

DOWNTOWN

# Windsor

Canada's gateway for business success



# Downtown Windsor, where opportunities, affordability and lifestyle converge.



## Prime waterfront location

Situated on the Detroit River with public parks, trails, and year-round events - a naturally active and inviting environment.



## Cross-border advantage

Three international border crossings within minutes including the Windsor-Detroit Tunnel, Ambassador Bridge and the new Gordie Howe International Bridge, all offering direct access to the U.S. markets.



## Built-in foot traffic

10,000+ downtown residents, 4,000 post-secondary students, and growing - a steady, diverse customer base at your doorstep.



## Affordable & accessible

Highly competitive commercial lease rates, low-cost parking, and integrated transit via bus, bike, and e-scooter networks.



## Climate leadership

Named to CDP's Cities A-List for 2024, Windsor is among only eight Canadian cities recognized globally for climate action, transparency and urban resilience.



## Revitalization in motion

The City's "Strengthen the Core" strategy invests in public safety, streetscaping and economic vitality — transforming downtown into a destination of choice.



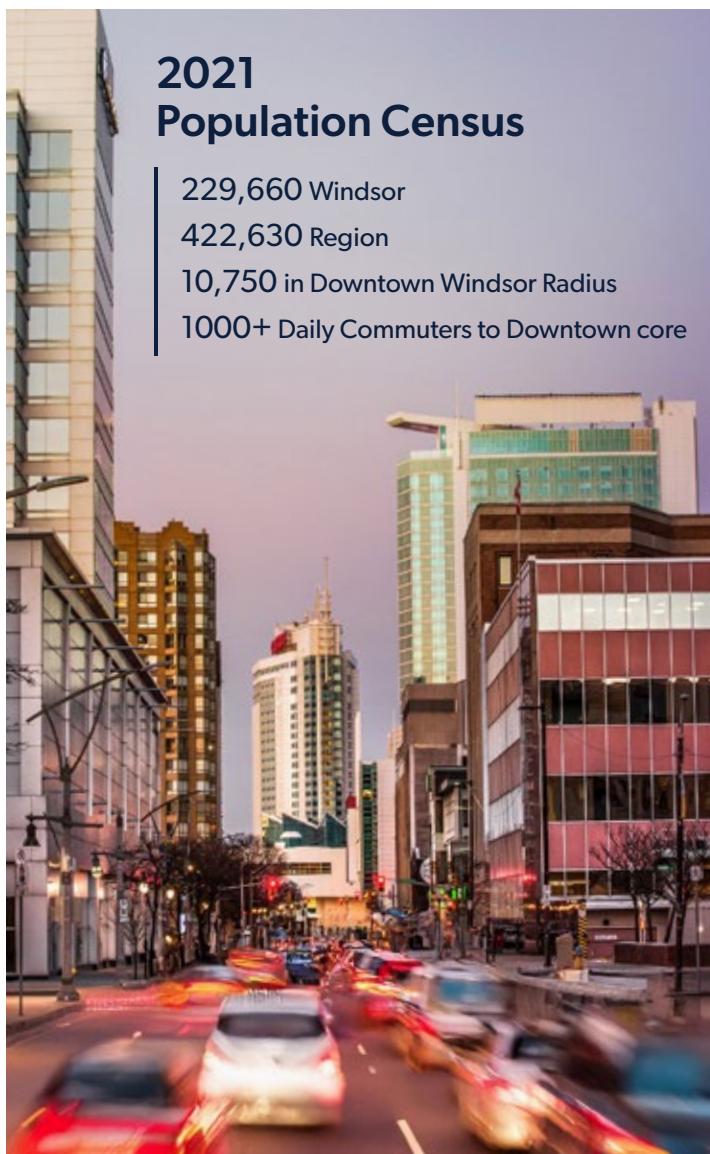
There's nothing like the energy of Downtown Windsor. We have seen firsthand how the core brings people together. The sense of community is captivating & we are proud to be a part of it for over 15 years. We have watched customers, both local and visiting, turn into regulars. Coming back time and again, discovering new favourite spots we are honoured to call our neighbours. Downtown Windsor is where we started and we wouldn't have had it any other way.

– Angus MacKinnon, *The Loose Goose Restopub (Hospitality)*

# Downtown Windsor is built for bold brands.

From waterfront views to world-class connectivity, Downtown Windsor blends business opportunity with a vibrant, walkable lifestyle. As the front door to Canada and a key link to the U.S. market, this is a location where flagship brands, bold entrepreneurs and professional services thrive.

Anchored by a growing residential population, two post-secondary campuses (~4,000 students) and over 100 events are held annually in the downtown core bringing tens of thousands of people to area. Here, your business isn't just opening a door — it's stepping into a neighbourhood that's evolving, investing and ready for what's next.



## 2021 Population Census

229,660 Windsor  
422,630 Region  
10,750 in Downtown Windsor Radius  
1000+ Daily Commuters to Downtown core

## Targeted Companies

Whether you're expanding a national footprint or opening your next destination storefront, Windsor's downtown core offers the visibility, affordability and audience you need to grow.



### Flagship retail & lifestyle brands

Apparel, home goods, beauty and concept stores — Windsor's affordable commercial rates and untapped market make it ideal for standout retail experiences.



### Tech, gaming & digital media

With strong post-secondary pipelines and new infrastructure investments, Windsor is attracting startups and innovation-driven firms.



### Professional services

Legal, finance, tech and creative firms benefit from downtown's proximity to courts, banks and the U.S. border - plus access to local talent.



### Flexible & mixed use concepts

Downtown offers multiple site options, from heritage storefronts to new mixed-use developments, perfect for hybrid retail, services and coworking uses.



### Grocery & specialty food

Demand is growing for independent grocery, organic markets and health-focused retail to serve the core's expanding residential base.

# Demographics & consumer profile



Downtown  
median age

**43.5 years**

(2021 Census)



Average household  
income

**\$54,367**

(in core area)



Population  
in city centre

**10,750**



Occupied dwelling  
in the core

**5,820\***



**\*Residential:**

New condos and mixed-use developments underway, bringing more residents and consistent foot traffic to the core.

## Retail demand & foot traffic



Monthly overall  
ridership on bus routes  
that include stops in the  
downtown core.

**2,317,630**  
RIDES

DT Windsor rides in  
2024. This accounts for  
27% of the ridership.



Walk score **99**  
("Walker's Paradise")



Bike score **63**

The move of college and university programs to downtown Windsor has resulted in a student population of close to 4,000 in the downtown core.

# Downtown Windsor location advantages



## Strengthen the Core

Windsor's bold \$3.2 million downtown revitalization plan focused on safety, vibrancy, and attracting new investment through community-driven action.



## Civic esplanade revitalization

\$15.4 million project featuring fountains, an event space and LED lighting



## Project SafeStreets

Lighting upgrades, security camera grants and 12 new officers for downtown



## Adventure Bay Water Park & Aquatic Centre

A family aquatic complex with 25 & 50-metre pools & diving well plus indoor water park



## Transit & parking

5,300+ municipal and private parking spaces; scooter/bike friendly. Served by major transit routes for easy access.



## Riverfront Trail

A 5.17 km multi-use trail along the Detroit River, connecting Ambassador Park to Centennial Park and passing scenic spots like Dieppe Gardens, Festival Plaza, Streetcar No. 351 & Legacy Beacon and Bert Weeks Memorial Garden.

## Real estate & cost comparison

### Commercial leasing costs

**\$16.87** /sq. ft. avg

Downtown retail

**\$12.27** /sq. ft. avg

Downtown office

### Comparative market rates

**\$98.23** /sq. ft. avg

Toronto retail

**\$25.00** /sq. ft. avg

Hamilton retail

**\$19.18** /sq. ft. avg

Detroit retail

Culture, Arts & Entertainment

# Experience the soul of the city



“

Downtown Windsor is the cultural heart of our city. It's where artists, curators, musicians, and audiences come together to share space, stories, and ideas. We believe a thriving downtown is essential to a vibrant creative community, and time and again, Windsor has demonstrated just how vital and vibrant that connection can be.

- Jennifer Matotek, Art Windsor-Essex (Arts & Culture)



## Waterfront attractions

Riverfront Trail, Dieppe Gardens, Odette Sculpture Park



## Major events

Carousel of the Nations, Rib Fest, Poutine Fest, and Downtown Windsor Carnival.



## Live music & theatre

The Colosseum at Caesars Windsor, Capital Theatre, Chrysler Theatre and Festival Plaza



## Arts & culture

Art Windsor-Essex Gallery, murals and art installations.



## Windsor International Film Festival

Canada's largest volunteer-run film fest with 300+ screenings

**“** Downtown Windsor is where stories come alive, not just on the screen, but on the streets, in the cafés and restaurants after a screening. As the home of the Windsor International Film Festival, the core has been essential to our growth and impact. It's a space that welcomes visitors, inspires artists, and shows the whole world what Windsor has to offer. We are exceptional.

Dr. Vincent Georgie  
*Windsor International Film Festival (Culture & Tourism)*



## Nightlife

A fast-growing food and bar scene with exciting new venues



## Community events

Weekly farmers markets/night markets and Open Streets



## Food & drink

A wide range of culinary restaurants and experiences.



## Caesars Windsor

A world-class destination for gaming, concerts and accommodations

# Education and key industries

Windsor-Essex is home to several major research facilities and institutes of higher education, as well as many facilities and programs that enable career-based training. With several strategic initiatives linking higher education and workforce development, it's no wonder our area's post-secondary programs are internationally recognized.



## University of Windsor

Enrolls approximately 18,000 students and offers 190 undergraduate programs, 65 graduate programs, and six professional programs. Approximately 30% of the student body are international students from nearly 100 countries.



## St. Clair College

Provides higher education for 13,000 full-time students across four campuses in Windsor and Chatham. It offers more than 120 advanced diplomas, degrees, and graduate certificates focused on health, technology and trades, business and IT, media arts and social services.



### Agriculture and agri-tech

Food and beverage processing sector generates over \$3 billion in annual GDP - 12,000 employees



### Advanced manufacturing

\$3.8 billion in annual GDP, skilled workforce of 43,000



### Healthcare & life sciences

Employs almost 35,000 people. 1.2 B annual GDP



### Information & communications technologies

8,500 employees \$300 M annual GDP



### Transportation and logistics

8,000 employees in the region's transportation, logistics and warehousing sector. Over \$600 million annual GDP

# Incentives & Support



“

Downtown Windsor is where I planted the roots of my business and found a community that genuinely supports local. There's a loyalty here. People come back, they bring friends, and they care about the heartbeat of the core. I've watched the streets grow more vibrant with each season, and I'm proud to be part of the momentum.

– Misty Adams, *The Gifting Tree (Retail)*

## Tax Increment grant

up to

**10 years**  
of tax relief

on increased value

## Retail investment grant

up to

**\$15,000**  
per unit

**\$30,000**  
per property

## Façade improvement grant

**50%**  
of costs

up to  
**\$20,000**  
(with bonuses)

### GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION GUIDE:

[citywindsor.ca/residents/planning/development-incentives/  
Downtown-Windsor-CIP](http://citywindsor.ca/residents/planning/development-incentives/Downtown-Windsor-CIP)



#### Business Improvement Area support

Concierge onboarding, street cleaning and event marketing

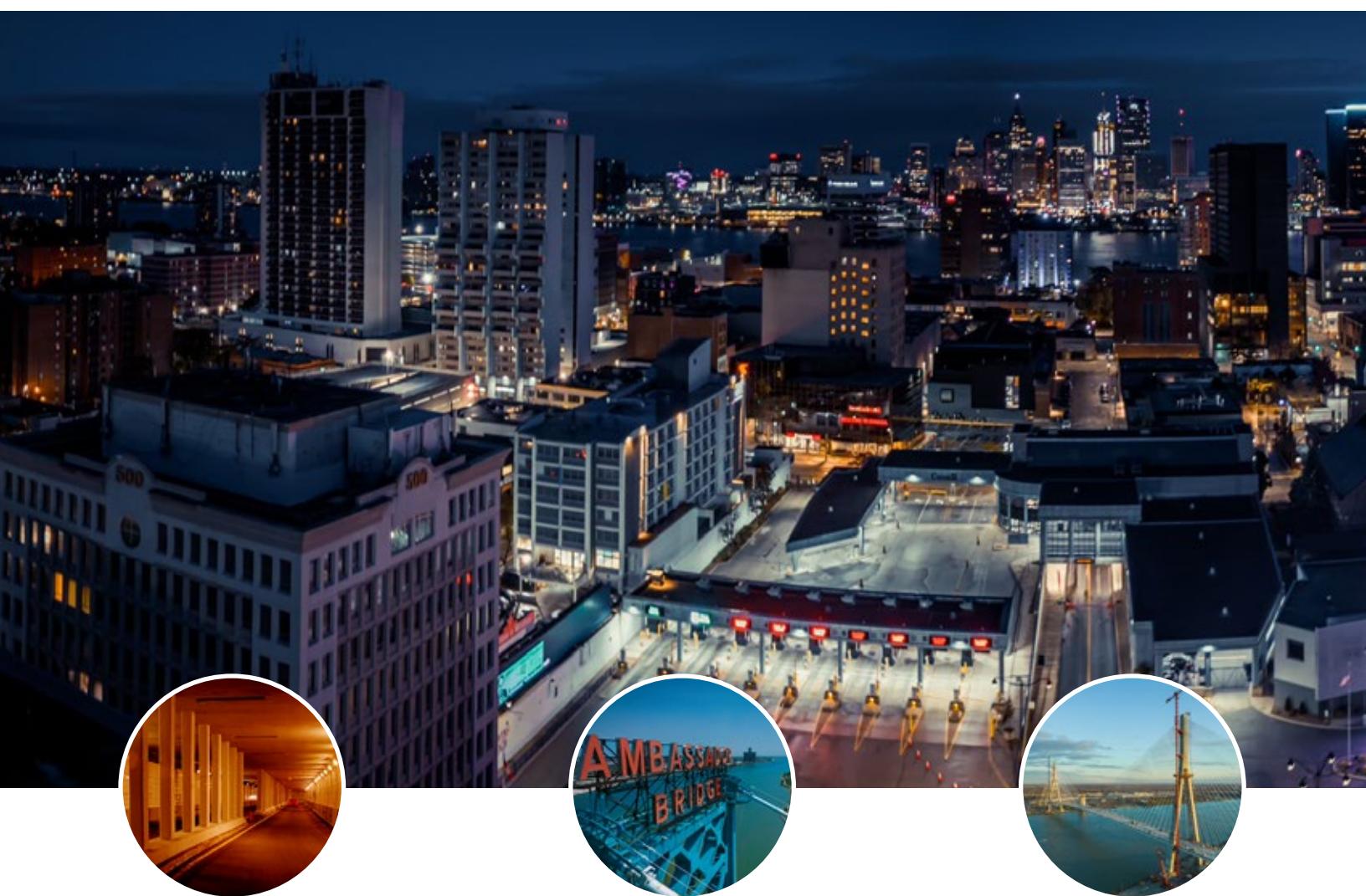


#### Project SafeStreets

Safety infrastructure grants up to \$5,000

Cross-border trade & tourism

# A true logistics & lifestyle hub



3-5 minutes to  
U.S. via tunnel

10 minutes to  
Ambassador Bridge

12-15 minutes to  
Gordie Howe Bridge

# 2024 Tourism Economic Impact

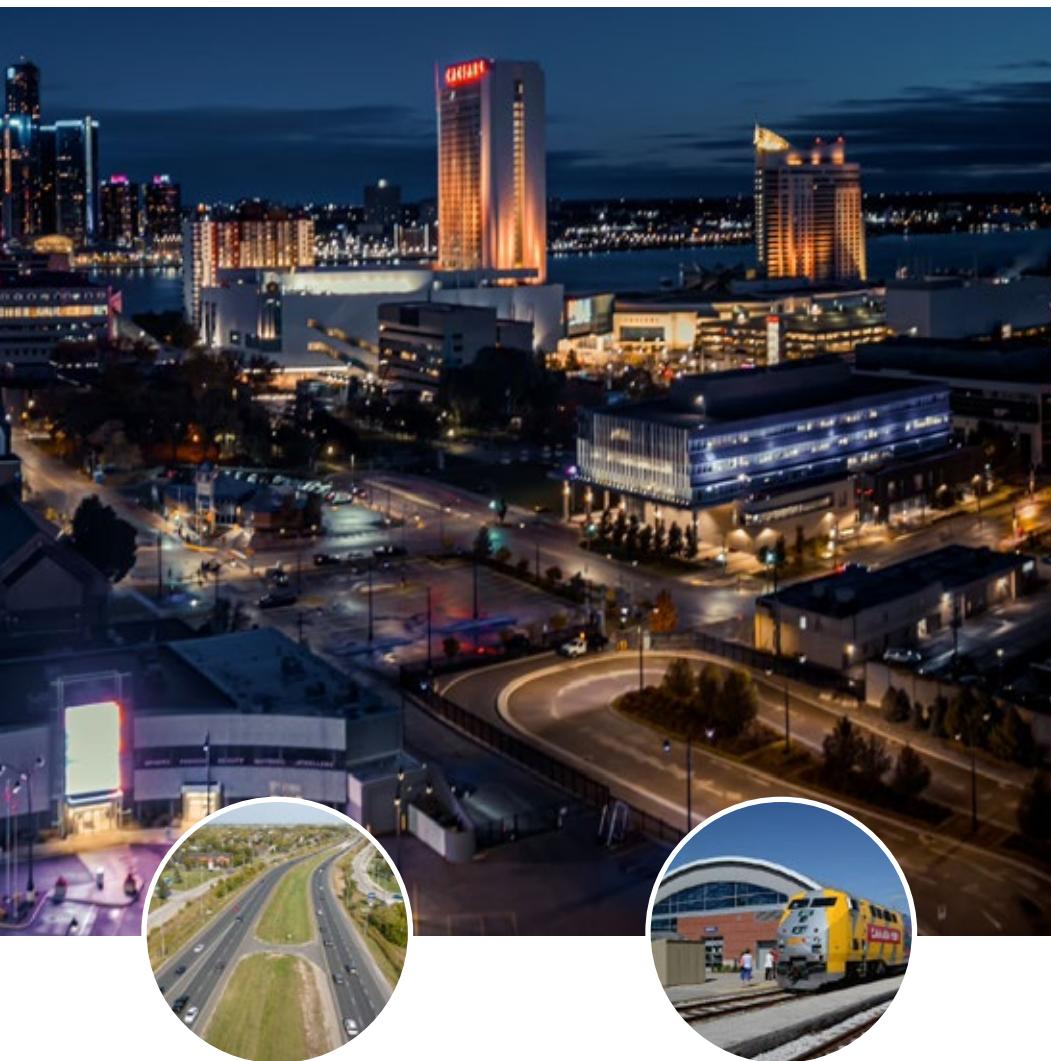
Visitor volume in Windsor Essex increased 84% since 2021 to 5.7 million visitors in 2024 – surpassing 2019 levels by 1%.

Meanwhile, visitor spending grew 115% compared with 2021 to \$878 million.

Of our 5.7 million visitors, 1.8 million or 31.5% were international – the vast majority being from the U.S. The visitor economy supported \$1.2 billion in total business sales across numerous industries.

## Downtown Windsor Accommodations

2024 Downtown Windsor occupancy rate - 72.12%  
Number of hotel rooms in Downtown Windsor - 1,761



**10 minutes to  
E.C. Row Expressway  
and proximity to 401**

**5-7 minutes to the  
VIA rail station**

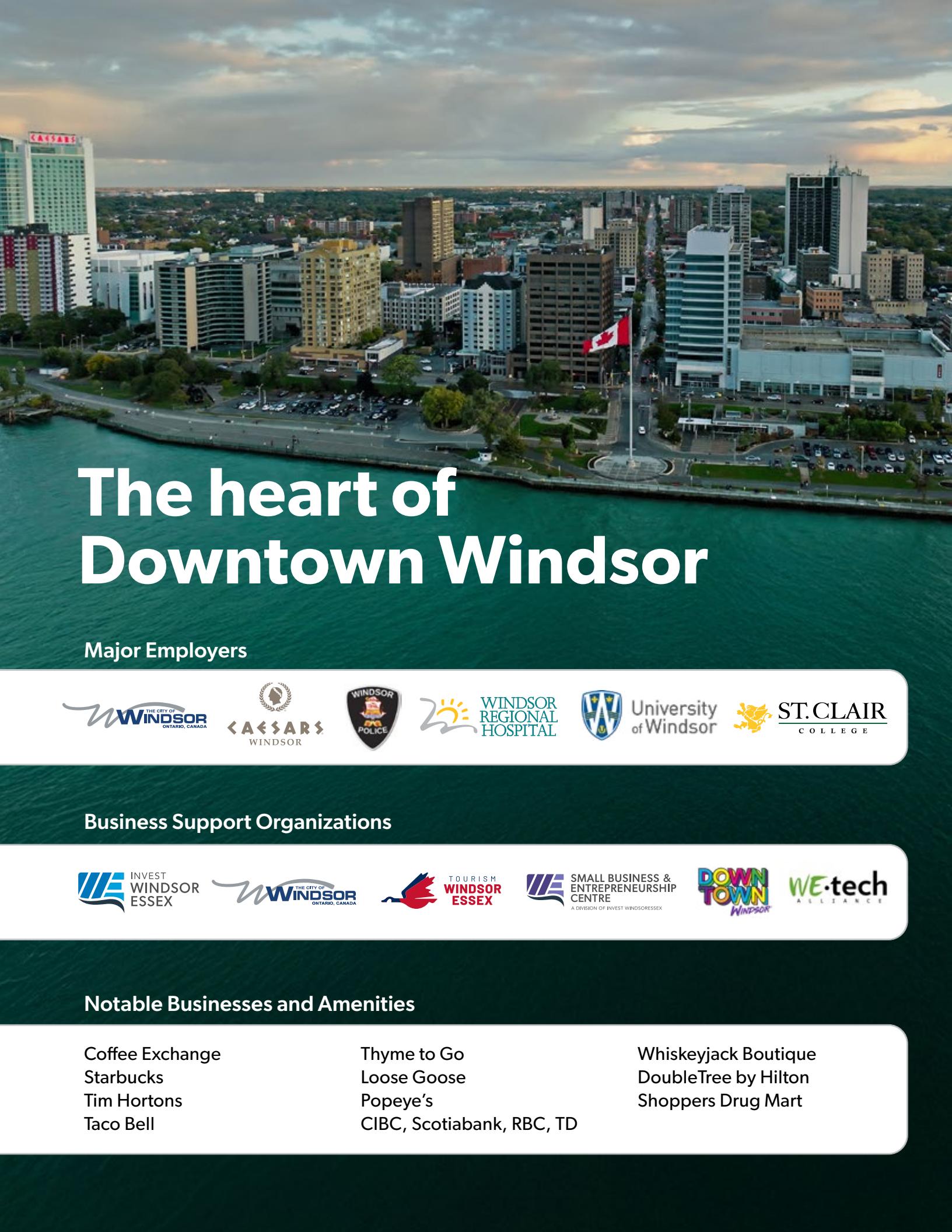
In 2024, there were approximately 10 million vehicle crossings between Ontario and the U.S. via bridges and tunnels, including Windsor's two main crossings. Specifically:



**The Ambassador Bridge**  
handled around 6.2 million crossings. Increase of 1.15% from 2023



**The Detroit-Windsor Tunnel**  
saw about 3.8 million crossing. Increase of 4.25% from 2023



# The heart of Downtown Windsor

## Major Employers



## Business Support Organizations



## Notable Businesses and Amenities

Coffee Exchange  
Starbucks  
Tim Hortons  
Taco Bell

Thyme to Go  
Loose Goose  
Popeye's  
CIBC, Scotiabank, RBC, TD

Whiskeyjack Boutique  
DoubleTree by Hilton  
Shoppers Drug Mart



# Downtown Windsor

# Invest here.

# Thrive here.

Windsor is projected to be Canada's fastest-growing Census Metropolitan Area, a reflection of its surging population, substantial business growth, and transformative public and private investment.

## Connect with our team

Let us help you find your perfect location, navigate approvals, and connect with Windsor's downtown community.

### Cristina Melnik

Senior Economic Development Officer

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