



2022

Economic Development and Tourism Annual Report



2022 Year in Review

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2022 was a year of booming growth in Durham, as the global economy began to emerge from the effects of the pandemic. Invest Durham had an exciting year, as we supported and celebrated several innovative projects and major investments.

The new Durham College Barrett Centre for Sustainable Urban Agriculture found a great temporary home on Regionally owned lands. Ontario Power Generation broke ground on what will be North America’s first small modular reactor. We celebrated as the ribbon was cut at Kubota’s new Canadian headquarters.

With a return to in-person events, we welcomed prospective investors from international markets to experience why Durham is in-demand. Invest Durham’s business development team grew; adding some necessary bench strength to service inbound investment inquiries. This ensured Durham is positioned to land advanced automotive and clean energy investments in the near term, leveraging our talented workforce.

We nurtured culinary industry change-makers at Feast on the Farm, and welcomed visitors back at Gates Open. These events brought thousands to get a taste of place and understand how farm reaches fork in Durham.

At the Invest Durham pavilion at the Collision Conference—the world’s premier gathering of tech companies—an abundant farm market stand showcased that Durham is a delicious place to grow your tech businesses – appealing to start ups with our vibrant and desirable lifestyle.

Anticipation has built through the year as we prepared our new five-year strategy to grow the Region’s economy. It sets out four bold economic aspirations 30 years in the future for the Region’s people, vibrant places, accelerating sectors, and creative identity.

Ready Set Future: A PLACE Blueprint for Durham was approved in December 2022. Now, it’s off to the races.



Simon Gill

**Director, Economic
Development and Tourism**

Economic Snapshot



Booming Growth

- Average commercial and industrial building activity of more than \$900M annually over the past three years.
- Durham Region's population is expected to grow to 1,300,000 by 2051.



In Demand

- Oshawa census metropolitan area (Bowmanville to Whitby) is the third fastest growing population in the country (2021 Census Data).
- Average industrial and commercial rental rates in the east Greater Toronto Area have increased 49 per cent year-over-year, and 144 per cent in the past five years.



Talented

- Durham Region post-secondary student population continues to grow, reaching more than 30,000 students annually.
- Durham College, Ontario Tech University and Trent University Durham GTA rank among Canada's Top 50 Research Colleges and Universities.



Innovating the Future

- Ontario Power Generation announces partnership with GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy, SNC-Lavalin, and Aecon to construct North America's first Small Modular Reactor (SMR) at the Darlington New Nuclear Project site.
- Project Arrow, the first all-Canadian zero-emission connected concept vehicle is engineered, built, and tested at Ontario Tech University.

Business Investment Highlights

The following non-exhaustive list details some key new businesses, strategic investments and retained/expanded businesses in Durham Region in 2022. Please note that this list does not include any retail or franchise opportunities and may include opportunities that our team did not directly support.

Excelencia Consulting locates Canadian office in 1855 Accelerator, Whitby.

Key2Enable has become a member of 1855 Technology Accelerator and is working on arranging resources for its entry in the Canadian market.

Vegan Delights – Commercial Kitchen and Bistro launched its commercial kitchen in Whitby.

CloudTax locates corporate office in 1855 Accelerator, Whitby.

Durham Region welcomes investments from **FGF Brands and Hi Tech Bay** to Pickering Innovation Corridor.

Broccolini continues construction of 685,000 square foot facility at Garrard Road in Whitby.

Atlantic Packaging expands its existing facility to add paper manufacturing.

Agile Manufacturing expands to Township of Brock.

TriBro Studios opens Sandy Beach Studios, a 165,000 square foot creative space with three sound stages in City of Pickering.

Durham College's new **Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture**, an urban farm on Regional land in Ajax broke ground.

Kubota celebrates grand opening of Canadian corporate headquarters in Pickering Innovation Corridor.

Swegon North America opens new facility and Canadian HQ in Town of Ajax.

Lastman's Bad Boy announce new corporate HQ and distribution centre in the Pickering Innovation Corridor.

General Motor's Oshawa Assembly adds third shift, bringing jobs total to 2600 since reopening.

Ontario Power Generation continues its decade-long collaboration with Durham College and Ontario Tech University through a new \$5-million investment.

Ontario Tech University's ACE Climatic Wind Tunnel opens enhanced space with Moving Ground Plane.

Federal government and Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority announce nearly \$30 million dollar investment into upgrading and extending the **Port of Oshawa**.

Business Development and Investment Attraction



Responded to 157 Business Investment Inquiries – 28% Increase over previous year



Directly landed three investments: Keys2Enable, Vegan Delights and Excelencia Consulting

148
leads remain open

10 national and international investment attraction missions

8 industry events, conferences, and trade shows

9 inbound delegations and site tours

In 2022, Invest Durham substantially advanced Regional relationships with important partner organizations for investment attraction, particularly with senior government investment attraction agencies both domestically and internationally. These senior agencies, or senior government staff of foreign governments, are critical to successfully attracting investment. Strong relationships result in an awareness of Durham’s brand, reputation, and value proposition for investment, and prospective investments are referred to Durham through these agencies.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Invest Durham supported a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship organizations and initiatives, including:

- Spark Centre
- Synergy Pioneer Program
- 1855 Accelerator
- Business Advisory Centre of Durham (BACD)
- Durham Entrepreneurship Ecosystem
- OPEN.innovate Creative Arts Incubator of Durham Region
- Digital Main Street
- SiberXChange and SiberX Canadian Women in Cybersecurity
- Collision Conference
- Ontario Shores' Mental Health Innovation Incubator
- Durham Region International Film Festival Emerging Filmmaker Incubator
- The Durham Regional Technology Development Site, a part of the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN), a provincial network of advanced mobility support organizations. The local partnership includes the Spark Centre, Ontario Tech University, Durham College and Durham Region/Invest Durham

Marketing

Promoting Durham Region for new investment and job creation.



Twitter

2,199 followers
1,829 interactions
102% follower growth



LinkedIn

3,829 followers
6,510 interactions
38% follower growth



Instagram

1,978 followers
2,266 interactions
40% follower growth

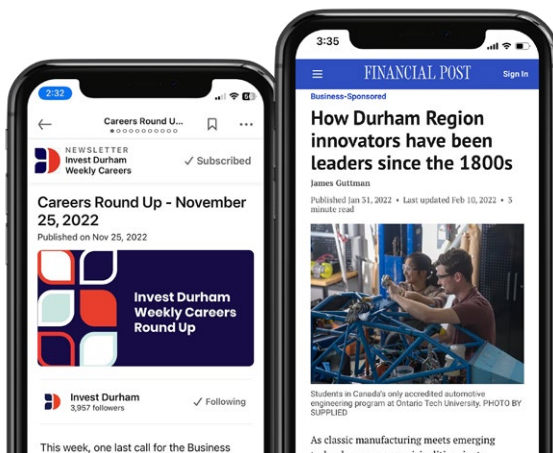
1,766 subscribers to Invest Durham Enews

Invest Durham Marketing Initiatives

- Teamed up with Durham’s local innovation community—including the eight local municipal economic development teams; three post-secondary institutions; as well as 1855 Accelerator; and Spark Centre—to showcase Durham Region’s exciting development potential to businesses and investors at Collision Conference, resulting in more than 1000 connections.
- Supported 2 Access IO events to foster entrepreneurship and promote innovative technological solutions in the community.



145% increase on Average Time spent on InvestDurham.ca between 2020 and 2022



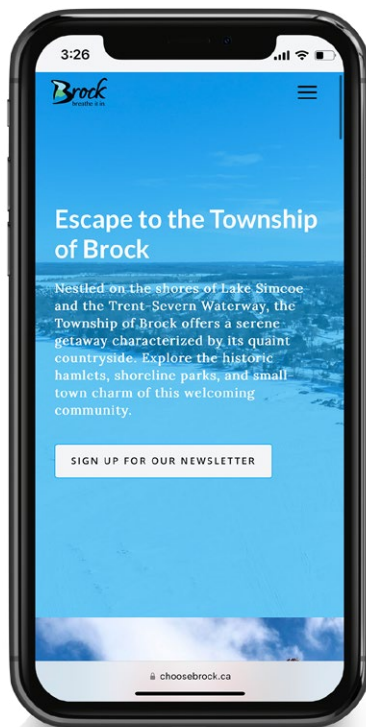
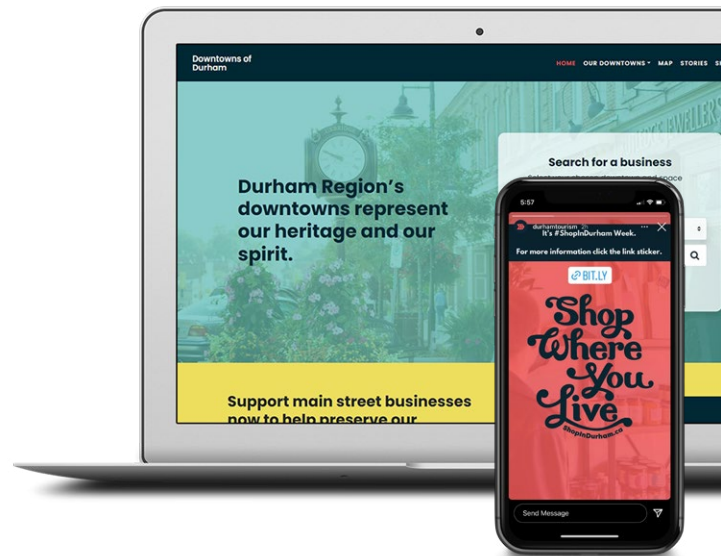
- 1387 subscribers following the launch of a Weekly Careers Round Up LinkedIn Newsletter
- 1,241,551 impressions of four-article series in Financial Post about Durham Region’s value proposition for investment.

Tourism

With promotions to bring tourists to Durham limited by the pandemic, Durham Tourism focused significant effort on supporting local tourism businesses and operators as many experienced the most severe impacts to their business due to restrictions.

Initiatives included:

- Shop Where You Live, Shop in Durham campaign—a joint effort with Durham’s Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade achieved a 61% year over year growth of the campaign landing page.
- Downtowns of Durham project—the website grew to reach over 62,000 page views in 2022, an increase of 7% over 2021.



Other key initiatives include:

- The creation of a Township of Brock tourism website; partnership with North Durham events such as Winding Roads Festival, Mural Marathon, and the Uxbridge Holiday Trail.
- Celebrated the arts, culture and creative industries through partnerships with events such as Small Town Big, The OMA’s, Springtide Music Festival, The Troubadour Series and Culture Days.
- Supported the establishment of the inaugural Oshawa Orientation Experience event in partnership with the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, City of Oshawa, Durham College, Ontario Tech University, Trent University, Downtown Oshawa Business Alliance, Central Counties Tourism and the province of Ontario.
- Welcomed 150 guests to Feast on the Farm—an event supporting industry changemakers who are championing regenerative farming and sustainable practices—in partnership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance.

Tourism



7,729

monthly e-newsletter subscribers



4,160

monthly industry e-newsletter subscribers



Twitter

8,394 followers
131,000 impressions
Engagement rate 2.4%



Instagram

9,363 followers
835,000 impressions
Engagement rate 4.1%



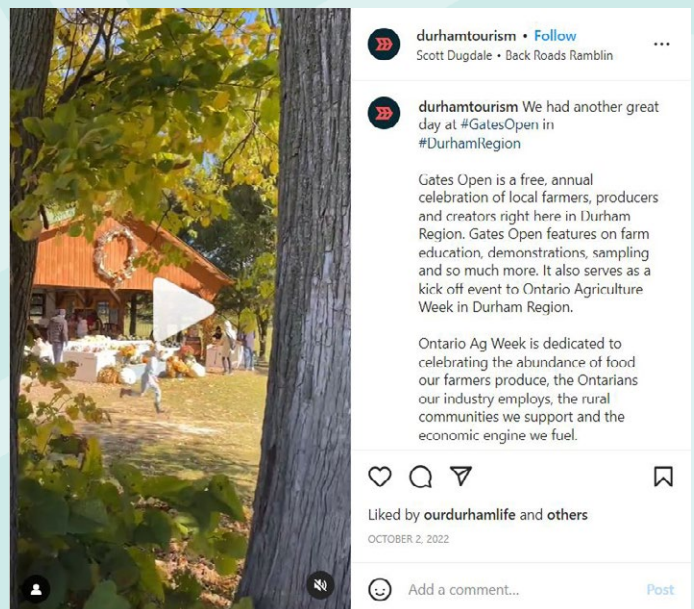
Facebook

6,571 followers
290,000 reach
Increase +1%



Tourism Initiative

Durham Tourism and Durham Farm Fresh co-hosted Gates Open: Find Your Flavour in October 2022. Gates Open is an annual celebration for Durham Farm Fresh members to “open their farm gates” and offer free, educational and experiential activities. Gates Open provides a platform for farms that are not typically open for visitors to participate in an on-farm diversified use. The 2022 event showcased 10 farms in Durham’s vibrant agriculture sector to 2,500+ visitors. The event received funding support from the Reconnect Ontario granting program.



Sport Tourism

In 2022, Durham Region was selected to host the 2023 Ontario Parasport Games from February 3 to 5, 2023.

Under the leadership of Sport Durham, a Games Organizing Committee (GOC) was formed of more than 60 members. Activities included:

- Planning for Opening Ceremony, dinner, and reception
- Coordination of 11 sport competitions and 4 demonstration/try-it sessions
- Organization of food, accommodations and transportation of nearly 500 participants
- Improving accessibility for participants
- Securing sponsorships
- Games promotion and 100-day Countdown event



Parasport Games Partnerships

- AccessNow mapping of Games venues and municipal facilities
- A pilot training program for accessible sport athletes
- Sensory support kits at libraries and Games venues
- A pilot program to add more adaptive sport and recreational opportunities at Durham College and Ontario Tech University
- Inclusive Athlete’s Lounge
- Collection of donations in support of Feed the Need in Durham

Other sport tourism activities included:

- Oshawa/Durham Region selected to host 2023 Canadian Tire National Skating Championships
- Collaborated with City of Oshawa to bid on and host Quidditch Canada Eastern Regional Championship in November 2022
- Secured Ultimate Canada’s Canadian 4-on-4 Ultimate Championships for April 2023 (Oshawa) and Canadian High School Championships for May 2023 (Ajax)
- Sport Tourism Specialist joined Sport Tourism Canada Board of Directors
- Supported 2022 events including the Ontario Basketball Association Under 16 Boys, Under 17 Boys and Under 19 Ontario Cup Championships, Special Olympics Hometown Games Bowling and Softball tournaments, University and College National Badminton Championships and the annual ten-day Ontario Lacrosse Festival

Rural and Agriculture



817
bi-monthly industry
e-newsletter
subscribers



7%
growth in number
of social media
followers



530
total attendees at
agriculture and rural
workshops

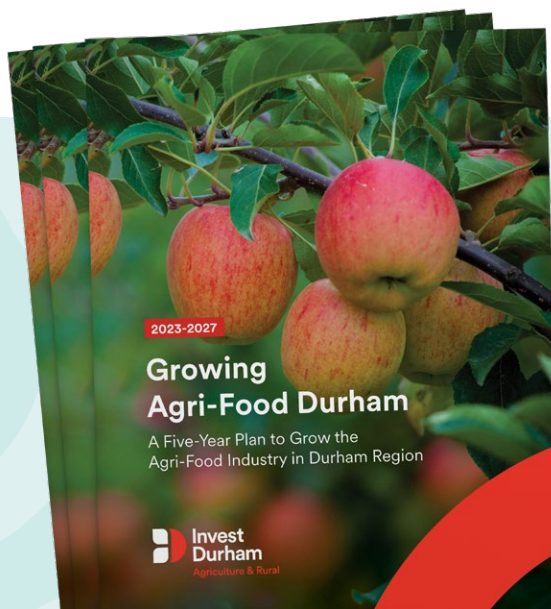
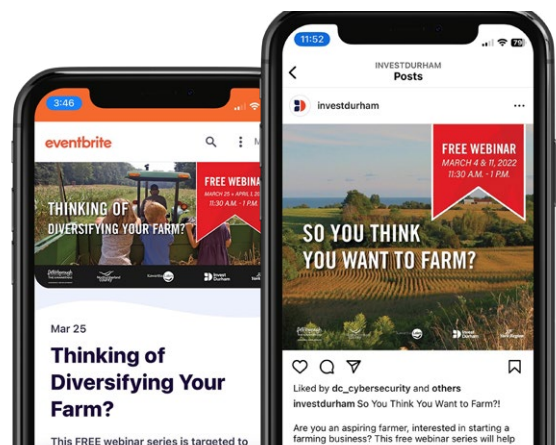


400
participants in
Vertical Farming
101 webinar
series

Completed the Uxbridge
Downtown Revitalization
Strategic Plan and Action
plan in partnership with the
Township of Uxbridge

70 participants in Thinking of
Diversifying Your Farm webinar series

60 participants in the So You Think
You Want to Farm webinar series



In June 2022, Regional Council endorsed the Growing Agri-Food Durham Plan. A 5 Year Plan to Grow the Agri-Food Industry in Durham Region. This is an Action Plan associated with the Ready Set Future Regional Economic Development Strategy and focuses on advancing agri-food as a priority cluster for the region of Durham.

Film Durham



53%

increase in film production days in Durham Region from 2021 to 2022



37%

in film production projects in Durham Region from 2021 to 2022



65

Helped to coordinate 65 film and television productions in Durham Region



Durham Region International Film Festival (DRIFF) 2022:



27 applicants to the DRIFF Emerging Filmmaker Incubator



3 sold out drive-ins showing works by diverse Canadian filmmakers



3 venues hosted Fall film festival series

456 attendees

at Film and Television Industry Career Fair hosted with 23 partners.

Broadband

The Region of Durham advanced the 2019 Broadband strategy by incorporating the Region's broadband municipal services corporation, Durham OneNet Inc. to design, build, and operate the Regional Broadband Network. Visit DurhamOneNet.ca to learn more.



Awards

Economic Development Awards

- Invest Durham's Timeline of Innovation Ad won an Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) Marketing Canada Award in the category of Single Advertisement; an International Economic Development Council (IEDC) award for Excellence in Economic Development; as well as an IEDC Bronze Award for the print version.
- The Durham is Home Social Media Campaign won a EDAC Marketing Canada Award in the category of Social Media/Apps.
- Tap into Talent campaign earned an EDAC Award in the Advertising Campaign category.
- EDCO Economic Development Awards – Finalist; Shop Durham Region Marketplace, in collaboration with Whitby BIA, Finalist; Energy Campaign.

AVA Digital Awards:

- Invest Durham Value Prop Video – Platinum
- Invest Durham Tap into Talent Video – Platinum
- Invest Durham Ag Careers Series – Honourable Mention
- Invest Durham Timeline of Innovation Campaign – Platinum
- Invest Durham Energy Campaign – Honourable Mention

MarCom Awards:

- Invest Durham Innovation Ad Series – Gold
- Durham at Collision – Trade Show Exhibit – Honourable Mention
- Invest Durham Timeline of Innovation Campaign – Platinum
- Invest Durham Energy Campaign – Honourable Mention



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If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact Economic Development and Tourism at 905-668-4113, ext. 2619.