



ICT & Digital Media

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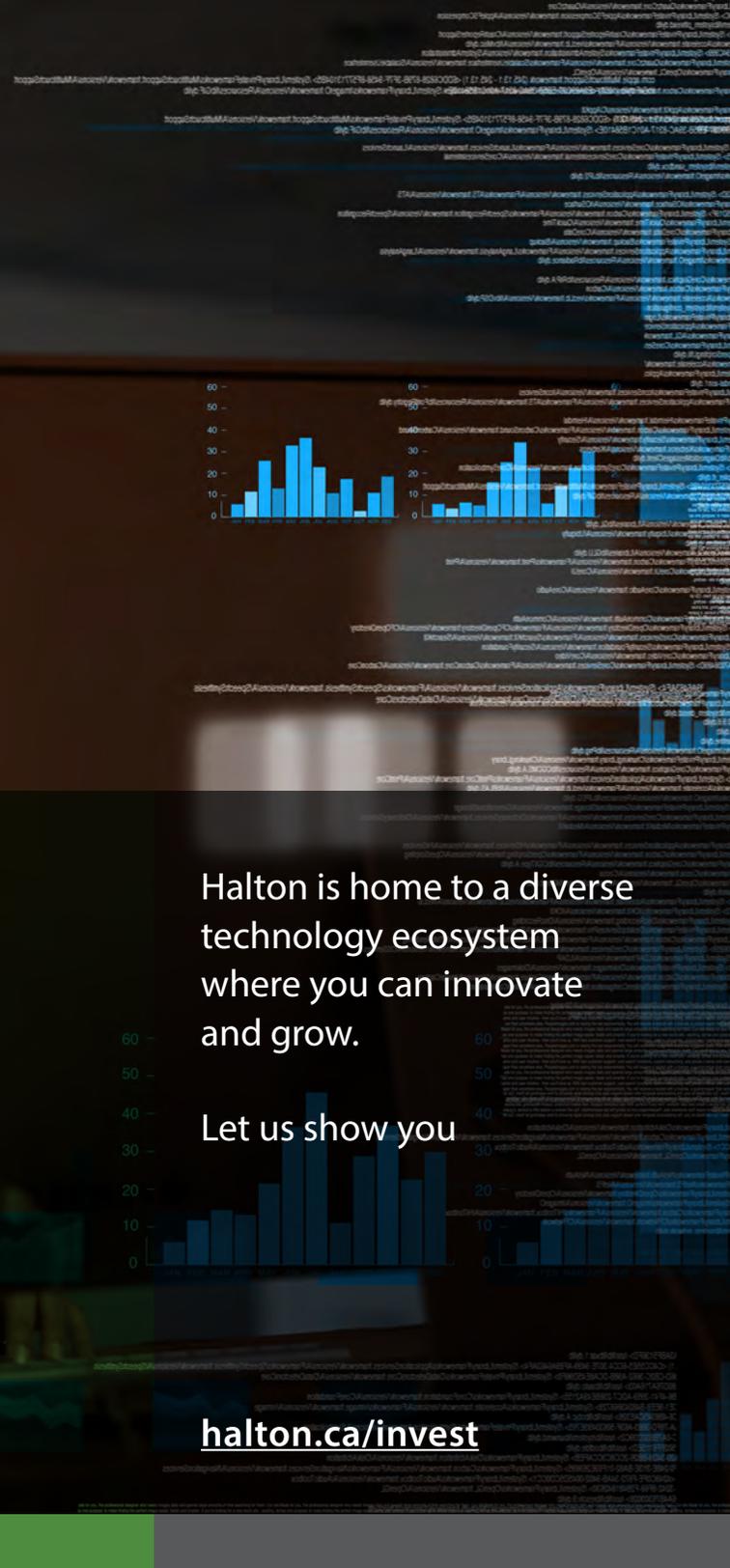
# Raise your game



Halton is home to a diverse technology ecosystem where you can innovate and grow.

Let us show you

[halton.ca/invest](http://halton.ca/invest)



# Halton is the ideal location for ICT and digital media firms.



Why Halton is your best choice for relocation or expansion:

- abundant talent
- specialized resources
- global business cluster
- central location within Canada's Innovation Corridor
- access to a diverse set of businesses that rely on innovative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions

Learn what makes Halton the premium choice for ICT and Digital Media firms...

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## Market overview

One of the safest and most affluent areas in Canada, Halton has four communities: Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. With a population of close to 600,000 people, Halton is part of Canada's largest metropolitan area, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which is home to more than 6 million people.

The GTA is at the centre of a broader, still-rapidly-expanding economic region known as the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The population of this mega-region is close to 10 million—approximately one quarter of Canada's total population. The GGH is destined for strong growth, with the population expected to reach 14.9 million by 2051.

Halton had a growth rate of 9 per cent from 2016 to 2021, almost four times the City of Toronto and ahead of all other regions in the GTA.

With proximity to major transportation routes including four international airports within an hours drive, two-way all-day rapid transit to Toronto, seaports and freight railway networks, Halton businesses have easy access to markets and supply chains. A premium choice for ICT and Digital Media firms, Halton is renowned for having:

- a diverse and global business environment;
- a competitive cost of doing business;
- proximity to international airports and transportation; and
- among the world's most livable communities.



Halton is located in Canada's Greater Golden Horseshoe between Toronto and the border to the United States. The four municipalities in Halton include: The City of Burlington and the Towns of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville.

# The information and communication technology (ICT) sector

Canada boasts a robust ICT sector, with a depth of talent in growing areas such as software development, computer equipment and hardware manufacturing, systems design, cloud computing and mobile technologies.

**Canada has been a consistent global leader in the ICT sector. In 2021, Canada's ICT sector:**

- comprised about 45,000 companies,
- generated \$242 billion in revenues,
- contributed \$104.5 billion to Canada's gross domestic product (GDP);
- employed approximately 717,590 individuals, earning an average of \$90,000 per year.

ICT industries are the largest performers of R&D in the Canadian private sector, with ICT sector R&D expenditures totaling \$10.3 billion in 2021.

Source: Government of Canada, Canadian ICT Sector Profile 2021

Halton is home to a diverse and evolving ICT sector, including more than 300 firms with 2,800 employed individuals.

**The ICT sector in this region has remarkable breadth, covering a wide range of IT specializations:**

- Software and systems design
- E-Commerce and FinTech
- Digital security
- Wireless technologies
- Telematics
- Cloud computing

ICT companies in Halton are at the centre of the wider GTA market that covers a diverse range of industries in manufacturing, finance and insurance, engineering, logistics, and, health care. These industries look to the ICT sector as an important enabler of innovation and growth and offer ICT firms opportunities to market proprietary systems and solutions here in Canada and abroad.

Halton raises the game when it comes to its desirability as a location for ICT-related companies in the Greater Toronto Area.

Notable ICT companies with a strong presence in Halton include:

- CPI Canada
- Evertz Microsystems
- Geotab
- OnSemi
- SEMTECH



# The digital media and gaming sectors

The strength of Canada's digital media sector comes from its exceptional talent in the film, animation, visual effects and video gaming industries. The Canadian video game industry is just one ICT niche market that is experiencing tremendous success and growth.

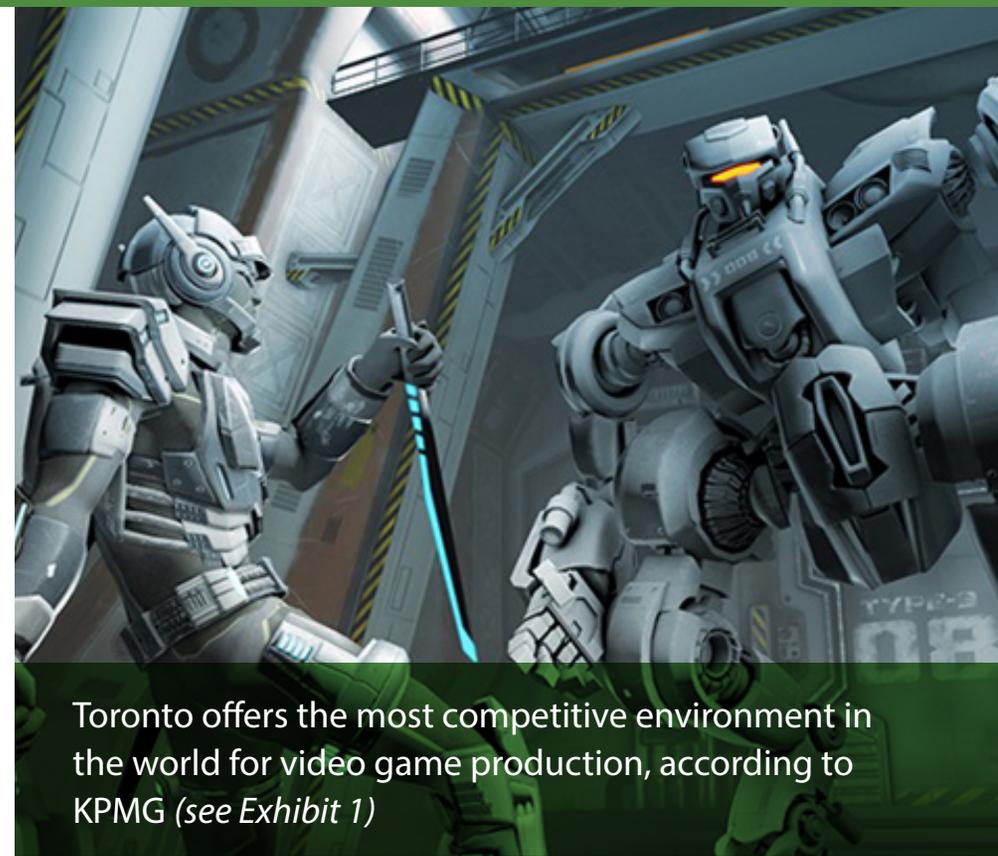
In 2021, video game companies in Canada generated an estimated \$4.3 billion in revenue, representing a growth of 20% since 2019. Additionally, Canada's video game industry supports an estimated 55,000 employees. In terms of GDP, the industry contributed a total of \$5.5 billion to Canada's economy in 2021. Of that \$5.5 billion, the industry directly contributed an estimated \$3.2 billion, and a further \$1.2 billion through indirect and induced impacts.

Visual effects technology from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) has been used in hundreds of Hollywood movies, making the GTA, including Halton, a global content creation hub.

Halton is also home to leading gaming companies such as Rockstar Toronto, located in Oakville. Rockstar games, including Grand Theft Auto and Max Payne, are developed in part at the Halton facility.

**Notable digital media companies with an extensive presence in Halton include:**

- Javelin Technologies
- Pelmorex Media
- Prodigy Education
- Rockstar Toronto
- Thrillworks



Toronto offers the most competitive environment in the world for video game production, according to KPMG (see Exhibit 1)

## Geography of Canada's Video Game Industry

**Table 1: Number of video game companies in Canada categorized by region**

Region	2017	2019	2021
Ontario	162	235	298
Quebec	198	218	291
British Columbia	139	116	161
Alberta	25	66	88
Atlantic	28	38	59
Manitoba and Saskatchewan	21	20	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>937</b>

Source: The Canadian Video Game Industry 2021,

# Diverse, strong economy

With a strong core and rapidly growing suburban business clusters, the GTA is Canada's business and financial epicenter. Halton has enjoyed sustained population and economic expansion in its location on the western edge of the GTA, and is well positioned for further growth.

Canada has a stable political and economic environment as well as a low-corruption rate making it an attractive destination for foreign investment.

- Canada ranks second to Japan in the G7 in having Political Stability.
- Canada's economy recovered strongly from the COVID-19 pandemic with real GDP reaching pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2021.
- Canada's annual GDP growth rate was 3.6% in 2022, 3rd in the G7, behind only the United Kingdom and Italy.

Source: The Global Economy, IMF, 2022 Halton Region Economic Review, 2022 Halton Region Employment Survey

Halton has enjoyed sustained population and economic expansion in its location on the western edge of the GTA, and the area is positioned for continued rapid growth.

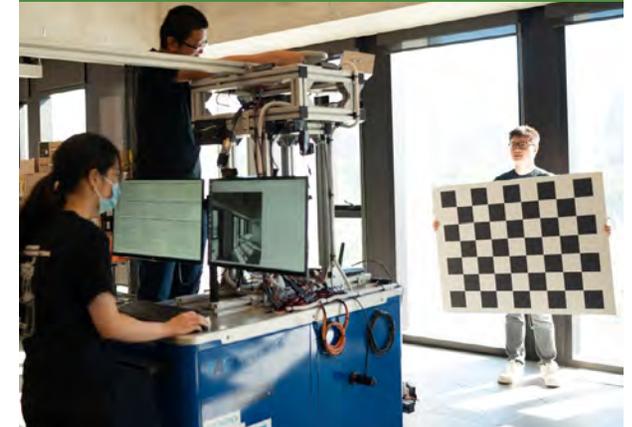
Halton is home to a growing business community in a diverse range of industry sectors; with clusters in engineering, automotive, information communication technology, financial services, food processing, and logistics distribution.

- Halton has a highly educated labour workforce of over 320,000 people.
- In 2022 there were approximately 13,870 employers across Halton employing 239,800 workers.
- In 2022 Halton had an unemployment rate of 5.5%, slightly below the broader GTA, and Halton's participation rate was the strongest in the GTA at 67.4%.
- Over 80 per cent of Halton businesses are forecasting steady or higher revenues over the next 12 months with 61 per cent of Halton businesses planning to make productivity investments or capital expenditures in 2023.

# Why Halton sets the standard

Halton ranks highly for several important site selector criteria including:

1. Diverse, strong economy
2. Deep labour pool
3. Proximity to world-class post-secondary institutions
4. Low cost of doing business
5. Regional and global connections
6. Market access
7. Robust office market



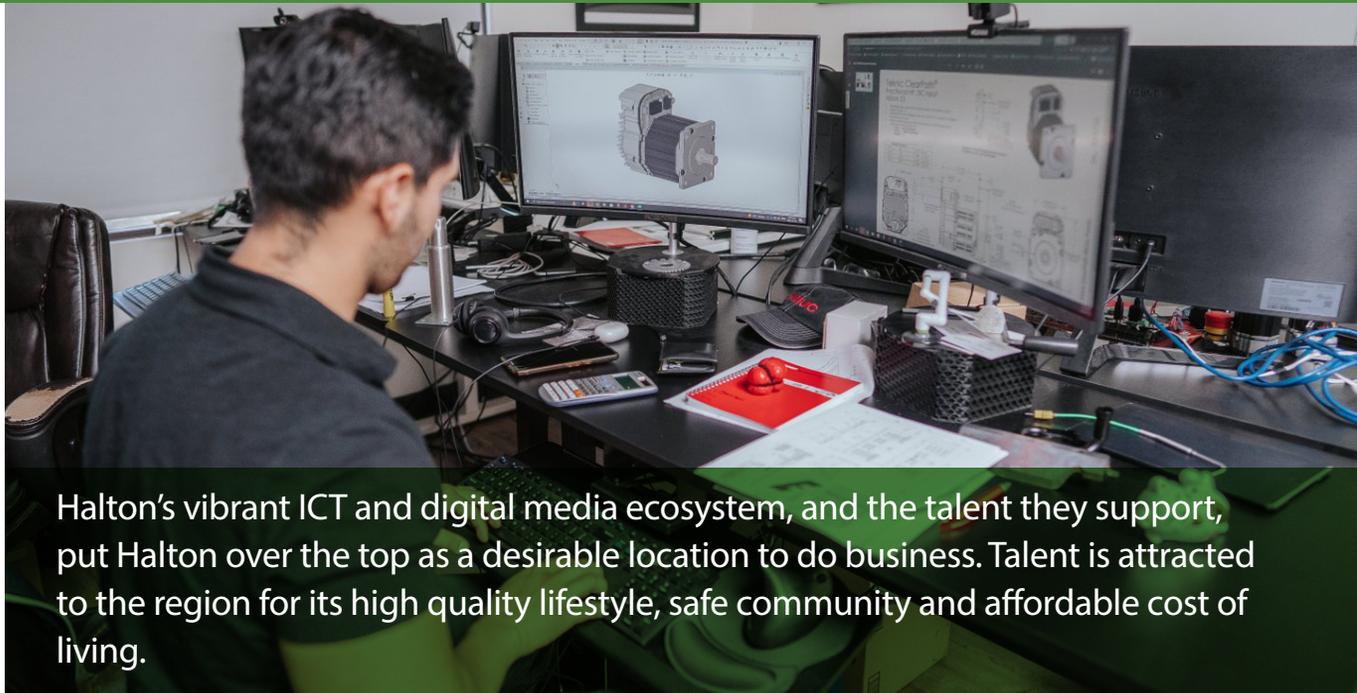
## Deep labour pool

Businesses in Halton have access to the world's most educated pool of prospective employees. Halton's resident labour force currently stands at over 320,000, with 13,870 employers and 239,800 total jobs. In the surrounding Greater Toronto and Hamilton area (GTHA) there are an additional 6.7 million individuals all within an hour drive.

In 2021, the percentage of Halton residents with post-secondary education was 78 per cent the highest in the GTHA. The percentage of population aged 25-64 with a STEM (science and technology, architecture, engineering, math or computer sciences) degree is 28%.

On the world stage, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development reports that Canada has the highest percentage of adults holding a tertiary education among all member countries.

78% of Halton's residents aged 25-64 held a post-secondary diploma or degree in 2021, the highest level of post-secondary attainment across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area.



Halton's vibrant ICT and digital media ecosystem, and the talent they support, put Halton over the top as a desirable location to do business. Talent is attracted to the region for its high quality lifestyle, safe community and affordable cost of living.

### Exhibit 2

#### ICT related employment

Industry	Employees
Utilities	2,210
Information and cultural industries	8,190
Professional, scientific and technical services	39,395
Arts, entertainment and recreation	5,280
<b>Total</b>	<b>55,075</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profile 2021

# Proximity to world-class education

Halton companies benefit from proximity to 11 universities and 9 colleges within an hour's drive. The region is also home to world renowned Sheridan College and McMaster University's DeGroote School of Business, and upcoming campuses of Wilfred Laurier University, Brock University and Conestoga College. This proximity to a wealth of academic institutions provides companies in Halton with access to a highly skilled and educated workforce, as well as opportunities for collaboration and innovation. Partnerships with colleges and universities provides companies access to cutting-edge research and development as well as the latest technological advancements. In addition to partnerships, there are funding opportunities to further assist businesses in Halton to access new talent and upskill or reskill their existing workforce.

Universities within one hour of Halton include: Brock University, University of Guelph, McMaster University, The Michener Institute, OCAD University, Ontario Tech University, Toronto Metropolitan University, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier University, and York University.

## Exhibit 2

Number of graduates from universities within a one-hour drive of Halton, 2020.

Program of study	Bachelor's degrees	Master's degrees	Doctoral degrees
Business & Commerce	9,166	3,409	31
Computer Science	2,411	413	48
Engineering	5,209	2,134	389
Fine & Applied Arts	2,700	417	54
Mathematics	2,346	374	70

Source: Common University Data (CUDO) - Council of Ontario Universities

The Milton Education Village (MEV) has been designed as an urban innovation district, where innovation meets natural wonder, at the centre of Ontario's Innovation Corridor. This innovation district is planned to accommodate 1,939 knowledge-based jobs by 2031 and 2,500 jobs by full build out, with an additional 6,700 students; 3,750 at Conestoga College and 2,940 at Wilfred Laurier University. This vision will be realized by the integration of Wilfred Laurier University and Conestoga College, outdoor recreational opportunities, views of the Niagara Escarpment, state-of-the-art research and design facilities and environmentally-conscious urban design. Development of this cutting-edge campus is set to commence in 2023.

The MEV will connect people, business, education and recreational opportunities through a fully integrated transportation system, accommodating public transit, vehicles, walking and cycling. With a mix of opportunities for young people to learn on-the-job and for forward-thinking businesses to leverage local students and talent, the MEV will be a centre for innovative solutions and education.



**Note:** All renderings are for illustrative purposes only. The physical campus will develop over a number of years and the campus will look different as development evolves.

## Halton's Sheridan College

Coined the “Harvard” of animation, Sheridan College in Halton produces high demand graduates and helps fuel the animation and gaming industry internationally.

For nearly half a century, Sheridan College in Oakville has been attracting students from across Canada and around the world. Sheridan has grown from its roots as a local college of 400 students to one of Ontario's leading post-secondary institutions, educating over 30,000 students in Oakville and nearby campuses in Brampton and Mississauga. Over that time, Sheridan has come to be recognized as a leader in animation and arts and design.

### Ranked #1 animation school in the world

Animation Career Review, consistently ranks Sheridan College first or second in their Top 25 International Animation Schools and Colleges excluding the US. Sheridan College is a world leader in the field of digital animation academic programs that has produced, Emmy, Annie and Academy Award winning animators, directors, and producers. Sheridan's award-winning graduates have gone on in high numbers to companies like Pixar, Disney, Nelvana, Sony Pictures Animation, Guru Studio, Atomic Cartoons, WildBrain and House of Cool.

In addition to its animation program, Sheridan College is known for its strong digital media programing that includes courses in game design, interactive multimedia and digital visualization as well as television and film, computer sciences and mobile computing, information sciences, interactive media management, internet communications technology and visual effects.



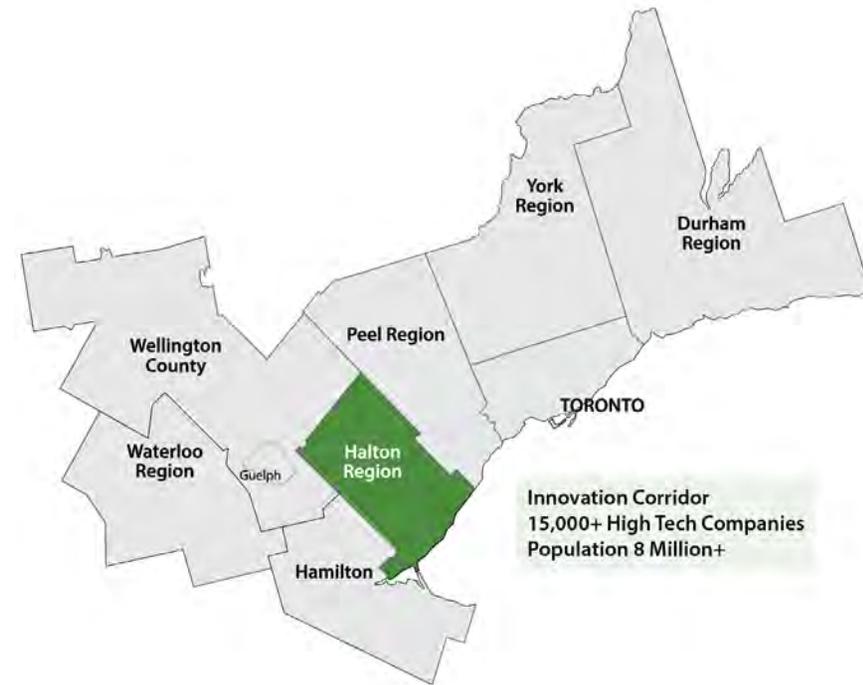
“Our graduates are leaders in screen-based industries who are consistently sought after by the best and biggest employers in the business.”

– Sheridan President and Vice Chancellor Dr. Janet Morrison

# Innovation Corridor

Halton is located in the centre of Canada's Innovation Corridor – stretching along the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area (GTHA) to Waterloo Region. It is one of the largest tech clusters in North America. According to Start-up Genome the Toronto-Waterloo corridor is home to North America's third largest and fastest-growing innovation ecosystem with more than 300,000 tech workers.

- In 2021, nearly half of the venture capital deployed in Canada, a record \$7.7 billion, went to companies based in Toronto and Waterloo.
- Toronto and Waterloo are in the top five most concentrated tech talent markets in North America.
- Between 2016 and 2021, the Greater Toronto Area had the most tech talent growth (+88,900 jobs), followed by Seattle, (45,569) and Vancouver (44,460).
- Since 2014 the millennial population in the Waterloo Region and Toronto grew by 26.3%, and 21.2% compared to Seattle 21.5% and the San Francisco Bay Area 14.4%.



The Toronto-Waterloo corridor is North America's third largest and fastest-growing innovation ecosystem.

Source: CBRE – Scoring Tech Talent, Start-up Genome Startup Ecosystem Report 2022, Canada's Innovation Corridor

15,000+ High Tech Companies

# Low cost of doing business

KPMG 2021 global analysis of the cost of doing business, ranks Canada first overall, followed by Taiwan, South Korea, Malaysia and the US.

Canada scored high in:

- Quality of labour
- Ease of doing business
- Infrastructure (transportation, utility and internet)
- Risk and protections

## #1 Canada ranks first for overall cost of doing business

According to Invest Canada, the Canadian marginal effective tax rate (METR) is the lowest in the G7 and below the OECD average.

Businesses have access to an abundance of class A and flexible office space in Halton, which is quickly becoming a hub of innovative co-working locations.

Halton has relatively low lease costs compared to the Greater Toronto Area. The average asking net rent for office space in Halton Region in 2022 was \$17.54/sq. ft., much lower than the GTA average of \$26.15/sq. ft.

Most Halton businesses enjoy free parking, a major advantage compared to downtown Toronto.



# Incentives to innovate

Canada spent \$41.9 billion on research and development in 2020, with \$3 billion allocated to tax incentives in the form of Income Tax Deduction and Investment Tax Credit. Canadian tax incentives offer advantages such as eligibility for all annual R&D expenditures, larger allowances for overhead expenses and contracted research compared to the U.S. Furthermore, Ontario corporations can claim R&D tax incentives even if their R&D costs are covered by foreign corporations or governments.

Foreign affiliates accounted for 32% of Canada’s business expenditure on R&D, second only to the U.K. among G7 countries, reflecting Canada’s openness to foreign investment. Canadian governments provide financial incentives, favorable R&D tax credits, and significant investments in university and college research, often through business partnerships. Canada’s combined federal-provincial corporate income tax system, particularly the Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) program, remains more attractive than the U.S. state tax system, allowing a 100% deduction for qualifying current R&D expenditures.

## Exhibit 4

Available Provincial tax credits

Ontario innovation tax credit (OITC)	Up to 8% refundable tax credit
Ontario business-research institute tax credit (OBRITC)	Up to 20% refundable tax credit

## Federal and Provincial incentive programs include:

- Global Innovation Clusters
- Accelerated Investment Incentive
- Customized Working Capital
- Scientific Research and Experimental Development Tax Incentive (SR&ED)
- Ontario Innovation Tax Credit (OITC)
- Ontario Research and Development Tax Credit (ORDTC)
- CanExport Innovation
- Advanced Manufacturing Innovation and Competitive (AMIC)
- Stream Southern Ontario Business Scale-Up and Productivity
- Southwestern Ontario Development Fund (SWODF)
- Interactive Digital Media Fund (IDM)
- Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit (OIDMTC)
- Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network (OVIN) programs
- Women in Technology Fund (WIT)

## Major technology providers with a presence in the GTA include:

- Apple
- Microsoft
- Cisco
- Nokia
- Ericsson
- OpenText
- Fujitsu
- Oracle
- Google
- Salesforce
- IBM
- Qualcomm
- Intel
- Samsung
- LG
- SAP
- Shopify
- Xerox



# Market Access

Canada is a global trading nation and has established free trade agreements with more than 10 countries, providing competitive advantages across a range of industry sectors. On July 1, 2020 the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) entered into force, which reinforces Canada's strong economic ties with the United States and Mexico. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the European Union (EU) also provides Canada access to a \$16.6 trillion market. The EU is Canada's third largest trading partner after the United States and China, accounting for 8.2% of its trade in goods with the world in 2020.

Canada's trade agreements enable companies to compete on a more level playing field and help eliminate trade barriers. More recently, Canada has been moving toward developing trade agreements that address labour mobility, intellectual property and investment.

Source: Global Affairs Canada



# Regional and global connections

Today's fast-paced, globally-connected businesses need to move product quickly and efficiently. Southern Ontario's transportation infrastructure provides Halton based companies with efficient methods of moving people and products. Products need to be shipped to meet demand and workers often need to travel across the globe on short notice. Halton's transportation infrastructure is especially well-positioned to meet these needs because it offers:

- direct access to the largest highway network in Canada, with regional, provincial and international linkages (over 30 interchanges to 400-series highways in Halton);
- a brief 40-minute commute to downtown Toronto via rapid transit;
- a less than one hour drive from the U.S. international border (Niagara-Buffalo); and
- proximity to four international airports, including Toronto Pearson, Hamilton, Billy Bishop and Buffalo.

The Toronto Pearson International Airport, neighbouring Halton, is Canada's principal airport and a major North American gateway, handling more international passengers than any airport in North America other than New York's JFK. Toronto Pearson serves more than 30 Canadian cities, 87 U.S. cities, and 30 international destinations.

# Robust office market

Halton's class "A" business parks offer modern, flexible office space along the active and visible Oakville-Burlington highway corridor and close to GO Transit rapid transit. Office space inventory in Oakville and Burlington is approximately 8.5 million square feet. The average asking net office rent in Oakville or Burlington is \$17.57 per square foot. In comparison, office rental rates in Downtown Toronto are more than twice this price averaging \$36.09 per square foot.

Halton's business parks provide easy access to major highways, airports and public transit, as well as a direct connection to the GTA's talent pool. Sites offer an ideal mix of affordability, market access, proximity to ICT industry clusters, innovation incubators and centres of excellence, with conveniently located amenities and services for employees.

Halton's strong growth and available shovel-ready lands, have provided for an abundance of greenfield development opportunities at competitive prices. In 2022, 6.4 million square feet of non-residential development was approved for construction adding significantly to Halton's real estate inventory.

## [Discover Halton's Business Parks](#)



# Halton's innovation ecosystem

Halton has a supportive and diverse innovation and technology ecosystem that is supported by several organizations with complementary mandates.

## Haltech

Since 2011, Haltech has been the go-to strategic connector and educator for startups across Halton and beyond. Today, more than 1,000 startups and scaleups have boosted their businesses through Haltech. With their client-first boutique care strategy, bold programming for women founders, range of educational events and webinars, and their diverse network of expert advisors, Haltech gives tech startups the tools they need to realize their full potential – no matter what stage they're at. Contact Haltech to inquire about their range of free business advisory services, learning workshops on entrepreneurship and commercialization, or for assistance with your corporate innovation program.

## TechPlace

Operated by Burlington Economic Development, TechPlace exists to help technology, talent and ideation come together under one roof. But it does more than provide a base camp for tech companies to get work done. Anchored by two co-location partners, Haltech and Angel One Investor Network, TechPlace provides tech companies (both new and growing) with access to space, resources, programming and mentorship through a growing partnership network and by creating an environment that's focused on generating opportunities for networking and growth.

## Milton Education Village

The Milton Education Village (MEV), a dynamic urban district, when completed will be home to campuses of Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College that will feature a hub for research and technology businesses. The MEV is being built and will eventually be the home of future satellite campuses of Laurier and

Conestoga and will offer prestige office opportunities embedded with STEAM talent sprouting from the local post-secondary programs. The vision for the MEV includes collaborative space, acceleration/incubation, business services, education and training.

## Silicon Halton

Since 2009, Silicon Halton has been a grassroots organization that is industry-led and includes a technology focused community of Freelancers, Solopreneurs, Entrepreneurs, IT Professionals, and Students that have achieved revenue and profits but need to network and collaborate to build profitable growth and commercialize innovation through technology, community and growth. The organization have become the platform for Halton tech companies to dream, discuss, develop, test, and launch their business ideas through several programs including Peer2Peer Groups, Silicon Halton Collaboration Days and Tech Under Twenty.



## Halton ICT business case: Geotab

As one of Canada's fastest growing companies, Geotab chose to remain in Halton (Oakville) when they decided to almost triple their size and build a new state-of-the-art headquarters.

***"As an entrepreneur at heart I believe this is one of the best places in the world to start a business."*** Geotab CEO Neil Cawse

Geotab is a made-in-Halton success story. Founded in 2000, with two people in the basement of their Oakville home, Geotab has grown to become a global leader in connected transportation solutions that provides telematics — vehicle and asset tracking — solutions to 41,000 customers in 150 countries. Now with over 2,200 employees, Geotab has invested in ground-breaking data research and innovation to enable partners and customers, including Fortune 500 and public sector organizations, to transform their fleets and operations. Geotab connects to over 3.5 million vehicles and processes more than 55 billion data points per day so that customers can make better decisions, increase productivity, have safer fleets and achieve their sustainability goals. Backed by a team of industry-leading data scientists and AI experts, Geotab is unlocking the power of data to understand real-time and predictive analytics — solving for today's challenges and tomorrow's world.

In 2022, Geotab was included in the Globe and Mail's list of Canada's top-growing companies for the fourth year in a row and has been named the number one commercial telematics provider worldwide by ABI Research (2022).

### Why Halton region?

In 2019, Geotab moved from its 36,000 square-foot facility in Oakville to a new 90,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art headquarters. One of the reasons they chose to remain in Oakville is because of the specialized talent they can access from several world-class academic institutions within an hours drive. Geotab's Campus Program provides co-op and internship opportunities to students from local universities and colleges in Computer Science, Math, Science and Business, Engineering and Environment. In 2020, Geotab launched the Geotab Student Challenge. As part of the challenge, students are placed in teams to work and find innovative solutions to existing business solutions. Students look at things like how to reduce waste and how to improve the customer experience.

***"Toronto and the surrounding cities have become a huge draw for immigration, which allows Geotab to attract highly skilled employees who are not necessarily born in Canada. [And] we are also directly connected to the tech ecosystem of the Greater Toronto Area, Hamilton, and Waterloo."*** Geotab CEO Neil Cawse

Another reason Geotab chose to stay and grow in Halton is having access to highly educated multicultural workforce that is drawn to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GHTA). The 2021 Census reveals that 34% of Halton's population is foreign-born. Halton is a welcoming place for newcomers, with a range of programs designed to support their integration into the community.

# GEOTAB



# Halton: The place to be in the Greater Toronto Area and Canada!

The Toronto metropolitan area as a whole ranks eighth globally in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Livability Ranking for 2022. The Toronto region is one of the world's most cosmopolitan and multicultural, where more than 200 languages are spoken—an important advantage in today's globalized business environment.

Despite its attractiveness as a place to live, work, and play, the Toronto region is an extremely affordable metro area according to Mercer's Worldwide Cost of Living Survey. In 2022, Toronto ranks as the world's 89th most costly city, meaning its costs are below Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, Berlin, Dubai, Melbourne, Vienna, Rome, Paris, Sydney, New York and London, among many others.

## Within the Greater Toronto Area, Halton stands out because:

- Halton is ranked Canada's safest large municipality.
- Halton public schools are especially well-regarded, and the region offers many private primary and secondary schools.
- Halton has 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) of prime Lake Ontario shoreline frontage, contrasted with varied topography and lifestyle opportunities inland.
- The average household income in Halton is \$121,000, which is the highest household income among the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area.
- Access to major attractions, including Toronto's CN Tower, Niagara Falls and Canada's wine country, Royal Botanical Gardens, and several theatres, galleries and museums.
- Plenty of recreational opportunities, including cycling, skiing, sailing, shopping, fine dining, racetracks, casinos and sporting attractions.





# Contact us

## Halton Region Economic Development

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### Hours of operation

Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We welcome your inquiries and look forward to connecting with you.

## Halton Region Economic Development: Your source for Halton business information

With a strong and robust economy, Halton is one of the best places in Canada to do business. Ask us about the region's market accessibility, our skilled and educated workforce, growth potential, above average lifestyle, competitive costs, business properties and any other topics related to business opportunities throughout Halton.

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