



Regional Review

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM DEPARTMENT

New energy investments power 'Ontario's Energy Capital'

The province's recent announcement to expand the Darlington site of Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and invest in the expansion at the Durham College Skills Training Centre has given Durham Region's business community a welcome boost.

"Durham Region is proud to be chosen as a host for the new build nuclear site, and we are very pleased that Ontario Power Generation is the generator of choice," stated Regional Chair Roger Anderson. "We anticipate about 3,500 direct and indirect construction and engineering jobs as a result of this great announcement. We look forward to continuing our relationship with OPG for many years to come as they expand their operations in Durham."

The prospect of the new build in Darlington and the refurbishment of existing reactors have brought an abundance of related industries into Durham Region. Companies are investing in the region, creating jobs and developing property—resulting in a significant energy cluster. In Pickering alone, 20 per cent of the workforce is working in the energy field.

Following the new energy build announcement, the Durham College Skills Training Centre recently



A rendering of the proposed expansion of the Durham College Skills Centre.

received a \$9-million government investment from the province to expand the Whitby campus. As a result, Durham College has taken on the challenge of supporting the significant demand for skilled workers in the energy sector.

The expansion of the Skills Training Centre will offer new programs in energy conservation, energy audits and renewable energy and see the campus turned into a 'living lab' for energy technology training. The University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) also offers dedicated programs in nuclear engineering and energy systems engineering—the only program of

its kind in Canada.

"The development taking place at Durham College and the research being conducted at UOIT reinforces Durham Region's energy capital brand and puts it on the map as a global centre of excellence within the energy sector," explained Doug Lindeblom, Director of Economic Development and Tourism for Durham Region. "The market needs energy-trained workers, and with the implementation of the new programs, there will be skilled trade labourers who will support existing industries and attract further investment."

OPG, Durham College and

UOIT are members of the Durham Strategic Energy Alliance (DSEA), which has played an important role in positioning Durham Region at the forefront of Ontario's development of clean, sustainable energy solutions.

Durham Region is 'Ontario's Energy Capital,' producing over 30 per cent of Ontario's electricity needs—which is expected to increase when two new reactors are built along side the existing reactors in Darlington.

For more information about Durham Region's exciting new energy investments, contact Lindeblom at 905-668-7711 ext. 2602.

MAKING BUSINESS HAPPEN

Durham Region enhances business website to attract investment

Durham Region's Economic Development and Tourism Department is working with local site selectors and investment partners to enhance their online presence.

A collection of links and information suited to potential investors will be available in a new section called 'Invest in Durham', which will be located on the Durham Business website at www.durhambusiness.ca.

The first phase of the 'Invest in Durham' web pages were developed to provide vital information for companies, and site selectors, looking to identify the right location for their business. The web pages will be continually updated to incorporate suggestions from the business community.

"This is just one of many strides towards making the Durham Region a benchmark for investor readiness year after year," said Patrick Olive, Commissioner of Economic Development and Tourism. "This site will provide investors with the necessary information about our economic landscape, and the many opportunities available in Durham Region."

The site will also offer information (such as available property, local industry, education and training), incentives and business support to help businesses make an educated decision on where a company should be located.

The new web pages were showcased at a focus group event on July 17 with local partners, including realtors, municipal economic development associates, utility company representatives, and contacts from the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) and Durham College.

"The attendees of this event are collectively the local partners we rely on to attract investment to Durham Region," said Liisa Ikavalko, Economic Development Officer for Durham Region. "Our partners have assisted in the restructuring of this web tool to create the best possible online business resource for Durham."

"Having a tool like this is critical for supporting the region's business community," said Chris Gillis, Manager, Innovative Business Solutions for Durham College Corporate Training Services.

All participants of the session had a positive outlook on the web pages' content. Comments indicated that realtors found the information a valuable tool and easy to use, while representatives from local municipalities found it to be the perfect way to distribute key messages.

Gamma Engineering Ltd. diversifies for success

In 1955, Gamma Engineering Ltd. opened its doors to service the steel industry in Vancouver, British Columbia. As the markets began to develop towards the east, Gamma moved their headquarters to Whitby, Ont. for a development contract for the former Co-Steel Lasco, currently known as Gerda Ameristeel. Starting out as a local business focused on the steel industry, Gamma Engineering has progressed over time into a successful multi-sector, global business.

Gamma, under the leadership of Alex Kamicheril, President, and George Chandy, Managing Director, has a dedicated staff of engineers, scientists, project management specialists, and designers helping them succeed with their motto 'client satisfaction is the only goal.' In the company's early stages, Gamma focused on industries within Durham Region, such as Co-Steel Lasco, General Motors, Atlantic Packaging and Bon L Canada Inc.

To remain current and successful, Gamma has evolved with the times—and sometimes ahead of the



Gamma Engineering Managing Director George Chandy (front, left) signs a joint venture agreement while on a trade mission to India.

times—diversifying their operations to include much more than the steel industry.

Gamma Engineering's portfolio currently includes: steel design, in addition to energy, civil and structural, mechanical, electrical and environmental sectors. Employees are committed to the company's success and the pursuit of new opportunities.

Chandy credits the company's success to diversification and globalization, as well as the staff's entrepreneurial drive. The head-

quarters in Whitby oversee several branch offices in the Middle East, Africa, India and China.

Currently, Gamma is involved in the development of an ethanol plant in Latin America, an electrical project in Nigeria, and a solar project in the Middle East, with more local and international projects brewing.

"Durham Region is an excellent location for our business," said Chandy. "Gamma arrived in Whitby in 1963 and currently employs 22 full-time staff members from in and around the Durham Region. Our

location in Durham is one the factors of our success. We find it easy to connect with our customers around the world from our Whitby location."

The company's own research and development division is working closely with the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) on a patented environmentally friendly recycling technology. In addition, a patented energy-saving lighting technology is in the works. Gamma is also working on an energy-saving solution for the iron and steel industry—which the company hopes to patent soon—and has the capabilities of reducing production cost up to \$2 per ton.

Gamma Engineering receives support from all levels of government, including the Durham Region's Economic Development and Tourism Department. They have worked closely with both federal and provincial representatives on projects, including several overseas trade missions to India and the Middle East. Gamma is also a member of the Whitby Chamber of Commerce.