

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Members of Council

2022-2026

Vaughan is the economic engine of York Region. The numbers speak for themselves, with the city representing almost 40 per cent of all economic output and employment across the region.

The 2022 report highlights the many ways the City of Vaughan's Strategic Economic Initiatives team is making a positive difference in the lives of residents and the success of local businesses. Their unique and insightful business services provide meaningful support across our city.

As Vaughan grows to take its rightful place as a world-class city, we recognize the contributions of the many incredible people in the community who are vital to our success.



Message from the Mayor



The City of Vaughan is committed to building a world-class city where residents and businesses can thrive. We are focused on keeping taxes low and building a culture of continuous improvement by focusing on innovation and technology.

The Strategic Economic Initiatives team ensures the City continues moving forward. They are effective, outside-the-box thinkers who are passionate about serving Vaughan's business community and helping it grow.

One of their core service offerings is the development of alternative sources of revenue for the City that help fund the programs and services on which residents rely. The hard work undertaken by the team allows the City to remain financially disciplined and maintain a low level of taxation.

Vaughan is fortunate to have a talented staff. The results of their work are summarized in this report, and I look forward to their future accomplishments.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Del Duca'.

Hon. Steven Del Duca
Mayor, City of Vaughan

Message from the City Manager



The Strategic Economic Initiatives team within the City of Vaughan's Economic Development department continues to position the city as a great place to build and grow a business, creating opportunities that attract and retain top talent.

Their work contributes to Economic Development's goal of providing businesses with a climate for growth and improving residents' quality of life and standard of living. They foster Smart City projects that use technology to solve civic challenges. They lead Vaughan's Public Art Program, which develops the city's unique identity and economic vitality. And they generate alternative sources of revenue for City programs through corporate partnerships.

On behalf of the Senior Leadership Team - Executive, I want to congratulate the Strategic Economic Initiatives team and the entire Economic Development department on the initiatives, awards and recognitions outlined in this review.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Spensieri', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nick Spensieri
City Manager, City of Vaughan



VAUGHAN CITY HALL



TAP

Into Vaughan





The City of Vaughan is **TRANSFORMATIVE**. Vaughan's economy and business community continue to change how business is done. The City's Economic Development department enables transformative projects.

The City of Vaughan is **AMBITIOUS**. The City of Vaughan undertakes world-class projects that elevate opportunities for local talent and businesses that strive to lead their industries.

The City of Vaughan is **PURPOSE-DRIVEN**. As a proud community leader, the City is dedicated to doing business with purpose, working to build a vibrant and an inclusive community where everyone prospers.

What are Strategic Economic Initiatives?

Strategic Economic Initiatives in Economic Development

The Economic Development department's Strategic Economic Initiatives (SEI) unit undertakes key strategic projects that establish economic assets. These projects aim to promote the growth of the City's business community and attract businesses and talent to Vaughan. The SEI unit strives to transform placemaking by developing ambitious, sustainable and purpose-driven projects that better the community.

Within the SEI unit, staff are undertaking projects in the following areas:

- 1. Smart Cities development**
- 2. Public art and art development**
- 3. Municipal partnerships**
- 4. Economic asset development (i.e., Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct)**



**We catalyze stakeholders,
talent and assets to drive
creative placemaking.**

2022 Strategic Economic Initiatives Highlights

JANUARY

- ▶ Three digital billboards activated on City property to generate more than \$405,000 of revenue per year for fifteen years

FEBRUARY

- ▶ Council endorsed a renewed ventureLAB partnership that enhanced innovation and entrepreneurship services
- ▶ The *Activate!Vaughan* Smart City Challenge received a Gold Award from the Economic Development Council of Ontario (EDCO)

APRIL

- ▶ The Government of Ontario announced an investment of \$2.5 million in ventureLAB partnership with Sterling Industries to open a first-of-its-kind MedTech Lab in Vaughan for local health-tech entrepreneurs

MAY

- ▶ The City launched the second year of the Grow with Vaughan Horticulture Sponsorship Program, resulting in more than \$75,000 in revenue to offset horticulture operational costs

JUNE

- ▶ Vaughan showcased its world-class status at the 2022 Collision Conference by highlighting our emerging health and life sciences sector
- ▶ Council endorsed the pursuit of a “hub-and-spoke” model for developing a cultural arts district in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC)
- ▶ Vaughan advanced healthcare innovation by enabling the development of the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct (VHCP) and extending land-use agreements with York University and Mackenzie Health



JULY

- ▶ The Smart City Task Force concluded with Council unanimously endorsing the Smart City Task Force Findings and Recommendations Report

AUGUST

- ▶ The Assembly Park Outdoor Public Art Gallery launched in the VMC with the exhibition, Transitions

SEPTEMBER

- ▶ Vaughan achieved the Smart Cities Early Adopter International Organization of Standardization (ISO) certification from the World Council on City Data

OCTOBER

- ▶ Vaughan hosted Canada Soccer's Toyota National Championship, generating nearly \$1 million in gross domestic product (GDP) for the hospitality sector

NOVEMBER

- ▶ City staff participated in the 2022 Web Summit to raise the profile of Vaughan among a global audience





Assembly Park Outdoor Gallery, Art Alley, Murals, 2022

Smart Cities Development

A smart city uses technology to solve civic challenges, provides businesses with a climate for growth and improves the quality of life and standard of living for residents.

Purpose-driven

Smart City Task Force

The City's Smart City Task Force had an overall mandate to make recommendations to ensure the City is advancing a culture of knowledge and continuous improvement. Through stakeholder engagement held in June 2022, the task force established a Smart City Development Roadmap.

2022 Accomplishments

Vaughan Council approved a findings and recommendations report, including an approved Smart City vision, guiding principles, strategic objectives, a framework and project prioritization for the 2022-2026 Term of Council.

City-wide Smart City Project Highlights

As a Smart City leader, the City seeks new and meaningful ways to incorporate innovative solutions into ongoing city-building efforts.

2022 Project Highlights

Led by Office of the City Manager:

- ▶ Partnered with York University's YSpace to support tech entrepreneurs in testing their innovative Smart City and IoT-based technology ideas.
- ▶ The Government of Ontario invested \$2.5 million in a ventureLAB partnership with Sterling Industries to open a first-of-its-kind MedTech Lab in Vaughan for local health-tech entrepreneurs.



Led by Legal and Administrative Services:

- ▶ Offered online voting during the Advance Vote period for the City's 2022 Municipal Election. The online voting platform met the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards.

Led by Infrastructure Development:

- ▶ The Rutherford and Maple GO Mobility On-Request Pilot was launched to make commuting to and from GO stations in Vaughan easier.

Led by Planning and Growth Management:

- ▶ Established a paperless development planning application process allowing citizens and industry professionals to submit application development electronically, with a secured login.

Led by Public Works:

- ▶ Launched SmartParks to allow park visitors to access amenity and facility bookings, report a problem and make a service request with the scan of a QR code on their smartphone.
- ▶ Installed a new system in City vehicles called the Road Patrol Manager to detect road deficiencies (such as potholes, sign obstructions, faulty streetlights, graffiti and more) as City staff drive around and work throughout the community.
- ▶ Installed a stormwater pond monitoring system called loticiti that automatically monitors the quantity and quality of stormwater in select City ponds, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- ▶ Enhanced tree maintenance operations using map-based technology.

Award-winning Smart City Initiatives

The City achieved the Smart Cities Early Adopter International Organization of Standardization (ISO) 37122 certifications from the World Council on City Data.

Vaughan is among the first cities worldwide to be certified under this new Smart City standard, joining an early adopter cohort of 10 cities globally.

In 2023, Vaughan will begin collecting data for ISO 37123 Indicators for Resilient Cities and become a global early adopter of that certification. More importantly, the City will be among only a handful worldwide that have obtained a triple certification under the ISO 37120 series.

ISO 37120



**WORLD COUNCIL
ON CITY DATA**

ISO 37122



**WORLD COUNCIL
ON CITY DATA**

ISO 37120



**WORLD COUNCIL
ON CITY DATA**

***Activate!Vaughan* Smart City Challenge wins Gold Award from the Economic Development Council of Ontario (EDCO)**

The EDCO Awards of Excellence is a well-established program recognizing outstanding economic development initiatives in Ontario.

The *Activate!Vaughan* Smart City Challenge called on businesses to propose innovative Smart City technologies to enhance the quality of life in Vaughan. The challenge brought together City departments, industry partners, startups and scaleups to address the challenges of today and the future.

More than 24 targeted, high-potential startups participated in the Smart City Challenge programming, which included innovation workshops, five live Q and A sessions and 56 mentorship meetings with industry partners. The *Activate!Vaughan* program awarded \$90,000 in grant funding to 15 ventures which will help them invest in commercialization, business expansion and job creation.



ACTIVATE!VAUGHAN
SMART CITY CHALLENGE

**A focus on
Smart City innovation**

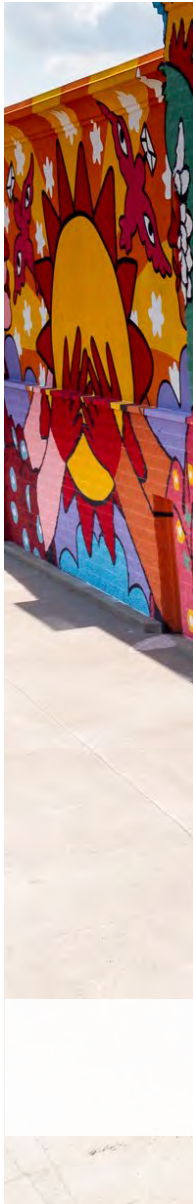
Five companies selected as winners
of pitch competition

Public Art and Art Development

Creative Placemaking: Public Art Program

Curatorial Initiatives

The Vaughan City-wide Public Art Program guides the development and acquisition of public art as a placemaking catalyst for conveying Vaughan's unique identity and economic vitality. Its role in animating the public realm contributes to the urban character of Vaughan and attracts businesses, talent and creative community-builders.





RICARDO CAVOLO, Here Comes the Sun and JEREMY SHANZ, An exploration of our timespace - a reverberation of our endless transformation: ArtWalk, Mural, 2021 | SmartVMC (image courtesy of Smart Centres)

Public Art Advances Creative Placemaking in 2022

Live and upcoming

- ▶ Public art in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) continues to leverage the creative potential in the emerging downtown area, cultivating its authentic metropolitan identity as a distinctive cultural destination.
- ▶ In VMC North, design development is nearing completion for Cortel Group's EXPO City CG Tower Public Art installation overlooking Edgeley Pond and Park. The monumental, sculptural piece, Edgeley Pond Fathom, slated for installation in late 2023 alludes to the previous industrial life of the area through a transformation-themed storyline paying homage to the landscape, history of the land and the story of Black Creek.
- ▶ In VMC South, QuadReal's Assembly Park Outdoor Gallery Program launched in the summer with the inaugural curated exhibition, Transitions, which featured the work of resident and Greater Toronto Area (GTA) artists.

- ▶ Public art planning is underway for several upcoming VMC installations, including:
 - SmartCentres' VMC East Block North major gateway feature at the corner of Jane Street and Portage Parkway, which is in the design concept phase.
 - A substantial on-site contribution of \$2.1 million was secured through the Metrus (Terra) Property Inc. development for a future gateway public art installation at Highway 7 and Jane Street.

- ▶ Citywide | The City-led ARTonBOXES Program will launch through its Group of Seven REMIXED pilot phase in spring 2023. It will debut original art on designated traffic signal boxes in high-profile, publicly accessible locations across all five wards of the city.



RAFAËL ROZENDAAL, Silence: PXL Gallery, Digital Art, 2021 | SmartVMC
(image courtesy of Smart Centres)

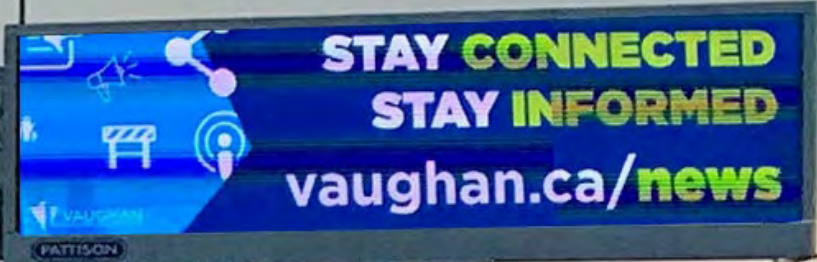
Municipal Partnerships

Alternative Revenue Generation

The Municipal Partnership Office aims to generate alternative sources of revenue for City programs, projects and services to alleviate the tax burden on citizens. The three priority focus areas include city-wide grant support, revenue-generating asset development and internal program support.

In 2022, Economic Development secured \$9.1 million in total advertising, sponsorship and grant revenue that offsets the tax base in support of projects across the corporation, including those that support the economy.





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VAUGHAN
PATTISON



Transformative

2022 Grant Accomplishments

36 grants applied

20 grants awarded worth a combined total of **\$8.5 million** for City programs, projects and services

\$3.5 million in provincial funding to advance the Doctors McLean District Park and Riverwalk Trail

\$2.9 million from the Government of Canada to fund projects, including the Keele Street Multi-Use Pathway, Park Refurbishments and Sensory Gardens, Woodbridge Avenue Streetscape and Woodbridge Library renovations, and Pierre Berton Heritage Centre parking lot revitalization



\$50,000 for the **Boyd Conservation Area Trail**

Feasibility Plan supporting the expansion and enhancement of active transportation infrastructure and a modal shift away from cars toward active transportation

\$224,673 in wage subsidies for city-wide summer staff through the Canada Summer Jobs Program

\$11,000 from The Atmospheric Fund

for two electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in Kleinburg

\$1 million in support of the City's Development Planning department efforts to streamline development approvals

\$5,000 awarded in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Other 2022 grant accomplishments include tree planting, Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service (VFRS) training support, accessible and diverse Vaughan Public Libraries (VPL) programming and recreation support for seniors

Ambitious

Revenue-generating Asset Development

Digital Billboard Revenue Project

The Digital Billboard Revenue Project is the City's first public/private partnership whereby City-owned property is leased to out-of-home advertising companies in a revenue-share lease agreement.



2022 Accomplishments

Three digital billboards were activated on City property to generate a total of **\$6.7 million** in revenue for the City in phase one.

Phase two has begun and includes **four additional sites** undergoing public consultation.



Purpose-driven

Internal Program Support

When internal City departments are looking to generate alternative sources of revenue (whether through a sponsorship program or grant opportunity) to offset their expenses, the SEI unit provides advisory support from the ideation phase to implementation.



2022 Accomplishments

Through **Green Guardians**, the Parks, Forestry and Horticulture Operations department was supported with two programs: the Grow with Vaughan Horticulture Sponsorship Program and the Corporate Tree Planting Program. Entering its third year, Grow with Vaughan has generated more than **\$130,000** in revenue since inception, which helps offset operational costs.

Supported Recreation Services with two programs: the local community sponsorship program for **Toyota National Championships and the RecAssist Fee Subsidy Program**. Hosted in Vaughan by Canada Soccer from Oct. 5 to Oct. 10, 2022, a total of **\$82,500** in revenue was generated to offset the Toyota National Championships by the Municipal Accommodation Tax. In addition, philanthropic funds were generated for the RecAssist Fee Subsidy program for low-income families in Vaughan who wish to participate in recreation and culture programs.

Supported the City's Development Planning department by providing a presenting sponsor for the **Vaughan Urban Design Awards**, offsetting the awards ceremony's expenses.





Economic Asset Development

Ambitious

Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct (VHCP)

Next generation of world-class healthcare in Canada

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the City is leading a collaboration to transform an 82-acre parcel of land surrounding the site of the Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital (Canada's first smart hospital) into the VHCP. Together with partners Mackenzie Health, York University and ventureLAB, the City is developing a world-class destination in healthcare and health innovation.

Economic Impact

The development of the VHCP will become a regional anchor attracting economic growth and activity and catalyzing future investment in the local economy.

2022 Milestones

In June 2022, Council approved recommendations to:

- ▶ enter into a ground-lease amending agreement with Mackenzie Health, enabling expansion of the hospital, developing a long-term care facility and establishing a ventureLAB MedTech lab in future Mackenzie Health facilities.
- ▶ transfer land to York University to establish a research, education and innovation facility.



Arts and Creative Industry Hub

The VMC will be the city's future premier arts and cultural district

Cultural hubs offer amenities that create community, social and economic benefits, including city-building and placemaking, investment attraction, job creation, tourism attraction, academic and social innovations, and civic pride.

Vaughan has a vision to become York Region's hub for design excellence and the creative industry with creative spokes across the city. Using a hub-and-spoke model with multiple, yet connected and distinct, spaces for arts and culture established in the VMC enables broader opportunities for activation and participation.

2022 Milestones

In June 2022, the VMC Sub-committee endorsed:

- ▶ the pursuit of a hub-and-spoke model for developing a cultural arts district in the VMC.
- ▶ the launch of a VMC Arts and Creative Industries Advisory Group that will lead co-ordinated efforts to develop, support and build on cultural arts activity in the VMC and the development of arts and cultural amenities that will eventually serve as hubs and spokes.

International Economic Relations

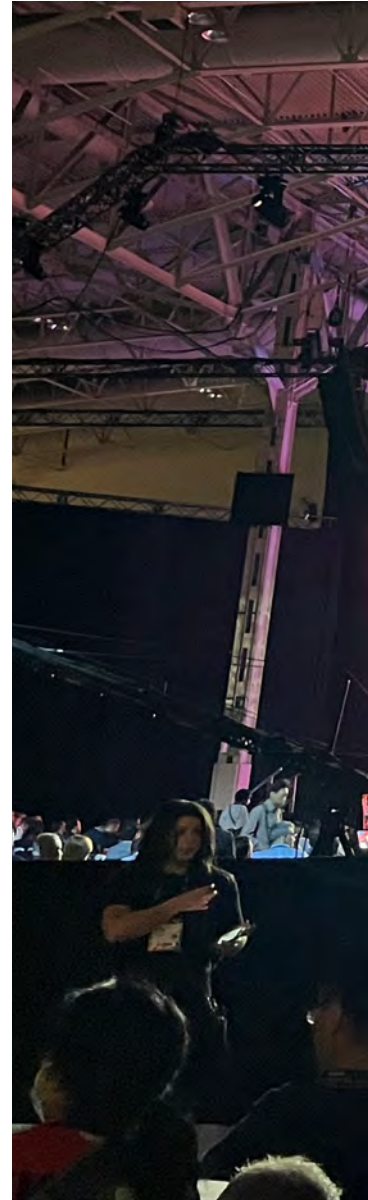
Vaughan is a gateway to Ontario's economy

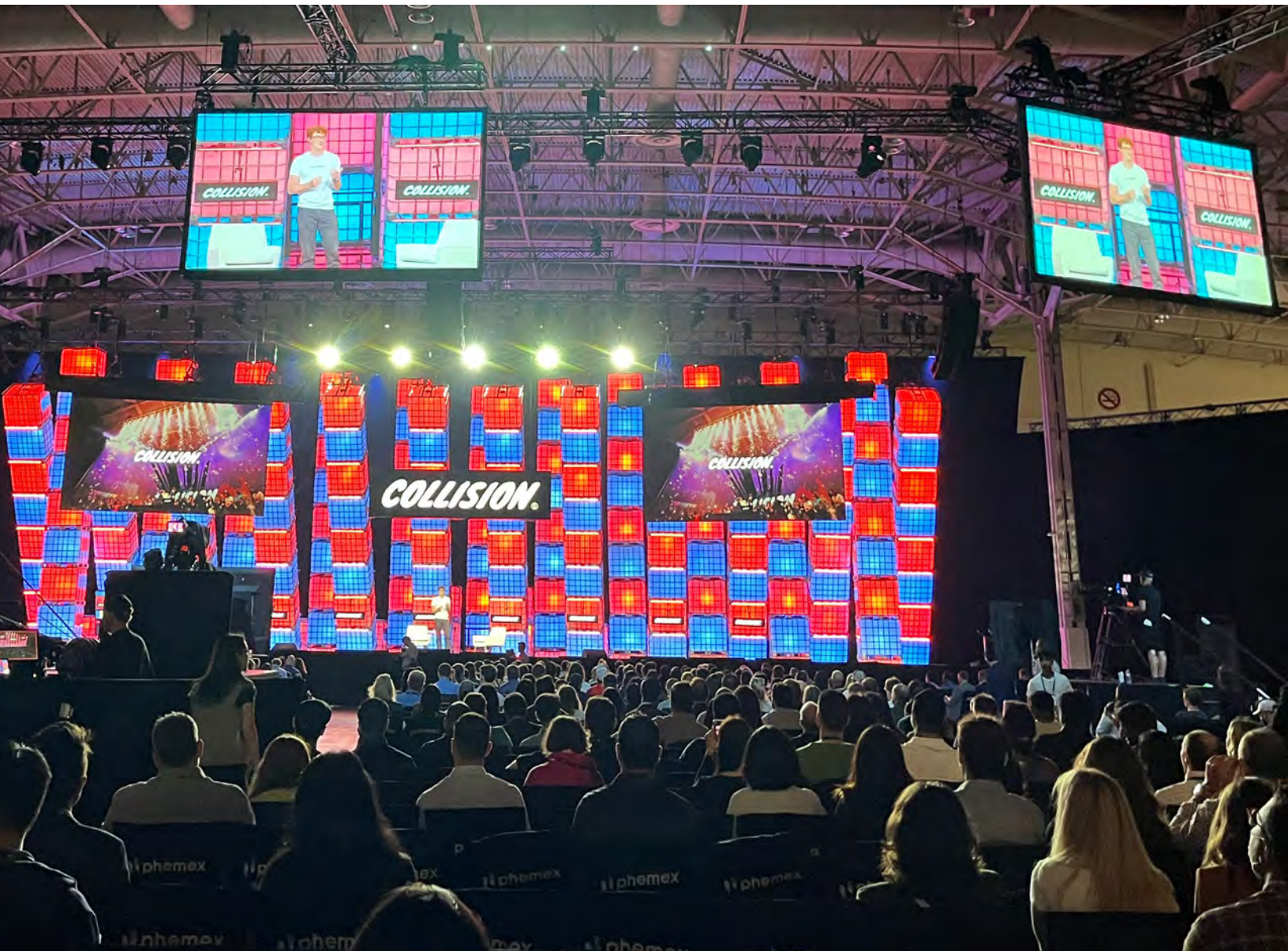
Participating in international trade missions and conferences is an important opportunity to raise the profile of Vaughan's economy among global audiences and generate trade opportunities and investment leads across the city's key sectors.

2022 Activities

Collision Conference - North America's fastest-growing tech conference

- ▶ Economic Development leveraged the 2022 Collision Conference to raise the profile of the VHCP and Vaughan's emerging health-technology and life-science sectors. This effort culminated in an announcement at York Region's pavilion for the VHCP partners from the Mayor, Mackenzie Health, York University and ventureLAB.
- ▶ Staff made nearly 300 individual connections, including representatives of multi-national firms, high-growth companies, other local, national and international government and public sector organizations, and investment agencies.





Web Summit - Europe's largest technology event

- Staff participated in the 2022 WebSummit conference to undertake trade and foreign direct investment activities, raise the profile of the VHCP among a global audience, observe models for creative placemaking and gain knowledge of best-in-class municipal innovation practices.
- Staff identified cross-border trade opportunities, particularly with gateway economies, to promote and develop Vaughan's key sectors.
- The conference focused on health technology and offered an opportunity to raise the profile of the VHCP as a world-class destination for health innovation by co-ordinating meetings with leading companies, international consulates and global trade organizations.
- Beyond the WebSummit conference, staff advanced the Cultural Arts Centre project by co-ordinating site visits with municipal staff and anchoring cultural organizations in Lisbon to gain knowledge of proven best practices.

Upcoming Strategic Economic Initiatives

Smart Cities Development

Vaughan Transportation Innovation Program

- ▶ Partnering with the Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management department and seeking Council's endorsement to launch an innovation program focusing on testing smart mobility innovation.

Smart Kiosks

- ▶ Modernizing and supporting our main streets by bringing a business case to Council to install smart kiosks in Vaughan's key commercial neighbourhoods and enhance the visitor experience.

Accessibility Technology Pilot in City Facilities

- ▶ Partnering with the Office of the Chief Human Resource Officer and Facility Management to deploy a two-year accessibility technology pilot to help the visually impaired or blind navigate independently in select City facilities.

Public Art and Art Development

Over a dozen prominent public art projects are advancing in the VMC and city-wide during the 2022-2026 Term of Council, including:

- ▶ Transit City 4 East Block North Gateway Public Art Project | VMC
- ▶ Aspenridge Public Art Project
- ▶ Assembly Park Outdoor Public Art Gallery - ongoing curation | VMC
- ▶ PXL Gallery - ongoing curation | VMC
- ▶ EXPO City CG Tower 5 Public Art Project | VMC
- ▶ Beverley Glen Public Art Project | Thornhill
- ▶ Burwick Condominium Public Art Project | Woodbridge
- ▶ SmartCentres Centre of Community Public Art Project | VMC
- ▶ Edgely Pond and Park Public Art Project | VMC
- ▶ Vaughan City Hall Public Art Project | Maple
- ▶ Woodbridge Streetscape CP Abutment Mural
- ▶ Vaughan-Yonge Steeles Centre Public Art District Strategy
- ▶ Vaughan Mills Centre Public Art District Strategy
- ▶ Rose Garden Public Art District Strategy | Concord
- ▶ ARTonBOXES mural program - Group of Seven REMIXED pilot | city-wide



RAFAËL ROZENDAAL, Silence: PXL Gallery, Digital Art, 2021 | SmartVMC
(image courtesy of Smart Centres)

Municipal Partnerships and Alternative Revenue Generation

Digital Billboard Revenue Program

Phase two consists of exploring an additional four sites that will move to public consultation pending Council approval in 2023.

Phase three development will begin with exploring future site locations and the revenue potential of current inventory.

Grants

SEI will continue to identify and circulate upcoming eligible grant opportunities citywide. There are 12 grants submitted and pending a decision, valued at more than \$16.5 million. These pending grants include funding for:

- city-wide EV charging stations.
- wetland restoration and an eco-classroom in North Maple Regional Park.
- Jane Street multi-use pathway.
- accessibility technology for the visually impaired.
- smart technology for seniors' recreation programming.
- VPL welcome kits at the new Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital and Auto-tech Detroit-led generation to develop Next-gen Auto in Vaughan.

Economic Asset Development

2023 International Missions

- ▶ Economic Development staff participation in Smart Cities Connect Conference and Expo in Denver, Colorado, in May 2023 to raise the profile of Vaughan's economy and to promote Vaughan's strategic city-building projects (Smart City and Next Generation Health and Healthcare delivery) on a world stage.
- ▶ Economic Development will attend the AutoTech Detroit conference in partnership with York Region and continue developing the Weston Road and Highway 7 corridor, further strengthening Vaughan as a destination for next-generation automotive technology.
- ▶ To advance Vaughan's globally-competitive farm-to-fork food and beverage industry cluster, Economic Development, will attend the international Anuga FoodTec Conference in Cologne, Germany in October 2023, in addition to engagements with northern Italy's food industry cluster.

North Maple Regional Park

SEI is working with the Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development department to support ongoing work to develop North Maple Regional Park into a world-class destination for mixed-use sport, recreation, wellness, education and culture.

Creative Industries Centre of Excellence

SEI is working to formalize a partnership with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection and the Vaughan International Film Festival to advance a Creative Industries Centre of Excellence in Vaughan.





The City's Economic Development department works to make Vaughan a place where entrepreneurship, business, tourism, arts and culture can prosper and grow.

To connect with us or learn about our services, programs and more, visit: vaughanbusiness.ca or email: ed@vaughan.ca

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