



## Year in Review

### Economic Development and Tourism

# 2023

Current climate and future forecast

2

Business park developments will bring more jobs

4

Entrepreneurship Hub continues to support small businesses

6

Marketing initiatives build Town's identity as investment ready

8

Tourism sector's impact on Georgina's economy

9

Local economic highlights

10



## Current climate and future forecast

The Town of Georgina is currently undergoing transformative and positive changes as its population and employment base grow. It is forecast to have a population of 70,500 and 20,700 jobs by 2051<sup>1</sup>.

Recent and pending transportation improvements and the development of designated employment lands in Keswick bring an opportunity to attract major investment that contributes to the non-residential tax base and creates more jobs that support Georgina's growing population.

While the majority of Georgina's businesses have less than 10 employees, their contribution to the economy is enormous and deserves equal focus. Collaborating with organizations and continuing to provide [entrepreneurship programming](#), which supported more than 189 businesses<sup>2</sup> in 2023 through six programs, is key to retention and expansion.

A new dedicated [website](#) was launched that showcases Georgina as investment-ready and serves as a tool for new and existing businesses looking to expand.

The tourism sector in Georgina has a major impact on the local economy. It employs approximately one out of every 10 jobs<sup>3</sup>. In 2023, the Town supported 28 events that attracted visitors from outside of its borders, through joint marketing and [grants](#). A continued focus on development through the lens of collaboration and partnerships will assist in creating the most economic impact from the sector.

Investment attraction, business retention and expansion, and tourism development, including downtown revitalization, are all strategic goals within a new five-year [Economic Development and Tourism Strategy](#) developed in 2023.

The outcome is that the Town of Georgina will have the reputation of a community that is 'open for business.' It will continue to be a unique municipality within York Region, offering its lakeside lifestyle, rural landscape and urban amenities, one where residents are proud to call home, where visitors want to return and where talent wants to live, work and play.

<sup>1</sup> York Region, 2023

<sup>2</sup> YSpace Georgina, 2023

<sup>3</sup> McSweeney & Associates, Situational Analysis & Target Market Analysis for the Town of Georgina, 2023



## Economic Snapshot

### Employment

Between 2017 and 2022, the local economy grew by 3,925 jobs (31 per cent) to a total of 16,387 jobs, a significantly faster rate than the province as a whole (which saw a six per cent growth).

Another key consideration is business counts by size. Specific to Georgina, the Canadian Business Registry notes that Georgina had 4,210 businesses as of December 2022, of which 1,155 (27.4 per cent) had employees. Of these 1,155 businesses, the majority had between one and nine employees (948, or 82.1 per cent).

## Between 2017 and 2022, the local economy grew at a significantly faster rate than the province.

Source: McSweeney & Associates, Situational Analysis & Target Market Analysis for the Town of Georgina, 2023

### Demographics

Population and Median Household Income



# 49.3K

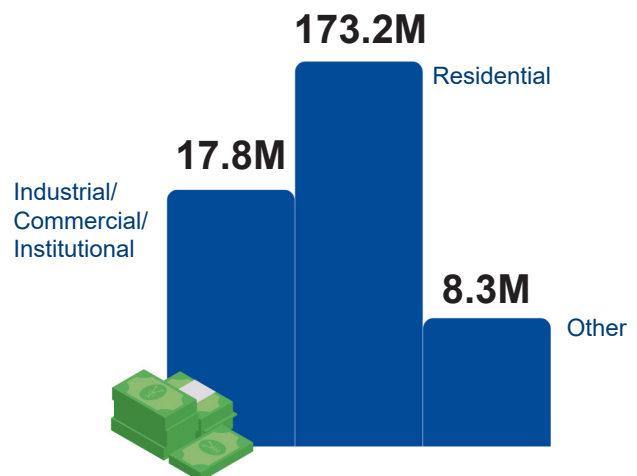
Statistics Canada Population



# \$105,399

### Development

Construction Value of Issued Permits (2023)



Other includes agricultural, swimming pools, demolitions, septic, signs, tents, decks, heating and plumbing.

Source: Localintel Estimates, Statistics Canada - Table: 11-10-0009-01

Source: Town of Georgina Development Services

Explore more up-to-date statistics on Georgina's growing economy at [choosegeorgina.ca](https://choosegeorgina.ca)



# Georgina's business park development will bring more jobs

More than 500 acres of business park lands are located in Keswick.



View a video highlighting the investment opportunities with the employment lands at [choosegeorgina.ca](https://choosegeorgina.ca)

The Town of Georgina's business park lands offer one of the most extensive footprints for business development in the Greater Toronto Area, which is exciting news for the Town as it has the potential to provide significant job opportunities and expand the Town's industrial tax base. Shovels were in the ground at the end of 2022 within Panattoni Development Company's 200+ acre property. By the end of 2023, the first 370,000 sq. ft. building became available for lease, with one tenant securing 52,000 sq. ft.

## Why Choose Georgina?



Georgina is within a one-hour drive on Highway 404 to the Greater Toronto Area's urban core. It is situated only 35 minutes from Highway 401 and 60 minutes from the Toronto International Airport. Its location, combined with planned [infrastructure improvements](#), provides optimal transportation access to northern and southern Ontario.



The Town has an [investment-ready program](#) with expedited approvals to ensure a smooth and timely development process. It also offers financial incentives through a development fee rebate.



Georgina's economy is growing. It is projected to see a 40 per cent population increase over the next two decades.





## Growth statistics signal prosperous investment opportunities in Georgina

Georgina works closely with York Region and the Keswick Business Park developers to market the investment opportunities within its designated employment lands, highlighting the growth in Georgina and the region.

Ontario has identified York Region as a population growth area through to 2031. Within a 60 km radius, there is a total population of more than 4.5 million people.

The Keswick Business Park's proximity to major residential centres to the south (<30 minutes) will be of great benefit for accessing labour and customers. Within a 35-minute drive, there is a total population of 609,250 people and a labour force of 500,200.

These growth statistics are positive indicators for any investor looking to relocate or expand, and with the Keswick Business Park being one of the most extensive footprints for business development in the Greater Toronto Area, we are working collaboratively to ensure Georgina is on their radar.

## Current developments\*

### Scott Woods-Transport Inc. Development (50+ acres)

Scott-Woods Transport Inc. is a heavy haul trucking company that employs more than 100 workers, transports shipments throughout North America and is known as one of Canada's most technologically advanced in specialized trucking fleets. The site is on the east side of Woodbine Avenue, north of Ravenshoe Road.

"Located just minutes from Highway 404, this location has easy access to the major transportation networks across the Greater Toronto Area. Together with the planned east-west transportation corridor situated just a few kilometres south of our new location in Georgina, Scott-Woods Transport will be well-positioned for future expansion and growth. In addition to the fantastic infrastructure the Georgina area provides, many of our employees already live in northern York Region, including Georgina, making this a great location for the next phase of our business and a place that we are excited to call our new home," said Mark Alden, owner and President of Scott-Woods Transport Inc.

### Panattoni Development Company (200+ acres)

The 404 Logistics Park, zoned to accommodate a variety of industrial and institutional business operations and small-scale commercial uses accessory to these uses developed its first of three buildings (approximately 370,000-square-foot) in the first of three phases along Woodbine Avenue.

### Life Sciences Technology Park (50+ acres)

The Canadian Life Science and Technology Park at the south end of the Keswick Business Park will offer customized spaces required by life sciences and technology companies. The park aims to support researchers with commercial aspirations and enable students to develop ideas through incubator and accelerator programs while connecting industry with the technical prowess of academic institutions and cutting-edge technologies.

\*At various stages in the development process.





## Entrepreneurship Hub continues to support small businesses

Georgina's partnership with the Town of East Gwillimbury and York University's YSpace has been wildly successful, supporting many businesses in the initial stages of their entrepreneurship journey and those looking for assistance to expand or grow their business. The best part is that it has all been free to the participants thanks to financial support from the partnership and the Province's Rural Economic Development grant program.

In 2023, programming supported more than 700 participants and offered more than 581 hours of mentorship. With in-person and virtual support available at no cost, more businesses in northern York Region are taking advantage of programming after recognizing and spreading the word of their new skills.



Nadya Edwards, an artist in Georgina, first reached out to YSpace Georgina for assistance in helping promote the Georgina Studio Tour as she sits on the event's steering committee. She started with one-on-one consultations and has participated in peer-to-peer groups. She says she has gained valuable insights into expanding her current offerings and is embracing a fresh perspective on her business strategy.

"YSpace has helped me a lot. The staff are truly amazing. The community connections and expertise of the staff and mentors have been invaluable. I definitely encourage other businesses to sign up. There are great opportunities that will help you. Don't worry about your skill level; there is something for everybody to learn." ~ Nadya.

**6** Programs  
**36**  
Workshops

**11** Networking sessions  
**\$151,500**  
in external funding received to support the partnership's programming



This year's programming included the ongoing program Idea Consultations. Through these one-on-one consultations with a business professional, a defined roadmap aligned to each participant's unique needs is designed, which includes access to additional support or mentorship. This program is a great starting point for any new or existing business exploring options for growth.



Other programs included Business Foundations and Digital Skills for Business. Business Foundations was a workshop series facilitated by nine industry experts that helped more than 192 entrepreneurs enhance their skills, covering topics from building a business plan to marketing and operations. Digital Skills for Business, another workshop series, assisted more than 180 entrepreneurs through topics such as social media, digital marketing, e-commerce, SEO and more.

Aside from the main programs offered in 2023, there have been many other events, including peer-to-peer networking, one-on-one mentoring through "Office Hours," and use of the meeting co-working space and Town support at 1 Market St. in downtown Sutton.



Georgina business owners and YSpace participants Jen and Tina, who own What's Your Damage? Skate Shop, a recent startup, took advantage of many training opportunities at

YSpace to help kick-start their business. Originally looking for help online, they discovered YSpace. Their journey included participation in peer-to-peer groups, mentorship programs, invaluable one-on-one consultations and the Digital Skills for Business Program.

"I kind of fell into YSpace by accident. I think I was looking for help with starting a Shopify website, and someone suggested some other programs, so through online searching, Google Shop here came up, and YSpace came up, and with these two services, we soft-launched What's Your Damage? Skate Shop. I met with Stephanie and she was integral in landing us in their programs. Tina and I joined the various classes that were offered both online and in person. We took plenty of notes and met many like-minded entrepreneurs with local businesses. We met twice a month for informative and inspiring sessions. Through this program, we were invited to connect with Stella from Stella Graphics. She has an eye for small details that make a visual impact online. With her help, we're tweaking details on our Shopify site and on our social media platforms to help with site performance and brand recognition." ~ Jen and Tina.

The successful partnership has been extended until 2026 to continue to support new and existing businesses. Learn more about current programming at [georgina.ca/YSpace](https://georgina.ca/YSpace).





# Marketing initiatives build Town's identity as investment ready

With shovels now in the ground within the Town's employment lands, investment readiness and attraction efforts were a priority for the Economic Development and Tourism office in 2023.

Projects were implemented in partnership with York Region that supported the Town's efforts in assisting developers to acquire tenants and, ultimately, create more jobs and increase the non-residential tax base.

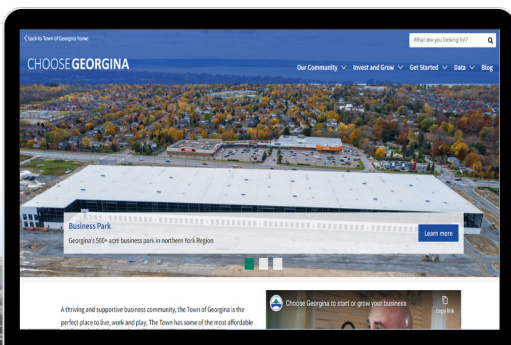
One of the main deliverables through the partnership was the creation and launch of an investment attraction website, [choosegeorgina.ca](https://choosegeorgina.ca). The new site is a comprehensive resource for talent and businesses considering Georgina as a place to call home and for existing businesses looking to expand.

Developed with easy navigation in mind, the mobile-friendly site highlights Georgina's

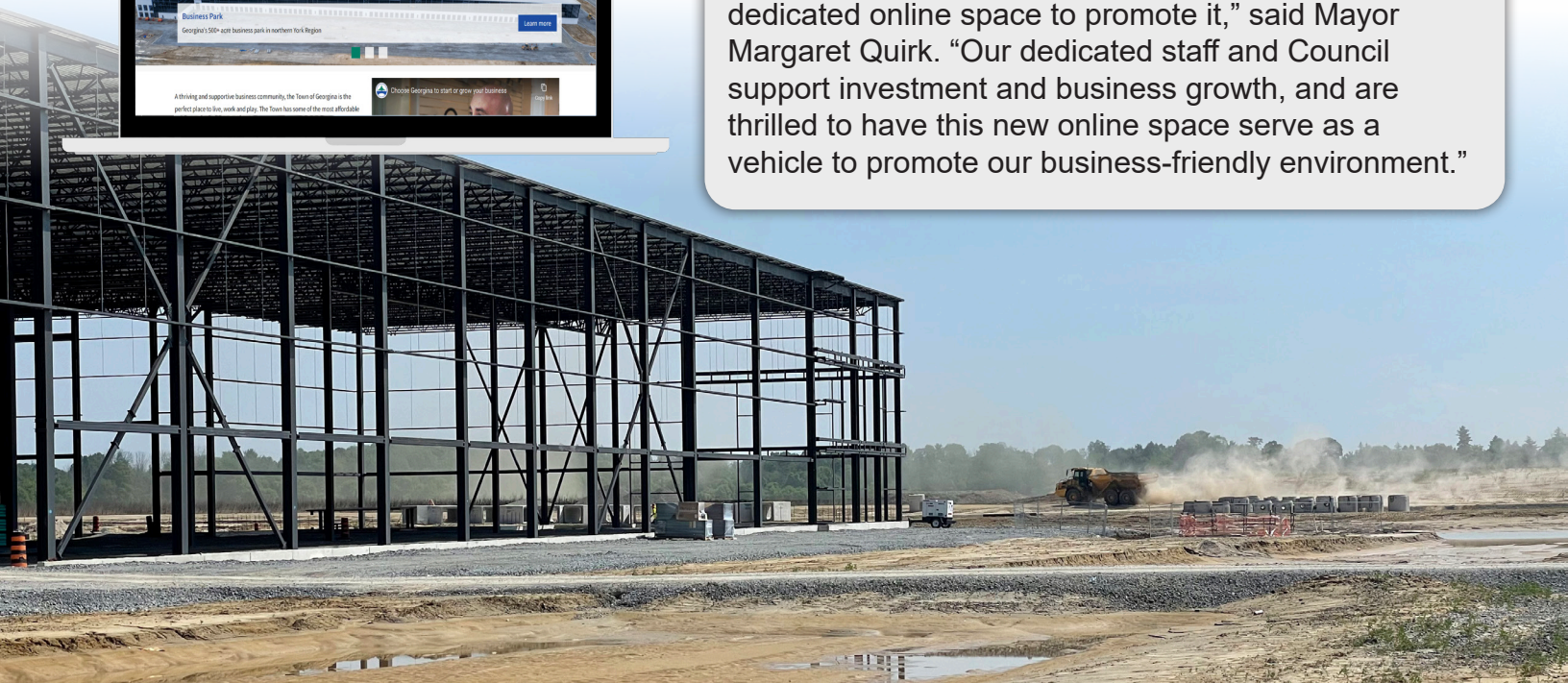
advantages, connecting its audiences to the information and staff needed to make an informed decision on why they should "Choose Georgina." Visitors can view up-to-date [interactive data](#), videos and testimonials and stay updated on economic development news through blogs and a monthly newsletter.

Other partnership projects included a video highlighting investment opportunities within the Keswick Business Park, a [National Post advertorial](#) that had an extensive reach and shone a light on the Town, and targeted digital campaigns.

Going forward, investment readiness and attraction efforts will increase as we work closely with developers and York Region to bring more investment to Georgina. Upcoming 2024 initiatives will include targeted marketing campaigns, trade shows and lead generation.



"The launch of this dedicated economic development site shows our commitment to attracting investment and talent to continue building a thriving and balanced economy. Georgina is the best place to live, work and play at the top of the GTA, and now we have a dedicated online space to promote it," said Mayor Margaret Quirk. "Our dedicated staff and Council support investment and business growth, and are thrilled to have this new online space serve as a vehicle to promote our business-friendly environment."





# Tourism sector's impact on Georgina's economy

Data suggests that one out of every 10 jobs in Georgina are directly or indirectly related to the tourism sector. This shows the impact tourism has on Georgina's economy and validates the work being done by the Town to promote the area as a four-season tourism destination.

To increase the impact tourism has on the local economy, the Town works closely with its partners through marketing and product development to attract visitors and increase spending, all while creating a sense of place.

## Town-led events build Georgina's tourism brand and stimulate spending

The Economic Development and Tourism office hosts two signature events that continue to grow and create an economic impact.

During the [Field to Table](#) event, nine farmers at eight locations welcomed 500+ residents and visitors to each of their properties to learn about agriculture and purchase farm-fresh products. The day brought many new customers to the farms, more than \$28,000 in revenue and helped bring awareness to Georgina's thriving agriculture community.

[Taste of Georgina](#), the Town's annual two-week food event that celebrates local cuisine, sold more than 700 prix

fixe meals and brought in more than \$25,000 in profit for the participating businesses. The event also brought in many new customers who purchased other meals from the regular menus.

## Supporting events and initiatives that have an impact on our community

The Town supported 18 event organizers in the amount of \$42,540 in 2023 through the [Economic, Culture, and Community Betterment Grant Program](#). Grant recipients included events like the Georgina Studio Tour, Georgina Marathon and Half Marathon and Military Day. Town staff worked closely with the organizers to help promote their events and link them with potential partners that can help elevate the event and create more of an economic impact.

## Place-making and beautification efforts help revitalize main streets

New banner arms and public art were installed within the Town's historic main streets, beautifying the areas and creating a sense of place.

The Town also continued to promote its [Community Improvement Plan](#) (CIP) grants to businesses that want to make improvements to their properties.



Staff were at the Outdoor Adventure Show in Mississauga. The busy three-day show allowed us to connect with many GTA residents and highlight the many great things to see and do close to the city. We also attended the Toronto Boat Show and the Great Canadian Outdoor Show.



# Business and tourism news highlights

## Uptown Keswick Parkette revitalized



Improvements were made to the Uptown Keswick Parkette that offers a multi-use shelter for community events, accessible seating and a public art installation featuring Indigenous art.

## Taste of Georgina event continues to grow and support local restaurants

Taste of Georgina, which celebrates the Town's growing and diverse food culture, grew by welcoming four new restaurants. The event brought more than \$25,000 in revenue from 700 meals sold in 12 restaurants.

## Town installs public art and infrastructure in downtowns



New place-making banner arms were installed along the Town's main streets to beautify the

areas, and permanent art was installed in Keswick, Sutton and Jackson's Point to celebrate Indigenous culture. These additions and improvements were made possible through the Federal Tourism Relief Fund.

## Partnership with York Region funds tourism and investment attraction marketing

The Town received \$20,000 in grants from York Region to support its Field to Table tourism event and investment-attraction marketing initiatives.

## New first-of-its-kind puppy development centre site announced in Sutton



A first-of-its-kind in Canada Puppy Development Centre was announced that will support, socialize and train future CNIB guide dogs and serve as a community space for residents to learn more about guide dogs and blindness. The new home of CNIB's Guide Dogs, Howard and Delores Beck Puppy Development Centre, will be located at 4907 Baseline Rd. in Sutton.

## New investment-attraction website launched

A new economic development website, [choosegeorgina.ca](https://choosegeorgina.ca), was launched in partnership with York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch. It is a comprehensive resource for talent and businesses considering Georgina as a place to call home and for existing businesses looking to expand.

## Georgina welcomes Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario visited ClearWater Farm Ontario to celebrate the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and his environmental stewardship and how his values are in action at ClearWater Farm.

## First business park tenant announced

Georgina welcomed Turf Care Products Canada. The company leased 52,000 Sq. Ft. of Panattoni Development Company Canada's 370,000 Sq. Ft. building, part of Phase 1 of the 404 Logistics Park.

Turf Care Products Canada is an award-winning, independent, and privately held Canadian company that provides quality products and services to the golf course



community, municipalities, parks departments and professional contractors.

## **Agri-tourism event shines a spotlight on Georgina's thriving agriculture sector**

The sixth annual Field to Table farm tour event was the most attended tour yet, which brought approximately 500 visitors to each of the eight tour stops and more than \$28,000 in revenue to participating farmers. Attendees experienced a day on the farm talking with the farmers, touring their properties, eating farm-fresh food cooked by local chefs and enjoying fun and educational activities.

## **Georgina's business park development receives national attention**



The Town's business park lands were featured in the National Post. The Town of Georgina's business park lands offer one of the most extensive footprints for business development in the Greater Toronto Area, which is exciting news for the Town as it has the potential to provide significant job opportunities and

expand the Town's industrial tax base.

## **Non-profit Organization Grant launched**

A new streamlined application process was launched in the fall that provides project-based funding to organizations that contribute to the social, economic, cultural, health or general well-being of the Town of Georgina.

## **Town helps increase food delivery to beaches**

The Town installed signage to identify designated food-delivery parking spots at the following beaches: De La Salle, Holmes Point, Jackson's Point Harbour Park, North Gwillimbury and Willow Beach to help residents and visitors to eat local at the beach.

## **Economic Development and Tourism Division receives marketing award**

The Economic Development and Tourism Division won a gold MarCom award for its marketing campaign promoting the annual Field to Table event. The event was initiated to strengthen community and agricultural partnerships and has now become one of

Georgina's signature events, attracting hundreds of residents and visitors each year. Since its inception in 2018, the event has more than doubled the number of attendees and revenue made by participating agri-businesses.

## **Businesses celebrated for more than 20 years in business**



Seven businesses that have been in operation for more than two decades were recognized through the Mayor and Council's Milestone Awards at a gala at the Briars Resort. This event is made possible through a partnership with the Georgina Chamber of Commerce, which provides a variety of awards to local businesses through the annual Business Excellence Awards.

# **STAY CONNECTED**

[Subscribe](#) to our eNewsletter for news and updates.



**GEORGINA**

**Economic Development and Tourism Office**

26557 Civic Centre Rd., Keswick, ON, L4P 3G1

905-476-4301



[Town of Georgina](#)



[GeorginaEconomicDevelopment](#)



[ChooseGeorgina](#)



[chooseeorgina.ca](mailto:chooseeorgina.ca)