



2020 Year in Review

ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
AND TOURISM VAUGHAN CORPORATION

TOURISM
vaughan

vaughan
ECONOMIC & CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

MESSAGE FROM THE **MAYOR**



The City of Vaughan is an economic leader in the Greater Toronto Area and beyond. Small business is the backbone of Vaughan's thriving economy – representing more than 85 per cent of all local job creators. Located in Canada's largest industrial market, our city is rich with talent and has the resources, networks and transportation connections to help businesses of all sizes grow.

Vaughan is home to more than 19,000 businesses that employ more than 227,000 people. While we have experienced a significant shift in how business is being done due to the global pandemic, the City of Vaughan remains committed to supporting our small business community because we understand that our strength lies in their success. Creating the right environment to help professionals unleash their full potential is a top priority.

The City offers invaluable planning advice, access to industry experts, and workshops to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners through the Economic and Cultural Development department. Since the onset of the pandemic, we innovated, pivoted and transformed service offerings to provide virtual access to business information, resources, training and hands-on assistance to start or grow a business.

In March 2020, I announced the creation of the Vaughan Business Action Plan as part of the City's swift and immediate response to support businesses. It includes a series of measures to safeguard the local economy and protect companies, consumers and citizens. The Vaughan Business Resiliency Plan was launched in June 2020 as an immediate and long-term strategy to help Vaughan's business community build capacity to adapt to the post-pandemic world. I encourage business owners to sign up to be included in the City's Open for Business online directory and visit vaughanbusiness.ca to learn more about how we can support them during these unprecedented times.

Annual events such as the Vaughan Business Expo, Activate!Vaughan Innovation Challenge and the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce Mayor's Luncheon are continuing virtually to encourage collaboration among industry leaders, stakeholders and investors. These networking opportunities remain critical as we continue the important task of city-building while working to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 on our city.

This year marks a decade of growth for the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC), which continues to be the largest and most ambitious project in the City's history. The heart of our emerging downtown is now home to several transformational transit projects, including the VMC Subway, seven high-rise towers that are now fully occupied, two new commercial office buildings, immersive public art projects, vibrant community event spaces, and many other exciting developments.

Despite the universal challenges presented by COVID-19, Vaughan remains a city of choice.

Our economy is showing signs of resilience. Since 2015, the VMC has attracted more than \$9 billion in economic activity, which is a testament to our ongoing efforts to exceed growth targets in our city's core. A high standard of living, accessible location, exceptional amenities, development opportunities, a subway connection, and so much more position the VMC as one of the best places to live, work and play. Building on this momentum, Vaughan's vision for the future is quickly becoming a reality.

I want to express my warmest and sincerest gratitude and appreciation to our small businesses, which have made significant sacrifices throughout the pandemic to ensure our community's safety and well-being. The Vaughan spirit is ready, resilient and resourceful. We remain focused on the path forward. I am confident that if we continue working together and supporting each other, we will emerge stronger.

Yours sincerely,



Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, P.C.
Mayor

2018-2022 CITY OF VAUGHAN Members of Council



First row, left to right: Linda D. Jackson, Regional Councillor; Gino Rosati, Regional Councillor; Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, P.C., Mayor; Mario Ferri, Regional Councillor, Deputy Mayor.

Second row, left to right: Alan Shefman, Ward 5 Councillor; Sandra Yeung Racco, Ward 4 Councillor; Rosanna DeFrancesca, Ward 3 Councillor; Tony Carella, Ward 2 Councillor; Marilyn Iafrate, Ward 1 Councillor.

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER



As COVID-19 continues to evolve, the City remains committed to working with all levels of government to stand up for entrepreneurs and small business owners, with a focus on maintaining the competitiveness of the local economy.

Through the [Vaughan Business Resilience Plan](#) (PDF), the City's Economic and Cultural Development department is helping businesses build resilience in strategic sectors like healthcare, supply chain and manufacturing, and tourism. The plan will also guide the City's efforts to share Vaughan's newly-transformed public spaces while following public health guidelines and inviting the community to experience Vaughan's vibrant culture and arts offerings.

Launched in April 2020 by Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, the #ShopVaughanLocal, and, later #DineVaughanLocal, initiatives are two of the many measures introduced by the City to provide relief to the business community and help ease the financial burden caused by COVID-19. These campaigns encourage citizens to show their local love by dining safely at or ordering takeout or delivery from local restaurants, shopping online from local businesses, using #ShopVaughanLocal or #DineVaughanLocal on social media and buying gift cards from local businesses.

The City's Economic and Cultural Development team continues to offer advisory consultations via tele- or video-conference, email and phone. The department also continues to partner with community organizations and stakeholders to host new and educational virtual webinars. Additional information, resources and consultation booking services have been easily accessible for all citizens with the May 2020 launch of [vaughanbusiness.ca](#). The new website was created to ignite economic prosperity by connecting with current and potential business audiences through a platform that is user-friendly, dynamic and accessible for all.

As part of the Economic and Cultural Development team, the City's official destination marketing organization, Tourism Vaughan, launched in 2020. In its inaugural year, Tourism Vaughan established a business plan focused on developing a strong strategic foundation

to establish Vaughan as a destination for travellers. Despite challenges presented by COVID-19, this report outlines the many ways in which Tourism Vaughan persevered to deliver its mandate and support the local tourism industry through the pandemic.

From the month-long virtual series of Culture Days activities to small business programs and services like the Activate!Vaughan series and Digital Boost Resiliency Program, the Economic and Cultural Development team has led a series of innovative initiatives and temporary measures that offer ongoing business support to safeguard the local economy and protect businesses, consumers and citizens.

The Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) has recently recognized the department for their award-winning Vaughan Rising Podcast in the urban Investment Attraction category. The EDCO also acknowledged the Economic and Cultural Development team and the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Program team for being a finalist in the urban Building Initiatives category for the Public Art Placemaking: A Gateway Landmark Leading into the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre initiative.

These projects are just some examples of the City's continuous work to support businesses and entrepreneurs while showcasing the vibrancy of Vaughan's neighbourhoods. These initiatives also serve as a proof point of the City's commitment to economic prosperity, investment and social capital – a key priority of the [2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan](#).

Since the start of the pandemic, this team has not missed a beat. For their ongoing efforts to provide Service Excellence, the entire Senior Leadership Team – Executive would like to congratulate the Economic and Cultural Development department for their progress and achievements in 2020.

I invite citizens to learn more about Economic and Cultural Development programs and services by visiting [vaughanbusiness.ca](#) or [sign up](#) to receive updates from the City's Economic and Cultural Development department.

A blue ink signature of Jim Harnum, written in a cursive style.

Jim Harnum
City Manager, City of Vaughan

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ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

Despite the COVID-19 global pandemic, the City of Vaughan continues to be a city in demand. With outstanding economic performance and population growth prior to the pandemic, the City's resilient business community and diverse economy are anticipated to rebound and continue the decade-long momentum of strong economic growth and prosperity.

ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM VAUGHAN

The Economic and Cultural Development (ECD) department and Tourism Vaughan played a critical role in supporting businesses through the COVID-19 global pandemic.

In 2020, the ECD department and Tourism Vaughan:

ASSISTED
165
businesses
to **start**
or **grow**

DELIVERED
1,223
CONSULTATIONS

ANSWERED
4,340
inquiries

PROVIDED
207
seminars
to **5,332**
PARTICIPANTS

*City of Vaughan, Economic and Cultural Development, 2021.
Economic and Cultural Development and Tourism Vaughan data, 2020.*

REAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

With exceptional economic growth pre-pandemic, **Vaughan is anticipated to make a strong recovery.**



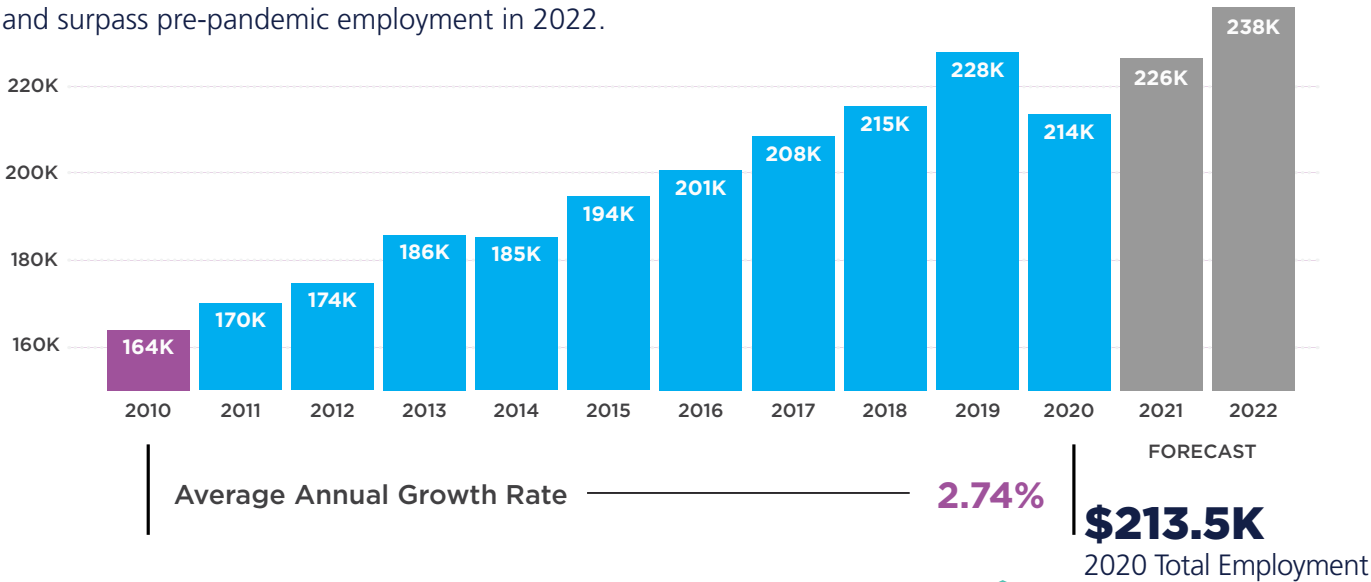
GDP growth rate **nearly double** the provincial and national rates (2010-2019)

YORK REGION'S LARGEST ECONOMY:
Vaughan accounts for **37%** of York Region's total GDP.

*The Conference Board of Canada. 2021. Regional Municipality of York Economic Forecast, 2009-2020.
Statistics Canada. 2021. Gross domestic product (GDP) [chained 2012 dollars], 2009 to 2019.*

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Vaughan’s highly educated and skilled workforce to rebound in 2021 and surpass pre-pandemic employment in 2022.



Employment growth rate more than double the provincial and national rates

2020 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: 9.1%—better than the provincial and national rates



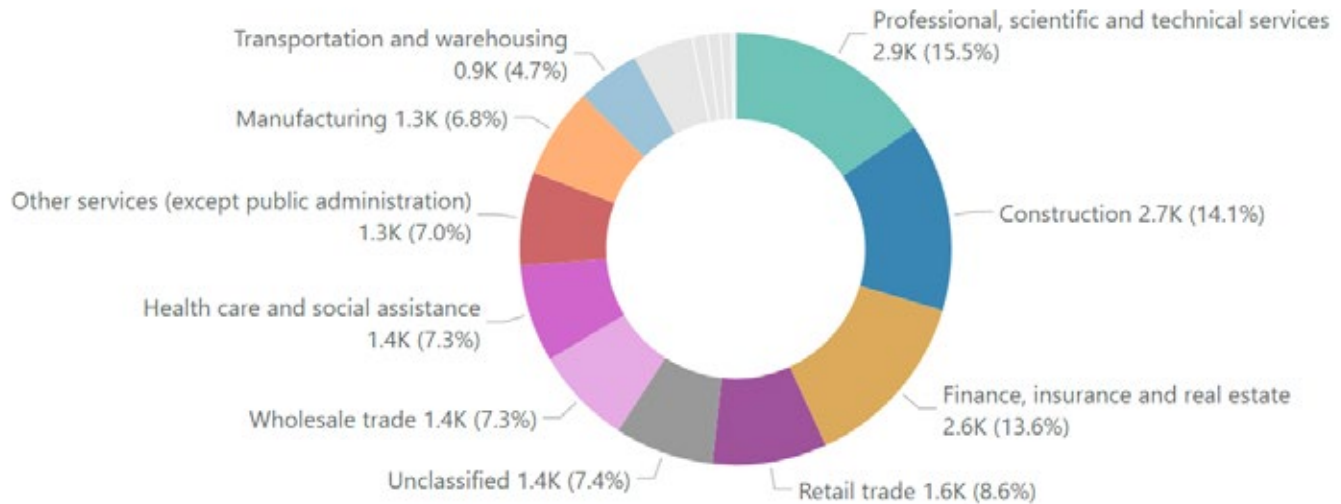
HIGHLY EDUCATED WORKFORCE: 70% post-secondary educated, ages 25 to 64

The Conference Board of Canada. 2021. Regional Municipality of York Economic Forecast, 2009-2020.
Statistics Canada. 2017. Vaughan, CY and Canada. Census, 2016.
Statistics Canada. 2021. Labour force characteristics, 2009-2020.



BUSINESS COUNTS - INDUSTRY SECTOR

Vaughan's diverse economy key to stability and post-pandemic recovery



2020 Business Count (with employees): **18,955**

2020 BUSINESS COUNT: EMPLOYMENT RANGE:

- Small Business (1-19): 87%
- Medium (20-99): 11%
- Large (100-499): 2%
- Very Large (500+): 0.16%

**SMALL BUSINESSES
DRIVE**

Vaughan's economy

Statistics Canada, 2021. Canadian Business Counts, December 2020.

POPULATION

A fast-growing population with a **97% citizen satisfaction rate**



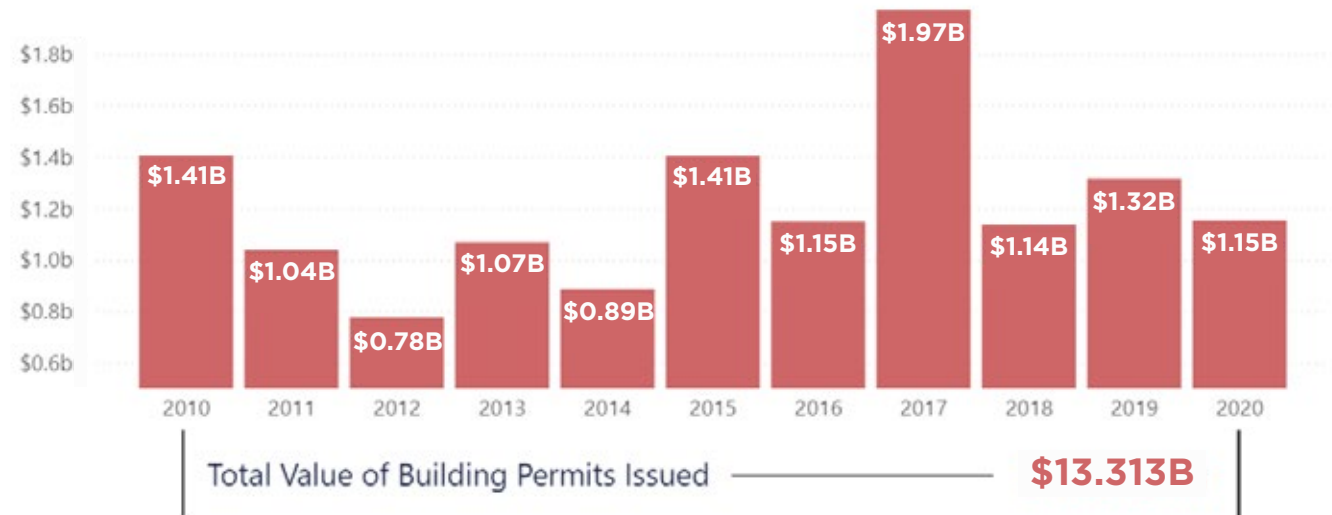
Population growth higher than the provincial and national rates

2020 Population: **331.6K**

Statistics Canada, 2020. Annual Demographic Estimates, July 2009-2020.

VALUE OF BUILDING PERMITS

City-building continues: Strong industrial and residential demand drove development throughout 2020



2020 Value of Build Permits Issued: **\$1.15B**

AN INDUSTRIAL POWERHOUSE: The **4th largest** industrial market in the GTA by total inventory

Average annual average of building permits issued: **\$1.21B**

City of Vaughan, Building Standards, 2021. Construction Activity, 2020.
Colliers International, 2021. Greater Toronto Area Industrial Market Report, Q4 2020.



WHO **WE ARE**



The Economic and Cultural Development (ECD) department works to make Vaughan a place where entrepreneurship, business, tourism, art and culture can prosper and grow.

ECD's objectives, as detailed in our 2020-2023 Strategic Business Plan, are to:

- enable a climate for businesses to grow, prosper and create jobs.
- advance economic opportunities and attract new investment.
- enrich Vaughan's communities and economy through public art and cultural development.
- effectively pursue service excellence.

A NEW ECD BRAND FOR AN EVOLVING CITY

In 2020, Economic and Cultural Development launched a family of identity marks. The prominent 'V' icon has three angular blocks representing Vaughan's small, medium and large businesses; enviable transit and roadways; and landmark towers announcing our rapid urbanization. The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and Vaughan Enterprise Zone are represented by the same icon but in distinct colours. Tourism Vaughan has a complementary but unique icon.

MAKING VAUGHAN A GREAT PLACE TO **LIVE, WORK AND VISIT**

Launched on Jan. 1, 2020, Tourism Vaughan is the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for the city of Vaughan with the mission to market and develop Vaughan as a destination for tourists and business travellers.

SUPPORTING VAUGHAN'S ECONOMY TOGETHER

A City-owned corporation, Tourism Vaughan is supported through the City of Vaughan's Economic and Cultural Development (ECD) department and supports the 2020-2023 ECD Strategic Business Plan through the Tourism Vaughan 2020 Business Plan - focused on supporting Vaughan's tourism industry.

A TOURISM BRAND FULL OF VIBRANT ENERGY

Tourism Vaughan revealed its first identity mark in 2020. It is part of the same family as the Economic and Cultural Development visual identity, but has a unique "V" icon. Tourism Vaughan's icon has two angular blocks with a diamond in the center. The diamond represents the high quality of the city while the blocks evoke a spotlight. Together, they look like a person celebrating with their arms up.





RESILIENCE

WORKING TOGETHER TO EMERGE STRONGER

Ready, Resilient and Resourceful defined the City of Vaughan in 2020. During the global COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Vaughan, through the Economic and Cultural Development department and Tourism Vaughan, mobilized to provide critical and timely support services to help build resilience into Vaughan's business community.

VAUGHAN BUSINESS ACTION PLAN

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City launched the [Vaughan Business Action Plan](#), which introduced a series of temporary measures to support and protect the local economy.

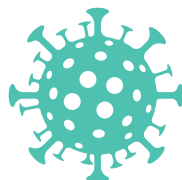
VIRTUAL CONSULTATIONS: MAINTAINING SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SERVICES

In the face of COVID-19, the Economic and Cultural Development department quickly pivoted to offer advisory consultations via tele- or video-conference, email and phone. The department also hosted and partnered in new and educational webinars. Through these new virtual channels, service quality and capacity were maintained, which proved crucial to helping local businesses navigate new regulations and access government assistance and support programs.

982
CONSULTATIONS
3,981
BUSINESS INQUIRIES

COVID-19 ONLINE RESOURCES

An online resource was created on [vaughanbusiness.ca](#) to collect, curate and showcase COVID-19-related business information programs and grants. The [resource page](#) made it easy for local businesses and organizations to find the critical support and information they needed. The new vaughanbusiness.ca website, launched in May 2020, features user-friendly access to programs, services, research products and marketing messages. It provides information and resources for businesses within and surrounding Vaughan and the diverse community of entrepreneurs, prospective investors, site selectors, realtors and potential residents.



THE COVID-19 RESOURCES
PAGE WAS THE MOST
VISITED PAGE OF 2020 ON
VAUGHANBUSINESS.CA WITH

3,811
PAGE VIEWS

314
EMAILS SENT
25%
AVERAGE
OPEN RATE

CONNECTING BETTER WITH OUR BUSINESSES: FOUR NEW ENEWSLETTERS

Four [eNewsletters](#) were launched to help the business community stay informed. The Vaughan Business, Vaughan Entrepreneurs, Tourism Vaughan B2B, and Vaughan Arts and Culture newsletters highlighted COVID-19 and industry-specific news, events, programs and more.

MUNICIPAL ACCOMMODATION TAX SUSPENSION

The Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) was suspended to support the travel and tourism industry during COVID-19, with endorsement from Tourism Vaughan. From mid-March 2020 to the beginning of September 2020, all accommodation providers in Vaughan were not required to charge the MAT to guests.

BUSINESS LICENSE RENEWAL DEFERRAL

The City established a 90-day grace period for business licence renewals to support existing local businesses.

SUPPORTING THE RESTOCKING OF SHELVES, ENHANCING THE MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND IMPROVING BUSINESS GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Several municipal by-laws were suspended to help retailers and businesses during the pandemic by allowing the prompt flow of goods and services into and across Vaughan.

CITY OF VAUGHAN: READY, RESILIENT AND RESOURCEFUL

MAYOR BEVILACQUA ESTABLISHES THE READY, RESILIENT AND RESOURCEFUL COMMITTEE

June 2020 marked the first meeting of the [Ready, Resilient and Resourceful \(RRR\) Committee](#) of Council. Chaired by Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, the committee's mandate is to report on issues related to the City's ongoing response efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee works closely with members of City administration to identify immediate and long-term impacts of the pandemic on City business and plan for continued success.

PATIO EXPANSION

In June 2020, Mayor Bevilacqua issued the first directive under the City's Emergency Measures By-law to allow local eating establishments and banquet halls to apply for a permit to [temporarily expand or establish additional patios](#) while maintaining physical distancing.



115

LICENCES ISSUED



PROPERTY TAX DEFERRAL, THE 2021 BUDGET AND THE ZERO PER CENT TAX INCREASE FOR 2021

In the first wave of the pandemic, the City provided an additional 30 days of relief on interim property tax bills and a 30-day extension on final instalments for property owners. Later in the year, as the pandemic continued, Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of Council approved the City's [2021 Budget and 2022 Financial Plan](#), which included a zero per cent increase to the property tax rate.

DIGITAL BOOST: VAUGHAN SMALL BUSINESS RESILIENCY PROGRAM

The Economic and Cultural Development department launched the [Digital Boost: Vaughan Small Business Resiliency Program](#) to help brick-and-mortar small businesses find new opportunities during COVID-19 by developing digital marketing skills and strengthening their online presence. General Assembly, an internationally recognized provider of award-winning education specializing in today's most in-demand skills, was among other partners, including the Province of Ontario, York Region, the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce and The Hub.

The program provided volunteer training and instruction to help participants reach their business goals and offer mentorship opportunities to bring their new digital marketing strategies to life.

TWO COHORTS,
300+
PARTICIPANTS,
\$5,000
IN PROVINCIAL AND
REGIONAL GRANT
FUNDING AWARDED TO
18 LOCAL SMALL
BUSINESSES

REGIONAL SUPPLY CHAIN PARTNERSHIP

During the first wave of the pandemic, the Economic and Cultural Development department brought together Supply Chain Canada, York Region, and the Cities of Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan to study the impact of COVID-19 on manufacturing supply chains and gather best practices to prepare for future supply chain disruptions. Upon completion in March 2021, the study will provide actionable recommendations in the form of a toolkit for businesses.

All aspects of this program were vital to the digital boost needed for my company. It helped me plan and forecast during the pandemic and to create realistic benchmarks, and also plan strategically while gaining more knowledge in areas like digital marketing. Virtual networking sessions introduced me to business owners in the community and also products created locally... The team in charge of this program was very helpful and resourceful and helped me every step of the way in answering questions and providing directions on next steps.

Sandra Awuku, SA Collective Inc.

ONTARIO TOGETHER: VAUGHAN'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR CONTRIBUTES TO THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

Through the [Ontario Together Fund](#), several Vaughan-based businesses received funds to expand their capacity and contribute to COVID-19 efforts. More notably, RONCO received more than \$1.4 million to establish production capacity to manufacture surgical masks and respirators, and Sterling Industries received more than \$1 million to increase capacity to make personal protective equipment.

VAUGHAN RISING BLOG AND PODCAST: SEASON 2

Building on the momentum of the [Vaughan Rising Podcast's](#) award-winning first season, Season 2 highlighted the bold and innovative ways that the Vaughan business community is demonstrating resilience during COVID-19. The new [Vaughan Rising Blog](#) expanded on this content by providing practical resources to help Vaughan businesses adapt to a post-COVID economy.



VAUGHAN RISING PODCAST: SEASON 1

WON A

2020 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

FROM THE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPERS COUNCIL
OF ONTARIO

2,158

PAGE VIEWS

1,431

DOWNLOADS





OVER 40 LOCAL BUSINESSES RECEIVED THE STAMP

- ✓ Restaurants
- ✓ Event venues
- ✓ Retail shops
- ✓ Festival and events
- ✓ Attractions
- ✓ Hotels

SAFE TRAVELS STAMP & TOOLKIT

Working with the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), Tourism Vaughan adopted the Safe Travels Stamp to support local tourism businesses to rebuild confidence among consumers to travel again. The stamp is an international symbol designed by the World Travel and Tourism Council to help travellers recognize businesses around the world that have adopted globally standardized health and hygiene protocols –

so visitors can experience ‘Safe Travels.’ A Vaughan Business Safe Travels Toolkit was created and distributed free of charge to Vaughan-based tourism businesses with digital and print assets to share the stamp with consumers.

REGIONAL RELIEF AND RECOVERY FUND

In 2020, Tourism Vaughan successfully applied for the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund, granted by the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) through FedDev Ontario in the amount of \$426,625. The fund helped Tourism Vaughan support the local industry through the pandemic and prepare to drive visitors back into the community when ready. Supported initiatives include developing an Interim Tourism Business Meetings and Events Recovery Strategy, the It’s Our Treat accommodations incentive program, a meeting and event planner website, hosting a virtual familiarization tour and more!

IT’S OUR TREAT ACCOMMODATIONS INCENTIVE PROGRAM

It’s Our Treat was a new incentive program designed to drive overnight stays to Vaughan accommodations. From December 2020 to February 2021, any two-night minimum stay received a \$100 rebate, courtesy of Tourism Vaughan. With safety as a top priority, guests received a Play Safe Vaughan itinerary with things to safely see and do during their stay.

CORPORATE MEETINGS AND EVENTS RECOVERY STRATEGY

This strategy was designed to attract meetings and events to Vaughan and build strategic partnerships between Tourism Vaughan, industry associations and Vaughan’s tourism stakeholders and partners. The strategy outlines marketing, lead generation initiatives and tools, including a customer relationship management (CRM) system, bid templates, and a meeting and event planner website.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

BRINGING VAUGHAN'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Community building is at the heart of what the Economic and Cultural Development department helps bring to the ever-growing City of Vaughan. The steps the department has taken, including new branding and websites and bringing Vaughan's future talent and businesses together, have helped redefine how residents, visitors and investors alike come to see Vaughan as a city of choice in the face of economic uncertainties from the global pandemic.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND SMART CITY TASK FORCES

The City continued to leverage community expertise through Council-led task forces to address specific matters of public importance. The Economic and Cultural Development department is working closely with the Economic Prosperity and Smart City Task Forces to address city-building and smart city initiatives in Vaughan.

The [Economic Prosperity Task Force](#) leverages industry knowledge to support sustainable economic growth, leading to more jobs, higher incomes, less poverty, higher living standards and a healthier municipality. Its mandate is to advise how the City can best deliver on commitments made in the Council-approved [Economic and Cultural Development department's Strategic Business Plan, 2020-2023](#).

The [Smart City Task Force](#)'s mandate is to advance a culture of knowledge, pursuing continuous improvement; provide advice to Council and City administration; include high-level political and community perspectives into developing a Smart City initiative; and endorse Smart City technologies. Discussion topics to date include the task force's vision, mission and core values, goals and objectives, and data and privacy considerations.



115
EXHIBITOR
BOOTHS
WITH NEARLY
400
IN-PERSON
ATTENDEES
(PRE-COVID)

PROMOTING COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN VAUGHAN

18TH ANNUAL VAUGHAN BUSINESS EXPO

The Vaughan Business Expo is the Economic and Cultural Development department's premier annual business event, bringing together the local business community to exhibit, network and discover new opportunities. The February 2020 Expo featured targeted zones for Innovators, York Region Food Movers, Makers and Shakers, Culture Creators and Business Builders.



ACTIVATE!VAUGHAN HEALTH INNOVATION CHALLENGE

This market-driven innovation program connected start-ups and scale-ups with large corporate enterprises and industry leaders. In partnership with presenting sponsors the Province of Ontario and Sterling Industries, and program partners Mackenzie Health, the Mackenzie Innovation Institute (Mi2), SE Health, ventureLAB, York Region and The Hub, the program presented problem-based innovation challenges and offered validation, collaboration and co-development opportunities to support the commercialization of emerging technologies.

78
COMPANIES PARTICIPATED,
\$45,000
IN PROVINCIAL GRANTS
AWARDED ACROSS
EIGHT WINNERS

*The City of Vaughan and the Activate!Vaughan program provided our team at Rekammend with an amazing platform to share the stories of individuals living with speech and language disorders. Through the **Healthcare Innovation Challenge** we connected with several entrepreneurs, technologists, and healthcare professionals who are passionate about developing health-tech solutions where patients are at the centre of care. The program provided us the opportunity to develop our sales plan for our software communication platform with mentors from ventureLAB. We are incredibly grateful for the support we've received from the City of Vaughan and are excited to continue collaborating with local talent.*

Abi and Hannah, co-founders of Rekammend

INDUSTRY COLLABORATION ROUNDTABLES

The Economic and Cultural Development department hosted industry collaboration roundtables in partnership with ventureLAB and Ontario Centres of Innovation (OCI) to foster collaboration and partnership among local businesses in key sectors, such as manufacturing, health tech and smart city technology. The roundtables spurred businesses to collaborate and share best practices related to COVID-19 resilience and recovery.

THREE ROUNDTABLES
HOSTED, MORE THAN

45 PARTICIPATING
COMPANIES

BUSINESS CAFÉ: NETWORKING MADE EASY

390
MEMBERS with
1,573
INTRODUCTIONS MADE

SHAPING VAUGHAN'S FUTURE TALENT

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

This year, along with the Government of Ontario's Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, the City's Economic and Cultural Development department has partnered with Niagara University (NU) to deliver Summer Company program virtual training and mentorship to 11 participating students. NU is offering workshops and experience-based learning opportunities focused on marketing, sales, leadership, time management, product development and customer service to help students develop future-proof skills. Participants will receive a certificate of completion from NU.

VENTURELAB AND VAUGHAN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

First announced at Small Business Week 2019, the City of Vaughan and ventureLAB launched a new partnership agreement to support local innovation and entrepreneurship – this agreement follows the successful pilot with ventureLAB earlier in 2019.

To further establish Vaughan as a hub for entrepreneurship, talent and innovation, ventureLAB and Economic and Cultural Development's partnership includes the continuation of ventureLAB's business advisory services for technology entrepreneurs in Vaughan; the delivery of Activate!Vaughan innovation pitch challenges; the engagement of Vaughan-based technology-driven companies and the development of the Vaughan Mackenzie Health precinct as a catalyst for economic development.

A NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BRAND AND VAUGHANBUSINESS.CA

The new [website](#) and brand aim to ignite economic prosperity in Vaughan by communicating business propositions more clearly with current and potential businesses. Launched in May 2020, the new website – incorporating the new brand – was designed to be an appealing and robust platform, highlighting the department's programs, services, research and products, and marketing messages in a more user-friendly and engaging way.



SUMMER COMPANY 2020

Vaughan's Summer Company program, managed by the Small Business and Entrepreneurship team in Economic and Cultural Development, provides young students with the tools to start their own companies, coaching from local business leaders and a provincial grant of up to \$3,000 toward startup expenses and operating costs.

 **58**
APPLICATIONS;
23
INTERVIEWED;
FOUR
STUDENTS ACCEPTED

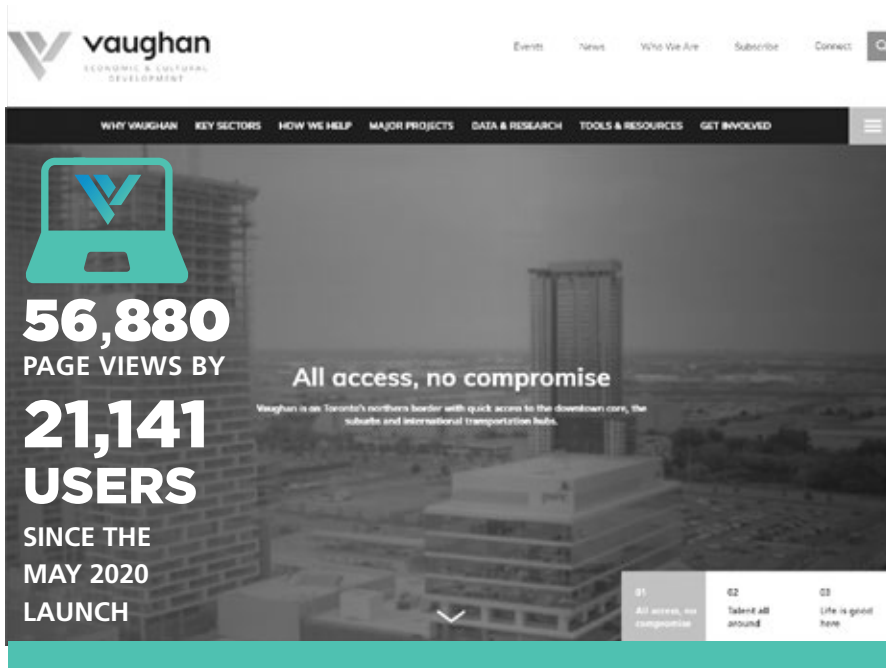
This past summer, I had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the Vaughan Summer Company program to bring my venture into fruition. I was provided with extensive resources and connected to many wonderful mentors who provided me with excellent advice in regards to marketing and selling my product.

Thanks to the program, I have also been invited to speak at several panels and events, and it has opened up a variety of opportunities for me. I definitely recommend that all teenagers with an entrepreneurial spirit apply for the Summer Company program. It has truly helped me achieve the impossible and I wouldn't have learned what I know today without the incredible support from the program and my mentors.

Ananya Vishwanath, founder and CEO of VQueues



MARKETING VAUGHAN AS A CITY AND DESTINATION



A NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BRAND AND VAUGHANBUSINESS.CA

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TOURISM VAUGHAN: GETTING SOCIAL

In December 2020, Tourism Vaughan launched its [Instagram](#) page to focus on supporting local businesses during the pandemic. Along with #ShopVaughanLocal messaging, the account also features campaigns on all that make Vaughan a great place to visit and explore and other ways to support the local community.

 **400**
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

FIRST SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST
GARNERED MORE THAN
16,000 IMPRESSIONS,
7,500 UNIQUE USERS AND
150 PROFILE VIEWS

TOURISM VAUGHAN'S BRAND AND THE LAUNCH OF VISITVAUGHAN.CA: EXPLORE ONLINE NOW, VISIT LATER

Tourism Vaughan's brand embodies the "vibrant, energetic and diverse destination offering year-round, family-friendly attractions, accommodations and experiences." With brand in hand, Tourism Vaughan partnered with Central Counties Tourism to launch a new [visitor website](#) that offers an exploration of all there is to see and do in Vaughan from the safety and comfort of home during the COVID-19 pandemic. The explore online now, visit later platform featured virtual, interactive content ensuring locals and visitors do not miss a thing while enjoying the city from home.

360-DEGREE TOUR AND MYVMC.CA REFRESH

The department updated and re-launched the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) [360-degree Virtual Tour](#) and the [myVMC.ca](#) website. These projects were substantially updated to align with the VMC's new brand and incorporate the latest developments in Vaughan's emerging downtown.


549 VIEWS
OF THE VMC
360-DEGREE TOUR

ULI WEBINAR - 'VAUGHAN RISING: VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE, SUBURBAN INTENSIFICATION'

The Economic and Cultural Development department partnered with Urban Land Institute (ULI) Toronto to host the webinar 'Vaughan Rising: Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Suburban Intensification' featuring Mayor Bevilacqua and other key

140
WEBINAR ATTENDEES
PLUS EARNED MEDIA COVERAGE
IN THE TORONTO SUN AND
HAMILTON SPECTATOR

9,766
PAGE VIEWS BY
3,643 USERS
SINCE THE
MYVMC.CA REFRESH

speakers. ULI Toronto reported such strong engagement that they launched a series of similar webinars with other GTA Mayors.

VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE (VMC) AWARENESS BUILDING

Continued awareness of the VMC among business and commercial real estate audiences via a robust program of events, advertising and content development was a priority in 2020. The VMC was prominently featured at the NAIOP REX Awards, UN-Habitat Urban Economy Forum, ULI Webinar, CoreNet REMmy Awards Presidents of Enterprising Organizations conference and in publications, including the Invest in Ontario Report, the Real Estate News Exchange and Urban Toronto.

436,864
PEOPLE REACHED
ACROSS ALL CHANNELS

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) PROMOTIONS

Despite COVID-19, FDI attraction activities continued digitally. In partnership with the Province of Ontario, the Economic and Cultural Development department delivered a virtual tour of Vaughan in the Ontario Innovation Ecosystem session, highlighting its innovative business ecosystem to international delegates. Later in the year, Vaughan showcased its innovation ecosystem at the Canada pavilion for the virtual 2020 Smart China Expo.

To support future ability to attract, retain and expand FDI in Vaughan, the department was awarded grant funding through the 2020 CanExport Community Investment Fund to research Vaughan's current investment appeal and identify new and pursuable leads.

2,915
PEOPLE REACHED
ACROSS BOTH EVENTS

\$11,500
IN GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED

FIRST PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION IN THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE (VMC)

In collaboration with Menkes Developments Ltd. and QuadReal Property Group, the City unveiled a temporary [public art installation](#) prominently situated along Highway 7, leading into the heart of what will soon become Vaughan's cultural and entertainment hub – VMC. Entitled "[Metropolis in Motion](#)," this City-curated, lenticular public art installation

features the graphic design of established Vaughan-based artist Frank Mazzuca and stands at 63-feet wide and 10-feet tall. This is the City's first installed work of public art in the VMC and will serve as the gateway to the South VMC.

MORE THAN
28 MILLION
ANTICIPATED ANNUAL CAR AND
PEDESTRIAN ENGAGEMENTS



2020 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

FINALIST

FROM THE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPERS COUNCIL
OF ONTARIO

BUILDING INITIATIVES -
URBAN OVER

**100,000
POPULATION**



Frank Mazzuca, *Metropolis in Motion*, 2020.



CULTURE DAYS GOES VIRTUAL

For the 11th year of [Culture Days](#) and the first year going virtual, Vaughan was chosen as the featured municipality for Ontario. As a national and provincial event celebrating arts, culture and heritage across Canada, the event had an incredible four-week run, from Sept. 25 to Oct. 25, with more than 50 virtual events and more than 65,000 social media *impressions for the entire month across the City of Vaughan's social media channels.

**Impressions are the number of times your content is displayed, regardless of whether it was clicked on or not. An impression means that content was delivered to someone's feed.*

CURATED ART GALLERIES JOIN THE DIGITAL FRONTIER

In keeping with new tech trends to enhance public art appreciation, as well as promoting responsible social distancing, the department pivoted from installing exhibitions for in-person art viewing at Vaughan City Hall to leveraging digital channels. Five curated [virtual art galleries](#) were brought online and made accessible on Flickr, including [Art Integration Collection](#), [Symbolic Expressionism](#), [Reflections on Jewish Heritage](#), [Waterscapes](#), [Treescapes and Earthscapes](#).

1,225
GALLERY PAGE VIEWS

VIRTUAL REAL ESTATE CONFERENCE 2020

In partnership with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, the City hosted the first-ever, two-day online [real estate conference](#) in November for realtors, developers, planners and local business owners in Vaughan. Attendees had the opportunity to tune in and engage in meaningful discussions about the impact of COVID-19 on Vaughan's real estate market.

MORE THAN

300

ATTENDEES FROM
ACROSS THE GTA

TOURISM VAUGHAN FAM TOUR

Tourism Vaughan held its first familiarization (FAM) tour in November. Together with six local industry partners, twenty meeting and event planners attended a 1.5-hour-long virtual session about why they should choose Vaughan to host their next meeting or event. Educational trivia games and prizes were included. The goal was to familiarize clients with what Vaughan has to offer for meetings and events, connecting attendees and partners. Vaughan's accommodations partners also donated room night stays for the attendees.



GROW WITH VAUGHAN HORTICULTURE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

A new partnership program developed by Vaughan's Economic and Cultural Development and Parks, Forestry and Horticulture Operations departments, [Grow with Vaughan](#) aims to beautify the city through engaging the business community in low-dollar value sponsorships on City flower beds.



21 FLOWER BED
SPONSORSHIPS TOTTALLING
\$38,000



CITY BUILDING

DESPITE COVID-19, CITY BUILDING CONTINUES

While the global COVID-19 pandemic made its mark on the Canadian economy, city-building continued in Vaughan. With the City bringing in new investment and major development projects staying the course, investor's confidence has proven Vaughan was and still is in demand. From 2010 to 2020, the City of Vaughan issued more than \$13 billion in building permits, with 2020 being no exception pulling in \$1 billion.

CORTELLUCCI VAUGHAN HOSPITAL: BUILDING A FUTURE HEALTH AND WELLNESS INNOVATION DISTRICT

CORTELLUCCI VAUGHAN HOSPITAL REACHES SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION

Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital reached substantial completion in August 2020. It opened in February 2021 as a pandemic response hospital with an exclusive focus on creating ICU and acute care capacity to help address the surge in COVID-19 cases in Ontario. Once the surge in COVID-19 cases has stabilized, it will open as a full-service hospital, as originally planned, with an emergency department, surgical services and operating

rooms, technologically advanced diagnostic imaging and specialized programs. The new \$1.7-billion [Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital](#) marks Vaughan's first hospital and Canada's first smart hospital. Generating more than 1,800 jobs in the community, the 1.2-million-square-foot facility has capacity for up to 350 beds.

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES: HEALTHCARE PRECINCT FEASIBILITY STUDY

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in Vaughan, the City is leading a collaboration to transform an 82-acre parcel of land at Jane Street and Major Mackenzie Drive into the [Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct](#).

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was

signed between the City, York University, Mackenzie Health and ventureLAB to identify transformational opportunities to maximize the best use of lands surrounding the site of the Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital through a feasibility study. The study will determine how best to create a centre of healthcare excellence and explore various options, including expanding ventureLAB to create another regional innovation hub in Vaughan. The feasibility study connects to additional activities occurring, such as Mackenzie Health collaborating with York University on academic health sciences.



TOURISM VAUGHAN'S DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

Tourism Vaughan is in the process of developing the [Vaughan Destination Master Plan](#), alongside consultant CBRE Ltd. brought on board in November. The plan will focus on developing a strong strategic foundation to power the city and Tourism Vaughan forward, charting out the tourism industry's recovery in the short- and long-term. The goal is to guide industry and municipal investment in developing Vaughan as a destination over the next five years.

ONLINE VACANT EMPLOYMENT LAND DIRECTORY

To support development in Vaughan, the Economic and Cultural Development department launched a new digital and interactive [Vacant Employment Land Directory](#) in October. With this launch, the department continues its momentum of digitizing products and services to promote Vaughan. The directory's interactive nature makes it more efficient for external stakeholders to identify development opportunities in Vaughan's employment areas, spurring new job creation and improving overall economic prosperity in Vaughan.

NOTABLE INVESTMENTS

VAUGHAN'S E-COMMERCE GROCERY FACILITY A FIRST IN NORTH AMERICA

September marked the launch of [Sobeys' new 250,000-square-foot distribution centre](#), a state-of-the-art automated customer fulfilment centre in Vaughan. Powered by Ocado's industry-leading technology, Voilà by Sobeys president, and CEO of Sobeys' parent Empire Company Ltd, Michael Medline has a "vision for the future of online grocery retail in Canada." At capacity, Voilà by Sobeys will bring about 1,500 jobs to the area.





WALMART CANADA TO BUILD A NEXT-GENERATION DISTRIBUTION CENTRE

Set to open in 2024, [Walmart Canada](#) and Condor Properties broke ground on a state-of-the-art, 550,000-square-foot distribution centre at 11110 Jane St. – anticipated to create hundreds of jobs in Vaughan.

AMAZON CANADA TO LAUNCH DELIVERY STATION IN 2021

[Amazon](#) is opening two delivery stations in Vaughan. The 209,000-square-foot station at 600 Tesma Way recently opened and a 193,000-square-foot facility at Keyes Court will open in 2021.

PwC DIGITAL RESILIENCE CENTRE

PwC Canada has opened its first [Digital Resilience Centre](#) in Vaughan, Canada. The Centre helps organizations unify their defences against digital threats by bringing together thought leadership and capabilities across cybersecurity, privacy, anti-fraud, anti-money laundering, physical security and safety.

AVID HOTEL VAUGHAN BREAKS GROUND

Expected to open by spring 2022 as an investment by InterContinental Hotels Group – one of the world's leading hotel companies – the new [Avid](#) hotel in Vaughan will offer 119 rooms across six floors.

VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS RECEIVES FUNDING TO INTEGRATE LEADING-EDGE ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION

[Vision Profile Extrusions](#)

has received a \$2.3-million repayable contribution from FedDev Ontario to adopt leading-edge robotics and automation processes – creating 36 skilled jobs and maintaining 30 others.

2021 HIGHLIGHTS:

ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

With 2020 being defined as a year for readiness, resilience and resourcefulness, 2021 is a new chapter for the City of Vaughan and the Economic and Culture Development department to build on these principles and support Vaughan's continuing innovation and growth. With 2021 comes exciting new projects that help define Vaughan as a city in demand and a city people want to live, grow and succeed. Here is just some of what the Economic and Cultural Development department has in store for 2021.

ACTIVATE!VAUGHAN SMART CITY CHALLENGE

The [Activate!Vaughan Smart City Challenge](#) is a call to start-ups and scale-ups to propose innovative solutions that leverage smart city technology to enhance quality of life in Vaughan. The City, in partnership with the province of Ontario, York Region, The HUB, Alectra Utilities, Mackenzie Health, Mackenzie Innovation Institute (Mi2), ventureLAB and Vaughan Public Libraries, is calling on entrepreneurs to pitch smart city solutions in four challenge areas: Electric Mobility, Municipal Services Route Optimization, Age-friendly Communities and Intelligent Placemaking.

With \$25,000 in provincial grant funding available, [Activate!Vaughan](#) will provide mentorship, validation and co-development opportunities with the City and other corporate partners to support the commercialization of new smart city solutions. The challenge runs from February to August 2021.

Four challenge areas:

- Electric Mobility
- Route Optimization
- Age-Friendly Communities
- Intelligent Placemaking

VAUGHAN HEALTHCARE CENTRE PRECINCT PARTNERSHIP

To be completed in 2021, with the implementation or recommendations to follow, the Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct Feasibility Study will assess the economic development and transformational opportunities to maximize the best use of lands surrounding the site of the Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital.

The City of Vaughan, York University, Mackenzie Health and ventureLAB are working together to bring healthcare, innovation and jobs to this site, which has the potential to become an epicentre of healthcare excellence in the city.

VAUGHAN RISING PODCAST: SEASON 3

The third season of the Vaughan Rising Podcast will look ahead to the major initiatives that will shape Vaughan's next decade. This includes City-led projects like the Vaughan Healthcare Precinct and Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Cultural Arts Centre, regional and provincial initiatives like the Yonge subway extension and private sector developments.

INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL TRADE PROGRAMS

As the global COVID-19 pandemic shifted the landscape of inbound and outbound delegations, the department has pivoted its effort to deliver trade programs by working virtually with foreign chambers of commerce and foreign trade and investment agencies. We continue to support Vaughan-based and international businesses with market intelligence and serve international trade and Foreign Direct Investment opportunities.

DOING BUSINESS TOGETHER: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ISRAELI COMPANIES IN VAUGHAN

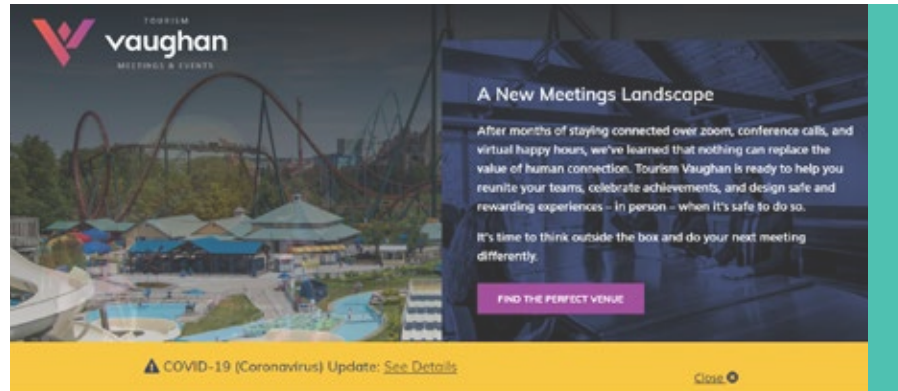
Continuing the success of the 2019 business mission to Israel, the City of Vaughan is partnering with the Israel-Canada Chamber of Commerce and the Canada Israel Chamber of Commerce via webinar to highlight Vaughan as a premier destination for Israeli business expansions.

VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE AWARENESS BUILDING

The pandemic has created uncertainty about the future of office space, but experts are optimistic about transit-oriented suburban nodes like the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC). To ensure that the VMC is top-of-mind for business leaders and commercial realtors, the City will continue building awareness through targeted events, advertising and content development.

GREAT TASTE OF ONTARIO ROADTRIP

In partnership with the Culinary Tourism Alliance (CTA), Tourism Vaughan is participating in the Great Taste of Ontario Roadtrip to showcase some of the best in food and beverage in Vaughan. To create the ultimate culinary experience, Tourism Vaughan will create a passport of local food and beverage businesses as part of several itineraries to eat and explore local. The program will run throughout 2021.



HOSTINVAUGHAN.CA

Launching in early 2021, HostInVaughan.ca is a meeting and event planner website that provides planners with easy-to-use tools to host their next event in Vaughan. The website features a handy venue finder that is sortable by venue type, capacity and more; RFP inquiry booking; familiarization tour registration and a compelling case for why Vaughan is the best place to host any meeting or event.

CITY-WIDE PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

The City is liaising with the development community to advance 11 City-wide public art projects, with most projects sited at the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and several others slated for Thornhill, Concord and Woodbridge. Later this year, the City will launch an expansive 20-metre-tall, suspended glass curtain wall for the digital light gallery on the south façade of Transit City Tower 3 infrastructure to exhibit a curated, rotating digital art collection that is activated at night. It is anticipated to be the public art highlight of 2021.

on the SLATE ART EXHIBITIONS: builtFORM | the art of placemaking

In keeping with the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre's transformational vision, a collective of accomplished artists were commissioned to explore the dynamic relationship between builtFORM and placemaking in an urban context. The artists selected for this exhibition bring diverse creative backgrounds into the interpretive mix, representing architecture, urban design, painting, photography, sculpture, digital media, industrial design, engineering and interior design. on the SLATE atrium gallery will be located at Vaughan City Hall, Level 1.

CULTURAL AND HERITAGE CELEBRATIONS 2021

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: FEB. 1

To celebrate Black History Month, the City's 2021 Virtual Observance Event featured Honourable Jean Augustine, who spoke about cultural advances and developments with the Ontario Black community and the importance of paving the way for future support and success.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: MARCH 8

This virtual event featured a panel of women leaders representing various sectors in the City of Vaughan, such as business, diversity, inclusion and education,

speaking to their efforts on forging ahead through COVID-19 and what they've learned through this unprecedented and challenging time.

INDIGENOUS HERITAGE MONTH: JUNE 1

In June, Canadians celebrate National Indigenous History Month to honour the history, heritage and diversity of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The month is a time for learning about, appreciating and acknowledging how First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples have helped shape Canada.

CANADA MULTICULTURALISM DAY: JUNE 27

Canada Multiculturalism Day is a national event celebrated by the City with activities from various cultures that bring Canadian society and cities to life.

CULTURE DAYS: SEPT. 24 TO OCT. 24

As a proud annual participant of [Culture Days](#), a free national event celebrating arts, culture, creativity and inspiration, the City's 12th year will be another full month of free, virtual city-wide activities.



facingNORTH: art | symbol | story exhibition, on the SLATE, 2020.



CONNECT WITH US

The City of Vaughan's Economic and Cultural Development (ECD) 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, please visit:

VAUGHAN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

vaughanbusiness.ca | ecd@vaughan.ca

Sponsorships and Partnership:

vaughan.ca/CorporatePartnerships

Arts and Culture: vaughan.ca/ArtsandCulture

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC): myVMC.ca

Vaughan Smart City: smartcity.vaughan.ca



TOURISM VAUGHAN CORPORATION:
visitvaughan.ca | tourism@vaughan.ca
hostinvaughan.ca