



20  
23



Economic Development,  
Tourism & Cultural Initiatives Department

# YEAR IN REVIEW



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## STAFF PHOTO

From left to right: Theresa Fuller, Natalie Walker, Matt Cuthbert, Betty Jo Cox, Jillian Page, Liz Oden, Leticia Carfesan, Amber Kane, Rob Dallaway, Lindsay House, Mae Legg, Glenn Brown, Sara Munroe, Leanne Rich, Lesley Magill, Kara Davey, Ron Gasparetto, Robert Ham, Connor Webb, Kevin Dekok, Ela Stypa Jones, Tia Chisholm, Adrienne Briggs.

# INTRODUCTION

Economic Development, Tourism and Cultural Initiatives embraced its first full year with the newly incorporated Real Estate division, including the Brantford Farmers' Market and the Brantford Municipal Airport. Significant strides were made in developing the Farmer's Market online presence with sizable results and the new Economic Development Strategy is near completion, with implementation already beginning. Overall the Department saw increases in business consultations, outreach activities, a return to pre-pandemic attendance levels at the Sanderson Centre and increases to both industrial building permit value, and industrial and commercial square footage.

This year-in-review is an annual report produced by the City of Brantford's Economic Development, Tourism and Cultural Initiatives Department to highlight the performance of the local economy by summarizing local economic data for the industrial, commercial, residential and tourism sectors, while also featuring significant accomplishments by the Department overall.



# Business Consultation Program

**1,037**

BUSINESS CONSULTATIONS



**129%** INCREASE IN  
BUSINESS CONSULTATIONS



**4,730**

BUSINESS INQUIRIES



Roustan Hockey (11 Spalding Dr.)'s mission is to grow hockey through supplying wooden sticks at affordable price points and is the only commercial hockey stick manufacturer in Canada.

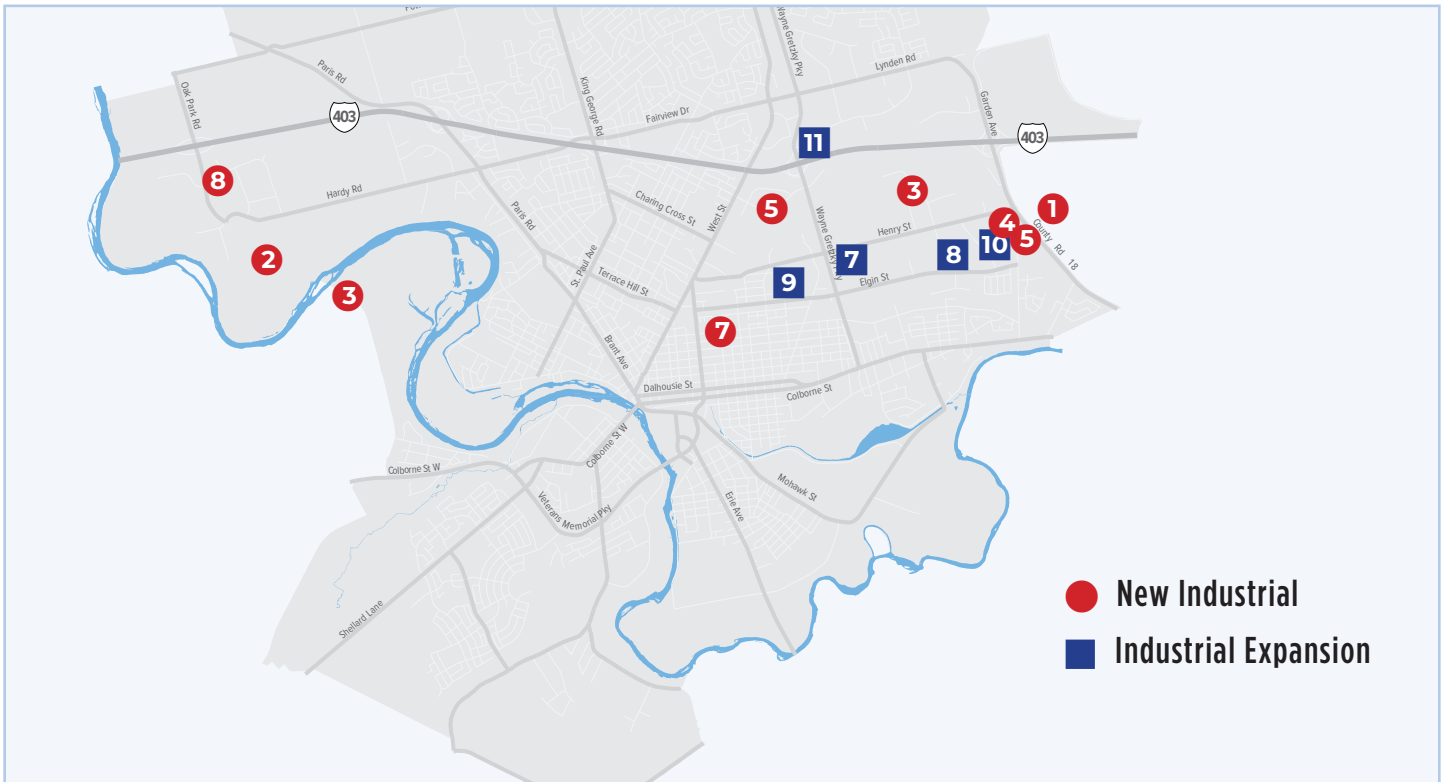


The Business Resource Centre (BRC) conducted 700 consultations in 2023 with 1,037 entrepreneurs from Brantford, Brant, Six Nations, Haldimand, Norfolk and Mississaugas of the Credit.



Located at 10 Craig St., Upfield is the largest plant-based consumer product company in the world.

# Major Investments



- 1 Vision Truck Group/Lanca**  
167 Garden Ave., **52K sq ft, \$10M**
- 2 Barry Callebaut/Granite REIT**  
4 Bowery Rd., **445K sq ft, \$93M**
- 3 Vicano**  
151 Garden Ave., **429K sq ft, \$24M**
- 4 Tees N More**  
213 Garden Ave., **46K sq ft, 25 jobs**
- 5 Volm Companies**  
178 Garden Ave., **35K sq ft, 40 jobs**
- 6 Cannabis Co-Pack**  
47 Morton Ave. E., **10K sq ft, 57 jobs**

- 7 Betco Products**  
27 Ryan Pl., **13K sq ft, \$1.6M**
- 8 Samuel, Son & Co.**  
546 Elgin St., **9K sq ft, \$13M**
- 9 Econo-Rack Group**  
132 Adams Blvd., **41K sq ft, \$3M**
- 10 Mitsui Hi-Tec**  
60-70 Fen Ridge Ct., **117K sq ft, \$25M**
- 11 Slacan**  
145 Roy Blvd., **30K sq ft, \$2M**

# Industrial and Commercial Sectors

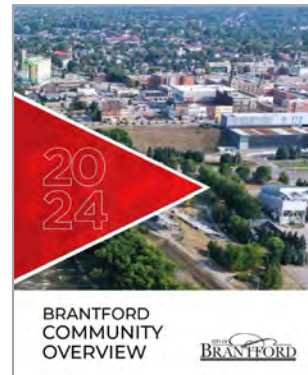
## Industrial

- **\$196M** industrial permit value
- **109%** increase in industrial permit value
- **1.2M** industrial square footage built
- **488K** in vacant industrial space
- **1.2M** industrial sq ft built
- **93%** increase in industrial sq ft
- **0** industrial business closures

## Commercial

- **\$61.3M** commercial permit value
- **23K** commercial sq ft built
- **167%** increase in TOTAL industrial and commercial sq ft.

BRANTFORD WAS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF CANADA'S TOP PLACES IN THE COUNTRY FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT BY SITE SELECTION MAGAZINE



Brantford Community Overview was updated in 2023 to showcase why Brantford is a great place to invest.



Mitsui High-tec (Canada) Inc. opened its second expansion encompassing 100K sf.



Massilly announced the grand opening of their 42.2K sf facility expansion.

# Workforce Development

5%

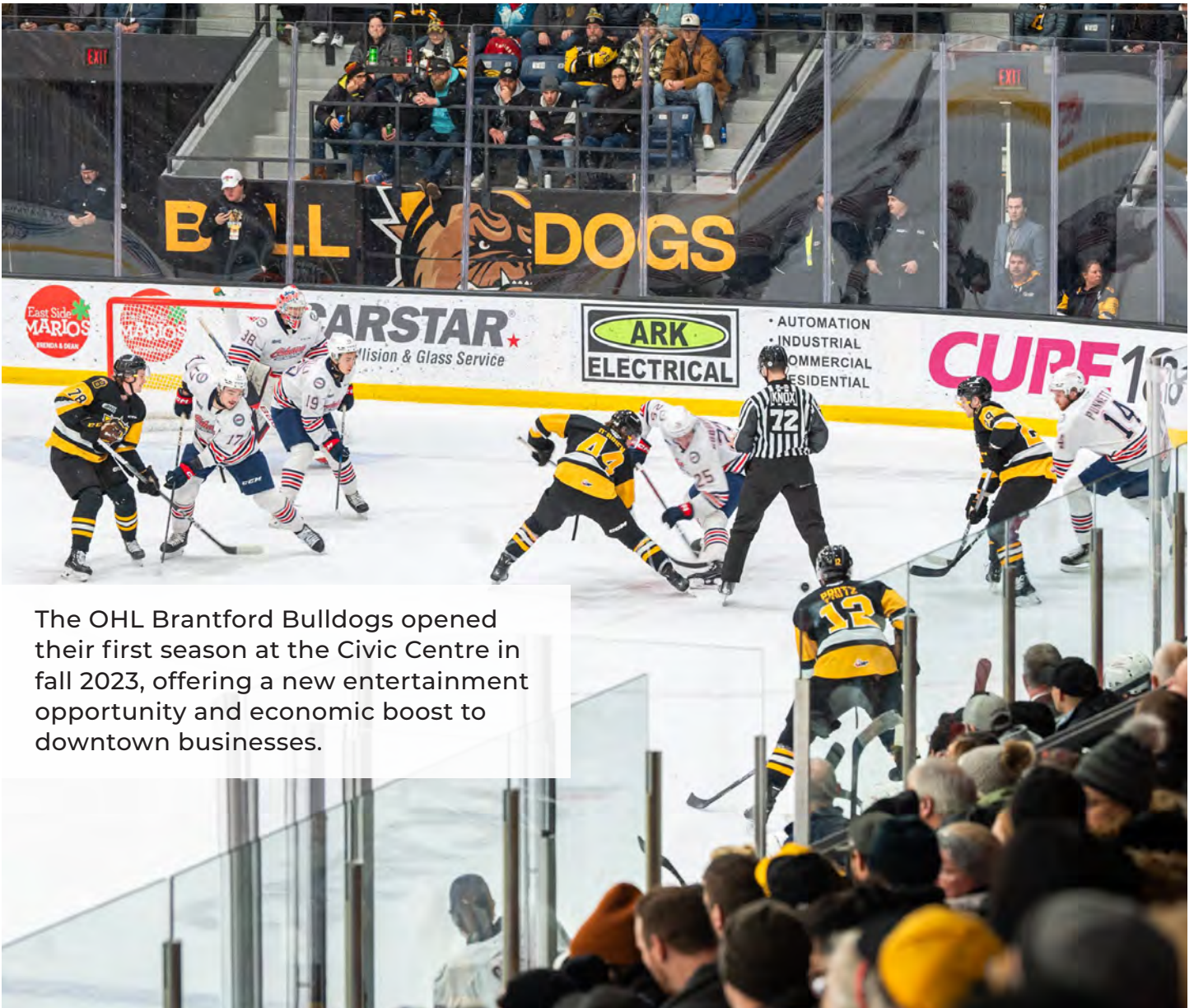
INCREASE IN  
AVAILABLE JOBS IN  
BRANTFORD CMA

10%

DECREASE IN  
UNEMPLOYED CITIZENS

67%

PARTICIPATION  
RATE



The OHL Brantford Bulldogs opened their first season at the Civic Centre in fall 2023, offering a new entertainment opportunity and economic boost to downtown businesses.

# Training, networking and outreach

12

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES  
ATTENDED



300%

INCREASE IN  
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES



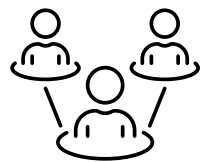
51

WORKSHOPS  
HOSTED



860

WORKSHOP  
ATTENDEES



1,221,533+

visitors attended special events in Brantford in 2023, including the Brantford International Villages Festival, which has been hosting “The World at Your Doorstep” since 1974.

## Karen Roberts, Take Your Shot, 2023, mixed media

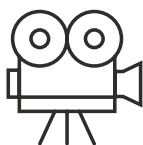
Lord Mayor Walter Gretzky, father of Wayne Gretzky and Canada’s most beloved hockey dad, was a pillar of the Brantford community. Shortly after his passing on March 4, 2021, members of the public spontaneously started placing hockey sticks, pucks and other paraphernalia with heartwarming tribute messages to Walter in his dedicated parking space at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre. These tokens of affection were collected by City staff and used by Roberts to create a sculpture that embodies the spirit of Walter Gretzky as a cherished figure in the local community, an emblem of hockey’s power to inspire, and a reminder of his enduring impact on the sport and its players.



# Film, television and new media

8

PRODUCTIONS FILMED  
IN BRANTFORD,  
INCLUDING UMBRELLA  
ACADEMY, MAYDAY AND REACHER.



1.64M

BRANTFORD-SPECIFIC  
BUDGETS



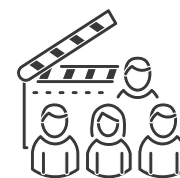
1,390

HOTEL NIGHTS

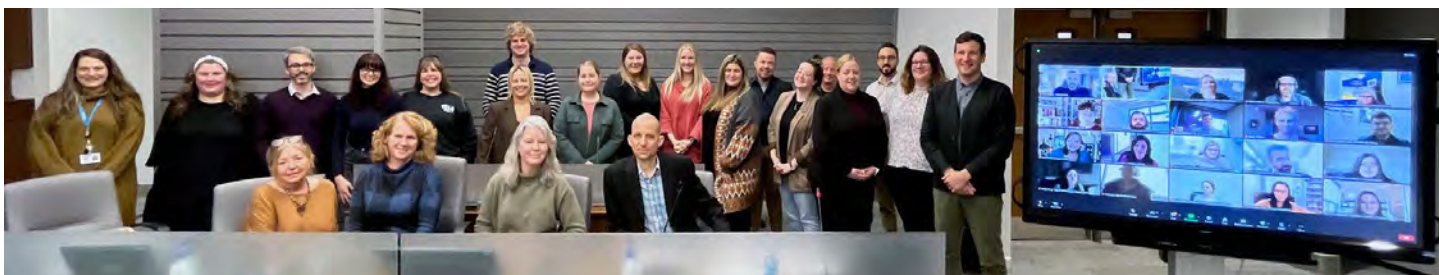


1,025

CAST AND CREW



Brantford participated in a L.A. Producers Fam Tour in Toronto to showcase some key locations.



Brantford hosted 40 municipalities and regions and 12 panelists to a Film Forum to network, learn about best practices, generate ideas, and identify common needs and opportunities.

47

PROJECT INQUIRIES



Handmaid's Tale filmed a significant funeral scene in Victoria Park in March 2023.

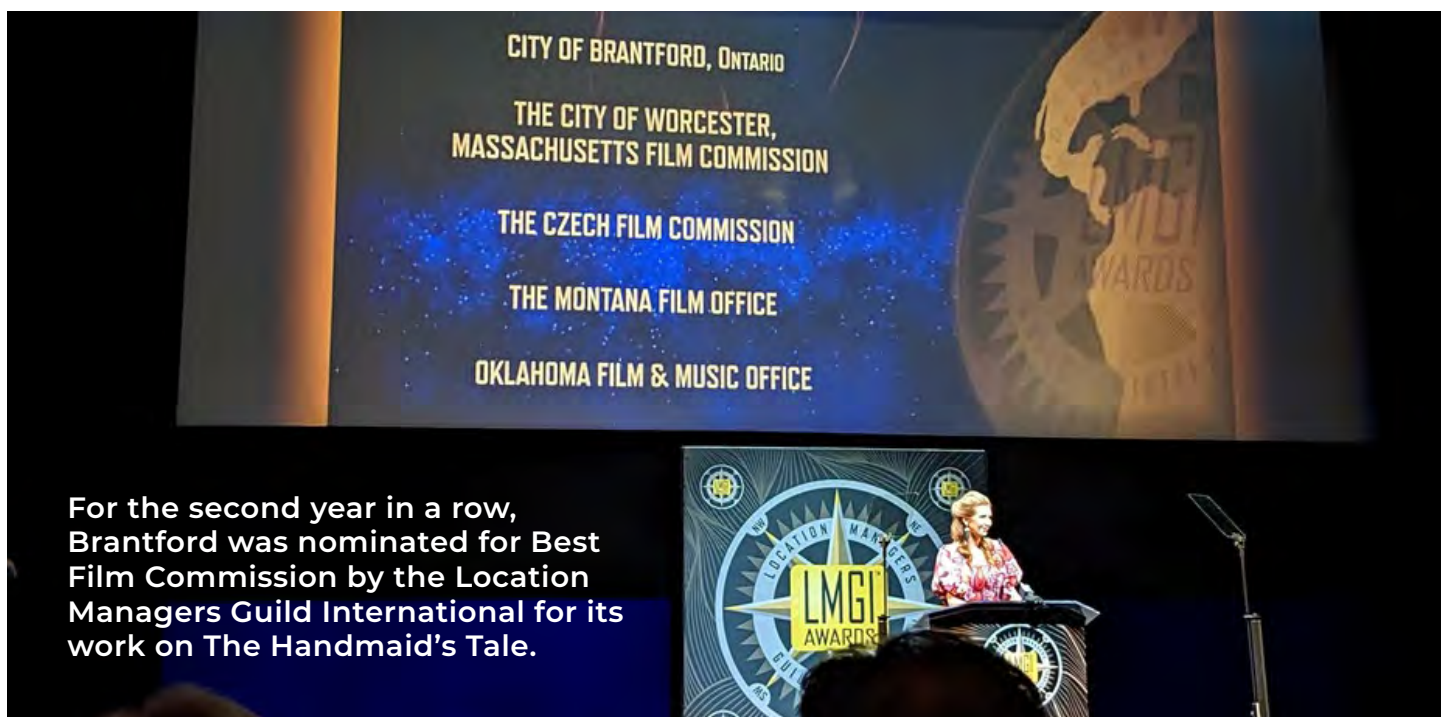
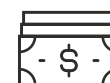
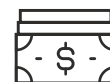
194%

INCREASE IN DONATIONS TO LEGACY PROJECTS



\$7,500

DONATED TO BRANTFORD FOOD BANK, DOWNTOWN BRANTFORD BIA, NOVA VITA, ROSEWOOD HOUSE, SANDERSON CENTRE AND VICTIM SERVICES OF BRANT



For the second year in a row, Brantford was nominated for Best Film Commission by the Location Managers Guild International for its work on The Handmaid's Tale.

# Grants

**\$360,477**

IN GRANTS RECEIVED



**59%**

INCREASE IN GRANTS RECEIVED



**\$158,470**

CULTURAL GRANTS DISPERSED



**\$418,470**

IN TOTAL GRANTS DISPERSED



**32%**

INCREASE IN GRANTS DISPERSED



BRC Lunch and Learn event hosted as part of Small Business Week with guest speakers John Ball, Jan Vilaca and Sherri Barna.















Sarah Williams opened Love Your Home Co. with training, advice and financial support through the BRC's Starter Company program. Love Your Home is consistently booked months in advance and hiring its first employee.



Mina Van Der Mark started their summer landscaping business with mentorship, training and a Summer Company grant through the BRC.

# Small Business

<b>\$55K</b> STARTER COMPANY GRANTS VALUE 	<b>10</b> SUMMER COMPANY GRANTS DISPERSED 
<b>\$30K</b> SUMMER COMPANY GRANTS VALUE 	<b>75</b> DIGITAL MAIN STREET GRANTS DISPERSED 
<b>\$175K</b> DIGITAL MAIN STREET GRANTS VALUE 	<b>250%</b> INCREASE IN DIGITAL MAIN STREET GRANTS DISPERSED 
<b>133%</b> INCREASE IN DIGITAL MAIN STREET GRANTS VALUE 	<b>167</b> NEW BUSINESS STARTS DIRECTLY ASSISTED 
<b>70%</b> INCREASE IN BUSINESS STARTS DIRECTLY ASSISTED 	<b>18</b> NEW BUSINESSES OPENED DOWNTOWN 
<b>0</b> BUSINESSES CLOSED IN DOWNTOWN 	

“Cutting Through the Noise: Five Secrets to Digital Marketing” hosted by the BRC in partnership with Enterprise Brant and the County of Brant.

# Tourism

960

CORPORATE  
EVENTS HOSTED IN  
BRANTFORD

20,978

CORPORATE  
EVENT ATTENDEES

134%

PARTICIPATION  
RATE

\$2.8

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF  
CORPORATE EVENTS



51

MOTOR COACH TOURS



2,211

MOTOR COACH VISITORS



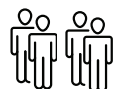
\$264,556

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF  
MOTOR COACH TOURS



31%

INCREASE IN SPORT TOURISM  
VISITORS



\$1.53M

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SPORT  
TOURISM EVENTS DIRECTLY ASSISTED

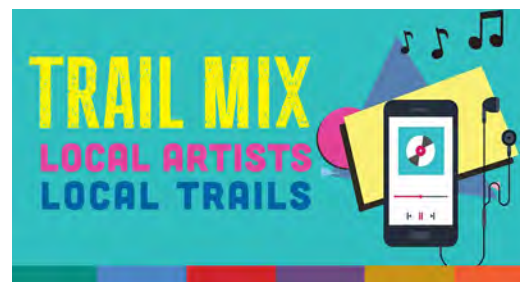


Discover

BRANTFORD



The first Culture Days on the Trails welcomed over 600 visitors over 3 hours to enjoy live performances along the Grand River.



Targeted leisure tourism marketing to the GTAH resulted in over 82% of the Trail Mix listens being enjoyed by GTAH visitors.

1,221,533

SPECIAL EVENT ATTENDEES



# Destination Marketing

**52%**

INCREASE IN INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS



**28%**

INCREASE IN WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS



**24%**

INCREASE IN FACEBOOK INTERACTIONS



45,000 copies of the Visitor Guide were distributed to Ontario Travel Centres and local businesses.

## 2023 Ontario 55+ Summer Games

The City of Brantford and County of Brant jointly hosted the 2023 Ontario 55+ Summer Games in August 2023 with 1,040 participants.

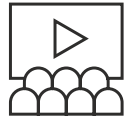
- **18** unique events across 15 locations in Brantford and Brant
- **1,040** participants
- **1,882** overnight stays
- **6,000** meals prepared by 14 local caterers and restaurants
- **221** volunteers



# Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts

**73,356**

TOTAL ATTENDANCE



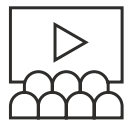
**88%**

INCREASE IN SPONSORSHIP



**38%**

INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE



**16%**

INCREASE IN TOTAL REVENUE



**\$2.4M**

IN TOTAL REVENUE



**246%**

INCREASE IN WEB USERS



**101%**

FACEBOOK INTERACTIONS



**447%**

INSTAGRAM REACH



The theatre had 201 days of active use in 2023 with a mix of public and private special events.

Increased social media engagement included a new series focused on glimpses “behind the scenes” with Sanderson Centre performers.



**8.4M**

total visitor spending (source: TREIM)

**\$746K**

REVENUE FROM AIRPORT LEASES

**\$331K**

OTHER LEASE REVENUE

ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING



EDP-COLBORNE POINT

view looking southwest



City Council supported the sale of “Colborne Point”, a high-profile site and natural gateway to the heart of the City, to Vrancor Group in a vital decision to support the revitalization of Brantford’s downtown.

# Brantford Farmers' Market

**169,500**

CUSTOMERS



**67%**

INCREASE IN CUSTOMERS



**550%**

INCREASE IN WEB USERS  
AND PAGE VIEWS



**253%**

INCREASE IN  
INSTAGRAM REACH

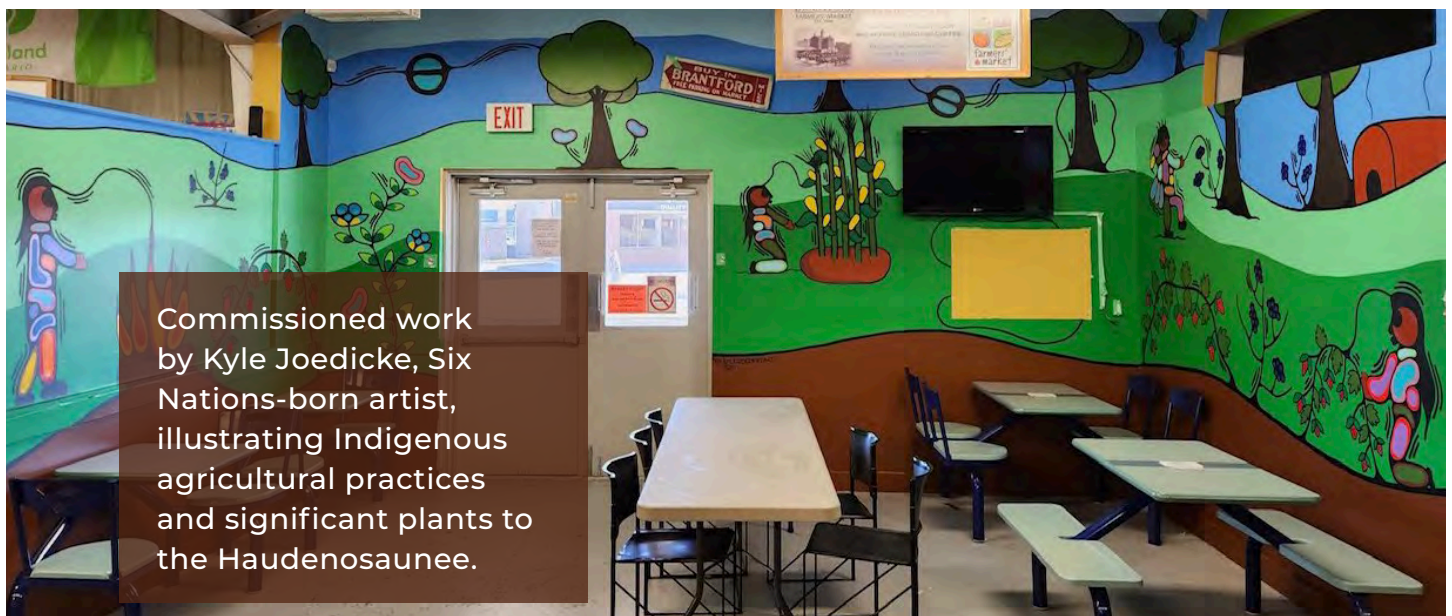


**159%**

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM  
INTERACTIONS



Trail Mix artists performed live at the Brantford Farmers' Market as part of a new community event series hosted 3 times in 2023. The Market also hosted its first Holiday Market event.



Commissioned work by Kyle Joedicke, Six Nations-born artist, illustrating Indigenous agricultural practices and significant plants to the Haudenosaunee.



Grand River Community Play Project displayed an interactive dragonfly art installation created by EXAR Studios that contains 70 stories of the Grand River during the premiere of *The Grand, From Source to Mouth in Harmony Square* on Saturday, June 17, 2023. Source: Brant Beacon.



The Farmers' Market received a modern branding refresh.

An increased focus on social media marketing and advertising helped to increase market visitorship by 67% over 2022.

**City of Brantford Economic Development, Tourism  
& Cultural Initiatives Department**

519-759-4150

**Economic Development & BRC Division**

58 Dalhousie Street  
[www.advantagebrantford.ca](http://www.advantagebrantford.ca)  
[www.brantford.ca/brc](http://www.brantford.ca/brc)

**Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts**

88 Dalhousie Street 519-758-8090  
[www.sandersoncentre.ca](http://www.sandersoncentre.ca)

**Discover Brantford** (Tourism Division)

Tourism Information Desk at Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre  
254 North Park Street  
[www.discoverbrantford.ca](http://www.discoverbrantford.ca)

**Real Estate Services** (incl. Brantford Farmers' Market)

58 Dalhousie Street and 79 Icomm Drive