

Ford Settles Where is GM and Oshawa?

Unionized workers at Ford Motor Company's Canadian operations have ratified a collective agreement with their employer, the union and the automaker announced on July 19. The new three-year agreement represents more than just pay raises for more than 5,000 unionized Ford workers represented by Unifor. It also represents a major investment in Ford's Canadian operations.

Unifor, Canada's largest private union, represents more than 5,000 Ford employees at plants in Oakville, Windsor and Essex. Ford Motor Company of Canada announced, as part of the collective agreement, it will spend \$1.25 billion to invest in its Canadian manufacturing operations.

This includes spending \$700 million to maximize production of the 5.0-litre engines made at the Essex Engine Plant. The automaker forecasts the addition of a third shift there as a result.

Additionally, the Essex investment will support the continued expansion and production of the 7.3-litre engines made there, the automaker said.

Another \$550 million, which was previously planned, will be spent at the Oakville Assembly Complex over the life of the three-year agreement.

The \$550-million boost is on top of a previously announced \$5 billion investment at the Oakville facility, which the automaker is spending to transition the plant into Canada's Super Duty assembly plant and to introduce Ford of Canada's first-ever stamping operations.

Ford building on more than a century of Canadian operations "This agreement is about investing in our people and Canada's future," Ford CEO Jim Farley said in a news release.

"With this agreement and our continued investments in Oakville, Windsor and Essex, we're building on more than a century of manufacturing leadership in Canada and strengthening Ford's ability to compete and win for years to come. We're proud to invest in Unifor's strong leadership and in our outstanding Canadian employees, dealers and customers."

Ford has had a manufacturing presence in Canada for 122 years. "The strength of Ford has always across the country."

GM and Stellantis are next

Unifor, Canada's largest private union, conducts its negotiations with the Detroit 3 (Ford, General Motors and Stellantis) one after the other, using the first ratified agreement as a basis of negotiations with the other two.

"We chose to work with Ford to establish the Detroit 3 pattern because of the company's continued commitment to its Canadian operations and a long-established constructive working relationship," Payne had said in a news release at the launch of the bargaining with Ford.

Four new DDSB schools opening in Durham this fall

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) has announced the names of four new schools scheduled to welcome students for the 2026-2027 school year this fall.

Construction remains on track, and school administrators look forward to welcoming families to these state-of-the-art learning environments in the coming weeks, said the announcement.

Following extensive community consultations and board trustee recommendations this past spring, the Ontario Ministry of Education officially finalized and approved the school names on July 6, the DDSB said.

It said the naming process engaged thousands of local students, families, staff, and community members who submitted and reviewed suggestions to ensure each school reflects the unique identity, history, and aspirations of its community and neighborhood.

"We are incredibly grateful to the school naming committees, our trustees, and the broader community for their thoughtful collaboration," said Andrea McAuley, Superintendent of Education, Leadership and Innovative Learning. "These names represent more than just brick and mortar—they reflect the geography, culture, and rich diversity of Durham Region. Together, we are laying a strong foundation for the future of our students."

Cedar Valley Secondary School will have a student capacity of 1,387. Each new elementary school will have a student capacity of 634, DDSB said.

The Meaning Behind the Names

Cedar Valley Secondary School (Oshawa): Named in connection to the nearby local conservation area. The name honors the region's natural landscape and the white cedar plant, which holds deep significance as a symbol of strength and healing.

Whitby Meadows Public School (Whitby): A place-based name referencing the vibrant, rapidly growing residential development area that the school will serve.

Waaban Public School (Oshawa): Translated from the Anishinaabemowin language, "Waaban" means dawn or the east, symbolizing new beginnings, hope, and the bright future of its students.

Heartwood Public School (Whitby): A nature-focused name referencing the "heartwood" or the strong, resilient inner core of a tree—representing the supportive and foundational environment the school aims to cultivate.

The DDSB is responsible for public education in the rural communities of Uxbridge, Brock and Scugog townships and the cities and towns of Ajax, Whitby, Pickering and Oshawa. It employs over 12,000 teaching and educational services staff in 144 elementary and secondary schools and learning centres. DDSB has more than 80,000 regular day students and thousands more who take continuing education and adult credit courses.

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