

# YORK REGION | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Construction of York Region's Administrative Centre Annex is well underway in the Town of Newmarket. Located next to the Administrative Centre – York Region's headquarters – the Annex building will offer a variety of public services to residents which will realize York Region's long-term plan to consolidate a variety of community, health and courts services into one central, fully-accessible, modern facility.



## YORK REGIONAL COUNCIL | 2018 - 2022



Mayor  
Frank Scarpitti  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Don Hamilton  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Jack Heath  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Joe Li  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Jim Jones  
City of Markham



Mayor  
David Barrow  
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor  
Maurizio Bevilacqua  
City of Vaughan



Chairman & CEO  
Wayne Emmerson



Regional Councillor  
Joe DiPaola  
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor  
Mario Ferri  
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
Gino Rosati  
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
Linda Jackson  
City of Vaughan

### A MESSAGE FROM YORK REGION CHAIRMAN AND CEO AND MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COUNCIL

The Regional Municipality of York is where talent and opportunity intersect. Home to 52,000 businesses with 636,000 employees across York Region, we are an economic powerhouse and a destination of choice for business growth.

Economic vitality remains a key priority for York Regional Council and the success of our efforts relies on the strength of collaboration and partnership. Highlights include:

- Establishing *YorkNet*; York Region's separate corporate entity to further support broadband initiatives
- Outpacing provincial and national job growth rates
- Connecting more than 450 business and industry leaders at *York Region's Broadband and Innovation and FinTech Summits*

As we look ahead to this new term of council, we are focused on supporting existing businesses, welcoming new opportunities and driving innovation and job growth.



Regional Councillor  
Carmine Perrelli  
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor  
John Taylor  
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor  
Tom Vegh  
Town of Newmarket



Mayor  
Margaret Quirk  
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor  
Robert Grossi  
Town of Georgina



Mayor  
Tom Mrakas  
Town of Aurora



Mayor  
Virginia Hackson  
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor  
Steve Pellegrini  
Township of King



Mayor  
Iain Lovatt  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



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# WHERE TALENT AND OPPORTUNITY INTERSECT

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### WELCOME TO THE YORK REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT YEAR IN REVIEW

2018 was another progressive year for York Region's growing business community. This publication provides an overview of the key business and economic development success stories in the region throughout the year.

The *Business Community & Ecosystem Highlights* includes stories that were released through third-party sources, demonstrating how York Region continues to be a leading destination for investment, innovation, and talent in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Canada.

The *Economic Development Highlights* focus on some of the key activities and achievements in 2018 of York Region's economic development team. In collaboration with local municipalities, stakeholders and other partners, these initiatives are making a real impact on York Region's business community and economic growth.

The *Economic Indicators* provide a summary of key business data and economic statistics, underscoring York Region's continued economic strength and importance as Ontario's third largest municipality and business centre.

**Enjoy the 2018 York Region Economic Development Year in Review!**





## YORK REGION: WHERE TALENT AND OPPORTUNITY INTERSECT

York Region is a vibrant, multi-faceted confederation of nine municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area. The region is home to 1.2 million residents, 52,000 businesses, 636,000 jobs, and four provincially-designated urban growth centres. York Region has the second highest number of technology companies in Canada, second largest financial services cluster in Ontario and one of the country's largest manufacturing and construction industry clusters, making it an economic powerhouse.

With the fastest population growth rate of any large municipal jurisdiction in Ontario, York Region is expected to grow to more than 1.8 million people and 900,000 jobs within the next 25 years. Residents find York Region to be a highly desirable community offering a unique mix of urban amenities, spacious neighbourhoods, protected green lands and a top quality of life – all in the heart of the GTA - Canada's largest metropolitan area. Moreover, as Ontario's third largest business centre, York Region is also a top destination for business, talent, and investment.

With York Region's strategic location in the heart of the GTA, businesses and residents have access to a variety of transit and transportation options. And as the economy and population continue to grow in the Region, so do investments in public infrastructure and services.

In particular, major public- and private-sector investments are underway in York Region's urban growth centres of Markham Centre, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Richmond Hill Centre, and Newmarket Centre. These growth centres represent a total of 1,700 acres of mixed use urban communities, making them a highly desirable location for professionals and knowledge-based employers.

**York Region is where talent and opportunity intersect!**







## BUSINESS COMMUNITY & ECOSYSTEM HIGHLIGHTS

York Region's local business community and innovation ecosystem regularly earn media coverage for their progressive technology, innovation, growth, and job creation. The selected highlights included are just a glimpse at the news that was shared on [yorklink.ca](http://yorklink.ca) and York Link's social media channels over the past year. It is easy to see why York Region is known as a leading destination for talent and business investment.





### LAIPAC TECHNOLOGY TAKES TOP HONOURS AT 2018 ONTARIO EXPORT AWARDS

Ontario Export Awards | [Richmond Hill](#)

Richmond Hill-based Laipac Technology took home the top honour as the 2018 Ontario Exporter of the Year, as well as, the sector award for consumer products. Ontario companies were recognized for their accomplishments in exporting at the fifth annual Ontario Export Awards, held November 20, at the International Centre in Mississauga.

These prestigious accolades recognize the contributions Ontario businesses make to the province's export sector.

The winners, selected from a pool of more than 40 applicants, showcase the high-calibre and diversity among businesses in Ontario's export sector.

### U.S.-BASED DECISIVEDGE OPENS OFFICE IN ONTARIO, SEEKING NEW TALENT

Computer Dealer News | [Markham](#)

A business consulting and technology services firm from Newark, Delaware is expanding its lending and leasing software across Canada by setting up its first Canadian office in Markham.

DecisivEdge LLC., a managed service provider which has clients around the world, including in Canada, decided to push further into the market north of the border at the end of last year leading to this new office in Markham.

### DAISY INTELLIGENCE SECURES \$5-MILLION FUNDING FROM ESPRESSO CAPITAL

Business Insider | [Vaughan](#)

Daisy Intelligence Corporation, an artificial intelligence software-as-a-service platform, captured first place at the ElevateR Pitch: AI Edition held in Toronto in November.

The pitch competition was open to Canadian corporations working in AI or an adjacent industry with less than \$10 million in revenue or funding. Selected from an overwhelming volume of submissions, 16 finalists pitched onstage to a panel of investors, celebrities, and media personalities for an opportunity to win.

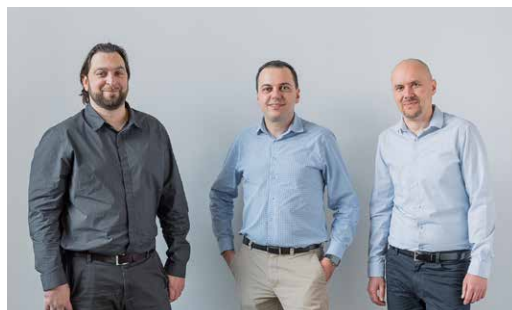


### FAST GROWING ELASTIC PATH OPENS NEW OFFICE WITH PLANS TO HOUSE EXPANDED R&D AND SALES TEAMS

Markets Insider | [Markham](#)

Elastic Path, a leader in enterprise headless commerce solutions, announced it opened a new Canadian location in Ontario, in the Toronto area [of Markham], following a recent \$43-million funding round and a series of new key executives and upper management hires.

Headquartered in Vancouver, Elastic Path's Toronto area office will house expanded research and development, as well as, sales and customer success teams.



### CYBEATS OPENED ITS FIRST OFFICE AND RECEIVES \$3-MILLION INVESTMENT

Business Wire | [Aurora](#)

Cybeats, a startup tech company that seeks to protect IoT devices from cybersecurity threats opened its first official office in Aurora. The company has raised \$3-million in funding from a number of venture capital firms to expand the team in York Region and abroad. The funding will be used to expand sales, research and development, and Cybeats' enterprise capabilities.

Cybeats was also crowned champion in two categories at the inaugural IoT Global Awards 2018 in London competing against 149 companies. The company's software is embedded into Enterprise IoT devices on infrastructure such as power grids to provide continuous protection, allowing devices to detect the most sophisticated threats instantly and help companies neutralize them.



### CELESTICA CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING AT ITS NEWMARKET FACILITY

Newmarket Today | [Newmarket](#)

A courtship that was three years in the making was made official today as electronics manufacturer, Celestica International Inc., celebrated its grand opening in Newmarket.

The global company's new manufacturing facility at 213 Harry Walker Dr. in Newmarket and is now home to hundreds of employees who were relocated from Celestica's former Don Mills location. A hiring outreach is already underway to fill new jobs at the plant, including electronics assemblers, shipping and receiving specialists, mechanical assemblers and electronics technicians.

"Over 24 years, our business has changed dramatically, but what remains unchanged is our staff," Celestica's Newmarket site general manager, Darryl Sills, said. "I want to thank employees of this new site for their dedication. Their acceptance of change has been our biggest success to date. They've had to make many small and large personal sacrifices and I truly appreciate it."



### PwC TOWER TOPPED OUT AND ENCLOSED

Urban Toronto | [Vaughan](#)

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre has been growing with new mixed-use development over the past few years construction of the TTC subway extension kicked off construction years ago. In the last year, the Toronto-York subway extension has brought rapid transit service to Vaughan; a new bus terminal is under construction, and construction of the new nine-storey PwC Tower with a YMCA and public library has made significant progress and expected to open in 2019. The building will also house a 10,000 square foot Vaughan public library branch, a new YMCA, and retail space.



### PLANT THAT AIMS TO BUILD CHARGING STATIONS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES OPENS

CBC | [Markham](#)

Ontario's first manufacturing plant that makes charging stations for electric vehicles opened in Markham. "The electric car is here and it's here to stay," says Autochargers.ca CEO Gleb Nikiforov. Autochargers.ca, is a national company that supplies charging equipment for electric vehicles. Nikiforov went on to say the plant [in Markham, York Region] aims to manufacture 40,000 charging stations a year, starting in 2019, and aims to create one hundred jobs over the next three years.



## REFLECTING ON YSPACE MARKHAM'S FIRST YEAR

Strengthening the relationship with York Region has always been a priority for York University. Although there are many exciting initiatives underway, one new success story remains at the forefront: YSpace.

The 10,000-square-foot facility in Markham Centre, is a community innovation hub supporting a growing number of entrepreneurs and innovators by providing dynamic co-working space, access to industry advisers, education, workshops and high-end technology.

Part of Innovation York's entrepreneurship portfolio, YSpace opened its doors in January 2018. Since then, demand from entrepreneurs, organizations and startups has been high. In less than a year, YSpace has experienced significant growth in all activity areas and, as a result, has doubled the size of its incubator. The innovation hub is currently home to 22 startup ventures and 11 entrepreneurs in residence (EiRs), and has held over 110 events for the community.

"We're dedicated to creating an environment where entrepreneurs can collaborate and push one another to new levels," said David Kwok, YSpace manager. "In the past year, we've created a diverse community by bringing in technology, digital marketing agencies, food retail startup ventures and many others into the space. The diversity in perspectives as well as industries has helped them learn from one another and overcome individual business challenges."

YSpace members have exclusive access to perks and programming that will help propel their ventures to the next level through access to EiRs, industry and funding professionals; discounts to law and prototyping firms; ongoing mentoring and support by the YSpace team; and access to programming that is designed to help push the ventures from one stage of their life cycle to the next.

The value of creating an innovation space in Markham Centre is not only to support student, faculty and community entrepreneurs, but to create an innovative community that can then connect back and bring value to the University.

There are multiple examples of student and recent alumni ventures in the space, of ventures entering into collaborative research partnerships with faculty members on campus, and of students obtaining experiential learning and work opportunities with the ventures. Creating connections between YSpace and the existing campuses is of paramount importance, which will only continue to increase as York University moves towards building a new campus in Markham.

**Within the first year, YSpace members have created 63 jobs, generated over \$2.4 million of revenue and raised over \$1.1 million in funding.**

"YSpace is an amazing incubator filled with knowledgeable, like-minded, entrepreneurs. As a York University student, I love the opportunity to connect with like-minded entrepreneurs who are at a similar stage," said Giancarlo Sessa, co-founder of Blade Filters Inc. "It is a community with a positive work environment where everyone hustles and shares their secrets to success. YSpace has given us access to equipment for testing, mentors to help us overcome roadblocks and meetings with potential mentors, funders and resources."

YSpace brings a lot of value to the entrepreneurial ecosystem as well, through its programming and events. An example is the Founders Fundamentals collaboration between Innovation York and the Small Business Centres throughout York Region, including Markham,

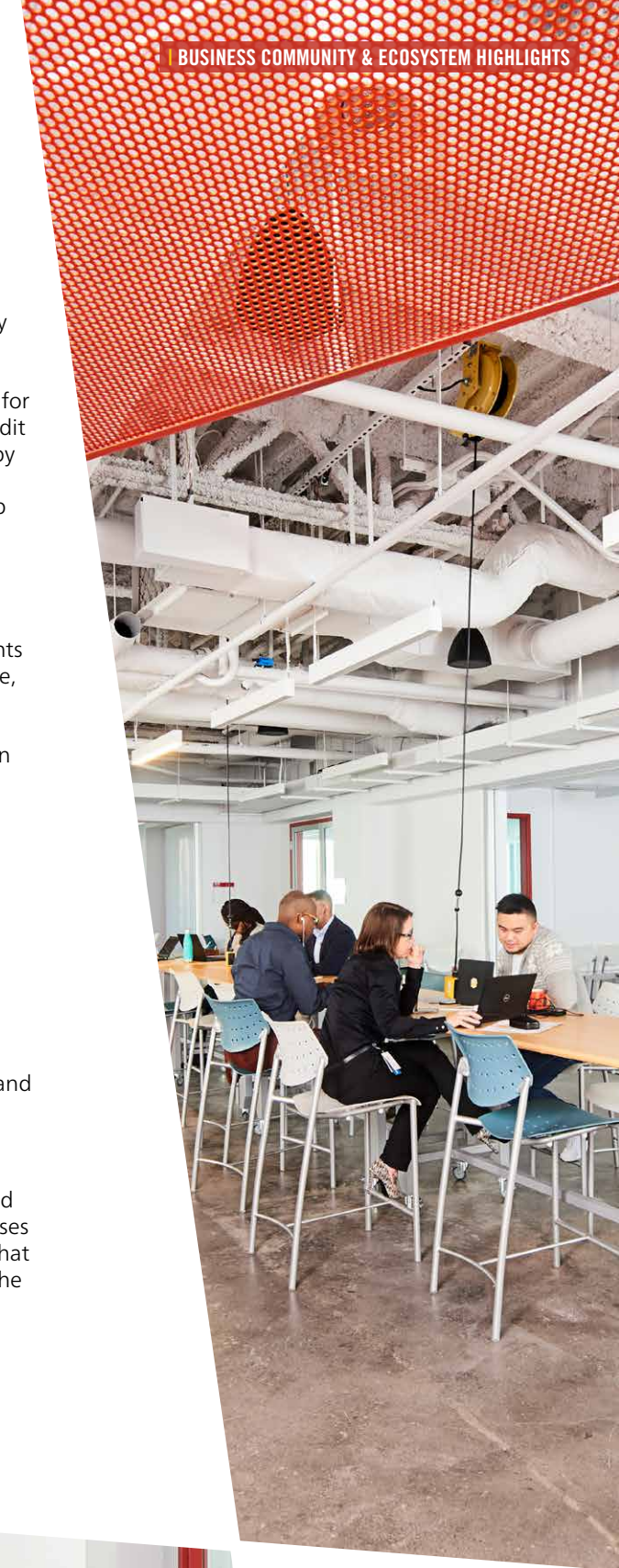
Richmond Hill, Vaughan and the Northern Six. This program gives entrepreneurs across the region an opportunity to learn about entrepreneurship and grow their businesses.

Other examples are the Youth Innovation by Design program and the York Region District School Board (YRDSB) co-op program. Every summer, 20 Grade 12 students go to YSpace for the month of July and participate in a for-credit innovation course developed and delivered by Innovation York and the YRDSB. In addition, in July 2018, five YRDSB students spent co-op terms in YSpace startups.

"Partnering with the YRDSB and bringing youth into YSpace has been really exciting – not only do they bring a special energy, but there's so much that the ventures and students can learn from one another," said Sarah Howe, Director, Innovation York. "This year we saw lots of interaction between the students and entrepreneurs – entrepreneurs participated in the summer school programming and co-op students made valuable contributions to the ventures. It was really very exciting to see."

As its first anniversary approaches, YSpace will continue to work closely with industry and community partners to develop new programs that can support University and community entrepreneurs, as well as create value for York University as a whole. The hub will also continue to build a cohesive innovation ecosystem within York Region, creating a community where entrepreneurs and innovators can effectively collaborate.

It has been an amazing first year. YSpace is creating a thriving and robust pipeline of startup talent to help entrepreneurs build and scale their sustainable and impactful businesses north of the downtown Toronto core. With that kind of momentum, there's no telling what the next year will hold.



By YORK UNIVERSITY

Originally appeared in:  
Y-FILE  
January 2019



## EXCO ENGINEERING AMONG FINALISTS FOR U.S. AUTO AWARD

Yorkregion.com | [Newmarket](#)

For the “first time,” the Newmarket-based Exco Engineering is among other finalists competing for the 2019 Automotive News PACE Awards in Detroit, dubbed as the “Academy Award for Innovation” for auto-parts suppliers.

Within its 135,000 square-foot plant in Newmarket, “what makes us special” is that Exco has “developed the processes necessary to push 3D printing or additive manufacturing into mainstream production,” Wes Byleveld, Exco’s director of additive manufacturing told York Region.

## GRAYBAR TO OPEN LARGEST BRANCH

Electrical Business | [Vaughan](#)

Graybar Canada, a wholesale distributor of electrical products, opened its largest branch to-date in Vaughan. The 90,000-square-foot facility is located near the intersection of Highways 427 and 407.

“For several years, we’ve been looking at ways to grow in the GTA,” says Brian Thomas, Graybar’s executive vice-president and General Manager. “...it makes sense for us to position ourselves in a central location.”

## WYSDOM.AI NAMED TOP TEN CHATBOT SOLUTION, AWARDED TWO NEW PATENTS

CIO Applications | [Richmond Hill](#)

CIO Applications has named Wysdom.AI one of their Top Ten Chatbot Solution Providers. As a multi-channel cognitive care solution, Wysdom helps enterprises deliver automated AI-based support to their customers across all digital channels.

Chatbots are seeing wide adoption across many industry verticals, and quickly becoming the standard for customer service.

In the wake of these developments, CIO Applications assembled a panel comprising CEOs, CIOs, CTOs, industry analysts, and CIO Applications’ editorial board, to select the leading providers that exhibit competence in delivering mature chatbot solutions.

## BIG DATA NEEDS BIG STORAGE BUILDINGS

The Globe and Mail | [Richmond Hill](#)

Data Centre One in Richmond Hill, was 50% occupied when it opened in 2017. The second is under construction, and ultimately there will be as many as five. Urbacon has now formed a joint venture with Summit Industrial Income REIT to develop, own, or operate data centres across Canada, including those in York Region.



## LOCATION IS DESTINY FOR AMD MARKHAM

GraphicSpeak | [Markham](#)

AMD Markham is an integral part of the AMD whole. The Markham offices are populated almost entirely by engineers and technical staff and the group works on all the AMD products, including hardware and software.

Once again, the company’s geographic location is part of its advantage. Canadian companies are strong in software development so the company has a large pool of local talent to draw from. Much of AMD’s software capability is now located in Markham and is providing expertise in all aspects of software including drivers, libraries, development tools, middle layer applications and anything else needed to integrate AMD hardware into partner systems.

The group at AMD Markham has developed a ray tracing program that is being incorporated into mainstream applications by other software vendors.

## SYM-TECH DEALER SERVICES INC. ANNOUNCES NEW HOME OFFICE LOCATION

Newsire | [Markham](#)

Sym-Tech Dealer Services Inc. announced their new home office location. The building located at 165 Commerce Valley Drive in Markham is a 2018 winner of the prestigious Toby Award that recognizes the best in commercial buildings. “I’m really excited to announce the purchase of this building to support both the current and future growth of Sym-Tech” said Brad Wells, CEO.

## AIRBOSS OF AMERICA ANNOUNCES U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONTRACT WORTH UP TO \$36.5-MILLION FOR CBRN PROTECTIVE GLOVES

Globe Newswire | [Newmarket](#)

AirBoss of America announced that AirBoss Defense, was awarded a contract from the U.S. Department of Defense for the manufacture of up to 1,636,000 pairs of AirBoss Molded Glove chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense protective gloves.



## BLUEWRIST USING EDGE-BASED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO POWER TOMORROW'S MANUFACTURING PLANTS

Financial Post | [Markham](#)

Markham-based Bluewrist, which won the Small Private category in the 2018 Ingenious Awards hosted by the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC), has spent the last 12 years building software that enables robots to fix minor issues on the production line before they become major problems, and it does it using an advanced form of machine vision.

## TAYLORMADE CANADA OPENS NEW HQ GOLF LABORATORY SHOWROOM

Building Design & Construction Network | [Vaughan](#)

TaylorMade Canada’s new headquarters located in Vaughan, recently completed construction. The 20,000-square-foot space includes the company’s corporate offices, a golf laboratory, and a product showroom; both open to the public.

The public-facing spaces feature three golf performance labs, a putting green, and an on-site workshop for custom-ordered TaylorMade golf products.



## DISTRICT ENERGY WELCOMES POND TECHNOLOGIES

Yorkregion.com | [Markham](#)

The Pond Technologies facility will be adjacent to Markham District Energy’s Warden Energy Centre in Markham. This will be the world’s first facility to capture and convert carbon emissions into valuable, nutritious health supplements through a biological process.

## SENECA COLLEGE KING CAMPUS CELEBRATED THE GRAND OPENING OF THE \$99-MILLION MAGNA HALL

Yorkregion.com | [King](#)

It’s a long time coming, but the brand-new Magna Hall is officially open to the students of Seneca College King Campus.

Hundreds of students and faculty members, joined by business representatives and government officials, gathered on Sept. 27 to celebrate the grand opening of Magna Hall, a newly built academic and athletic facility at the campus.

The new building, part of Seneca’s ongoing expansion project at King Campus, is currently the biggest facility at the campus with a capacity of 1,450 students.

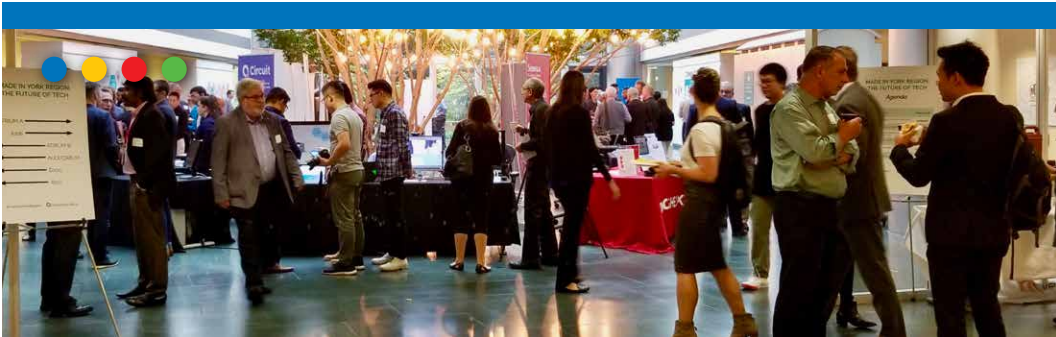
Built on a lot which was previously used for parking, the three-storey facility is a much-needed project to accommodate the growing need for student enrolment in York Region, according to Angelo Miranda, director of major capital projects at Seneca College.

The \$99.2 million project includes 25 new classrooms, computer labs, specialty labs, a library, and student centre with a multi-purpose athletic and recreation space including a double gymnasium, fitness facility, dance studio, and indoor rock-climbing wall.

[Magna International donated a \$3 million philanthropic gift for the Seneca King Campus expansion.]







**MADE IN YORK REGION: THE FUTURE OF TECH**  
ventureLAB | Markham

On October 11, 2018, ventureLAB, the regional innovation centre serving York Region, hosted the inaugural 'Made in York Region: The Future of Tech' to showcase and celebrate the many technologies, businesses, and entrepreneurs this region has to offer. In 2017, ventureLAB launched its accelerator space at the IBM Innovation Space-Markham Convergence Centre, then a 25,000 square-foot innovation hub for tech companies. In just over a year, the hub has expanded to 50,000 square feet, with over 40 tech companies and innovation partners that help our companies build, grow, and scale.

York Region has a thriving tech cluster that includes start-ups, scale-ups, and global multinationals. The October showcase was proof and celebration of York Region's independent and booming ecosystem. Thirty companies showcased their products, technologies, and services, meeting over 250 attendees.

Four panels discussed the history of gender and diversity in tech companies, and how inclusivity in workplaces goes beyond gender; why Toronto created more tech jobs last year than the Bay Area, Washington, and Seattle combined, yet still faces a talent gap; how technology is helping Canadians become healthier; and how tech is making it easier to bring healthcare closer to home.

For more information about ventureLAB and services offered please visit: [venturelab.ca](http://venturelab.ca)



**GROUND OFFICIALLY BROKEN ON HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS & SUITES**  
The Auroran | [Aurora](#)

The Holiday Inn Express & Suites hotel in Aurora is a development in conjunction with InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG). "It is an exciting opportunity due to the fact we're looking at becoming a premiere destination when it comes to sports tourism and this allows us to provide the opportunity to have a place to stay within our town.

That is a very exciting opportunity for us and we're looking forward to not only the business and sports community, but for everyone to come here and learn and see the uniqueness of our town," said Mayor Mrakas.

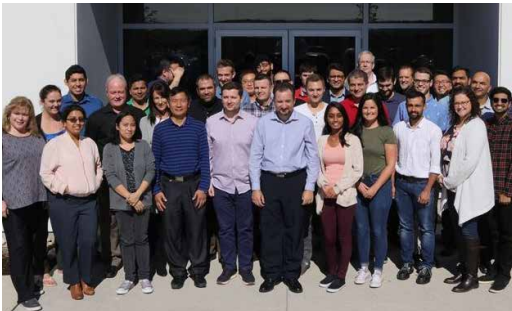
**DEALER-FX ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH MITSUBISHI MOTORS NORTH AMERICA TO UPGRADE DEALERS' RETAIL EXPERIENCE**  
PR Web | [Markham](#)

Dealer-FX, software provider for automotive OEMs and their retailers, announced that it has been selected as the exclusive provider of Digital Aftersales applications for Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc., (MMNA). By adopting DealerFX's ONE Platform, customized and branded MICAR for Mitsubishi, MMNA's dealerships in the U.S. will have the digital technology needed to deliver an exceptional retail experience and improve customer retention.



**DRONE DELIVERY CANADA AND TOYOTA TSUSHO CANADA ANNOUNCE COMMERCIALIZATION INITIATIVES FOR INTERNATIONAL MARKETS**  
PR Web | [Vaughan](#)

Drone Delivery Canada and Toyota Tsusho Canada Inc. announced they signed an agreement to collaborate on a drone delivery logistics platform. "This agreement with TCI is expected to open international markets for us as a company," commented Tony Di Benedetto, CEO of Drone Delivery Canada.



**STOUFFVILLE COMPANY HELPS NASA WITH SUPERSONIC FLIGHT PROJECT**  
Yorkregion.com | [Whitchurch-Stouffville](#)

A Stouffville business is creating a figurative sonic boom by helping reduce the noise made by a literal sonic boom. Wolf Advanced Technology announced it is supplying electronic modules for NASA to use in an upcoming supersonic flight project.

**UPPER CANADA MALL LOOKS TO LURE SUBURBAN HIPSTERS WITH FOODIE FARE**  
Toronto Star | [Newmarket](#)

Millennials may be fleeing cities for more affordable suburbs, but that doesn't mean they're leaving their urban sensibilities behind and are increasingly seeking the same unique, artisanal offerings available downtown. At Upper Canada Mall in Newmarket, the desire for hipster food experiences is being met with Market & Co., a 40,000-square-foot food and beverage hall that opened September 7.



**MACKENZIE VAUGHAN HOSPITAL REACHES FOR THE TOP AHEAD OF SCHEDULE**  
Yorkregion.com | [Vaughan](#)

Two years after it broke ground, the \$1.6B Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital marked a major milestone by reaching the highest point in its construction. It's expected the 1.2 million-square-foot facility will open in about two years, and a number of dignitaries were on hand on November 1st to mark the "topping off" celebration. Mackenzie Vaughan will be the first fully integrated 'smart' technology hospital in Canada, creating over 1,800 full-time equivalent staff positions.

**SPARK INNOVATIONS MAKING NEW THINGS IN KING CITY**  
Yorkregion.com | [King](#)

Before there is a good product, there has to be a good idea. That is what King City's Spark Innovations has been working with for the better part of 29 years. Spark is a product engineering and development firm that helps people bring their unique ideas to market. "The goal for most of the clients who come to us is to get a patent," Design Director Chris Pearen said. The showroom at Spark's office on King Road is littered with examples of its work; kitchen products, toothbrushes, shower caps, drywall tools and an indoor hydroponics machine are just a few of the things the company has helped develop in recent years.

**EAST GWILLIMBURY'S LARGEST COMMERCIAL HUB IS GETTING LARGER**  
Yorkregion.com | [East Gwillimbury](#)

The Yonge and Green Lane intersection in East Gwillimbury has long been the town's largest commercial hub and it's only getting bigger. The town is expecting continued growth on the northeast corner in the coming years. Mayor Virginia Hackson said several new businesses are on their way, including a Longo's grocery store, The Beer Store, and East Side Mario's. And Hackson said the plaza has been a real commercial success for many of the businesses as both Lowe's and Firehouse Subs say this location is one of their higher volume stores.



# YORK REGION: WHERE TECH COMPANIES GO TO SCALE UP

Second only to Toronto as a Canadian tech centre, the region boasts 4,300 tech companies across its nine cities and town. Many of those companies are industry leaders - both global names, as well as Canadian scale-ups.

When General Motors chose a location for its new Canadian Technical Centre, it chose York Region's City of Markham because it's the "tech capital of Canada," according to Brian Tossan, Director of the facility.

The 150,000-square-foot research and development centre officially opened in January and will employ 700 engineers and software developers when it reaches capacity, making it Canada's largest autotech hub.

York Region offers "opportunities to look for partnerships to further expand GM's ecosystem" because it's home to one of the largest tech clusters in North America, says Tossan.

## SYNERGIES BETWEEN LARGE AND SMALL

Synergies between large multinationals like GM and homegrown startups make York Region a great place for small businesses to grow into big ones, explains Melissa Chee, President and CEO of ventureLAB, a non-profit regional innovation hub.

"Some of our most successful companies grew and scaled because of early revenue from global customers," says Chee. "York Region has a wealth of global multinationals, including companies like Celestica, AMD, IBM, GM, and

GE. Companies like these partner with startups and scale-ups, who have emerging tech, to meet customer demands more quickly."

## ACCESS TO EXPERIENCED TALENT

People are a major reason technology companies settle in York Region when they're looking to scale up and break into international markets. Local success stories include Real Matters, Redline Communications, Enghouse Systems, Mircom Technologies, Book4Time, Everlink, and Dealer-FX, to name a few.

An experienced talent pool is essential for growth at Daisy Intelligence, located in York Region's City of Vaughan. The company uses artificial intelligence to analyze big data for its customers, helping them become more efficient and increase profits. Daisy started with two staff members and now has 50. More growth is expected in 2019.

"The most important thing for us is having access to talent," says founder Gary Saarenvirta.

Daisy's office is near Highway 407 as well as the Toronto-York Region subway extension to the emerging Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. That makes it accessible for recent grads, who tend to come from downtown Toronto, as well as 30-somethings, who live locally or drive in from other locations.

"Convenient access is why we chose the current location," says Saarenvirta. "It's a perfect hub spot for our salespeople, who travel quite a bit. We're 20 minutes from the airport."

## URBAN-SUBURBAN HYBRID

Traditionally known as a suburban location with detached homes that appeal to families, York Region is becoming an urban-suburban hybrid, with a mixed housing market, walkable neighbourhoods and transit options that attract a diverse workforce.

Over the last four years, more than 20,000 new condo apartments were sold in York Region, according to BILD, an Ontario-based association of home builders. York is second only to the City of Toronto for new condo builds in the Greater Toronto Area.

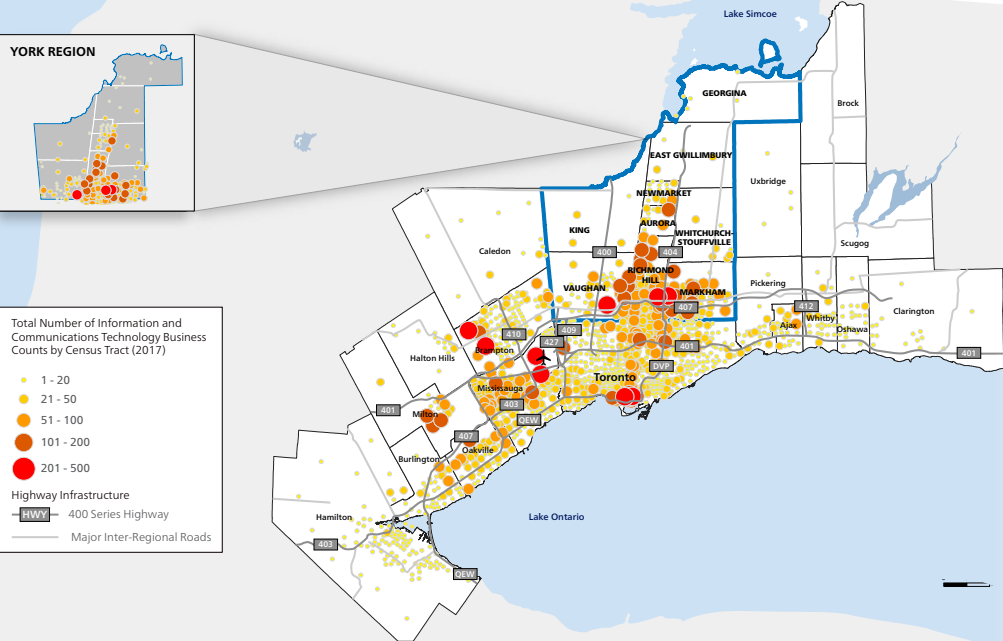
These increasing urban housing options are attracting younger professionals and new Canadians, making it a rich source of talent for companies that know a diverse workforce is a competitive advantage.

## INNOVATIVE EDUCATION

York Region's tech companies attract grads from universities and colleges across the Toronto-Waterloo corridor and beyond. But the region has special relationships with York University, Canada's third-largest university, and Seneca College, a school of applied arts and technology with several campuses in the area.

York University links students with local tech companies for experiential learning opportunities, and partners with businesses for joint research projects. It also consults with area stakeholders to create programs.

"It's about identifying what skills the industry needs," says Sarah Howe, Director of Innovation York, the university's industry liaison office. "We're training students early and giving them opportunities for experience."



By DAPHNE GORDON  
Originally appeared in:  
MaRS Wired Different  
December 2018



## YORK REGION BOASTS CANADA'S HIGHEST CONCENTRATION OF TECH FIRMS

Yorkregion.com | York Region

Relative to its population, York Region has the "highest concentration" of tech companies in Canada, according to its chief planner.

"York region is home to over 4,000 information, communication and technology companies," said Paul Freeman, York Region's Chief Planner for Planning and Economic development. "This makes it the highest concentration in the technology sector in Canada, relative to our population."

According to the 2016 census population estimate by Statistics Canada, York Region has about 1.1 million people. On top of that, its population is continuously rising.

"There is quite an influx (of people) and a very good amount of growth York Region achieves, not only in terms of population growth, but also in the high tech sector," Freeman added. "We have many tech positions, good paying jobs." Citing a 2016 Statistics Canada report, Freeman said, "highest tech talent is not in Waterloo, but in York Region."

The competition between cities is high, especially in that there are about six million "highly skilled" tech workers across the United States and Canada, according to research company CBRE's annual talent report.

In July, CBRE reported that Toronto "for a second year running" was "North America's fastest growing tech market." However, CBRE didn't specify if it included the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in its research. "Other Canadian cities had a strong showing with Ottawa and Montreal ranking at thirteenth and fourteenth, respectively," it added.

York Region, meanwhile, has also its own special spots that differentiate it from other places, including that of Toronto.



## BOOK4TIME CONTINUES RECORD GROWTH; OPENED NEW OFFICE IN LONDON, ENGLAND

PR Web | Markham

To keep up with this incredible success and accommodate increases in hiring at home in Markham. Book4Time is doubling the size of their office space. The organization is continuing on a path of global expansion. This includes adding new sales offices in London and Dubai and increasing presences in Latin America and the Caribbean, bringing their total number of countries of operation to nearly 70.



## CLEARBRIDGE MOBILE LISTED AS ONE OF CANADA'S FASTEST-GROWING COMPANIES BY GROWTH 500

Clearbridge Mobile | Vaughan

Canadian Business and Maclean's listed Clearbridge Mobile on the Growth 500, the definitive ranking of Canada's Fastest-Growing Companies.

Clearbridge Mobile was ranked number 94 with a revenue growth of 918 per cent on the list formerly known as the PROFIT 500. In addition to this, we were also listed as the seventeenth fastest-growing software company in the country.

## KONTROL ENERGY EXPANDS ENERGY PLATFORM THROUGH TELUS MARKETPLACE

InvestorIntel | Vaughan

Kontrol Energy Corp. has announced it will offer its Internet of Things (IoT) energy management and analytics platform to enterprise customers in Canada on the TELUS IoT Marketplace. Kontrol currently provides its energy management and analytics services to three TELUS data centers.

"Following our recent acquisition of the iDimax SaaS technology, Kontrol now operates in more than 180 commercial buildings, spanning over 12 million-square-feet of real estate," says Paul Ghezzi, CEO of Kontrol Energy. "...Kontrol's energy software technology has delivered more than 500 million kilowatt hours of energy savings and the equivalent of 300,000 tonnes of CO2 reduction annually."



## CIENTET CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Manufacturing Automation | Markham

CleNET, a global technology service provider of technical consulting and software engineering solutions, has announced the grand opening of its Canadian Technology and Development Centre located in the City of Markham in the Greater Toronto Area.

CleNET has been focusing on automotive and mobility-related technologies' research and development since its establishment in Canada and is set to build the Canadian Centre of Excellence for automotive technologies.

"The Canadian Technology and Development Centre will give us the upper hand to better serve our customers in Canada and empower effective collaborations for fast growing teams. It provides an avenue for CleNET to become a stronger player in engineering and innovation in the Canadian market," according to Grace Sang, managing director of CleNET Canada.



## HIBAR SYSTEMS: THREE LESSONS FROM HOMEGROWN EXPORTERS

The Globe and Mail | Richmond Hill

Since 1986, Mr. McColl has been president and chief executive officer of Hibar Systems Ltd., a company based in Richmond Hill that manufactures automated industrial equipment.

Since the late eighties, Hibar has seen a 600-per cent increase in revenues, Mr. McColl says, with consistently more than 97 per cent of revenues derived from export-based sales. The company has grown from about 45 employees then to almost 160 today.

## STARTUP LAUNCHPAD, YEDI, RANKED AS TOP UNIVERSITY BUSINESS INCUBATOR

CBC | Vaughan

In the category of university-linked accelerators, the York Entrepreneurship Development Institute with facilities in Vaughan took the top spot, with three other Canadian accelerators rounding out the top four in the rankings.

UBI assessed hundreds of programs from more than 50 countries for the rankings, looking at factors like funding raised by startups, the number of jobs created, and the survival rate of companies.

## ENGHOUSE SYSTEMS ACQUIRED DUTCH AND SWEDISH TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

Globe Newswire | Markham

In 2018, Enghouse Systems announced its acquisition of two technology companies in Sweden and the Netherlands. Capana Sweden AB is a software company specialized in wholesale, interconnect, roaming, broadband billing, IoT and Partner Settlements.

Telexis Solutions is an innovative technology provider offering public transport agencies and operators end-to-end e-ticketing solutions.

## FLAGHOUSE CANADA EXPANDS ITS HQ OPERATIONS AT NEW FACILITY

Newswire | Richmond Hill

FlagHouse, a leading eCommerce and catalog retailer of equipment and programs for physical education, recreation, special needs and education markets is expanding its Canadian headquarters in a new location at 50 East Wilmot Street in Richmond Hill. This is expected to help the company double its workforce.

## SPOTLIGHT ON BUCHNER MANUFACTURING

Georgina Economic Development | Georgina

Buchner Manufacturing's Pepperlaw office is the headquarters with multiple locations in Ontario including Newmarket, North Bay, Owen Sound, and Kingston. Buchner Manufacturing offers steel and aluminum roofing, eaves trough, soffit, fascia, as well as, products for the outside of the home; supplied internationally to the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East.

Production has evolved to include more automation that reduces the negative impact of physical labour and increases efficiency. Buchner Manufacturing employs over 100 workers with 42 per cent having worked for the company over five years and 32 per cent having worked for the company for more than 10 years.





**Since 2010, Regional business advisory services facilitated the creation of 3,700 new and expansion jobs across York Region in collaboration with local municipalities and service delivery partners.**



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

York Region's Economic Development team is actively involved in the local business community. The breadth of the team's activities encompasses business advisory, economic research, innovation initiatives and business attraction marketing and sales. York Region's investment and marketing activities are delivered through its York Link program. Small business entrepreneurship services are delivered in the region's northern six municipalities by the York Small Business Enterprise Centre.

These highlights showcase some of the key activities and achievements in 2018 by York Region's Economic Development team. In collaboration with local municipalities, stakeholders and partners, these initiatives are making a real impact on local business and economic growth.





Canadian multinational electronics manufacturing services company Célestica celebrated in November 2018 the official grand opening of its new Toronto area facility in Newmarket, bringing about 700 jobs to the community. York Region's Economic Strategy office supported Newmarket's proposal in the competitive bid phase as well as provided initial hiring promotional support.

## YORK REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROUDLY WORKS TO FOSTER BUSINESS, INNOVATION, AND INVESTMENT

Regional Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction (BRE&A) advisory services to established companies are focused primarily on knowledge-based sectors and customized to client needs. These services augment and extend the reach of corporate call programs undertaken at the local-municipal level by leveraging regional economies of scale, robust social media marketing channels and an extensive network of service delivery partners.

Regional staff are also responsible for the delivery of small business and entrepreneurship advisory services in the region's northern six municipalities via the York Small Business Enterprise Centre in Newmarket.

Since 2010, regional business advisory services delivered in collaboration with local municipalities have facilitated the creation of approximately 3,700 new and expansion-related private sector jobs across York Region. These services have also helped with retention of thousands of local jobs, as companies continue to assess business location options for operational and talent attraction reasons.

In 2018, York Region's business advisory teams engaged over 800 businesses and entrepreneurs and delivered roughly 250 in-depth business consultations. The next few pages highlight some of the many success stories facilitated via regional programs.



In July 2018, award-winning cybersecurity tech start-up, Cybeats, opened its first office in Aurora with the support of York Region's Economic Development team, in collaboration with the Town of Aurora.



In January 2018, GM Canada celebrated the grand opening of its Canadian Technical Centre - Markham Campus; making it Canada's largest automotive innovation hub. The City of Markham, in partnership with York Region's Economic Development team, were pivotal in supporting GM's new facility; creating 700 new software and engineering jobs. The event was livestreamed on York Link's Facebook page.



York Region's Economic Development team highlighted the growing local co-working sector by providing region-wide awareness marketing support to The Hub; a world-class shared office space in Vaughan that opened in 2018.

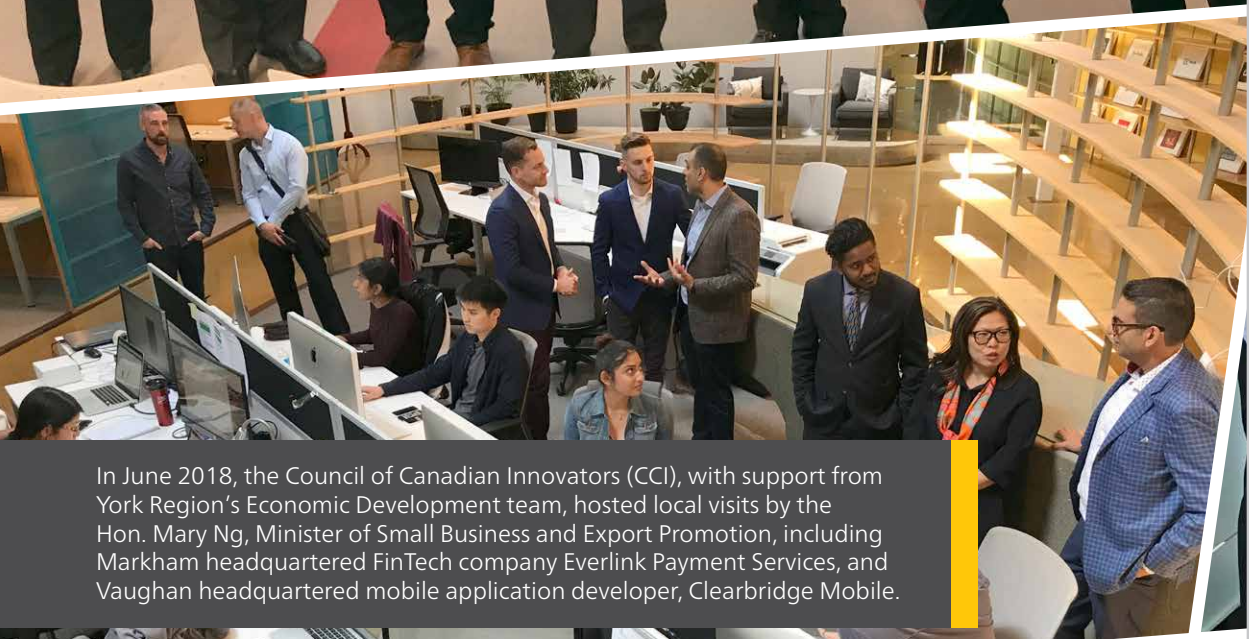


In February 2018, York Region's Economic Development team, partnered with KPMG and the City of Vaughan, hosted the region's key innovation support organizations at the KPMG Tower in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre to discuss collaboration opportunities in promoting local entrepreneurship.





In March 2018, CleNET, a U.S.-Chinese technical consulting and software engineering company opened a Canadian Development Centre focused on autonomous vehicle technology in Markham. The City of Markham and York Region Economic Development teams worked together with CleNET to facilitate their investment, which is expected to create up to 100 high-skilled technology jobs over the next three years.



In June 2018, the Council of Canadian Innovators (CCI), with support from York Region's Economic Development team, hosted local visits by the Hon. Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, including Markham headquartered FinTech company Everlink Payment Services, and Vaughan headquartered mobile application developer, Clearbridge Mobile.



In October 2018, York Region's Economic Development team had an integral role in the opening of OTT Financial's new office in Markham. OTT provides WeChat and AliPay payment platforms that serve Canadian merchants and Chinese consumers.





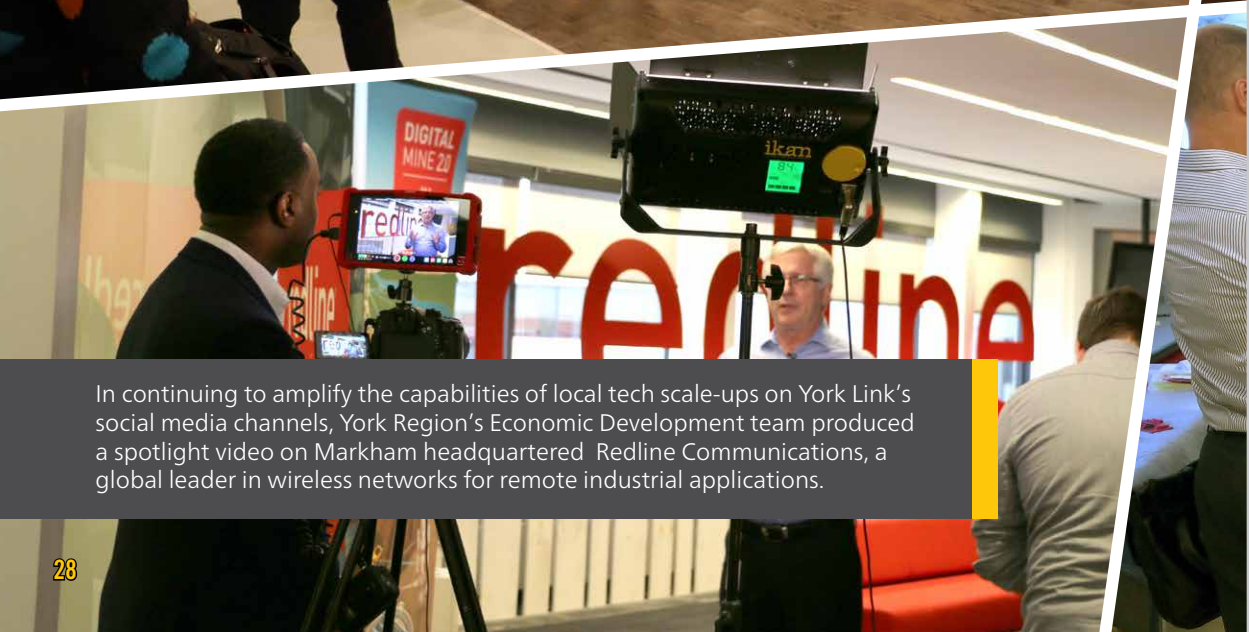
In November, York Region hosted its fourth Broadband and Innovation Summit at the Toronto Marriott Markham. Registration exceeded 270 people from 133 public and private sector organizations who converged to discuss how technology affects employment trends across all industries.



In February 2018, York Region's Economic Strategy office hosted a delegation led by GTA's FDI agency Toronto Global of Canadian Trade Commissioners from around the world at the YSpace Innovation Centre for a presentation on the region's tech sector.



York Region Residents and community stakeholders were accompanied by staff from the Planning and Economic Development branch on a walking tour as they learned about the future benefits of York Region's urban growth centres as the Region focuses on intensification in Markham Centre, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Richmond Hill Centre, and Newmarket Centre.

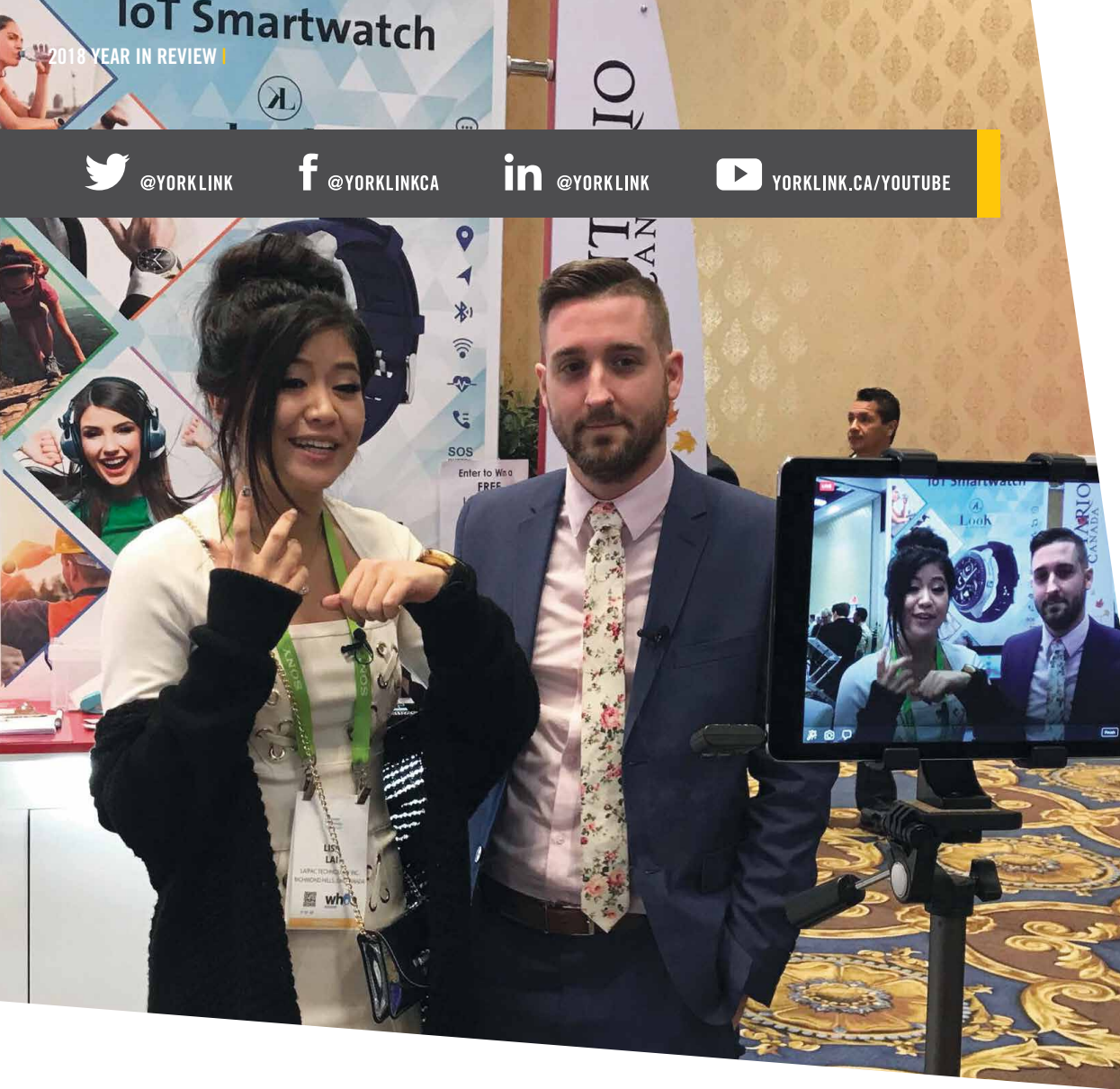


In continuing to amplify the capabilities of local tech scale-ups on York Link's social media channels, York Region's Economic Development team produced a spotlight video on Markham headquartered Redline Communications, a global leader in wireless networks for remote industrial applications.



Bluewrist is one of York Region's fastest growing tech scale-up companies and continued its fast growth with a move in 2018 to a larger office space in the City of Markham. The company has been working closely with Markham and York Region's Economic Development teams and will be featured in York Region's Technology Experience Pavilion at Collision Conference in 2019.





## YORK LINK SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT: INNOVATIVE YORK REGION TECH COMPANIES SHOWCASED AT THE CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW & MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS

The Consumer Electronics Show (CES) and Mobile World Congress Americas (MWCA), both held in the U.S., are two of the largest tech conferences in the world. Local technology companies were present at these events in full force to showcase “made in York Region” innovations ranging from smart-watch phones, to cellular signal amplifiers, to smart-home building solutions, education software apps, and much more.

Leveraging the popularity of these tech-centric conferences, York Region Economic Development partnered with Ontario’s Ministry of International Trade to deliver an on-site promotional campaign via York Link’s social media channels.

The campaign highlighted 10 technology companies from Markham, Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Aurora, in the broader context of more than 4,300 tech companies in York Region; Canada’s second largest cluster of information and communications technology businesses.

Piggy-backing on the real-time social media activity at CES and MWCA, York Region’s ‘technology spotlight’ video interviews generated significant exposure (over 85,500 views and over 433 hours of watch time on Facebook) continuing to raise awareness of York Region as a key technology hub in North America while creating additional opportunities for participating companies to engage with industry peers and media.

## YORK REGION WINS EDCO PROMOTIONAL AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR YORK LINK’S SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

York Region’s Economic Development team won the Economic Developers Council of Ontario’s (EDCO) Award of Excellence in the “Technology & New Media” category for York Link’s social media campaign promoting York Region’s business community, talent attraction, and local innovation ecosystem partners.

York Region’s Economic Development staff were on hand at the annual EDCO conference and awards dinner in Toronto to receive the 2018 award; joined by Paul Freeman, Chief Planner.

The team is extremely proud to have been recognized with this award as the work on social media is contributing to quantifiable success on the ground and increased exposure for York Region as the place for business investment in the Greater Toronto Area.

In 2019, York Link, will be promoting a major York Region presence - *online and in-person* - at North America’s fastest growing technology conference, Collision, in Toronto.

### OTHER 2018 SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS:

**GM Canada** partnered with York Link to livestream the grand opening of the Canadian Technical Centre - Markham Campus on York Link’s Facebook page. This new facility is scaling up to house 700 high-skilled engineering and software development jobs.

The **York Region Broadband & Innovation Summit** and **York Region FinTech Summit** relied heavily on York Link for promotion and the two hashtags (#IntelligentYR and #YRfintech) generated over 2.8 million impressions, had a reach of nearly 312,000 people, and had contributions from 137 different people on Twitter throughout the day of the Summits.

York Link’s social media messaging was embraced throughout the year by the local business community, federal and provincial government multipliers, and other ecosystem partners. This helped York Link increase its followers across all social media channels by 18% and engagements by 56% compared to the previous year.

<b>22,000</b>	<b>2,918,075</b>	<b>27,240</b>	<b>30,811</b>
FOLLOWERS	IMPRESSIONS	ENGAGEMENTS	MINUTES OF YORK LINK VIDEOS WATCHED

Combined statistics across all of York Link’s social media in 2018.







**YORK REGION JOINS THE CITY OF TORONTO'S HOST COMMITTEE FOR 'COLLISION'; NORTH AMERICA'S FASTEST GROWING TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE**

York Region | Investment & Marketing - Economic Strategy

York Region's Economic Strategy team was invited by the City of Toronto in mid-2018 to join a pan-Canadian host committee for North America's fastest growing technology conference, Collision, moving from the U.S. to Canada in 2019. This is the first time the conference will be held outside of the United States. Collision's relocation is a sign of the growing importance of Canada's global tech sector. The conference will be held at the Enercare Centre in Toronto May 20-23, 2019.

As a major technology hub in the GTA and Canada, York Region is joining the City of Toronto's host committee alongside other leading Canadian tech jurisdictions such as Ottawa, Montreal, Vancouver, and Waterloo. Other participating tech and business organizations include MaRS, Communitech, DMZ, OneEleven, TechStars, Toronto Region Board of Trade, and investment attraction agencies from all three levels of government.

Collision Conference is one of the most significant events in the global tech community, consisting of 14 sub-conferences plus a range of professional and social side events. Collision is expected to attract 20,000 attendees from 120 countries, 6,000 start-ups and companies, hundreds of investors, 1,200 media representatives, and over 400 speakers.

York Region, in partnership with local municipalities, the private sector, and innovation organizations, will have a significant and important presence at Collision that will solidify the Region's position as a destination for top tech companies and talent in the Greater Toronto Area.

**COLLABORATION IS KEY IN SUPPORTING YORK REGION'S AGRI-FOOD SECTOR**  
Planning & Economic Development | York Region

York Region has a thriving agri-food cluster with over 700 farm-based businesses and 270 food and beverage manufacturers and distributors. There are about 57,000 jobs in the region's agri-food sector, with an economic impact of \$6.3 billion, according to Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Agriculture. The agri-food sector is a highly visible and important economic driver in the Region.

In 2018, York Region staff worked closely with municipal partners, the Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group, and with other stakeholder groups to begin the implementation of the Agriculture and Agri-food Strategy. The Strategy was completed in 2017 and was designed to assist York Region in continuing to

provide support to its agricultural community with a strategic plan for the future. A key focus of the economic strategy team on agriculture in the Region is to build on existing stakeholder connections, and to explore new opportunities for collaboration across the agri-food value chain. On September 28, 2018, York Region and partners hosted the successful Agri-



Food Workshop and Networking Forum in the City of Vaughan.

The purpose of the event was to engage and educate the local business community about waste reduction solutions that would benefit their bottom line. The event was attended by 55 participants from across the agri-food business sector. Attendees included food processors, retailers, and other value chain stakeholders.

Other action items completed in 2018 include hosting succession planning workshops, an agricultural implementation workshop with OMAFRA, an asset mapping workshop, and promotion of local farms through the York Farm Fresh Association. This was done through the development of the York Farm Fresh Map encouraging traffic to local farm gate operations.

One important goal of the Agricultural and Agri-Food Strategy is to facilitate and foster relationships between all players in the agri-food sector by continuing to develop improved synergy between producers, processors, retailers, and stakeholder groups with an interest in local food production. This will be part of the work plan in 2019.

**YORK REGION NAMED TO THE TOP 10 INTELLIGENT COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD**  
Planning & Economic Development | York Region

On October 24, 2018, the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) named the Region to its "Top 10 Intelligent Communities in the World with Population 1,000,000 and over." This latest recognition by the ICF is due to the ongoing commitment by York Region and its local municipalities to initiatives focused on leveraging technology designed to improve the quality-of-life for its constituents.

These initiatives include efforts to enable broadband service delivery, to expand access to open data sets, and to improve traffic flow throughout the Region.

**RESIDENTS LEARN ABOUT YORK REGION'S GROWING URBAN CENTRES**  
Planning & Economic Development | York Region

Residents participated in walking tours at two of the four urban growth centres within York Region on different days to learn about community planning and economic development.

Residents along with Planning and Economic Development staff toured through Markham Centre and the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre to gain insight into the planning process and how these areas are of strategic importance to the Region as areas to live and work both now and in the future.



**COUNCIL OF CANADIAN INNOVATORS CONNECT WITH YORK REGION SCALE-UPS**

Planning & Economic Development | York Region

York Region's Economic Development team maintains and develops an extensive network of business advisory partners in both the private and public sector to facilitate business retention, expansion, and attraction in York Region.

One example of a key regional initiative in this area in 2018 was a strategic collaboration with the Council of Canadian Innovators (CCI) to support the growth and policy advocacy needs of local technology scale-ups.

The collaboration work with CCI included targeted consultancy introductions, as well as, a high-profile CEO business roundtable led by CCI Chair and former Blackberry CEO Jim Balsillie.





## WHERE IS THE PROVEN AUTOMOTIVE TECH CLUSTER IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA?

The future of the automotive industry is in autonomous, connected, and electric vehicle technologies – the autotech sector. Finding top software developers and hardware engineers is tantamount to the success in this highly competitive phase of the automotive industry.

Automotive innovation that will ultimately lead to the development of the cars of the future now requires a labour force with skills in software coding, artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, wireless communications, machine learning, and sensor technologies.

### YORK REGION: LEADING LOCATION FOR AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

York Region's thriving autotech cluster has been gaining momentum and its success has positioned the region as a leading automotive innovation hub in the Greater Toronto Area and across Canada.

The autotech hardware and software ecosystem in York Region includes industry leaders such as CleNET, GM Canada Technical Centre, Lytx, DealerFX, Veoneer, Magna and Autochargers, among others.

According to the Automotive Policy Research Centre (APRC) York Region is also home to Canada's largest automotive parts manufacturing industry cluster. There are more than 100 automotive parts manufacturers located across York Region; from Vaughan, Richmond Hill, and Markham, to Aurora, Newmarket, and King. Some of these companies are global industry leaders such as Magna International, Multimatic, Autoliv, Martinrea, Nova Plastics, and Showa Canada.

Toronto area's York Region, specifically Richmond Hill and Markham, is also a Canadian headquarter location for major auto brands such as BMW, Honda, Hyundai, Mazda, and Volvo Canada.

### 2018 AUTOTECH SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

These are very exciting times for York Region's automotive technology cluster. Here are several other recent announcements that made industry headlines in 2018:

In March 2018 close to 100 attendees gathered at York University's accelerator 'YSpace' in downtown Markham to celebrate the announcement that U.S.-Chinese company **CleNET Technologies** was opening their Canadian R&D centre focused on automotive technologies.

York Region's Economic Development team, in collaboration with the City of Markham, worked closely with CleNET to support them as they established their first Canadian location.

CleNET is a global technology service provider of technical consulting and software engineering solutions. Their expansion into the Canadian market has been focused on expertise in automotive infotainment software development, and testing for the "connected car." The company currently has over 30 employees and expects to reach over 100 within the next three years.

U.S. company **Lytx** recently expanded into a larger R&D centre location in Markham. Lytx's vehicle fleet video telematics solutions captured and analyzed more than 80 billion miles of driving data to better understand, predict, and prevent incidents on the road.

Cleantech company **Autochargers**, opened an electric vehicle charging technology headquarters and manufacturing facility in Markham; creating up to 100 new jobs.

Scale-up tech companies **Dealer-FX** and **Bluewrist**, landed significant contracts for their software related to auto dealership customer service platforms, and vehicle manufacturing automation processes, respectively.

**General Motors Canada** opened a 150,000 sq.ft. Canadian software development centre in Markham, York Region – the heart of the GTA's enterprise technology cluster.

*Continues next page.*



**THIS NEW FACILITY IS “CANADA’S LARGEST  
AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION HUB”**

Finding a location that offers access to a large pool of experienced software development talent and is also an area that would be attractive to potential global talent, played a critical role in GM’s decision to establish what the company calls “Canada’s largest automotive innovation hub”.

As stated in January 2018 by Kenneth Kelzer, GM’s Vice-President of Global Vehicle Subsystems, at the GM Canada’s Technical Centre’s 2018 grand opening in Markham, “GM deliberately selected this site in Canada because of its clear capacity for innovation, proven talent, and central access to great universities, and innovative partners.”

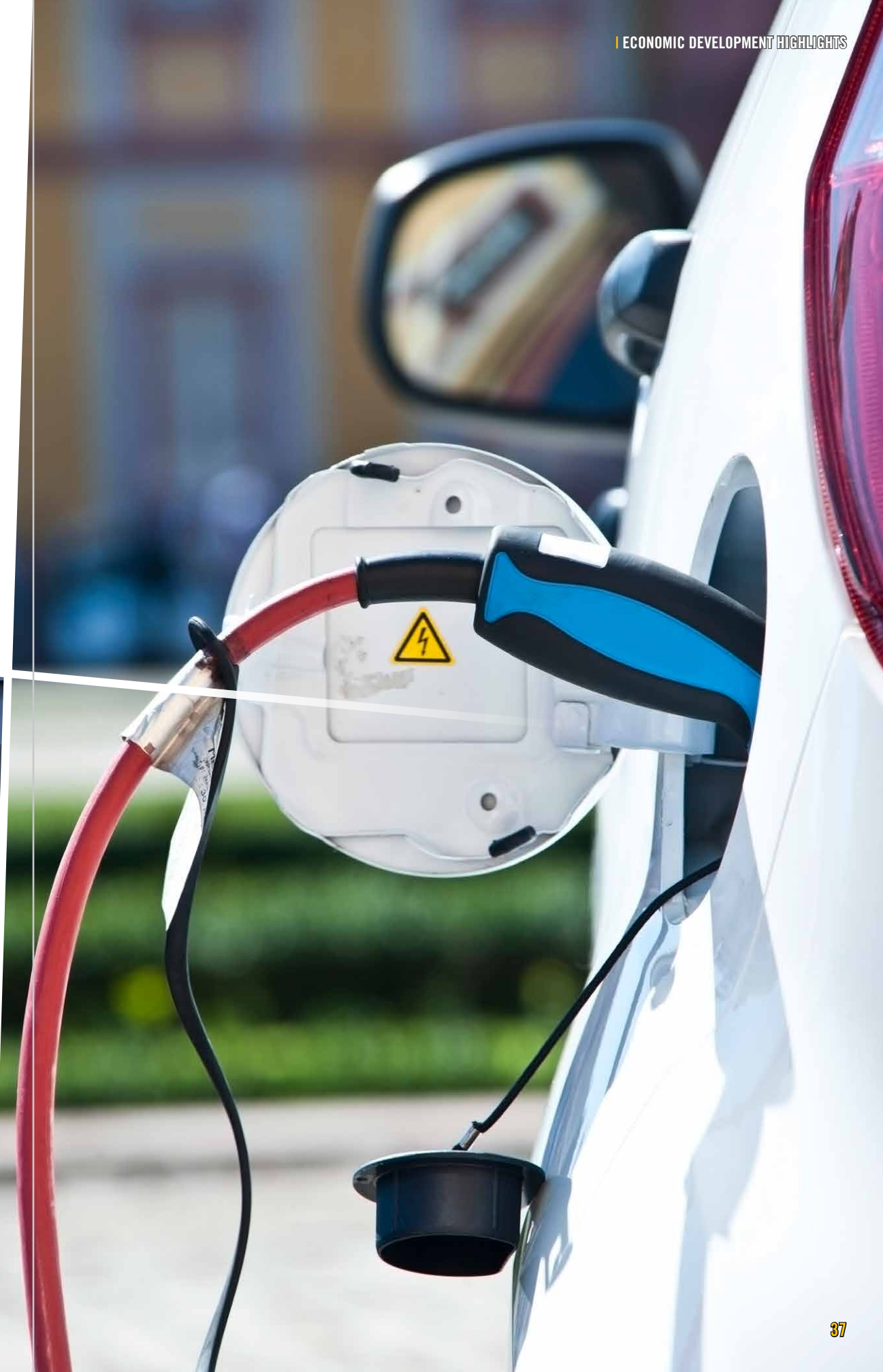
GM’s Markham campus has a global mandate for software development and innovation in the areas of next-generation active safety, in-car infotainment systems, and software controls related to GM’s development of self-driving and connected vehicles. The space was carefully

designed with one key goal in mind; offering their employees an amazing experience everyday where they can collaborate on and design the cars of the future.

York Region’s Economic Development team played a key role in facilitating GM’s location selection. The team also assisted with aftercare community awareness building and with talent acquisition initiatives. GM’s grand opening event streamed live on York Link’s Facebook page.

Working with local municipal partners, York Region Economic Development actively worked to facilitate the growth of the local automotive technology cluster. Support is provided through direct-to-business services as well as investments in infrastructure, transit, urban growth, and community building – thereby attracting and retaining top talent from around the world.

Adapted from  
**York Link Blog Series**  
May 2018





## YORK REGION ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANIES TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT THE 2018 TORONTO TECH SUMMIT

For many the acronym “AI” (artificial intelligence) brings immediate thoughts of the “Terminator”, or super robots who plan to take over the world.

However, as highlighted at the Toronto Tech Summit, hosted at the **MaRS Discovery District** in downtown Toronto, the pursuit of AI integration now weaves its way into less exciting business operations such as customer service support, personnel assistants, human resources, and e-commerce. The inclusion of artificial intelligence in everyday operations is already having a huge impact on, and dramatically reshaping how these sectors engage with their customers. The world of customer experience is changing rapidly. It is being driven by three game-changing technologies; artificial intelligence, asynchronous messaging, and blockchain.

The Tech Summit brought together an audience of over 500 technology professionals and enthusiasts interested in exploring the latest trends in artificial intelligence now used by a variety of industries, including the future of autonomous vehicles.

York Link was one of the lead sponsors at the 2018 Summit. The team was out in full force answering questions from participants about the scale of York Region’s technology ecosystem, and about career opportunities within many of its leading tech companies.

The highway 404 /407 business area has hundreds of global technology firms and Canadian scale-ups that are developing

disruptive technologies in areas of AI; IoT, business applications, autonomous vehicles, mobile applications, cloud computing, and more.

Companies such as IBM, GM Canada, AMD, Adastra, Qualcomm, Wysdom AI, MobileLIVE, Daisy Intelligence, Bluewrist, and Indus.ai are just a sample of top global and Canadian scale-ups that are leading the AI charge in York Region.

The Summit was organized by Genesys Technologies, which is headquartered in Silicon Valley and has a large R&D office in Markham. Genesys is a leader in customer experience solutions software for some of the biggest global brands powering more than 25 billion of the world’s customer experiences each year.

A portion of Genesys’ next generation technology development is done at their Canadian R & D Centre in Markham. It is home to over 150 employees, doing everything from software engineering, to development to sales and marketing.

Along with Tech Summit host and organizer, Genesys, other York Region companies such as Richmond Hill-based MobileLIVE and Markham-based IBM Canada participated on discussion panels; sharing their thoughts on the latest trends in AI and its tremendous impact on customer experience.

York Link Blog Series  
June 2018



## 2018 YORK REGION BROADBAND & INNOVATION SUMMIT: THE KNOWLEDGE WORKFORCE WILL DRIVE THE FUTURE

The Regional Municipality of York hosted its fourth York Region Broadband and Innovation Summit, this time at the Toronto Marriott Markham in the City of Markham. Registration exceeded 270 people from 133 public and private sector organizations who converged to discuss how technology affects employment trends across all industries.

Federal, provincial, regional and municipal government representatives also attended and joined in the discussion about the importance of hiring, retaining and developing knowledge-based workers in securing their participation in the broadband economy.

Marc Saltzman, Master of Ceremonies, welcomed summit guests and cited York Region as a knowledge workforce hub, and a place where talent and opportunity intersect. Speakers represented YorkNet, Robert Half Technology, Quanser, Magna International, Compugen, York University, Seneca College, Predictive Success, and the Workforce Planning Board of York Region.

## 2018 YORK REGION FINTECH SUMMIT: INNOVATION IN FINANCE WITH MOBILITY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

On November 8, York Region hosted The 2018 FinTech Summit; following the success of the first York Region FinTech Summit in 2016. York Region is home to the second-largest financial, insurance and accounting services cluster in Ontario with over 2,900 firms and many of them are utilizing or integrating financial technology into their businesses.

The summit highlighted how enhanced mobility and AI are changing the financial landscape as we shift to the idea of "self-driving" finance. Featured keynote speaker Denizhan Uykur, of Monitor Deloitte took the audience through a discussion based on his recent insights and findings from the World Economic Forum report on this topic that he co-authored.

One of the key highlights of the summit was a lightning round pitch session with five up-and-coming FinTech Companies. Karen Wong, Co-Founder and CEO of TakuLabs, operating out of the IBM Innovation Space in Markham, was awarded the grand prize of a one-on-one meeting with Ryan Spinner, Head of Innovation with Aviva Canada. Muhammad Rashid, Co-Founder and CEO of Moregidge took home the People's Choice Award and won a one-on-one meeting with Bhupinder Randhawa, Partner, and Bereskin & Parr LLP.

The 2018 York Region FinTech Summit provided the opportunity for attendees to learn more about the financial service and financial technology business landscape in the Region, in addition to global trends in financial technology.







## YORK SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE

York Small Business Enterprise Centre (YSBEC) supports local entrepreneurs and small business throughout York Region's northern six towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

From the Summer Company and Starter Company Plus programs to holding group and individual business consultations this is a brief look back at the year that was for the York Small Business Enterprise Centre.



**STARTER COMPANY PLUS**YSBEC | [York Region](#)

Starter Company Plus is an entrepreneurship program geared to help adults over 18 to start or grow their business. The program provides grants of up to \$5,000 along with training, advice and mentoring. In 2018, the YSBEC Starter Company Plus program trained 40 participants and disbursed 16 grants to help participants with their businesses.

**CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: PHYSACTIVE SPORTS MEDICINE**YSBEC | [Richmond Hill & Whitchurch-Stouffville](#)

Julian Roach has every reason to be confident. A registered physiotherapist, he has treated more than 18,000 patients in England, Finland and Canada. He's also an Adjunct Lecturer and Clinical Educator for the University of Toronto and served as a Lead Physiotherapist for the 2015 Pan Am Games. That's just for starters.

He clearly knows his stuff, but when he launched PhysActive Sports Medicine in 2016, he was smart enough to know what he didn't know. "I was a new entrepreneur," he says. "I knew how to manage a physiotherapy clinic, but I had no experience in running a business."

The Starter Company Plus program helped him focus on ways of reaching potential patients, including marketing and clarify his business model.

**CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: JULIA'S BEST EVER INC.**YSBEC | [King City](#)

Julia Brown started roasting and blending almonds into nut butter for fun. Brown's degree (in media, information and techno-culture) had

prepared her for the marketing aspects of running a business, but not so much about business and putting together a business plan. For that reason, she decided to take part in the Starter Company Plus program.

"The program was awesome, I would never have put together a business plan like that just because numbers aren't my strength," she says.

"Every couple of days, I look at it to see how on track I am. I can see how much I need to be selling to reach my goals and how much I should be producing to maintain that. I'm in 40 locations and I hope to triple that number in the next year."

**SUMMER COMPANY LAUNCHES 12 NEW ENTREPRENEURS IN YORK REGION**YSBEC | [York Region](#)

In support of York Region's youth and entrepreneurship, YSBEC once again delivered the Government of Ontario's Summer Company in the summer of 2018. The provincially funded program provides students between the ages of 15 and 29 to start and operate a successful summer business.

Along with a start-up grant of up to \$3,000, the program assists young entrepreneurs with offering mentoring from community business leaders and hands on training such as writing a business plan, building a marketing strategy, customer service, and cash flow management. In 2018, 12 students successfully completed the Summer Company program, receiving grants totaling \$36,000 and earning over \$48,800 in total revenue.

**CONNECTING BUSINESS WITH LEARNING AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES**YSBEC | [York Region](#)

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre, through partnership with the Ontario Government hosted or partnered on more than 60 seminars and seven business events, together outreach attendees amounted to over 1,800 people. These events covered business topics including marketing, sales, financing, market research and business plan development.

**ARE YOU LOOKING TO START OR GROW YOUR BUSINESS?**YSBEC | [York Region](#)

If you are starting a new business, or are an existing small business with less than 10 employees, contact us! We can help.

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre (YSBEC) serves small businesses in the northern six York Region municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville. The municipalities of Markham, Richmond Hill, and Vaughan also have Small Business Enterprise Centres to serve their respective communities.

The YSBEC is managed by the Regional Municipality of York's Economic Strategy division and is a partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth, and the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Science. Each of the Region's Small Business Enterprise Centres focus on providing support to both new startups and existing small businesses in their communities through business consultations, workshops and seminars, including networking events.

Call and book a one-on-one consultation with YSBEC at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71572, or visit us online: [www.yorksmallbusiness.ca](http://www.yorksmallbusiness.ca)







## ECONOMIC INDICATORS

York Region's economy continues to grow and understanding how and what that growth might mean plays an important role in planning for the future. Over the next few pages you'll find information and data that will highlight trends on business growth, jobs creation, population growth, housing, industry sector breakdowns, and more; all of which reinforces York Region as the place *where talent and opportunity intersect*.



**1.2** **MILLION**  
RESIDENTS

**636,000**  
LOCAL JOBS

**1,500**  
NEW BUSINESSES  
ANNUAL AVERAGE (10 YEARS)

**3<sup>RD</sup>** LARGEST  
BUSINESS HUB IN  
ONTARIO  
52,000+ EMPLOYER ESTABLISHMENTS

**2<sup>ND</sup>** LARGEST  
ICT SECTOR IN CANADA  
WITH 4,300+ COMPANIES  
AND HIGHEST DENSITY OVERALL

**27** FORTUNE 500  
COMPANIES  
HAVE OPERATIONS IN TORONTO AREA'S YORK REGION

**20%**  
OF GREATER TORONTO'S **STEM** AND **BUSINESS**  
GRADUATES LIVE IN YORK REGION

**2<sup>ND</sup>** LARGEST  
FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE  
SERVICES SECTOR IN  
ONTARIO WITH 2,900 FIRMS

**6** OF GREATER TORONTO AREA'S  
**TOP 10 ICT**  
CORPORATE R&D SPENDERS

**3<sup>RD</sup>** HIGHEST  
POPULATION WITH  
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION  
AMONGST CANADA'S LARGEST MUNICIPALITIES  
(70%)

**230** DISTINCT ETHNIC  
ORIGINS AND OVER  
**120 LANGUAGES SPOKEN**

**\$3.9** **BILLION**  
CONSTRUCTION VALUE (2017)  
**2<sup>ND</sup> HIGHEST IN ONTARIO**

**\$19**  
BILLION IN ANNUAL EXPORTS  
2,400 EXPORTERS

**6<sup>TH</sup>** LARGEST  
MUNICIPALITY IN  
CANADA

**\$4.7B**  
10-YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

YORK REGION LOCAL GDP  
**\$56**  
BILLION [est.]

**3<sup>RD</sup>** LARGEST  
POPULATION IN ONTARIO  
FOR RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE OF CANADA  
(47%)

**18** **PUBLIC** COLLEGES AND  
UNIVERSITIES  
WITHIN 120 KILOMETERS

YORK REGION'S TOP 28 COMPANIES  
**\$106**  
BILLION IN ANNUAL REVENUE

**12,500**  
NEW JOB GROWTH  
ANNUAL AVERAGE

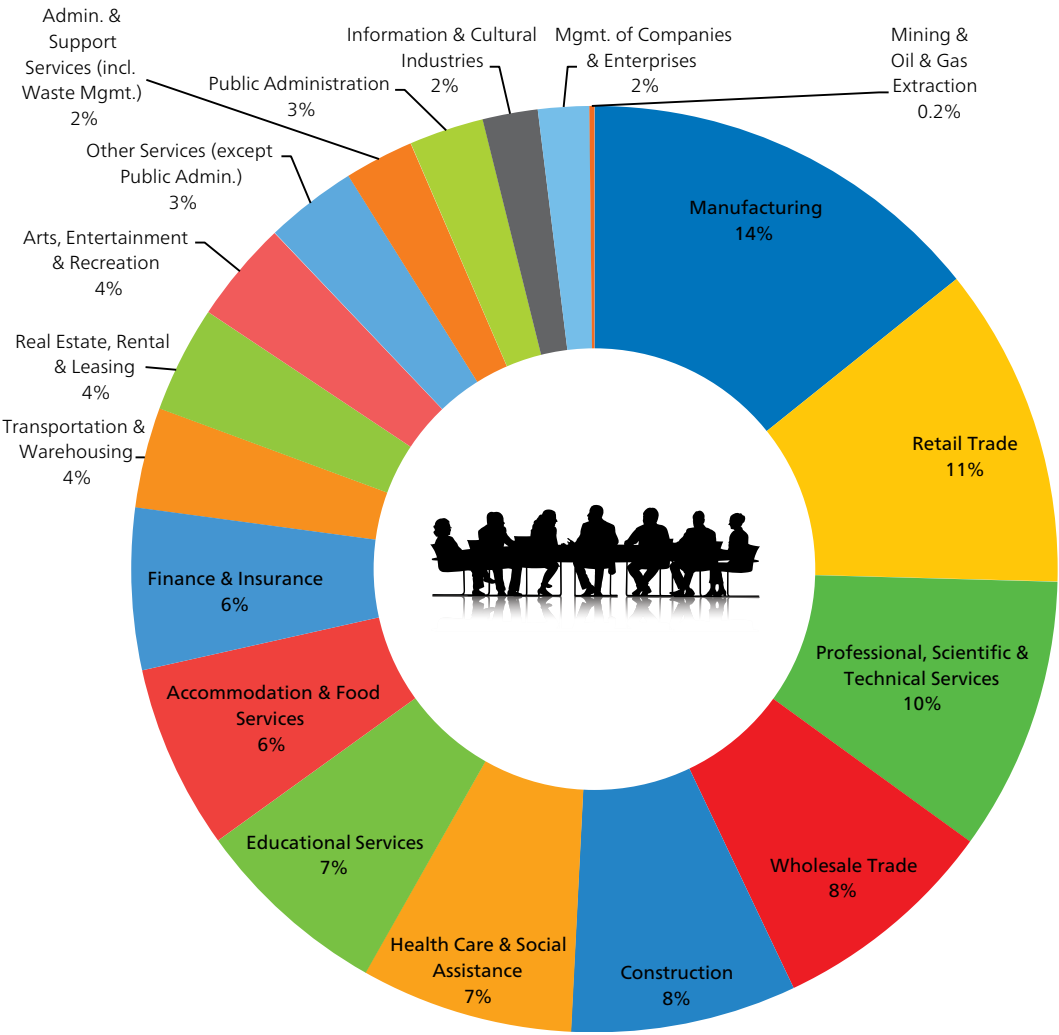
**YORK REGION IS AN**

**ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE**



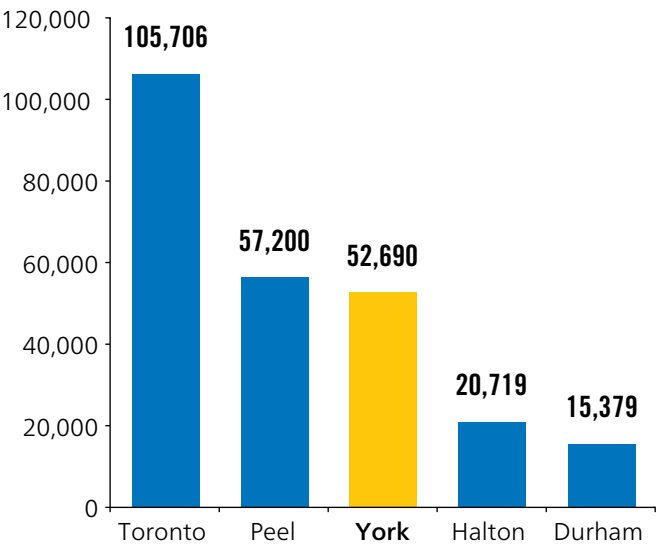
YORK REGION EMPLOYER BUSINESS COUNT BY SECTOR			
INDUSTRY SECTOR (NAICS)		BUSINESS COUNT	
54   Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9,153	31 - 33   Manufacturing	2,632
23   Construction	6,130	52   Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,549
44 - 45   Retail Trade	4,816	56   Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,367
62   Healthcare and Social Assistance	4,094	52   Finance and Insurance	2,086
81   Other Services (Except Public Administration)	3,707	48 - 49   Transportation and Warehousing	1,952
41   Wholesale Trade	3,500	61   Educational Services	755
72   Accommodation and Food Services	2,882	51   Information and Cultural Industries	633
Other*	5,434	TOTAL: 52,690	
*Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; Utilities; Management of Companies and Enterprises; Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Public Administration; Unclassified			
Source: Statistics Canada   CBC December 2018			

YORK REGION DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEYED EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR



Source: York Region, Planning and Economic Development | 2018 Employment Survey

TOTAL EMPLOYER BUSINESSES BY GTA REGION



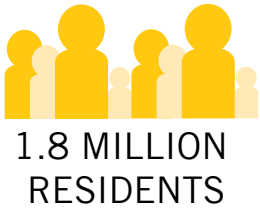
Source: Statistics Canada | CBC December 2018

CANADA'S TOP TECHNOLOGY HUBS

MUNICIPALITY	# of ICT EMPLOYERS
City of Toronto	6,810
YORK REGION	4,388
Peel Region	3,974
Greater Vancouver	3,927
Montreal	3,801
Ottawa	3,125
Calgary	2,813
Halton Region	1,633
Edmonton	1,470
Durham Region	850
Waterloo	780

Source: Statistics Canada | CBC December 2018

BY 2041, YORK REGION IS PROJECTED TO GROW TO:





## GREATER TORONTO AREA NEW HOME SALES IN 2018

REGION	TOTAL	SINGLE FAMILY HOMES	CONDOMINIUM APARTMENTS
Toronto	11,785	168	11,617
<b>YORK REGION</b>	<b>4,030</b>	<b>1,042</b>	<b>2,988</b>
Peel Region	3,624	1,121	2,503
Durham Region	1,694	749	945
Halton Region	1,660	761	899
<b>GTA COMBINED</b>	<b>22,793</b>	<b>3,841</b>	<b>18,952</b>

Source: Altus Group | Totals based on month-by-month data aggregation per municipal geography and may differ from adjusted data for year-end GTA total released at a later date.

## OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE IN YORK REGION

TYPE	ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS
Single	236,373
Semi-Detached	22,421
Row / Townhouse	48,076
Duplex	15,160
Apartment	55,450
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL</b>	<b>377,480</b>

Source: York Region, Planning and Economic Development | 2018

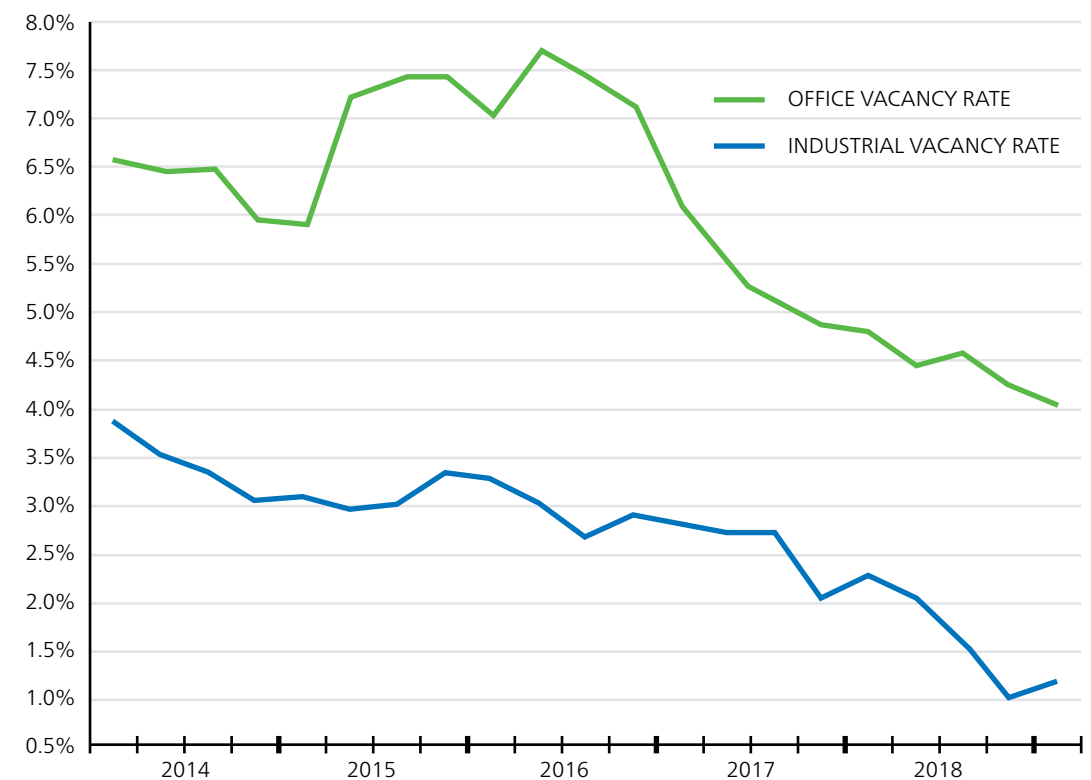
## BUSINESS PROPERTY TAX RATES IN THE GTA

MUNICIPALITY	COMMERCIAL	INDUSTRIAL
<b>Markham (York Region)</b>	<b>1.61%</b>	<b>1.87%</b>
<b>Richmond Hill (York Region)</b>	<b>1.64%</b>	<b>1.91%</b>
<b>Vaughan (York Region)</b>	<b>1.65%</b>	<b>1.93%</b>
Oakville	1.71%	2.65%
<b>Aurora (York Region)</b>	<b>1.77%</b>	<b>2.07%</b>
Burlington	1.78%	2.77%
<b>Newmarket (York Region)</b>	<b>1.82%</b>	<b>2.13%</b>
Mississauga	1.99%	2.22%
Brampton	2.14%	2.44%
Toronto	2.40%	2.45%
Pickering	2.50%	3.49%
Oshawa	2.87%	4.04%

Per Cent of Taxable Assessment | Ordered by Commercial Tax Rate  
Source: NRU | August 2018

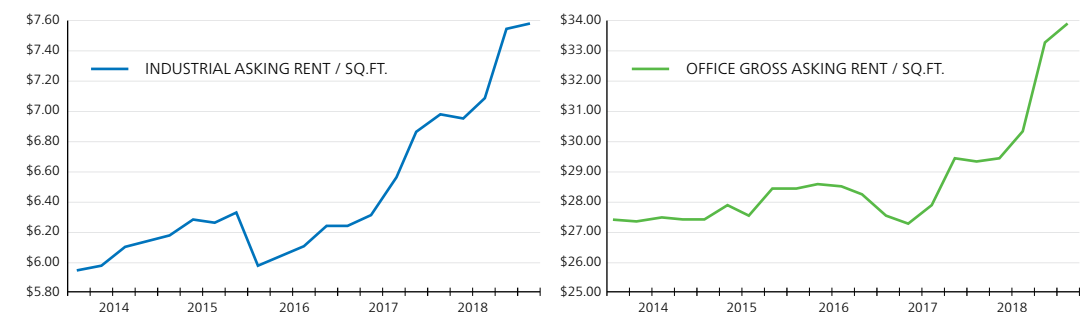
For more resources, please visit our website: [yorklink.ca](http://yorklink.ca)

## YORK REGION OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL VACANCY RATES (%)



Source: CoStar | January 2019

## INDUSTRIAL AND OFFICE GROSS ASKING RENT / SQ.FT.



Source: CoStar | January 2019

## YORK REGION COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL VACANCY RATE AND RENT

## OFFICE SPACE

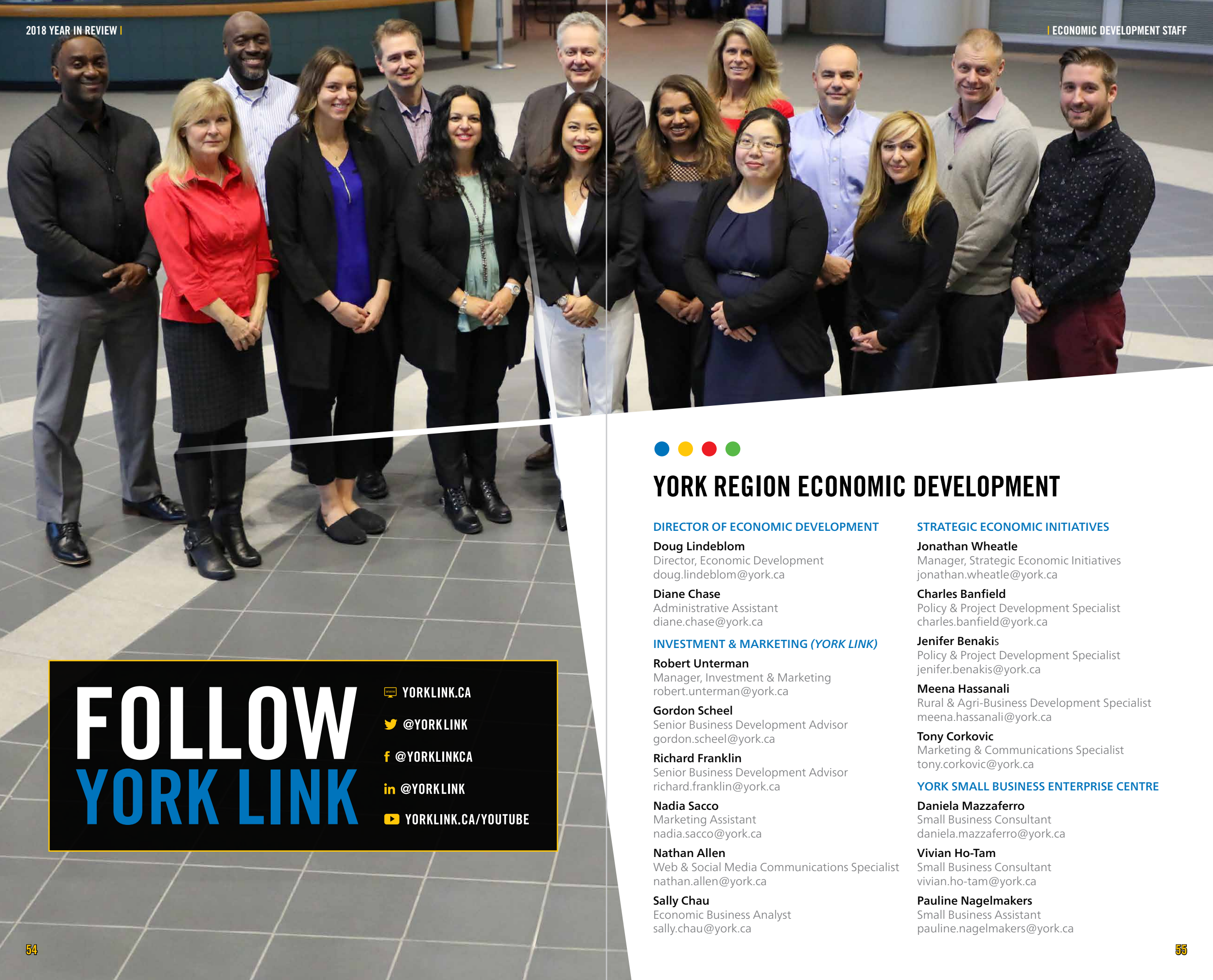
Asking Rent per SF, 2018 Average: **\$33.89**  
 Asking Rent per SF, 5-year Average: **\$28.38**  
 Vacancy Rate, 2018 Average: **3.9%**  
 Vacancy Rate, 5-Year Average: **6.1%**

## INDUSTRIAL SPACE

Asking Rent per SF, 2018 Average: **\$7.57**  
 Asking Rent per SF, 5-year Avg.: **\$6.35**  
 Vacancy Rate, 2018 Average: **1.2%**  
 Vacancy Rate, 5-Year Avg.: **2.7%**

Source: CoStar | January 2019





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**WHERE TALENT AND  
OPPORTUNITY INTERSECT**

**AURORA**

**EAST GWILLIMBURY**

**GEORGINA**

**KING**

**MARKHAM**

**NEWMARKET**

**RICHMOND HILL**

**VAUGHAN**

**WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE**



Photo Credit: York University | ySpace

  
**York Region**