

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 18, 2024

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION AND ATTRACTION - 2023
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT YEAR IN REVIEW

FROM:

Nick Spensieri, City Manager

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide an update on key accomplishments from the programs and initiatives undertaken by the Economic Development business unit and provide an economic data update from 2023.

Report Highlights

- The Economic Development business unit within the city's Economic Development department provides services to develop and support Vaughan's established, growing, and emerging clusters.
- Vaughan remains the largest economy in York Region – accounting for more than 35 per cent of all employment and economic output in York Region in 2023.
- The city's economic output, as measured by real gross domestic product (GDP), rose to more than \$25.5 billion, outpacing provincial and national growth rates in 2023.
- Vaughan remained one of the top development markets in the country, ranking ninth by value of building permits in Canada for all types of buildings and sixth nationally by value of industrial permits in 2023.
- In 2023, Economic Development tracked 23 major business investments in the City that represent more than 3 million square feet of commercial and industrial space.

Report Highlights continued

- Economic Development completed a number of initiatives, projects, and activities last year to support the growth and expansion of the city's medium- and large-sized business community and advance knowledge and insight delivery.

Recommendations

1. THAT the Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction - 2023 Economic Development Year in Review report be received for information.

Background

The Economic Development business unit within the city's Economic Development department provides services to develop and support Vaughan's established, growing, and emerging clusters.

Its objective is to develop and support Vaughan's established, growing, and emerging clusters by:

- Raising the profile of Vaughan's economy.
- Developing and sharing local economic intelligence.
- Undertaking business, retention, and expansion and attraction activities with an emphasis on business advisory services

The department's Economic Development unit delivers a suite of services to deliver business retention and expansion (BR&E) services, intelligence and data provision, workforce development and business attraction support.

1. Corporate Calling Program

Through the corporate calling program, staff engage with business owners to better understand their needs, offer business advisory services, and address any business challenges they may have. Corporate calls are a key mechanism in gathering information on our local economy and offer a pulse-check to monitor emerging macro and micro trends or issues affecting the local economy. Through this program, businesses can access:

- Business advisory support through the dissemination of information that can help their business grow, including relevant funding or financing programs, value-added introductions, or advocacy and government relations toolkits.
- Introductions to partnerships and business development opportunities

2. Site Selection and Location Assistance

Businesses that are looking to expand or relocate in Vaughan are offered one-on-one site-location assistance. This service includes providing:

- Information about the community and relevant properties
- An inventory of vacant land for opportunities
- Arranging site visits
- Custom research
- Introductions to local businesses
- Introductions to business support organizations
- Information about relevant government programs that can help the business grow

3. Data Analysis and Provision

To measure economic growth and capacity and provide economic insights for the City and business community, Economic Development utilizes several external data sources to report on five key economic indicators that measure the growth and capacity of Vaughan's economy. Data sources for these indicators includes Statistics Canada, Conference Board of Canada, Regional Municipality of York and the City of Vaughan.

The key economic indicators and their sources are:

1. **Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** - This indicator measures the value of the goods and services produced by Vaughan's economy. Data is procured from the Conference Board of Canada on an annual basis.
2. **Employment** - This indicator measures the number of people currently employed at businesses within Vaughan. Data is procured from the Conference Board of Canada on an annual basis.
3. **Population** – This indicator estimates current population for the City. Estimates are provided on a biennial from York Region Long Range Policy Planning.
4. **Business Counts** - This indicator highlights the number of businesses that operate throughout the City. Data is procured through StatsCan Canadian Business Counts program.
5. **Building Permits** - Value and number of building permits indicate overall building activity within the City and is provided through the City's Building Standards department, while comparator data with other municipalities is procured through Statistics Canada.

These economic indicators are used City-wide to inform memos, briefs, final reports, program updates and publicly accessible dashboards that can be found here:

<https://vaughanbusiness.ca/data-and-research/data-research/>.

4. Business, training, and networking connections for the local business community

Economic Development plays a vital role in facilitating meaningful business connections for the local business community. A key function in providing business advisory and intelligence provision to our business community is the facilitation of connections between businesses. Economic Development partners with key industry stakeholders like local and regional chambers, business and industry associations, and other levels of government to host conferences, networking and learning events in Vaughan, offering businesses opportunities to develop effective relationships with one another by sharing industry information and best practices and connecting to potential customers, suppliers, and business partners.

5. Workforce development support

As part of efforts to address challenges identified through corporate calling, Economic Development staff work to support workforce development through partnerships with key stakeholders in this space, such as post-secondary institutions, the Workforce Development Planning Board of York Region, and employment centres, as well as through city-led initiatives such as Talent City Vaughan.

The Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction - 2023 Economic Development Year in Review will highlight key projects, initiatives, programs, and accomplishments for the past year, as well as provide an economic data update for 2023. It recognizes Economic Development staff, partners, and community stakeholders for their vital role in advancing economic opportunities, attracting new investments, and enabling a climate for businesses to grow, prosper and create jobs.

Previous Reports/Authority

[2024-2027 Vaughan Economic Development Action Plan](#), Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report, April 10, 2024

[2023 Germany and Italy Mission Final Report and 2024 Economic Relations Look Ahead](#), Committee of the Whole (1) Report, January 23, 2024

[Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction 2022: Economic Development Year in Review](#), Committee of the Whole (2) Report, June 6, 2023

[2021 Year in Review – Economic Development](#), Committee of the Whole (2) Report, June 21, 2022

Analysis and Options

2023 Business Retention, Expansion and Investment Attraction Activity Highlights

In 2023, Economic Development tracked 23 major business expansions in the City that represent more than 3 million square feet of commercial and industrial space.

Since 2022, there have been more than 35 major business expansions representing nearly 6 million square feet of commercial and industrial space. The major investments selected for highlight in 2023 can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: 2023 Major Business Investments by Ward

Business	Ward	Address	Facility sq. ft.
Dass Metal Products	2	370-372 New Enterprise Way	196,442
Belmont Concrete Finishing	4	360 Spinnaker Way	41,905
Rogers Communications	4	7810 Keele Street	144,176
Varcon Construction	4	250 Doney Crescent	70,000
Ryder Logistics	2	6680 Langstaff Road	265,530
Tremco	2	6685 Langstaff Road	330,460
Silgan Plastics	3	400 Rowntree Dairy Road	147,459
Shawflex	4	336 Courtland Avenue	226,259
Vinfast	3	7979 Weston Road	21,114
Legacy Supply Chain	4	20 Graniteridge Road	142,506
Lucid Motors	4	220 Caldari Road	30,005
Arla Foods	1	11110 Jane Street	104,833
Stage Windows & Doors	4	140 Great Gulf Drive	126,785
Mobile Climate Control	4	50 Locke Street	31,120
Cardinal Health	4	300 Applewood Crescent	136,303
Metrie	2	9151 Huntington Road	249,843
Giant Tiger	3	67 Colossus Drive Unit D10	18,875
Hanon Systems	2	470 Anatolian Road	426,430
PTNR Production	2	60 Innovation Drive	27,022
Litens Automotive	4	214 Courtland Avenue	47,104
Porsche Centre Vaughan	4	50 Four Valley Drive	20,860
Toro Aluminum	4	440 Edgeley Boulevard	27,040
IHL Canada	3	27 Director Ct.	216,224

Additionally, Vaughan-based companies who successfully accessed funding that is supporting job creation and productivity improvements in 2023 include:

- York Metal Productions - Ontario Automotive Modernization Program (O-AMP)
- Novel Biotechnology Inc. - Ontario Centre of Innovation
- Macrodyne Technologies Inc. - Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation Competitiveness Program
- ArcelorMittal Tailored Blanks Americas Limited - FedDev Ontario

Economic Data Update

As part of its core services, Economic Development procures, analyzes, and tracks economic data and indicators to support business advisory services and

Gross Domestic Product

Vaughan remains the largest economy in York Region – accounting for more than 35 per cent of all employment and economic output in York Region in 2023, totaling more than \$25.5 billion in real gross domestic product (GDP).

The top three industries as measured by real GDP in 2023 were:

1. Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (25.7 per cent)
2. Construction (15.7 per cent)
3. Manufacturing (15.4 per cent)

Vaughan's diverse economy has many industries with substantial economic output which drive outbound trade in York Region. In fact, Vaughan's businesses accounted for 47 per cent of all York Region exports in 2019.¹

Vaughan was accountable for more than \$25.5 billion in economic output, which outpaced provincial and national growth rates in 2023.

The City's real gross domestic product (GDP) since 2013 has grown steadily and recovered fully from economic losses that occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 1 illustrates real GDP growth over a 10-year period, amounting to an average annual growth rate of 2.91 per cent from 2013 to 2023.

Despite a deceleration in growth from 2022 to 2023, Vaughan outpaced provincial and national growth rates for economic output.

¹ City of Vaughan, Economic Development Data Report, December 2022.

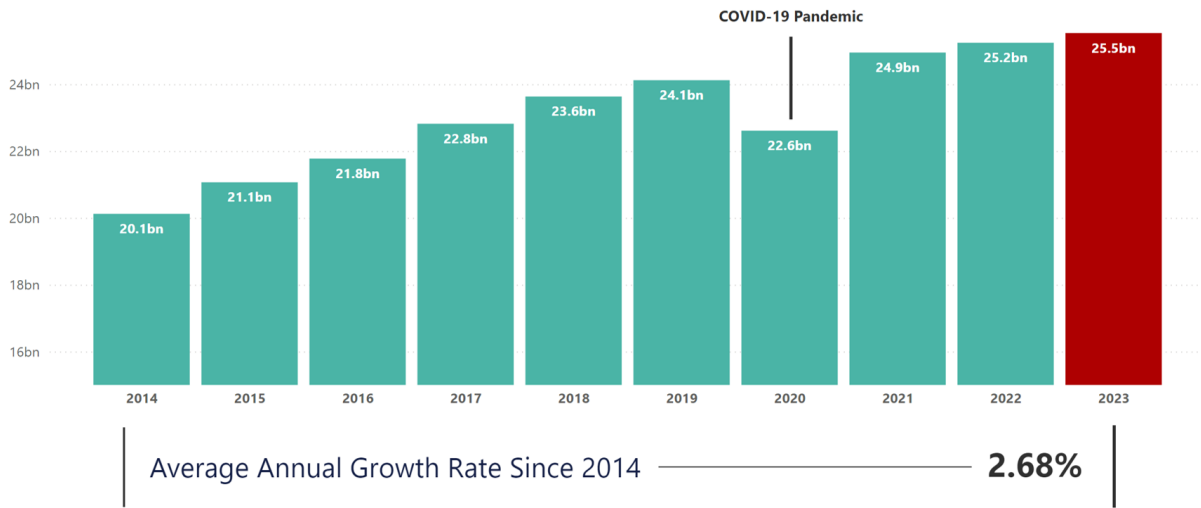


Figure 1: Real Gross Domestic Product, Vaughan 2014-2023 (Source: Conference Board of Canada)

Employment

With nearly 220,000 workers in the city in 2023, Vaughan’s employment by place of work has continued to increase over the last decade with an annual average growth of 1.7 per cent.

After declines seen at the onset of the pandemic, employment has surpassed pre-pandemic levels – the average annual growth rate of employment since 2020 is 4.1 per cent. This past year saw growth in a number of knowledge-based employment industries, such as information and cultural industries; professional, scientific, and technical services; and health care and social assistance, which all grew by more than five per cent year-over-year in 2023.

Employment is expected to continue to grow into 2024 but at a decelerated rate – however, Figure 2 highlights the last decade of total employment.

Vaughan’s top three industries by employment in 2023 were:

1. Construction (16.5 per cent)
2. Manufacturing (14.3 per cent)
3. Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (13.6 per cent)

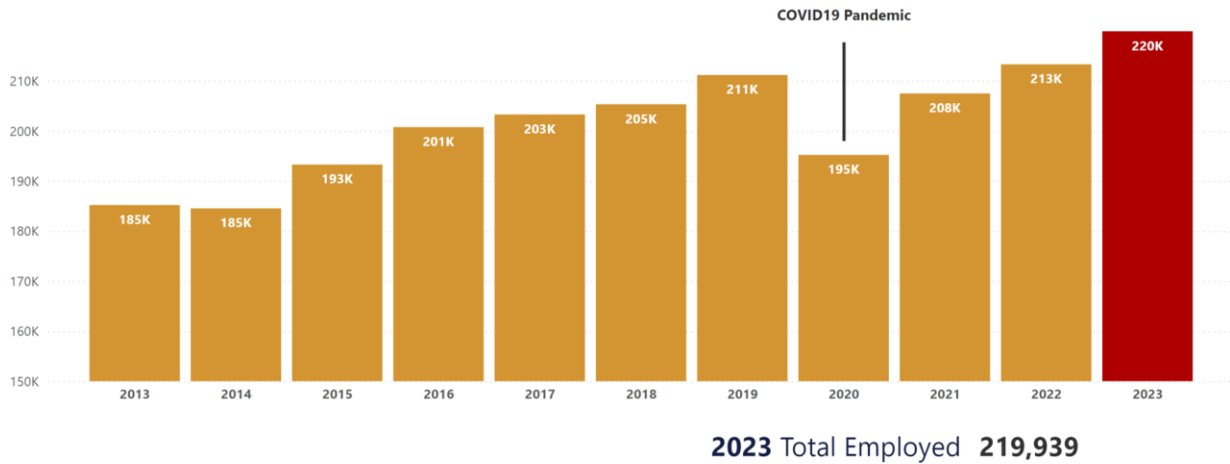


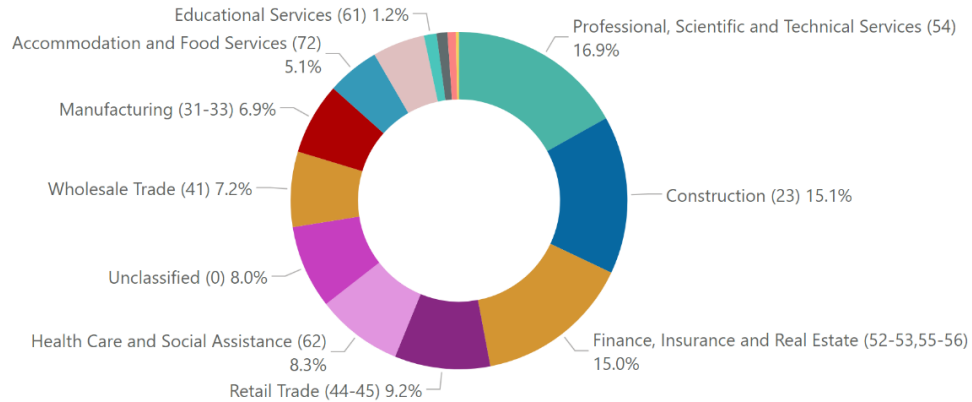
Figure 2: Employment by Place of Work, Vaughan, 2014-2023 (Source: Conference Board of Canada)

Business Counts

Economic diversification is an important aspect of building a resilient economy. With more than 19,700 business in 2023 (Figure 3), Vaughan’s businesses span a variety of sectors and reflect a well-diversified economy as evidenced by its strong economic performance as measured by real GDP.

Vaughan’s top three industry sectors by number of businesses were:

1. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (16.9 per cent)
2. Construction (15.1 per cent)
3. Finance Insurance and Real Estate (15.0 per cent)



| In 2023 there were more than **19,700** Businesses (with employees) in Vaughan |

Figure 3: Business Counts, Vaughan, 2023 (Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts)

Building Permits

Vaughan had a record development year, issuing more than \$2.6 billion in value of building permits in 2023. The City is one of the top development markets in the country, ranking ninth by value of building permits in Canada for all types of buildings and sixth by value of industrial permits.

Vaughan remains the largest industrial market in York Region and the fourth largest industrial market in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area after Toronto, Mississauga, and Brampton.

Vaughan continues to be one of the largest industrial markets in the Greater Toronto Area, with a total industrial inventory of nearly 100 million square feet at the end of the fourth quarter, according to a [market report](#) by Colliers. Both vacancy rates and availability rates remained very low in Vaughan and across the Greater Toronto Area for industrial properties.

Table 2: Top 10 Canadian Development Markets (All Buildings) by Value of Permits, 2023	
1. Toronto	6. Ottawa
2. Calgary	7. Hamilton
3. Montréal	8. Brampton
4. Vancouver	9. Vaughan
5. Edmonton	10. Winnipeg

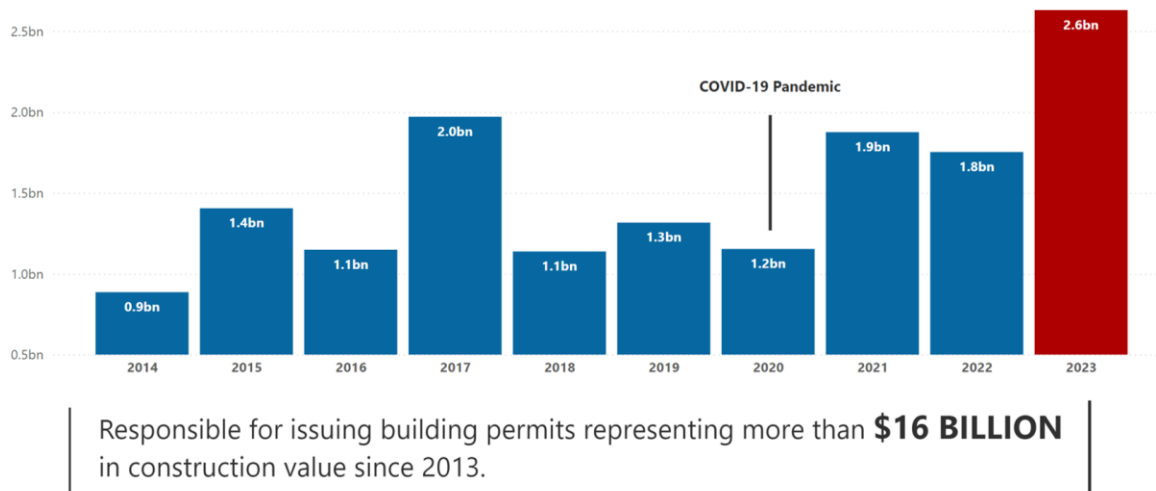


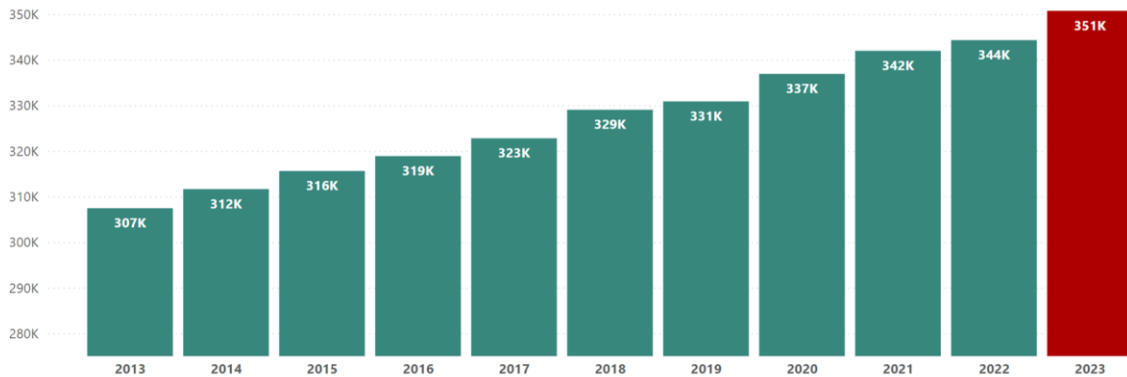
Figure 4: Building Permits, Vaughan, 2014-2023 (Source: City of Vaughan)

Population

At the end of 2023, Vaughan was home to more than 350,000 residents – that number is expected to increase by 66 per cent to more than 576,000 by 2051. Vaughan accounts for 28 per cent of York Region’s population and is the Region’s second largest population centre.

Vaughan is home to a diverse population. The City’s residents are a mosaic of more than 217 ethnic or cultural origins and there are 113 unique languages spoken in Vaughan. The top five ethnic or cultural origins (excluding Canadian) in Vaughan are Italian, Chinese, Jewish, Russian, and Indian.

The City of Vaughan’s residents are also highly educated, constituting a highly skilled local talent pool. Seventy-three per cent of Vaughan’s population over 25 years old has a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree – surpassing both the provincial (68 per cent) and national (67 per cent) average.



2023 Population 350,723

Figure 5: Population Estimates, Vaughan, 2014-2023, (Source: York Region Long Range Policy Planning)

Programming and Service highlights

Economic Development has completed a number of initiatives, projects, and activities to support the growth and expansion of the city’s medium- and large-sized business community. These include:

- Business advisory services through the corporate calling program
- Delivering customized site selection and business development packages
- Improving transit service to support talent attraction and retention for Vaughan’s employers
- Leading and participating in two international economic development missions
- Sector development focused on automotive and agri-food and food processing
- Refreshing marketing collateral

Staff completed more than 50 business advisory corporate calls and helped more than 60 companies understand the opportunities associated with investing in Vaughan in 2023.

Staff completed 53 corporate calls to companies across a variety of sectors, including advanced manufacturing (inclusive of automotive and food and beverage subsectors), construction, and professional services. During corporate calls, staff continued to hear from businesses that expressed challenges related to:

- 1. Hiring and retention of talent,**
- 2. Transit availability, and**
- 3. Costs of doing business – notably, increased costs of land and real estate.**

To address challenges identified in these corporate calls, Economic Development:

1. *Advanced workforce development initiatives through the 2023 cohort of Talent City Vaughan, as well as partnering to run the first Talent City Vaughan Youth Career Expo.*

Talent City Vaughan is a first-of-its-kind workforce development initiative to be implemented by a municipality, providing tangible workforce development opportunities for Vaughan residents and employees of Vaughan-based businesses, initially launched in 2022.

For Talent City's Vaughan second year, eight non-profit organizations were selected to host training programs for nearly 200 Vaughan residents or employees of Vaughan-based businesses. Programs consisted of a wide array of training opportunities that included awareness and training in the skilled trades, professional training for business interpreters, dementia support training for personal support workers, and dietary aid workers in long-term care homes.

In Spring 2023, Economic Development hosted the Talent City Vaughan Youth Careers Expo in partnership with COSTI and Next Steps Employment to further support workforce development and employers in the city. The expo was an opportunity for youth in Vaughan between the ages of 15 to 29 to connect directly with major employers. More than 160 youth participated and established connections with 17 potential employers who participated.

Additionally, Economic Development, in partnership with CME, completed [an advertorial spotlighting the Talent City Vaughan program](#). The advertorial features Mayor Steven Del Duca, Raphael Costa and program participant, Noor Din. The feature launched as part of the Empowering Canada's Newcomers campaign online on innovatingcanada.ca and in the National Post. The article reached innovatingcanada.ca's 84,800 monthly readers and National Post's 460,000 daily readers, and was supplemented with additional advertising through Media Planet to maximize reach.

2. *Collaborated with York Region Transit (YRT) to address challenges faced as a result of the limited transit service. As a result, YRT service was extended in the Vaughan Enterprise Zone (VEZ) in 2023, and an existing route will be extended to support employers relocating to north Maple in 2024.*

The City of Vaughan has significant goods movement assets – it is home the Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Vaughan Intermodal Yard, CPKC's largest intermodal facility in Canada, and Canadian National (CN) MacMillan Yard, CN's largest classification yard.

The City is also continuing to add to its existing assets for people movement – Vaughan benefits from being the only municipality outside of Toronto with direct subway access, as well as being connected regionally via Metrolinx GO train and bus service, and locally via bus rapid transit.

To enhance connectivity, Economic Development staff have been actively engaged in collaborative efforts with employers, transit agencies, and mobility solution providers to identify potential transit solutions in the VEZ.

In the fall of 2023, YRT launched a one-year pilot of the 361 Nashville Express route to serve employers in the Vaughan Enterprise Zone (VEZ). To ensure potential new bus routes, stops and schedules are optimized to best meet the employers' needs, staff obtained the work shift schedules of selected employers and shared them with YRT's service planning team.

Staff also worked with YRT and Brampton Transit (Zum) to offer additional enhancements to transit in the VEZ in winter 2023. Additional infrastructure for a new bus stop was added to service Highway 7 at Gibraltar Road, and Brampton Zum service started in late December at the intersection in both directions.

Through consultation with employers such as Arla Foods and Walmart on new locations located in North Maple near Jane and Teston, Economic Development also secured a commitment to expand existing service of the 20 Jane route in 2024.

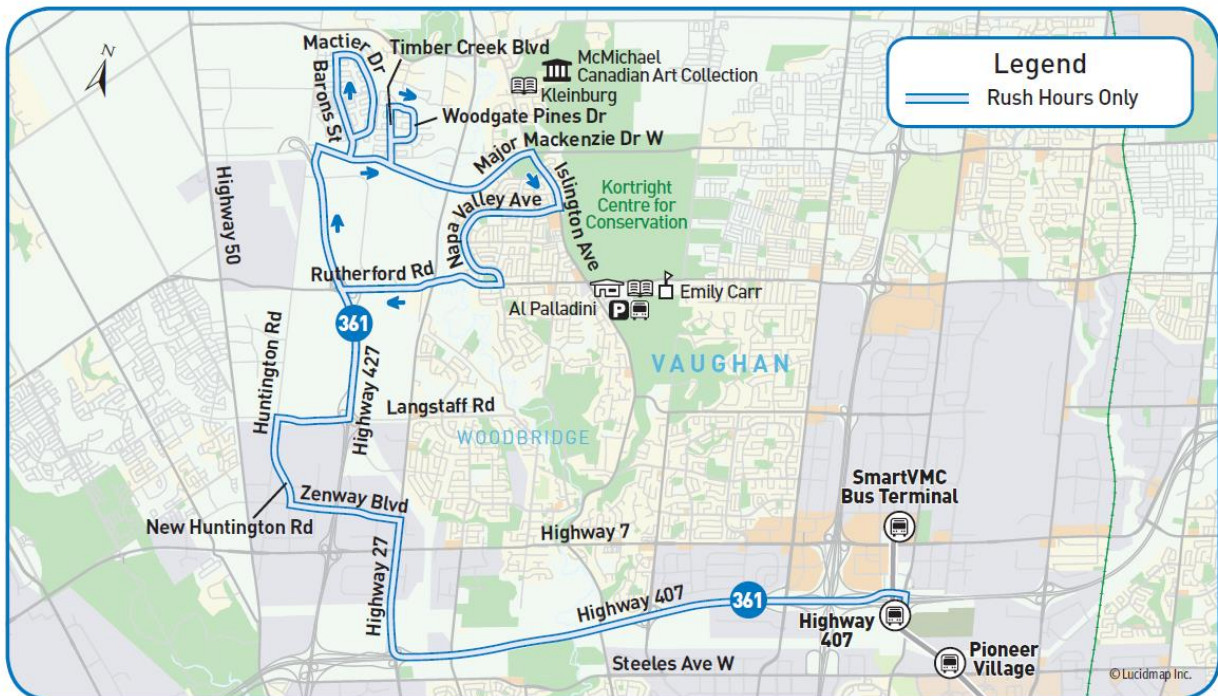


Image 1: Map of YRT Route 361 - Nashville/Huntington Express which launched in 2023, serving the Vaughan Enterprise Zone.

3. Identified a variety of grant and funding opportunities to share with local businesses, through direct outreach, as well as leveraging the departments social media channels.

To support businesses navigating increases costs, staff identify a variety of grant and funding opportunities (through direct outreach, as well as leveraging the departments social media channels). This included advisory support related to the following funding opportunities: Ontario Automotive Modernization Program (O-AMP), Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation Competitiveness (AMIC), CanExport, Ngen Electric Vehicle Manufacturing Value Chain Program (EVMP), FedDev Ontario, and others.

Other insights gathered as a result of the corporate calling program included a desire for additional support in navigating planning and building permit processes. Economic Development staff collaborated with development planning and building standards for a

number of new investments last year, such as Rivian Automotive, Microsoft, FGF Brands, Cardinal Health, Fastfrate Group, and Giant Tiger.

Staff supported more than 60 companies to understand the opportunities associated with investing in Vaughan in 2023. Staff also completed included 27 tailored site-selection packages to support relocation and expansion of existing businesses and supporting new potential investments. Of these packages:

- The majority of these requests were for industrial operations
- Approximately 50 per cent represented domestic investments, and 50 per cent foreign investments
 - The majority of site selection packages for foreign investments in 2023 were for companies originating from Italy (30 per cent) and the United States (23 per cent), with additional requests from French-, Belgian-, Dutch-, and Taiwanese-origin companies.

The Economic Development business unit led the 2023 international economic relations mission to Germany and Italy in 2023 to advance trade opportunities, provided information about Vaughan to prospective investors, and introduced economic opportunities of our city to Italian economic development agencies. Staff also participated in the AutoTech Detroit delegation to raise Vaughan's profile as a destination for automotive and electric vehicle investments.

In June 2023, staff joined a delegation to AutoTech Detroit 2023 in partnership with York Region, the City of Markham and the Town of East Gwillimbury to promote Vaughan as an ideal location for investment, talent and innovation and generate economic opportunities. Over the course of the delegation, staff met with 12 pre-qualified companies, and six governmental trade, investment, educational and development agencies, including the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) in Detroit, TechTown Detroit, Detroit Regional Partnership, and Newlab Tech Accelerator.

In October 2023, the city's Council-approved international delegation joined the federal government, Ontario Food Cluster, and York Region at the Anuga FoodTech Conference in Cologne, Germany, then conducted business and institutional meetings in Milan, Italy with the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Ontario (ICCO), the federal Trade Commissioner Services (TCS), and other local agencies.

Over the course of the mission, the delegation engaged 44 companies and 10 governmental trade, investment, and development agencies. To these partners, staff delivered:

- 31 business development packages to companies seeking trade and business

relationships with Vaughan-based companies.

- Five site selection packages to companies considering establishing new facilities in Vaughan.
- Five economic information packages to trade and investment agencies helping European companies invest in Canada and trade with Canadian companies.

The business unit supported a number of local targeted sector development initiatives working with a variety of partners and stakeholders to build capacity across Vaughan's established, growing and emerging sectors.

Various initiatives throughout the year focused on advancing and further develop the city's automotive and agri-food and food processing clusters, in addition to participating in Autotech Detroit and the Germany and Italy missions in 2023.

Automotive

- In January 2023, Vaughan became the newest municipality to join the Ontario Auto Mayors Caucus to continue advocacy at a provincial and federal level for the automotive sector in Ontario.
- In the spring of 2023, Economic Development, in partnership with York Region, secured the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA) first networking event of the year in Vaughan, which was hosted Project Arrow at Martinrea's facility in Concord. This event provided the opportunity for local automotive businesses to connect, network and discuss industry challenges and opportunities, with approximately 70 participants.
- Vaughan partnered with York Region to be the title sponsor for the 71st annual Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA) conference in 2023, additionally securing the annual industry event in 2024, 2025 and 2026 in Vaughan. This serves as further opportunity to highlight the strength of Vaughan's automotive sector in Canada, as well as bring quality networking opportunities for the city's automotive cluster.
- Vaughan proceeded to host the second meeting of the Ontario Auto Mayors Caucus in the fall of 2023, marking the 10th anniversary of the group. Chaired by Town of Oakville Mayor Rob Burton and hosted by City of Vaughan Mayor Steven Del Duca, the group included representatives from 31 Ontario municipalities, Ontario's original equipment manufacturers and automotive industry associations who met in Vaughan discuss the latest updates and trends in the automotive industry as well as advancing the items outlined in the Auto Mayors Action Plan.

Agri-food and food processing

- Joined as a member of Food and Beverage Ontario, a non-profit leadership organization that advocates on behalf of food and beverage manufacturers and processors from across Ontario on matters related to trade, workforce development, and innovation.
- Joined the CareersNOW! Advisory Council, which is composed of leaders from business, education, the non-profit sector, industry associations, and government, provides strategic direction and future planning for workforce development through the CareersNOW! Program. This program is an industry tool to connect job seekers and students with employers for career opportunities and advancement, which staff have leveraged as part of business advisory efforts with this industry to support workforce challenges.
- In October 2023, to further supplement investment attraction efforts related to agri-food and food processing, Economic Development in partnership with Communications, Marketing and Engagement (CME), secured [an editorial to spotlight Vaughan's thriving food and beverage supply chain with Food in Canada](#), a stakeholder publication that has earned the highest degree of trust and respect within the Canadian food and beverage processing industry. This was the first editorial that was facilitated with this organization. The article reached Food in Canada's 7,994 print subscribers, 19,165 total print readership and 30,000 average monthly national online page viewers, and was supplemented with additional advertising to reach the outlet's 9,163 social media followers, 10,425 e-blast subscribers and 11,548 e-newsletters.

The Economic Development business unit launched a series refresh of marketing materials to support business retention, expansion, and attraction activities, including seven key sector profiles and eight key opportunity areas.

With support from the CME team, Economic Development launched refreshed marketing collateral focused on highlighting Vaughan's established, growing, and emerging sectors as well highlighting geographic areas of opportunity city-wide.



Image 2: Refreshed selected designed versions of Automotive Key Sector, Vaughan Enterprise Zone Area of Opportunity, and Agri-food and Food Processing Key Sector.

Key sector profiles have been published on vaughanbusiness.ca and printed for various applications that highlight the following industries:

- [Automotive](#),
- [Agri-food and food processing](#),
- [Construction and building materials](#),
- [Healthcare, Health Tech, and Life Sciences](#),
- [Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\)](#),
- [Logistics, Distribution, and E-Commerce](#), and
- [Tourism](#).

Profiles to highlight key opportunity areas identified as significant areas for business attraction were developed to promote unique geographic clusters throughout the city. These opportunity areas represent significant economic, social and cultural opportunities for businesses and talent looking to expand existing business operations or re-locate to Vaughan. These include:

- [Major Mackenzie Healthcare Corridor](#) (Ward 1)
- [Vaughan Innovation Corridor - Jane Street](#) (Ward 1)
- [Vaughan Enterprise Zone](#) (Wards 1 & 2)
- [Vaughan Village Corridor - Islington Avenue](#) (Wards 1 & 2)
- [Vaughan's Next Generation Auto Cluster - Weston and Highway 7](#) (Wards 3 & 4)
- [Vaughan Metropolitan Centre](#) (Ward 4)

- [Vaughan Mills Centre](#) (Ward 4)
- [Promenade Centre and Yonge Steeles Centre](#) (Ward 5)

Economic Development has also advanced knowledge and insight delivery, providing a number of insights and business updates on vaughanbusiness.ca. Additionally in 2023, Economic Development launched its own LinkedIn Channel, to further raise Vaughan’s profile as a destination for investment in Ontario and beyond.

Building on the launch of the Insights and Data page on vaughanbusiness.ca last year, more than 20 insights and thought leadership articles that appeared on the department’s microsite and LinkedIn Channel. Staff continue to leverage participation at conferences and industry events and share insights, trends, and opportunities with the business community as a complement to the unit’s business advisory services.

Economic Development launched its own LinkedIn channel in February 2023 as another marketing channel to support businesses retention and expansion activities. This channel provides an additional opportunity to provide thought leadership and position the department as knowledge brokers. In 2023, more than 300 posts were published on the Vaughan Economic Development LinkedIn Channel – these post were viewed by nearly 80,000 LinkedIn users last year.

2024 Look Ahead

The Economic Development business unit is dedicated to advancing economic opportunities, creating a climate for job creation, and increasing local investments through key projects and initiatives. The team has a number of exciting projects and initiatives scheduled for 2024 and beyond.

2024 Key Activities	
Site Selectors Guild Conference Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the York Region delegation to the annual Site Selectors’ Guild Conference, a premier opportunity to engage leading site selection professionals. These professionals are responsible for supporting companies’ development and investment efforts. (Completed April 2024)

<p>Modular Housing Symposium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the delivery of the Modular Housing Symposium at Vaughan City Hall to bring industry stakeholders and all levels of government together and support the growth of this subsector in Vaughan’s construction industry. (Completed March 2024)
<p>Continued support for transit expansion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To further support employers with talent attraction and retention, staff will support YRT and Brampton transit as they continue analysis and consultations with employers in the VEZ to inform future service improvements. (Ongoing)
<p>Community Improve Plan(s) Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following direction from Council in December, Economic Development is working with Policy Planning and Development Finance to develop Community Improvement Plan(s) to advance complete community development (incentivizing non-residential and purpose-built rental development) as well as last-mile good and people movement solutions.
<p>International Economic Mission - Italy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the success of a mission to Germany and Italy in 2023, Economic Development will be leading a mission to continue to raise Vaughan’s profile and advance trade and investment opportunities for Vaughan’s economy in Northern and Central Italy. (July 2024)
<p>Municipal Concierge Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vaughan’s established and emerging sectors are seeing increasingly mixed-use and complex development proposals that can benefit from efficient inter-

	<p>departmental collaboration. Economic Development will work with Development Planning, Policy Planning, Building Standards, Development Engineering, and other relevant departments to explore implementation of a municipal concierge program for businesses looking to invest, expand and grow in Vaughan that meet criteria for major investments. (Ongoing)</p>
<p>Private Label Manufacturers Association (PLMA) Annual Trade Show</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Private Label Manufacturers Association is the only trade association devoted exclusively to the private label industry and represents more than 3,800 member companies worldwide - manufacturers of virtually every type of food, snacks, beverages, health & beauty, over-the-counter pharmaceuticals, personal care, household & kitchen products. Economic Development intends to participate and promote Vaughan as an ideal destination for investment in the food & beverage sector, to identify potential business opportunities for Vaughan-based businesses, and to meet with potential businesses that may be interested in expanding to Vaughan. (November 2024)
<p>Supporting Shared Micromobility Pilot</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development will support engagement of businesses city-wide in support of Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management

	(IPCAM)'s Shared Microbidity Pilot project. (Fall 2024)
Industry-focused networking opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development will continue to offer targeted networking opportunities to key industries through participation in various events, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnering with Food and Beverage Ontario to host a Sustainability and Packaging Roundtable for the food and beverage industry. (May 2024) ○ Activating the APMA's Canada Automotive Summit to celebrate and provide meaningful connections for Vaughan's auto industry. (June 2024)

Financial Impact

N/A

Operational Impact

The activities in this report have no new operational impact for the department.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

The Economic Development Strategic Economic Initiatives - 2023 Year in Review complements communications and outreach strategies to help raise the profile of Vaughan's economy.

A copy of the publication will be uploaded on www.vaughanbusiness.ca and distributed to critical local/regional partners and stakeholders, such as York Region Economic Development, the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, other Chambers of Commerce, consuls in the Ontario and Canadian marketplaces, ministries, local and regional stakeholders, and prospective business relocation opportunities. Sharing this

publication with key stakeholders will help raise the City's profile, attract new partners and investments, and support the expansion of the local business community.

Conclusion

Economic Development remains committed to business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts that focus on a variety of industries to encourage further diversification of Vaughan's economy. Economic Development continues to provide businesses with advisory services through direct business strategy consultations and corporate calls, seminars and events, and assistance to businesses expanding in Vaughan. In coordination with the CME team, Economic Development will continue to promote services, programs, and initiatives that support Vaughan businesses as they navigate changes in the economy.

Staff will finalize and circulate the designed infographic of the unit's Year in Review to Members of Council and on Economic Development's microsite and social channels for public distribution and marketing purposes.

For more information, please contact Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development, ext. 8891.

Attachments

None.

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