

# coverstory



Oshawa offers an eclectic mix of architecture, with no shortage of parks, conservation areas and sports facilities.

## Oshawa offers endless opportunities

‘Our city loves change, so bring it on,’ says mayor

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Special to Postmedia Network

Oshawa is transforming in so many ways, and while this might be scary to some, the Mayor assures that this is the most exciting time in the city's history. “We have lots of new businesses moving here, new development happening, and a growing population, and our future is going to be very bright,” says Mayor Dan Carter. “We are a city that is now transferring from automotive and manufacturing to new technology. Our city loves change, so bring it on.”

The city, known as the eastern anchor of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), is only an hour drive from downtown Toronto, and is the largest municipality in the Regional Municipality of Durham.

The city's roots are tied deeply to the automotive industry as it has long

been home to the Canadian division of General Motors (GM). Late last year the automotive giant said it would be closing its plant in the city; however earlier this summer announced a \$170-million investment to transition the facility, saving many jobs and creating new ones.

The plant will no longer produce vehicles, but instead 22 hectares of it will be turned into a test-track for autonomous and advanced vehicles. “We have been ‘all things automotive’ for over 100 years and now we will be ‘all things tech,’” says Carter. “Oshawa has always experienced change, and we are a city that is adaptable, forward thinking, and we enjoy challenges. We are a city that is also great at solving problems and fully realize that embracing new innovations is the best solution in order to grow.”

The city is now also widely known as a leader in health, technology and

sciences — all industries fueled by new investments, and a skilled labour force too, thanks to its major post-secondary institutions: Ontario Tech University, Trent University-Durham, Durham College, as well as the Lakeridge Health Education and Research Network (LHERN), in association with Lakeridge Health Oshawa. StatsCan recently named Oshawa as the sixth best place in Canada for employment.

The downtown core is a happening place with office buildings and businesses, as well as scores of restaurants, pubs, and cafes. The city's core is also home to the Tribute Communities Centre where the Oshawa Generals play, the Canadian Automotive Museum, the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, and Regent Theatre. As well, downtown boasts the Regional Innovation Centre for new tech startups. In fact the Regional Innovation Centre may have a new home, according to Carter.

The Canada Post distribution centre is now vacant (new site is located at Riston Road North and Adelaide Street area) and he wants to turn the 65,000 square-foot facility into a massive tech centre with co-working offices. “We need to continually find ways to keep our top talent here,” he says. “Sure, we have been a place that offers exceptional employment opportunities, but being a leading tech hub will require us to think differently and offer the best for our local innovators.”

Moving the Regional Innovation Centre to the old Canada Post building is definitely a step in the right direction and will help new startups

build their businesses and create even more jobs for our city.”

Oshawa offers an eclectic mix of architecture. Parkwood Estate is a National Historic Site, and has been used as a backdrop in many featured films, including *It*, *Chicago*, *X-Men*, and *Billy Madison*. Checkered throughout downtown and its surrounding area are homes and buildings constructed at the height of the industrial era, and off to the north in “Poshawa,” as its nicknamed, modern-style homes and condos are popping up everywhere.

“The growth in Oshawa is amazing and so many people are moving here from the big city to enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle that is certainly affordable,” explain Christian Huggett, who is the VP of Development for Podium Developments. Podium just unveiled its new build, Ironwood in North Oshawa. The ravine community will offer 125 contemporary freehold townhouse units on a private street. The community, which is near Ontario Tech University, Highway 407, and commercial outlets, will marry modern urban living with outdoor amenities, like with nearby protected conservation areas. Simply put, this new development is offering exceptional living spaces for professionals, families, and empty nesters alike.

“I grew up in Pickering, so I have seen so much change and growth happen in Oshawa over the years,” says Huggett. “The city is now booming and it's a great time to move here. The city has so many moving parts and the growth is totally exciting.”

Marlin Spring, also a well-known developer, just announced its new project in the city, Symphony Towns. These two and three-level town-

homes will offer modern living at its finest: freestanding tubs, stainless steel appliances, AC, glass showers, tall uppers in kitchens, and breakfast bars, to name a handful. “Our new development is extra-special as they offer big backyards and this is not common nowadays with new builds,” says Erin Millar, who is the Director of Sales and Marketing with Marlin Spring. “This new community is also located close to the GO Station, schools, parks, and shops.”

Of course with growth means planning properly for the future. “I articulated my vision clearly to city planners, staff, businesses, and the community at large when I first took office and told everyone that we need to think big,” says Carter. “I don't want to be like other municipalities — I want Oshawa to be dynamic. So, when it comes to planning our infrastructure, growth and new development, I want us to be extraordinary. I want our transportation to be vibrant and smart — the best; I want greenspaces; I want us to think about the future when planning; and I want us to build a smart city that stands out from the rest.”

If you live or visit Oshawa, then you will enjoy its cultural and recreational assets. There is the Oshawa Museum, the Ontario Regiment Museum, and there is no shortage of parks, conservation areas, sports facilities, and community centres.

Locals and tourists also like spending time on the sandy beach at Lakeview Park during the summer months. The city also now has over 100 playgrounds, eight ice pads, nine splash pads, and three skateboard parks. “We offer it all here,” says Carter. “Our city is exceptional, and we will continue to grow in so many ways.”



Podium has just unveiled its new development in Ironwood in North Oshawa.



Ironwood in North Oshawa is a ravine community that will offer 125 freehold townhome units on a private street.



The Oshawa Executive Airport is a busy place these days for the professional types.