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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

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From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development  
Report: #2024-INFO-9  
Date: March 1, 2024

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**Subject:**

Durham Region Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Ready Set Future Wins  
EDCO Award of Excellence

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**Recommendation:**

Receive for information

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to notify Council that the Region of Durham's new Economic Development and Tourism strategy, titled '2023-2027 Ready Set Future – A PLACE Blueprint for Durham', won the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) Award of Excellence in the category of Planning and Strategic Development (urban population).

**2. Background**

2.1 EDCO is Canada's largest provincial economic development association and provides leadership to enhance the professional development of its members; advance economic development as a profession; and support municipalities in fostering economic prosperity in Ontario. EDCO administers the EDCO Awards of Excellence, an annual program seeks progressive and insightful ideas and initiatives that can become economic development best practices of the future.

- 2.2 Municipalities across Ontario put forth their projects to be considered for awards in a variety of categories. The applications are reviewed by a panel of judges and winners are announced at the EDCO awards ceremony annually.
- 2.3 Recipients of the EDCO Awards of Excellence are viewed as leaders in economic development and often asked to present their efforts and accomplishments at speaking engagements including the EDCO Conference and Showcase. The competition also allows communities across Ontario the opportunity to compare their economic development and tourism initiatives to other municipalities.
- 2.4 On February 8, 2024, the Economic Development and Tourism Division won the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) Award of Excellence in the category of Planning and Strategic Development (urban population) for the Region of Durham's new Economic Development and Tourism strategy, titled '2023-2027 Ready Set Future – A PLACE Blueprint for Durham'.

### **3. Ready Set Future Strategy**

- 3.1 In December 2022, Regional Council endorsed [Ready Set Future](#), the Region of Durham's new five-year Economic Development and Tourism strategy.
- 3.2 A comprehensive analysis was commissioned to review and consider economic and demographic data, local economic reports, and to explore the most impactful global drivers of change for years ahead. This analysis was used to identify high-value opportunities to grow the regional economy. A steering committee was assembled, comprised of a strong and diverse group of leaders from throughout Durham, including the post-secondary institutions, Durham's largest businesses, the Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade, the Arts / Cultural / Creative industry, and technology startups from the innovation community.
- 3.3 Collaborative sessions with internal and external partners and community members were held to identify and develop shared economic aspirations. In collaboration with these partners, five long-term aspirations for Durham's economic future were formed, and measures of success were identified.

### **4. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 4.1 [#2022-EDT-15](#): Ready Set Future: Five Year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy and Action Plan

## **5. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Economic Prosperity Goal #3.1: Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business.
- b. Economic Prosperity Goal #3.2: Leverage Durham's prime geography, social infrastructure, and strong partnerships to foster economic growth.
- c. Economic Prosperity Goal #3.4: Capitalize on Durham's strengths in key economic sectors to attract high-quality jobs.
- d. Economic Prosperity Goal #3.5: Provide a supportive environment for agriculture and agri-food.

## **6. Conclusion**

6.1 The "Ready Set Future" strategy sets out bold, long-term economic aspirations for Durham that will have a great impact on all residents of Durham Region. Staff are honoured by the recognition of this strategy by a panel of their Economic Development industry peers, and look forward to implementing this award winning, future forward strategy.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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