



2024

ANNUAL REPORT



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## PERFORMANCE METRICS 2024

### 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.

[investwindsor.essex.com](https://investwindsor.essex.com)

### New Investment Facilitated

**\$420,930,170**

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

**130** Expansions Facilitated (IA, BRE, SBEC)

**1258** New Jobs Facilitated (IA, BRE, SBEC)

**49** Priority Files (IA)

**140** Business Startups (SBEC)

**3** Funding Applications (AI)

### Business Support Sessions

**229 Sessions** (BRE, SBEC, AI)

**2600 Attendees** (BRE, SBEC, AI)

### Top Economic Priorities

as reported by Windsor-Essex Businesses

**1** Canada/U.S. trade – Over 80% of local manufacturers export to the U.S. Many also import raw materials from the U.S. By the end of 2024, the threat of 25% tariffs on all imports from Canada announced by incoming President Donald Trump, along with the potential retaliatory tariffs from Canada, was a concern across many local industries but particularly manufacturing and agri-business. The overall uncertainty had a negative impact on the community which was widely expected to be among the most impacted regions in Canada.

**2** Skilled labour – Despite having an unemployment rate among the highest in the country and a continual inflow of new residents, employees with certain skills were still difficult to find for many employers. An aging workforce and the impending retirement of highly skilled workers continue to concern local industry leaders.

**3** Energy costs (electricity and natural gas) – Energy costs remain high and continue to impact companies across all sectors, particularly greenhouse operators and manufacturers.

**4** Market diversification – The uncertainty around future direction of the automotive industry since early 2024 and the resulting delay in program launches has put pressure on companies across the automotive supply chain to diversify into other customer markets.

**5** Housing – As Windsor-Essex continues to attract new residents, partially as a result of new companies establishing facilities in the region, new residential construction is an imperative. However, the U.S. trade situation and the related uncertainty have started to dampen homebuilding.

### Regional Economic Indicators †



**Population\***  
**402,900**



**Labour Force**  
**258,600**



**Employment**  
**237,200**



**Full-time Employment**  
**190,000**



**Part-time Employment**  
**47,200**



**Unemployment**  
**21,400**



**Not in Labour Force**  
**144,300**



**Unemployment Rate**  
**8.3%**



**Participation Rate**  
**64.2%**



**Employment Rate**  
**58.9%**



† The above figures reflect all of Windsor and Essex County comparing 2024 to 2023

\*Number of persons of working age, 15 years and over. Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey custom tabulation

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR, CITY OF WINDSOR AND CHAIR OF THE BOARD



**Drew Dilkins,**  
Mayor, City of Windsor  
Chair of the Board, Invest WindsorEssex

Windsor-Essex has been identified as one of the most important communities to watch in Ontario and Canada. We continue navigating the evolving needs, leveraging all opportunities, and meeting the unique challenges that accompany unprecedented growth in our economy and population, creation of new jobs, and global threats to trade that are disproportionately impacting cities and towns along the border between Canada and the United States. As an international gateway and home to the busiest trade corridor between the two nations, it is more important than ever that we work in lockstep to safeguard our economy and livelihoods, our employers and workers, our families and neighbourhoods, and to continue attracting new investments to the region.

For the City of Windsor, we are committed to **Building Windsor's Future** with a focus on **Investment, Growth,** and **Sustainability**, and in a way that positively impacts the broader region. We are undertaking this important work by creating, strengthening, and nurturing resilient partnerships and forming trusted bonds with businesses, labour, healthcare,

academic leadership, the tech and innovation sectors, the creative community, upper levels of government, and combining the efforts of our entire region to sustain the upward growth trajectory across the Windsor-Essex Region.

As the Mayor of Windsor, I would like to specifically highlight the City's significant progress across major initiatives that are working to support economic development, housing, infrastructure, and community safety and well-being – all key ingredients to attract new investments to our communities. These game-changing initiatives include the **Windsor Works Economic Development Strategy, Housing Solutions Made for Windsor**, and our **Strengthen the Core: Downtown Windsor Revitalization Plan**. The overlapping goals of these guiding programs is to attract investments, businesses, residents, and visitors to Windsor-Essex and to leverage this period of growth that is fueled by large-scale infrastructure projects like the Gordie Howe International Bridge, NextStar Energy EV Battery Manufacturing Facility, the new Windsor-Essex Acute Care Hospital, and work to build up our critical Sandwich South lands to create the largest industrial park on this side of the Canada-U.S. border. Combined, these projects, and the spin-off infrastructure investments supporting and enhancing them, are changing the very landscape of our community, creating the conditions for continued prosperity, and cementing our status as a 'Revival City' with promising economic growth and unparalleled opportunities.

While many are understandably nervous and concerned about the impacts of the next few years of Donald Trump's presidency, I remain focused on the long game, the big picture, and the incredible progress we are making in the Windsor-Essex community. Since announcing NextStar in 2022, there has been an additional \$1.3 billion worth of investments here. Since 2023, we have welcomed thirty-nine new investments and expansion projects above and beyond the NextStar build.

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR, CITY OF WINDSOR AND CHAIR OF THE BOARD



This included the recent announcement of a \$300 million investment by Minth Group for a 379,415 sq. ft. manufacturing plant that will create 1,099 direct jobs, and DS Actimo Canada's \$60 million investment to create 96 jobs at a new EV component manufacturing plant. These additional investments will create about 2,700 more jobs, generate over \$830 million in capital spend within our community, and bring additional EV and battery research and development centres to the region, along with new educational programs at the university and college. Our economic development pipeline of further job creation remains strong. Our municipal EcDev team is chasing over \$6 billion in further investments in diverse sectors including logistics, healthcare, aerospace, and advanced manufacturing that could land up to an additional 4,600 employment opportunities. This not only strengthens Windsor's role as a cornerstone of the global economic landscape but expands opportunities and growth across the entire Windsor-Essex region.

Looking forward, we have approved a \$2.24 billion 10-year capital budget that includes \$312.7 million in capital investments for 2025, including \$856.8 million for roads, \$485.2 million for sewers, \$186.2 million for parks and recreation, and \$182 million for transportation. The provincial government's Protect Ontario budget includes ongoing

support for the planning and design for a new interchange connecting Highway 401 to Lauzon Parkway, construction of a new interchange at Banwell Road and E.C. Row Expressway, construction to widen Highway 3 between Essex and Leamington, a \$2.3 billion investment over four years to help build municipal housing-enabling infrastructure projects including right here in our region, continued support for the growing EV sector, and investments in education infrastructure.

In Windsor-Essex, we are continuing to create more jobs, more housing, and planning for vital infrastructure needed to support our exponential growth. Despite the unprecedented challenges we are facing, I have never been more optimistic and excited about our City's – and our entire region's – future than I am today. On behalf of the City of Windsor, and as the Chair of the Board for Invest WindsorEssex, I would like to thank the Board and dedicated staff at Invest WindsorEssex for their continued work to support the initiatives that are changing our community in such vital and once-in-a-lifetime ways. Thank you for supporting local businesses and helping to ensure that Windsor-Essex remains ready to seize opportunities and prepare for the unimaginable as we continue to move toward a bold and bright future.

**Drew Dilkens**  
Mayor, City of Windsor  
Chair of the Board, Invest WindsorEssex



# MESSAGE FROM THE WARDEN, COUNTY OF ESSEX



**Hilda MacDonald**  
Warden, County of Essex

"Ready for anything" has been a regional mindset in Essex County for generations. It served us well in 2024 as new residents moved here and economic opportunities continued to open up. This did not happen by accident. Plans and partnerships helped us to succeed and persevere.

Essex County is experiencing historic growth fueled by thriving agricultural and manufacturing sectors, and by generational regional investments, like the Gordie Howe International Bridge, the NextStar Energy EV battery plant and the new state-of-the-art acute care hospital.

Our exceptional and affordable quality of life is also attracting newcomers. The county's population is expected to increase from around 200,000 to as much as 315,000 by 2051. The number of jobs is likewise expected to grow, from 72,000 jobs to as many as 124,000.

The updated County of Essex Official Plan places an emphasis on ensuring we have a wide range of housing options that are affordable and attainable for Essex County residents. It supports vibrant communities with ample greenspaces, parks and opportunities for cycling and walking, and unique town centres filled with a wide range of services and amenities.

We are ensuring these communities are connected in ways that meet the needs of residents and employers. Transit Windsor, with the support of the county and local municipalities, now extends into LaSalle, Amherstburg, Tecumseh, Essex, Kingsville and Leamington. Essex County Council has called for a Regional Transit Working Group to build on this momentum.

The county maintains roads that form a critical part of the network of highways on which the regional economy depends. We are committed to maintaining these arterial roads while also planning for future growth, particularly around the new battery plant and hospital.

The County Wide Active Transportation System (CWATS) network of bike trails and routes stretches more than 400 kilometres and will span some 1,000 kilometres within the next 15 years, connecting all local municipalities with trail networks in Windsor and Chatham-Kent.

At the same time, the County of Essex is setting the stage for more investment. We are creating a Regional Employment Land Strategy and examining the potential for Community Improvement Plans to spur industrial, commercial and residential development. We are also working on a Regional Affordable Housing Strategy with the City of Windsor.

We are grateful to Invest WindsorEssex for providing the expertise, connections and insights we need to move forward. The staff has been instrumental in supporting existing businesses, attracting investment and sniffing out new opportunities. Thanks to strong partnerships like these and a history of resilience, we know we are ready to overcome and succeed in the years ahead.

**Hilda MacDonald**  
Warden,  
County of Essex

# MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**Joe Goncalves**

Interim Chief Executive Officer, Invest WindsorEssex

It is with great pride that I present the 2024 Annual Report for Invest WindsorEssex. This past year has been a powerful testament to the strength of regional collaboration, innovation, and resilience across Windsor-Essex as we continue to lead the transformation toward a diversified economy.

The past year marked a pivotal point for our region's investment trajectory and talent development strategy. The continued momentum behind the electric vehicle (EV) revolution, spearheaded by transformational projects like the NextStar Energy battery plant, has energized our communities and catalyzed record levels of business attraction and expansion. Our team supported the establishment of key international and domestic investments, including Austria-based Andritz Canada Inc., Canada QiuMing Auto Parts, and CpK Interior Products, injecting tens of millions into our economy and creating hundreds of new jobs. Overall, the team at IWE facilitated over \$420 million in regional investment and the creation of over 1250 jobs.

Our Investment Attraction team worked hand-in-hand with local municipalities and global partners to ensure businesses investing in Windsor-Essex were supported with data-driven site selection, workforce insights, and strategic integration

into the regional economy. From welcoming Modduls's expansion in Tecumseh to supporting a new research and development hub for automotive seating in our region, we are not just building a stronger economy—we are shaping the future of mobility.

Equally important is the foundational support we offer to our small business community. Through our Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre, more than 1,300 local businesses were served in 2024 alone. Programs like Digital Main Street, Summer Company, and Starter Company PLUS enabled entrepreneurs to innovate, scale, and thrive. Initiatives such as the W.E. Shop Local Pop-Up and Foodpreneur Advantage exemplify how we continue to nurture a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Our Automobility and Innovation team expanded outreach and talent development programs across the country. From hosting over 70 students during the Future Mobility Challenge, to showcasing our regional strengths at DiscoveryX and Collision 2024, to taking the EVcareers.ca message coast to coast—we have championed Windsor-Essex as a destination for talent, innovation, and opportunity. The EV Careers campaign and associated career fairs drew thousands of new job seekers, some of whom are already reshaping our region's workforce story.

I want to acknowledge the dedication and collaboration of our staff, board of directors, municipal and federal partners, and the private sector leaders who have championed our mission throughout this journey. Your commitment to growth and innovation has fueled every milestone featured in this report.

As we look ahead, I am confident that Windsor-Essex is not just responding to change—we are driving it. Together, we are building an inclusive, future-ready economy rooted in advanced manufacturing, innovation and bold partnerships.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

**Joe Goncalves**

Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Invest WindsorEssex

# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

### Workshop series: Opportunities in the Electric Vehicle Supply Chain



▲ One of four Windsor-Essex Opportunities in Electric Vehicle Supply Chain workshop participants.

In response to strong local interest in joining the electric vehicle (EV) supply chain, Invest WindsorEssex (IWE) hosted a series of four targeted workshops in Windsor-Essex, supported by funding from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario). Delivered by PEM Motion—the German firm behind the Canadian Automobility Hub—and Automobility Enterprises, these workshops catered to specific industry groups over four days, attracting about 70 participants. Building on this success, IWE's Business Retention and Expansion and Marketing and Communications teams organized a similar series in Hamilton, with support from multiple partners including FedDev Ontario, Next Generation Manufacturing Canada, Invest Hamilton, and McMaster-affiliated institutions. Like the Windsor-Essex series, the Hamilton workshops were customized for different sectors and helped participants explore potential opportunities in the EV supply chain. In post-event surveys, the majority of respondents indicated that they found the workshops helpful in identifying opportunities for them in the EV supply chain. The Marketing and Communications team executed all aspects of the events, including the development of social media assets, e-mail communications and registration pages. Event management and logistics were also coordinated.

The Hon. Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario and MP for Hamilton West-Ancaster-Dundas joined us on day one in Hamilton and made a presentation. ►





## Presentations delivered by the Business Retention and Expansion team

### CanCham webinar: Ontario/Windsor-Essex - Driving the future of the automotive industry



Invest WindsorEssex's Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) and Automobility and Innovation teams shared a presentation on the future of the automotive industry as part of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of Mexico's celebration of Ontario month in Mexico. The webinar was also supported by the Ontario government's Trade and Investment Office in Mexico and provided the opportunity to connect with Mexican automotive companies interested in doing business in or expanding to Ontario.

◀ Top left, Christophe Chaffat, Ontario's Mexico City Trade and Investment Office with Daaish Hussain, Invest Ontario. Bottom left, Wendy Stark and Ed Dawson, Invest WindsorEssex.

### Announcing the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario's latest funding intake



The BRE team was pleased to help host a webinar announcing the spring intake for funding applications for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. The webinar outlined the focus areas of the program as well as the eligibility requirements. Applications for funding between \$125,000 and \$10 million are being accepted for projects that develop, commercialize or produce innovative products, processes and services; improve productivity, capacity and competitiveness; or help businesses to scale-up and expand to develop new business opportunities, enter new markets, or reach new customers.

▲ Top left, Wayne Sankarlal, Invest WindsorEssex and Dave Norton, manager, Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. Bottom left, Bryan May, parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Small Business and to the Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario and Steve Masson, vice-president, policy, partnerships and communications, Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

### Informing and connecting with Windsor-Essex Home Builders' Association



The BRE team delivered a presentation on the Windsor-Essex economy and the transition to becoming the Automobility Capital of Canada to a meeting of the Windsor-Essex Home Builders' Association. The association was looking for insight into what the future holds for the region, especially relating to the impact of the NextStar Energy EV battery plant and its suppliers in various stages of setting up local operations. The expected influx of new residents into the community will undoubtedly have an impact on new house construction as well as non-residential construction. The presentation provided both a statistical economic forecast and anecdotal information about expectations for the region.

## Celebrating Economic Development Week in Windsor-Essex

For years, the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) team has celebrated Economic Development Week in Windsor-Essex, a tradition started by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in 2016 to highlight the work of economic development professionals. Following last year's success, the team expanded this year's initiative to include more regional economic development professionals. Partnering with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT), and local economic development officials, BRE and Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre team members visited companies across the region. These visits, accompanied by the municipality's economic development representative and the Senior Business Advisor for MEDJCT, were showcased in a series of videos produced by Invest WindsorEssex's Marketing and Communications team. These videos, widely shared on social media, highlighted the collaborative efforts to support local businesses and provided companies with a platform to promote why Windsor-Essex is an excellent place for business. Additionally, the BRE team partnered with Workforce WindsorEssex to promote a business conditions survey, distributed to local businesses to gather insights on challenges, growth prospects, workforce issues and wage rates.



- ▲ (L-R) Phil Campbell, CentreLine (Windsor); Wendy Stark, Invest WindsorEssex; Nancy Creighton Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and Dawn Hadre, Town of Lasalle.

## Supporting Windsor-Essex mold makers and suppliers at NPE2024



- ▲ (L-R) John Hodgins, Acrolab; Wendy Stark, Invest WindsorEssex; Franklin Paulus, Baldemar Castillo and Andreas Waller, Acrolab; Nicole Vlanich, Automate Canada.

The Invest WindsorEssex Business Retention and Expansion team supported the Canadian Association of Moldmakers and more than 10 local companies who participated in NPE in Orlando, Florida. The Windsor-Essex companies exhibiting at the show included Cavalier Tool & Manufacturing, Acrolab, Michmar Engineering, DMS, Synergetic Engineering and Windsor Feedscrews. The NPE Show is the largest plastics show in the Americas, with over 2,000 exhibiting companies. All of the local companies attending reported making valuable business connections.

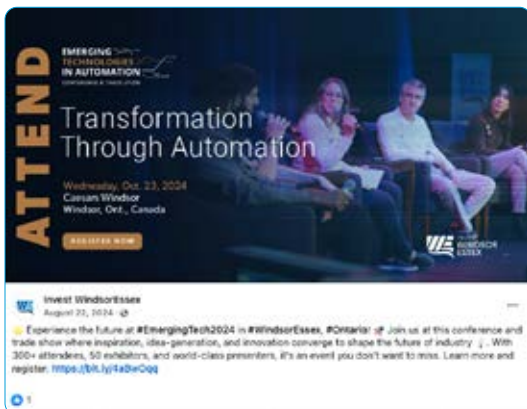
## Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference and Trade Show



▲ The BRE team's signature event, Emerging Technologies in Automation, drew its largest attendance to date.

The **Emerging Technologies in Automation** Conference and Trade Show was held on Oct. 23 at Caesars Windsor, welcoming approximately 370 attendees and 49 exhibitors. The Business Retention and Expansion team has organized this event since 2016 with support from Automate Canada, the Canadian Association of Moldmakers, the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association, the Ontario government and founding partner the National Research Council of Canada's Industrial Research Assistance Program. This year's keynote speaker was Paul Zikopoulos, vice president, IBM technology sales – skills vitality and enablement, who spoke about generative AI for business. Breakout sessions featured presentations on topics such as artificial intelligence, robotics, the convergence of IT and OT as well as industry-specific technology demonstrations for agri-business, automotive, construction and mold-making companies. Many of the presenters in the breakout sessions were from Windsor-Essex companies. Gold sponsors this year were the University of Windsor and Next Dimension and silver sponsors were Vista Solutions, St. Clair College and Siemens. WEtech Alliance powered the Start-up Zone again this year and Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing sponsored the post-event reception. Additional support was provided by Next Generation Manufacturing Canada (NGen) and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario). The post-event survey results showed that over 97% of respondents made valuable contacts for their companies at the conference. The next event will be held on Oct. 29, 2025.

## Marketing the Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference and Trade Show



The Marketing and Communications team supported the Business Retention and Expansion team with the development of a marketing strategy for the Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference that included a robust digital paid and organic advertising campaign to attract exhibitors and attendees. The [conference website](#) was regularly updated to include up-to-the minute agenda details, speaker profiles and sponsorships. The Marketing and Communications team also developed and maintained the registration page and managed all media relations, read the [media release](#).



## Windsor-Essex's manufacturing industry highlights career opportunities



▲ Essex Mayor, Sherry Bondy joined the MFG Day tour of Atlas Tube in Harrow.

Manufacturing (MFG) Day is an international effort to show students the opportunities offered by a career in the modern manufacturing industry. This year marked the ninth annual MFG Day in Windsor-Essex. Workforce WindsorEssex, Automate Canada, the Canadian Association of Moldmakers and the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association worked together with Invest WindsorEssex's (IWE) Business Retention and Expansion team to coordinate a program of visits by more than 1,000 students to 23 individual manufacturing locations. With a significant portion of the skilled trades and manufacturing workforce approaching retirement, it is becoming increasingly important for manufacturers to recruit new talent. MFG Day is a way to demonstrate to students that a career in manufacturing, and particularly in the skilled trades, will offer them a secure, well-paying job and expose them to the latest in technology and automation. The initiative was supported by IWE's Marketing and Communications team with an extensive organic social media campaign.

## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

### INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

#### Breaking ground: TownePlace Suites by Marriott comes to Tecumseh



▲ Joe Goncalves, interim CEO and vice president investment attraction & strategic initiatives, Invest WindsorEssex (left) celebrates the groundbreaking of TownePlace Suites by Marriott in Tecumseh.

The Town of Tecumseh celebrates the arrival of TownePlace Suites by Marriott, a new hotel catering to extended stays, strategically meeting the rising demand spurred by the NextStar Energy battery plant and other regional growth. Invest WindsorEssex's Investment Attraction team collaborated with HVS, a leading global consulting firm specializing in hospitality, during the initial planning stages. The team provided regional insights, demographic profiles, sector-specific workforce data and highlighted significant regional projects to facilitate the feasibility study. This venture injects an additional \$35 million into the region's economy and is expected to generate 80 new employment opportunities.

#### CpK Interior Products set up plant for sequencing in Windsor



▲ CpK Interior Windsor operations, located at 9355 Twin Oaks Dr.

Ontario-based **CpK Interior Products**, a manufacturer of automotive interior components, has established a new \$7-million assembly and sequencing facility to better serve Stellantis. The new location at 9355 Twin Oaks Dr., Windsor, spans over 200,000 sq. ft. and will create 150 new jobs. Investment Attraction supported CpK during the site selection process, providing sector-specific information and labour data. This development significantly enhances the region's electric vehicle (EV) sector, helping to complete the value chain.



## Austria-based manufacturing company selects Windsor

Austria-based manufacturer **Andritz Canada Inc.**, a leading global supplier, has chosen Windsor to manufacture specialized machinery to serve the Canadian and U.S. markets. The company excels in providing plants, equipment and services for various industries. With over 250 production sites and service/sales companies worldwide, they are making a significant investment of \$48 million in the Windsor facility, which will create 85 well-paying jobs. Since the fall of 2023, the Investment Attraction team has facilitated various meetings and engagements with local stakeholders during the site selection process.

Invest WindsorEssex CEO, Joe Goncalves joined the groundbreaking ceremony for the company's new plant.



## EV automotive parts supplier sets up Canadian manufacturing facility in the Town of Tecumseh



▲ Tecumseh-based Canada QiuMing Auto Parts produces elastic clips, spring nuts, washers, hinges and sunroof frames for the automotive sector.

Shanghai, China-based Tier 2 automotive parts supplier, Canada QiuMing Auto Parts Ltd. has chosen the Town of Tecumseh as its Canadian manufacturing hub. The company specializes in producing elastic clips, spring nuts, washers, hinges and sunroof frames for the automotive sector. Located at 1106 Laramie St., the Tecumseh facility will supply parts to Tesla in Mexico, with trial production set to begin in September 2024. The total investment is \$5 million, and the project is expected to create 30 jobs over time. The Investment Attraction team provided continuous support for talent identification and introductions to local service providers to assist with the facility's setup.

## Clean room panel manufacturer Moddulx selects Tecumseh as Ontario hub



**Moddulx** is a Mississauga-based engineering design and manufacturing company, specializing in clean room solutions for the automotive and pharmaceutical sectors across North America, has established a new subsidiary in Windsor-Essex with a nearly \$2-million Cdn investment in capital expenditures. Located at 5815 Outer Dr., Unit 300, in the Town of Tecumseh, this new facility will enable in-house production of prefabricated composite panels for modular clean rooms. This new operation enhances quality control, reduces reliance on external manufacturers and accelerates project timelines. The company plans to create over 10 new jobs as it expands its client base and explores opportunities in emerging sectors, including EV batteries, medical devices and life sciences. This investment contributes to the region's economic diversification. The Investment Attraction team has been supporting the company by assisting with the site selection process, including site identification, workforce data analysis and connections to regional service providers.

◀ Mississauga-based Moddulx's manufacturing facility underway.

## Automotive seating R&D company establishes Canadian hub in Tecumseh

A Michigan-based automotive seating systems company is expanding its footprint into Canada with a new research and development (R&D) facility in the Town of Tecumseh. The new site will house several test lines to prototype products ahead of mass production. The \$5-million Cdn investment will create 50 engineering-related jobs and further strengthen the region's automobility sector. The Investment Attraction team played a key role in the site selection process, showcasing Windsor-Essex's unique advantages, including its highly educated and cost-effective labour force, a growing EV battery-focused ecosystem and access to government support programs. Windsor-Essex's competitive edge was key in securing this project, and the Investment Attraction team will continue to support the company by assisting in attracting top talent for this R&D hub.



Seating system integration, shown is an example of the seat with lumbers with heating and cooling systems installed. ▶

# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## AUTOMOBILITY AND INNOVATION

### Driving Innovation: The Future Mobility Challenge inspires young innovators



In March, the Windsor-Essex Regional Technology Development Site (WE RTDS), in collaboration with WEtech Alliance, proudly hosted the learning component of their annual hackathon, The Future Mobility Challenge. This in-person event brought together over 70 students, alongside a virtual audience, and covered topics pertaining to automobility and the emerging technologies sector. The overarching aim was to explore the potential of these sectors and cultivate entrepreneurial opportunities for the students.

◀ (L – R) Mackenzie Habash, program manager, IWE; Sam Branton, manager of talent programs and engagement, WEtech Alliance; Scott Fairley, founder and CEO, Optimotive; Amber Mac, speaker, author, host, entrepreneur; Yvonne Pilon, president and CEO, WEtech Alliance.

### DiscoveryX 2024



▲ (L-R) IWE's Jessica McCarthy, talent attraction specialist and Ed Dawson, interim executive director, automobility and innovation host a booth at DiscoveryX



▲ (L-R) Invest WindsorEssex's Mackenzie Habash and Kassem Nizam, program managers host a booth at DiscoveryX.

In April, Invest WindsorEssex's Automobility Innovation Center (AIC) team attended the premier DiscoveryX conference, in Toronto. This event is renowned as one of Ontario's best showcases of innovation, bringing together startups, government officials and academic institutions. The team managed two booths, one in the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN) section, sharing space with seven other Regional Technology Development Sites (RTDS). Here, they engaged with startups in the mobility industry, generating leads for programs the Windsor-Essex RTDS offers, such as cyber security, the Ansys startup bundle and digital twinning. The second booth represented our talent attraction team, where we promoted the thriving Windsor-Essex EV sector and highlighted the exciting developments in the region. Numerous recent graduates and students interacted with the team to learn more about opportunities in Windsor-Essex.



## Collision 2024 Conference



▲ (L-R) Invest WindsorEssex's Katlyn Melnik, Lina Williams, Jessica McCarthy, Gina Meret-Dybenko, Mackenzie Habash, Ed Dawson and Kassem Nizam; St. Clair College's Ankush Saxena.

Led by Invest WindsorEssex (IWE), in partnership with the City of Windsor, the County of Essex, the University of Windsor, St. Clair College, WEtech Alliance and Workforce WindsorEssex showcased the Windsor-Essex region on a global stage at the Collision 2024 Conference in Toronto. The regional participation at Collision built awareness of Windsor-Essex as a premier location for mobility innovation and highlighted the technological advancements and programming available to companies and individuals looking to expand into Canada's Automobility Capital. IWE's Windsor-Essex Regional Technology Development Site promoted the programs and supports available to companies through the Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network. The booth also included a talent attraction component, supported through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, and focused on highlighting advanced career opportunities in Canada's fastest-growing economy.

## Marketing the Collision 2024 Conference



▲ The Invest WindsorEssex booth graphics at Collision.

The Marketing and Communications team supported the Automobility and Innovation Centre's participation in the four-day Collision Conference in Toronto. The team developed marketing assets, including trade show booth graphics and a social media plan to promote participation by Invest WindsorEssex and its ecosystem partners. They also provided public relations support and managed event coordination and logistics.

During the event, the Marketing team provided on-site support at the Windsor-Essex booth including engaging with potential leads and social media promotion. Check out the [recap video](#) to see the highlights.



## Windsor-Essex Career Fair



▲ (L-R) Invest WindsorEssex's Gina Meret-Dybenko, Lina Williams, Cristina Melnik, Natash Marar, Mackenzie Habash, Katlyn Melnik, Wendy Stark, Nico Antes and Jessica McCarthy.



▲ Job seekers attend the Windsor-Essex Career Fair.

Invest WindsorEssex (IWE) in partnership with the Windsor Regional Employment Network, WEtech Alliance and Workforce Windsor-Essex hosted the Windsor-Essex Career Fair at the WFCU Centre on Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2024. The career fair was supported through the Government of Canada and Employment Ontario. The event was free to attend and included participation from over 30 top regional employers across all industry sectors, including NextStar Energy, Nature Fresh Farms, Seasons Retirement Communities and AAR Aircraft Services Windsor. Over 1,400 job seekers attended the career fair ranging in experience and skill level from recent graduates to seasoned professionals looking for new opportunities. The Windsor-Essex Career Fair is part of the regional strategy to promote workforce development and talent attraction in Windsor-Essex. This strategy includes a dedicated talent attraction specialist to coordinate regional talent attraction efforts together with a targeted marketing campaign promoting career opportunities and highlighting Windsor-Essex as a desirable location to work and live.

## Marketing the Windsor-Essex Career Fair

The Marketing and Communications team supported this talent attraction event including creating all promotional assets and the event communication plan for partners, implementing paid social campaigns targeting individuals seeking full-time employment, organic social media campaigns, email marketing communication, registration management, media management, employer booth and attendee organization, floor plan, venue and crowd control organization.

The event included participation from over 30 top regional employers across all industry sectors and over 1,400 job seekers attended the career fair from Windsor-Essex and outside of the region. Read the [media release](#). Watch the recap [video](#).

In addition to the talent attraction initiative, there has been a notable increase in the Windsor-Essex EV sector with EV Careers generating 2,700 registrants to the website since the launch earlier this year.





## Talent Attraction takes EVCareers.ca across Canada



▲ Harley Noskey of Edmonton recently applied for a job at NextStar Energy.



▲ (L-R) Invest WindsorEssex's Jessica McCarthy, Yashawini Pagadala and Wendy Stark attend the OSPE Engineering Conference.



▲ Invest WindsorEssex's Jessica McCarthy sharing information about EV Careers at the Halifax Career Fair.

The Talent Attraction team wrapped up the year by taking EVCareers.ca across Canada. From Nova Scotia to Alberta, Jessica McCarthy, talent attraction specialist, met with many career seekers to discuss the incredible opportunities in the Windsor-Essex region. Throughout this quarter, Jessica hosted a booth at career fairs and attended conferences in:

- **Calgary, Alberta**
- **Greater Toronto Area**
- **Build a Dream's Dreamer Day and You're Hired (Toronto)**
- **YQG Green Expo (Windsor)**
- **OPSE Engineering Conference (Windsor)**
- **Halifax, Nova Scotia**
- **Edmonton, Alberta**



In Edmonton, IWE's Marketing and Communications team developed a talent attraction campaign that ran for two weeks through Meta, strategically launched to engage job seekers in the area. The marketing campaign successfully raised awareness of opportunities available through EVCareers.ca and promoted jobs at NextStar Energy and other Windsor-Essex companies in the EV battery manufacturing sector. One notable success story was Harley Noksey, who discovered the campaign online and attended the Edmonton Career Fair to connect with Jessica. Inspired by the available opportunities, Harley has since applied for a Machine Technician role at NextStar Energy and is excited about the prospect of building his career in the Windsor-Essex region.

# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

### Digital Main Street program concludes after assisting 1,300 local businesses



- ▲ Laura Tucker, owner of Bergeron Art + Frame, received business support from the Digital Service Squad and a grant from Digital Main Street.

In 2024, the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre's Digital Service Squad (DSS) delivered 146 consultations to 101 Windsor-Essex businesses through the Digital Main Street (DMS) program. The one-on-one support helped brick-and-mortar small businesses enhance their digital presence and adopt innovative technologies. The DSS provided hands-on advisory and technical assistance while helping businesses secure Digital Transformation Grants of \$2,500 to support their digital transformation projects. Between January and March, 23 grants totaling \$57,500 were distributed to local businesses. The DSS also hosted Entrepreneur Toolbox, a four-part lunch-and-learn series covering AI for small businesses, email marketing with MailChimp and SEO strategies. The Digital Main Street program has had an outstanding and lasting impact in

Windsor-Essex. Since the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre received funding for a Digital Service Squad in 2019, 1,300 Windsor-Essex businesses received advisory support and over \$1.1 million in grants were awarded to 447 local businesses. The Digital Main Street program concluded in March 2024.

### Summer Company supports 15 new student businesses



- ▲ Student participants in the 2024 Summer Company program.



- ▲ Amisha Suresh, owner of Luminique Naturra, receives a Summer Company program certificate of completion from Sabrina DeMarco, executive director of the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre, and Andrew Dowie, Member of Parliament for Windsor-Tecumseh.

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Center (SBEC) supported a new cohort of student entrepreneurs this summer. The Summer Company program ran in July and August and drew 15 high school and post-secondary students from Windsor and Essex County. Summer Company provides full-time students, aged 15-29, with hands-on business training, advice and mentorship from local business leaders and a grant of up to \$3,000. Businesses in this year's program included cleaning and auto detailing, handmade goods such as crochet clothing, soap and bags, party rentals, a food delivery application, photography, swimming lessons, and more. The students participated in the Downtown Windsor Farmers' Market as vendors over the summer to promote and sell their products and services. Together with their families, program facilitators and mentors, the students gathered to celebrate the conclusion of the 2024 Summer Company program during a student entrepreneur showcase event on Aug. 27 at the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre in Windsor. Summer Company is delivered locally by SBEC and supported by the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

## Starter Company PLUS supports 20 new entrepreneurs



- ▲ Starter Company Plus participants completed a week of business training led by BizLaunch, followed by group mentorship sessions and one-on-one business coaching.

The **2024 Starter Company PLUS program** returned in November with 20 new Windsor-Essex entrepreneurs participating. Starter Company PLUS is supported by the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and provides individuals starting, expanding or purchasing a small business with training, mentorship and a grant of up to \$5,000. This year's program intake drew interest from 143 individuals, with 57 of them going on to apply to Starter Company PLUS. The businesses accepted to the program deliver a range of products and services from many industries including healthcare, hospitality, professional services, manufacturing, personal care services, janitorial services, arts and recreation and education.

### Starter Company PLUS program participants:

Anchor Leather Design	Mahon Nursing Professional Corp.
Balanced Fitness Wellness Studio	Musicland
Cementology Incorporated	The Oven Door
Daisy & Co. Wine Bar	The Topsy Toucan
DustFree Cleaning	Sweet Retreat by VANTastic Wellness
Ember Ridge Celebrations of Life	TOTO Café Inc.
FEPSS	Rose City 360
Ford City Potters	Weldok
Genio Tech Robotics	Work Lingo
Junk4Less	Yolanda's Woodslee Pharmacy

The participants completed a week of business training led by BizLaunch, followed by group mentorship sessions and one-on-one business coaching. They also successfully pitched their business plans to program facilitators and members of the business and professional community. The program is proudly supported by professional mentors and business pitch judges from the following Windsor-Essex companies: Miller Canfield, Mainstream Marketing, Cedar Valley, Whamburg, Zuleeats, Light Up Works, Midwest Accounting, Work with Wanda, Shred Shop and Edward Jones. Starter Company PLUS concluded in the spring of 2025.



## F&B businesses launch and grow with Foodpreneur Advantage



- Richmond Popcorn Co. owners Nicole and Dan Gemas completed the Foodpreneur Advantage Scale-Up program, which awarded them a \$5,000 grant to help grow their Amherstburg business.



- Foodpreneur Advantage Scale-Up participants toured the current and future homes of Cedar Valley to learn about their production processes and plans for future growth.



- Four Windsor-Essex businesses receive eight intensive weeks of industry-led training followed by mentorship.

Throughout 2024, the Foodpreneur Advantage program enhanced the entrepreneurship landscape for food and beverage businesses across southern Ontario. The program provides targeted support for startup and scale-up food and beverage businesses, helping them navigate complex regulations, build business strategies and access growth capital.

A total of 24 virtual startup seminars were delivered throughout the year. These seminars were open to food and beverage entrepreneurs from across southern Ontario and covered vital topics such as starting a food business, regulatory compliance, selling to consumers and retailers, costing and pricing, marketing and branding, and labelling and packaging.

The Foodpreneur Advantage Scale-Up program offers businesses eight weeks of intensive, industry-led training, personalized mentorship and an opportunity to earn a \$5,000 business grant. The program is designed for growth-stage food and beverage manufacturers. In 2024, there were eight business from Windsor-Essex that participated in the Scale-Up program: Richmond Popcorn Co., Pak'd Protein Pancakes, Sweet Moments Cookie Co., JamWorks Jams, Golden Oven Bakery, Just Freeze It Sweets, Iyal, and All Season Caribbean Jerk Sauce & Rub.

The program also included in-person training days, such as a tour of Windsor-based Cedar Valley, a past Foodpreneur graduate and successful pita chip manufacturer.

Foodpreneur Advantage is a collaborative initiative led by Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECS) in Windsor-Essex, London, St. Thomas, Chatham-Kent, Sarnia, Brampton, Guelph/Wellington and St. Catharines. It is funded by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) and Libro Credit Union.

## Business walks promote services and partnerships



▲ (L-R) City of Windsor Councillor Renaldo Agostino; By-law Property Standards Enforcement Lead for the downtown core, Nicole Brush; Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre's Business Advisor, Aparna Krishnamoorthy and Marketing & Entrepreneurship Manager, Natasha Marar.

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) team recently completed their annual business walks throughout Windsor and Essex County. In 2024, SBEC visited 298 businesses across 16 commercial districts in the region. These walks allowed SBEC to connect directly with business owners and operators, offering information about available services and support. During these interactions, the team gathered valuable insights on how businesses are performing, the local business climate, challenges faced and the types of assistance needed. SBEC followed up with advisory support for businesses that requested further help. The next round of business walks will take place in spring 2025. SBEC extends its thanks to regional partners, including BIA coordinators and board members, Community Futures Essex County, and municipal representatives, for their ongoing support of this initiative and for joining SBEC on many of these walks.



▲ (L-R) The Town of LaSalle Mayor Crystal Meloche; Director of Strategy and Engagement, Dawn Hadre; Executive Director, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre, Sabrina DeMarco; and Owner/Pharmacy Manager, Malden Health Pharmacy, Naimish Shekhat.



▲ Ottawa Street's Yay for Stray Cat Café, owner Chantelle Gaudette.

## Devonshire Mall W.E. Shop Local Pop-Up



▲ (L-R) Allison Mistakidis and Katie Stokes, owners of Whiskeyjack Boutique.

In honour of Small Business Month in October, the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) launched the W.E. Shop Local Pop-Up at Devonshire Mall from Sept. 30 to Nov. 10. This event, a continuation of SBEC's signature W.E. Shop Local Show, aimed to further support and promote local businesses. A dedicated kiosk in the mall's south end showcased a rotating selection of six Windsor-Essex small business vendors each week: Whiskeyjack Boutique, Urban Art Market, Corporal4Life Apparel, Montañeros Coffee, Ruscom Maple Products and The Little Petal Truck. These vendors offered a wide range of products, including handmade homewares, jewellery, apparel, flowers, and specialty food items. The initiative highlighted the unique offerings of local businesses, while providing them with valuable exposure to new customers and educating the community on the importance of shopping locally. There was no cost for businesses to participate in the W.E. Shop Local Pop-Up, offering them an excellent opportunity to boost sales and connect with customers. The Marketing and Communications team supported SBEC with the development of a marketing strategy that included promotional assets, **weekly social media videos**, as well as a robust digital paid and organic advertising campaign to promote the event. Read the **media release**.





## Celebrating Success 2024

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre



**17,656**  
inquiries  
received



**1,427**  
business  
consultations



**119**  
seminars/  
workshops

**15**

Summer  
Company Grants

**24**

Starter Company  
PLUS Grants

**218**

Outreach  
Activities

Total Investment  
Facilitated

**\$3,416,480**

**1,307**  
people  
attended

Grant  
Funding  
Facilitated

**\$194,000**

Other  
investment  
leveraged

**\$3,222,480**



**140**  
start  
ups

**102**  
expansions



**464**  
jobs created



SMALL BUSINESS &  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CENTRE  
A DIVISION OF INVEST WINDSOR/ESSEX

**OUTREACH**

## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications department develops strategies that support and leverage business development activities and include the following elements: event management, media/public relations, communications, social media, marketing tools such as videos, brochures and integrated marketing and advertising plans. These strategies are developed for Invest WindsorEssex and its departments - Business Retention and Expansion, Investment Attraction, Automobility and Innovation and Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre.

### AWARD

#### Site Selection honours Invest WindsorEssex in top 20 Canada's Best Locations in 2024



Invest WindsorEssex has been recognized as one of Canada's Best Locations for 2024 by Site Selection Magazine, a prestigious accolade that highlights the region's exceptional efforts in fostering economic growth and attracting global investment. This recognition underscores Windsor-Essex's strategic importance as a hub for innovation, business expansion and infrastructure development, further solidifying its reputation as a top destination for industry leaders and investors seeking to capitalize on Canada's growing opportunities.

Read the [media release](#).

### ADVERTISING

#### Launch of talent attraction campaign



The Marketing and Communications team developed and launched a phased paid and organic talent attraction digital campaign focused on opportunities in the electric vehicle (EV) sector, while simultaneously promoting Windsor-Essex as a place to live, work and play. For phase one, "Elevate Your Life", a general awareness campaign was launched, promoting Windsor-Essex as a region on the rise with a focus on the growth of the EV sector as well as promoting the quality of life and the infrastructure projects underway. The target cities include Toronto, Waterloo, York, Hamilton, Halton, Middlesex, Lambton, Simcoe, Wellington, Peel, Durham and Niagara. Phase two, "Every Opportunity", targeted students who are in relatable programs in the EV sector, while the final phase 3, "Evolve Your Career", will target individuals who have the training and skills to transition to the EV sector. Elements of the campaign included the development of a landing page, [choosewindsor.essex.com](https://choosewindsor.essex.com), social media ads as well as paid search. In 2024, analytics indicate 32,613 page views, 4,883,934 impressions and 30,963 clicks.

## Battery Boost: Technical Training for Battery Manufacturing Careers program



The Marketing and Communication team supported the Automobility and Innovation department in launching the Battery Boost program. This included developing the [media release](#) to announce Invest WindsorEssex's program funding of \$3.8 million, creating a [program landing page](#), coordinating all social media assets and a digital campaign.

## FDI one-pager

In the first quarter of 2024, the Marketing and Communications team updated several foreign direct investment brochures with current data to reflect the latest investments in the region.

### WINDSOR-ESSEX, ONTARIO: A region on the rise

**FASTEST GROWING  
LOCAL ECONOMY  
IN CANADA**

**A REGION ON THE RISE**  
Windsor-Essex, Ontario is undergoing transformational projects and once-in-a-generation infrastructure development.

**OVER \$6 BILLION IN  
INVESTMENT AND 4,000  
JOB OPPORTUNITIES  
ACROSS THE REGION**

**JOIN CANADA'S FASTEST GROWING EV SECTOR**  
Advance your career in Windsor-Essex, Ontario.

**DETROIT, MICHIGAN  
(1.6KM AWAY)**

**A GATEWAY TO NORTH AMERICA**  
The region offers all the charms of a close-knit community with access to the business and lifestyle amenities of a metropolis.

**HOUSING PRICES  
41% LOWER THAN  
PROVINCIAL AVERAGE**

**AFFORDABLE LIVING AT ITS BEST**  
Enjoy a high quality of life in Canada's most southern community.

### FOUR GREAT REASONS WHY...

- LOCATION**
  - Busiest Canada-United States border: \$1 billion Cdn daily
  - At the heart of the richest consumer market in the world, with more than 200 million people located within a 13-hour drive
- INCENTIVES**
  - No development charges
  - Expedited building permit process
  - Tax grants
  - Available serviced land
  - Competitive land costs and lease rates
- TALENT**
  - Highly educated, skilled and diversified workforce
  - Over 13,000 graduates annually from local post-secondary institutions
- AFFORDABLE**
  - Attractive cost of living and housing costs
  - High quality of life in one of Canada's most affordable communities

**INVEST  
WINDSOR  
ESSEX**

[info@investwindsoressex.com](mailto:info@investwindsoressex.com)  
[INVESTWINDSORESSEX.COM](http://INVESTWINDSORESSEX.COM)

## Promoting the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre events, programs and client successes





## Are you starting or expanding your small business?

Get complimentary professional advice.

- FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- WINDSOR PUBLIC LIBRARY JOHN AUBUR BRANCH  
363 Mill St., Windsor

Schedule your in-person consultation now!



**GOODE HOWE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

**SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES



## New year, new opportunities.

We can help you start and grow your business.

[webbusinesscentre.com](http://webbusinesscentre.com)

**SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

## Sunshine & Synergy

BUSINESS SOCIAL

Thursday, July 18, 2024 • 4-7 p.m.  
Bearded Dog Brewing Co.,  
Windsor, ON



**SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

A VIRTUAL SUMMER SEMINAR SERIES

## Entrepreneur Toolbox

### Social Media Marketing 102

AUGUST 29  
2-3 p.m.



**GOODE HOWE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

**SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

APPLY NOW FOR A

## \$10,000 BOOSTER LOAN

Clients of Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre are now eligible to apply for a \$10,000 booster loan.



**SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS ESSEX COUNTY**  
The Official Partner Since 2014

## SUCCESS STARTS HERE

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 from ideation to reality.

LEARN MORE: [webbusinesscentre.com](http://webbusinesscentre.com)



**SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES

## foodpreneur ADVANTAGE

### Take your food business to the next level!

Get business training, mentorship and funding through the Foodpreneur Advantage program.



IN COLLABORATION WITH **SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**  
A DIVISION OF PEELTOWN INDUSTRIES



FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS

## Advanced Financial Statements

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre  
NOVEMBER 27 • 2-3 PM



Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre  
CPA  
Member of the

## Basics of Writing a Business Plan

Learn how to develop a professional business plan to put your ideas into action.

THURSDAY, JULY 13  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.



Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre  
Gordon Howe

## Merry Business Mingle

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 4 • 4:30-7:30PM

Erin St. GastroPub, Windsor



Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre

## Basics of Starting a Small Business

Everything you need to know when starting your own small business!

DECEMBER 9  
1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Atlas Tube Recreation Centre  
Lakeshore



Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre

## LEVEL UP your marketing

Access a free resource guide to e-marketing for small businesses and improve your:

- website
- social media
- email marketing
- search engine optimization

DOWNLOAD



Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre



SBEC Client  
Dan & Nicole Gemus  
Richmond Popcorn Co.  
Amherstburg



SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE  
A DIVISION OF INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

### Small Business Month

October is a time to celebrate small businesses and the enormous contributions they make to our local economy. Our team of advisors are here to support you throughout your journey of starting and growing a successful business in Windsor-Essex.

[webusinesscentre.com](http://webusinesscentre.com)

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre  
1,280 followers

LAST DAY TO APPLY to the 2024 Starter Company PLUS program! Eligible entrepreneurs can receive free business training, mentorship and a grant of up to \$5,000 to start, grow, or purchase a business in #WindsorEssex.

Learn more: <https://fb.us/jy/Q02P1x170>

CEconomy | EconomicOP

Starter Company Plus

Invest in your small business

With training, mentorship & up to \$5,000 in grant funding



Ontario

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre  
1,280 followers

Stay up to date on the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre and business community events happening for the month of September! Check out our events calendar: <https://bit.ly/4aCBPp0> #WindsorEssex Events.



Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre

## Promoting Invest WindsorEssex's events, services and client successes

**Invest WindsorEssex**  
June 24 at 1:00 PM · 🌐

EV Careers is your one-stop destination for all things related to electric mobility and careers in the #EV sector. This online worker registry tool is a comprehensive resource that offers job seekers:

- ✓ Access to a database of job listings
- ✓ A library of resources and information to help build skills
- ✓ A platform to connect with employers ... [See more](#)



**Charge Up Your Career**

Register for **FREE** and discover your next career opportunity!

WEtech | workforce | [See more](#)

**Invest WindsorEssex**  
8,591 followers  
Tina · Edited · 🌐


Our Investment Attraction team had an excellent time at the 2024 K-Globe, Canada-Korean Startup Summit in Toronto! 🇰🇷🇨🇦 We connected with innovative South Korean startups and investors eager to explore opportunities in the ... [more](#)




[CC](#) Yvonne Pilon and 68 others · 3 comments · 2 reposts

**Invest WindsorEssex**  
September 11 at 4:45 PM · 🌐

📢 **GREAT NEWS!** The #WindsorEssex Career Fair has arrived! Invest WindsorEssex team is thrilled to be part of the action and host this event alongside Windsor Regional Employment Network, WEtech Alliance and Workforce WindsorEssex. We're here with over 25+ regional industry employers as they connect with hundreds of job seekers, providing valuable insights and resources to those looking for their next career opportunity or advancement. #YQJobs #ONJobs #CareerFair Ontario At Work



**INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX**



**Invest WindsorEssex**  
June 7 · 🌐

Sign up for the Invest WindsorEssex news and never miss out on key updates! Choose your preferred categories and receive an email straight to your inbox. #WindsorEssex #Ontario

👉 Subscribe here: <https://bit.ly/3tEXmYp>



**Stay Informed**

Sign up for news and information

[Invest WindsorEssex](#)

**Invest WindsorEssex**  
June 4 · 🌐

Source WindsorEssex is a regional database connecting you to businesses across key sectors to find suppliers, explore regional capabilities and collaborate on innovative projects.

Learn more: <https://bit.ly/49Xx8kd>



**Source WindsorEssex**

Windsor-Essex Key Sector Database

LIST YOUR COMPANY FOR FREE

**Invest WindsorEssex**  
June 22 at 11:00 AM · 🌐

**ELEVATE YOUR LIFE** in a region that provides a small-city lifestyle with big-city amenities. 🏡🌳🏙️

👉 Discover the opportunities and ideal lifestyle in #WindsorEssex <https://bit.ly/4dSOGQf>



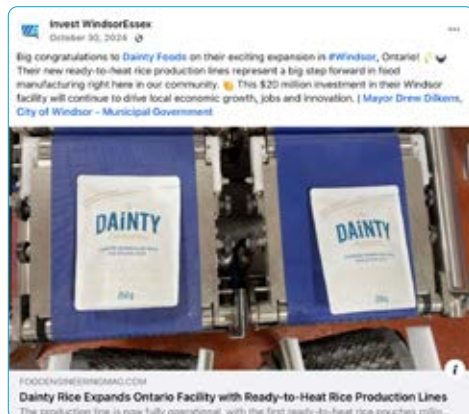
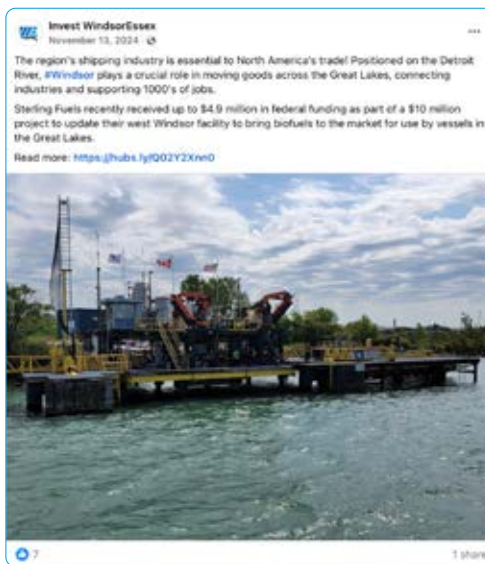
LEARN MORE AT:

**ChooseWindsorEssex.com**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

[Invest WindsorEssex](#) | [WEtech](#) | [workforce](#) | [Canada](#)







# SPONSORSHIPS

## National Engineering Month and Ontario Society of Professional Engineers Partnership



## Women Driven Mobility YQG Breakfast



## Biz X Magazine Business Excellence Awards



## Ontario Colleges Marketing Competition



## 19th Annual Amherstburg Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards



- ▲ IWE's Wendy Stark, was on hand to present Jack's Organics with the Large Business of the Year award.

## CAMM Annual General Meeting



- ▲ (L-R) Saylo Lam, CAMM's new chair, Wendy Stark and Yashaswini Pagadala, Invest WindsorEssex

## Leamington Chamber Business Excellence Awards



- ▲ Wendy Stark, director of business retention and expansion, Invest WindsorEssex with George Bargaen, president, UE Enclosures.

## Automate Canada's The Age of Humanoid Robotics is Upon Us



- ▲ (L-R) Taylor Bentley, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service; Yash Pagadala, Invest WindsorEssex; Dave Fortin, Automate Canada and DataRealm; Nico Antes, Invest WindsorEssex; Nicole Vlanich, Automate Canada; Vladimir Franjo, National Research Council and Wendy Stark, Invest WindsorEssex.





# EVENT MARKETING



## Strike-Up Viewing Party

The Marketing and Communications team developed promotional assets and executed a social media plan pre and post event for the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre's Strike-up Viewing party held on Thursday, Feb. 29.

## Panhandle Regional Expansion Project

Invest WindsorEssex's Interim CEO and Vice President Investment Attraction & Strategic Initiatives, Joe Goncalves was pleased to join the Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford and Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Electrification as a guest speaker during a July 19, 2024, media conference to announce the start of construction by Enbridge Gas on its \$358- million Panhandle Regional Expansion Project. This project is critical to guaranteeing increased access to reliable and affordable energy for current and future business in Windsor-Essex and supports the prosperity of the local economy. Read the [media release](#).



## Celebrating the joining of the two sides of the Gordie Howe International Bridge

In June, the Canadian and U.S. sides of the Gordie Howe International Bridge deck met over the Detroit River. Crews installed the final segment, known as the mid-span closure, officially making the bridge an international crossing.

Later in the month, Joe Goncalves, interim CEO and vice president investment attraction & strategic initiatives was among several dignitaries and guests from Canada and the U.S. who attended a ceremony celebrating the joining of the Canadian and U.S. sides of the Gordie Howe International Bridge.

◀ (L-R) City of Windsor, Mayor Drew Dilkens; Essex County Warden and Leamington Mayor, Hilda MacDonald and interim CEO and Vice President Investment Attraction & Strategic Initiatives, Joe Goncalves.



## MEDIA RELEASES

Windsor-Essex announces recognition of Economic Development Week 2024

Windsor-Essex "Canada's Automobility Capital" exhibits at one of the world's biggest tech conferences

Summer Company student-led business showcase

Summer Company student entrepreneurs celebrate small business success

Site Selection Names Global Groundwork Index Leaders, Canada's Best Locations and Top Utilities in Economic Development

Local career fair expected to attract thousands for job opportunities across Windsor-Essex

Top employers participate in local career fair attracting thousands of eager job seekers from across Windsor-Essex

Global procurement solution company establishes Canadian operations in Windsor-Essex

Devonshire Mall pop-up showcases local small businesses

Manufacturers open doors to students and jobseekers to highlight local career opportunities for 10th annual Manufacturing Day

Emerging technologies conference attracts hundreds to experience the latest in automation and artificial intelligence

Windsor-Essex, Ontario workers to receive high-demand, advanced simulation skills training for immediate placement in EV supply chain

# 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** – 74,813  
**Page views** – 165,450  
**New users** – 74,009  
**Returning users** – 8,715

**webbusinesscentre.com**

**Users** – 35,049  
**Page views** – 123,948  
**New users** – 34,617  
**Returning users** – 4,766

## Top Site Visitors



Canada



USA



Poland



India



United Kingdom

## Social Media Analytics

**Invest WindsorEssex**

@investwindsoressex  
 @\_investwe

**SBEC**

@webbusinesscentre  
 @wesmallbusiness



**Total fans** – 30,446



**Total impressions** – 1,425,793\*



**Total engagement** – 43,949\*

\*due to lower spends on paid campaigns

## 2024 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

December 31,	2024	2023
<b>Assets</b>		
Current		
Cash	\$ 1,201,810	\$ 2,063,042
Short-term investments (Note 2)	407,287	220,621
Accounts receivable	325,592	167,660
Prepaid expenses	245,221	43,644
	<u>2,179,910</u>	<u>2,494,967</u>
Capital assets (Note 3)	74,783	151,878
	<u>\$ 2,254,693</u>	<u>\$ 2,646,845</u>

**Liabilities and Net Assets**

Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 310,432	\$ 1,102,819
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	915,435	614,080
	<u>1,225,867</u>	<u>1,716,899</u>
Deferred contributions (Note 7)	40,472	134,052
	<u>1,266,339</u>	<u>1,850,951</u>
Commitments (Note 9)		
Net Assets		
Invested in capital assets	34,311	17,826
Unrestricted	834,804	664,042
Internally restricted (Note 8)	119,239	114,026
	<u>988,354</u>	<u>795,894</u>
	<u>\$ 2,254,693</u>	<u>\$ 2,646,845</u>

**Statement of Operations**

For the year ended December 31,	2024	2023
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grants (Note 6)	\$ 4,470,557	\$ 4,199,173
Core Funding - City of Windsor	1,366,661	1,366,661
Core funding - County of Essex	1,122,060	1,122,060
Miscellaneous revenue	121,926	154,901
Deferred contributions realized (Note 6, 7)	93,580	388,743
	<u>7,174,784</u>	<u>7,231,538</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Development programs	4,612,548	4,409,511
Salaries and benefits	1,412,700	1,437,828
Office operations	723,312	740,622
Amortization - Virtual Lab (Note 7)	67,675	362,835
Media and special events	82,691	142,223
Amortization - other	25,142	63,250
Amortization - Equipment (Note 7)	25,905	25,908
Support	32,351	2,619
	<u>6,982,324</u>	<u>7,184,796</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue)	192,460	46,742
Net assets, beginning of year	795,894	749,152
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 988,354</u>	<u>\$ 795,894</u>



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024

Chair	Mayor Drew Dilkens, City of Windsor
Vice Chair	Robert Gordon, PhD President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Windsor
Secretary/Treasurer	Federica Nazzani, Managing Partner, Capital Assist
Past Chair	Chris Savard, Regional Manager, Operations, Devonshire Mall, Primaris REIT
Director	Hilda MacDonald, Warden, County of Essex
Director	Alex Anobile, Strategic Consulting
Director	Waseem Habash, Principle, Habash Consulting Inc.
Director	Jim Lyons, Executive Director, Windsor Construction Association
Director	Maria Campagna, Executive in Residence, Odette School of Business, University of Windsor
Director	Jimi Tjong, PhD PEng – Adjunct Professor

# STAFF 2024

## ADMINISTRATION

Joe Goncalves	Interim Chief Executive Officer
Holly Connelly	Executive Liaison
Shannon Theroux	Manager Administrative Services

## AUTOMOBILITY AND INNOVATION CENTRE

Edward Dawson	Executive Director, Automobility and Innovation
Nataliia Butkovska	Grants and Operations Administrator
Mackenzie Habash	Senior Program Manager
Bryan Holmes	Software Developer, Simulation Team
Jessica McCarthy	Talent Attraction Specialist

**BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION**

Wendy Stark	Director, Business Retention and Expansion
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Francisco Contreras	Data Administrator and Analyst
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Yashaswini Pagadala	Economic Development Officer
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**INVESTMENT ATTRACTION**

Joe Goncalves	Vice President Investment Attraction and Strategic Initiatives
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Na Qu	Senior Investment Attraction Officer
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Cristina Melnik	Senior Economic Development Officer, Grants and Programs
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**MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Gina Meret-Dybenko	Director, Marketing and Communications
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April Adan	Communication and Event Coordinator
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Katlyn Melnik	Communications and Event Coordinator
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Lina Williams	Digital Marketing Manager
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**SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE**

Sabrina DeMarco	Executive Director
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Stephanie Clark	Business Advisor
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Aparna Krishnamoorthy	Business Advisor
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Wayne Sankarlal	Business Advisor
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Natasha Marar	Manager, Marketing and Entrepreneurship Programs
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Renee Morel	Client Success Coordinator
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