



**Subject:** Aurora Business Directory & Employment Trends  
**Prepared by:** Michael Logue, Program Manager, Economic Planning  
**Department:** Planning and Building Services  
**Date:** April 4, 2017

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**In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may request that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming General Committee or Council meeting agenda for discussion.**

## **Executive Summary**

This report announces the release of Aurora's 2016-2017 Business Directory, and provides an overview of employment and industry trends in Aurora:

- Strong one- and ten-year employment growth rates of 3.1% and 3.4% respectively, both above Regional averages;
- Strongest growth in Business Services sectors; continued growth in population-related industries; and promising signs of manufacturing recovery.

## **Background**

The data referenced in this report is made possible by Aurora's partnership with the Regional Municipality of York's on the York Region Employment Survey (YRES). The survey, which has been conducted annually since 2001, attempts to survey all businesses in York Region and Aurora, every summer.

A memorandum regarding last year's employment and industry trends for Aurora was prepared for the Economic Development Advisory Committee in May, 2016.

## **Analysis**

### **Business Directory**

The Town of Aurora's 2016-2017 business directory is now available online in two versions. The [businessaurora.ca](http://businessaurora.ca) website hosts both a downloadable spreadsheet and a map-based interactive directory, containing information collected over the summer of

2016. The directory contains listings for over 1,500 businesses, including over 1,300 records at 'bricks and mortar' locations, with the balance being participating home-based business. The 'brick and mortar' businesses at industrial, commercial and institutional locations form the basis for the following analysis.

## Employment Trends

Following a year of moderate growth reported for 2014-2015, Aurora's employment growth rebounded back to familiar territory for 2015-2016. After posting a 1% net gain in jobs in the year prior, this year's survey revealed strong one-year year growth of 3.4%, on the strength of nearly 800 net new jobs.

2016 York Region Employment Survey Results				
		Aurora	Northern 6	York Region
2016 surveyed employment		24,121	99,758	543,496
2015-2016 employment growth	#	790	2,526	16,239
	%	3.4%	2.6%	3.1%
2006-2016 avg annual emp growth		3.1%	1.9%	2.8%
2016 businesses surveyed		1,307	6,098	32,531
2006-2016 business growth		1.4%	1.1%	2.8%

Aurora's one-year growth rate has outpaced the average for the six northern municipalities of York, the Regional average itself, and was in fact among among the top one-year rates of all the Region's local municipalities. This suggests a strong local economy, as the Region also compares favourably within the GTA and Ontario context.

Aurora's 2015-2016 job growth rate of 3.4% is also fairly close to Aurora's ten-year average annual growth rate in jobs of 3.1%, which also outpaces the Regional and Northern Six averages.

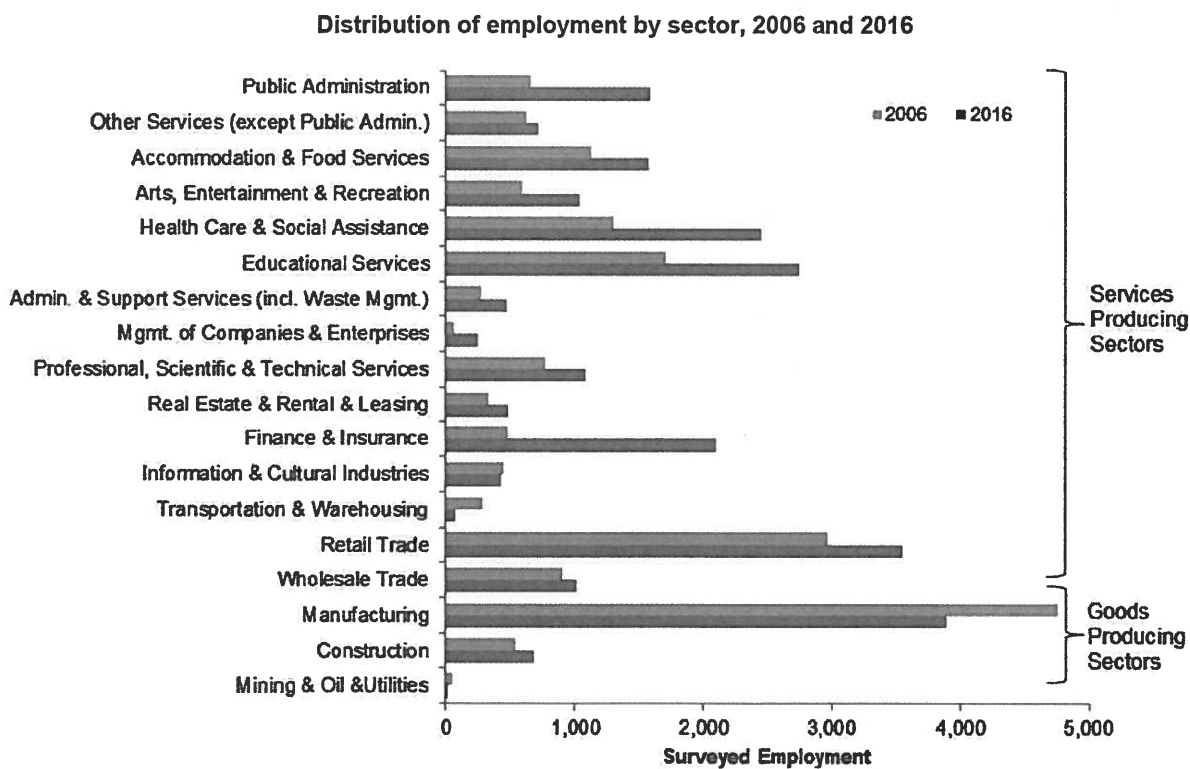
On the business growth side (number of establishments), Aurora's ten-year average gain is 1.4% - higher than average of York's Northern Six municipalities of which Aurora is part (1.1%), but lower than the Regional average of 2.8% (which matches exactly the Region's job growth rate).

A higher job growth rate than business growth rate for Aurora suggests that a substantial proportion of job growth is coming from existing businesses growing within Aurora – an encouraging sign, and a key tenet of the Town's Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) strategy.

### Industry Trends

The industry sector posting the single-largest one-year job increase in Aurora for 2015-2016 was manufacturing – gaining over 300 jobs. This is significant for Aurora, as manufacturing remains Aurora’s largest single employment sector, despite a decline over the ten-year period, and the rise of service- and knowledge based industries during that time.

This gain is encouraging, as Aurora was not immune to the global forces affecting manufacturing in Canada and Ontario during the recession that hit in 2008. Aurora’s 2016 manufacturing employment has reached its highest level since pre-2008 recession, which validates increased industrial real estate activity observed by economic development staff. Continued gains in manufacturing bodes well, as York Region has an above-average concentration of manufacturing relative to the GTA, and Aurora has an above-average concentration of manufacturing relative to York Region – it is important for the local and greater economy. Therefore it remains important to protect employment lands for industrial uses to accommodate new and expanding manufacturers.



Maintaining its position as Aurora’s second largest employment sector in 2016, as in 2006, is Retail Trade. Growth in retail and other service industries such as Accommodation & Food Services is driven primarily by population growth. This ten-year period saw population growth of approximately 10,000 persons, from 50,000 to 60,000 in Aurora.

The top growth sector over the ten-year period 2006-2016 has been Finance & Insurance, with State Farm Insurance's relocation to Aurora during that period being a major contributor. However, all Business Services sectors combined (also including Management of Companies & Enterprises) have more than doubled during the ten-year period 2006-2016. These sectors represent knowledge-based industries and generally provide well-paying jobs.

Institutional sectors have also shown strong growth over the last ten years, with the three sectors of Education, Health Care, and Public Admin all averaging gains of over 1,000 jobs each from 2006 to 2016. These sectors are also considered well-paying, and can also be population-driven - but Aurora is lucky to have concentrations such as two school board offices, a world-renowned private school, and the York Regional Police headquarters, which re-located to Aurora over the ten-year period.

## **Advisory Committee Review**

No Communication Required.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications.

## **Communications Considerations**

Media Release.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

The Aurora Business Directory & Employment Trends report supports the Strategic Plan goal of Enabling a Creative, Diverse and Resilient Economy through its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within this goal statement:

Promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business: Through the monitoring of emerging employment trends and economic trends, future workforce, education and business development needs are identified in accordance with the Develop plans to attract businesses that provide employment opportunities for our residents action item.

Supporting small business and encouraging a more sustainable business environment: By providing employment growth data to local business development and employment agencies as well as publishing reports on economic trends to build more global awareness

of Aurora's strengths as a destination to live, work and play, the Work with community partners to promote local employment practices/opportunities for local businesses and residents action item is realised.

## **Alternative to the Recommendation**

None.

## **Conclusions**

The Town of Aurora's 2016-2017 Business Directory is now available via the [businessaurora.ca](http://businessaurora.ca) website. The current and historical survey data that populates the directory reveals several employment and industry trends for Aurora;

- One-year and ten-year employment growth rates are both quite healthy, in excess of 3% on an average annual basis.
- Aurora's job growth is outperforming our municipal neighbours, York Region and the greater economy.
- While the number of businesses also continue to grow, a significant share of job growth is originating from existing Aurora businesses.
- Beginning to see the rebound of the manufacturing sector, a local strength in Aurora.
- Retail & Personal Services, and Institutional industries continue to grow in step with population.
- Business Services, including Finance & Insurance, and Management of Companies & Enterprises, are the best-performing sectoral grouping over the last ten years.
- Lands must continue to be planned and protected for prestige employment uses such as office-based knowledge workers, and industrial-based manufacturers.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1- Aurora 2016 Employment Survey Results (Profile by York Region)

## **Previous Reports**

None.

**Pre-submission Review**

Agenda Management Team Meeting review on March 17, 2017.

**Departmental Approval**

**Approved for Agenda**



**Marco Ramunno, MCIP, RPP**  
**Director**  
**Planning and Building Services**



**Doug Nadorozny**  
**Chief Administrative Officer**

# AURORA

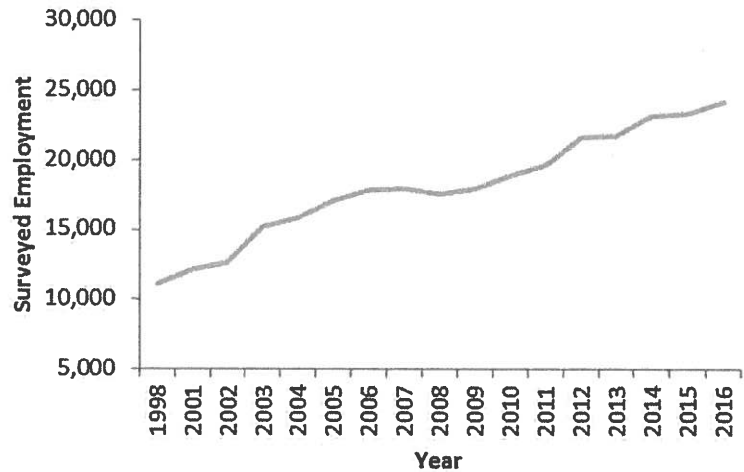
## 2016 employment survey results

Highlights

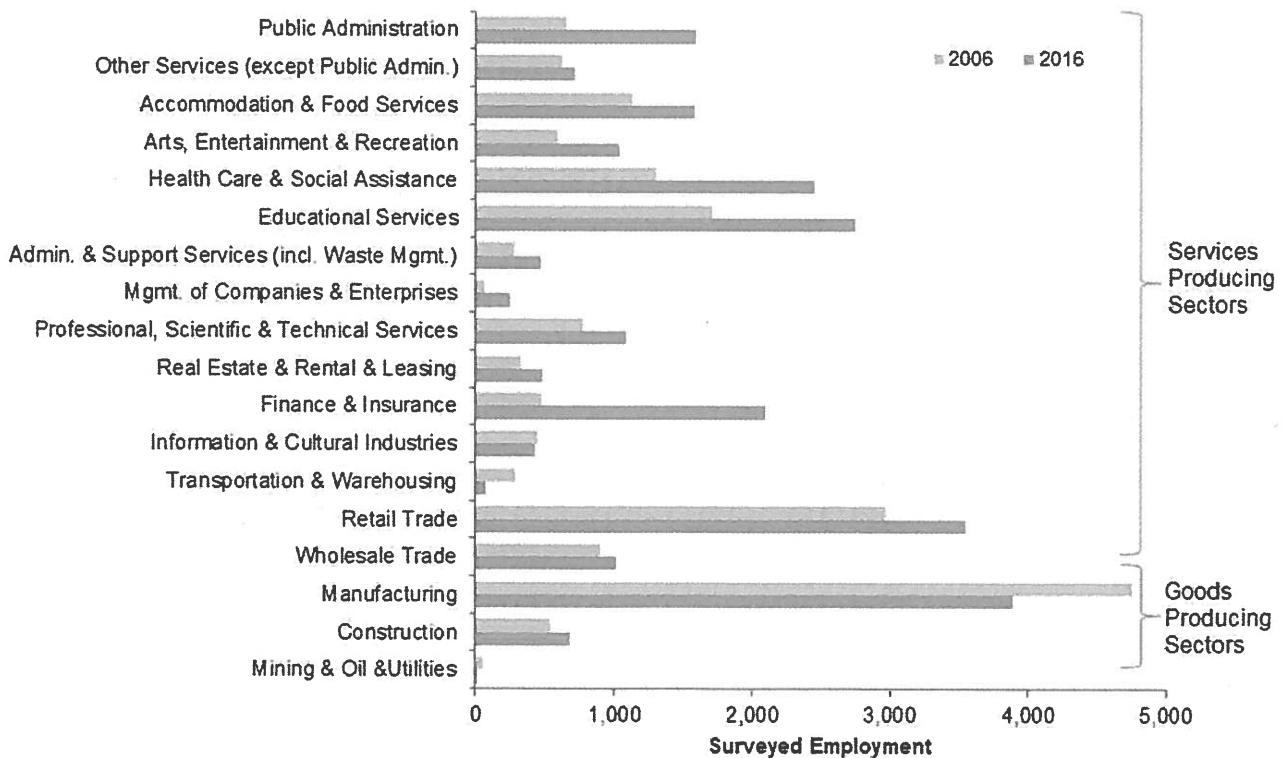
<b>2016 surveyed employment</b>	24,121 jobs	<b>2015-2016 employment growth</b>	790 jobs or 3.4%	<b>2006-2016 average annual employment growth</b>	3.1%	<b>2016 businesses surveyed</b>	1,307	<b>2006-2016 average annual business growth</b>	1.4%
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- Since 1998, the Town of Aurora has added 12,980 jobs to its employment base
- Finance and insurance was the top growth sector between 2006-2016 growing by 1,619 jobs
- The top growth sector between 2015-2016 was manufacturing (313 jobs)
- Service-oriented jobs represent an 81% share of employment for the Town
- Manufacturing, retail trade and educational services sectors accounted for the three largest shares of employment

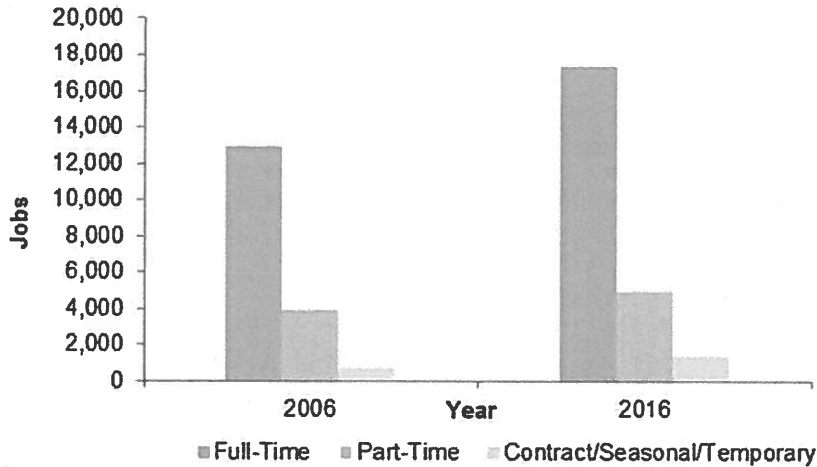
Historical Surveied Employment, 1998-2016



Distribution of employment by sector, 2006 and 2016



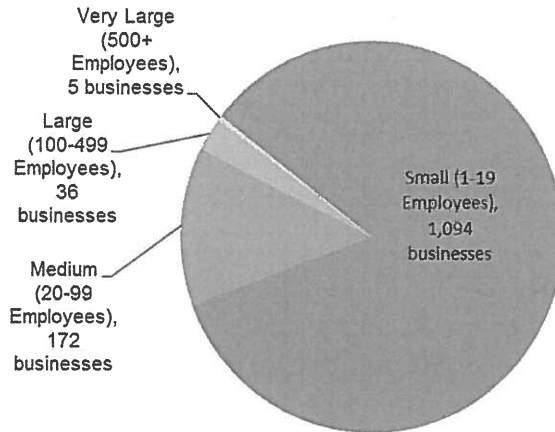
### Employment by type of worker, 2006 and 2016



- Since 2006, full-time employment grew by over 4,400 jobs, a 34% increase and accounted for 72% of the Town's employment in 2016
- The share of part time employment slightly decreased from 23% in 2006 to 20% in 2016 while the share of contract/seasonal/temporary employment increased from 5% to 8%

### Surveyed businesses by Size, 2016

- In 2016, a total of 1,307 businesses were surveyed in the Town of Aurora
- Small firms comprise the largest share of businesses in Aurora, accounting for 84% of total businesses surveyed
- Since 2006, the number of large and very large businesses have also increased, representing 3.0% of the Town's businesses



### Development Activity Overview, 2016

Projects Under Construction		
Business Name/Developer	Land Use	Building Size (sq. ft.)
15490 Bayview Avenue (PetSmart)	Commercial	20,000
218 Earl Stewart Drive	Industrial	16,750
7-25 William Graham Drive	Commercial	11,500
95 Wellington Street East	Commercial/Office	8,200
Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham (announced)	Hotel	50,000

Recently Opened Businesses/Completed Projects		
Business Name/Developer	Land Use	Building Size (sq. ft.)
212 Earl Stewart Drive	Industrial	16,750
15610-15630 Bayview Avenue (Michael-Angelo's, Panera)	Commercial	31,000
15400 Bayview Avenue (Canadian Tire)	Commercial	115,000
625 St. John's Sideroad (Sterne Acura)	Commercial	20,000
250 Don Hillock Drive	Industrial	100,000
15955-15975 Bayview Avenue	Commercial	12,500
233-239 Earl Stewart Drive	Commercial	10,300

For more information on the York Region employment survey please contact:  
 Planning and Economic Development Branch  
 The Regional Municipality of York  
[www.york.ca/employmentsurvey](http://www.york.ca/employmentsurvey)  
 905-830-4444 ext. 71508

