

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN WINDSOR-ESSEX



Q3

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

This report highlights business development accomplishments by Invest WindsorEssex from June to September 2021 and provides an overview of regional economic development interactions that include, but are not limited to, outreach, consultation, trade shows, performance metrics, entrepreneurship, marketing and international outreach by the business development team.

Through these and other activities, the team focuses on five key areas:

Investment Attraction

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre

Business Retention & Expansion

Automobility & Innovation

Marketing and Communications



Quarterly reports are provided to funders, stakeholders and the general public and are posted on the corporation's website investwindsoressex.com



From the president and CEO's desk



Welcome to our report for the third quarter of our 2021 fiscal year. As you will see from the updates and metrics that follow, all the Invest WindsorEssex departments and team members have been busy implementing our strategy and activities in support of our entrepreneurs, businesses and stakeholders.

The same is expected as we enter the last quarter of the year, and I would like to highlight a couple of our key upcoming events.

First on October 26, 2021 we are hosting our **Annual Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference**. The theme for this year is *How Automation Shapes the Post-Pandemic World*.

The conference will be held virtually, and our partners include the National Research Council of Canada - Industrial Research Assistance Program and Automate Canada.

I am also pleased to note that our gold level sponsors this year are the University of Windsor and St. Clair College, and our silver level sponsors are Laval International and Eltromex. Be sure to check the link above for the conference website where you will find information on the breakout sessions, speakers and how to register.

Next, I would like to remind everyone that October is Small Business Month in Ontario. It is a time to recognize and celebrate the important contribution that small businesses make to our local economies and our communities. Our Small Business and Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) will be observing this month by running marketing campaigns to showcase SBEC services and resources to support local and independent businesses.

The first campaign is the SBEC branded *Shop Local Love Local Tote Bag Giveaway*. SBEC will be distributing reusable canvas shopping bags free-of-charge to participating, local independent small businesses, the WindsorEssex Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Windsor Farmers' Market. The businesses are encouraged to offer Small Business Month specials and provide customers a free bag with purchase. This campaign will target a variety of shoppers who directly support local businesses. We are encouraging consumers to shop at their local, independent retailers and fill the bags with their favourite products this month.

Lastly, on October 29, SBEC is hosting a webinar in partnership with Chatham-Kent Small Business Centre: **Fill the Gap: Tips & Best Practices for Recruiting in an Employee's Market**. This webinar is designed to help small business owners and employers who are increasingly finding it difficult to find and retain employees. It will offer information and resources for recruiting and retaining employees for small businesses.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Stephen MacKenzie". The signature is stylized and fluid, with the first letters of the first and last names being prominent.

C. Stephen MacKenzie
President and CEO,
Invest WindsorEssex

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

IAA Mobility 2021, Munich, Germany



The Investment Attraction (IA) department attended the IAA Mobility 2021 trade show in Munich, Germany. The event was organized by the German Association of the Automotive industry (VDA) and presented the future of mobility. There were more than 1,000 exhibitors and speakers that presented innovations and concepts. Many of the exhibitors represented major automakers, technology companies that showcased their latest innovations and future trends for data, mobility and automotive. IA made connections with several EV companies and are currently in discussions with one company about their expansion plans to Canada.

▲ IAA Mobility 2021

P3 group Green-Hydrogen Charge Park feasibility study completed



STRATEGIC ADVISORY
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING
DIGITAL SOLUTIONS



WE CAN GREEN | ZERO EMISSION TARGET PICTURE

Feasibility Study Charging Park

WINDSOR ESSEX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION P3 group

Joe Goncalves Chris Heiler | Simon Buderath | Surendra Ghimire

Since 2020, P3 Group, a consulting company headquartered in Germany, has been assisting Invest WindsorEssex in conducting a feasibility study on a zero emission - green hydrogen charging park. The study is now completed, and the project is moving to the next stage. Invest WindsorEssex is looking to develop an E-mobility strategy for the Windsor-Essex region and bring local, private and public stakeholders together for a discussion on the feasibility study.

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

Digital Service Squad expands its reach in Windsor-Essex

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) has been awarded a third Digital Service Squad (DSS) grant from Digital Main Street (DMS). The grant of \$100,000 allows the organization to continue employing a team of digital marketing specialists to provide support to businesses and promotion of the DMS programs in Windsor-Essex. The Digital Service Squad provides one-on-one assistance to bricks-and-mortar small businesses to help them grow their digital presence and adopt new technologies. SBEC's Windsor-Essex DSS program launched in 2019 and since then has provided advisory services and hands-on technology support to hundreds of local businesses. SBEC is expanding its DSS to support more businesses in Essex County, with its service area now including the Municipality of Lakeshore and Municipality of Leamington. The Uptown Leamington BIA's DSS continues to service businesses in that district. Other DMS programs were also renewed during this quarter, such as ShopHERE and Digital Transformation Grants. Eligible businesses in Windsor-Essex can apply for a \$2,500 grant to leverage new technologies and tools for their businesses. The DSS is actively assisting businesses with the grant process. New applicants to the program can apply by October 31.

Summer Company program turn ambitious students into entrepreneurs



▲ 2021 Summer Company students

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre welcomed 13 high school and post-secondary students from Windsor-Essex into its Summer Company program this year. Summer Company is an Ontario government program that provides high school and post-secondary students with the resources and training to start a new summer business. Full-time students, aged 15-29, receive hands-on business education, advice and mentorship from local business leaders, and a grant of up to \$3,000. The 2021 Summer Company startups come from a variety of industries including clothing and hair accessories retailers, drone video production, mobile auto detailing, swimming instruction, landscaping, manufacturers for outdoor furniture and commercial signage and more. Summer Company program participants joined other small businesses in August at the Downtown Windsor Farmers' Market to sell their products and services. Visit the [Summer Company webpage](#) for a list of participants.

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

Foodpreneur Advantage engages food and beverage businesses

foodpreneur ADVANTAGE

Foodpreneur Advantage programming continued throughout the summer months. In the spring, the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre announced its partnership with Small Business Enterprise Centre partners in London, St. Thomas and Oxford County with the launch of Foodpreneur Advantage. The program features a monthly series of introductory seminars and training opportunities to support entrepreneurs looking to get a start in the food and beverage manufacturing industry. The seminar series concluded in September but will return in 2022. The seminars drew 108 attendees from Windsor-Essex during the 2021 series. Startup businesses were also invited in September to apply to the Foodpreneur Scale-Up Program. The 10-week program provides training, mentorship and a \$5,000 grant to a select group businesses that produce consumer packaged goods and have demonstrated high potential to scale operations. Successful applicants will participate in the program from October to December and the program will return in 2022.

Digital marketing summer seminar series



Paid Advertising
JULY 29 - 9-10:30 AM

Make the most of your advertising goals by learning the fundamentals of Facebook and Instagram advertising.

POINT INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE
GORDIE HOWE
INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE
A DIVISION OF INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) hosted three digital marketing seminars in July and August — Paid Advertising: Facebook & Instagram Fundamentals; Google Ads 101 Recap: Review of Fundamentals & Objectives; and Facebook & Instagram Deep Dive. The seminars were presented by industry expert Kat Spargalo of BLACC Agency. Established small business owners from various industries participated in the seminars which were geared towards companies looking to refine and grow their paid media campaigns. The seminar series was hosted by SBEC through the Sandwich Business Development Program, and funding was provided by the Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan.

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

Emerging Technologies in Automation Speaker Series – Data Analytics and Rapid Prototyping

The Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) team, along with the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP), hosted the latest instalment of the Emerging Technologies in Automation Speaker Series on August 18. The webinar featured Dr. Manjari Maheshwari from the Data Analytics program at St. Clair College and Joel Hodgdon of the Lambton College Manufacturing Innovation Centre. Manjari spoke about data sources and how businesses can focus on collecting the data they need to become more productive and efficient. She also discussed how Data Analytics students can help companies with their data requirements. Joel's presentation focused on emerging trends in rapid prototyping, digital technology integration, and the support network that Lambton College, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and National Research Council (NRC) can provide to manufacturers. [Watch the recording.](#)



▲ Dr. Manjari Maheshwari, Professor, St. Clair College

WOWC Workforce Strategy community focus group



Business Retention and Expansion is working with the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) to assist with their development of a Western Ontario regional Workforce Strategy. As part of the consultation process, local businesses and key stakeholders in Windsor-Essex were invited to participate in a Community Focus Group on July 12, 2021, facilitated by Mellor Murray, the lead consultant on the project.

The attendees included representatives from the County of Essex, municipal governments, Invest WindsorEssex, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Centre, academia, Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, Leamington Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, Workforce WindsorEssex, Windsor-Essex Local Immigration Partnership (WELIP), Ontario Federation of Agriculture/Essex County Federation of Agriculture, and the employment and human resources sector.

Throughout the breakout sessions, participants provided opinions, observations and experiences on such topics as, but not limited to, opportunities and barriers to attracting, retaining and recruiting talent in our community, attainable housing and the key priorities for our community with a five-year outlook. Outreach to industry was conducted one-on-one throughout July and August. The feedback will be critical to the WOWC Workforce Strategy Project for their final Report and recommendations for addressing workforce and housing gaps in the Southwestern Ontario region. Project updates including the [background research report](#).

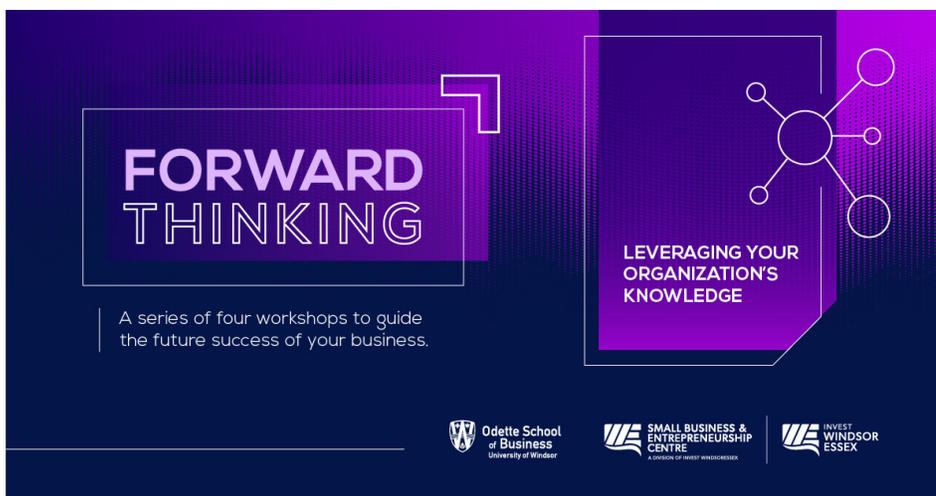
BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

Plastico Brasil Xperience Virtual Trade Show



In partnership with the Canadian Association of Moldmakers, the Business Retention and Expansion team took part in the three-day virtual event. Billed as the largest and most important industry event in Latin America, the 2021 edition of Plastico Brasil is the second time the show has been held virtually. The event welcomed key professionals from leading industry consumers of manufactured plastics, including construction, food and beverage, automotive and auto parts and more. At the last in-person event in 2019, Plastico Brasil saw more than 45,000 attendees and more than 800 Brazilian and international brands from every industry segment.

Forward Thinking Speaker Series Part 1 – Leveraging Your Organization’s Knowledge



The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Centre and the Business Retention and Expansion team partnered to host this facilitated in-person workshop which engaged participants in an active conversation aimed at understanding their organizations’ knowledge creation, capture, and management processes. Participants were able to take the findings back to their organizations and help mobilize processes while generating new knowledge to be better prepared to profit from new economy’s knowledge management challenges. This session was the first of four planned sessions and will be followed by Succession Planning (November 2021), Business Valuation (January 2022) and Building Your Organizational Structure and Strategy (March 2022).

AUTOMOBILITY & INNOVATION

Automobility and Innovation Centre host for Ontario Government announcement



On July 13, the Automobility and Innovation Centre was the site for an important announcement made by Ontario Minister of Labour, Training, and Skills Development Monte McNaughton regarding the Second Career program. The program offers skills training and financial support to workers who have found themselves laid-off due to COVID-19 and are looking to retrain for jobs in sectors that have good potential for future employment. Joining Minister McNaughton were special guest speakers including Windsor Mayor Drew Dilkens. After the announcement, Minister McNaughton was given a demonstration of the VR CAVE that is supported by the Province's AVIN program. The simulation team highlighted the benefits of virtual reality for many applications including training. [Read the Windsor Star article.](#)

- ◀ Ontario Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development Monte McNaughton experiences the virtual model of APMA's Project Arrow in the Windsor-Essex VR CAVE.

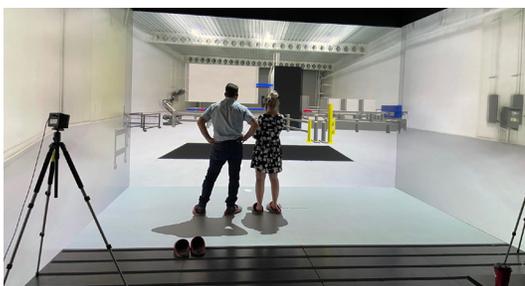
Funding announcement - Project Arrow receives \$5 Million from FedDev Ontario



On August 11, the Windsor-Essex VR CAVE was featured during an important announcement where APMA received a \$5-million non-repayable infusion from the federal government through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) to support Project Arrow. The funding announcement was made by Irek Kusmierczyk, MP for Windsor-Tecumseh, on behalf of Mélanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official languages and Minister responsible for FedDev. This funding will help propel the project forward as the vehicle moves from the virtual prototype stage to the physical prototype stage. The simulation capabilities of the VR CAVE are playing an important role in the development of this lighthouse project. [Read the Windsor Star article.](#)

- ◀ Irek Kusmierczyk, MP, Windsor-Tecumseh makes the funding announcement in the VR CAVE.

Digital Twinning program expands software offerings



- ▲ Digital Twin Engineer, Linsey Pecile shows Unity Pro's capabilities to Mike Hoppe from GeoPogo.

In an ongoing effort for the Windsor-Essex VR CAVE to become software agnostic, the simulation team acquired and implemented Unity Pro software which allows for additional support to local companies and beyond. Unity Pro software is known as a video game development platform. However, in the last couple of years, they have expanded their reach into design and development in other areas including automotive, mechanical and more. Unity Pro is open-source software, meaning there are no restrictions or limitations to 3D file types that can be imported to the Windsor-Essex VR CAVE. During this implementation, the team also acquired a plugin software called Interact which allows for physics-based simulations and deployment into the VR CAVE. These additions allow for the expansion of the Digital Twinning capabilities and the creation of simulations and not just animations.

AUTOMOBILITY & INNOVATION

Simulation team supports new Canadian EV startup – AK Motor



The Automobility and Innovation simulation team is supporting AK Motors, a new Canadian EV startup company, through their concept vehicle named Maple Majestic. The Windsor-Essex VR CAVE allows for the immersive visualization of the Maple Majestic virtual prototype and showcases how the vehicle will transform through its pre-production journey. Founder and CEO Arkadiusz Kaminski acknowledged that the Windsor-Essex region can provide a lot of the support needed for the Maple Majestic vehicle as it is being developed using external suppliers for components and assembly services, as well as technological innovations and academia. This project is a great example of the importance of a Canadian company that is pursuing the creation of zero emission vehicles

◀ [The Maple Majestic EV as rendered in the Windsor-Essex VR CAVE](#)

Another success for virtual hackathon BorderHacks



The Automobility and Innovation team was proud to support the second iteration of the **BorderHacks** virtual hackathon. The event took place from Sat., Sept. 25th to Sun., Sept. 26th, 2021. BorderHacks has helped students from both sides of the Windsor/Detroit border come together to compete in challenges and work together to solve problems. Focused on automobility, challenges were taken on over the course of 36 hours. Students had the opportunity to present their solutions to a panel of industry professionals, academic experts and their peers. The event surpassed its goal of 600 participants – with enrollment of 1000+ hackers! Proceedings took place over Discord and on Twitch.tv, with LIVE simultaneous broadcasting from the Windsor-Essex VR CAVE. Overall, it was a very inspirational event that encouraged students to think about using their skills to take their ideas to the next level and how they can be supported by the Windsor-Essex regional innovation ecosystem.

Corporate Marketing & Communications

The marketing department focuses on creating strategies that support business development initiatives within the areas of business retention and expansion, investment attraction, and entrepreneurship as well as, provides client support. Advertising strategies are aimed at enhancing business development and promoting the Windsor-Essex region.

Strategic programs and activities include the following:

Integrated marketing and advertising campaigns, event management, sponsorships, media and public relations, collateral materials, and communication through social media channels including video and corporate websites. Marketing maintains corporate brand standards and brand image across all media.

Website Analytics

investwindsoressex.com

Users – 7,135
Page views – 15,417
New Visitors – 84.3%
Returning Visitors – 15.7%

webusinesscentre.com

Users – 4,410
Page views – 13,482
New Visitors – 79.6%
Returning Visitors – 20.4%

Top Site Visitors



Canada



USA



China



India



United Kingdom

Social Media Analytics

Invest WindsorEssex

@investwindsoressex
 @_investwe

Total Fans – 19,112
Total Impressions – 192,673
Total Engagement – 5,255

SBEC

@WEBusinessCentre
 @wesmallbusinesscentre
 @wesmallbusiness

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Advertising

The Marketing and Communications department developed advertisements for the following:

INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

OUR LOCATION. YOUR ADVANTAGE.

INVESTWINDSORESSEX.COM

▲ Ontario Film Directory

Celebrating Small Business Month OCTOBER 2021

At the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre, we work with entrepreneurs to provide them with the **training** and **support** necessary to **start** and **grow** a successful business.

Find out how we can help your business grow by booking a **FREE** consultation with a virtual business advisor or visit our website for further resources:

webbusinesscentre.com

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE
A DIVISION OF INVEST WINDSORESSEX

▲ Biz X Magazine

CONGRATULATIONS
to all the nominees and winners of the 2021 Business Excellence Awards.

INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

INVESTWINDSORESSEX.COM

▲ Leamington Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards Program advertisement and sponsorship of the Industrial Manufacturing Excellence Award.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN AUTOMATION
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

HOW AUTOMATION SHAPES THE POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26TH, 2021

INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

Jim Beretta
CUSTOMER ATTRACTION & THE ROBOT INDUSTRY PODCAST

FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

LEARN MORE AT: EMERGINGTECHNOLOGIES.CA

▲ CTMA View Magazine

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Event marketing

Eastern Canada Farm Writers Association annual conference – Transforming Trade between Ontario and Michigan

ecfwa

Eastern Canada Farm Writers' Association

Stephen MacKenzie, President and CEO of Invest WindsorEssex was invited to speak at the ECFWA virtual conference to provide an overview on the region's agriculture industry and the future opportunities that will result from the new Gordie Howe Bridge. He was joined by representatives from the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, producers and businesses to explain how one of Canadian agriculture's most significant transportation corridors is about to be transformed.

Emerging Technologies in Automation Virtual Conference

The Marketing and Communications department developed social media assets and launched a robust digital advertising campaign to promote the event. The registration page was created and the [conference website](#) was continually updated with full agenda details, sponsorship and speaker profiles.

Media coverage

[Avoiding Canada's EV resource curse](#)

[A Look into the World of Virtual Reality - Live with Invest WindsorEssex](#)

[Project Arrow, Canada's zero-emissions concept car, gets \\$5M in federal funding](#)

[Project Arrow gets injection of \\$5-million in federal funding](#)

[Student-led businesses display their ideas at the Downtown Windsor Farmers' Market, Saturday](#)

[Summer Company Program](#)

[Podcast: Making it in Ontario: Welcome to Windsor, Ontario – Automobility Capital of Canada](#)

[Ontario Spotlight: Meet the Automobility Capital of Canada: Windsor-Essex](#)

[Invest WindsorEssex offering free mobility hub seminar](#)

[Region's talent, infrastructure key components to growing automobility hub](#)

[Stellantis eyeing Canada as possible destination for electric vehicle battery plant](#)

[Unifor officials remain confident of Ford's future in Windsor](#)



PERFORMANCE METRICS 2021

What We Do

Invest WindsorEssex advances economic development and prosperity in our region. We are the region's lead economic development agency and a dedicated catalyst for business growth and expansion. We attract new businesses to our region, help strengthen existing businesses and support entrepreneurship in three key ways:

Informing

We provide the most current and relevant information and data on site selection, market research and available government funding.

Guiding

We provide answers and advice on general business practices, expansion planning, multi-national branch planning and exporting, as well as training and educational resources.

Connecting

We help organizations cut through red tape and we connect them directly with key decision makers, potential partners and funders.

New Investment Facilitated

\$57,000,000 (IA/BRE)
\$238,500 (SBEC)
\$175,000 (AI)

Total amount of new investment to the region, through both public and private investment streams.

25 Expansions Facilitated
(IA/BRE) 3 | (SBEC) 22

238 New Jobs Facilitated
(IA/BRE) 125 | (SBEC) 113

15 Priority Files

39 Business Startups

4 Funding Applications and Joint Papers Developed

Business Support Sessions

49 Sessions
292 Attendees

Top Economic Priorities as reported by Windsor-Essex Businesses

- 1 Canada-U.S. border closure: limited cross-border business travel and uncertainty of staged/planned re-opening of U.S. land border incl. vaccination policies that is heavily impacting multiple sectors.
- 2 Uncertainty of economic climate: impacting business investment and project planning.
- 3 Labour challenges: unintended consequences of COVID supports to employees leading to staffing, labour and talent shortages vs. unemployment challenges.
- 4 Uncertainty of longevity of government resources and support programs, accompanied by uncertainty of vaccination mandates and required resources for implementation of vaccine passports and compliance measures.
- 5 Small business sustainability.

Regional Economic Indicators †



Population
368,700



Labour Force
224,200



Employment
201,400



Unemployment
22,800



Unemployment Rate
10.2%



Participation Rate
60.8%



Employment Rate
54.6%



Building Permits
\$50,825,113

Notes: Totals do not include September building permit values for Tecumseh.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey custom tabulation.

