

## **Toronto Employment Survey 2024**

**Date:** January 7, 2025

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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Toronto has recorded a new high of 1,600,300 jobs citywide and the highest year-over-year employment growth rate in the last two decades. Many new businesses continue to open with three out of ten businesses being less than five years old. The attached bulletin summarizes these and many other results of the 2024 Toronto Employment Survey, which is the 42nd annual survey of Toronto businesses. The bulletin highlights the Survey's key findings and counts of employment and business establishments in the City of Toronto for 2024. The bulletin also reports on the type and longevity of establishments and employment activity in Downtown, the Districts, the Centres, designated Employment Areas, Secondary Plan areas and Areas of Employment across the city.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. Planning and Housing Committee receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The City Planning Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

## DECISION HISTORY

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Since 1983, the City has conducted an annual survey of Toronto business establishments to monitor economic activity, provide information for policy and decision-making, and offer additional context for the planning of public works and city services. Using a consistent coding system of land parcel uses and occupant activities, the Survey provides over forty years of time-series data for long-term analysis of employment activity in Toronto.

Aggregated results of the Toronto Employment Survey are used by City Planning and other City divisions to monitor economic conditions, to review the progress of Official Plan policies and to inform emerging policy directions that may be required to respond to economic shifts. Staff from various divisions also use the Survey's results to develop employment projections and in the planning of municipal infrastructure and services. This report summarizes the results of the Toronto Employment Survey conducted between May and September 2024.

## COMMENTS

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The Toronto Employment Survey collects land use and employment information that is unique to the City of Toronto. Each year, a team of surveyors collects information directly from businesses through in-person visits, with follow-up phone calls and e-mails as required. Unlike some business surveys that rely on sampling and indirect sources, the Survey team confirms information directly with the business owners, managers, and staff of each of the City's 73,180 establishments.

The section below contains highlights from the 2024 Toronto Employment Survey. The attached Bulletin is a more detailed look at these results with accompanying charts and maps for additional context.

### Total Employment

- The Toronto Employment Survey counted 1,600,300 jobs in 2024.
- In 2024, the Toronto Employment Survey recorded a 4.2% increase in total jobs, up 65,010 jobs. This is the highest growth rate measured in the last two decades.
- Total employment has surpassed the pre-COVID-19 pandemic total of 1,569,800 in 2019, a difference of 30,500 or 1.9%.
- Full-time employment increased by 39,310 jobs (3.3%) from 2023 to 1,218,680 jobs.
- Part-time employment increased by 25,710 jobs (7.2%) from 2023 to 381,620 jobs.

### Number of Establishments

- In 2024, the Survey counted 73,180 establishments, a net increase of 650 or 0.9%.
- A total of 6,430 establishments were new to the city in 2024. Of these, 1,870 are located in Employment Areas (29.1%), 1,520 in Downtown (23.6%), 320 in the Centres (4.9%), and 2,730 (42.4%) in the rest of the city.
- The Office category had the most new establishments in 2024 with 2,410.

## Employment by Category

- The Office category continues to make up the largest share of Toronto employment, with 49.3% of jobs, up from 47.9% a decade ago, demonstrating the continued importance of the Office category to Toronto's economy.
- Institutional employment has been Toronto's fastest growing category with a 30.6% increase in jobs over the last decade.
- Service employment had a strong increase of 10,460 jobs or 6.2% since 2023. This is notable following the decline in 2020 of almost one-quarter of Service jobs.
- In 2024, all categories experienced growth except Manufacturing and Warehousing, which declined by 0.9%.
- Community and Entertainment, representing 3.3% of employment in 2024, experienced the highest year-over-year growth with a 17.2% increase.

## Downtown

- There were 643,350 jobs in Toronto's Downtown in 2024, the highest employment count reported in the last five years. Downtown grew faster than the citywide average of 4.2%, gaining 42,340 jobs or 7.0%. Since 2023, Institutional and Office have added the most jobs in Downtown, with growth of 17,450 and 15,950 jobs respectively.
- Job intensification continues in Downtown as the average employment density increased to 29,970 jobs per square kilometre or 300 jobs per hectare in 2024.
- The widespread prevalence of hybrid work schedules means that the number of people physically present in Downtown still varies widely across days of the week, as per the Occupancy Index by Strategic Regional Research Alliance.

## Districts and Centres

- Over half of jobs citywide (52.3%) are located in Toronto and East York District. This is followed by North York (19.5%), Etobicoke York (16.0%) and Scarborough (12.2%).
- The four Centres, Yonge-Eglinton Centre, North York Centre, Scarborough Centre, and Etobicoke Centre had an increase of 3.5% in 2024 amounting to 76,300 jobs or 4.8% of the city's total employment. This follows four consecutive years of decreases in net employment in the Centres.

## Employment Areas

- In 2024, Employment Areas contained 387,760 jobs, 24.2% of the city total. This is down 10,150 jobs or 2.6% from last year.
- Employment Areas contain 21,510 establishments, 29.4% of the city total.
- In 2024, 29.1% of new establishments in the city were located in Employment Areas.
- Employment Areas continue to accommodate important concentrations of jobs within certain sectors, with most Manufacturing (87.4%), Utilities (83.4%), and Construction (73.5%) jobs locating in these areas.
- Core Employment Areas contained 63.5% of all jobs in Employment Areas, 15.4% of all citywide employment.

- General Employment Areas contained 36.5% of all jobs in Employment Areas, 8.9% of all citywide employment.

## Secondary Plan Areas

- Secondary Plan areas account for 916,770 jobs or 57.3% of all citywide employment, a 6.3% increase from last year.
- The Downtown Plan area remains the largest Secondary Plan area in terms of employment, having grown by 6.7% to 632,750 jobs. Note that the Downtown Secondary Plan area has a different geographic boundary than Downtown as identified in the Official Plan's Urban Structure map. The reported employment and establishment counts for these areas are not directly comparable.
- Office continues to be the largest employment category in Secondary Plan areas with 61.9% of employment and 46.1% of establishments.

## Areas of Employment

- According to the Planning Act, an “‘area of employment’ means an area of land designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic uses”. These uses include manufacturing, uses related to research and development in connection with manufacturing, warehousing, associated retail and office uses, and ancillary facilities. There are 23 Areas of Employment (AOEs) in Toronto which represent geographic clusters of lands designated as either Core Employment Area or General Employment Area in the Official Plan.
- In 2024, employment in AOEs accounted for 410,380 jobs, or 25.6% of all citywide employment, and 22,040 establishments, or 30.1% of the total.
- The Manufacturing sector remains the largest source of jobs within AOEs with 74,990 jobs in 2024, despite a decline of 6,360 jobs since 2019.

## Regional Employment Policies

- Toronto is forecast to accommodate 1.98 million jobs by the year 2051, as per the Reference forecast scenario supporting the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020 (Growth Plan).
- Although the new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 (PPS 2024) has replaced the Growth Plan, Policy 2.1.2 of the PPS 2024 allows municipalities to continue to forecast growth using Growth Plan forecasts.
- Toronto is on track to achieve the 2051 forecast sometime before 2042, based on the 2024 Toronto Employment Survey results which show a ten-year rate of growth that is more than double the rate anticipated by the Growth Plan forecast.

## Hybrid Work

- In 2024, the response rate for questions related to remote work was higher than previous years.
- The percentage of staff working remotely remained constant at 32.5%, signalling a stabilizing of hybrid work arrangements in Toronto.

- One in four businesses that adopted a hybrid work model reported having employees work on-site three days a week on average, showing no change between 2023 and 2024.
- Geographically, Downtown Toronto establishments have the largest proportion of remote workers in the City. Downtown establishments have seen an increase of 45,000 remote employees along with an increase of 600 remote work businesses. The proportion of "remote work" employees in Downtown has continued to increase from 55.5% in 2023 to 63.6% in 2024.

## **Job Precarity**

- Part-time workers may be more susceptible to fluctuations in the economy with larger job losses and slower recovery than more stable full-time jobs. The 2024 count of 381,620 part-time jobs is still below the 2019 peak of 390,850 part-time jobs.
- Community and Entertainment jobs and Service jobs were most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, losing 35.8% and 23.4% of jobs respectively in 2020. Community and Entertainment part-time employment increased by 23.8% from 2023, and Service part-time employment increased by 7.1%, but both are still below 2019 employment numbers.

## **Data Collection**

- In 2024, 57,190 establishments out of 73,180 responded to the Survey, a response rate of 78%. Responses represent 997,020 jobs or 62.3% employment in the city. This is much higher than the response rate of 70% last year but lower than the typical rate of 85% to 90% in pre-pandemic years.

## **2025 Toronto Employment Survey**

The continuation of the annual Toronto Employment Survey is important for land use planning and economic development purposes as it provides a time-series dataset for analysis of employment and land use change over time. The 2025 Survey will begin in May 2025, with the fieldwork scheduled to be completed by August 2025. This will be the 43rd year of the Survey program.

City Planning will continue to monitor changes in employment, and report on notable changes such as trends in working from home, as this will have an impact on future policy directions.

## **CONTACT**

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Philip Parker, Project Manager, Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, 416-338-4161, [Philip.Parker@toronto.ca](mailto:Philip.Parker@toronto.ca)

Jessica Krecklo Naidu, Assistant Planner, Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, 416-392-3596, [Jessica.KreckloNaidu@toronto.ca](mailto:Jessica.KreckloNaidu@toronto.ca)

Joshua Morales Franco, Assistant Planner, Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, 416-338-7527, [Joshua.MoralesFranco@toronto.ca](mailto:Joshua.MoralesFranco@toronto.ca)

Sabrina Poinen, Assistant Planner, Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division, 416-392-8786, [Sabrina.Poinen@toronto.ca](mailto:Sabrina.Poinen@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Jason Thorne  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Toronto Employment Survey 2024 Bulletin