

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN WINDSOR-ESSEX



# Q3

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2022

This report highlights business development accomplishments by Invest WindsorEssex from July to September 2022 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 and Expansion**

**Automobility and Innovation**

**Marketing and Communications**



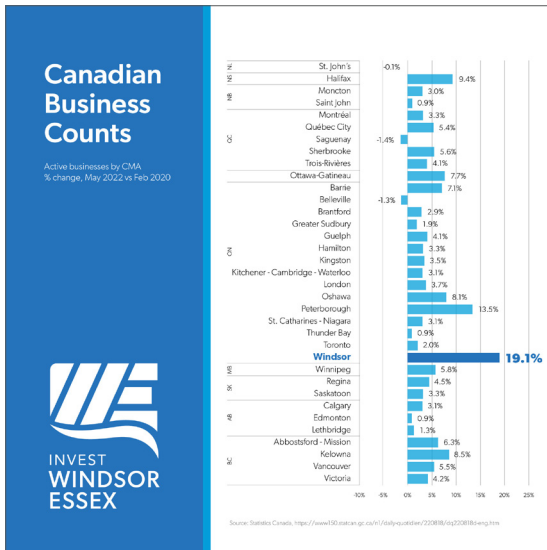
Quarterly reports are provided to funders, stakeholders and the general public and are posted on the corporation's website, [investwindsoressex.com](https://investwindsoressex.com)

## From the president and CEO's desk



Welcome to our report for the third quarter of 2022; it's hard to believe that we are already three quarters through our fiscal year!

I would like to start by sharing some recent news from Statistics Canada. For the period from February 2020 to May 2022, the Windsor Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) led the nation in percentage of new business growth at 19.1 per cent. In February 2020 the Windsor CMA counted 7,249 active businesses which further grew to 8,635 by May 2022.



This data, encompassing almost 100 per cent of the COVID time frame, is a testament to the resiliency of local residents and the collaborative approach ecosystem partners and political and education leaders have taken to building supports for entrepreneurs. I am very proud of the support provided by our Invest WindsorEssex team and our Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC).

Speaking of our SBEC, this year the Centre is celebrating its 30-year anniversary and will commemorate this with an exclusive speaking engagement for the local business community. **Fostering Your Inner Shark**, an absolutely essential event for aspiring entrepreneurs and business leaders, will take place on November 21 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the St. Clair Centre for the Arts. The keynote speaker for the event will be Kevin Harrington, original “shark” on ABC’s Shark Tank, creator of the Infomercial, pioneer of the As Seen on TV brand, top entrepreneurial keynote speaker and business expert.

In addition to this event, our Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) team hosted the annual Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference and Trade Show at Caesars Windsor on Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2022. The conference attracted over 400 attendees and exhibitors and brought together international leaders in automation, experts in advanced manufacturing, and supply chain purchasers. Overall, the conference was a great success and showcased our region as a global leader in automation and Industry 4.0 technology.

Finally, the IWE team continues to work with public and private partners in positioning the Windsor-Essex region as a leader in next-generation vehicle production and Canada’s Automobility Capital. The IWE marketing team launched a **Globe and Mail campaign** promoting investment opportunities in the region throughout Ontario and internationally across all trade media networks. The campaign promoted Windsor-Essex’s great quality of life, access to global talent and rapidly growing automobility and technology sectors.

As always, we encourage entrepreneurs and businesses to **contact one of our team members** if we can provide information or assistance for business start-up, expansion or relocation to our thriving and growing region.

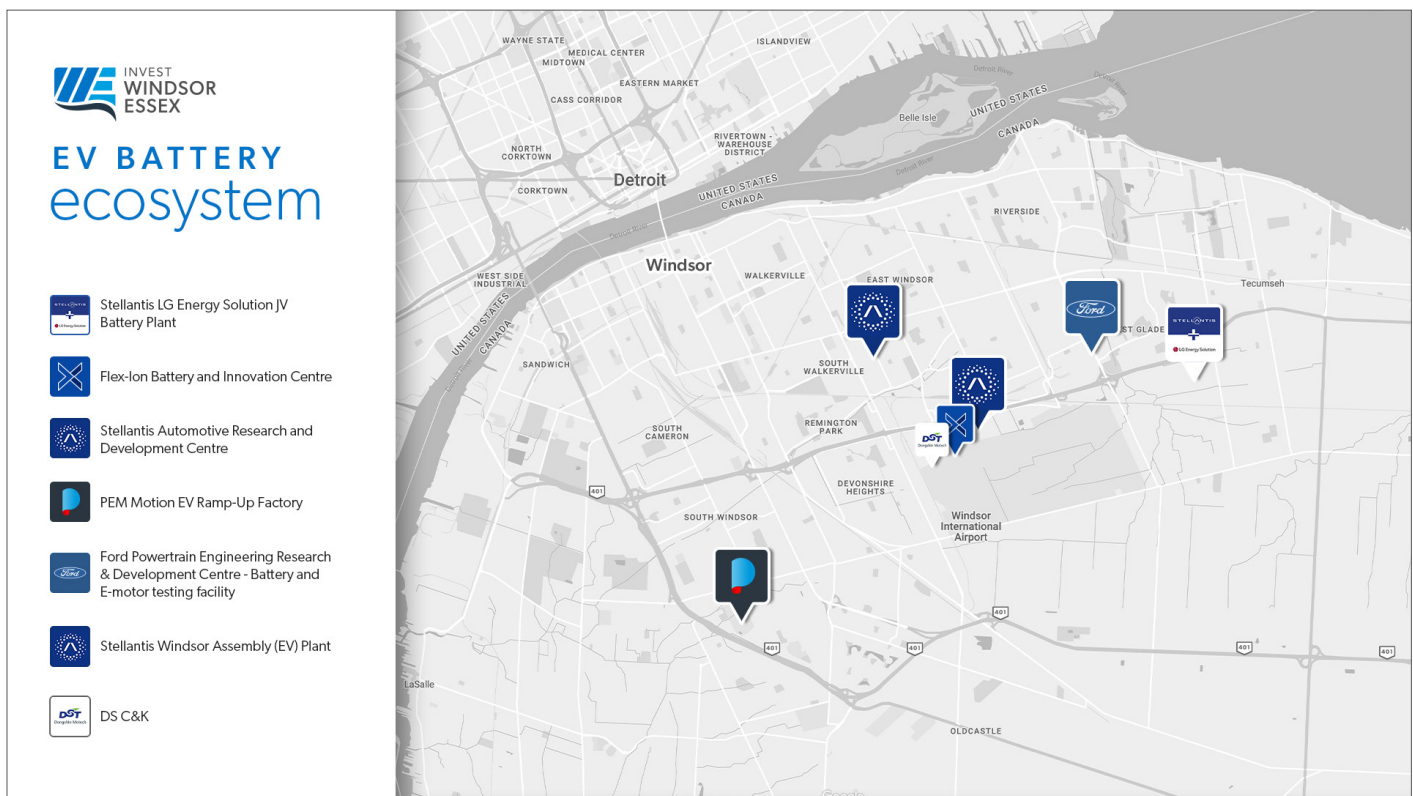
Warm regards,

C. Stephen MacKenzie  
 President and CEO,  
 Invest WindsorEssex

# INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

## Investment Attraction team continue to attract EV supply chain companies

The Investment Attraction team continues to work on attracting companies in the EV sector to help the Windsor-Essex region build out an integrated EV supply chain. During the third quarter of 2022, the Investment Attraction team hosted several delegations from battery supply chain companies to explore the opportunity of establishing operations in Canada. Delegates visited potential sites and met with key community stakeholders to understand the business benefits of setting up in Canada versus other countries. Regional advantages in talent, competitive labour costs, strategic cross-border location, global market access and various government support programs for foreign direct investment create a solid value proposition.



## Investment Attraction team attended The Battery Show North America

The Battery Show is the largest battery and electric vehicle technologies trade show in North America with more than 800 top-industry suppliers attending. This year, the Investment Attraction team attended the show and identified over 30 battery supply chain companies in battery materials, components and recycling. A brief deck of the Windsor-Essex value proposition was provided to the companies and follow-up meetings with selected companies are planned.



▲ Joe Gonclaves, director, investment attraction interacts with companies at The Battery Show in Novi, Mich.

## INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

## Investment Attraction team initiates discussions with leads generated through targeted FDI campaign



To better diversify the region's economy, the Investment Attraction team set a goal to attract more ICT companies to the region. Situated at the southern entry point of Ontario's tech corridor, Windsor-Essex has top talent and cost advantages for American-based companies looking to set up operations in Canada. The Investment Attraction team partnered with the Marketing and Communications team on launching a campaign targeting ICT companies in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. The campaign included video, social media, billboards, display ads and search engine marketing tactics designed to drive audiences to a landing page ([TheFuturesWE.ca](https://TheFuturesWE.com)) profiling the Windsor-Essex value proposition and next steps to future expansion. The Investment Attraction team will continue to follow-up with leads generated through the campaign.

▲ The Future is WE – United States-based ICT company attraction campaign launched by IWE Marketing and Communications department.

## Ridder Canada establishes new Leamington office to serve greenhouse industry



Windsor-Essex is home to the largest vegetable greenhouse cluster in North America and second largest in the world. As the industry continues to expand, the demand for greenhouse technologies to help companies meet their facility management and labour demand has increased exponentially. Prior to the pandemic, the Investment Attraction team engaged with Ridder, a Dutch developer of advanced greenhouse technologies, to identify new office space. In September, Ridder Canada had a grand opening of their new Leamington facility. This expansion will allow the company to provide innovative technologies and solutions to support local growers with their challenges due to changes in legislation, labour shortage and sustainable production. The company is expected to hire 20 to 30 employees over the next few years.

## SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

### | Sizzling season of success for Summer Company students



▲ Vanessa Brenders, owner of Cookies & Crumbs

Ten Windsor-Essex students plunged ahead as first-time entrepreneurs in the annual **Summer Company program**. Summer Company is an Ontario government program that provides youth with the resources and training to start a new summer business. Full-time students, aged 15-29, received hands-on business training, advice and mentorship from local business leaders and up to a \$3,000 award.



▲ L-R: Safiya Shujah, Sophisticated Sweets by Safiya Shujah; Dilraj Sandhu, Hephaestus' Tinkerer; Lisa Harangozo, Lisa's Greeting Cards

This summer the students launched a variety of businesses including bakeries, custom greeting card publishing, swimming lessons, lawncare, wellness products, 3D virtual home tours, marketing, embroidery and screen printing and computer building services. The students also had the opportunity to promote their products and services as vendors at the Downtown Windsor Farmers' Market.

### | Foodpreneur Scale-Up program continues to support food and beverage businesses



The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC), in partnership with Small Business Enterprise Centres in London, St. Thomas, Chatham and Sarnia, launched the next series of **Foodpreneur Advantage** in August 2022. This online seminar series features introductory webinars to support entrepreneurs looking to get started in the food and beverage manufacturing industry. The Foodpreneur Scale-Up program also opened applications in August 2022. This program includes ten weeks of support for a select group of businesses that produce consumer packaged goods

and have demonstrated high potential to scale operations. The program connects entrepreneurs to industry experts and mentors and provides them with an opportunity to receive a \$5,000 business grant. Foodpreneur Advantage is supported by Libro Credit Union and FedDev Ontario.

This quarter SBEC had the opportunity to travel around Windsor-Essex visiting past Foodpreneur Scale-Up program participants to learn more about their businesses and how the program has been integral to their success. SBEC also hosted a networking lunch for the past participants to mingle and chat about their achievements and challenges.

# SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

## Digital Service Squad hits the ground running to help businesses improve their online presence



The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre onboarded two Digital Service Squad Consultants (DSS) through the **Digital Main Street Program**. The DSS provides one-on-one consultation services to bricks-and-mortar small businesses to help them grow their online presence and adopt innovative technologies. In addition to offering hands-on advisory support, the DSS also assists businesses with the application process for the Digital Transformation Grant, which provides eligible bricks-and-mortar small businesses a \$2,500 grant to support their digital transformation projects.

## Growing Creative Careers Cohort Three accepts participants



Applications were open August through mid-September for the third cohort of the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre’s **Growing Creative Careers program** (GCC). GCC is an intensive professional development experience for artists, creatives and cultural workers living in the Windsor-Essex area.

Twenty participants were successfully admitted into this cohort which will focus on how to build creative projects and programs, from idea to execution. Participants will work closely to workshop their ideas with peers and will come away from the program with the resources and knowledge needed to take their projects to the next phase.

GCC is led by WorkInCulture in partnership with the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre and Arts Council Windsor & Region and funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

## SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

### Sandwich Business Development program provides succession planning training for West Windsor businesses



The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) hosted Guide to Succession Planning in partnership with Capital Assist, through SBEC's **Sandwich Business Development program**. Forty businesses registered for the event and learned why succession planning is important, what factors to consider when developing a succession plan, how to exit from a business, business valuation and tax implications.

The Gordie Howe International Bridge project will bring numerous economic development opportunities to the Windsor-Detroit region. To help West Windsor businesses and entrepreneurs take advantage of these opportunities, a business development program is available through funding provided by the Gordie Howe International Bridge Community Benefits Plan. Through this initiative, SBEC is providing targeted services and programs to Sandwich Town and the surrounding West End community.

### Starter Company PLUS program accepts 12 ambitious entrepreneurs



**Starter Company PLUS (SCP)** is an acceleration program that provides entrepreneurs with resources and support to help them start, expand, or purchase a new business. Entrepreneurs accepted into the program receive hands-on training, mentorship and a grant of up to \$5,000.

Business training and mentorship is a key component of the SCP program. In September participants underwent 15 hours of small business training which covered a wide range of topics including business plan development, market analysis, competitor analysis, marketing strategy, financials and cash flow projections. It also allowed the entrepreneurs an opportunity to network and learn from each other's successes and challenges. Over the course of the program the entrepreneurs will also take part in group mentorship sessions with local business professionals to answer questions and offer experienced business advice. At the conclusion of the program, participants will be invited to pitch their business concept to a team of judges from the local business and entrepreneurship community for feedback, suggestions and business advice.

## BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

## Pilot workshop highlights opportunities in the EV supply chain



▲ Robin Johnston, PEM Motion

To support the growing recognition of the Windsor-Essex region as the Automobility Capital of Canada and to assist local companies to take advantage of this shift, the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) team hosted a workshop focused on opportunities in the EV supply chain. This was a pilot workshop with a small number of companies across several industry segments. PEM Motion, the private German company behind the **Canadian Automobility Hub**, delivered the workshop which was a condensed version of their multi-day Fit 4 E-mobility program. Participating companies were selected because of their previously expressed interest in supplying the EV industry. The program included a discussion of market trends, the shift towards electric mobility and the difference between conventional and electric vehicles, followed by a more detailed examination of the production process for key EV components. The presentations enabled participants to determine the potential of their companies to enter the EV supply chain. They could also identify their value proposition and any gaps in their capabilities. The workshop was structured as a pilot event with the intention that it would be refined based on feedback and then offered more widely as a pre-conference workshop ahead of the Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference and Trade Show in October.

## Dimachem commemorates 50-year anniversary with new expansion



▲ L-R: Steve Cox, Andrew Conway and an employee from Dimachem.

Chemical manufacturer Dimachem recently celebrated the 50-year anniversary of its Windsor facility by holding an open house. The event also featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the company's new \$5 million production line and building expansion. Dimachem invested in the new line and 20,000-square-foot expansion as a result of a major contract with Clorox to produce and package Pine-Sol. In the early days of the pandemic, Dimachem not only produced their own hand sanitizer pre-mix, they were also an integral part of IWE's hand sanitizer working group and assisted other Windsor-Essex companies looking to make the product. The BRE team supported Dimachem by making various connections related to the expansion project and connected them to Trillium Manufacturing Network to take part in one of their podcasts.

## NextStar Energy battery plant construction begins with first phase supplier day

The first phase of development of the new NextStar Energy battery plant, an Inclusive Supplier Day event, was held on Sept. 23, 2022.

This inclusive information session on behalf of NextStar Energy, was organized in partnership with Alberici-Barton Marlow JV (A-BM, prime construction contractors) with the support of Stellantis, the Canadian Consulate General of Canada in Detroit, the City of Windsor, the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council and Women Business Enterprises Canada. More than 300 interested suppliers attended the event. The Invest WindsorEssex BRE team was pleased to participate and network with the attendees to ensure that they completed our online form to stay updated on Windsor-Essex EV supply chain opportunities and indicate if they have a service or product that may be of interest to the project.

The focus of the event was to inform invited construction industry supplier companies about the construction bid opportunities at the new battery plant. This event also provided an opportunity for our local Windsor-Essex companies to network and learn about the project, the bid process and how to pre-qualify for bid opportunities and meet the project teams through targeted break-out sessions.

Additional information sessions on other phases of the project are expected in the coming months, as construction and development progresses.



## AUTOMOBILITY AND INNOVATION

## Automobility and Innovation Centre leading Project Arrow eXtended reality phase



▲ Project Arrow virtual design.

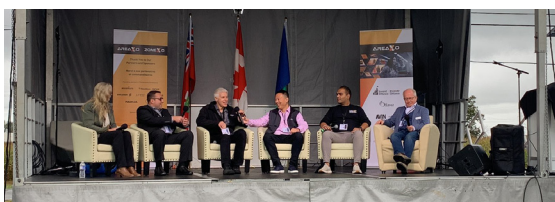
As the Official Virtual Reality Simulation Partner for the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association's (APMA's) Project Arrow, the Automobility and Innovation Centre (AIC) team is proud to lead another important phase of the Project Arrow concept vehicle development. The next chapter involves using eXtended Reality (XR), which is a combination of virtual reality and augmented reality to bring to life contributions of products and technologies on the vehicle. These efforts will be showcased at CES 2023 and all future events promoting the best of Canada's EV ecosystem. Ultimately, the Project Arrow XR showroom will showcase the latest model in a photorealistic and 1:1 scale for anyone at conferences to activate parts or triggers to learn more about the hardware and software companies involved.

## Black Boys Code get hands on with virtual reality



On July 28, the AIC team welcomed the local chapter of Black Boys Code for a full-day session that included a technical tour and training of the **Invest WindsorEssex (IWE) Virtual Reality (VR) CAVE**. The students started the day learning about the projects underway at the Centre, meeting and engaging with the staff and hearing more about the services offered to companies across the region. The students then shared descriptions and background information on their Black Boys Code challenge projects and how they could use the VR CAVE to help visualize their coding work. The students also received a hands-on demonstration and training from Akash Charuvila, the lead engineer at the AIC and were able to test out the hardware and software to control the IWE VR CAVE.

## Simulation is key to testing CAVs at the TCXpo



▲ Invest WindsorEssex's Ed Dawson on stage at the TCXpo event in Ottawa.

On Sept. 20, Ed Dawson, senior manager of simulation at Invest WindsorEssex's AIC participated in-person at the TCXpo event in Ottawa. The team showcased Windsor-Essex automobility projects and took part in a panel discussion regarding the power of simulation and how it can be applied to current mobility research and development. The TCXpo: An Epic Canadian Smart Mobility Demonstration Day brought together hundreds of innovators, entrepreneurs, technology developers, industry leaders, regulators, smart mobility partners and stakeholders from Canada's Capital and across the country.

CORPORATE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications department focuses on creating strategies that support business development initiatives within the areas of business retention and expansion, investment attraction, automobility and innovation and entrepreneurship. 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 and Communications maintains corporate brand standards and brand image across all media.

**Website Analytics**

**investwindsoressex.com**

**Users** – 19,950  
**Page views** – 33,294  
**New visitors** – 85%  
**Returning visitors** – 15%

**webusinesscentre.com**

**Users** – 3,923  
**Page views** – 14,509  
**New visitors** – 81%  
**Returning visitors** – 19%

**Top Site Visitors**



USA



Canada



India



Nigeria



China



Invest WindsorEssex was the recipient of a 2022 AVA gold digital award for its newly launched website. The website promotes the Windsor-Essex region as a competitive location for both foreign and local investment and enables easier access to data and information relevant to site selectors and local businesses for the purpose of investment, expansion and talent attraction. This international competition recognizes excellence by creative professionals responsible for the planning, concept, direction, design and production of digital communications.

**Social Media Analytics**

**Invest WindsorEssex**

@investwindsoressex  
 @\_investwe

**SBEC**

@webusinesscentre  
 @wesmallbusiness

**Total fans** – 22,948  
**Total impressions** – 244,976  
**Total engagement** – 113,216

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Advertising



- ◀ Leamington Chamber of Commerce, sponsorship of the Business Excellence Awards and program guide advertisement



- ▲ Automate Canada Magazine advertisement

Perspective Windsor-Essex



The Invest WindsorEssex (IWE) Marketing and Communications team launched a Globe and Mail campaign promoting investment opportunities in the region throughout Ontario and internationally across all trade media networks.

This 16-page tabloid titled “**Welcome to Windsor-Essex...the Automobility Capital of Canada**” was delivered on Sept. 16, 2022 as a special feature through the Globe and Mail newspaper, reaching a readership of over 300,000. This insert was accompanied by a digital media promotion targeting government officials, investors, real estate professionals and business influencers to ensure international reach.

This marketing initiative features ecosystem partners across Windsor-Essex and further promotes the region as the Automobility Capital of Canada. Windsor-Essex’s great quality of life, access to global talent and

rapidly growing automobility and technology sectors were highlighted, showcasing the region as a premier location for mobility innovation and investment to thousands of prospective companies and individuals.

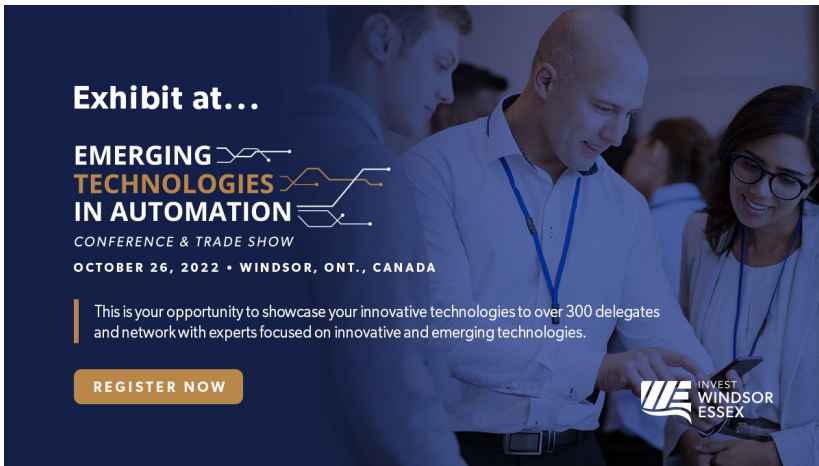
Copies of Perspective Windsor-Essex were also distributed to all Canadian Trade Commissioner Service offices globally in the United States, Europe and Asia. The tabloid will be used as a marketing tool by IWE and regional partners and will be made available at conferences, trade shows, as well as other events throughout the year.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Advertising

Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference and Trade Show

The Marketing team supported the Business Retention and Expansion department on the development and coordination of all the pre-conference marketing assets included website updates, registrations, sponsorships, and the digital promotion of the event. [emergingtechnologies.ca](http://emergingtechnologies.ca).



MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Event Marketing

North American International Auto Show



Invest WindsorEssex (IWE), the University of Windsor, St. Clair College, WEtech Alliance and Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island partnered to showcase the Windsor-Essex region on a global stage at the AutoMobili-D exhibit of the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS). The IWE Marketing and Communications team lead the booth design and coordination for the region’s participation at the show. The Marketing and Communications team also produced an informational flyer that included a description of the partners and the region’s value proposition.

The goal of this regional participation at the NAIAS was to build awareness of Windsor-Essex as a premier location for mobility innovation and to showcase the technological advancements and programming available to companies looking to expand into **Canada’s Automobility Capital**. Over the two days, partners networked extensively with major mobility OEMs and early-stage technology companies to bolster the region’s reputation and opportunities amongst growing mobility tech companies.

In addition to promoting the region’s assets and opportunities for foreign direct investment, the Invest WindsorEssex Automobility and Innovation team unveiled a compendium of digital test tracks for connected and autonomous vehicle (C/AV) testing.



## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

## Media Releases

Windsor-Essex Canada's Automobility Capital on world stage at North American International Auto Show

Invest WindsorEssex launches Globe and Mail campaign targeting FDI in mobility sector

Invest WindsorEssex Automobility and Innovation team to participate in TCXpo in Ottawa

Global automation company AXILE machine establishes North American operations in Windsor, Ont.

## Media Coverage

July 2022 – September 2022

### Highlights:

This month in automobility: July

Canadian campaign aims to lure Hoosier tech companies

Government of Canada invests in warehouse capacity to relieve supply chain congestion at the Port of Windsor

2021 business highlights from Invest WindsorEssex

Gas-powered truck gutted, being converted into all-electric 'showcase piece' in Windsor, Ont. | Video

Black Boys Code group gets hands-on tech industry experience at Windsor's VR Cave | Video

Canada's Best Locations 2022 | Invest WindsorEssex one of top 20 regions

WEtech Alliance selects field for next edition of ScaleUp Program

Detroit's big auto show returns 'for people who love cars

Summer's ending but not Summer Company business initiatives

Working women on a mission

This month in automobility: August

Gettin' Down in Motown: Detroit Annual Auto Show returns after three-year hiatus

From VR caves to good wine, here's how Windsor-Essex is being pitched at the NAIAS

Windsor-Essex trying to attract auto industry interest at the Detroit auto show | Video

Virtual Reality Technology VR CAVE

Windsor's VR Cave unveils new virtual testing options

'No power equals no growth': Windsor explores short-term energy solutions | Video

Windsor region leads nation in percentage of new business growth: StatsCan

Dealmakers are taking advantage of a scaled-down Detroit auto show

AXILE Machine Establishes North American Operations in Windsor, Ontario

Taiwanese firm AXILE Machines chooses Windsor for North American technology centre

Local investors purchase CS Wind property



# PERFORMANCE METRICS 2022

## 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

**\$1,200,000** (IA/BRE)  
**\$18,000** (SBEC)  
**\$121,250** (AI)

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

- 16** Expansions Facilitated (IA/BRE) 11 | (SBEC) 15
- 110** New Jobs Facilitated (IA/BRE) 30 | (SBEC) 80
- 10** Priority Files
- 27** Business Startups
- 4** Funding Applications and Joint Papers Developed

## Business Support Sessions

**47 Sessions**  
**320 Attendees**

## Top Economic Priorities as reported by Windsor-Essex Businesses

- 1** ArriveCAN app – a cross-section of industry associations requested an end to the ArriveCAN app; citing that it adds another layer of red tape for cross-border business travel and discourages tourism travel. N.B. The Government of Canada removed COVID19 border and travel measures effective Oct. 1, 2022, including the mandatory use of the ArriveCAN app.
- 2** Supply chain disruption – reduced supply/availability of necessary materials; increased cost of materials (especially steel), impacting critical manufacturing production deadlines and financial well-being of companies (especially smaller companies who cannot maintain consistent supplies due to cost overhead).
- 3** Labour force challenges – continued shortfalls in labour/talent pools across all sectors; increased labour costs also a concern.
- 4** Inflation – cost of inventory, forecasting special projects and expansions, market outlook, deeply impacting small & medium size businesses; all factors are impeding growth.
- 5** Small business - inflation impacting their ability to forecast/schedule repayment of pandemic recovery loans which are coming due very soon.

## Regional Economic Indicators †



† Notes: The above figures reflect all of Windsor and Essex County, Q2 2022 to Q3 2022.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey custom tabulation.