



The Regional Municipality of Durham

Planning and Economic Development Committee Agenda

Tuesday, May 7, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

Regional Council Chambers

Regional Headquarters Building

605 Rossland Road East, Whitby

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

Note: This meeting will be held in a hybrid meeting format with electronic and in-person participation. Committee meetings may be [viewed via live streaming](#).

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4. Statutory Public Meetings	
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5. Presentations	
5.1 Greg Pereira, Manager, Transportation Planning, Chris Leitch, Principal Planner, and Aneesah Luqman, Senior Planner re: 2024 Durham Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy (#2024-P-10) [Item 7.2 a.]	
5.2 Eileen Kennedy, Economic Development Specialist (Creative Industries Specialist) re: Film and Television Sector Development, 2012 to 2022, and Future Plans (#2024-EDT-8) [Item 8.2 a.]	10
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- a. Report #2024-EDT-8 25
Film and Television Sector Development, 2012 to 2022, and
Future Plans

9. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There are no advisory committee resolutions to be considered

10. Confidential Matters

There are no confidential matters to be considered

11. Other Business

12. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, June 4, 2024 at 9:30 AM

13. Adjournment

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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

A regular meeting of the Planning & Economic Development Committee was held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 9:30 AM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Councillor Chapman, Chair
Councillor Pickles, Vice-Chair
Councillor Collier* attended the meeting at 9:34 AM
Councillor Kerr
Councillor Neal*
Councillor Shahid
Councillor Wotten
Regional Chair Henry
*** denotes Councillors participating electronically**

Also

Present: Councillor Crawford*
Councillor Mulcahy* attended for part of the meeting
*** denotes visiting Councillors participating electronically**

Staff

Present: E. Baxter-Trahair*, Chief Administrative Officer
C. Boyd, Solicitor, Chief Administrative Office – Legal Services
B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
M. Broderick, Manager, Business Development and Investment, Economic Development
J. Feuiltault, Business Development Specialist, Economic Development
H. Finlay*, Manager, Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
N. Gibson, Business Development Specialist, Economic Development
S. Gill, Director, Economic Development and Tourism
C. Goodchild, Director of Planning
S. Hajsaleh, Planner, Transportation Planning
A. Harras*, Director of Legislative Services and Regional Clerk
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
G. Pereira, Manager, Transportation Planning
J. Rhynas, Program Coordinator, Economic Development
J. Severs, Manager, Marketing and Tourism, Economic Development
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

L. Talling, Acting Manager, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Economic Development
N. Taylor*, Commissioner of Finance
L. Trombino, Manager, Plan Implementation
V. Walker, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
* **denotes staff participating virtually**

2. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest made.

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Kerr, Seconded by Councillor Pickles,
(23) That the minutes of the regular Planning & Economic Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. **Statutory Public Meetings**

There were no statutory public meetings.

B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development, and S. Gill, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, introduced Maylene Broderick as the new Manager of Business Development and Investments.

5. **Presentations**

5.1 Simon Gill, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, re: Investment Attraction Metrics – Annual Activity Report 2023 (#2024-EDT-7) [Item 8.2 b.]

Simon Gill, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the Investment Attraction Metrics – Annual Activity Report 2023.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- What We Do
- Collaboration with DEDP
- Our Focus
 - Future Energy
 - Next Gen Mobility
 - Arts, Culture and Creative
 - Applied Digital Tech
 - Agri-Food
- Investment Leads
- Lead Sources

- Investment Attraction Missions
- Spotlight: Auto Tech Detroit Mission
- Supporting Events
- Inbound Delegations
- Spotlight: Ontario TIO Delegation
- Metrics Summary
- Investment Successes
- Booming Growth

S. Gill responded to questions from the Committee with regards to the types of investment leads that comprise the 9% that falls outside of the Region's five (5) named priority areas; how the results, metrics and costs of Invest Durham compares to the Region's previous partnership with Toronto Global for investments in the Region; whether the Region apportions new businesses among the area municipalities; if certain business types are more commonly launching in the Region and the main factors that attracts new business to the Region; the involvement from the area municipalities as it relates to new and returning business investments; what defines an investment success; how expansions of existing businesses are captured in the success statistics; the amount of leads gathered through attendance at trade shows and networking; the support received from the Provincial and Federal governments; and the availability of government grants or subsidies to contribute to new business growth.

6. Delegations

There were no delegations to be heard.

7. Planning

7.1 Correspondence

There were no communication items to be considered.

7.2 Reports

- A) Application to Amend the Durham Official Plan, submitted by Clark Consulting Services, on behalf of Thornlea Holsteins Ltd., to permit the severance of a farm dwelling rendered surplus as a result of the consolidation of non-abutting farm properties, in the Municipality of Clarington, File: OPA 2023-002 (Regional Official Plan Amendment #198 (2024-P-8))
-

Report #2024-P-8 from B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, was received.

Moved by Councillor Wotten, Seconded by Chair Henry,

- (24) That we recommend to Council:
- A) That Amendment #198 to the Durham Regional Official Plan, to permit the severance of a dwelling rendered surplus as a result of the consolidation of nonabutting farm parcels, be adopted as contained in Attachment #3 to Report #2024-P-8 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development;
 - B) That “Notice of Adoption” be sent to the applicant, the applicant’s agent, the Municipality of Clarington, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and all other person or public bodies who requested notification of this decision; and
 - C) That the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing be requested to modify the Council adopted Durham Regional Official Plan as shown on Attachment 4 to Report #2024-P-8 so that the approvals granted by Regional Council through Amendment #198 are carried forward and properly reflected in the Region’s new Official Plan which is currently pending approval by the Minister.

CARRIED

- B) Re-Nomination to the Board of Directors of the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (2024-P-9)
-

Report #2024-P-9 from B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, was received.

Moved by Councillor Kerr, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,

(25) That we recommend to Council:

- A) That Mr. Johan van ‘t Hof be re-nominated to the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) Board of Directors as Durham Region’s municipal representative for a term ending on October 17, 2026; and
- B) That a copy of Report #2024-P-9 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development be forwarded to the GTAA.

CARRIED

8. **Economic Development**

8.1 Correspondence

There were no communication items to be considered.

8.2 Reports

- A) Gather at the Farm 2023 Agri-Food Marketing Campaign (2024-EDT-6)
-

Report #2024-EDT-6 from B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, was received.

Following a question from the Committee regarding whether the Region collects data to measure the success rate of the program, and whether the participating farms also track data and provide the results to the Region, staff advised they will investigate geo-fencing and other modes of data collection to gather relevant statistics and report back to the Committee.

Moved by Councillor Wotten, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,
(26) That Report #2024-EDT-6 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development be received for information.

CARRIED

B) Investment Attraction Metrics – Annual Activity Report 2023 (2024-EDT-7)

Report #2024-EDT-7 from B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, was received.

Staff responded to a question of clarification from the Committee with regards to the descriptions for Investment Leads as set out in Attachment #2 to the report.

Moved by Councillor Pickles, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,
(27) That Report #2024-EDT-7 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development be received for information.

CARRIED

9. Advisory Committee Resolutions

9.1 Durham Active Transportation Committee

A) Resolution regarding June Bike Month

Moved by Councillor Kerr, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
(28) That we recommend to Council:

Whereas June is Bike Month;

And whereas Durham Regional Planning Staff have organized numerous bike friendly activities annually for over a decade to educate residents about cycling safety, promote the benefits of cycling, and encourage residents to bike more by participating in Bike Month throughout the month of June; and

And whereas the Durham Active Transportation Committee fully supports the Region's planned Bike Month activities.

Now therefore be it resolved that the Durham Active Transportation Committee request Regional Council's support of the planned Regional Bike Month activities and proclaim the month of June as Bike Month in the Region of Durham.

CARRIED

9.2 Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee

A) Resolution regarding Stormwater Management Fees

Discussion ensued regarding whether farmers that use ponds or wetlands receive credits for the carbon capture that occurs on the farm; and the tax subsidies farmers may be eligible to receive.

At the request of the Committee, staff was directed to investigate whether a formula exists to calculate carbon credits for farmers that have naturalized areas on their properties and examine what subsidies a working farm may be eligible to receive at the Provincial and Federal levels to offset the effects of carbon taxes, and report back to the Committee.

Moved by Councillor Pickles, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,
(29) That we recommend to Council:

Whereas Stormwater Management fees are intended for urban infrastructure needs and flood prevention, the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) believes that bona fide farmers on agricultural properties should be exempt from paying Stormwater Management fees in the Region of Durham; and, that this resolution be circulated to Durham's area municipalities for their information.

CARRIED

10. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

11. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Planning & Economic Development Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 9:30 AM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

13. Adjournment

Moved by Chair Henry, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
(30) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 AM

Respectfully submitted,

B. Chapman, Chair

V. Walker, Committee Clerk



Film and Television Sector Development 2012 to 2022 and Future Plans

Planning and Economic Development Committee

May 8, 2024

Durham Region Film Commission

Creation and Building Capacity

- 2012 film office established – central contact for film-related investment
- Building industry relationships and internal/external resources
- Film and Television Advisory Committee and Municipal Film Liaisons

Action Plan

- Scouting and production logistics support
- Promotion of locations, products and services
- Formal reporting and building the value proposition

Sector Development

- Film and Television Career Fairs
- Emerging Filmmaker Incubators
- How To Do Business with Film and Television Industry Seminars
- Film Location Readiness Workshops
- Ontario Green Screen Initiative
- Durham Hotel Assoc. Cast/Crew Rates
- Film Commissioner Certification
- Post-secondary Film Industry Spotlights





Infrastructure Investment

TriBro Sandy Beach Studios, Pickering - May 2022

- 180,000 sf facility, 3 soundstages, shops, 30,000 sf production offices and ancillary space

William F White Backlot, Pickering – Sept 2021

- Canada's largest, 23-acre, modern day small town on 90-acre plot for productions of all types

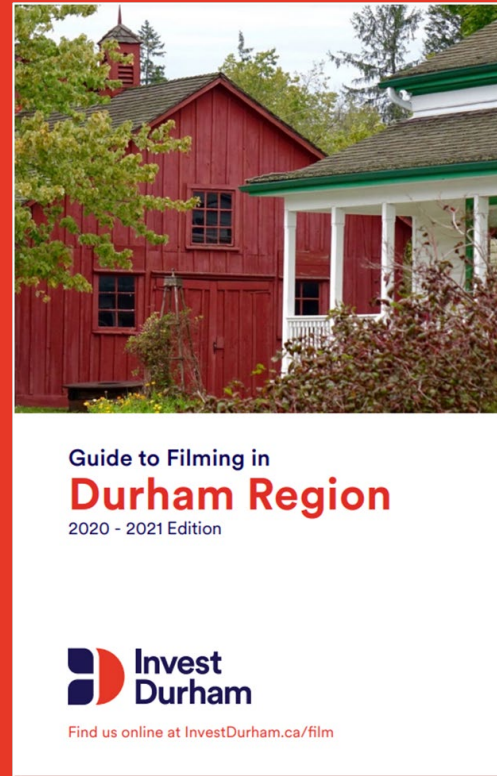
Footsteps Post-Production Sound, Uxbridge

- Increased capacity 1 to 3 studios, major domestic/foreign film and television projects



Film Durham Promotions

- Guide to Filming in Durham
- Ontario Creates Locations Library
- Parkwood Estate Co-Branding Partnership
- Invest Durham website sector page
- Foreign and domestic trade shows
- Locations/studios familiarization tours
- Film Durham sizzle reel
- Industry trade magazines advertising





Film Tourism

Durham Region International Film Festival

- Film Durham founded 2015
- Not-for-Profit since 2017
- 3-day event with gala events, education, film screenings, industry workshops



Fannibal Fest Bus Tours

- 258 fans from 13+ countries visited Hannibal TV filming locations 2017 and 2018





Production Activity

Strong Growth

- Durham Region 2022: record-setting 74 projects, 598 production days
- 2012 to 2022 production value grew \$19M to \$76.9M, and production days 224 to 598

Type of Projects

- From small independent productions to feature films and TV series, averaging 70+ projects/year
- Major domestic and foreign studios, Disney, Paramount, Amazon, Netflix, Blue Ant, Shaftesbury



Future Plans

- Increase opportunities to showcase Durham as a film destination
- Continue location and business industry readiness seminars
- Maximize local economic impact
- Support local and emerging filmmakers
- Workforce development initiatives with educators
- Support Ontario Green Screen program
- Create new film tourism events i.e., The Way Home
- Support growth of Durham Region International Film Festival



Eileen Kennedy, Durham Region Film Commission

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InvestDurham.ca



If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact Economic Development & Tourism at 1-800-706-9857, ext. 2619.



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2024-P-10
Date: May 7, 2024

Subject:

2024 Durham Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy

Recommendation:

That the Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the 2024 Durham Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy be endorsed as a toolbox of common reference points in the process of planning and designing TOD Places in Durham Region; and
 - B) That the guidelines within the 2024 Durham TOD Strategy that have implications on designing and constructing Regional infrastructure be considered as part of future annual business plans and budget processes for those capital projects.
-

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and seek Regional Council's endorsement of a Durham Region specific Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy, which identifies 36 TOD Places in Durham Region characterized by eight distinct TOD Place types: i) GO Train Areas; ii) Large Retail Centres; iii) Mixed-Use Hubs; iv) Historic Centres; v) Rapid Transit Corridors; vi) Institutional Nodes; vii) New TOD Areas; and viii) Rural Regional Centres.

- 1.2 The TOD Strategy supports growth and design through a series of guidelines within each distinct TOD Place, including: mobility, public realm, land use, built form, parking management and design, and transit station design. The TOD Strategy also identifies next steps for implementation including partners, collaboration opportunities, and key performance measures for ongoing monitoring and management of TOD in Durham.
- 1.3 The TOD Strategy is intended to provide more specific direction to the Regional Official Plan and area municipal official plans, including secondary plans, by outlining a comprehensive set of guidelines for reviewing development proposals and/or plans within the TOD Places.
- 1.4 This report will be accompanied by a staff presentation to Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Region initially developed a TOD Strategy in 2010 to support development and transit-supportive design around existing and future transit in Durham including GO stations and along major transit corridors.
- 2.2 Since 2010, there have been significant changes to provincial planning policies and guidelines, including the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020 Consolidation) and the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (2018). These documents provide a greater emphasis on: transit-supportive development; intensification within built-up areas; and higher densities in both redeveloped and newly developing areas, to achieve complete communities. Coupled with the increased demand for housing and a broader mix of unit types, an update of the Region's TOD Strategy was required to effectively plan for TOD across the Region.
- 2.3 The new Council-adopted [Regional Official Plan](#), in policy 8.1.3, as well as action #3 of the [Durham Transportation Master Plan \(2017\)](#), identifies the development and implementation of regional TOD Guidelines as one of the principles for achieving TOD, with a particular focus on Strategic Growth Areas such as Urban Growth Centres, Regional Centres, Major Transit Station Areas, and along Regional Corridors.
- 2.4 The updated 2024 TOD Strategy incorporates the evolving nature of development patterns in Durham, leveraging opportunities for further implementation within the various TOD Places outlined within the Strategy. It also integrates the results of Envision Durham, the Region's municipal comprehensive review process, and the

policies of the new Regional Official Plan to further transit-supportive development in Durham.

- 2.5 Urban Strategies Inc. (USI) was retained in June 2023 to conduct the update to the TOD Guidelines and facilitate meetings with Regional staff and the area municipalities. USI created the 2010 TOD Strategy.

3. Consultation and Area Municipal Engagement

- 3.1 The consultation and engagement process included staff from the Planning and Economic Development, Works, and Social Services departments, Durham Region Transit, the Rapid Transit & Transit Oriented Development Office, as well as staff from each of the eight area municipalities.
- 3.2 In summer 2023, workshops were held with Regional and area municipal staff to provide an overview of the 2010 TOD Strategy, an understanding of its current use, changes to policy and development context over the last 10-15 years, review of best practices, and establishing a vision for the updated Strategy.
- 3.3 On February 15, 2024, an additional workshop was held with Regional and area municipal staff to provide an overview of the draft TOD Strategy and its component guidelines. Input from area municipal staff on the draft document has been incorporated into the final Strategy.

4. Overview of the 2024 Transit-Oriented Development Strategy

- 4.1 The following provides a high-level overview of the key components of the 2024 TOD Strategy (Attachment #1).
- 4.2 Section 3 “TOD Guidelines,” identifies a series of best practices to support TOD, providing detailed direction to achieve the seven regional priorities outlined in section 1.2 of the TOD Strategy, the seven priorities being: i) Complete Communities; ii) Mix of Uses; iii) Active Modes of Travel; iv) Diversity; v) Vibrant Communities; vi) Investment Opportunities; vii) Health and Wellbeing.
- 4.3 The Guidelines have been organized into the following six components:
 - i. **Mobility** – creating a well-connected and balanced transportation system for all modes, enhance the mobility patterns within TOD Places, and offer a range of transportation options with a priority for sustainable transportation;

- ii. **Public realm** – supporting high-quality, attractive, and livable public areas that incorporate complete streets, beautiful public spaces, and healthy settings to foster a sense of community and belonging;
 - iii. **Land use** – fostering a mix of uses that support transit ridership, including the clustering of residential, commercial, institutional, and employment uses, along with civic, and community amenities;
 - iv. **Built form** – incorporating effective design, densities, mixed uses, and arrangement of new buildings in TOD Places to create attractive and inclusive environments for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users;
 - v. **Parking management and design** – supporting careful design and placement of parking facilities to support pedestrian and transit-oriented environments; and
 - vi. **Transit station design** – promoting positive user experiences, safety, and accessibility within transit stations as strong community focal points.
- 4.4 Section 4, “Working Together to Deliver TOD,” identifies key tools, partnerships, and structures for effective collaboration, coordinated decision making, and successful advancement and implementation of the guidelines and strategies contained within the TOD Strategy.
- 4.5 The Strategy also includes opportunities and key performance indicators, including potential data sources, for measuring the success of TOD within the six guideline components included in Section 3.

5. Implementation of the TOD Strategy

- 5.1 The TOD Strategy will equip staff in the Planning Division and the Rapid Transit Implementation and Transit-Oriented Development Office with tools and guidelines to effectively review strategic projects and developments, as well as inform future growth and infrastructure considerations within TOD Places, especially within Strategic Growth Areas including the Protected Major Transit Station Areas as identified in the Council-adopted Regional Official Plan.
- 5.2 The TOD Strategy is also intended to support area municipal staff in development review within TOD Places, as well as provide guidance for the preparation of any secondary plans or corridor studies. The development industry can also apply the TOD guidelines in their preparation of development applications and block plans for larger development areas.

- 5.3 Given the above, it is recommended that the 2024 Durham Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy be endorsed as a toolbox of common reference points in the process of planning and designing TOD Places in Durham Region.
- 5.4 There are certain guidelines that require consideration in the planning and design of transportation infrastructure projects led by the Region, such as road widenings, reconstruction, intersection improvements, new or upgraded bus stops, implementation of rapid transit corridors and cycling facilities. As such, it is recommended that the guidelines within the 2024 Durham TOD Strategy that have implications on designing and constructing Regional infrastructure be considered as part of future annual business plans and budget processes for those capital projects.
- 5.5 Regional staff intend to measure progress of TOD using the key performance indicators described in Section 4.4 of the Strategy, as part of its growth management monitoring. Further, Regional staff will consider establishing internal and external TOD working groups, either on a standalone basis or as part of other initiatives (e.g., Growth Management Data Working Group with the area municipalities) to collaborate on the planning, infrastructure and implementation of TOD Places.

6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:
- a. Goal 1, Environmental Sustainability: Objective 1.5: Expand sustainable and active transportation.
 - b. Goal 2, Community Vitality: Objective 2.1: Revitalize existing neighbourhoods and build complete communities that are walkable, well-connected, and have a mix of attainable housing.
 - c. Goal 2, Community Vitality: Objective 2.5: Build a healthy, inclusive, age-friendly community where everyone feels a sense of belonging.
 - d. Goal 3, Economic Prosperity: Objective 3.3: Enhance communications and transportation networks to better connect people and move goods efficiently.
 - e. Goal 4, Social Investment: Objective 5.1: Optimize resources and partnerships to deliver exceptional quality services and value.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The TOD Strategy was prepared to best advise Regional and area municipal staff on creating and implementing TOD Places in Durham Region through a set of guidelines organized around six components or themes. Advancing TOD requires coordination with various key partners and stakeholders including internal departments, advisory committees, Metrolinx, the province, landowners, developers, and area municipalities. While area municipalities do have area-specific urban design guidelines that are transit-supportive, a comprehensive strategy is necessary to promote opportunities for implement TOD within the identified 36 TOD Places as described in the Strategy.
- 7.2 The TOD Strategy forms a key component for the Region, with its key partners, to continue to advance opportunities that encourage growth patterns, community form and infrastructure investment that create more transit-supportive communities. The introduction and expansion and phased implementation of the higher-order transit network in Durham, the establishment of a Rapid Transit and Transit-Oriented Development Office and the ongoing planning in Strategic Growth Areas all contribute to ensure that complete, inclusive communities are being built close to existing and planned rapid and frequent transit services.

8. Attachments

Attachment #1: [Durham Transit-Oriented Development Strategy, May 2024](#)

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP, PLE
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2564.



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2024-EDT-8
Date: May 7, 2024

Subject:

Film and Television Sector Development, 2012 to 2022, and Future Plans

Recommendation:

That the Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends:

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the development of the film and television sector in Durham Region and an overview of activities since the inception of the Durham Region Film Commission.

1.2 This report will be accompanied by a staff presentation from Eileen Kennedy, Creative Industries Program Specialist.

2. Background

2.1 Prior to 2012, the Region of Durham had no formal processes for managing film-related investment inquiries, facilitating productions and permits, statistical reporting, or a sector development budget and programming.

2.2 In 2012, the Region of Durham established a film office, known as the Durham Region Film Commission (Film Durham) with support from external stakeholders

such as [Ontario Creates](#), industry unions and guilds, post-secondary institutions, and area municipalities.

- 2.3 The establishment of Film Durham allowed for a formalization of processes and enabled a strategic focus on the film and television industry in Durham Region.
- 2.4 In 2014 Film Durham became a member of the Association of Film Commissions International which provided global access, valuable resources, educational opportunities, and other benefits as a film commission.
- 2.5 In 2015, MDB Insights, a consulting group, completed a film sector analysis and strategy to provide a solid perspective on Durham's value proposition and prospects in the film sector.
- 2.6 The MDB report included an action plan with three areas to enhance Film Durham's resources and profile in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) film and television sector:
 - a. Strengthen and develop the existing internal structures and systems to encourage greater promotion and development of the sector;
 - b. Identify sector-building activities and infrastructure investments, leveraging external resources where possible to extend the reach of Film Durham;
 - c. Engage with existing regional networks and coordinate internal resources to strengthen industry networking and collaboration opportunities.

3. Action Plan outcomes and achievements

- 3.1 Several achievements resulted from the MDB strategy and its associated action plan. These achievements include:
 - a. Film Durham became the official central point of contact for film and television production companies seeking filming locations;
 - b. A dedicated sector profile web page was created on the [Investdurham.ca](https://investdurham.ca) website, and other digital promotional activities were launched to grow Durham's film and television industry;
 - c. The Durham Film and Television Advisory Committee was formed to provide direction to Film Durham and assist with building key industry relationships;
 - d. Comprehensive reporting began to highlight economic impact, sector growth, and encourage partnerships;
 - e. A budget was created to deliver sector development programming, dedicate staff resources, and conduct investment attraction activities;

- f. A film liaison role was identified in each municipality and processes were streamlined to manage productions, permits and supporting resources;
- g. Promotion of Durham locations began through digital locations libraries, familiarizations tours, domestic and international industry conferences and trade shows, marketing materials and trade magazines.

4. Growth of the Film and Television Industry in Durham Region

- 4.1 Since 2012, most productions filming in Durham have changed from low-budget independent projects to high-budget foreign and domestic television shows, feature films, movies of the week and commercials.
- 4.2 In the past ten years, the film and television industry in Durham Region has experienced strong growth. Production value realized an annualized 15 per cent growth rate from \$19.7M in 2012 to \$76.9M in 2022, and production days grew at an annualized rate of 10 per rate from 224 to 598.
- 4.3 Major domestic and foreign studios bringing their projects to Durham are Disney, CBS, Paramount, Amazon, Netflix, Shaftesbury, CBC, Apple TV, and MGM. High profile productions have included *Anne with an E*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Reacher*, *Schitt's Creek*, *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, *Thanksgiving*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Umbrella Academy*, *The Way Home*, and the Oscar-winning film *Women Talking*.

5. Investment Highlights

- 5.1 As an outcome of continued growth in the Region's film and television sector, being a welcoming host community to film, and successful efforts of area municipal teams, the Region has welcomed two successful film sector investments:
 - a. [William F. White International Inc.'s](#) backlot opened in 2021 in the City of Pickering. The 23-acre, modern day small town is situated on a 90-acre plot of land leased from the City of Pickering, and was built for feature films, TV series, and commercials. It is the largest of its kind in Canada.
 - b. [TriBro Sandy Beach Studios](#) opened May 2022 in City of Pickering. The facility is a 180,000 square foot studio with three soundstages, shops, 30,000 square foot production offices, and ancillary space. They also offer virtual reality (VR) services with a mobile volume wall.

6. Sector Development Highlights

- 6.1 Film Durham undertakes numerous regular sector development initiatives to grow the local film and television industry. These include annual and reoccurring events and programs. Examples include:
- a. Initiatives to identify new potential filming locations, documenting them through photography and descriptions, to increase Durham's presence on the Ontario Creates Digital Location Library. Currently there are more than 370 sites listed covering a variety of time periods and geographies;
 - b. The annual Durham Region International Film Festival (DRIFF), which is supported through sponsorship and in-kind commitment of staff time. These events feature three days of events, film screenings, awards, and industry workshops in venues in Ajax, Oshawa, and Whitby;
 - c. Film tourism projects such as the Fannibal Fest film tours in 2017 (54 tourists) and 2018 (204 tourists) taking *Hannibal* fans from thirteen countries to locations in Durham where scenes were filmed;
 - d. The production of the Guide to Filming in Durham, which advertises Durham's businesses, locations, and industry-related resources to film industry professionals;
 - e. Regular Film and Television Industry Career Fairs, which support workforce development. Past events have seen between 550 and 1000 attendees;
 - f. Ongoing participation in the Advisory Committee and Ambassador program for the [Ontario Green Screen](#) (OGS) initiative which provide screen-based industries and government agencies with a green plan for sustainable film and television production in Ontario;
 - g. Promoting the 2022 and 2024 Emerging Filmmaker Incubator where local filmmakers compete to win cash plus equipment grants and resources to produce a short film screened at DRIFF;
 - h. Co-hosting events such as the How to Do Business with the Film and Television Industry (240 registrants), to provide local businesses with the information required to access film production opportunities;
 - i. A partnership with Parkwood National Historic Site, one of Canada's top ten filming locations, to promote the region's film and television industry.

7. Updated strategy

- 7.1 In December 2022, Regional council approved Ready Set Future: A PLACE Blueprint for Durham, the new Economic Development and Tourism strategy and action plan.

- 7.2 Ready Set Future identifies goals to strengthen Quality of Place, including an action item to enable growth in the film industry through a refreshed region-wide film sector plan.
- 7.3 Staff are beginning work to develop this refreshed plan to further propel growth in the film and television industry in Durham Region.

8. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 8.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham region Strategic Plan:
- a. Priority 3.1 - Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business.
 - b. Priority 3.2 - Leverage Durham's prime geography, social infrastructure, and strong partnerships to foster economic growth.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Durham Region's film sector creates significant economic impact in the region, creating jobs, spill over spending, and attracting investment. Economic Development and Tourism Division staff efforts have strongly contributed to the significant growth of this industry in Durham and staff will continue to undertake various initiatives to leverage the opportunity of growing the film and television industry.
- 9.2 Staff are beginning work on a refreshed Film and Television Sector plan in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP, PLE
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer