



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

---

To: Township of Brock Council  
From: Stacey Jibb, Manager, Agriculture & Rural Economic Development  
Date: April 13, 2025

---

**Subject:**

Growing North Durham Plan Annual Activity Report – Township of Brock

---

**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an annual report on the implementation of the [Growing North Durham: Rural Economic Development Action Plan](#).
- 1.2 The report will be accompanied by a staff presentation from Stacey Jibb, Manager of Agriculture and Rural Economic Development and Jessica Rhynas, Rural Economic Development Specialist.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Growing North Durham Plan was endorsed by Regional Council and the Township of Brock in early 2023. It sets out goals and actions to support economic growth across north Durham to 2027.
- 2.2 The Growing North Durham 2024 Annual Activity Report was received by the Township of Brock Mayor and Members of Council on March 10, 2025.

**3. Implementation Update**

- 3.1 The delivery of economic development programming in the Township of Brock relies on collaboration between Durham Region (Economic Development and Tourism staff), the Township of Brock, as well as business support organizations such as the

Brock Board of Trade (BBoT) and South Lake Community Future Development Corporation (SLCFDC).

- 3.2 Regional Economic Development staff meet regularly with relevant Township staff and members of Council to discuss and advance matters relating to economic development and tourism in the Township of Brock. This collaborative approach has been integral in the implementation of the Growing North Durham Plan to date.
- 3.3 The Growing North Durham Plan (the Plan) is structured under three pillars: People, Places and Prosperity. Each pillar contains goal areas and actions that support a community-driven approach to economic development. Identified below are some of the key activities that are either underway or were completed within each pillar over the past year:
- a. **People:** This pillar recognizes the strong correlation between human capital and economic growth.
- Working with partners at the BBoT and Durham Workforce Authority, staff supported several business workshops on topics related to workforce needs marketing for small businesses and understanding employee retention and recruitment.
  - The Regional Business Development Team led Employer Roundtables in 2025 to inform the development of a Request for Proposal to undertake a Region Wide Workforce Development Strategy. Regional Economic Development staff participated on behalf of north Durham and provided input on businesses from across Scugog, Uxbridge and Brock to be invited to the roundtable.
  - The Business Advisory Centre Durham (BACD) works closely with the business start-ups, entrepreneurs and small businesses across Durham to support their continued growth. This includes providing business plan templates, business coaching and a recently launched program, 360 Growth, focusing on scalable businesses. In 2025, the BACD Team supported 47 north Durham businesses through one-on-one meetings and had almost 90 north Durham businesses participate in their business workshops.
  - In late 2025, Economic Development and Tourism Division staff began work on a campaign to attract talent to north Durham. The [North of Unexpected](#) campaign ran from February 23 to April 3, 2026. The campaign primarily targeted an audience currently living and working in Toronto, in the technology and manufacturing sectors, between the ages of 25-55, who may consider a career move to north Durham. Businesses

were featured prominently in the campaign, from the Township of Brock included Agile Manufacturing and Nordstrong Equipment.

- Rural Economic Development content, including business success stories, is shared through the Invest Durham e-newsletter and media channels, and Durham Tourism channels when relevant. Invest Durham and Durham Tourism continue to grow their online presence which benefits entrepreneurs and small business owners in north Durham.
- b. **Places:** This pillar highlights and strengthens north Durham's unique qualities of place that stimulate meaningful connections with the community.
- Several initiatives and campaigns led by the Division's Marketing, Tourism and Rural Tourism staff have been delivered over the last year with strong north Durham content or focus, including Gather at the Farm, Rural Routes, Durham Region Signature Sites, Recreate the Holiday Magic and #ShopinDurham Week.
  - Across the Invest Durham, Durham Tourism and Downtowns of Durham platforms, north Durham or a north Durham business was mentioned 129 times in blog posts throughout 2025. A business or organization from Brock was mentioned on 35 occasions throughout 2025.
  - Staff attended select business openings and celebrations and connected with new businesses to make them aware of support available. One-on-one support was provided to 57 current or prospective north Durham businesses throughout 2025 and early 2026. This support included activities such providing letters of support, identifying funding opportunities, assisting with site selection, facilitating connections to industry partners, and sharing relevant information and data.
- c. **Prosperity:** The prosperity pillar is about business retention and making informed decisions to encourage and enable economic growth.
- In coordination with Township staff, Regional Economic Development and Tourism staff respond to investment inquiries on an ongoing basis. Most investment inquiries are generated through the Region's Business Development and Investment Team who undertake investment attraction work on behalf of all Durham municipalities. In other cases, investment leads are received directly by Regional Economic Development Staff or Township staff. Regional Economic Development and Township Development Services staff collaborate to identify potential sites to submit for consideration. Of the 26 investment inquiries circulated to the Durham Economic Development Partnership (DEDP) in 2025, at least one north

Durham site was submitted on 12 occasions. A Brock site was submitted on three occasions.

- Building, Business and Parcel inventories were developed for downtown Beaverton, Cannington and Sunderland as well as Brock's employment lands. These are valuable for responding to investment inquiries, tracking potential opportunities for investment/new business, targeting businesses for selected promotional activities, and providing data for grant applications and/or reporting. To streamline data collection and reduce manual effort, staff are in discussion with the Region's Business Count Survey team to explore opportunities for collaboration and process improvements.
- The [Brock Business Toolkit](#) was updated and promoted.
- Staff continue promote the Invest Durham Signature Sites document which features key investment opportunities across Durham.
- Staff continued to develop relationships with owners or representatives of developable employment and commercial land parcels across the Township of Brock, share servicing information, provide appropriate connections and discuss development opportunities with potential investors and partners. This includes supporting advocacy and economic development/tourism efforts related to the Ontario Northlander.
- In addition to collaborating on economic development initiatives in the Township of Brock, the Region of Durham's Economic Development and Tourism Division, through the Durham Tourism team, supports various tourism-related initiatives across the Township. While tourism is not the primary focus of the Growing North Durham Plan, it plays a critical role in advancing Brock's overall economic prosperity. For instance, Regional Economic Development and Tourism are actively working to deliver a Rural Cycling Wayfinding Program, with plans for wayfinding signs to be installed in Spring 2026. Regional Staff have been in discussions with Township staff to support the implementation of this program.
- Staff are currently developing options for a standardized approach to ongoing business visitations across north Durham to effectively deliver business retention programming.
- One of the goal areas in the Growing Agri-Food Durham Plan is to enable agriculture-related (AR) and on-farm diversified (OFD) uses. A collaborative project between the Region of Durham's Community Growth and Economic Development Department and the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge to support and enable north Durham agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses has recently moved into its implementation phase. Regional Economic Development Staff are working

closely work with Township staff to support Brock applicants with navigating the new AR and OFD use policies while providing economic development support.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Growing North Durham Plan represents an ongoing commitment for a collaborative north Durham-wide approach to the delivery of economic development programming in the Townships of Scugog, Uxbridge and Brock. Regional Economic Development staff look forward to continuing to work together with Township staff and business support organizations to attract and retain businesses in Brock.
- 4.2 Plans are underway to support, advance, or launch several key initiatives that will continue to advance goals of the Plan. Areas of focus include tracking and analyzing results from the North of Unexpected talent attraction campaign development of a business visitation program, exploration of a job fair to be hosted with north Durham partners and promotion of Downtown Community Improvement Plans.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Stacey Jibb  
Manager, Agriculture & Rural Economic  
Development  
Invest Durham, Region of Durham