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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2024-INFO-54
Date: September 6, 2024

Subject:

North Durham Economic Development Web Asset Improvements

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the additions and improvements made to online economic development resources as they relate to the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge (north Durham).

2. Background

2.1 The Agriculture and Rural Economic Development section of the Durham Region Economic Development and Tourism Division (Invest Durham) undertakes and delivers economic development projects, initiatives, and services in the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge.

2.2 The [Growing North Durham Rural Economic Development Action Plan](#) identified the need for updated and improved online information and resources to support north Durham economic development, business support, and investment attraction.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 [Growing North Durham: Rural Economic Development Action Plan \(Report 2023-EDT-2\)](#).

- a. The Investment Readiness goal area of the plan references the need for online business information toolkits and updated community profiles.
- b. To compete with other jurisdictions looking to attract new investment and encourage existing investors to lay deeper roots in the community, it is vital that preliminary information of interest to these groups be accessible online.

3.2 [North Durham Online Business Toolkits \(Report 2023-INFO-27\)](#).

- a. The first iterations of Township-specific business toolkits were launched in mid-2023. These webpages were developed to streamline and simplify the local business support landscape across north Durham.
- b. Since their launch, information has routinely been added and updated ensuring that these remain relevant and useful tools for current and prospective business owners.
- c. Business Toolkits can be accessed at the following locations:
 - [TownshipofBrock.ca/BusinessToolkit](#)
 - [Scugog.ca/BusinessToolkit](#)
 - [Uxbridge.ca/BusinessToolkit](#)

4. Economic Development Web Asset Additions, Updates and Linkages

4.1 Invest Durham has recently invested in a suite of interactive data tools from Canadian location marketing company, Local Intel, that highlight the many economic advantages that exist in Durham Region and its area municipalities. These interactive tools are meant to be informative, user-friendly and provide valuable insights to businesses and investors.

4.2 While all five tools draw from regional level data, the community profile tool and largest industries tool also display data at the municipal level for all eight area municipalities. Tools of interest to north Durham can be found on the following webpages:

- a. [Township of Brock Community Profile](#)
- b. [Township of Scugog Community Profile](#)
- c. [Township of Uxbridge Community Profile](#)

d. [The Durham Advantage](#)

4.3 Further details about each tool are provided below.

a. Community Profile

- Individual community profile tools have been created for the Region of Durham as well as all eight of its area municipalities.
- The community profile tool includes economic indicators and information pertaining to residents, households, dwellings, workforce, and livability.

b. Largest Industries

- This tool highlights the largest industries by total employment for the given geography (Region or Township).
- This tool uses 4-digit North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes to rank top industries. Tool functionality allows for local industries (e.g., restaurants, grocery stores, etc.) and traded industries (e.g., manufacturing, agriculture, etc.) to be separated for individual analysis.

c. Talent Pipeline Advantages

- This interactive tool allows users to explore Ontario's talent pipeline by examining the number of students enrolled in post-secondary education across a variety of program areas. The tool illustrates the proximity of this talent to Durham Region based on their enrollment in post-secondary institutions.

d. Logistics and Accessibility Advantages

- Using interactive maps, this tool illustrates the various ways that Durham Region is connected to the world through its access to airports, seaports, rail and freight networks, major road networks, and broadband infrastructure.

e. Next Generation Workforce

- The Next Generation Workforce tool empowers users to explore potential worker pools by postal code area, based on residents' education, occupation, or industry type. This helps employers identify whether there

are enough qualified workers within proximity of their current or potential business location.

- 4.4 Although the data tools outlined above are hosted on the Invest Durham website, considerable attention and effort has been dedicated to ensuring they are easily accessible from municipal websites across north Durham.
- 4.5 There is a shared responsibility to provide economic development and business support services across north Durham. It is essential to establish strong linkages between online content targeted at businesses hosted by different organizations and levels of government. This premise led to the development of online Business Toolkits, which serve as a central repository for information and resources. These toolkits have also been leveraged to ensure that current or prospective businesses are aware of and can access the data tools outlined above.
- 4.6 Additionally, updates were made to Community Profile webpages on northern area municipal websites to ensure that users are being directed to the information hosted by Invest Durham. Moving forward, this will allow Invest Durham to assume responsibility of keeping Community Profile information relevant and up to date.
- 4.7 Invest Durham will continue to promote the online resources outlined throughout this report through a variety of mediums including social media, newsletters, interactions with current or potential business owners and investors, among others. We also encourage Township staff and members of Council to share these resources with appropriate audiences to help maximize the visibility and effectiveness of these tools.

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. Goal 3: Economic Prosperity
 - 3.1 Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business;
 - 3.2 Leverage Durham's prime geography, social infrastructure, and strong partnerships to foster economic growth;
 - 3.4 Capitalize on Durham's strengths in key economic sectors to attract high-quality jobs.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Significant progress has been made towards enhancing the online resources available to support economic development, business attraction and business support in the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge. These improvements directly address the needs identified in the Growing North Durham Rural Economic Development Plan.
- 6.2 The suite of interactive data tools, updated community profiles, and Business Toolkits provide current and prospective businesses with valuable information about the economic landscape, talent pool, logistical advantages, and business supports available throughout north Durham. These resources are seamlessly integrated between regional and municipal websites, ensuring a user-friendly experience.
- 6.3 Moving forward, Invest Durham will continue to promote these resources and leverage partnerships with Township staff and members of Council to maximize their visibility and effectiveness. By providing comprehensive and up-to-date online information, we will continue to strengthen north Durham's position as an attractive and competitive location for business investment and growth.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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