

Invest Barrie combines the Economic and Creative Development Department with the Small Business Centre to offer robust support to Barrie businesses, entrepreneurs, and the arts community. Fostering creativity and innovation, Invest Barrie works to retain and expand local jobs and investment to accommodate a projected population of 298,000 by 2051.

Small Business and Creative Sector

Entrepreneurial and small business ecosystem

The Small Business Centre is supported by the Province of Ontario and the City of Barrie and is one of 54 Small Business Enterprise Centres operating across the province, delivering key programs including Summer Company, Starter Company Plus, and Digital Main Street.

Through ongoing support of Georgian College's
Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre, Invest Barrie
champions initiatives such as the Further Faster
twelve-week business training program and partners
with the College to host Xcelerate Summit, Central
Ontario's premier business conference.





Emerging Artist Program and Showcase at Meridian Place

The Emerging Artist Program activates the waterfront and downtown with free performances and provides youth summer employment, culminating in the Emerging Artist Showcase at Meridian Place at the end of the season.

Barrie Arts Awards

The Barrie Arts Awards boost the arts and culture sector by elevating its profile and recognizing local talent.

Public Art

In 2023, the City's public art program featured:

- Brightening Barriers, showcasing original works by local artists on nine downtown restaurant patios.
- Five new digital artwork traffic cabinet wraps to support graffiti abatement efforts.
- Art on Transit, which features works from five artists displayed on transit shelters.



52

start-up and entrepreneurbased programs/events delivered 238

Small Business
Centre consultations

77

Further Faster graduates over 3 cohorts

3 Streams
31 Speakers
150 Participants

at the 10th anniversary

Xcelerate Summit Conference

21

new pieces of public art

2,068

participants in cultural development educational workshops, programs, and events

\$225,900

distributed through the Arts and Culture Investment Program

9

projects in partnership with the Downtown Barrie BIA, such as Culture Days and Open Air Dunlop street festivals

Who Invest Barrie Supports

- Business owners and entrepreneurs
- Site selectors and developers
- Investors
- Residents
- Visitors
- Artists and arts organizations
- Mayor and Council

4,405 Barrie businesses

7,986 Invest Barrie business touchpoints

Invest Barrie's Goals

- Position Barrie as a **PREMIER** business investment destination
- Develop a robust ENTREPRENEURIAL AND **SMALL BUSINESS** ecosystem
- Cultivate a dynamic workforce and PIPELINE **OF TALENT**
- Foster a vibrant **DOWNTOWN** and WATERFRONT AREA with a focus on the economic corridor
- Promote growth of a diverse and sustainable ARTS & CULTURAL sector
- Support businesses to STAY and GROW within Barrie by leveraging a connected business environment



Promotional Outreach

Invest Barrie markets the city as a top domestic and foreign investment destination, positioning it as competitive for talent, tourism and business opportunities.

Social Media **Highlights**

94,874

Creative Barrie Video Views

3,077 Small Business Centre Lifetime Followers

103,985

Financial Post Campaign

380,000+ 4.58%

Ad Impressions

Engagement Rate



Putting Barrie on the Map

Engaging in national and international trade shows and welcoming delegations, Invest Barrie is elevating the city's visibility on the global stage.

Tradeshows

- CANSEC, Ottawa: Canada's largest defense industry trade show.
- Canadian Manufacturing Technology Show (CMTS),
 Toronto: Canada's national stage for manufacturing technologies.
- The Vehicle Transportation Innovation Meetings (VTM), Novi, Michigan: International B2B forum.
- The Battery Show, Detroit, Michigan: connecting with the advanced battery, and electric and hybrid vehicles technology community.
- Collision, Toronto: North America's fastest-growing technology conference.

Delegations

- Through a collaboration with local manufacturer
 SBS Drivetec Inc. | Burger Group, Invest Barrie was honoured to show a German delegation what Barrie has to offer.
- Invest Barrie hosted the Life Sciences Ontario (LSO)
 Road Show, which toured different municipalities
 across the province to celebrate Global Bio Tech
 Week.

2023 Barrie Airshow

 Presented in partnership with the CFB Borden and the County of Simcoe, brought tens of thousands to Barrie's downtown and waterfront.



German delegation



Barrie Airshow

Businesses Welcomed or Expanded

18

projects supported by Invest Barrie through the City's development process 25+

grand openings attended



SZTG, Inc. | Speedy Transport's expansion into Barrie is the company's 10th facility and its first along the Highway 400 corridor, highlighting the significant growth of the region.



Invest Barrie worked with Bill Gosling Outsourcing to find the perfect location in downtown Barrie, with space for 240 in-office employees.



Miski Brewing located their innovative business in Barrie, where they're redefining the beer industry with the world's first gluten-free, kosher, certified organic beer made entirely from quinoa.



Environmental Systems Corporation (ESC), clean room manufacturers who have called Barrie home since 1983, expanded into a new 66,000 ft² location.



Canplas Industries Ltd., which has been in Barrie for 52 years, added a 75,000 ft² expansion to their distribution facility at the company's headquarters on Veterans Drive.

Connected Business Community

Invest Barrie works with regional partners to provide local businesses with networking and collaboration opportunities.

Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Entrepreneurship (RISE) Symposium

Invest Barrie jointly invited industry to learn and explore the research and innovation capabilities at Georgian College.



Manufacturing Innovation Summit

Invest Barrie joined forces with its partners at the County of Simcoe to host the 2023 Manufacturing Innovation Summit; a dynamic two-day event celebrating manufacturing across the region.



6th Mayor's Innovation Awards

These awards recognize businesses, individuals, and organizations whose innovative approaches and sheer determination contribute to a resilient foundation for our city.



Workforce Development

Job Fairs

Invest Barrie collaborates with local employment service providers and regional partners to organize industry-specific job fairs aimed at connecting job seekers with relevant job opportunities.



Skills Development Fund

Invest Barrie, in partnership with Georgian College, was successful in receiving \$1.08 million in funding through the Province of Ontario's Skills Development Fund to offer free RapidSkills micro-credentials for industry-focused training to address the needs of local manufacturers and develop skills within the workforce.



4

job fairs delivered 1828

job seekers

168

companies participated

220

individuals trained through the RapidSkills Micro-Credential program.

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2023 Economic Development Awards

Each year, Invest Barrie carefully chooses projects to compete for recognition by provincial, national, and international economic development associations.





Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) Awards of Excellence

- Rapid Skills Micro-Credential Program, an Invest Barrie partnership project with Georgian College and the County of Simcoe, won the Innovation in Community Resiliency – Urban Award
- Finalists for the:
 - Tourist Attraction and Tourism Product Development Urban Award for the 2023 Barrie Airshow
 - Workforce Development and Resident Attraction Urban Award for the Rapid Skills Micro-Credential Program

International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Excellence in Economic Development Awards

- Rapid Skills Micro-Credentials Program
 - Gold in Partnerships with Educational Institutions
 - Silver in Talent Development and Retention
 - Silver in Multimedia/Video Promotion
- Invest Barrie Entrepreneurship Campaign
 - · Gold in Paid Advertising Campaign
 - Simcoe Muskoka Craft Beverage Forum
 - Silver in Special Events category

Contact Us

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