2019 – 2024
Coquitlam **Technology Strategy**

coquitlam.ca/technology

Coquitlam

B.C.'S TECHNOLOGY SECTOR PERFORMANCE

$28.9 Billion total revenue

$15.5 Billion (7.6%) of Province's Gross Domestic Product

10,236 Businesses

106,430 Jobs

$5.8 Billion Export Revenue

Source: *Province of B.C.*

Prepared by:
Economic Development Division
City of Coquitlam
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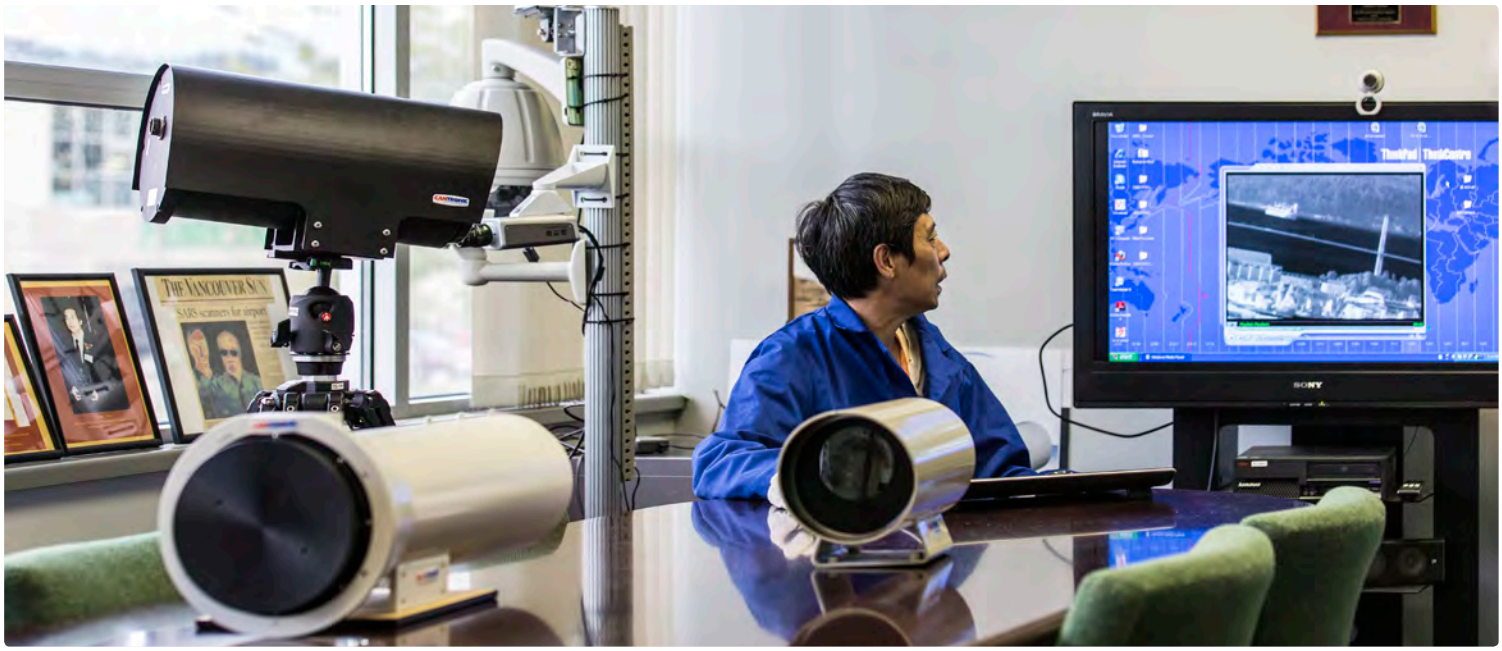


Definition of Technology

For the purposes of the 2019 - 2024 Coquitlam Technology Strategy, the technology sector is inclusive of a number of technology-related subsectors such as information and communications technology, digital media and wireless, robotics, automation, artificial intelligence, health and life sciences and clean-tech as well as the creative sector, which encompasses subsectors such as software development, research and development, design, arts and culture, etc.

B.C.'S TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

B.C.'s technology sector has become one of the province's largest sectors accounting for 7.6% of the B.C. economy and adds $15.5B to our province's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The technology sector employs over 100,000 people in a variety of subsectors such as information and communications technology (ICT), digital media and wireless, health and life sciences and clean-tech. The sector includes 10,000 established companies and another 18,750 emerging companies.

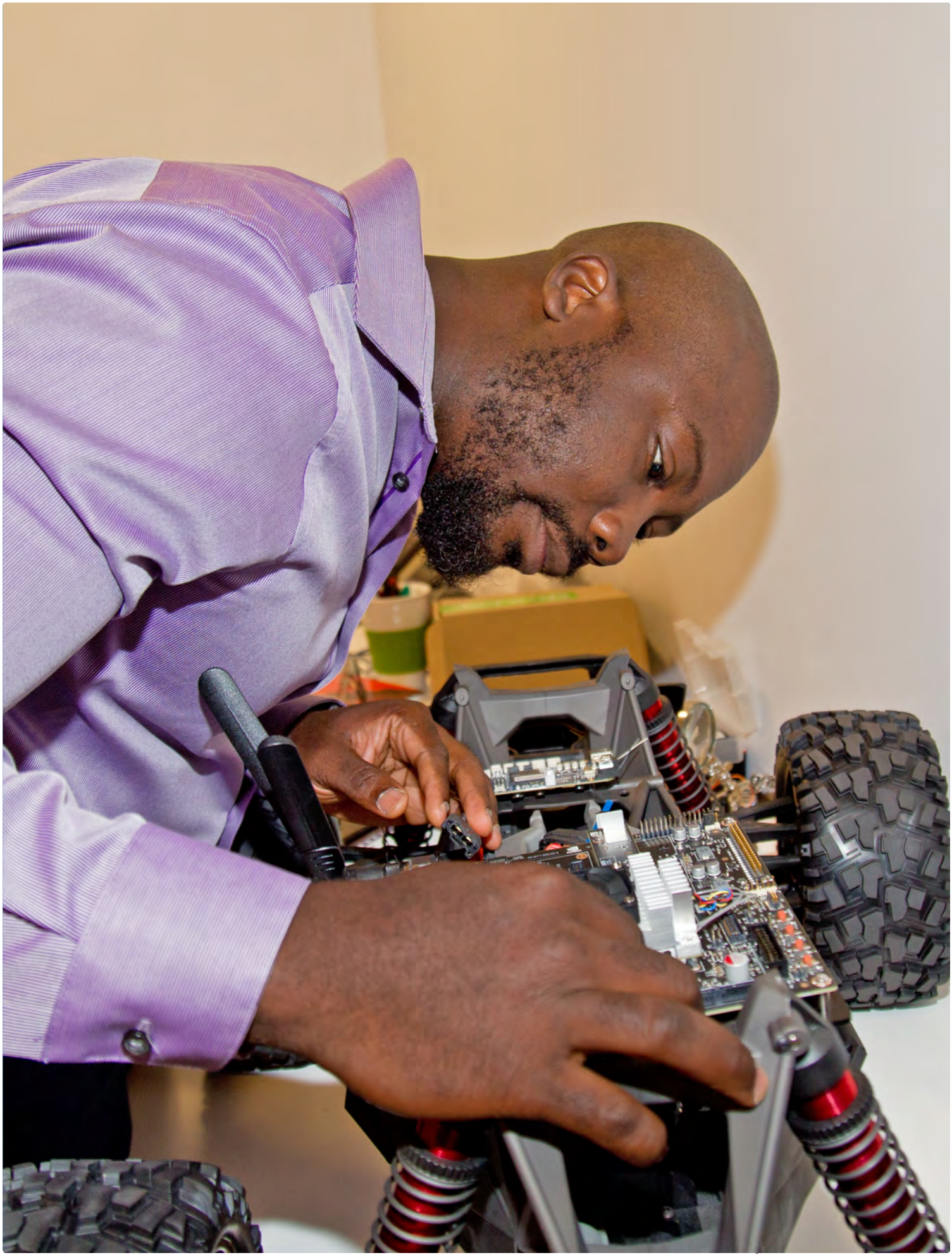
B.C. is recognized as a destination for technology investment and as a leader for developing and growing technology companies. A highly-educated labour force, strong educational institutions, clusters of technology companies, stable economy and proximity to the United States and Pacific Rim markets establish B.C. as an ideal place for technology businesses. This is demonstrated by job growth in the technology sector increasing at twice the rate of overall employment growth in the province.

COQUITLAM'S TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

Coquitlam's technology sector has diversified over the past decade to include a variety of businesses in the ICT, digital media and wireless, health and life sciences and clean-tech subsectors. Further, the number of technology related jobs continues to expand as today technology is an integral component of a wide variety of sectors ranging from retail to manufacturing to professional services.

In 2014, the Economic Development Office collaborated with a group of technology entrepreneurs to establish TriCelerate, a technology incubator based in Coquitlam. In 2015, the TriCelerate Innovation Hub, which is designed to provide resources to technology entrepreneurs, opened at the City Centre Branch of the Coquitlam Public Library.

Coquitlam's labour force in the technology sector is continuing to expand. The sector, which is included as part of the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry category, accounts for 10.1% (or 7,450 jobs) of Coquitlam's labour force. The majority of Coquitlam's technology firms operate in the southwest industrial area. Coquitlam is currently home to a variety of technology and knowledge-based businesses such as Cantronic Systems, Seon Design, Hermary, MedRay Imaging and Graytek.



QNET

Our business... is your future!

QNet delivers superior, carrier grade fibre optic network access within the City of Coquitlam, providing residents and businesses with the most competitive telecommunication choices of any municipality in Canada.

QNet Offers Coquitlam Businesses...

- ***Dedicated fibre optic connections from competitive carriers***
- ***Base cost of $400 per month***
- ***City wide network***
- ***Free installation***
- ***Symmetrical bandwidth speeds of 100Mbs, 1Gbs, 10Gbs, etc.***
- ***State-of-the-art data centre co-location opportunities***
- ***60 Km of fibre***

COQUITLAM OPTICAL NETWORK (QNET)

The City of Coquitlam continues to develop strategies designed to respond to the needs of technology companies. One example of innovative policy decisions implemented to increase investment and job creation is QNet. A subsidiary of the City of Coquitlam, QNet was established in 2008 to facilitate the use of the City's fibre-optic network. The 60-kilometre network was originally designed to connect the City's traffic signal system and facilities. QNet has enabled the delivery of low-cost broadband services from competitive telecom companies to Coquitlam's residents and businesses. QNet opens up access to high-speed services in the community by leasing new carrier-grade optical fibre to telecom service providers. This enables Coquitlam to support existing and future businesses by meeting the escalating need for high-speed communication bandwidth.

Situation Analysis

The following analysis outlines some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for Coquitlam as a technology sector destination.

STRENGTHS

Sector Growth: The technology sector in Coquitlam, similar to Metro Vancouver and British Columbia, has been expanding. Employment in B.C.'s technology sector increased 4.1%, surpassing overall employment growth of 3% and the national technology sector employment growth rate of 0.3% (2016).

Grass Roots Technology Ecosystem: The City of Coquitlam has excellent educational institutions that offer state-of-the-art training in various fields of technology and entrepreneurship. Coquitlam also possesses a number of home-based technology companies, an incubator program and a few co-work/shared office space locations.

Proximity: Centrally located in Metro Vancouver, Coquitlam provides access to major markets stretching from Vancouver, B.C. to Oregon, USA. Coquitlam's proximity to the Vancouver and Abbotsford International airports and Port of Vancouver provides businesses with convenient access to global markets. Coquitlam, which is also close to many educational institutions (SFU and Douglas College), is easily accessible via transportation networks such as Highways 1 and 7, the Barnet Highway, West Coast Express and the SkyTrain Evergreen Extension.

Coquitlam Optical Network (QNet): QNet delivers superior, carrier-grade fibre optic network access within the City of Coquitlam, providing residents and businesses with competitive telecommunications options.

Highly Educated Labour Force: The City of Coquitlam has a highly-educated labour force with 65% of the labour force possessing post-secondary certificates, diplomas or degrees. Coquitlam also has access to the labour forces in neighbouring communities.

Lifestyle: Coquitlam's expanding network of amenities (parks, trails, entertainment, etc.) and housing and transportation options are attractive to technology sector employees.

WEAKNESSES

Cluster of Technology Businesses: The City of Coquitlam has a number of home-based and/or small technology businesses; however, the absence of medium to large technology businesses has impacted the development of a technology sector cluster within the city.

Office Space: The limited amount of office inventory available in Coquitlam makes attracting technology companies more challenging. Additionally, whether it is office development or technology company attraction, both areas are fairly competitive marketplaces with many municipalities competing for the developments and jobs.

Lack of Marketing: The amount of marketing that has been pursued by Coquitlam to promote the city as an attractive destination for the technology sector has been limited.

Partnerships: The number of partnerships with sector associations as well as government organizations is limited. Thus, the programming that is available to assist Coquitlam technology businesses is not being promoted as readily as it should be.

Lifestyle: The Technology sector is attracted to areas with a wide variety of cultural and entertainment options. The City of Coquitlam needs more amenities of this nature as well as more meeting and conference spaces.

Situation Analysis

OPPORTUNITIES

Vancouver Technology Ecosystem: The technology sector ecosystem based in the City of Vancouver is well developed and, as a result, there are a number of technology firms, start-ups and industry associations that may be in the market for new locations within Metro Vancouver.

Office Development: The City of Coquitlam has the ability to encourage increases in office space inventory via policy tools, incentives, partnerships, etc.

Partnerships: Maximize sector partnerships with organizations such as the BC Tech Association, Creative BC, DigiBC and other partners such as the Foresight Cleantech Accelerator Centre, VentureLabs, etc.

Programming: Metro Vancouver is home to a variety of accelerators, incubators, education providers and government programs from Spring IS to Launch Academy to the National Research Council. Coquitlam could leverage the already established programming by seeking partnerships and/or promoting various programs/services.

Capital Networks: Metro Vancouver has many established capital networks such as the Angel Investment Network and the VANTEC Angel Network that could be accessed to finance the growth and expansion of local technology companies and/or start-ups.

Coquitlam's Technology Focus: The City's Technology Roadmap fosters City-led opportunities for tech-enabled services with the City and within the community.

THREATS

Competition: A number of municipalities in the Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley have identified the technology sector as key to growing their local economies. Thus, attracting technology businesses to a community is a very competitive process.

Suitable Locations: Many neighbouring communities have larger inventories of office space that would be suitable for technology businesses.

Urban Centres: A number of technology firms have a preference for being located in larger market areas such as Vancouver, Seattle, Toronto, Montreal, etc.

Labour Market: The Metro Vancouver job market is very competitive with many opportunities for skilled workers. There are also risks and/or costs associated with employee turnover, which is typically higher in the technology sector, when compared to other sectors.

Sector Consolidation: Mergers and acquisitions have always been a staunch characteristic of the technology sector. Thus, there is always a risk of Coquitlam-based technology businesses being purchased and relocated and/or absorbed by larger technology businesses that are located in other areas of the globe.

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VISION STATEMENT

Coquitlam will foster a climate that supports growing our technology sector and expanding the economic impact of the sector by promoting Coquitlam as an attractive destination to build and grow technology businesses of all sizes, while expanding local jobs and prosperity.

PRIMARY MARKET

The primary market is composed of technology-based businesses that are based in the Metro Vancouver and Fraser Valley regions.

SECONDARY MARKET

The secondary market is composed of technology-based businesses that are based in North America or other global regions.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

Three key focus areas were developed based on research conducted by the Economic Development Division and feedback provided by the technology sector professionals who participated in the Technology Sector Strategy Workshop.

1. Technology Ecosystem Development
2. Retention & Expansion
3. Marketing & Attraction

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KEY AREA OF FOCUS – TECHNOLOGY ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1:

Work with the technology sector partners to continue to develop and expand the Coquitlam technology sector ecosystem.

Actions:

Stakeholder Relations ("A" Priority)

- Continue to work with sector partners (government, education and business) to develop a technology sector ecosystem in Coquitlam that will assist with the evolution of a technology cluster.
- Focus on connecting sector stakeholders in order to build beneficial relationships and partnerships.
- Develop relationships with and promote Coquitlam to capital organizations and angel investors.
- As the City of Coquitlam's Technology Roadmap continues to be implemented, examine opportunities to work with technology sector partners to enhance the delivery of City services to the community.

Sector Programming ("B" Priority)

- Continue to work with sector partners to deliver technology sector ecosystem programming that will assist with attaining the resources required to expand and/or grow their business (e.g. connecting local businesses to accelerator/incubators such as Spring IS, VentureLabs, etc.).
- Work with the incubator stakeholders to continue to grow and expand programming, focusing on marketing technology sector incubator/accelerator programming to local entrepreneurs and home-based businesses.
- Identify opportunities to connect local technology businesses with investors, government programs (e.g. National Research Council) and/or mentors.

Monitoring and Evaluation ("C" Priority)

- Complete an initial assessment of the status of the current local technology ecosystem.
- Monitor and track ecosystem statistics and data.
- Identify ecosystem developments and growth opportunities.

Key Performance Indicators

- Work with partners to gather and develop statistical information on the Coquitlam technology sector
- Technology sector economic impact
- Inventory of Coquitlam-based technology sector stakeholders
- Number of technology sector partnerships and programs
- Number of technology sector start-ups
- Labour market changes

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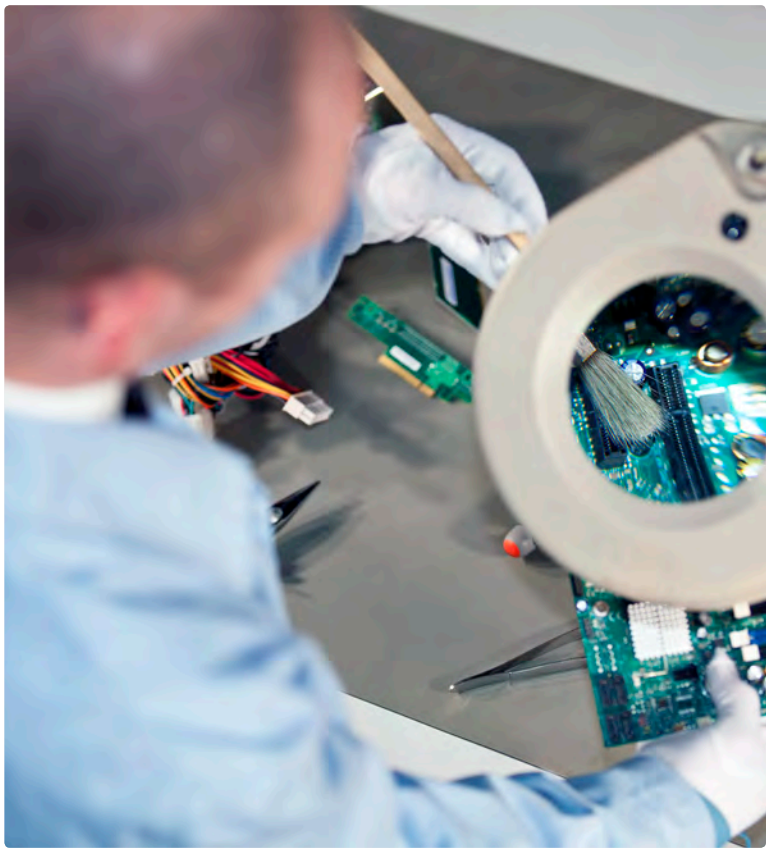
KEY AREA OF FOCUS – RETENTION & EXPANSION

Goal 2:

Continue to implement the Coquitlam Business Connects Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program, focusing on the development of policies and initiatives for the retention and growth of technology businesses.



Actions:

Retention & Expansion ("A" Priority)

- Continue to build relationships with local technology businesses.
- Provide assistance to Coquitlam technology businesses on items such as connecting to business community members to finding alternative site locations (e.g. assistance requests).
- Identify opportunities to convey the value of the economic impact and jobs created by Coquitlam's technology sector.

Partnerships ("B" Priority)

- Work with partners (e.g. Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, educational institutions, accelerators, industry associations, etc.) to promote local education and training programs that assist with technology business growth.
- Identify opportunities to leverage QNet's service offerings and build collaborative relationships between QNet, the local technology sector and the business community.
- Work with partners to create events and forums for Coquitlam technology businesses to connect and establish relationships.

Statistics and Information Development ("C" Priority)

- Conduct research on Coquitlam's various technology sector businesses.
- Track local technology sector trends and changes.
- Develop marketing materials that report key technology sector trends and/or opportunities.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of technology businesses (business licences)
- Number of meetings with local technology businesses
- Number of assistance requests from local technology businesses
- QNet local business connections growth

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KEY AREA OF FOCUS – MARKETING & ATTRACTION

Goal 3:

Continue to promote the City of Coquitlam as an attractive destination for technology businesses to relocate to, expand and grow.

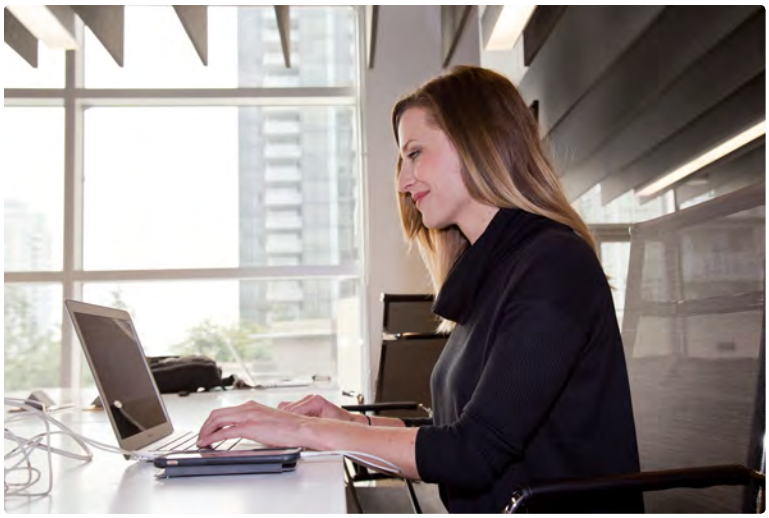
Actions:

Marketing & Communications ("A" Priority)

- Pursue strategic marketing initiatives that are designed to highlight Coquitlam's competitive advantages to the technology sector.
- Develop marketing materials that promote the City of Coquitlam as a destination for technology firms (e.g. print, social media, etc.).
- Explore opportunities to promote and utilize the B.C. Technology Association's resources and connections.

Business/Investment Attraction ("B" Priority)

- Work with QNet representatives to promote the competitive advantage of QNet's high-speed fibre to the technology sector and other business sectors interested in relocating or expanding to Coquitlam.
- Leverage relationships with industry associations, the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, the real estate community and technology sector to generate technology attraction leads.
- Explore opportunities to build the Coquitlam technology sector cluster by attracting the technology operations of larger organizations.
- As the City of Coquitlam continues to migrate toward being a Smart City, promote the competitive advantages of the ongoing implementation of the City's Technology Roadmap to the technology sector and other business sectors interested in relocating or expanding to Coquitlam.
- Monitor technology sector investment and interest by tracking the quantity and quality of attraction inquiries.



Co-operative Marketing ("C" Priority)

- Work with industry associations such as the B.C. Technology Association, Digi B.C., Creative B.C., etc., to maximize cooperative marketing opportunities.
- Promote and leverage, where applicable, industry and government initiatives, such as the Canadian Digital Technology Supercluster, labour market programs, research and development initiatives, etc., which provide opportunities to grow the technology sector.
- Work with media partners to promote Coquitlam's technology sector and opportunities for growth.

Key Performance Indicators

- Marketing material development
- Track the return on investment of marketing programs
- Online analytics (e.g. web, social media, etc.)
- Number of new technology-based businesses (business licences)
- Number of technology business attraction inquiries
- Number of QNet telecom service providers

2019 – 2024 Coquitlam Technology Strategy

IMPLEMENTATION

The 2019 - 2024 Coquitlam Technology Strategy provides the core goals needed to enhance the expansion and economic contribution of Coquitlam's technology sector.

The Economic Development Division will develop annual work plans to achieve the goals identified in the 2019 - 2024 Coquitlam Technology Strategy.

Acknowledgements

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Economic Development Advisory Committee

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