internationally (eg. Web Summit/Collision)	Economic Strategy/local municipalities & Toronto Global	Increase in York Link social media followers; York Region presence at Collision; foreign investments as outcome	Ongoing; Collision through 2021	Implemented – there was a virtual presence at Collision 2021
5.	Examine opportunities for broadening York Region's economic base through new cluster analysis and development (e.g. environmental/green technology, health technology, automation, hardware and artificial intelligence)	Economic Strategy/Planning & Environmental Services	Completion of review; recommended approach as outcome	One cluster per year	Implemented - support for Hardware and auto sector underway
6.	Delivery of the actions in the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy and support the administration of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee (AAAC) of Council	Economic Strategy/AAAC	As outlined in the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy	Ongoing	Implemented - Agri-food Strategy over 90% completed. Reported annually.
7.	Work with other industry service providers and stakeholders to examine the role of the Region in the delivery of tourism services through a tourism marketing review	Economic Strategy/Tourism stakeholders	Completion of review; recommended approach as outcome	In 2022	Underway

Supporting Innovation

Action Item #	Description	Lead Responsibility/Partners	Performance Indicators and/or Expected Outcomes	Timing	Status
1.	Administer and promote the Innovation Investment Fund to attract and support major transformational investments and drive innovation in the community	Economic Strategy	Funds leveraged by the Entrepreneurship and Innovation fund	Ongoing	Implemented – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500,000 to provide COVID-19 support to small businesses. Council approved \$1.5M for the HCI expansion at ventureLAB for hardware and semiconductor companies and FDI
2.	Administer, in conjunction with ventureLAB, the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund to develop the Regional innovation network by supporting companies, initiatives, incubators and accelerators	Economic Strategy/ventureLAB	Distribution of \$100,000 to targeted projects and businesses	Annual	Implemented – reported annually
3.	Establish a Regional Smart City Working Group to guide and evaluate Intelligent Community efforts, including engaging with local partners and private sector entities, and seek senior government funding program opportunities	Economic Strategy/Regional Departments	Number of partnership and funding opportunities identified	Ongoing	Implemented – however the mandate of this group is being revisited since the federal government has not launched another Smart Cities Challenge
4.	Support business development opportunities with YorkNet , the Region-owned dark fibre service provider, to build economic and innovation capacity in all parts of the Region	Economic Strategy/YorkNet	Number of opportunities identified	Ongoing	Implemented - underway. Successful ICON and UBF applications will see YorkNet receive \$63MM over the next three years
5.	Support businesses and innovation network partners with the delivery of an annual signature technology event/summit within the Greater Toronto Area	Economic Strategy/local municipalities & innovation stakeholders	Delivery/presence at major event; number of stakeholders and businesses engaged as outcome	Annual	Implemented – the event has been incorporated into ventureLAB's signature event
6.	Support the delivery of an innovation portal with network partners to tell the story of innovation in the Region and drive community engagement	ventureLAB/Economic Strategy & innovation stakeholders	Innovation portal is launched; number of stakeholders contributing as outcome	Launch 2020	Implemented - the portal has been integrated into yorklink.ca

Supporting Talent

Action Item #	Description	Lead Responsibility /Partners	Performance Indicators and/or Expected Outcomes	Timing	Status
1.	Undertake post-secondary/business connection activities to strengthen the connections between institutions and the business community to address talent development, acquisition and retention	York University & Seneca College /Economic Strategy	Support post-secondary partners with development of business community engagement strategies (and vise-versa)	Ongoing	Implemented – in-person activities with business and talent interactions were suspended due to COVID-19. However, multiple virtual Employer Roundtables were delivered by York University with the support of York Region and other stakeholders
2.	Explore new post-secondary investment opportunities to expand the Region’s capacity to generate talent and skills that meet business growth needs	Economic Strategy	Number of new opportunities identified	Ongoing	Implemented – activities have been focused on supporting increased presence of existing institutions
3.	Undertake talent attraction placemaking marketing to facilitate growth in the local technology sector by showcasing the Region as a location that attracts and retains top professionals through social media campaigns leveraging York Link and local and global industry event activations	Economic Strategy	Increased engagement of talent on York Link digital and social media channels	Ongoing	Implemented- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns included in the presence at the Collision conference as well as targeted social media activities • Work In York job board and Talent Map Tool on yorklink.ca in collaboration with the WPB
4.	Support a tech-job board with industry partners on the innovation portal to help technology companies identify and secure talent	Economic Strategy/ ventureLAB/innovati on stakeholders	Number of jobs posted	Ongoing	Implemented- Work In York has been incorporated into Yorklink.ca in collaboration with the Workforce Planning Board of York Region
5.	Act as a Designated Referral Partner for the Federal Global Skills Program to assist companies with accessing highly skilled international talent in occupations for which there are demonstrable shortages	Economic Strategy/Federal government	Number of referrals made	Ongoing	Implemented- hundreds of jobs supported
6.	Examine live-work in the Region in the context of talent retention and business access to appropriate labour	Economic Strategy/Long Range Planning	Completion of review	By 2021	Implemented- NOTE: this was completed by the Workforce Planning Board of York Region and is being leveraged
7.	Undertake targeted marketing of financial incentives for purpose built rental affordable housing to support talent retention and attraction	Economic Strategy/Long Range Planning/Finance	Number of Developers engaged; new/expanded rental accommodation secured as outcome	Ongoing	To be revisited- started in 2020 but suspended due to COVID-19. To be revisited in 2022-23

YORK REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT // 2021

YEAR IN REVIEW

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RESILIENCE IN YORK REGION

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LGC RELOCATES TO REGION
BRINGING **400 LOCAL JOBS** TO
NEW FACILITY OPENING IN 2024

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OPENS **NEW FACILITY** FOCUSED
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AMAZON CANADA CREATES
400 LOCAL JOBS WITH NEW
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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

On behalf of York Region Economic Strategy, I am pleased to present the 2021 Economic Development Year in Review. This is an overview of economic development activities undertaken this past year, highlights of business news from across the Region, and important economic indicators showing the strength and resilience of our business community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As 2021 continued to be a challenging year with the COVID-19 pandemic, the rollout of vaccines brought a sense of optimism. As well, federal, provincial, and municipal government funding and other support programs provided hope to businesses and residents across the country.

York Region's economic engine is made up of a diverse mix of small, medium, and large businesses and they also responded, demonstrating resiliency and creativity. In fact, while they all felt the impact, many entered new markets with solutions targeted towards supporting the global pandemic response.

At the local level, in response to the pandemic, our economic development community comprising local municipal economic development staff and other stakeholders continued to pull together to identify and implement ways to help businesses. This resulted in several impactful initiatives over the last two years focused not just on pandemic response but also long-term recovery, many of which are highlighted in this Year in Review.

Finally, thank you to the Economic Strategy team for their tremendous efforts dedicated to delivering best-in-class service to the business community.

As we look back on 2021, we continue to celebrate all the entrepreneurs and businesses across York Region and look forward to a year of growth in 2022. I invite you to visit yorklink.ca for more information on support services available to businesses across York Region, business news, events, and more.

*Jonathan Wheatle
Director, Economic Strategy
The Regional Municipality of York*

YORK REGION

WHERE TALENT AND OPPORTUNITY INTERSECT

Please note: Original and stock photos in this publication come from a variety of sources and were taken both prior to, or during, the COVID-19 pandemic. The public should continue following COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

Photo Credit: Level Studio

YORK REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

YORK REGION'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY DIVISION CONTINUES TO FACILITATE GROWTH IN BUSINESS, INNOVATION, AND TALENT

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Over the last 10 years York Region economic development programs and services facilitated the creation of over 7,300 new and expansion jobs, as well as the retention of tens of thousands of local jobs as companies continuously assess and evaluate their business location options.

In addition, over 4,600 new jobs were facilitated via key entrepreneurship and innovation partner agencies directly funded or supported by the Region, such as ventureLAB and York University's YSpace.

York Region's Economic Strategy team remained engaged with the business

community throughout the pandemic, delivering a range of services, programs and initiatives in collaboration with local municipalities and other economic development partners. These include direct-to-business advisory, economic development marketing, economic and business research, industry cluster development and innovation network support.

The York Region Economic Development 2021 Year in Review highlights business community success stories, economic development initiatives facilitated by the Region over the past year, and important business and key economic market indicators.



Meena Hassanali
Agriculture and Agri-Food Business Specialist
Planning & Economic Development, York Region



York Region continued to support region-wide business recovery initiatives such as the "Accelerate Business Recovery Virtual Hub" led by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration, with York University.

DELIVERY OF REGIONAL BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVICES CONTINUES THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

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Regional-level business retention and expansion advisory services targeting established companies across York Region focus primarily on growth industry sectors in the knowledge-based economy. These services leverage regional economies of scale, the award-winning 'York Link' marketing platform, economic/business research, and a network of external partners to augment and extend the reach of local-municipal corporate call programs being undertaken.

Regional staff also provide small business and entrepreneurship services in York Region's northern six municipalities through the York Small Business Enterprise Centre (YSBEC).

Since the COVID-19 state of emergency was declared across Ontario in March 2020, York Region transformed all its business advisory services to online delivery where possible.

In 2020 and through early 2021, direct-to-business advisory services focused primarily on supports related to business continuity and recovery in the face of pandemic-related restrictions in highly-impacted industries.

As the economy continues to re-open, business advisory services and programs are increasingly refocused on the growth needs of the local business community, as well as, businesses looking to locate in York Region.

BUSINESS ADVISORY SERVICES

- Industry sector data and advisory
- Partnered business investment and expansion support
- Strategic B2B/B2G connections
- Talent attraction support
- Small business & entrepreneurship support services
- Community relations and awareness building marketing
- Advisory on Provincial and Federal government programs

FOR MORE: [YORKLINK.CA/SERVICES](https://yorklink.ca/services)



FOSTERING **INNOVATION** IN YORK REGION REMAINS A KEY AREA OF FOCUS

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Innovation is a fundamental driver of economic growth and prosperity, regardless of the economic climate. York Region has earned its place amongst the largest innovation hubs in Canada, and it continues to play an active role as an enabler of initiatives that support innovation across all sectors.

The York Region Economic Action Plan 2020 to 2023 includes several actions designed to support innovation in York Region and this Year in Review captures many of them, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Collaboration with YSpace – York University's entrepreneurship hub – to deliver the York Region Food and Beverage Accelerator, which is focused on supporting high-growth consumer packaged goods ventures in scaling up their operations and acquiring new distribution channels.
- Continuing partnership with ventureLAB – York Region's Research and Innovation Centre – to support the delivery and promotion of core incubation and acceleration services,

the Hard Tech Conference and the Hardware Catalyst Initiative, which has received nearly \$10 million in federal funding support

- Leveraging the York Region Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund, administered by ventureLAB, to support development of the Region's innovation network by supporting promising early-stage start-ups, accelerators, incubators, and community partners
- Supporting the expansion of the Hardware Catalyst Initiative and the development of a soft-landing program for foreign-based hardware tech companies looking to invest in the Region by leveraging \$1.5 million in funding from the York Region Innovation Investment Fund
- Supporting YorkNet – the builder and operator of York Region's open-access dark fibre network – with its successful funding applications to the Improving Connectivity for Ontario program and the Universal Broadband Fund to enable a significant expansion of the network by 2025

REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR **TALENT** ATTRACTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY REMAINS A KEY PRIORITY AREA

The Regional Municipality of York |

The attraction and retention of high-quality talent has become the top priority for business leaders in the knowledge-based economy. Fostering an environment that draws such talent is a key priority for York Region Council.

Through multiple departments, the Region cultivates a dynamic and inclusive ecosystem for the local workforce and talent development.

York Region's 2020-2023 Economic Development Action Plan includes several talent-focused action areas. This publication covers some of the related activities that were undertaken or progressed in 2021 by the regional Economic Strategy office including, but not limited to:

- Placemaking marketing focused on tech talent attraction via a Masterclass activation at Collision From Home tech conference, as well as, through York Link's social media

- Delivery of talent-focused business advisory services including referral of qualified companies to the Federal Government's Global Skills Strategy programs to assist them with accessing highly-skilled international talent in occupations for which there are demonstrable shortages.
- Collaboration with the Workforce Planning Board of York Region to expand access to the 'Work in York' job board and talent information tools, benefiting employers and job seekers across the region
- Entrepreneurship development through the York Small Business Enterprise Centre (YSBEC) in partnership with local SBECs in southern York Region and business incubators/accelerators such as ventureLAB, YSpace, Seneca Helix, and the Treefrog Accelerator



THE YORK REGION BUSINESS RECOVERY SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP FACILITATED COVID-19 BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND RESILIENCE

The Regional Municipality of York |

The COVID-19 pandemic has a profound impact on the global, national, provincial, and regional economies. More than ever, this highlighted the need for partnerships in delivery of the Region's Economic Development Action Plan.

In mid-2020, the Regional Municipality of York's Economic Strategy division launched the York Region Business Recovery Support Partnership (BRSP) focused on COVID-19 pandemic related support for the business community.

Members include York Region's Economic Strategy division, nine local municipal economic development offices, nine local Chambers of Commerce/Boards of Trade, York Region Business Coalition, Workforce Planning Board of York Region, ventureLAB, Seneca College and York University. The BRSP consists of four subgroups of focus including agri-food, business advisory, supply chain, and tourism arts and culture.

Together the partners collaborated on localized activities and initiatives that are complementary to pandemic business supports provided by upper-tier levels of government and a variety of industry associations.

Targeted initiatives were important in 2020 and were again undertaken in 2021, aimed at facilitating business continuity and recovery in the sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Region's small business community in particular.



Notable initiatives and outcomes of the BRSP in 2020-21 include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Manufacturing supply chain resilience study in partnership with Supply Chain Canada, a national industry association, and a number of York Region municipalities
- Supporting the development and launch of the Accelerate Business Recovery Virtual Hub; a chamber of commerce led self-serve business advisory resource for small businesses in York Region

- Targeted \$500,000 regional COVID-19 Small Business Recovery Program
- Virtual business recovery webinar series in collaboration with Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade in the Region
- Centralized online COVID-19 business support resources portal on York Link
- Northern York Region Professional Services Access Program providing specialized advisory with experts in such areas as legal, human resources, marketing, and accounting
- #ReadyWhenYR and #ShopLocal regional marketing campaigns to support re-opening and recovery of main street, hospitality and tourism businesses across York Region
- Partnered business recovery accelerator webinar series for the food and beverage processing industry
- Targeted economic impact research and insight including, but not limited to, COVID-19 Economic Impact Analysis study in collaboration with The Conference Board of Canada, business impact surveys, monthly labour force indicators, commercial/industrial real estate market data tracking, and others
- Distribution and communications of Public Health COVID-19 regulations, health and safety information for employers and business establishments in York Region
- Temporary foreign worker campaign to raise awareness of, and support for, workers in the local Agri-Food sector impacted by COVID-19 mitigation measures
- Mobile COVID-19 testing at farm locations throughout York Region, as well as, health and safety training for farm operations



FOR DAILY UPDATES FOLLOW YORK LINK

YORKLINK.CA //     

COVID-19 BUSINESS RECOVERY SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS



ACCELERATE BUSINESS RECOVERY HUB
Newmarket Today | [York Region](#)

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with York University, launched in October the “Accelerate Business Recovery Virtual Hub” to help York Region businesses adapt to a rapidly changing landscape and prepare for the new normal.

The program – sponsored by Aurora-based Desjardins Insurance in partnership with York Region, the Town of Aurora, and the Government of Ontario – provides local businesses free consultation with experts in a variety of fields, along with virtual instruction from York’s Schulich School of Business.

“The new economic climate requires businesses to rethink their business models from operations, to marketing, to finance. It is imperative that we created this Hub as a self-guided resource so that business owners can work around their hours of operation while learning how to improve their management skills,” said Sandra Ferri, president and CEO of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

“The Hub supports the development and growth of businesses by providing personalized training, development and mentorship for entrepreneurs and business owners,” said Christine Elliott, MPP for Newmarket-Aurora and Deputy Premier of Ontario, “up to 350 people will receive training using a series of webinars, recorded sessions and consultation sessions. They will also benefit from an online resource centre for one-on-one mentorship.”



COVID-19 REGIONAL SMALL BUSINESS FUNDING PROGRAM
The Regional Municipality of York |

In 2020, Regional Council approved \$500,000 in support of small businesses, leveraging the Innovation and Investment Fund, to be distributed to eligible local businesses through an application process administered by the four Small Business Enterprise Centres that serve York Region and through some local municipal Community Improvement Programs (CIPs).

The program was complementary to major financial support programs launched by the Federal and Provincial governments to assist businesses during the pandemic.

Close to 100 businesses were supported through the four Small Business Enterprise Centres and the King and Stouffville CIPs.

#READYWHENYR GOLD MARCOM AWARD
The Regional Municipality of York |

The York Region Economic Strategy team was honoured to receive a 2021 Gold MarCom Award for the #ReadyWhenYR marketing campaign. This business support initiative was a collaboration with the York Region Arts Council and helped drive new interest in local tourism in the Region. If you’re planning to explore the region visit: [experienceyorkregion.com](#)



YORK REGION MARKETING SPOTLIGHT



YORK REGION AT COLLISION FROM HOME 2021 VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE
The Regional Municipality of York |

Marketing and promotion of the local technology sector remains a regional economic development priority considering that York Region is home to Canada’s second largest cluster of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) companies.

In April 2021 York Region participated in the global ‘Collision From Home’ virtual technology conference through a Masterclass activation.

The conference activation featured a 30-minute promotional video of subject matter experts highlighting the business attraction advantages of the Greater Toronto Area and York Region, in particular, the local start-up support ecosystem in York Region, and corporate considerations for setting up a local business.

Over 140 participants watched throughout the Region’s masterclass; making it one of the most attended economic development themed masterclasses at the Conference.

Attendees came from such companies and organizations as IBM, Royal Bank, TD Bank, Interac Corp, Nestle USA, Invest Canada, Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Enterprise Ireland, Netherlands Consulate, US Commercial Service, The British High Commission, Frankfurt Economic Development, and the Japan External Trade Organization, to name a few.

To date, the Masterclass has generated over 1,000 views on the York Link YouTube channel. Close to 200,000 additional views of segment clips, promoted on various social media channels, are building further awareness of the tech sector and talent advantages offered by York Region and its local municipalities.

York Region Economic Strategy and local partners will have a booth at the 2022 Collision Conference; currently scheduled for June 20th - 23rd in Toronto subject to public health guidelines.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING INITIATIVES THROUGH ‘YORK LINK’ SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESS RECOVERY AND GROWTH
The Regional Municipality of York |

York Region’s 2020-2023 Economic Development Action Plan calls for expanding the York Link marketing platform to communicate with the business community and promote York Region as a leading destination for business, innovation, and talent.

While York Link was originally focused on the promotion of York Region as a destination of choice for knowledge-based employers in and around the region’s urban centres and transit corridors, in January 2021 the platform was re-aligned to become the primary communications vehicle for York Region’s Economic Strategy division across program areas and strategic industry sectors.

The award-winning York Link marketing platform has become a recognized brand within the business and economic development community across the GTA and beyond with over 26,000 followers across our social media, 1.5 million content views annually, and over 15,000 e-newsletter subscribers.

York Link’s digital channels were extensively leveraged during the peak phases of the COVID-19 pandemic to keep the local business community up to date with support programs, resources and health and safety guidelines, complementing the regional government’s official COVID-19 public health information portal.

Prior to 2021, the Region’s economic strategy team managed multiple websites providing business resources and related information to the community, including York Link, the York Small Business Enterprise Centre, and the York Region Innovation Portal.

To better serve the business community these websites were consolidated in early 2021 into [yorklink.ca](#). Businesses of all sizes, other business-focused organizations, and even job seekers can now conveniently access all kinds of business resources from a single source.



YORK REGION PARTNERS WITH MUNICIPALITIES AND SUPPLY CHAIN CANADA TO ASSESS IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE MANUFACTURING SUPPLY CHAIN

The Regional Municipality of York |

The Regional Municipality of York has joined with the City of Markham, City of Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan to partner with Supply Chain Canada to study the resilience of the manufacturing sector supply chain in York Region due to the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We know many businesses, including those in the manufacturing sector, have been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," said York Region Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson. "Supply chain resilience is fundamental to economic recovery at local, provincial and national levels. Assessing our manufacturers' state of readiness will help us better understand business recovery."

There are over 2,500 manufacturing businesses operating within York Region's nine cities and towns, making it the third largest manufacturing cluster in Ontario and fifth largest in Canada.

The Building Supply Chain Resilience report provides key recommendations for manufacturers to safeguard their businesses in times of uncertainty, plus steps levels of government may implement to support this industry.

"Supply Chain Canada is proud to have brought together the expertise and collaborative spirit to deliver such an important report with York Region and its member municipalities," said Christian Buhagiar, President and CEO of Supply Chain Canada. "This report is a model for other jurisdictions across Canada and has meaningful insights for supply chain leaders and policy makers who want to foster economic recovery and future prosperity."

This report will assist in business recovery from the current challenges brought upon by the pandemic and serve as a guide for manufacturers and governments," said City of Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti. "It will help towards understanding, assessing and managing manufacturing supply chain risks and business continuity in the face of future external economic shocks."

"The long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our manufacturing sector may not be known for many years," said City of Richmond Hill [former] Acting Mayor Joe DiPaola. "It is crucial to provide guidance and support to manufacturers, with their continued input, as they focus efforts on a lasting recovery. This report is an important first step of the process."

"The economic and trade challenges resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic have impacted manufacturers in communities across Canada. Risks and uncertainties have emerged relating to supply chains in key manufacturing sub-sectors," said City of Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua. "As a region, we remain committed to working with job creators, industry leaders and stakeholders to usher in a resilient, resourceful and competitive future for the manufacturing sector."

Thirty York Region-based manufacturers from five manufacturing sub-sectors were consulted to form the basis of the analysis and recommendations of the report, including electronics and electrical, agriculture and food processing, building materials, automotive components, and life sciences.

READ THE FULL REPORT:
YORKLINK.CA/SUPPLYCHAIN



STUDY LEADS TO ACTION ON THE GROUND

The study served as one of the cornerstones for the GTA-wide Supply Chain Onshoring Resilience & Expansion (SCORE) Program launched in late 2021 by Toronto Global – GTA's investment attraction municipal partnership with the Provincial and Federal governments.

YORK REGION'S AUTOMOTIVE AND AUTOTECH SECTOR PROMOTED AS CANADA'S INDUSTRY LEADER

The Regional Municipality of York |

York Region's automotive sector has quietly been a leader in the industry for many years with some of North America's largest auto parts manufacturers such as Magna, Martinrea and Multimatic headquartered in the Region, alongside the Canadian head offices of OEMs including Honda, Hyundai, Volvo, and BMW. Recently, the ecosystem has been making waves in the news with major announcements such as Tesla's recent expansion into Markham

with a new manufacturing facility. This facility builds on the company's local battery tech capabilities, which started with an acquisition of Richmond Hill headquartered company Hibar Systems. High-end niche automotive assembly company, Multimatic, has also landed a new contract to build the all-new extreme 2023 Ford Bronco DR after its succesful run of manufacturing the Ford GT supercar.

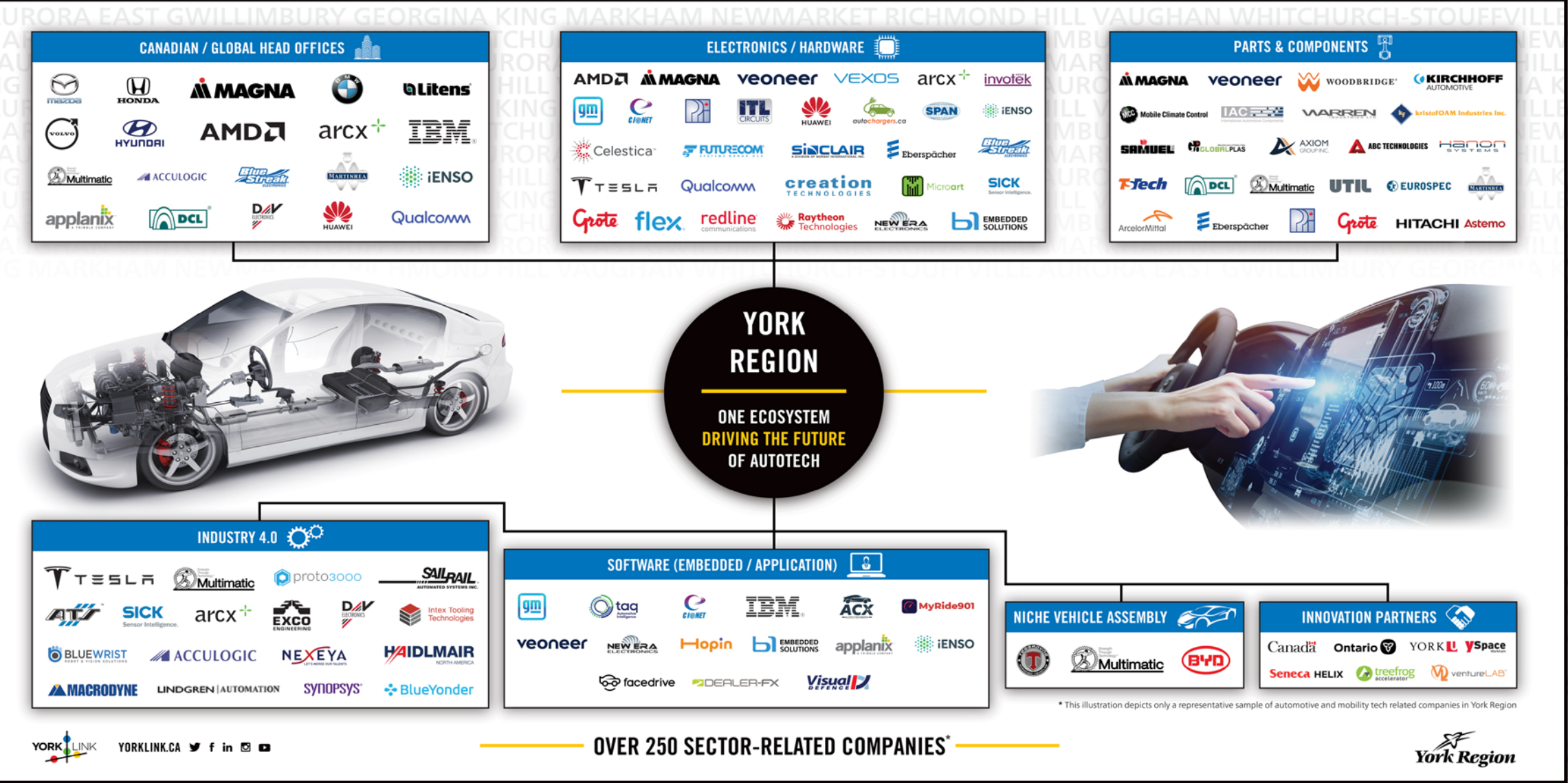


Photo Credit: Ford Motor Company | Ford GT is built in York Region by Multimatic

Multimatic also specializes in developing new technology and parts innovation, primarily focused on the auto racing circuits both on-road and off-road. It has been a few years but General Motors also joined the Region's autotech ecosystem when they opened Canada's largest automotive innovation hub in Markham, scaling up to over 700 software and hardware engineers.

These are just a few of the highlights coming out of York Region. With over 250 automotive and mobility tech related companies in the Region there are surely even more exciting announcements to come. We encourage you to explore our autotech sector map below of some of the companies that are driving the future of AutoTech innovation in York Region.

TORONTO AREA'S YORK REGION // LEADING CANADA'S AUTOTECH INDUSTRY



THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT AND METROLINX ANNOUNCE ADVANCED PLANS FOR YONGE NORTH SUBWAY EXTENSION INTO YORK REGION

Ontario Government & Metrolinx | York Region

The Ontario Government, in partnership with the Government of Canada, shared updated plans for the Yonge North Subway Extension, one of the province’s four priority subway projects that will bring better rapid transit to the Greater Toronto Area.

The Yonge North Subway Extension will transform the commute in York Region, North York and beyond by extending the TTC’s Line 1 service north from Finch Station in Toronto to Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill, connecting four cities.

When it goes into service after the Ontario Line is complete, the extension is expected to see 94,100 daily boardings, and make it faster and easier for more people to travel between York Region and downtown Toronto while cutting down on traffic congestion and pollution.

Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario are teaming up with municipal and regional partners to move the Yonge North Subway Extension forward quickly, in the best way possible.

Not only will extending Line 1 service to Richmond Hill make it easier to travel between York Region and downtown Toronto, it will create convenient connections with local transit services and allow more subway riders to complete their journeys without having to transfer.

The proposed extension will connect to the Richmond Hill GO train and Highway 407 GO bus service, as well as local bus routes at every station.

Transit hubs are proposed at Steeles Avenue and within the Highway 7/Highway 407 corridor (Bridge Station).

A station at High Tech Road would serve future communities envisioned within the Richmond Hill Centre area. Clark Station will offer riders seamless connections to the planned extension of the Viva Orange bus rapid transit line, which serves communities along Highway 7.

“The Yonge North Subway Extension is a long-awaited project that will bring faster transit to more people across York Region and Toronto. It is a vital piece of the transit network that we are building across the region and will connect communities and people for decades to come”, said Phil Verster, President and CEO of Metrolinx.

“Our government hasn’t stopped working to deliver a world-class transit system the people of Toronto and York Region deserve,” said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. “The Yonge North Subway Extension will strengthen connectivity across the region, reduce travel times and greenhouse gas emissions, and provide more people with access to rapid transit.”

“Public transit is at the heart of a clean, inclusive recovery. As a part of the largest investment in public transit in the GTA’s history, the Government of Canada is investing up to \$2.24 billion in the Yonge North Subway extension, helping to kickstart our economy and create thousands of jobs,” said Catherine McKenna, (former) Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.

Note: Proposed route accurate as of December 2021. All alignments, locations, names, and quantity of stations are subject to change.



“The Regional Municipality of York is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Ontario, with the population anticipated to grow to over 2 million people by 2051.

Expanding the number of stations on the Yonge North Subway Extension will help accommodate the future growth of our communities while also increasing options for those who travel throughout our communities.

As the top transit priority of York Regional Council, we thank our partners at all levels of government and Metrolinx for their sustained commitment to providing this vital link in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area transit network.

Moving forward with a fourth station at Clark Avenue will better serve all travellers across our Region.”

- Wayne Emmerson
York Region Chairman & CEO

Subway construction photo is from York-Spadina Subway Extension to Vaughan

YORK REGION AGRICULTURE & AGRI-FOOD UPDATE



YORK REGION'S AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY WELL UNDERWAY

The Regional Municipality of York |

In 2021, York Region continued to deliver on the Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy. First endorsed by Regional Council in 2017, the strategy contains more than 45 action items aimed at supporting and growing the sector.

There are nearly 1,000 sector-related businesses and 57,000 jobs in the Region with an economic impact of over \$6 billion, according to the 2016 Census of Agriculture from Statistics Canada.

The implementation of the strategy is on track with 90% of actions either underway, planned or completed.

Key highlights include:

- Partnered with York University to secure \$106,000 in funding for the first Regional Food & Beverage Accelerator Program
- Continued to support York Farm Fresh to raise awareness of local agricultural products and develop the Farm Fresh Guide Map and a new mobile application with a total reach (est.) of more than 361,000 online
- Launched a local food awareness campaign to raise the profile for agriculture and agri-food in the Region, including a dedicated agri-food webpage, a spotlight series to showcase local farmers and businesses, a video tour of the Region's agriculture and agri-food sector, and more

YORK FARM FRESH LAUNCHES NEW APP

The Regional Municipality of York |

The York Farm Fresh association launched a new app – on Android and iOS – to help you find local food right from the palm of your hand. The app lists 36 farms and eight farmers' markets to explore and is available in eight languages. The development of the mobile app was made possible through York Region's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund.



YORK REGION FOOD & BEVERAGE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM SUPPORTS FOOD ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Regional Municipality of York |

In 2021, York University's YSpace launched the second year of the York Region Food and Beverage Accelerator, in partnership with the Regional Municipality of York.

This program is a five-month accelerator focused on supporting high-growth consumer packaged goods ventures in scaling up their operations and acquiring new distribution channels.

One of the success stories include Remix Snacks, founded by two local Markham residents that launched into 50+ retail locations and saw a 200% month over month revenue growth during the program.

"We owe our success of launching into the local programs at Metro, Sobeys, and Loblaws, growing our e-commerce, and expanding our production to the amazing network we were connected with over the last few months [being a part of the York Region Food & Beverage Accelerator.]"

— Jamie Lee & Isabelle Lam
Founders of Remix Snacks

The York Region Food & Beverage Accelerator has run two successful cohorts to support 20 ventures. Collectively, the 20 ventures generated over \$912,000 in revenue, gained an additional 456 retail locations, and created 15 new job opportunities during the program.

The program has also been featured by major media outlets such as BNN Bloomberg, the Toronto Star, and a few participants have even gone on to land deals on CBC's Dragons' Den.

[YSPACE.YORKU.CA/FOOD-ACCELERATOR](https://yspace.yorku.ca/food-accelerator)



YORK REGION HOSTS SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL 2021 AGRI-FOOD FORUM

The Regional Municipality of York |

The 2021 Municipal Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Forum is an annual event that brings together stakeholders from across Ontario to learn, network and celebrate our diverse agriculture and agri-food sector.

The theme for this year's event was Innovation and Resiliency in the Agri-Food Sector, focused on showcasing agri-tech, entrepreneurship, and innovative ways of doing business and building a resilient sector in light of the pandemic.

Over the two-day event more than 200 attendees joined in to listen and learn from an engaging lineup of over 60 speakers, such as world-renowned Futurist Nikolas Badminton, local agri-food businesses and industry leaders.

It also provided an opportunity to showcase York Region's diverse agriculture and agri-food sector by highlighting local businesses and key sector statistics, including:

- \$2.7 Billion in annual GDP
- 57,000 Agri-food jobs
- 270+ Food and beverage manufacturers and processing companies; 4th largest in Canada
- 700+ Farm-based businesses
- #1 Gross farm revenue per acre in the GTA
- 140,000 Acres of farmland

[YORKLINK.CA/AGRIFOOD](https://yorklink.ca/agrifood)



YORK REGION WELCOMES HISTORIC FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL INVESTMENT IN BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Regional Municipality of York |

On August 6, 2021, the Government of Canada and the Ontario Government announced the allocation of \$230 million to be invested in broadband infrastructure projects in Central Ontario that will serve communities in Central Ontario and bring reliable, high-speed internet to homes and businesses across the region, which will benefit nearly 53,000 households.

Up to \$63,390,358 of these funds will be allocated to York Region, which will allow the expansion of its dark fibre network by more than 500 kilometres and target over 5,000 underserved homes and commercial or industrial properties by the year 2025. This expansion will focus on several rural communities across York Region and will be overseen by YorkNet; the Region-owned corporation that plans, builds, operates, manages and maintains the Region's high-speed, open-access, dark-fibre network.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has shined a bright light on the vital importance that broadband connectivity plays in all aspects of our economy and our daily lives. These include accessing health care services, the education of children, and shopping for groceries and other goods and services. For many, access to high-speed internet is what has allowed them to remain gainfully employed throughout this crisis and this will continue to be the case once it is in the past. Unfortunately there are many communities that have been especially challenged during this time due to a lack of sufficient broadband services.

With the support and commitment of Regional Council and the YorkNet Board of Directors, led by Chair and Mayor of Georgina, Margaret Quirk, and Vice-Chair and Mayor of King Township, Steve Pellegrini, York Region is working to improve access to high speed broadband in our communities. Through the expansion of its dark fibre network, York Region is enabling improved high-speed connectivity for institutions, businesses and residents across the region.

Ongoing support from the federal and provincial governments and through partnerships with Internet Service Providers, York Region is taking important steps toward closing the digital divide for our communities and to ensuring more equitable broadband access for all.



BUSINESS COMMUNITY & ECOSYSTEM HIGHLIGHTS



BUSINESS PARK IN GEORGINA WILL BRING 200 ACRES OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATE 2,000 JOB OPPORTUNITIES
Town of Georgina | [Georgina](#)

Panattoni Development Company has acquired 200 acres of zoned industrial land in Keswick, which can be readied for immediate development. The site is located three kilometres from Highway 404 in an area that has seen considerable growth.

With another 2,500 residential units in the approval process and a future Multi-use Recreation Complex, this development further supports Georgina’s commitment for well-balanced economic growth.

With Highway 404 now extended to Georgina, further major transportation infrastructure extensions planned, and the installation of dark fibre in progress, Georgina’s business park lands are a desirable opportunity for investors looking to move just north of the Greater Toronto Area’s urban core. The site is one of the largest available development opportunities within an ideal distance of Toronto, zoned to permit a wide range of industrial uses, as well as professional offices.

CANADA’S FIRST SMART HOSPITAL LEVERAGES DIGITAL DEVICES TO ENHANCE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
Hospital News | [Vaughan](#)

Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital, Canada’s first smart hospital and the first net new hospital in Ontario in more than 30 years, has taken emergency preparedness to the next level.

In February 2021, Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital implemented a digital platform for clinical communication and workflow, to become the first Canadian hospital to fully integrate its overhead communication system with smartphones using a mobile application.

“The digital platform prioritizes incoming communications using real time alerts that are secure, providing the situational awareness needed to make timely and informed decisions,” said Felix Zhang, Chief Technology Officer at Mackenzie Health.

“The platform enables the right person to receive the right information at the right time, and to know which information is important, like when a cardiac arrest code is activated, it not only alerts staff of a medical emergency, but the hands-free capabilities let staff provide hands-on patient care improving patient outcomes.”



YORK UNIVERSITY MARKHAM CAMPUS MARKS ANOTHER MILESTONE EN ROUTE TO 2023 OPENING
Yorkregion.com | [Markham](#)

The official unveiling of University Boulevard in Markham Centre is yet another milestone en route to the opening of York University’s Markham campus.

University Boulevard will welcome students to the heart of York University’s Markham campus, slated for opening in the fall of 2023.

Together with YSpace, the Markham Small Business Centre, the city’s Economic Development initiatives and technology companies already based in Markham, the new campus will help foster innovation and entrepreneurship in Markham and the region.

The campus is also expected to attract more skilled, diverse talent to study, work and settle in Markham, further growing the city’s reputation as a leading technology and innovation hub.

KINGLORY ANNOUNCES MARKHAM AS ITS CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS
GlobeNewswire | [Markham](#)

On July 12th, 2021, distinguished guests attended a ceremony to celebrate Kinglory selecting Markham to be its corporate headquarters. With a team of over 200 tech experts from Canada, the United States, and elsewhere Kinglory is a public, open-source platform that is dedicated to maintaining and developing a blockchain community. Kinglory brings a major technological overhaul to the existing blockchains in the data, network, consensus, incentive, and application layers.



Tesla
9,393,169 followers
2mo •



Tesla Canada ca Joignez-vous à notre équipe en pleine croissance à Markham!

Tesla Canada ca Come join our growing team in Markham! <https://lnkd.in/gk-jeTRE>

TESLA LAUNCHES A MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN MARKHAM FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE BATTERY PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT
Reuters | [Markham](#)

Tesla Inc. opened a factory to produce battery manufacturing equipment in the city of Markham. In 2019, the U.S. electric carmaker acquired Richmond Hill-based Hibar, which manufactures pumps used in fast-speed battery assembly that Tesla is introducing for its new 4680 cells.

Last year, Tesla senior vice president Andrew Baglino said that its “vertical integration” with Hibar and others would allow them to build batteries faster and scale up production of its 4680 battery cells.

“I’m delighted to share that Tesla Canada is joining our already robust automotive and technology ecosystem by locating a manufacturing facility in the City of Markham,” said mayor Frank Scarpitti. “The facility will produce state-of-the-art manufacturing equipment to be used at the Gigafactories located around the world in the production of batteries.” City official Bryan Frois told Reuters the Markham facility opened [last] summer, marking an expansion of another site in neighboring Richmond Hill.



LIFE SCIENCES COMPANY LGC RELOCATING TO VAUGHAN, BRINGING 400 ‘HIGHLY-SKILLED’ JOBS
Yorkregion.com | [Vaughan](#)

LGC is expected to open its 200,000 sq.ft. facility in 2024. Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua said LGC is going to bring about 400 highly skilled jobs into the city that could possibility create a “new cluster and a brand-new area” in Vaughan, catering to innovation-based approaches to growing the economy.

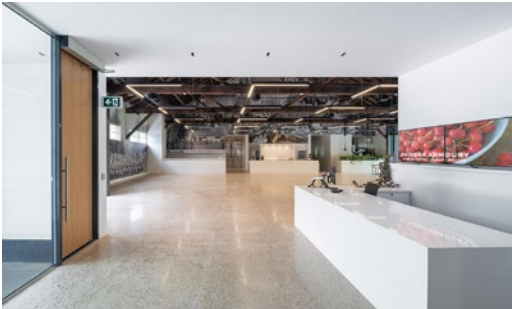
“We are excited to make Vaughan our new home in Canada and are grateful for the partnership and support that we have received from Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, the ZZEN Group and our other local partners in helping to turn our vision for a new facility into reality,” said Euan O’Sullivan, LGC President and CEO.



MAGNA INTERNATIONAL AND MAPLE ADVANCED ROBOTICS TOGETHER RECEIVE FUNDING BOOST FROM NGEN CANADA
Manufacturing Automation | [York Region](#)

The Autonomous Adaptable Robot System (AARS) developed by Aurora headquartered Magna and Richmond Hill-based Maple Advanced Robotic received funding from Next Generation Manufacturing Canada (NGen), the industry-led organization behind Canada’s Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster.

The AARS project is for manufacturers who require flexible solutions but may not have the scale of work or resources needed to justify larger investments in automation systems. The solution will allow operators to easily modify a robots path and workspace.



AURORA ARMOURY CANADIAN FOOD AND WINE INSTITUTE WINS A LIV HOSPITALITY DESIGN AWARD
Town of Aurora | [Aurora](#)

The Aurora Armoury won a global design award for its Canadian Food and Wine Institute (CFWI). The award, handed out by LIV Hospitality Design Awards, recognized the Armoury’s CFWI as the winner in Architectural Design Event Space. The annual awards celebrate quality architectural ventures and interior design diversity.

The event space has been designed to be flexible in all aspects of its use, from the most complex events, to small simple intimate gatherings. The design of the space showcases pays tribute to the historical events and features of this magnificent site. The layout has brought the richness of the surrounding area, natural light, mature trees, and the grandeur of Aurora’s Town Park.

The Aurora Armoury was originally established as a military drill shed, built in 1874. Declared surplus by the provincial government in 2012, the Armoury was purchased by the Town of Aurora, and through a collaboration with Niagara College, converted into an outpost location for the CFWI – a space for post-secondary culinary instruction, and a venue for general interest courses and community events.

CANADA’S DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SUPERCLUSTER HAS ANNOUNCED A \$20 MILLION PROJECT TO DEVELOP A NEW DIGITAL WELLNESS PLATFORM FEATURING TECH FROM WYSDOM AI
BetaKit | [Richmond Hill](#)

The new digital wellness platform is being developed in partnership with Lululemon, Richmond Hill headquartered Wysdom.AI, Microsoft, Mitacs, and Queen’s University. The platform will be based on Wysdom AI’s conversational AI-optimization technology.

The project aims to use AI and machine learning technology to digitize users’ “complete state of wellbeing” and develop digital virtual agents to help them.

HOW DRONE AND DATA COMPANY SKYX FOUND A HOME AND ROOM TO GROW IN CANADA’S AIRSPACE
Invest Ontario | [Vaughan](#)

SkyX provides solutions for autonomous, long-range Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems to collect bird’s-eye view aerial data for companies in sectors like oil and gas. Using drones to continuously monitor remote assets like pipelines is more efficient and provides data that can’t be gathered by traditional methods.

With its head office in Vaughan, SkyX has taken advantage of the thriving technology scene in the area. “I believe Toronto is one of the greatest tech hubs. It’s evolving much faster than... San Francisco right now,” says Didi Horn, SkyX CEO. “They take serious care of startups here, and that’s very nice to see.”

For such a tech-heavy startup, the kind of support the province provides—such as an Ontario investment tax credit for scientific research and experimental development—can be key to any new company’s research and development phase. For SkyX, R&D was critical for the first three and a half years.



29 YORK REGION-BASED COMPANIES MAKE CANADA’S TOP GROWING COMPANIES LIST FROM THE GLOBE & MAIL
The Globe & Mail | [York Region](#)

Overall, there are a total of 448 businesses ranked with a total of 29 companies based in York Region on Canada’s Top Growing Companies list from The Globe & Mail.

The program ranks participating private and public Canadian businesses on three-year revenue growth. Regardless of where they’re located, what they make or whether they’ve been operating for five years or two decades, all these companies have one thing in common: Each managed to grow in unprecedented times this year.

The 29 companies in York Region came from Aurora, Newmarket, Markham, Richmond Hill, and Vaughan and operate across a variety of industry sectors from technology to agri-food.



KONTROL BIOCLOUD PROVIDED REAL-TIME VIRAL DETECTION TECHNOLOGY FOR CANADIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AT TOKYO GAMES (HELD IN 2021 DUE TO PANDEMIC)
Cision | [Vaughan](#)

Kontrol Technologies provided BioCloud units to the Canadian Olympic Committee for real-time viral detection to help safeguard the health and safety of Team Canada during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games; held in 2021.

These safe space technology units were used at the Olympic Games within Team Canada’s residential areas including the Athletes’ Village.

“Protecting the health and safety of Team Canada, which has always been a top priority, needs innovative solutions in our current global context,” said Dr. Mike Wilkinson, Team Canada’s Chief Medical Officer. “The addition of Kontrol BioCloud really complements the stringent protocols put in place by the COC, International Olympic Committee and Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee to protect the health and safety of our team.”

RICHMOND HILL-BASED STAGEZERO LIFE SCIENCES DEVELOPED SCREENING TEST AIMS TO DETECT EARLY-STAGE CANCER USING BLOOD SAMPLES
CTV News | [Richmond Hill](#)

StageZero Life Sciences is a Richmond Hill-based health care company that has developed a way to simultaneously screen for a wide variety of cancers using a single blood sample. Some of the cancers that StageZero can detect include breast, cervical, endometrial, prostate, liver, stomach, bladder and colorectal.

“We’re adding a whole series of additional ones. And as we continue to build out, we’ll continue to add to them,” StageZero Chairman and CEO James Howard-Tripp.

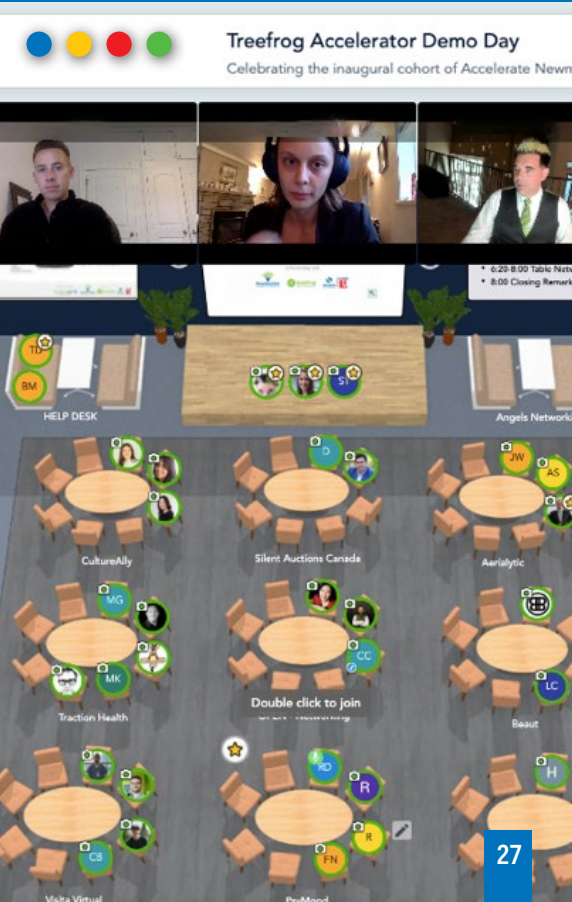
WANT MORE YORK REGION BUSINESS COMMUNITY NEWS?
Visit yorklink.ca/news where you can see all the aggregated news and highlights.

NEW ACCELERATOR IN NEWMARKET BRINGS INCREASED OPPORTUNITY FOR STARTUPS AND ENTREPRENEURS
York Link | Newmarket

The first cohort of the Treefrog Accelerator set out on a path to complete a new 5-week business program, setting the stage for startups and founders to continuously learn and develop new skills, connect with local startup ecosystem leaders and investors, and improve their businesses. This culminated with a virtual open house on July 8, where the participants showcased their businesses to investors, stakeholders, partners and many others who tuned in to watch.

The very first Treefrog Accelerator cohort had an impressive 17 businesses and 25 participants. They took part in roughly 32 hours of course content over five weeks, with 10 mentors and 27 speakers sharing their expertise and lessons learned.

The Treefrog Accelerator program is part of a new initiative called Accelerate Newmarket – a collaborative business-focused program between the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce, Schulich School of Business at York University and Treefrog. The participating organizations designed this program to support Ontario-based entrepreneurs and startups, while enhancing the local economy.





SENECA AND KINGSBRIDGE CENTRE TEAM UP AND PLACE KING AT THE FOREFRONT OF ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

Globe Newswire | King

Seneca and Kingsbridge Centre are creating an innovation hub that will deliver a real-world setting and programs to help entrepreneurs build and scale businesses in the agriculture, food production and processing, energy and environmental sectors.

Through shared resources in business development and applied research, Seneca and Kingsbridge Centre will help companies grow and solve challenges related to technology, infrastructure and sustainability. The collaboration is the latest addition to the thriving innovation ecosystem in York Region and will harness the unique assets located in King Township.

Seneca's contributions to the initiative include applied research infrastructure, faculty expertise and access for aspiring entrepreneurs to HELIX, Seneca's business incubator and accelerator. HELIX has built a strong reputation in York Region helping young business owners with mentorship, infrastructure, access to investors and professional development opportunities.

Seneca and Kingsbridge Centre will also engage with community members directly to identify and address employment gaps for those adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

AI COMPANY EAIGLE LAUNCHED A NEW PROOF OF VACCINATION PLATFORM TO PROVIDE ORGANIZATIONS WITH ENHANCED HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTECTION

Cision | Markham

Artificial Intelligence (AI) company EAIGLE, has launched a new proof of vaccination platform to provide its existing five (5) million monthly users with an additional layer of health and safety protection.

The Digital Vaccine Pass is a proof of vaccination platform that enables governments and organizations to verify vaccination status at scale.

"We recognize the growing need to protect workplaces and public spaces via a flexible and automated solution that is reliable, easy to implement, and scalable," said Amir Hoss, EAIGLE CEO. "This is why we have designed a platform that's in line with current market expectations but can easily evolve to meet the needs of a dynamic landscape," Hoss added.

GEORGINA WELCOMES SCOTT-WOODS TRANSPORT AS COMPANY EXPANDS

Town of Georgina | Georgina

Scott-Woods Transport is a heavy haul trucking company that employs more than 100 people. The company has outgrown its existing location and sees this relocation to Georgina as an opportunity for expansion and growth.

The company transports shipments throughout North America and is known as one of Canada's most technologically advanced in specialized trucking fleets. Easy access to the major transportation networks across the GTA and the planned east-west transportation corridor were the main selling points in choosing to move to Georgina. The company also noted that aside from the Town's infrastructure, many of its employees live in northern York Region.

Plans for the new location include building a 25,000 square foot office and mechanical garage with parking areas for employees and a truck fleet.



BIG BOOM WILL SEE EAST GWILLIMBURY POPULATION NEARLY TRIPLE OVER 30 YEARS

Newmarket Today | East Gwillimbury

York Region is expected to get the highest portion of population growth in the GTA over the next 30 years. According to the 2020 Growth and Development report, York Region is expected to add another 800,000 residents by 2051. By that year, the population of East Gwillimbury — currently about 31,100 — is anticipated to be almost as large as its neighbour Newmarket, between 90,000 and 110,000 residents. Part of the reason for East Gwillimbury's explosion of growth is because it is one of the areas identified in York Region where land is being designated for future urban growth.

The report identified a total of 245 hectares in East Gwillimbury, just north of Newmarket, for future urbanization as the population continues to grow over the next 30 years.

DRONE DELIVERY CANADA OPENED A NEW COMMERCIALIZATION CENTRE TO AUGMENT ITS MAIN FACILITY AND TEST RANGE

Cision | Vaughan

The new commercialization centre is on approximately 100 acres west of the Company's main office in Vaughan and will be operational in November 2021. The Condor is currently the Company's largest drone with an expected range of 200 kilometres and a payload capacity of 180 kilograms.

"With the ongoing successful testing of our Condor delivery drone and as we work towards its commercialization, this location will facilitate engineering testing, pre-customer delivery verification, customer demonstrations, customer & employee training, and maintenance of Condor drones, as well as for future drone platform enhancements and modifications for an anticipated diverse range of future applications, potentially to include inspection and data collection services. The new Commercialization Center will bring lasting commercial benefits across the whole organization," said Michael Zahra, President & CEO of DDC.



FIRST CANADIAN UN LEADERSHIP TRAINING CENTRE OPENING AT YORK UNIVERSITY

York University | Markham

As a leader in the effort to build a more socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable world, York University and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research are proud to announce the establishment of Canada's first Centre International de Formation des Acteurs Locaux (CIFAL) at York's new Markham campus.

CIFAL York will be uniquely positioned to help achieve the UN's sustainable development goals around emergency and disaster management, diversity and inclusion, economic development, health, and entrepreneurship.

Rhonda L. Lenton, President & Vice-Chancellor of York University stated, "The world is facing complex global problems — from the climate crisis to inequality to rapid technological change to the pandemic — that call for collaboration across sectors and across countries to solve.

The creation of this CIFAL Centre, in partnership with UNITAR, will enable us to bring leaders from governments, not-for-profits, and industry together with researchers and educators to share experiences and expertise, and to train new generations of global leaders. We are proud to host CIFAL York as part of our commitment to building a healthier and more just, sustainable, and prosperous world."

Wayne Emmerson, York Region Chairman and CEO added, "York Regional Council and The Regional Municipality of York are proud of the strong partnerships shared with York University and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research which have led to a more welcoming and inclusive community for all who call York Region home.

In welcoming a CIFAL Centre to York University, we are expanding collaborative opportunities between all levels of government, international organizations, the business community, and the public sector to continue building strong, caring, safe communities where everyone can develop to their full potential."



VENTURELAB ANNOUNCES NEW INDUSTRY LEADING PARTICIPANTS, BROADENING CANADA’S HARDWARE CATALYST INITIATIVE
ventureLAB | [York Region](#)

ventureLAB announced new participants in its Hardware Catalyst Initiative (HCI), Canada’s only lab and incubator for hardware and semiconductor companies.

The announcement comes on the heels of an additional \$4.7 million investment made by the Federal Economic Development Agency of Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), bringing the total government investment to \$9.7 million.

The new participants signal the growing importance of Canada’s hardware and semiconductor industry, as demand for chips and sensors continues to surge, causing global shortages and production disruptions.

The new participants – Siemens Canada, Dell Canada, Dassault Systems, and NeuronicWorks – join a global network of experts and industry leaders, including:

- AMD
- Synopsys
- Silicon Catalyst
- TSMC
- Arm
- Keysight
- Nuvia
- And others

Hardware Catalyst Initiative partners have committed over \$15 million in resources, equipment, expertise, and mentorship for the participating companies.

According to The Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development and MP for Markham-Thornhill, “These new partnerships are great news for ventureLAB and for Canadian businesses. The global demand for microchips has provided an opportunity for Canada’s hardware and semiconductor industry to grow and expand.”

“Entrepreneurship is in our DNA at Dell Canada, so supporting emerging innovations and startups in Canada is a natural fit for us,” said Pam Pelletier, Canada Sales Leader and Country Manager, Dell Canada.

[VENTURELAB.CA/HCI](#)

VENTURELAB RECEIVES OVER \$6 MILLION IN FUNDING TO SUPPORT CANADA’S FIRST HARDWARE LAB AND INCUBATOR
Cision / York Link | [York Region](#)

In 2021, ventureLAB received multiple funding investments. The Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) announced a contribution of \$4.73M to expand Canada’s first hardware and semiconductor-focused lab, ventureLAB’s Hardware Catalyst Initiative and the Regional Municipality of York authorized an additional \$1.5 million in funding over five years from the Region’s Innovation and Investment Fund.

Funded in part by the Government of Canada, through FedDev Ontario, this competitive program helps southern Ontario-based tech SMEs accelerate their time to market in a sector that normally incurs lengthy entry and scale times, enabling Canadian hardware and semiconductor companies to grow and scale locally, and compete globally.

With an initial investment of \$5 million from the Government of Canada, the Hardware Catalyst has gained rapid momentum as Canada’s Hardware Hub with a growing global network of private sector industry partners.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION FUND CONTINUES TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES ACROSS THE REGION
The Regional Municipality of York | [York Region](#)

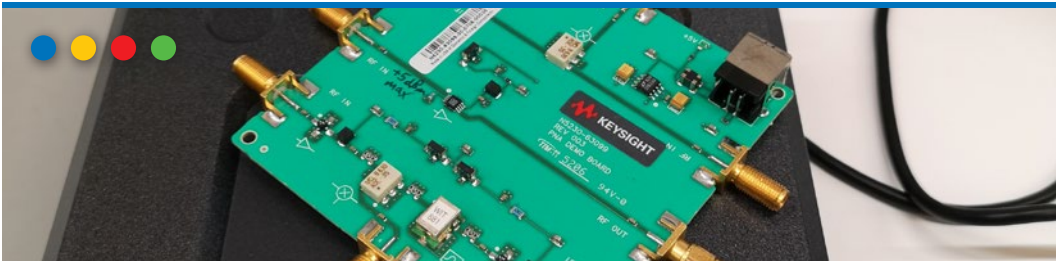
The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund supports development of the innovation network in York Region by supporting promising early stage start-ups, accelerators, incubators, and community partners.

ventureLAB and York Region are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2021 Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund. The funds were presented to nine companies and organisations in York Region. Funded with the generous support of the Regional Municipality of York, the fund allows local organisations to increase innovation and elevate sustainability in York Region while expanding inclusion, diversity, and accessibility. The fund is divided into two streams, one for [non-profit community partners](#) and the other for [small businesses and entrepreneurs](#).

2021 Recipients:

- ELLA Accelerator
- Mely AI Technologies
- TechConnex
- OVA.ai
- AutoMetrics
- Portable Intelligence
- DeepSight
- Qoherent
- Mech Solutions

[VENTURELAB.CA/INNOVATIONFUND](#)



HARDTECH CONFERENCE BRINGS TOGETHER INDUSTRY LEADERS AND PROFESSIONALS TO DISCUSS GLOBAL SEMICONDUCTOR CHALLENGES
The Regional Municipality of York | [York Region](#)

In 2021, ventureLAB launched HardTech, Canada’s premiere hardware and semiconductor event for innovators, leaders and hardware enthusiasts. Over two days, the sold out conference brought together industry leaders, tech founders, expert panelists, audiences from coast-to-coast, media, and government.

From insights on the future of hardware to a dynamic pitch competition, HardTech challenged the way we envision Canada’s role in tech innovation. Panel discussions centered around the global semiconductor industry and the role it plays in building transformative technologies like smart energy, autonomous vehicles, and innovative healthcare solutions.

Hardware and semiconductors are essential to building sustainable and revolutionizing solutions to global challenges with the potential to create greener solutions, modernize traditional sectors, and develop trailblazing products.

As part of the conference, ventureLAB partnered with the Regional Municipality of York and other HCI partners to provide startups developing hardware and semiconductor focused products the opportunity to showcase their innovative solutions.

After a rigorous national application process, eight finalists developing product-level and chip innovations in electronic hardware battled it out in front of a live audience and top-notch public and private sector judges for \$100K in cash and in-kind prizeing.

HARDTECH PITCH WINNERS:

- ROCKMASS
- TITANS HAPTICS
- CYBERWORKS ROBOTICS

HARDTECH CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



333

HARDTECH ATTENDEES

\$100,000

CASH & IN-KIND PRIZES

7

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

25

SPEAKERS & JUDGES

NEW AMAZON DELIVERY STATION IN RICHMOND HILL WILL OPEN IN 2023 AND CREATE 400 NEW JOBS

The Liberal | Richmond Hill

Amazon Canada has chosen Richmond Hill as the home of its newest delivery station.

The 224,000 sq.ft. facility is being constructed on 10.85 hectares of land adjacent to Highway 404 in the Headford Business Park just north of 16th Avenue. It will serve as the “last mile” of Amazon’s order fulfilment process, providing service to customers throughout central York Region.

Targeted to open in early 2023, the new facility is expected to bring 400 new jobs to the city, including over 200 full-time positions, which offer comprehensive benefits starting on day one.

The online retailer is also committed to fully transitioning its fleet at the Richmond Hill facility to electric vehicles by 2030, supporting the Richmond Hill council’s strategic priority to balance growth and green.

Amazon Canada joins other multinational companies in Richmond Hill, including BMW, Staples, Olympus, Compugen, Tesla Hilar, and others.



CEPHEID LAUNCH DIRECT COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS IN MARKHAM

Cision | [Markham](#)

Cepheid Canada’s operations in Markham will include direct service, order management, and technical support.

Cepheid is the global company behind GeneXpert® Systems and Xpert® tests that deliver fast, accurate, and reliable real-time PCR test results. These systems are already in use across Canada in many community hospitals, clinics, and at the Public Health Agency of Canada’s National Microbiology Lab. With the launch of direct commercial operations in Canada, Cepheid plans to strengthen its partnership with Canadian healthcare leaders.

“We are excited to announce the opening of our offices in Markham, Ontario, to support current and new customers across Canada,” said Irfaan Remtulla, Cepheid Vice President of Canada Commercial Operations. “We are proud to deliver innovative solutions to help Canadian communities, from small medical clinics to high-volume reference laboratories and hospitals, to access the speed and accuracy of molecular diagnostics.”



MULTIMATIC SELECTED AS THE PRODUCTION PARTNER FOR THE NEW 2023 FORD BRONCO DR RACE SUV PRICED AT \$300K

The Car Guide | [Markham](#)

Ford has unveiled the all-new Bronco DR (as in Desert Racer), an extreme SUV designed solely for off-road use and endurance competitions.

Ford has secured Multimatic as its production partner. The Markham, Ontario company already manufactures the Ford GT supercar, which is bowing out after the 2022 model year, and will next focus on this wild Bronco creation.

A prototype will make its race debut in 2022 and is targeting entry in Mexico’s SCORE Baja 1000, wearing Ford Performance red, white, black and blue livery honouring the Baja 1000 victory.

The first 50 units of 2023 Bronco DR will be available for sale late next year with a starting price of a little more than \$300,000.



80 NEW GREEN ENERGY JOBS AT GE HITACHI IN MARKHAM POWER CLIMATE ACTION, FUTURE WORKFORCE

Yorkregion.com | [Markham](#)

Eighty new green energy jobs in Markham will not only provide well-paying professional jobs, but also play a major role in solutions to climate change and develop the workforce of the future.

GE Hitachi announced the expansion tied to the development of the company’s BWRX-300 small modular reactors (SMRs) while it cut the ribbon on its SMR facility in Markham.

“GE has operated in Canada for nearly 130 years and is uniquely positioned to scale a workforce to support Canada’s clean energy vision,” said Markham resident and GE Canada president & CEO Heather Chalmers.

“SMRs are an important solution piece of the climate change challenge; a challenge whose urgency increases daily to ensure we meet our carbon reduction goals while also generating the necessary clean energy required to power our communities.”

It created the 80 skilled positions to support the deployment of new, carbon-free nuclear power technology, with the goal of having the first grid scale SMR at Darlington by 2028.

MAGNA FOUNDER HAS PLANS TO BUILD A NEW HEADQUARTERS IN STOUFFVILLE FOR SARIT, A 3-WHEELED ELECTRIC VEHICLE

Yorkregion.com | [Whitchurch-Stouffville](#)

Frank Stronach, founder of Magna International, plans to develop a new light industrial assembly facility and global headquarters just east of Highway 404 on Aurora Road in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The new SARIT (Safe Affordable Reliable Innovative Transport) facility is intended as an assembly plant and display centre with most production occurring elsewhere in York Region and other locations in Canada.

The SARIT vehicle can travel 100 kilometres on a single charge. It is very compact, measuring three feet wide, six feet long and five feet high.



EXPONENTIAL GROWTH HELPS LMN TO DOUBLE ITS COMPANY EMPLOYMENT SIZE

Cision | [Markham](#)

LMN, a B2B landscape business software company, is recruiting additional team members across all departments including human resources, sales, marketing, customer service, and training. The addition of these new hires will nearly double the size of LMN’s current team. This expansion is a result of the tech company’s exponential growth in 2021.

LMN, recognized as one of the fastest-growing companies in Canadian Business 2020 Growth List, has kept pace with the evolving needs of business owners in the landscape industry across the U.S. and Canada. This includes expanding its online LMN Academy program, software updates, as well as the launch of Landscape Disruptors.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY PIZZA’S NEW MASTER FACILITY IN VAUGHAN PRODUCING UP TO 100,000 FROZEN PIZZAS PER MONTH, MORE THAN DOUBLING OUTPUT

Business Wire | [Vaughan](#)

General Assembly Holdings Limited, a Toronto pizza restaurant turned omnichannel consumer packaged goods brand, announced the opening of its “expanded kitchen” – a 42,060 square-foot master production facility in Vaughan, Ontario. The company secured the new production facility in July and commenced production on September 9. The facility has increased the Company’s monthly output of frozen units to 100,000, with greater output expected to come.



QEA TECH WINS THIRD PLACE AT THE SHENZHEN INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETITION-2021

QEA Tech | [Markham](#)

Markham-based climate-tech & energy audit startup won a prize of USD \$64,500 at the 5th Sci Innovation Competition and its global session Shenzhen Innovation & Entrepreneurship Competition. QEA Tech was placed 3rd amongst 189 enterprises from Canada, the US, Australia, Japan, Israel, the UK, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, and China.

QEA won a Canadian divisional third place prize – \$4,500, a second place prize in the digital economy sector – \$15,000, and a third place prize in the Grand Finale – \$45,000. The Canadian Delegation won a total of 20 prizes adding up to C\$450,000.



18 YORK REGION-BASED COMPANIES MAKE THE 2022 GTA'S TOP 100 EMPLOYERS LIST

Canadastop100.com | [York Region](#)

This year marks the 16th annual edition for the Greater Toronto's Top Employers competition, which has become the benchmark in the GTA for workplace best-practices.

Like the metropolitan area it represents, the competition has become exceptionally strong and competitive — so much so that, for Toronto-area employers, the minimum scores to secure a place on the GTA list routinely rank among the highest in the nation.

The 2022 winners were announced via The Globe and Mail in December; 18 York Region-based companies, with either head office or major presence locally, made it on the list.

TWO YORK REGION FOOD COMPANIES SECURED DEALS ON CBC DRAGONS' DEN

York Link | [York Region](#)

Over the last year food startups across York Region have been busy securing deals and creating delicious products, of course. Some companies prefer to work in the background, while others like to go all-in and make a splash on national television.

Appearing recently on CBC's Dragons' Den, startups, It's Souper and Dear Snackers, made their pitch to the five Dragons and both secured deals for their companies at \$180,000 and \$100,000, respectively.

TERAGO PARTNERS WITH MCMASTER UNIVERSITY TO DEPLOY THE FIRST INSTITUTION-BASED PRIVATE 5G MILLIMETER WAVE NETWORK

Cision | [Markham](#)

TeraGo has partnered with McMaster University to jointly build and deploy the first university-based 5G millimeter wave private network for research. The two entities plan to develop the most cutting-edge technologies for advanced manufacturing and Industry 4.0 in Canada.

A 5G millimeter wave private network delivers higher speeds and lower latency and is a prerequisite to advanced manufacturing and logistics. With these capabilities, users can access the benefits of machine learning, augmented reality, remote automation, edge computing, and more, to improve current products and processes.



ZOGLO'S INCREDIBLE FOOD AND CLASSIC TOUCH FOODS PARTNER TO LAUNCH NEW PLANT-BASED PRODUCT LINE

Cision | [Markham & Vaughan](#)

Zoglo's Incredible Food announced that it partnered with Classic Touch Foods to introduce 100% plant-based and vegan offerings that will be made available to both retail and food service sectors. Leveraging different strengths of each company, the partnership will entail the creation of a co-branded product line including ready-to-heat and eat offerings.



ONTARIO OPENS HIGHWAY 427 EXPANSION TO MAJOR MACKENZIE DRIVE IN VAUGHAN

Ontario Government | [York Region](#)

The Ontario Government opened a 10-kilometre expansion of Highway 427 from Finch Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive to help improve traffic flow, reduce congestion and move people and goods safely.

A 6.6-kilometre extension of the highway includes eight new lanes from Highway 7 to Rutherford Road and six new lanes to Major Mackenzie Drive. Three new interchanges at Langstaff Road, Rutherford Road and Major Mackenzie Drive have also been constructed to connect roadways without interruption. A four-kilometre segment has also been widened to eight lanes from Finch Avenue to Highway 7 along with an upgraded full interchange at Highway 7.

The expansion of Highway 427, which serves as a heavily-used commuter route to the City of Vaughan and neighbouring communities, is expected to save commuters up to 25 minutes of total travel time for a two-way trip during peak periods.



GENERAL MOTORS CANADIAN TECHNICAL CENTRE MARKHAM FACILITY AT CENTRE OF PROVINCE'S \$56.4M PLAN TO DRIVE DEALS FOR HYBRID, ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Toronto Star | [Markham](#)

GM Canada's Canadian Technical Centre in Markham was the site of a recent announcement regarding the province's latest commitment to putting Ontario at the forefront of global demand for cleaner, safer, more sustainable transportation solutions.

Delivered in partnership with the Ontario Centre for Innovation, the government's \$56.4-million investment in the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network was announced by Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Vic Fedeli on December 2nd, 2021 to a limited number of guests.

The investment is part of Driving Prosperity: The Future of Ontario's Automotive Sector, the government's plan to drive deals and secure production mandates for hybrid and electric vehicles, create a domestic battery ecosystem, and strengthen Ontario's position as a North American automotive and EV innovation hub.

Minister of Transportation Caroline Mulroney said the flagship program will go a long way toward supporting the area's talented workforce, electric vehicle R&D, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

SENECA HELIX HOSTS 5TH ANNUAL SUMMER INSTITUTE INITIATIVE

The Regional Municipality of York | [York Region](#)

In 2021, York Region continued its ongoing partnership with Seneca HELIX – the college's innovation and entrepreneurship incubator – by supporting the fifth-annual Summer Institute initiative. Other partners included Southlake Regional Health Centre, ventureLAB, Humber College, George Brown College, and Kingbridge Centre. This event focuses on addressing real-world issues faced by health care providers and since 2017 this initiative has engaged 166 participants from across York Region and beyond, including 34 participants in 2021.



YORK REGION SMALL BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

YORK SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE (YSBEC)



STARTER COMPANY PLUS HELPS NEW ENTREPRENEURS GET STARTED

YSBEC | [York Region](#)

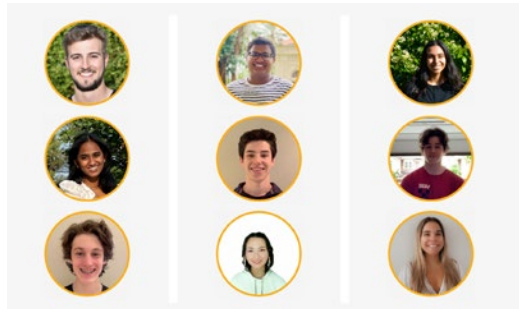
Starter Company Plus is an entrepreneurship program, funded by the Ontario Government’s Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, geared to help adults over 18 to start or grow their business. The program provides a variety of services, including mentoring, training, workshops, and a provincial grant up to \$5,000.



STARTER COMPANY PLUS - SMALL BUSINESS RECOVERY SUPPORT PROGRAM HELPED BUSINESSES ADAPT TO CHALLENGES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

YSBEC | [York Region](#)

The Starter Company Plus – Small Business Recovery Support Program (SCP-BRSP) provided free training and mentoring opportunities to help local businesses adapt to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was funded entirely by the York Region Innovation Investment Fund as part of the COVID-19 pandemic business recovery effort and delivered by the four SBECs across York Region. The SCP-BRSP also offered grants of up to \$5,000 to help businesses adopt new tools, increase their online presence and implement new strategies. This year, 47 small businesses leveraged the program.



NINE STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY IN THE 2021 SUMMER COMPANY PROGRAM

YSBEC | [York Region](#)

From drone photography to car detailing services, the 2021 Summer Company program featured a diverse mix of young entrepreneurs; participating in a fully-virtual format. The York Small Business Enterprise Centre administers its Summer Company program in partnership with the Ontario Government. The program is designed to foster and develop the entrepreneurial spirit in students between the ages of 15 to 29, and who are registered to return to school full-time the following fall. Along with a start-up grant of up to \$3,000, the program provides young entrepreneurs mentoring from community business leaders and hands-on training such as writing a business plan, building a marketing strategy, and managing a budget. The nine students accepted into the program made a total combined revenue of over \$16,800 and each of them completed the program successfully.

SPOTLIGHT: GOBLETS AND GOBLINS

YSBEC | [Newmarket](#)

Goblets and Goblins is a board game cafe based in Newmarket, offering customers a warm atmosphere to enjoy food, drink and play a variety of board games. Eddie Rayle, Co-Owner of the cafe wanted to see what his options were for support as a first-time business owner and found the YSBEC through a google search. YSBEC’s Small Business Consultant, “helped me out with my business plan and guided me through all of the licenses I needed, and what next steps to take,” said Mr. Rayle, “I found it very helpful and I think it’s something you can keep on doing. I would recommend it to anyone.”



SPOTLIGHT: MONA HAIR SALON

YSBEC | [Aurora](#)

Mona Sohrabibalsini started her business with a dream – she had over 20 years of experience and wanted to finally venture out on her own. Based in Aurora, Mona Hair Salon specializes in hair services such as cutting, styling, colouring and even threading. Mona knew she could use some help during the COVID-19 pandemic, so she called the York Small Business Enterprise Centre for support. “COVID-19 was a very tough time for all businesses, including me,” said Mona. “I reached out to the YSBEC to improve my online presence, and they really helped me out.” She met with an YSBEC Small Business Consultant for a free consultation and began the Starter Company Plus program as it provides training, mentoring and the opportunity to receive a grant of up to \$5,000. With the grant, she was able to improve her online presence. Mona also participated in many seminars and workshops to help her gain knowledge in new areas, including social media, e-commerce and market research. Mona is using her new skills to grow her business and is currently hiring new staff for the salon to handle an influx of clients. “I strongly recommend the York Small Business Enterprise Centre if you want to start or grow your business,” said Mona. “I’d like to thank them for helping me manage the challenges of COVID-19 and improving my business.”

SPOTLIGHT: WHOLE FAMILY HEALTH FOOD

YSBEC | [Georgina](#)

Whole Family Health Food is a community-focused health food store in Georgina, Ontario, offering vitamins minerals, herbs, specialty, grocery, natural body care, and even a section for pets. Business Owner, Kristen Schiener, came in with a business plan looking for a bit of support, “it was very specific for what I needed to learn and where we wanted to grow. The mentors they selected for me were top notch.”

NORTHERN YORK REGION PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ACCESS PROGRAM PROVIDED FREE PROFESSIONAL ADVICE TO 100 SMALL BUSINESSES

YSBEC | [York Region](#)

With the unprecedented economic impacts of COVID-19, having access to professional services is critical for the success of any business. However, not all business owners can easily afford these costs. The Northern York Region Professional Services Access Program (PSAP) provided eligible businesses with access to free professional advice, on topics including:

- Legal
- Finance
- Marketing
- Human Resources
- And more...

In 2021, this program, which is unique to YSBEC clients, helped more than 100 business access critical support from a variety of professionals, such as lawyers, accountants, and financial analysts. Details including a full list of service options is available here: yorklink.ca/psap



“The program was incredibly helpful for helping me think outside the box, gain clarity in where I’m heading and gave me a tangible jumping off point to take my business to the next level.

Thank you for your help.”

- Owner, Front Porch Refillery

'OUR FIRST YEAR WAS A WHIRLWIND': THE MAKER'S MARK, SELLING ARTISAN CRAFTS IN NEWMARKET, MARKS THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Yorkregion.com | Newmarket

Erin Gooderham and Meghan Larkin bonded on the artisan market circuit. Gooderham creates original drawings, paintings and prints under the company pea + GRUFF, while Larkin makes keepsake stuffed animals under the company Sew Shenanigans.

"We connected immediately over our shared passion for supporting the handmade community and over our desire to find a better way of selling handcrafted goods," they said in an email.

In the middle of the pandemic, they launched The Maker's Mark. On November 28, the Newmarket business marked its first anniversary.

The business provides a retail location where artisans can sell high-quality, handmade goods year-round without incurring the costs and risks normally associated with owning a storefront, Gooderham and Larkin said.

It also offers a venue where makers can teach, learn and collaborate.



LOCAL DIRECTORS' MOVIES SCREENING AT REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL Toronto Star | Newmarket

Newmarket-raised director Albert Shin was invited to the Reel Asian International Film Festival with his moving short film, "Together."

Ganesh Thava's "The Orchid and the Tree" was included in this year's Shorts programming. Thava is a Tamil Canadian writer and director, of the second generation of immigrants from Sri Lanka, who grew up in Markham.

"It is nice that the festival is featuring BIPOC films. I'm really appreciative that they are providing the space," Thava said, adding he felt very grateful, nervous and vulnerable, "because every aspect of the film was crafted and decided by me, which means what people are seeing is truly me — that's scary."



MARKHAM RESIDENT REALIZES DREAM OF OWNING RESTAURANT, SMASH Yorkregion.com | Markham

Jason Goodis is owner of Markham's Smash Kitchen and Bar, Next Door Restaurant and a charcuterie and bottle shop called CharBox.

Born and raised in Unionville, he entered the restaurant industry at age 14 when his father brought him to Lick's Homeburgers and Ice Cream at McCowan Road and Hwy. 7 to get a job. He fell in love with the restaurant industry and later attended the University of Guelph to study hospitality.

CharBox, opened during the pandemic, focuses on locally crafted cheeses and cured meats. As for Next Door Restaurant, its specialty is Canadian seasonal cuisine.



YORK REGION'S FIRST SUPERMOON JAPANESE CHEESECAKE STORE OPENS Yorkregion.com | Newmarket

With lineups out the door, Wasim Jarrah considers his new business, Supermoon Japanese Cheesecake, to be a success.

The real estate agent and business owner celebrated the grand opening of his new venture on Saturday, Dec. 11. The store, located at 695 Stonehaven Ave., offers fluffy Japanese-style cheesecakes.

"We brought it into the market to fill a gap. People wanted something different," Jarrah said, adding that the dessert isn't very heavy but has a sweet taste to it.



LONGTIME FAMILY MEDICAL EQUIPMENT BUSINESS CHOOSES NEWMARKET FOR SECOND LOCATION

Newmarkettoday.ca | Newmarket

A new medical equipment supplier, Homestead, has officially opened its doors in Newmarket.

The business, which supplies oxygen, mobility equipment like walkers and grab bars, and medical devices like CPAP machines, celebrated the grand opening of its location at 17305 Leslie Street on October 7, 2021.

One of the owners, Geoff Patton, said he never imagined himself in this position. As a former professional hockey player, he didn't expect to return to his hometown of Lindsay, Ontario or run a family business.

Now his focus is to further grow his family's business and after considering a few markets, they chose Newmarket.



EAST GWILLIMBURY WOMAN SEARCHED FOR HIGH-QUALITY TOYS, NOW SHE SELLS THEM IN HER OWN STORE

Yorkregion.com | East Gwillimbury

When Sherry Paymani was growing up in Iran, her father made musical instruments and would fashion beautiful toys for her out of wood, such as cubes and figures.

So, when she had her daughter, Rae, on Nov. 30, 2018, she wanted her to have access to quality toys too and set out to search for the best toys. But Sherry found quality toys difficult to find. She had wanted to find wooden toys, like the kind she grew up with and Montessori-inspired resources, too.

"It was mind-blowing these weren't available," said Paymani, who lives in East Gwillimbury. In the end, she decided to open her own store called Little Rae Goods, an all-natural children's toy boutique.

MOM AND SON DUO BAKE DELICIOUS LOCAL MACEDONIAN FOOD AT THIS NEWMARKET SPOT

CBC | Newmarket

Nicholas Georgievski is the young owner behind the tiny shop, Macedonian Secrets. He just turned 30 in August. He was born in Richmond Hill, and identifies as Macedonian.

His parents, Maggie and Louie, are from Strumica, a southern city close to the Bulgarian border. They came to Canada over 30 years ago when they were young, and Maggie's first job was running a coffee truck.

Nicholas worked at one of the oldest pizza places in town, but soon realized that he wanted to do something a bit more traditional.

He wanted something more Macedonian, something that's harder to find. He wanted to do something inspired by his mom, who was known for making her own flat breads and savoury pastries. So they found a former pizza shop, with the oven intact, and they started experimenting.

You can find Macedonian Secrets at 16700 Bayview Avenue in Newmarket.

YORK REGION BUSINESS & ECONOMIC INDICATORS

1.2 **MILLION**
RESIDENTS

600,000
LOCAL JOBS

1,200
NEW BUSINESSES
ANNUAL AVERAGE (2011 - 2021)

3RD **LARGEST**
BUSINESS HUB IN
ONTARIO
54,000 EMPLOYER ESTABLISHMENTS

2ND **LARGEST**
ICT SECTOR IN CANADA
WITH 4,500+ COMPANIES
AND HIGHEST DENSITY OVERALL

16 **FORTUNE 100**
COMPANIES
HAVE CORPORATE / DIVISIONAL OPERATIONS
IN YORK REGION

20%
OF GREATER TORONTO'S **STEM** AND **BUSINESS**
GRADUATES LIVE IN YORK REGION

2ND **LARGEST**
FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES SECTOR IN
ONTARIO WITH 6,500 FIRMS

6^{OF GREATER TORONTO AREA'S}
TOP 10 ICT
CORPORATE R&D SPENDERS

3RD **HIGHEST**
POPULATION WITH
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
AMONGST CANADA'S LARGEST MUNICIPALITIES
(70%)

10,000+
NEW HOMES & CONDOS SOLD
IN YORK REGION | 2021

\$5.1 **BILLION**
CONSTRUCTION VALUE (2021)

656,000
LOCAL LABOUR FORCE
[est. 2021]

3RD **LARGEST**
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY
SECTOR IN ONTARIO
WITH OVER 2,600 FIRMS

\$4.6B
10-YEAR NEW PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT (2020 - 2029)

YORK REGION REAL GDP
\$64.7
BILLION [est. 2021]

3RD **LARGEST**
POPULATION IN ONTARIO
FOR RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE OF CANADA
(47%)

18 **PUBLIC COLLEGES AND**
UNIVERSITIES
WITHIN COMMUTING DISTANCE

2,700
COMPANIES EXPORTING GOODS
[est. 2021]

#1 **CANADA'S LARGEST**
AUTO PARTS & MANUFACTURING CLUSTER

YORK REGION IS AN

ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE

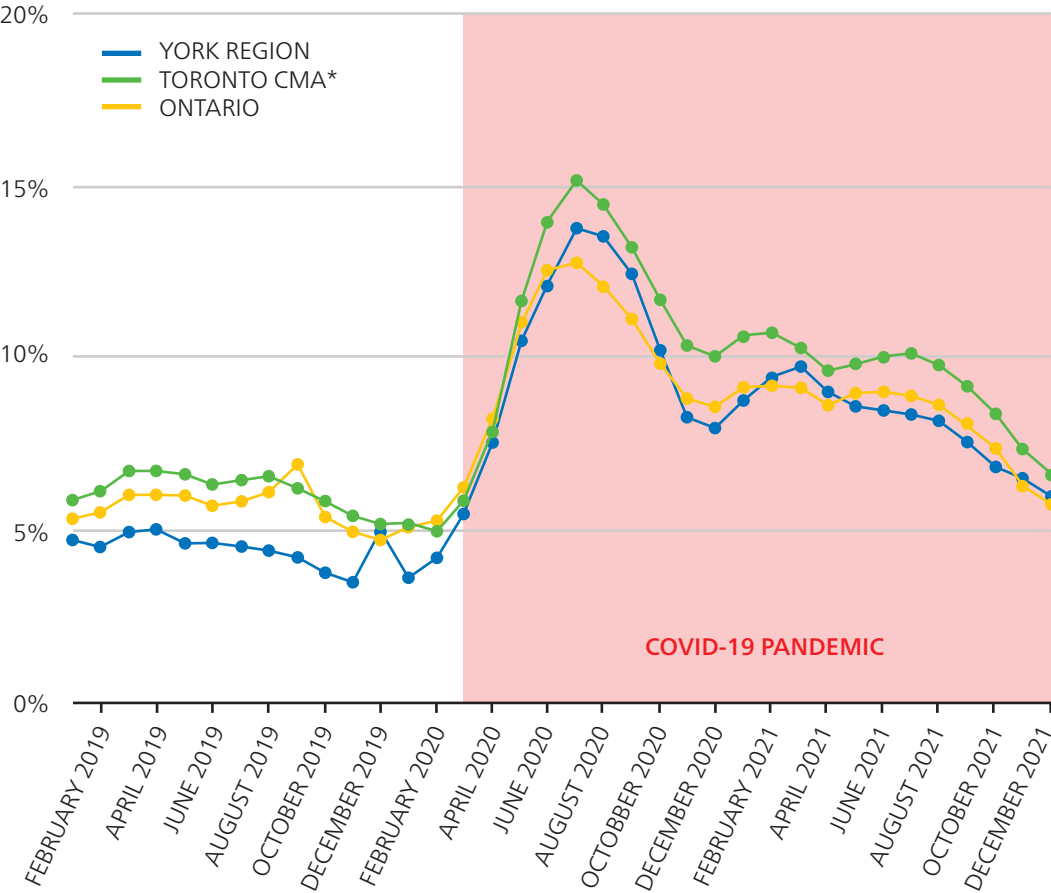
EMPLOYERS IN YORK REGION BY INDUSTRY SECTOR

BUSINESS COUNT		BUSINESS COUNT	
54 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9,628	53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,694
23 Construction	6,309	31 - 33 Manufacturing	2,502
44 - 45 Retail Trade	4,927	56 Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,350
62 Healthcare and Social Assistance	4,660	52 Finance and Insurance	2,062
81 Other Services (Except Public Administration)	3,650	48 - 49 Transportation and Warehousing	2,012
41 Wholesale Trade	3,356	61 Educational Services	794
72 Accommodation and Food Services	2,838	51 Information and Cultural Industries	651
Other*	5,504	TOTAL: 53,937	

*Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; Utilities; Management of Companies and Enterprises; Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Public Administration; Unclassified

Source: York Region, Planning & Economic Development analysis by NAICS; Statistics Canada; CBC by Location | 12/2021

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

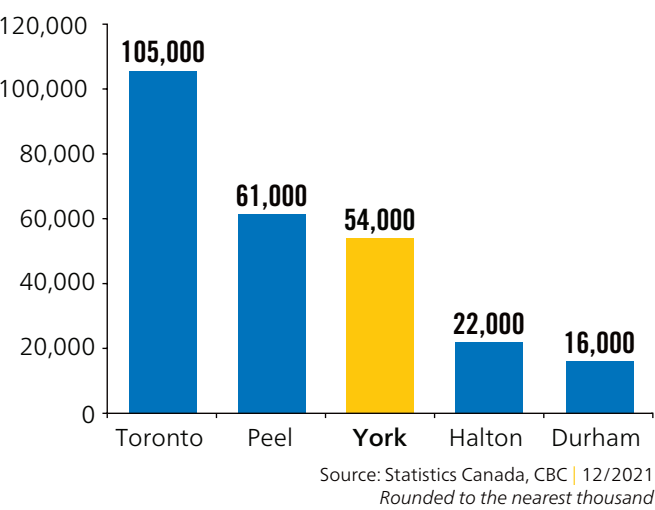


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, 3-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality | 2021

*Census Metropolitan Area

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [YORKLINK.CA/ECONOMIC-INDICATORS](https://yorklink.ca/economic-indicators)

TOTAL EMPLOYER BUSINESSES BY GTA REGION



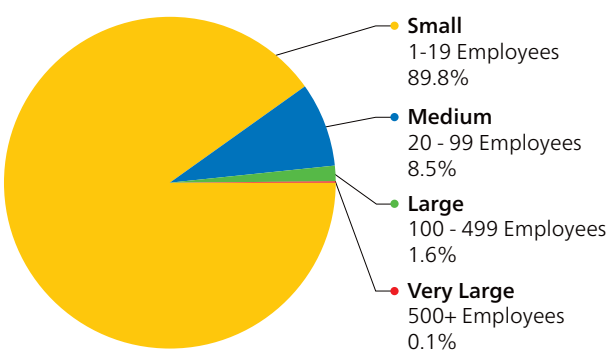
CANADA'S TOP TECHNOLOGY HUBS

MUNICIPALITY	# of ICT EMPLOYERS
City of Toronto	7,179
YORK REGION	4,580
Peel Region	4,416
Montreal	4,329
Greater Vancouver	4,238
Ottawa	3,224
Calgary	2,932
Halton Region	1,777
Edmonton	1,491
Durham Region	967
Waterloo	780

Source: Statistics Canada, CBC | 06/2021

York Region, Planning & Economic Development analysis by NAICS

YORK REGION BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT SIZE



Source: York Region, Planning & Economic Development analysis of 2-Level NAICS; Statistics Canada, CBC by Location | 12/2021 | (Numbers may not add up due to rounding)



● ● ● ● ●

**BY 2051,
YORK REGION
IS PROJECTED
TO GROW TO
2.03 MILLION
RESIDENTS
AND 991,000
LOCAL JOBS**

Source: York Region, Planning & Economic Development | 2021

2021 TOTAL CONSTRUCTION VALUE

REGION	TOTAL VALUE	CHANGE FROM 2020
City of Toronto	\$11,757,596,000	2.0%
Greater Vancouver RD	\$10,296,313,000	1.4%
City of Calgary	\$5,894,018,000	63.2%
YORK REGION	\$5,192,673,000	97.6%
City of Montreal	\$4,962,240,000	11.2%
Peel Region	\$4,210,608,000	32.9%
City of Ottawa	\$3,701,704,000	-12.7%
City of Edmonton	\$3,016,846,000	-5.8%
Durham Region	\$2,780,477,000	11.0%
Halton Region	\$2,386,736,000	-4.7%

Source: Local Municipal Building Permit Reports, 2021; Statistics Canada Building Permit Reports and Table 32.2 (unpublished) | 2021

Note: List includes cities, Regions, and Regional Districts as defined locally.

GREATER TORONTO AREA NEW HOME SALES | 2021

REGION	TOTAL	SINGLE FAMILY HOMES*	CONDOMINIUM APARTMENTS
Toronto	16,071	356	15,715
YORK REGION	10,878	5,080	5,798
Peel Region	7,597	2,452	5,145
Durham Region	6,868	4,327	2,541
Halton Region	5,237	1,517	3,720
GTA COMBINED	46,651	13,732	32,919

*Single family homes, including detached, linked, and semi-detached houses and townhouses (excluding stacked townhouses).

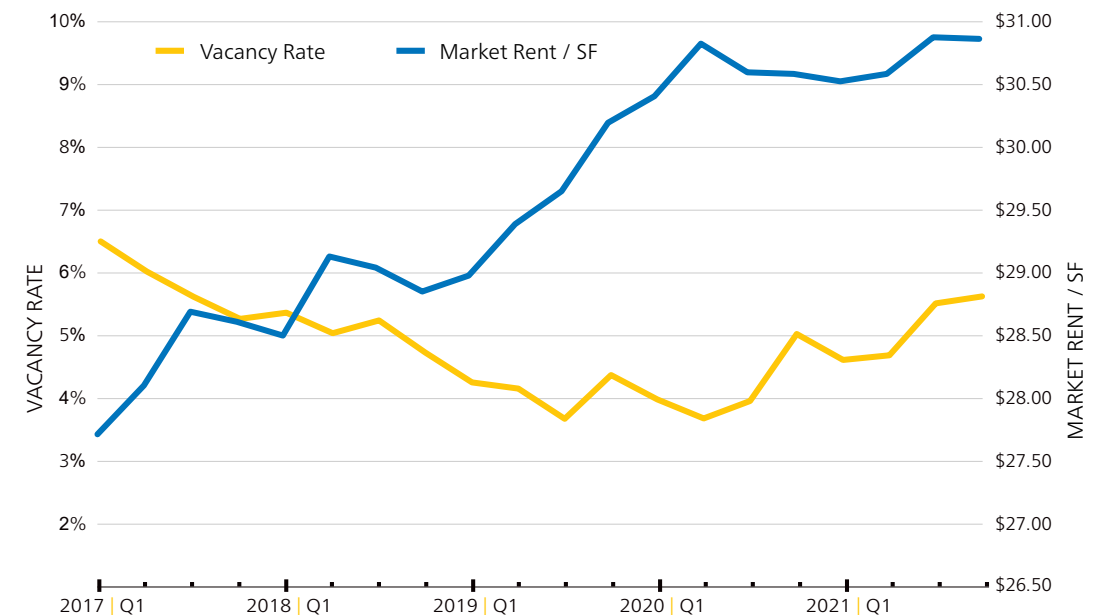
Source: Altus Group | 2021

OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE IN YORK REGION

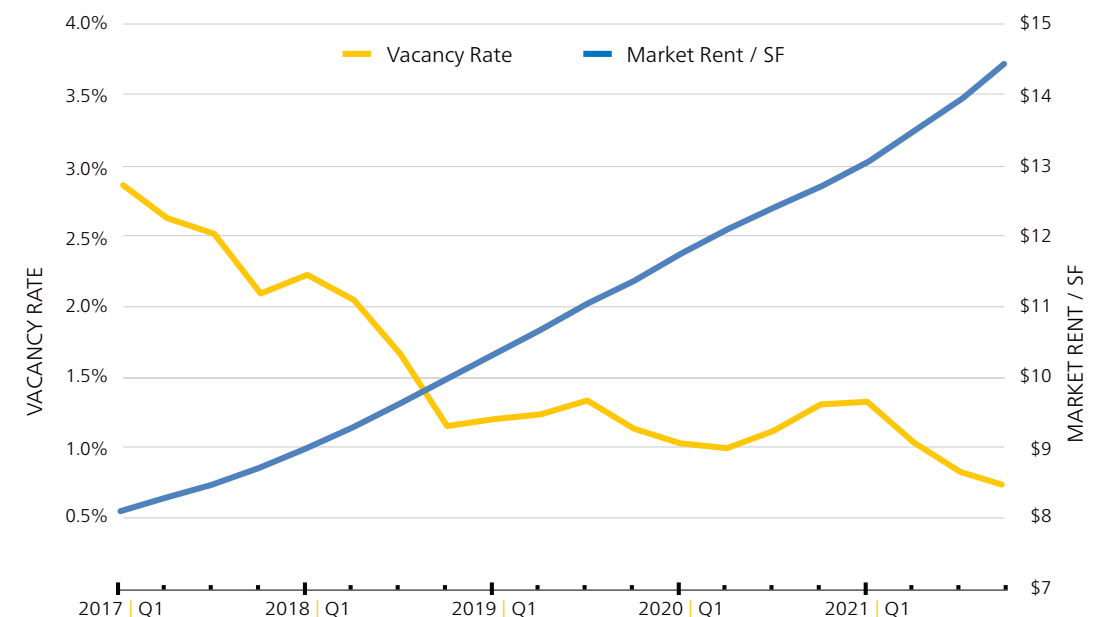
TYPE	ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS
Single	240,807
Semi-Detached	23,053
Row / Townhouse	52,481
Duplex	15,160
Apartment	62,982
ESTIMATED TOTAL	394,483

Source: York Region, Planning & Economic Development | 2021

YORK REGION OFFICE VACANCY RATE (%) AND MARKET RENT



YORK REGION INDUSTRIAL VACANCY RATE (%) AND MARKET RENT



YORK REGION COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL VACANCY RATE AND MARKET RENT

OFFICE SPACE

Market Rent per SF, Annual Average: **\$30.74**
 Market Rent per SF, 5-year Average: **\$29.63**
 Vacancy Rate, Annual Average: **5.04%**
 Vacancy Rate, 5-Year Average: **4.80%**

INDUSTRIAL SPACE

Market Rent per SF, Annual Average: **\$13.74**
 Market Rent per SF, 5-year Average: **\$10.96**
 Vacancy Rate, Annual Average: **1.01%**
 Vacancy Rate, 5-Year Average: **1.56%**

Source (all data on this page): CoStar | 2021

IS YOUR BUSINESS CONSIDERING EXPANSION OR RELOCATION?

In partnership with York Region’s nine local cities and towns, York Region’s Economic Strategy team provides advisory and support services to companies looking to establish operations in York Region – part of the Greater Toronto Area – as well as supporting established York Region businesses seeking to expand.

We provide a range of complimentary services to help retain, grow, and attract businesses and talent in York Region, including:

- Industry sector data and advisory
- Location selection assistance
- Entrepreneurship and small business support programs
- Strategic B2B/B2G introductions
- Marketing and promotion support
- Access to government incentives
- Soft landing
- Talent acquisition support

We’re here to help. To speak with a member of the team, email: edo@york.ca

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WHERE TALENT AND OPPORTUNITY INTERSECT

