

Q4

QUARTERLY REPORT



INVEST
WINDSOR
ESSEX

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN WINDSOR-ESSEX

This report highlights business development accomplishments by Invest WindsorEssex from October to December 2025 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

HIGHLIGHTING

2025



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

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



As we close out the fourth quarter and reflect on the accomplishments of 2025, I am proud to share the Invest WindsorEssex (IWE) Q4 2025 highlights. This final quarter marked a strong conclusion to an exceptional year defined by collaboration, resilience and meaningful growth across the region.

The **Automobility and Innovation Centre (AIC)** continued to build momentum in workforce development and innovation with the Battery Boost Technical Training Program. The team celebrated a major milestone in the program's performance with 408 participants trained and 397 successfully placed into full-time employment, reflecting a 97 per cent placement rate. This achievement showcases the impact of immersive training technologies and the region's growing capacity to support workforce development aligned with Canada's emerging battery manufacturing sector.

The **Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)** team remained focused on supporting local companies through a complex economic landscape. By strengthening connections between businesses, government partners and innovation programs, the team helped companies identify new opportunities for growth, investment and market diversification. BRE also hosted their signature event, the Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference & Trade Show which grew larger this year as it merged with the Mobility Transformation Conference drawing over 450 attendees, 45 exhibitors and 30 world-class presenters.

The **Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC)** wrapped up the year by continuing to empower entrepreneurs at every stage of their journey. Through targeted programming, direct outreach and advisory services, SBEC supported newcomers, aspiring entrepreneurs and main-street businesses across the region. The team hosted an inaugural Small Business Summit in partnership

with the Windsor Essex Chamber of Commerce, attracting nearly 200 entrepreneurs, small business owners and community partners for an event designed to inspire, educate and build connections.

This quarter also capped off a strong year for the **Investment Attraction team**, with \$1.6 million in investment in Q4 alone. Strategic engagement with domestic and international investors, combined with strong collaboration across municipal, provincial and federal partners, reinforced Windsor-Essex's reputation as a competitive, investment-ready location. These efforts position the region well for continued growth in 2026 and beyond.

The **Marketing and Communications team** played a vital role in amplifying our work throughout the year. In Q4, the team continued to elevate Invest WindsorEssex's profile by promoting key initiatives, coordinating announcements, supporting partner engagement, and showcasing the region's successes locally, nationally, and internationally.

Finally, I had the pleasure of presenting at the Downtown Detroit Partnership 2025 Fall Forum held at Michigan Central to highlight the major development projects, growth potential and top attractions for the City of Windsor. Despite the current trade disruption, the event celebrated the unique relationship between Windsor and Detroit and how the two border cities would continue to forge a positive economic future, unlocking new opportunities in trade, development and innovation.

As we conclude 2025, I am pleased to report that IWE successfully launched our 3-year strategic plan after completing a comprehensive engagement schedule with ecosystem partners and stakeholders. We look forward to putting this plan into action in 2026 and I want to sincerely thank the Invest WindsorEssex team, our Board of Directors, funders, partners and community stakeholders for their contribution. Your dedication, collaboration, and shared commitment to this region have driven a truly successful year. Together, we have built strong momentum, laid the groundwork for future opportunity and reinforced Windsor-Essex as a place where innovation, talent and investment thrive.

I look forward to carrying this momentum into 2026 as we continue to support economic growth, job creation and prosperity across Windsor-Essex.

Gordon Orr
Chief Executive Officer

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

German aluminum plate manufacturing selected Tecumseh for its Canadian manufacturing hub



A German precision aluminum cast-plate manufacturer has selected a site in the Town of Tecumseh (Oldcastle) for its new Canadian manufacturing hub to serve the broader North American market.

The Investment Attraction team began working with the company in August 2025, supporting its site-selection process, facilitating connections with local professional service providers and identifying applicable government programs.

The company will produce high-quality aluminum blocks used for prototyping and design applications within engineering firms and the mold-making industry. Establishing operations in Windsor-Essex will allow the company to significantly reduce delivery lead times and provide faster turnaround for customers across Canada and the United States.

This investment will create 25 skilled, well-paying jobs and represents a strong addition to the region's advanced manufacturing ecosystem.

Annual tech conference Web Summit 2025



The Web Summit 2025, the largest tech conference in Europe, welcomed more than 70,000 attendees and over 800 world-class speakers this year. Keynote sessions covered topics such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, trust and ethics and advancements in robotics. The Investment Attraction team will incorporate key takeaways from these sessions into next year's strategy, particularly focusing on how AI and machine-learning adoption can strengthen Windsor-Essex's manufacturing sector.

The event also provided opportunities to connect with several companies, including a Spain-based food and beverage firm exploring expansion and a Germany-based company specializing in AI integration for manufacturing operations. Follow-up discussions with these companies will continue.

◀ Invest WindsorEssex's, Vice President Investment Attraction and Strategic Initiatives, Joe Goncalves attended the annual tech conference Web Summit 2025 in Lisbon, Portugal.

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Delegations from Windsor's twin cities, Gunsan, South Korea and Lublin, Poland visits the region



The Investment Attraction team supported the hosting of two delegations from Windsor's twin cities—Gunsan City in South Korea and Lublin in Poland. The delegations were briefed on Windsor-Essex's recent economic development progress and participated in various local tours tailored to their areas of interest.

The Gunsan City delegation toured several South Korean manufacturing companies operating locally in the electric vehicle (EV) battery sector. These visits further strengthened cultural and business ties between the two regions and reinforced ongoing efforts to attract additional foreign direct investment from South Korea.

The Lublin delegation toured the University of Windsor, St. Clair College, the Gordie Howe International Bridge and Windsor International Airport. Through these visits, they gained a deeper understanding of the region's sectoral strengths, advanced manufacturing capabilities and robust talent pipeline supported by the two post-secondary institutions.

◀ Delegations from City of Windsor's twin city Gunsan, South Korea visited Windsor and toured NextStar Energy battery plant.

Investment Attraction showcases Windsor-Essex at 2025 K-Globe Canada - Korea Business Summit



▲ Invest WindsorEssex's Max Jung attended 2025 K-Globe Canada-Korea Business Summit in Toronto.

The 2025 K-Globe Canada-Korea Business Summit was held on Oct. 10, 2025, at the Ontario Investment Centre, bringing together leaders from Google, Celltrion, Invest Ontario, OVIN and other major global organizations to engage with South Korean startups seeking expansion opportunities. Sixteen Korean firms with active plans to enter the Canadian market attended, drawing nearly 90 participants for targeted investment and partnership discussions.

Representing Invest WindsorEssex, the Investment Attraction team actively promoted the Windsor-Essex region as a competitive landing point for manufacturing, R&D and commercialization activities. Throughout the event's one-to-one investment sessions, the team highlighted the region's skilled talent base, robust advanced manufacturing and technology ecosystem and strong network of academic and industry partners. These engagements positioned Windsor-Essex as a prime candidate for future Korean investment and opened new avenues for follow-up discussions with companies exploring North American expansion.

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

Building momentum for small business in Windsor-Essex



▲ The Small Business Summit's keynote address by James Boettcher, chief empowerment officer of Righteous Gelato.



▲ (L-R) Panel discussion moderated by Amy Dodge, host, CBC Windsor Morning and panelists Richard Peddie, Amherstburg business owner & philanthropist; Brenell Dean, paralegal & business Consultant, TPP Partner Inc. & Good Tell Collaborative; John Alvarez, co-owner, F&B Hospitality Group; Ameen Fadel, co-founder & president, Cedar Valley and Jason Trussell, franchise owner & national speaker, McDonald's.

An inaugural Small Business Summit was held on Oct. 21 at St. Clair Centre for the Arts. Nearly 200 entrepreneurs, small business owners and community partners came together for an event designed to inspire, educate and build connections. Supported by the Windsor Essex Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre, and presented by TD Bank, the Summit allowed attendees to engage with ideas, resources and one another, reinforcing the importance of a strong and connected entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The Summit featured an inspiring keynote address by James Boettcher, chief empowerment officer of Righteous Gelato, who shared insights on values-based leadership, culture and sustainable growth. A panel discussion and targeted breakout sessions further explored topics such as leadership, marketing, funding and long-term business resilience. These sessions equipped participants with knowledge and tools to drive growth and address common business challenges.

The strong turnout and positive engagement highlighted the Summit's impact as a learning and networking opportunity to support small businesses and strengthen the economic vitality of Windsor-Essex.

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

New ventures welcomed into Starter Company PLUS program



▲ Sabrina DeMarco, executive director from the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre welcomed the new cohort of Starter Company PLUS participants.



▲ Starter Company PLUS participants enjoyed group mentorship sessions.

The Starter Company PLUS program returned in November with a cohort of 20 new entrepreneurs from across the Windsor-Essex region. Delivered by the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) and supported by the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, the program assists individuals who are starting, expanding or purchasing a small business by providing training, mentorship and access to a grant of up to \$5,000.

The current cohort represents a diverse cross-section of entrepreneurs in Windsor-Essex, with participating businesses spanning sectors such as retail trade, accommodation and food services, professional and technical services, and personal and wellness services. Many of these businesses are community-focused and emphasize niche products, personalized services and enhanced customer experiences, including specialty retail concepts, creative and consulting services, and food-based ventures such as cafés, catering operations and specialty food products.

Participating companies include those located in Windsor, Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, Leamington and Tecumseh.

This year's program included an intensive week of business training facilitated by BizLaunch, followed by group mentorship sessions and one-on-one business coaching. Participants also completed formal business plan pitches before program facilitators and members of the local business and professional community. The program is supported by professional mentors and pitch judges from a range of organizations and small businesses, including City of Windsor, Edward Jones, Futurpreneur, Light Up Works, Mainstream Marketing, Miller Canfield, Motor City Community Credit Union, Shred Shop Wellness Complex, Spotvin, University of Windsor, Work with Wanda and Zuleeats.

Starter Company PLUS participants will continue with group and individual mentorship sessions and are scheduled to complete the program in spring 2026. Through SBEC's delivery of Starter Company PLUS, these entrepreneurs are strengthening the local small business ecosystem and contributing to ongoing economic development across Windsor-Essex.

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE

Holiday event connects and celebrates small business community



▲ The Merry Business Mingle event welcomed more than 160 local entrepreneurs and ecosystem partners.

On Nov. 24, the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre (SBEC) hosted its third annual Merry Business Mingle, welcoming more than 160 attendees from across Windsor-Essex's entrepreneurial and small business community. The sold-out event was held at the newly opened and elegant Nico Walkerville in Windsor, providing an inviting setting for networking and connection.

Attendees included established small business owners, early-stage entrepreneurs exploring new ventures, and participants from SBEC programs, as well as ecosystem partners and support organizations. Municipal and community-based stakeholders were also present, demonstrating strong regional engagement and collaboration in support of small business development.

The Merry Business Mingle served as a platform to strengthen relationships, share resources, and expand professional networks, reinforcing SBEC's role as a key connector within the local entrepreneurship ecosystem and supporting the continued growth and resilience of the Windsor-Essex small business community.

Foodpreneur Advantage Scale-Up supports three new local businesses



▲ (L-R): Foodpreneur Advantage participants Michael Solcz, Hyena Brew Company; Anthony Man-Son-Hing, Guyana Culture & Cuisine Inc.; and Fadi Bidawid, Nust4Dates.

This fall, Foodpreneur Advantage delivered a series of virtual startup seminars for small businesses across Southwestern Ontario interested in food and beverage manufacturing. These sessions attracted early-stage entrepreneurs seeking guidance on launching and growing food businesses. Seminar topics included starting a food business, regulatory compliance, selling to both consumers and retailers, costing and pricing, marketing and labelling and packaging requirements. The next round of virtual startup seminars is scheduled to begin in January 2026.

The Foodpreneur Scale-Up program continued to support growth-stage food and beverage manufacturers by providing eight weeks of industry-led training followed by one-on-one mentorship and an opportunity for participants to receive a \$5,000 business grant. A new cohort of businesses joined the fall intake, representing communities across Southern Ontario, including three businesses from the Windsor-Essex region: Nuts4Dates, Hyena Brew Company and Savour Guyana Culture & Cuisine Inc. The program launched in November and will conclude in March 2026.

Foodpreneur Advantage is a collaborative initiative between the London Small Business Centre and Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre in Windsor-Essex, designed to support food and beverage manufacturing clients across Ontario's Small Business Centre network.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference & Trade Show merges with Mobility Transformation Conference



▲ Keynote speaker Lisa Lortie, vice president of RAM LD Product Planning, Stellantis.

The Business Retention and Expansion team's signature event, the Emerging Technologies in Automation Conference & Trade Show, grew larger this year as it merged with the Mobility Transformation Conference previously held at the University of Windsor. Founded in 2016, Emerging Technologies continues to highlight the Windsor-Essex automation cluster while expanding its reach to attract exhibitors, attendees, and decision-makers from across Ontario, Michigan, and multiple industries beyond the region.

This year's event drew over 45 exhibitors and more than 450 attendees. Keynote speaker Lisa Lortie, vice president of RAM LD product planning at Stellantis, spoke about the evolution of mobility within Stellantis including exciting new product developments. In addition to multiple breakout sessions and concurrent presentations within the Mobility Transformation portion of the event, the main stage featured Cory Garlick, industry vice president global sales & marketing at Rockwell Automation and Chris Cunningham, vice president of major projects – small modular reactors at Ontario Power Generation. A particular highlight on the main stage was a panel discussion featuring Danies Lee, CEO of NextStar Energy, and Joris Myny, senior vice president, digital industries at Siemens Canada. The discussion was focused on building the battery ecosystem and was moderated by Invest WindsorEssex's Ed Dawson, executive director, Automobility and Innovation.

Manufacturing Day in Windsor-Essex features tours across the region



▲ Invest WindsorEssex's Yash Pagadala and Town of Essex Mayor Sherry Bondy join the students from St. Thomas of Villanova as they tour EnerQuest in Harrow.

Partnering with Workforce WindsorEssex, the Canadian Association of Moldmakers and the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association again this year, the Business Retention and Expansion team was excited to assist in organizing Manufacturing Day tours for student groups at facilities across Windsor and Essex County. This year, more than 1,200 students visited 23 manufacturing operations. Municipal staff and elected officials from several municipalities joined some of the tours. Manufacturing Day gives high school students and new Canadians the opportunity to see what a career in a modern manufacturing facility could offer them. Several of the participating employers have offered tours every year since Manufacturing Day began.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Assisting Windsor-Essex companies with defence industry outreach



▲ Invest WindsorEssex's booth at the Best Defence Conference in London, along with local companies Jahn Engineering, ONYX Engineering and Sabre Machine Tool.

The Invest WindsorEssex's Business Retention and Expansion and Investment Attraction teams exhibited at the Best Defence Conference in London, Ont. and provided a portion of the space to local companies Sabre Machine Tool, ONYX Engineering, Jahn Engineering and Calibur Tool and Mold. The companies have capabilities required to become part of the defence supply chain and all reported making valuable contacts at this event. The two-day conference featured speakers from all parts of the Canadian Armed Forces as well as many defence suppliers. Other local companies in attendance were Dieffenbacher North America and ATMIS.

Webinar: FedDev Ontario's Regional Tariff Response Initiative

Fall 2025

Regional Tariff
Response
Initiative

Program Information
Session



▲ Invest WindsorEssex (IWE), Windsor Essex Chamber of Commerce and FedDev Ontario hosted an information session on the new Regional Tariff Response Initiative.

In August 2025, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) announced the launch of a new program for companies negatively impacted by the tariff situation with the United States. The Regional Tariff Response Initiative (RTRI) provides nearly \$160 million to Southern Ontario businesses impacted by trade disruptions, helping them boost productivity, diversify markets, and strengthen supply chains through repayable or non-repayable funding for projects like tech upgrades, automation, and market expansion, with specific support for steel and automotive sectors. On Nov. 17, IWE's Business Retention and Expansion team, along with the Marketing and Communications team and the Windsor Essex Chamber of Commerce, assisted FedDev Ontario in hosting a webinar to share details about the program. The event was very well attended, with close to 100 people logging in.

Canadian Trade Commissioners discuss exporting plans with Windsor-Essex companies



▲ (L-R) Taylor Bentley, Kurt DeVries, Canadian Trade Commissioner Service; Nancy Creighton, Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; Wendy Stark, Invest WindsorEssex; Nicole Vlanich Canadian Association of Moldmakers and Jonathon Azzopardi Laval International.

From Dec. 8 to 10, the Business Retention and Expansion team was pleased to host Taylor Bentley and Kurt DeVries from the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service's Toronto office. With Taylor's focus on advanced manufacturing and Kurt's focus on the automotive industry, they were in Windsor-Essex to visit local companies with interesting or new technologies and to offer exporting advice and assistance. With a network of over 1,000 professionals and a presence in over 160 cities worldwide, the Trade Commissioner Service offers extensive support for Canadian businesses in international markets. The Trade Commissioners also had the opportunity to meet with the Canadian Association of Moldmakers and the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association during their visit.

AUTOMOBILITY AND INNOVATION

Battery Boost Media Day



▲ (L-R) Michael Rosas, Virtualware; Ed Dawson, Invest WindsorEssex; Danies Lee, NextStar Energy; Gordon Orr, Invest WindsorEssex.

On Nov. 13, 2025, the Automobility and Innovation Centre team hosted partners and community leaders to celebrate a major milestone in the Battery Boost Technical Training Program, an initiative delivered collaboratively by Invest WindsorEssex, NextStar Energy, Upskill Canada [powered by Palette Skills] and the Government of Canada, Virtualware, and the Job Shoppe. The celebration highlighted the program's strong performance to date, with 408 participants trained and 397 successfully placed into full-time employment, reflecting a 97 per cent placement rate. Notably, 99 per cent of participants entered the program with no prior battery-manufacturing experience and are now earning, on average, \$13,900 more annually in their new roles. This achievement showcases the effectiveness of the partnership model, the impact of immersive training technologies and the region's growing capacity to support workforce development aligned with Canada's emerging battery manufacturing sector.

Talent Attraction regional events



▲ (L-R) Invest WindsorEssex's Ed Dawson, Gordon Orr and Gina Meret-Dybenko attend the YQGgreen Expo reception and networking social event.



▲ (L-R) Maggie Silk-Barwell, NextStar Energy; Jessica McCarthy, Invest WindsorEssex and Cristina Mazza, NextStar Energy attend the Build a Dream International Day of the Girl Breakfast.

Invest WindsorEssex's (IWE) Talent Attraction Specialist, Jessica McCarthy, has been actively representing the organization at a variety of community and workforce events. She connected with job seekers and promoted regional opportunities at both the Build a Dream – You're Hired employment event and the International Day of the Girl breakfast, where she helped inspire young women exploring future career paths.

IWE was also proud to sponsor the YQGgreen Expo reception and networking social in collaboration with the City of Windsor Economic Development. Our talent attraction team hosted a booth at the event's Career Corner, providing attendees with resources and information about the growing EV battery manufacturing sector across Windsor-Essex.

Together, these events enhanced IWE's visibility, strengthened community partnerships and advanced our regional talent attraction efforts.

AUTOMOBILITY AND INNOVATION

DisruptHR Windsor



In October, Invest WindsorEssex's Senior Program Manager at the Automobility and Innovation Centre (AIC), Mackenzie Habash had the opportunity to take the stage at DisruptHR Windsor hosted by the Job Shoppe. She shared how the AIC is using Virtual Reality (VR) training to prepare people for the future of advanced manufacturing. Her presentation walked the audience through the real impact that immersive training has on participants, how it builds confidence, improves safety and helps open doors to new careers. The session sparked great conversations with community leaders who were excited to see this technology being developed right here in Windsor-Essex.

◀ [Invest WindsorEssex's Mackenzie Habash presenting at DisruptHR.](#)

Cavalier Tool & Manufacturing's 50th Anniversary



▲ [Invest WindsorEssex's Software Developer, Bryan Holmes showcased a virtual reality \(VR\) demo at the Cavalier's 50th anniversary supplier day.](#)

Invest WindsorEssex's (IWE) Automobility and Innovation Centre (AIC) team was honoured to host a booth at Cavalier Tool & Manufacturing's 50th Anniversary Supplier Community Open House. The celebration highlighted Cavalier's long-standing success, offered guided tours of their facility and featured a trade show-style showcase where regional companies and organizations promoted the innovative work they contribute to the Windsor-Essex region.

As part of IWE's exhibit, Bryan Holmes, software developer on the AIC team, presented a custom virtual reality (VR) module he developed featuring one of Cavalier's molds. Using VR headsets, attendees experienced an immersive, industry-leading demonstration that visualized the mold and its functional process in a highly engaging, detailed environment. Having worked closely with the Cavalier team throughout the project, Bryan delivered a dynamic VR experience that not only met Cavalier's high standards but also highlighted the strength of regional partnerships and the advanced technical capabilities within our local automobility ecosystem.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Advertising



Forward Together

Windsor-Essex entrepreneurs made 2025 a year of bold ideas and growth.

In 2026, we'll continue to be your trusted partner, empowering local businesses to start, scale and thrive.

SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTRE
A DIVISION OF INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

WEBBUSINESSCENTRE.COM

▲ Biz X Magazine advertisement.



INVEST WINDSOR ESSEX

OUR LOCATION. YOUR ADVANTAGE.

INVESTWINDSOR ESSEX.COM

▲ Ontario Filmmaker Directory advertisement.



BATTERY BOOST TECHNICAL TRAINING PROGRAM
Powering Canada's battery manufacturing workforce

408+ Participants trained | 397 Placed in employment

Average graduate income increase: \$13,900 CAD | 99% No previous battery technician experience

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

- 96% Expectations met
- 95% Would recommend to a friend
- 96% Satisfied with program

ACCELERATED GROWTH

Windsor: Lakeshore, Tecumseh | Amherstburg: LaSalle, Essex | Kingsville: Leamington

"The state-of-the-art facility, paired with an incredible staff, made the experience outstanding. I would highly recommend the program to anyone interested in pursuing a career in battery manufacturing. Thank you to Battery Boost for not only helping to enhance my future but also for playing an active role in making it possible." - Freda Dagnall, Cabot

WILbatteryboost.com

▲ Infographic illustrating the success of the Battery Boost Technical Training Program and its growing impact on the region's EV workforce.

"Ontario is" social media campaign



ONTARIO IS WINDSOR-ESSEX



WINDSOR-ESSEX'S GDP GROWTH IS PROJECTED TO BE ONE OF THE HIGHEST IN CANADA.




HOME TO NEXTSTAR ENERGY, A \$5-BILLION INVESTMENT THAT RECENTLY HIT THE MILESTONE OF HIRING 1,000TH EMPLOYEE.



MINTH GROUP RECENTLY ANNOUNCED A \$300-MILLION INVESTMENT CREATING ABOUT 1,100 NEW JOBS.

AISIN & MINTH JOINT VENTURE SIGNING CEREMONY



THE WINDSOR-DETROIT CROSSING IS THE BUSIEST COMMERCIAL CANADA-U.S. BORDER CROSSING.

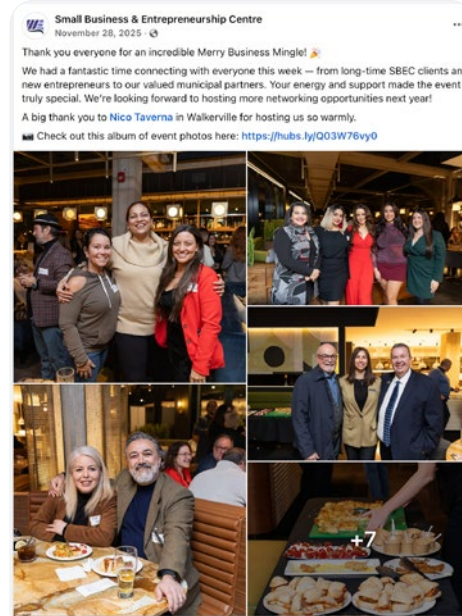
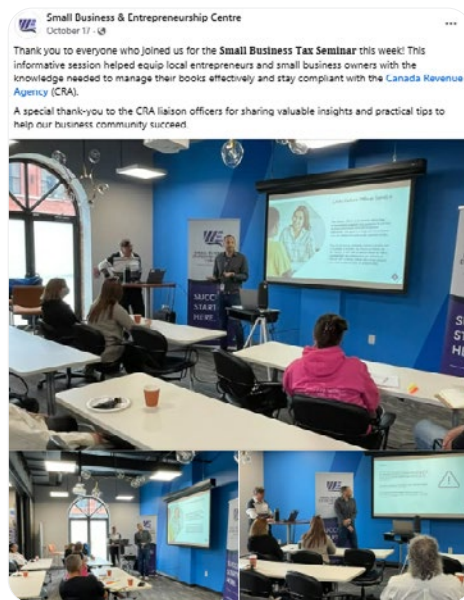
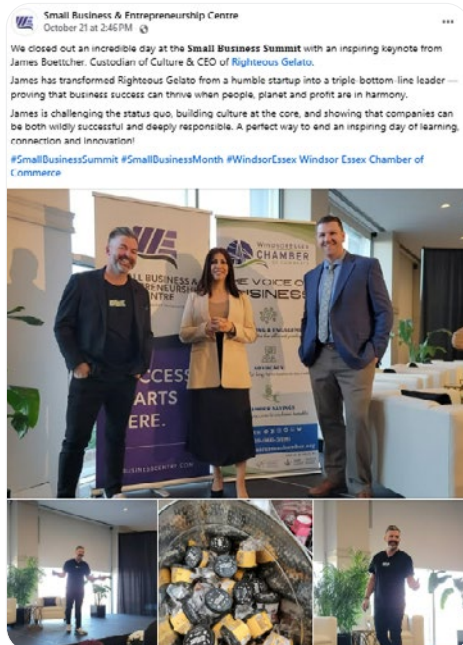
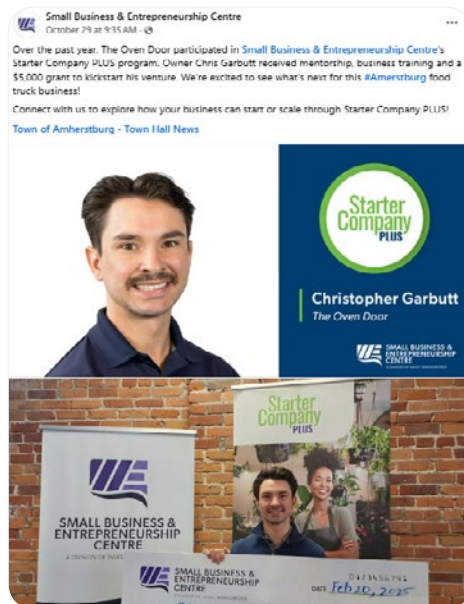
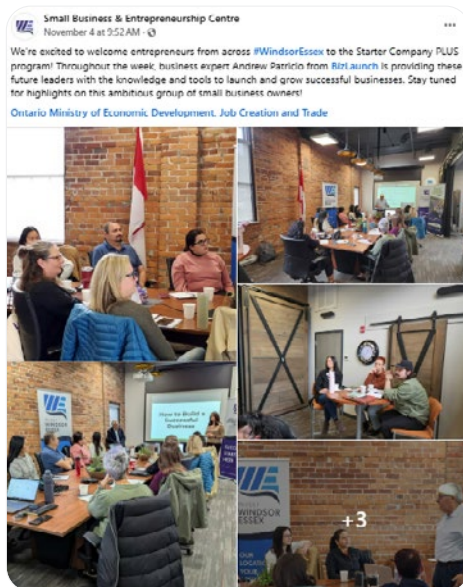


RAPIDLY GROWING AEROSPACE AND DEFENCE SECTOR.

The Windsor-Essex region was promoted through Invest Ontario's targeted social media campaign highlighting the area's investment value proposition. Invest WindsorEssex's Marketing and Communications team supported the initiative by developing the content and visuals for the **campaign's social posts**. The campaign launched on Friday, Dec. 19, 2025.

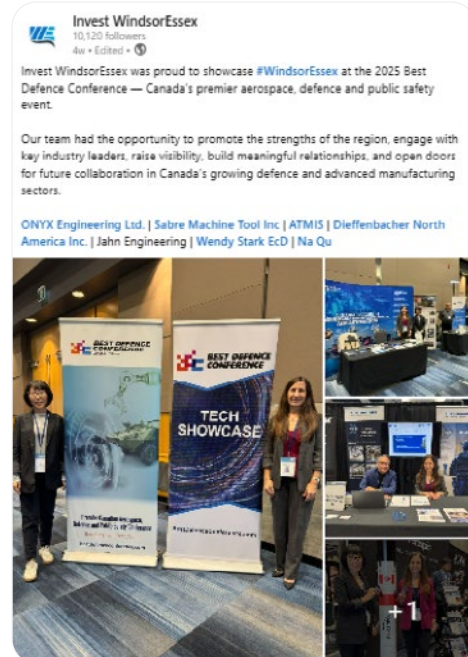
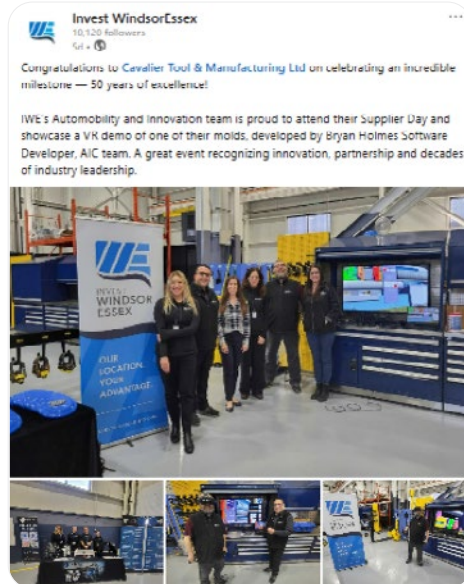
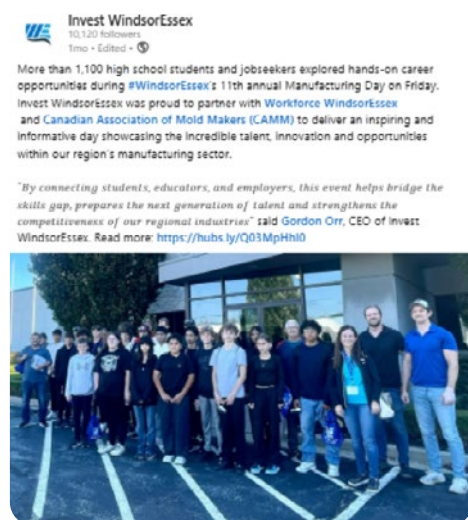
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Promoting the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre's events and programs on social media



MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Promoting Invest WindsorEssex's services, programs and client's successes on social media



MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Event Marketing

Downtown Detroit Partnership 2025 Fall Forum: Special Edition



At the Downtown Detroit Partnership 2025 Fall Forum: Special Edition, presented in collaboration with Michigan Central and the RIVER Collaborative, Gordon Orr, CEO of Invest WindsorEssex and Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, highlighted how Windsor's growth is complimenting downtown Detroit's resurgence, emphasizing the deep, historic, and ongoing connections that unite our cross-border region.

This year's forum celebrated the Windsor-Detroit region as a vital economic and cultural hub, demonstrating the transformative power of regional collaboration, innovation and infrastructure and showcased the Gordie Howe International Bridge as a symbol of the region's shared future.

- ◀ During a presentation, Gordon Orr, CEO of Invest WindsorEssex and Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, underscored how Windsor's growth complements downtown Detroit's resurgence.

Small Business Summit



The Marketing and Communications team supported the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre team during the inaugural Small Business Summit, co-hosted with the Windsor Essex Chamber of Commerce. Leading up to the event, the team launched a robust, organic and paid social media campaign designed to inspire and mobilize the local small business community to join a half-day filled with learning, networking and inspiration. During the summit, the team was on the ground managing public relations, live social media coverage and registration ensuring a seamless and engaging experience for all attendees.

Read the [media release](#).

Emerging Technologies in Automation and Mobility Transformation Conference and Trade Show



The Marketing and Communications team supported the Business Retention and Expansion team by delivering real-time updates to the conference website and driving a robust organic social media campaign to connect with exhibitors and attendees. In addition, a paid targeted social media campaign reached key audiences in Michigan, Windsor-Essex and communities along the 401 corridor to the Greater Toronto Area amplifying event visibility and engagement. The team also provided on-site support throughout the event, managing public relations, photography, social media coverage and registration.

Read the [media release](#).

- ▲ Emerging Technologies in Automation & Mobility Transformation Conference & Trade Show proved to be a success, bringing together over 500 attendees and over 40 exhibitors from across the advanced manufacturing and automation industry.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Battery Boost Program media event and open house



Invest WindsorEssex, in partnership with NextStar Energy and Upskill Canada powered by Palette Skills, hosted a media event for the Battery Boost Program to celebrate its achievements, acknowledge key partners and showcase how the training continues to meet growing workforce demand in the battery and energy supply chain. The Marketing and Communications team provided support to the Automobility and Innovation Centre team, including event coordination, invitation management, social media coverage and public relations.

Read the [media release](#).

Read the [media coverage](#).

▲ Invest WindsorEssex CEO, Gordon Orr served as emcee during the media conference.

Webinar: Overview of the Regional Tariff Response Initiative



The Marketing and Communications team provided support for the webinar, co-chaired by the Windsor Essex Chamber of Commerce and Invest WindsorEssex. To promote the event, the team created marketing assets and executed a social media campaign focused on engaging with local businesses impacted by tariff-related issues. Delivered by FedDev Ontario and presented information regarding the Regional Tariff Response Initiative, the webinar offered practical resources to help companies navigate and mitigate trade disruptions.

Merry Business Mingle



The Marketing and Communications team supported the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre with the development of marketing assets and executed a social media campaign focused on inviting Windsor-Essex entrepreneurs, the small business community as well as ecosystem partners to a holiday networking event.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sponsorships



- ▲ Invest WindsorEssex and the City of Windsor partnered to sponsor the YQGgreen Expo as VIP Reception & Networking sponsors.



- ▲ The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre sponsored Biz X Magazine Business Excellence Awards.



- ▲ Invest WindsorEssex/Small Business & Entrepreneurship Centre sponsored by the Leamington District Chamber of Commerce's Jingle & Mingle Holiday Lunch and BusinessExpo held on Thursday, Dec. 4.

Media Releases

Automation and mobility converge: Windsor-Essex to host premier industry conference showcasing next-gen innovations

Automation meets mobility: Windsor-Essex hosts landmark conference showcasing next-gen innovation

Windsor-Essex to celebrate success of Battery Boost program exceeding national training and employment targets

Media Coverage

Manufacturers open doors for Windsor-Essex students, jobseekers

'Downtown at its best' — expanded Windsor route to showcase Canadian pride during Detroit Marathon

Windsor-Essex entrepreneurs gather for inaugural Small Business Summit

NextStar Energy has 'huge obligation' to make Windsor battery plant successful, says CEO [video]

Windsor-Essex hosts landmark conference showcasing next-gen innovation

Windsor's NextStar plant to prioritize making batteries for power grid storage systems

NextStar Energy expands into energy storage: Windsor battery production begins this month

Virtualware powers Canada's EV workforce with immersive XR training

Battery Boost program's impact on Windsor

Windsor-Essex celebrates success of Battery Boost Program

VR training graduates find success at local battery plant

Webinar to be held to help Windsor-Essex businesses affected by tariffs

Battery Boost program helps nearly 400 Windsor-Essex workers land jobs at NextStar Energy plant

City of Windsor named finalist for Economic Developers Council of Ontario Awards of Excellence

Creatives of Windsor Podcast's 48th guest Gordon Orr, CEO at Tourism WindsorEssex and Invest WindsorEssex



PERFORMANCE METRICS 2025

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

\$44,749,931
(IA/BRE/SBEC/AIC)

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

27 Expansions Facilitated
(IA/BRE/SBEC)

124 New Jobs Facilitated
(IA/BRE/SBEC)

85 Priority Files
(IA)

25 Business Startups
(SBEC)

Business Support Sessions

26 Sessions (BRE/SBEC)

1113 Attendees (BRE/SBEC)

Top Economic Priorities as reported by Windsor-Essex Businesses

- 1** Tariff impacts – The US-imposed tariffs and Canadian retaliatory tariffs continue to impact the local manufacturing industry. Large users of steel as a manufacturing input are particularly impacted as they need to find US suppliers to avoid tariffs when the final product is exported to the US. Many local exporters are still navigating US Customs regulations and paperwork. The team at IWE has hosted several events with supply-chain advisors and trade and customs professionals to provide local companies with relevant information and resources.
- 2** Bank financing – Many traditional lenders have tightened their loan criteria, making it more challenging for companies to borrow. Companies are also reluctant to take on additional debt given the current trade situation.
- 3** Labour force challenges – Although the unemployment rate in Windsor-Essex has improved with major employers such as NextStar Energy and Stellantis actively hiring, many smaller to mid-sized companies are facing challenges and are using the Work Share program and/or are laying off employees. There is a fear of losing key employees with skills that will be needed once the current situation is resolved.
- 4** Finding new customer and export markets – Companies are actively reducing their exposure to trade-impacted industries and are investigating alternative customer markets. They require support and connections to successfully compete in these new markets – which is a key priority for the team at IWE.
- 5** Supply chain issues - Many businesses are realigning their supply chains to utilize Canadian suppliers as much as possible. While this can prove to be challenging, it also opens up further opportunities for the domestic market. Immediate challenges include short lifespans for supplier quotes making it difficult for companies to bid on projects.

Regional Economic Indicators [†]

 **Population**
408,000  **0.15%**

 **Labour Force**
267,300  **2.57%**

 **Employment**
244,700  **5.88%**

 **Unemployment**
22,600  **23.39%**

Unemployment Rate
8.5%  **2.8%**

Participation Rate
65.5%  **1.7%**

Employment Rate
60%  **3.4%**

Note: The above figures reflect all of Windsor and Essex County comparing Q3 2025 to Q4 2025. Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey custom tabulation.