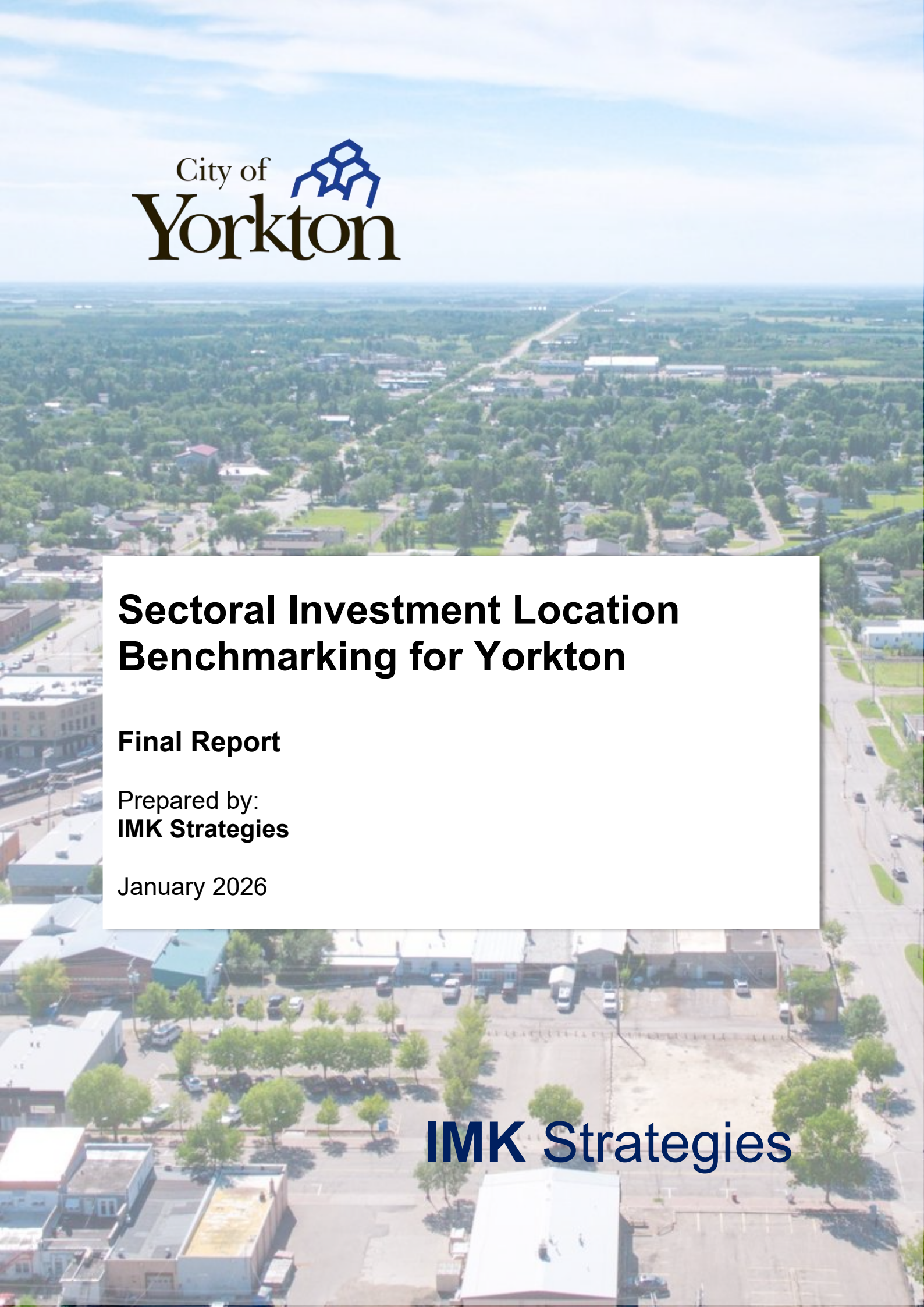

City of Yorkton

Sectoral Investment Location Benchmarking for Yorkton

Final Report

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IMK Strategies

January 2026

IMK Strategies

IMK

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Executive Summary

The City of Yorkton commissioned this Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Attraction Strategy to support economic diversification, job creation, and long-term competitiveness, while positioning the city to access external funding such as CanExport Community Investments. The Strategy is grounded in supply- and demand-side analysis and reflects current investor behaviour and market trends.

This strategy moves beyond analysis to provide a clear, implementable roadmap. It recommends where Yorkton should focus its efforts, how investment attraction activities should be delivered, and how FDI attraction in these sectors can contribute to measurable economic and community outcomes aligned with federal and provincial priorities.

FOCUS

Where Yorkton should concentrate its efforts

- Three priority sectors (~80% of effort):
  Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing; Logistics & Distribution; AgTech / Automation (applied)
- Priority markets:
  Proactive focus on Europe and selected Indo-Pacific markets, with a deal-responsive presence in the United States
- Strategic principle:
  Concentrate limited resources on sectors and markets where Yorkton is most competitive and investor demand is strongest

DELIVERY

How the Strategy can be successfully implemented

- **Sector-specific Investment Attraction Strategy**
  Practical, sector-led guidance for each priority sector - target investor profiles, target technologies, investment-ready sites, incentives pathways, and delivery partners.
- **Investor marketing and promotion platform**
  "Invest in Yorkton" website and materials, clear value propositions, and targeted LinkedIn promotion
- **Targeted lead generation campaign**
  Structured outreach campaigns by sector and market, focused on meetings and qualified opportunities

IMPACT

Why this matters for Yorkton

- **Economic outcomes:** Job creation, economic diversification, and increased local supplier and service demand
- **Indigenous economic development:** Practical pathways for Indigenous employment, contracting, and supplier participation across priority sectors
- **Policy and funding alignment:** Strong alignment with Canada's FDI priorities, Saskatchewan's investment attraction strategy, and CanExport requirements, supported by clear deliverables and measurable outcomes

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

The City of Yorkton is a regional hub in eastern Saskatchewan with strong assets in agriculture, agri-processing, and manufacturing. Its strategic location along the Trans-Canada Yellowhead Highway, combined with reliable transport links and a skilled workforce, underpins its growing role in Western Canada's value-added economy. Recent investments, including the Louis Dreyfus Company expansion and new plant-based protein facilities, highlight Yorkton's competitiveness and momentum.

Through this project, the City seeks to diversify its economic base and attract sustainable, high-value investment. The resulting strategy will also position Yorkton to apply for the CanExport Community Investment Grant to continue expanding its investment attraction efforts.

1.2 Project Objectives

The project will deliver a practical, evidence-based, and actionable Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Attraction Strategy for the City of Yorkton. It will provide clear priorities, target sectors, and an implementation roadmap to guide future investment promotion and outreach activities.

The strategy will also serve as a key instrument to support the City's eligibility for the CanExport Community Investment Grant (CIG), demonstrating Yorkton's readiness, analytical foundation, and alignment with national trade and investment objectives. This will position the City to secure funding and continue expanding its investment attraction efforts beyond the current project scope.

1.3 Document Purpose

This document presents the findings of the Supply Side Assessment (phase two of the four-phase project). It provides an overview of Yorkton's strengths and competitive position, drawing on both quantitative data analysis and qualitative insights gathered through research and stakeholder engagement.

These results form the foundation for the next phase - Demand Side Assessment - which will evaluate the market dynamics within Yorkton's principal sectors of interest.

2. Methodology

Our methodology has been designed to provide a structured and comparable assessment of Yorkton's investment competitiveness relative to peer cities.

It combines quantitative indicators from national and provincial statistical databases with qualitative insights from stakeholder interviews, focusing on sectoral relevance for agri-processing, advanced manufacturing, and sustainable resource industries, including mining and materials processing.

The analysis is organised around two complementary dimensions:

- the supply side, which examines Yorkton's structural conditions and operating environment, and
- the demand side, which explores investor behavior, FDI flows, and perceptions to assess the city's attractiveness and long-term positioning.

2.1 Project Scope

The project focuses on identifying Yorkton's priority sectors for investment attraction and benchmarking its competitiveness against comparable Prairie cities. The goal is to define realistic, high-impact opportunities that align with Yorkton's industrial base and development ambitions.

Comparator Cities

Yorkton is benchmarked against Brandon, Lloydminster, and Prince Albert – three mid-sized Prairie centres with similar economic profiles and roles as regional service and industry hubs:

- **Brandon (MB)** – A leading agri-processing and manufacturing centre, demonstrating how smaller cities can diversify their base and attract large-scale food and logistics investments.
- **Lloydminster (SK/AB)** – A cross-provincial industrial hub with strong energy and service sectors, relevant for Yorkton's ambitions in bioenergy and supply-chain support.
- **Prince Albert (SK)** – A comparable city that has successfully revitalised its manufacturing and resource industries, offering lessons for Yorkton's shift toward value-added and sustainable sectors.

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Sectors of Interest

The following seven sectors of interest were selected based on an initial high level analysis, and agreed with Yorkton. They were chosen to reflect Yorkton's potential strengths and evolving global demand patterns, and will be assessed further in this current phase and the next phase of the project.

Sector	Definition	FDI Opportunity & Readiness
Advanced Manufacturing	Fabrication and assembly for agricultural, industrial, and automation equipment.	**Opportunity:** Machinery, components, automation.
		Readiness: Established base; limited skilled trades.
Energy (Renewables & Bioenergy)	Renewable fuels, biomass, and bioenergy projects leveraging agricultural residues.	**Opportunity:** Biofuels and renewable energy demand.
		Readiness: Feedstock and land available; grid capacity limited.
Life Sciences / Agri-Bio	Biotechnology and bio-based products linked to agriculture and nutrition.	**Opportunity:** Crop-based innovation and bioproducts.
		Readiness: Emerging field; R&D partnerships needed.
Logistics & Distribution	Transport, warehousing, and cold-chain operations supporting agri-exports.	**Opportunity:** Central location, agri-export volumes.
		Readiness: Excellent road access; rail and cold storage gaps.
Mining & Mining Services	Equipment, maintenance, and logistics serving Saskatchewan's mining sector.	**Opportunity:** Supply-chain demand from regional mining.
		Readiness: Skilled industrial base; servicing focus.
Technology (AgTech / Automation)	Precision agriculture, automation, and digital tools for production and processing.	**Opportunity:** Expanding AgTech markets.
		Readiness: Applied industries strong; digital skills limited.
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing	Processing of grains, oilseeds, and plant-based proteins into higher-value products.	**Opportunity:** Global demand for sustainable food.
		Readiness: Strong base (Richardson, LDC); workforce development needed.

2.2 Quantitative Analysis

The supply-side evaluation measures the tangible factors shaping Yorkton's financial, operational, and regulatory competitiveness for industrial investment. We have structured our analysis around 8 pillars, which together represent a holistic view of a region's attractiveness to a prospective investor. The pillars are as follows:

Table 1: Supply-Side Evaluation Framework

Pillar	What It Measures	Indicators examined
Business Environment	Overall business confidence and sustainability performance, including renewable energy adoption and emissions reduction.	• Business Future Outlook (12 month expectations) • Renewable energy – total generation & share of generation capacity
Incentives & Taxes	Fiscal competitiveness, covering provincial and municipal tax rates and available investment incentives.	• Corporate tax rate • Manufacturing tax rate • Small business tax rate
Industry Presence	Strength of industrial clusters, specialisation, export capacity, and value-added potential in key sectors.	• GDP, by industry • Productivity, by industry • Workforce size, by industry • Automation in businesses • Exports – total and by sector
Infrastructure	Quality of transport links, industrial land, utilities, and energy reliability.	• Distance to highways, airports, ports • Asset condition rating • Broadband availability • Industrial capacity
Innovation	Technological capacity, start-up activity, and collabouration with local R&D and training institutions.	• Education & research centres • Research output • Patents granted
Labour & Utility Costs	Cost and reliability of energy, water, and labour as drivers of operational efficiency.	• Energy costs • Average salaries
Labour Market	Availability and quality of talent, vocational skills, and workforce stability.	• Graduates, by sector • Size of workforce
Quality of Life	Living standards, affordability, and community well-being affecting talent attraction and investor perception.	• Cost of living index • Crime severity index • Median house prices & rent costs

Source: IMK Strategies

Each indicator within these sub-pillars has been selected for its relevance to industrial investors and standardised to ensure comparability across locations. Data sources include Statistics Canada, the Library of Parliament, SaskEnergy, and other recognised statistical institutions.

Supply-Side Scoring System

Each indicator within each sub-pillar was scored on a 0–100 scale, where 100 represents the

most competitive performance among the benchmarked locations. Scores were calculated by normalizing quantitative indicators using a min–max standardisation formula:

$$Score_i = 100 \times \frac{(X_{best} - X_i)}{(X_{best} - X_{worst})}$$

(for cost-type indicators, where lower is better), and

$$Score_i = 100 \times \frac{(X_i - X_{worst})}{(X_{best} - X_{worst})}$$

(for performance-type indicators, where higher is better).

Each indicator was then weighted according to its relative importance within the sub-pillar. Weighted indicator scores were aggregated to produce sub-pillar scores, which were then combined to generate pillar results.

Higher scores therefore reflect greater competitiveness, cost efficiency, reliability, or structural stability, depending on the dimension assessed.

2.3 Stakeholder engagement

To get a more holistic view of Yorkton's strengths and competitive advantages, we also conducted interviews with 9 community organisations in Yorkton. Our interviews were conducted in a freeform format, but we structured them to gather information on 5 main themes (aligned with the supply side assessment framework, above).
Below are examples of questions / topics that we covered under each theme, as a guide

Table 2: Stakeholder Interviews Question Guide

Theme	Topics covered
General	• What are the key strengths of Yorkton? • What are the key weaknesses of Yorkton? • Are there any countries that you see as peer cities / regions? • What key countries do you see as a potential to attract FDI?
Business Ecosystem	• How would you describe the overall business climate in this region for businesses as well as for foreign investors? • What sectors or industries are strongest here? • where do you see growth potential for these industries? • What are the gaps for these industries? • What are the main advantages for companies considering investing here? • What are the biggest challenges or barriers that new companies typically face? • How effective are local business networks, chambers of commerce, and industry associations at supporting investors? • How would you compare this region's ecosystem to peer regions?
Costs	• How would you characterise the cost of doing business in this region (real estate, utilities, labour, taxes, etc.)? • Are there cost advantages compared to other regions? If so, which areas are most competitive?

	• What incentives (tax breaks, grants, financing, etc.) are available to foreign investors? • Are there foreign trade zones? • How do infrastructure costs (transport, logistics, energy) compare to peer regions?
Talent	• How would you assess the availability of skilled labour in this region? • Which sectors have the strongest talent pipelines, and which face shortages? • How well do local universities, community colleges, and training programs align with industry needs? • Are there specific skill sets that are especially abundant or especially scarce? • How competitive are wages and salaries here compared to other regions? • How attractive is the region for talent retention and attraction (e.g., quality of life, amenities, housing, etc.)? • Do you see any demographic or workforce trends that could affect talent availability in the future?
Innovation	• How would you describe the region's innovation ecosystem? • What role do universities, R&D centres, and startups play in driving innovation? • Are there clusters of innovation & transformation in specific sectors? such as advanced manufacturing, life sciences, clean tech, or digital industries? • What is the level of collabouration between industry, academia, and government? • In your view, how does the region's innovation capacity compare to competitors?

Source: IMK Strategies

3. Supply-Side Analysis

3.1 Supply-Side Benchmarking Analysis Results

The results of our quantitative benchmarking analysis confirm Yorkton's strong business climate, skilled workforce, and reliable infrastructure, reinforcing its competitiveness in production and processing industries. However, limited innovation capacity, modest fiscal differentiation, and relatively high energy costs constrain its ability to attract higher-value, technology-intensive investment.

A summary of our findings are given below (and full detail follows from the next page onwards).

Table 3: Supply-Side Quantitative Benchmarking Results for Yorkton, Brandon, Lloydminster and Prince Albert

Pillar	Yorkton	Brandon	Lloydminster	Prince Albert
Business Environment	66	60	30	54
Incentives & Taxes	30	40	60	30
Industry Presence	50	34	60	59
Infrastructure	48	25	44	49
Innovation	8	65	25	55
Labour & Utility Costs	39	81	31	47
Labour Market	29	69	53	28
Quality of Life	39	58	49	25

Source: IMK Strategies

Key findings:

- **Business Environment:** Yorkton shows steady confidence supported by strong mining and energy sentiment and a resilient provincial energy mix combining wind, solar, and thermal generation, more balanced than Manitoba's hydro reliance.
- **Incentives & Taxes:** Corporate tax rates are 12% in Yorkton versus 8% in Lloydminster (AB); small business rates are 0–2% across all cities, indicating a stable but undifferentiated fiscal setting.
- **Industry Presence:** Yorkton's base of 218 farms and strong agri-processing activity sits within Saskatchewan's $5.5 B agriculture GDP and $18.5 B exports. Productivity (~$82/hour) is solid, though diversification beyond agri-food remains limited.
- **Infrastructure:** Excellent broadband (5/5), highway proximity (1.6 km), and reliable utilities make Yorkton a well-connected inland hub. About 43–57% of roads and bridges are in good condition – sufficient for processing and logistics.
- **Innovation:** With one research centre and roughly 51 patents/year, Yorkton lags peers (Brandon 68; Lloydminster 484), reflecting a small-scale innovation base.
- **Labour & Utility Costs:** Energy inputs are high (19.9¢/kWh electricity; $3.75/m³ water; $3.37/GJ gas) compared with Brandon, yet manufacturing wages (~$1,360/week) remain moderate, keeping total operating costs manageable.
- **Labour Market:** An older workforce (avg. 41 yrs) but strong vocational skills (20,325 sub-bachelor credentials) make Yorkton the most talent-dense of the benchmarked cities.
- **Quality of Life:** Affordable housing (index 72) and cost of living (106) balance moderate safety concerns (crime 169), offering a family-friendly but quieter living environment.

3.2 Supply-Side Benchmarking Analysis – Findings per Pillar

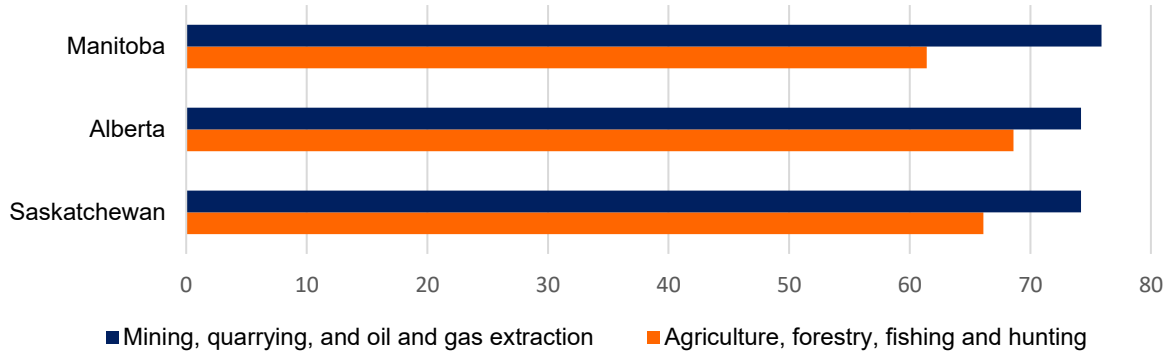
Business Environment

Business sentiment in Yorkton reflects moderate but steady optimism, driven by strong confidence in mining and energy and supported by stable outlooks in agriculture and processing industries.

Business sentiment indicators point to moderate optimism overall, with Yorkton and Prince Albert achieving the highest composite confidence scores (66.5 each), followed by Brandon (64.4) and Lloydminster (61.3)[1]. The 12-month outlook reflects cautious optimism across provinces, suggesting expectations of steady activity rather than rapid expansion.

Particularly, optimism is strongest in mining and energy-related activities, where confidence levels exceed 74 points across Saskatchewan and Alberta, reflecting ongoing investment interest and stable commodity demand. In contrast, the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector shows slightly lower but still positive sentiment – around 66 in Saskatchewan and 61 in Manitoba – driven by sustained export markets and steady processing expansion, as Figure 1 illustrates.

Figure 1: Optimistic Future Outlook by Sector (12-Month Expectations) in Saskatchewan and Benchmarked Locations, 2025



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Saskatchewan shows a more balanced energy mix than Alberta's fossil-driven system and Manitoba's hydro-dominated portfolio.

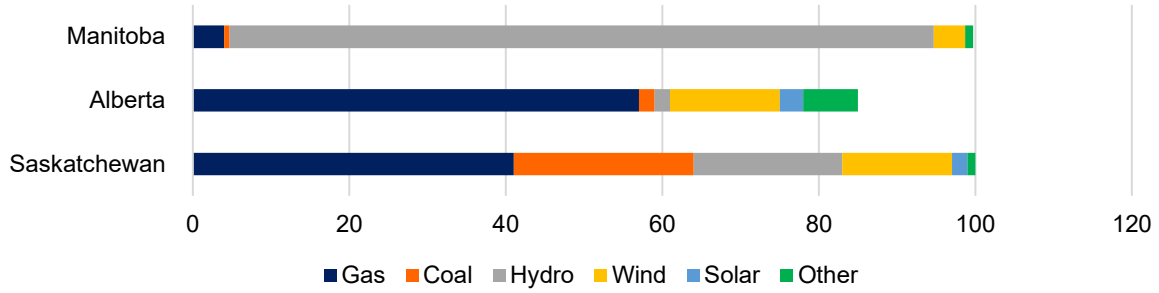
Sustainability indicators reveal notable contrasts in renewable development across provinces. Saskatchewan's energy mix is comparatively more diversified, combining wind, solar, and thermal generation sources, whereas Manitoba remains heavily reliant on hydroelectric power. For wind's share of total generating capacity, Yorkton and Lloydminster stand at 14%, while Brandon and Prince Albert are at 3%[2]. Growth in Lloydminster remains constrained by the provincial pause on new project approvals and limited nearby infrastructure[3].

Regarding renewable generating capacity, Manitoba leads with 99.9 MW, Saskatchewan are

[1] Statistics Canada (2025)
[2] SaskPower (2024) / Dunsky (2023)
[3] Pembina Institute (2024)

each at 35.5 MW, and Alberta is at 19 MW[4].

Figure 2: Available generating capacity (MW) in Saskatchewan and Benchmarked Locations, 2024



Source: SaskPower (2024) / AESO (2025) / Manitoba Hydro (2025)

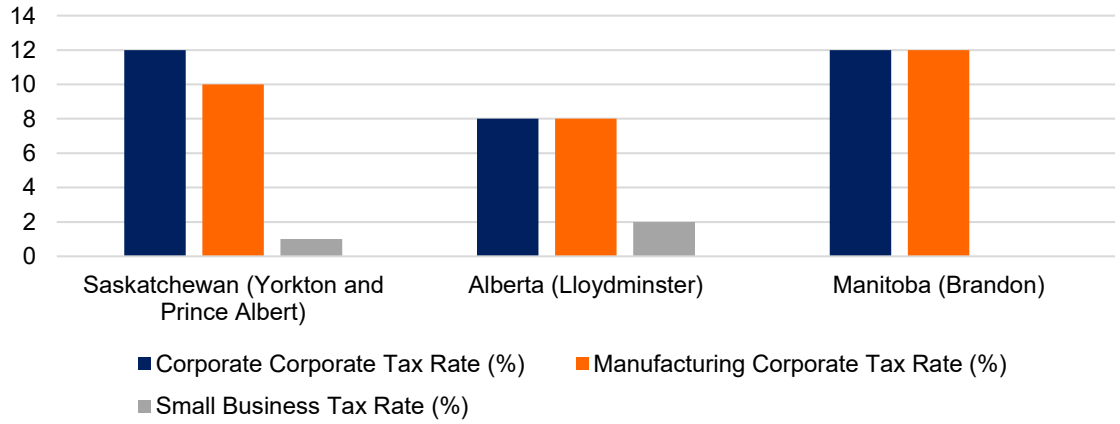
Incentives & Taxes

Yorkton benefits from Saskatchewan's moderate corporate rates, though Alberta continues to attract investors with its streamlined tax regime

Tax indicators show a broadly consistent framework across the four locations. The corporate tax rate is 12% in Yorkton, Brandon, and Prince Albert, slightly lower in Lloydminster at 8%[5]. Manufacturing corporate tax rates mirror this pattern, maintaining 12% across all except Lloydminster, which again posts the lowest rate at 8%[6].

Small business taxation remains favorable across the board, with rates between 0 and 2%. Lloydminster and Prince Albert stand out with the lowest effective small business rates – 0 and 1% respectively[7] – providing a marginal cost advantage for smaller enterprises.

Figure 3: Corporate, Manufacturing, and Small Business Tax Rates (%) in Saskatchewan (Yorkton) and Benchmarked Locations, 2025



Source: Ernst & Young (2025)

[4] AESO (2024) / Canada in Action (2023) / SaskPower (2024)
[5] Ernst & Young (2025)
[6] Ernst & Young (2025)
[7] Ernst & Young (2025)

Industry Presence

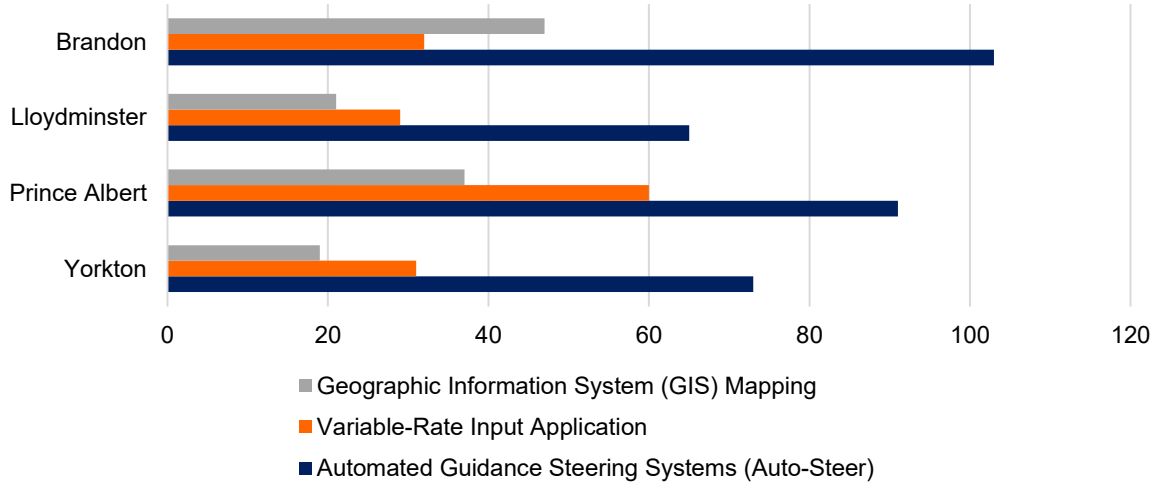
Agri-processing remains Yorkton's main economic anchor, with provincial scale behind it

Yorkton sits inside Saskatchewan's powerhouse agri economy: provincial agriculture GDP is ~$5.5B (2024), food manufacturing output is material within manufacturing, and agri-food exports reached ~$18.5B in 2024[8]. Locally, 218 farms[9] provide a meaningful base for supply, while provincial manufacturing productivity sits at a solid ~$82 per worked hour[10] – supportive for value-added processing margins. Together, this underpins Yorkton's positioning as an agri-processing hub and suggests continued headroom for downstream food and ingredient manufacturing.

On-farm tech adoption is present in Yorkton but mixed – an opening for AgTech enablement

Precision agriculture is visible but not maxed out: 73 farms use auto-steer, 31 apply variable-rate, and 19 use GIS mapping[11]. Compared with peers (e.g., Brandon higher on most tech counts), Yorkton's adoption looks "mid-pack." That signals two opportunities: (i) productivity uplift for local producers via accelerated adoption, and (ii) a go-to-market beachhead for AgTech vendors (hardware, data, and services) tied to Yorkton's processing base – especially where ROI is proven by input savings and yield stability.

Figure 4: Technologies Used in Farm Operations in Saskatchewan (Yorkton) and Benchmarked Locations, 2021

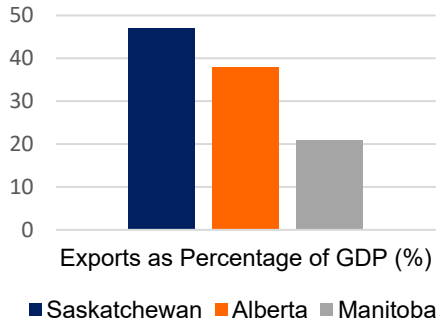


Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

8 Government of Saskatchewan (2024)
9 Statistics Canada (2024)
10 Statistics Canada (2024)
11 Statistics Canada (2024)

Yorkton's economy is highly trade-exposed, linking local output to global value chains

Figure 5: Exports as Percentage of GDP (%) in Saskatchewan (Yorkton) and Benchmarked Locations, 2023



Source: Library of Parliament (2023)

With exports accounting for nearly 47% of Saskatchewan's GDP[12] and per capita goods exports exceeding $36,000[13], Yorkton's industries – particularly agri-food and manufactured goods – operate in a strongly outward-facing environment.

This trade intensity gives local firms access to global demand and pricing but also heightens exposure to external shocks such as commodity cycles and logistics costs. The city's competitiveness will depend increasingly on productivity, quality certification, and value differentiation rather than low-cost production alone, reinforcing the need for innovation within established sectors.

Diversification vectors: equipment manufacturing, mining services, and a small but fast-growing tech base

Productivity in Saskatchewan's ICT manufacturing (~$68/hr)[14] and broader manufacturing (~$82/hr)[15] supports light-to-midweight advanced manufacturing tied to agriculture (e.g., processing equipment, maintenance, and fabricated components). Mining and oil & gas extraction remain a strong provincial pillar (robust GDP and mineral shipments), creating adjacent demand for maintenance, environmental services, and logistics. The digital economy is still small in share (tech workers ≈1.1% of workforce)[16] but shows momentum (≈9.3% YoY growth)[17], suggesting a pragmatic "embedded tech" play: data, automation, and controls layered into agri-processing, logistics, and equipment manufacturing rather than stand-alone software hubs.

Infrastructure

Digital readiness is strong, eliminating one of the key constraints for mid-sized cities.

Yorkton achieves a top broadband availability score of 5/5[18], placing it on par with its peers and signaling a highly connected urban environment. This level of digital infrastructure supports both industrial and service-oriented businesses that rely on real-time data, remote management systems, and high-speed communication. For the agri-processing and manufacturing sectors, this connectivity underpins the adoption of digital production tools such

12 Library of Parliament (2023)
13 Government of Saskatchewan (2024)
14 Statistics Canada (2024)
15 Statistics Canada (2024)
16 Derek Murray Consulting Associates (2023)
17 Derek Murray Consulting Associates (2023)
18 ISED (2025)

as process automation, data analytics, and precision agriculture systems. It also strengthens Yorkton's attractiveness for hybrid work models and digital service providers. Unlike other rural or peripheral cities where connectivity can limit competitiveness, Yorkton's digital foundation allows businesses to focus on scaling technology adoption rather than building basic digital access.

Road access is a key enabler, while functional proximity to airports and borders supports trade and mobility

Yorkton's physical accessibility is robust: the city lies only 1.6 km from a major highway[19], offering seamless integration into Saskatchewan's regional and national road networks. The nearest international airport – Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker – is 191 km away[20], providing practical, if not immediate, air connectivity for passenger travel and time-sensitive cargo.

Additionally, the Canada–US border is approximately 282 km away[21], which, while not adjacent, is close enough to support regular trucking routes into the U.S. Midwest. Together, these features create a dependable multimodal infrastructure base. It is not optimised for just-in-time or air-intensive industries but is well aligned with Yorkton's existing economic profile – agriculture, agri-processing, and light manufacturing – where road and rail reliability matter more than proximity to air hubs.

Distance from ports positions Yorkton for efficient land-based logistics rather than export immediacy

At roughly 1,872 km from Vancouver's major port facilities[22], Yorkton's location limits direct maritime access, positioning it instead as a cost-efficient inland node rather than a port-proximate exporter. This dynamic reinforces the city's reliance on road and rail logistics, particularly for high-volume, low-margin goods like grain, food ingredients, and equipment.

Long-distance transport is a manageable factor for firms already integrated into Saskatchewan's bulk export systems, but it makes local value-added processing more strategic: by capturing more of the product value before shipping, Yorkton can offset transport costs with higher per-unit margins. For investors, this means Yorkton's advantage lies in process efficiency, reliability, and proximity to suppliers – not in speed-to-port.

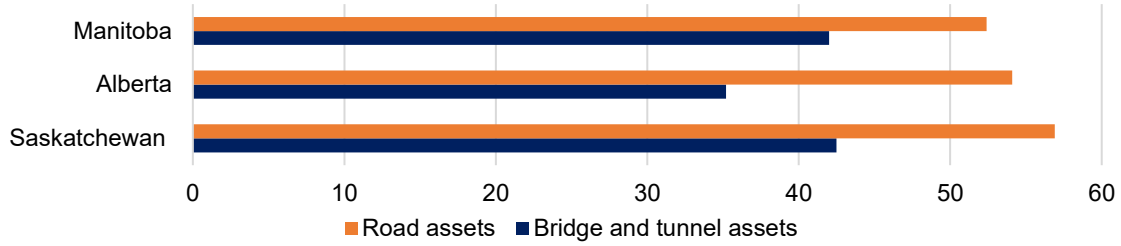
Utility capacity and transport assets offer a stable base for future industrial growth

With approximately 5,930 MW of provincial generating capacity through SaskPower[23], Saskatchewan's grid provides sufficient headroom for industrial users, including energy-intensive processors and manufacturing facilities. Asset quality indicators reinforce this picture: about 57% of road assets and 43% of bridge and tunnel assets are rated in good condition[24], broadly consistent with Canada's mid-tier provincial averages. This suggests a stable infrastructure environment – neither a major constraint nor a structural risk. Yorkton's power stability, combined with its road-centric connectivity, creates a predictable platform for expansion in sectors such as agri-processing, logistics, and light industrial fabrication. For investors, this translates to low operational uncertainty, manageable infrastructure costs, and

19 Google Maps (2025)
20 Google Maps (2025)
21 Google Maps (2025)
22 Google Maps (2025)
23 SaskPower (2024)
24 Statistics Canada (2022)

a physical network capable of supporting incremental industrial growth without requiring major upfront public investment.

Figure 6: Asset Condition by Type (% Rated in Good Condition) in Saskatchewan (Yorkton) and Benchmarked Locations, 2022



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Innovation

Yorkton maintains solid educational coverage but lacks the research infrastructure and innovation ecosystem seen in larger regional centres

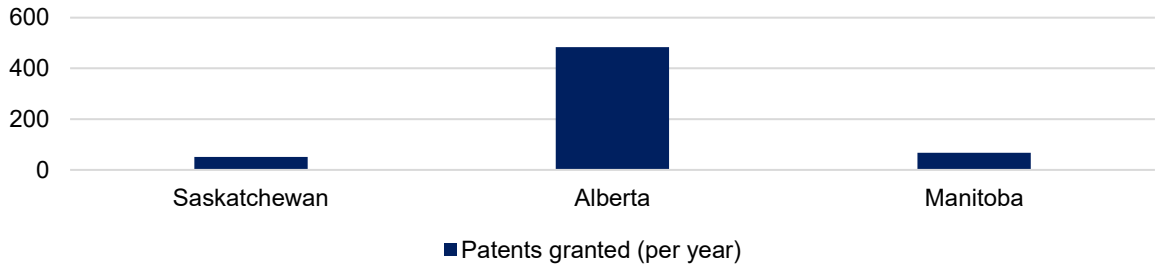
Education and research infrastructure are well distributed across the four locations, though scale and specialisation vary. Brandon shows the strongest educational footprint, with 24 high schools and 5 post-secondary institutions within 100 km[25]. Prince Albert follows with 20 high schools and 4 post-secondary institutes[26], while Lloydminster and Yorkton maintain smaller but functional networks with 12 and 11 high schools[27], and 5 and 1 post-secondary institutes[28], respectively.

Research presence is more limited but concentrated. Lloydminster leads with 3 research centres, while Prince Albert, Brandon, and Yorkton each host 1[29]. Yorkton's centre serves primarily as a platform for applied studies in agriculture and food processing, reflecting the city's industrial strengths but also its limited research scale compared to larger regional hubs.

Innovation indicators further differentiate the regions. At the city level, Lloydminster leads in research output with a publication share score of 36.8, followed by Brandon at 0.81, while Prince Albert and Yorkton show limited or no publication activity[30]. At the provincial level, Alberta records the highest innovation performance with 484 patents granted per year, followed by Manitoba with 68, and Saskatchewan with 51.

25 Economic Development Brandon (2025)
26 Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division (2025)
27 Lloydminster Public School Division (2025)
28 City of Yorkton (2025)
29 Google Maps (2025)
30 Nature (2025)

Figure 7: Patents granted per year in Saskatchewan (Yorkton) and Benchmarked Locations, 2024



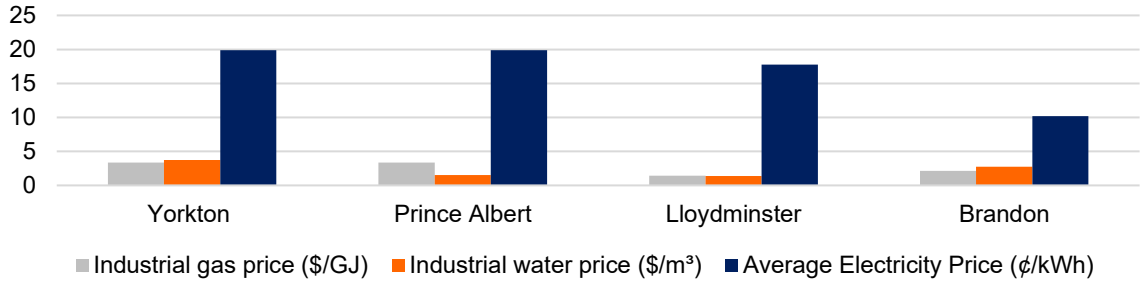
Source: ISED (2024)

Labour & Utility Costs

Yorkton Faces Higher Utility Costs but Maintains Competitive Labour Market Conditions

Brandon offers the lowest electricity price at 10.2¢/kWh, compared with 19.9¢/kWh in Prince Albert and Yorkton and 17.75¢/kWh in Lloydminster[31]. Industrial gas is cheapest in Lloydminster at $1.45/GJ, mid range in Brandon at $2.13/GJ, and highest in Prince Albert and Yorkton at $3.37/GJ[32]. Water pricing is also most competitive in Lloydminster at $1.40/m³ and in Prince Albert at $1.50/m³, versus $2.76/m³ in Brandon and $3.75/m³ in Yorkton[33].

Figure 8: Industrial Utility Costs in Yorkton and Benchmarked Locations, 2025



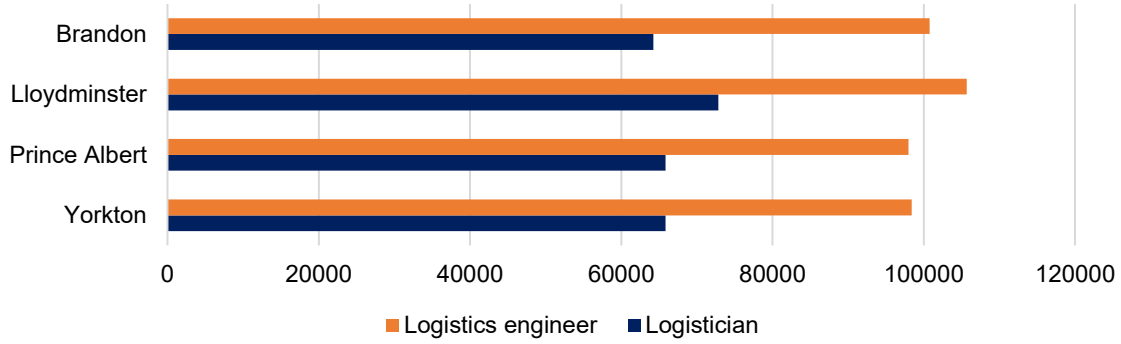
Source: SaskEnergy (2023) / AECO (2025) / City of Yorkton (2024) / Energyhub (2025)

Despite these higher input costs, sector-specific wages highlight Yorkton's balanced affordability. In logistics and distribution, logistics engineers earn ~$98K, while logisticians average ~$65K, both below Alberta benchmarks but sufficient to attract and retain talent locally. Manufacturing workers' weekly earnings are steady at $1,360[34], reflecting moderate labour intensity and strong retention potential for production facilities. Meanwhile, Yorkton's tech sector aligns with Saskatchewan averages – total compensation for software publishers and computer systems professionals (~$88K)[35] sits notably below Alberta's, supporting the

31 Energyhub (2025)
32 PUB Manitoba (2025) / SaskEnergy (2023) / AECO (2025)
33 Energyrates (2025) / City of Prince Albert (2025) / City of Yorkton (2024)
34 Statistics Canada (2025)
35 Derek Murray Consulting Associates (2023)

feasibility of tech-enabled industrial operations without significant payroll burdens. This cross-sector cost efficiency positions Yorkton well for industries where margins are sensitive to labour costs yet quality and reliability remain essential.

Figure 9: Average Annual Earnings – Logistics and Distribution (CAD/year) in Yorkton and Benchmarked Locations, 2025



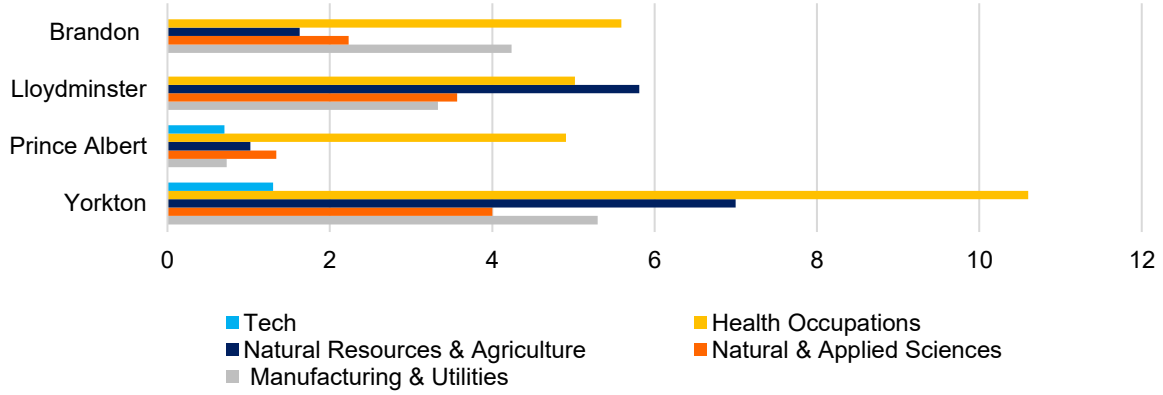
Source: Salary Expert (2025)

Labour Market

Yorkton Leads in Health and Agriculture Workforce Concentration

Yorkton shows the highest workforce concentration in health occupations (10.6%) and in natural resources & agriculture (7%), far exceeding Brandon's 5.6% and 1.6% respectively. This strong specialisation highlights a deeply rooted skills base in healthcare and agri-production, positioning Yorkton for growth in value-added agriculture, agri-biotech, and health-related manufacturing.

Figure 10: Workforce Distribution by Industry Sector (%) in Yorkton and Benchmarked Locations, 2025



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Yorkton's workforce is vocationally skilled, with a strong base of technically trained workers

The city reports 7,065 residents with postsecondary certificates or diplomas below a

bachelor's degree[36], a higher share than any peer community when adjusted for population. This highlights Yorkton's strength in applied and trade-oriented training, which aligns with the practical demands of agri-processing, logistics, and light manufacturing sectors. Meanwhile, 2,545 residents hold bachelor's degrees or higher[37], providing a balance of technical and supervisory talent. The educational mix supports Yorkton's ability to sustain mid-skilled industrial operations that require both hands-on expertise and managerial oversight.

Yorkton's labour pool is experienced but aging, underscoring the need for renewal.

With an average age of 41.2 years[38], Yorkton has the oldest population among the four benchmark cities. This points to a mature and stable workforce but also signals a potential medium-term constraint in labour supply as retirements rise. Given its modest total population of around 16,000 residents, Yorkton's growth potential will depend on its ability to retain young workers and attract skilled newcomers, particularly in technical, health, and engineering roles. The current structure offers reliability and experience, but long-term competitiveness will require proactive talent attraction and training strategies aligned with the city's evolving industrial base.

Quality of Life

Yorkton balances affordability and accessibility but faces moderate safety concerns impacting talent attraction and retention

Yorkton's quality-of-life indicators position it near the middle of the benchmark group. Its cost of living index (106 vs. national average)[39] is slightly above Brandon but below Prince Albert, suggesting moderate affordability pressures without reaching the higher expense levels seen in larger urban centres. Median housing and rent values (index 72) align with Prince Albert, underscoring relatively accessible housing compared with Lloydminster's higher 81[40].

Yorkton's quality of life was consistently highlighted as a strength. The city offers affordability, safety, and a strong sense of community. High-quality schools and healthcare facilities contribute to family-oriented appeal. Nevertheless, the limited range of cultural, recreational, and entertainment amenities makes it harder to attract young professionals from outside the region.

Moderate Safety Challenges Limit Yorkton's Talent Attraction Potential

The Crime Severity Index stands at 169, notably higher than Brandon (111.3) but well below Lloydminster (224.9) and Prince Albert (268.9)[41]. This intermediate positioning reflects moderate safety challenges that may weigh on Yorkton's attractiveness to high-skill workers and young professionals – particularly those prioritizing community stability and family-friendly environments.

While Yorkton's cost competitiveness and reasonable housing prices help retain residents,

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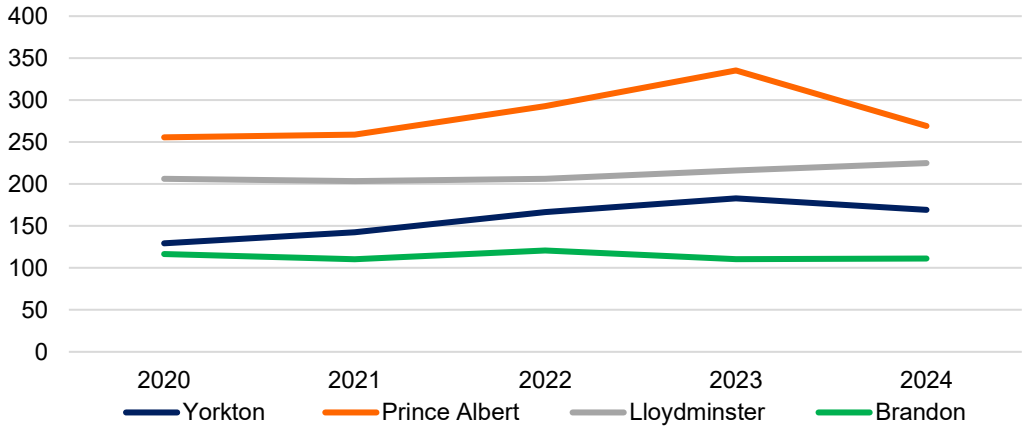
36 Statistics Canada (2021)
37 Statistics Canada (2021)
38 Statistics Canada (2021)
39 EARI (2025)
40 Area Vibes (2021)
41 Statistics Canada (2024)

perceptions around safety and limited urban amenities constrain its capacity to attract new talent from outside the region. This dynamic affects employer recruitment – especially in growth sectors like logistics, advanced manufacturing, and agri-processing – where workforce stability and skill attraction are increasingly critical.

Figure 11: Evolution of the Crime Severity Index in Yorkton and Benchmarked Location, 2020-2024



Source: Statistics Canada (2024)

3.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Consultations with local stakeholders confirm that Yorkton possesses a strong foundation for attracting new investment, particularly in agri-processing, logistics, and light manufacturing.

The city benefits from a favorable business environment, competitive costs, and a strategic location along major transport routes. Stakeholders consistently described Yorkton as "a place that delivers – pragmatic, reliable, and business-minded." At the same time, Yorkton faces structural challenges related to workforce availability, innovation capacity, and sector diversification. These factors could limit the city's ability to capture higher-value investment without targeted action in skills development, infrastructure, and cluster expansion.

The overall perception among stakeholders is that Yorkton is a reliable, cost-effective, and well-connected location for industrial activity. With strengthened coordination, talent initiatives, and innovation support, it can evolve from a regional manufacturing hub into a competitive and sustainable investment destination.

Table 4: Supply-Side Qualitative Analysis Results for Yorkton

Pillar	Stakeholder Score	Key Strengths	Key Challenges
Business Environment	**High**	Supportive local government, efficient permitting, pragmatic engagement with investors	Limited industrial land, need for stronger coordination with provincial bodies
Incentives & Taxes	**Low**	Predictable tax framework, access to provincial incentive programs	Low program awareness, limited local incentive instruments
Industry Presence	**High**	Mature agri-processing base anchored by major investors, growing supply-chain ecosystem	Lack of diversification beyond agri-food, limited scale to attract large multinationals
Infrastructure	**High**	Excellent road and rail connectivity, adequate utilities, established industrial park	Broadband and energy upgrades required, limited housing supply
Innovation	**Low**	Practical innovation within firms, potential role for Suncrest College	Absence of formal R&D ecosystem, weak collabouration between industry and education
Labour & Utility Costs	**Low-Medium**	Competitive operating costs and utilities	Shortages in skilled trades and technical labour
Labour Market	**Low**	Stable, experienced workforce with strong work ethic	Not enough skilled workers (particularly in automation, digitalisation, and sustainability areas) and limited workforce in general
Quality of Life	**Low-Medium**	Affordable housing, safety, strong community environment	Limited amenities and cultural offer for younger professionals

Source: IMK Strategies

3.4 Findings by Analytical Pillar

Business Environment

Yorkton's business climate is widely viewed as efficient and pragmatic. Stakeholders emphasised the City's responsiveness, clear permitting procedures, and constructive engagement with the private sector. Interviewees also described the local government as approachable and solution-oriented, highlighting the efficiency of administrative processes and the consistency of policy support for business expansion. Additionally, the cost of doing business remains attractive compared to larger urban centres.

However, constraints in industrial land availability and fragmented jurisdictional processes were highlighted as impediments to expansion. Overlapping responsibilities between municipal and provincial levels were identified as a structural constraint that may delay investment decisions. Improved coordination with provincial authorities and more agile planning mechanisms would further strengthen competitiveness.

Incentives & Taxes

Saskatchewan's tax regime is generally perceived as transparent and predictable. Stakeholders described the fiscal environment as stable and investor-friendly, emphasizing the province's consistency in regulatory and taxation policies. Provincial programs, including the Saskatchewan Value-Added Agriculture Incentive (SVAI), offer useful mechanisms to support investment but are underutilised due to limited awareness among local enterprises.

Municipal incentives remain modest and largely confined to property tax relief or infrastructure cost-sharing. Stakeholders identified an opportunity to develop more targeted incentive instruments linked to sustainability, innovation, and workforce development – particularly those that could enhance the city's competitiveness in attracting higher-value or technology-driven projects.

Industry Presence

The city's industrial profile is dominated by agri-processing, which continues to expand through investments by major players such as Louis Dreyfus Company and Richardson International. These anchor firms have established Yorkton as a regional production hub with significant upstream and downstream linkages. Interviewees highlighted that the region also possesses strong knowledge and expertise in agri-value-add, which supports the potential for further development along the supply chain.

Stakeholders identified growth potential in related activities such as equipment manufacturing, logistics, and renewable energy. Nonetheless, the city's industrial base remains narrow, which could limit its ability to attract larger, diversified investments without targeted development efforts.

Infrastructure

Yorkton's transport and logistics infrastructure is considered a major competitive asset. The Trans-Canada Yellowhead Highway and freight rail access provide strong connectivity to national and export markets. Utilities are reliable, and the industrial park is generally well-equipped, although nearing capacity. Recent provincial commitments further reinforce this advantage: in August 2025, Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe announced that the province

would fund half of the upgrade costs for a key road supporting economic activity in the farming sector.

Several participants noted the need for upgrades in broadband and power infrastructure to support advanced manufacturing. Local representatives also noted that housing availability and community amenities can influence the ability to attract and retain skilled workers, particularly in trades and technical roles.

Innovation

Innovation capacity in Yorkton is viewed as emerging but limited. Firms tend to focus on process improvements rather than research-driven innovation. There is currently no formal R&D ecosystem or incubator presence.

Suncrest College and regional institutions were frequently mentioned as potential partners for applied research and skills development. Establishing an innovation or demonstration hub focused on sustainable agri-processing which could strengthen Yorkton's positioning within the bioeconomy and support higher-value industrial activities.

Labour & Utility Costs

Yorkton retains a clear cost advantage over larger urban centres, with competitive labour and utility costs that support manufacturing and processing operations.

However, persistent shortages of skilled tradespeople, engineers, and technicians – particularly in industrial and technical fields such as welding, machining, and electrical work – were reported across multiple interviews. These constraints have the potential to limit business expansion. Addressing housing availability and promoting Yorkton's lifestyle advantages were suggested as ways to improve recruitment and talent stability.

Labour Market

The local workforce is regarded as reliable, loyal, and experienced in industrial and agricultural activities. Employers consistently praised work ethic and stability.

The main concern relates to the skills gap in areas such as automation, digital technologies, environmental management, and technical trades, compounded by an aging population and limited inflow of younger workers. Stronger alignment between training providers and business needs is required. There is also potential to attract talent from nearby cities, particularly younger professionals drawn by Yorkton's lower cost of living, and to expand apprenticeship and technical education programs to address workforce bottlenecks.

As one employer summarised, ***"Companies here are not struggling with loyalty – they're struggling with specialisation. Once you find the right people, they stay."*** This sentiment reflects a broad consensus among interview participants: Yorkton's labour market is dependable and rooted in experience, but long-term competitiveness will depend on targeted upskilling and the attraction of younger, specialised talent.

Quality of Life

Yorkton's quality of life was consistently highlighted as a strength. The city offers affordability, safety, and a strong sense of community. High-quality schools and healthcare facilities contribute to family-oriented appeal.

Nevertheless, the limited range of cultural, recreational, and entertainment amenities makes it harder to attract young professionals from outside the region. Enhancing the city's urban offer and promoting its lifestyle advantages could strengthen its talent attraction capacity.

3.5 Sector Assessment

In addition to the benchmarking and stakeholder interviews, we also conducted wider research into the supply side capabilities / suitability of Yorkton for the seven sectors of interest, to better understand its competitive strengths and weaknesses, and to uncover where there could be potential opportunities.

3.5.1 SWOT by Sectors of interest

Advanced Manufacturing

Yorkton is host to industrial companies in food and food processing, with some local companies manufacturing more advanced industrial components such as hydraulic cylinders. The availability of serviced industrial land and strong rail/highway links – give the city a good offer for manufacturers of components. However, its rural location, limited local supply chain, small workforce and competition from larger cities may limit Yorkton's potential to attract new investment in this sector.

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Existing agri-processing presence: Yorkton hosts multiple processors and supporting manufacturing (industrial complex where LDC/Richardson operate) • Transport links: intersection of major highways + rail access (CN/CP corridors) for inbound feedstock & outbound product , located only 1.6 km from major routes, supports inbound materials and outbound finished goods. • Competitive manufacturing productivity (~$82/hour) and reliable utilities reinforce Yorkton's operational base.	• Limited workforce: Small labour market relative to big metro centres; specialised high-skill hires (e.g. advanced automation engineers) may need relocation, but housing supply is limited • Limited local R&D / advanced engineering capacity compared with provincial research hubs • The innovation base is limited, with only one research centre and low patent activity (≈ 51 per year), restricting technology diffusion.
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Supply-chain spillovers from pea-protein & canola expansions - firms supplying heat-exchangers, process skids, packaging and metal-fabrication could locate nearby	• Larger provincial centres with broader labour markets may attract high-skill investments. • Rising energy costs (19.9¢/kWh) could erode cost competitiveness for energy-intensive production.

Energy (Renewables & Bioenergy)

With major oilseed and pulse processors nearby, Yorkton has direct feedstock for bioenergy (biodiesel/renewable diesel pre-treatment, CHP and biomass) and the logistics to be able to aggregate large volumes. The region's open prairies are a potentially favorable location for solar and wind energy, and Saskatchewan's active push for investment in this area potentially creates an opportunity for industrial-scale renewables. Yorkton's near-term opportunity is to position itself as a bioenergy + renewables hub (onsite solar for processors, feedstock aggregation for renewables fuels, heat recovery), while planning for grid interconnection and storage to firm supply.

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Bioenergy feedstock: local canola/processing residues and nearby crush plants (Richardson, LDC) can support biodiesel/renewable diesel pre-treatment, CHP or biomethane projects • Flat, open prairie terrain with good solar irradiation and available land for utility scale wind/solar	• Distance from consumers: Grid interconnection capacity and high-capacity transmission access can be a constraint for large projects • Lack of storage: Intermittency of solar & wind would require storage not present in Yorkton. • High industrial electricity (19.9¢/kWh) and water costs ($3.75/m³) weigh on project feasibility for power- or heat-intensive facilities.
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Bioenergy corridor: aggregation of canola oil for renewable diesel feedstock, linking to local anchor processors • Solar/wind investment: Strong provincial renewable push by Saskpower	• Renewables is a highly incentives driven sector, so can be affected by changes to policy • Potential community/landowner resistance

Life Sciences / Agri-Bio

The recent pea-protein investment (LDC) and existing canola crush capacity (Richardson) provide Yorkton with a concrete agri-bio anchor: feedstock, pilot scale and downstream demand. Coupled with the local applied research/demonstration capacity (Agri-ARM) and college training, Yorkton could grow contract testing, food-science labs, nutraceutical formulation and pilot bioprocessing services. The main lift will be building accredited lab capacity and formal partnerships with provincial research hubs to attract R&D satellites and spin-outs.

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Anchors in ag-bio: pea protein plant (LDC) + canola crush capacity (Richardson) – provide feedstock, pilot scale and downstream demand • Local applied research / demonstration network (Agri-ARM East Central Research Foundation)	• R&D capacity and specialised life-science talent are concentrated in Saskatoon/Regina (universities, research parks). Yorkton would need partnerships or to build shared lab space
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Leverage Agri-ARM demo network and Suncrest training programs to upskill local workforce • Satellite pilot plants, contract testing labs (food safety, protein analytics), nutraceutical formulation, and plant-protein value chain services – building on the LDC facility	• Talent competition from larger research hubs • High-regulation for food/health labs and certification requirements

Logistics & Distribution

Yorkton functions today as a regional logistics node: at the intersection of highways and rail routes, with nearby industrial land supporting steady flows of grain, inputs and processed goods. That foundation can be expanded into higher-value logistics services – cold-chain aggregation, packaging and rail spur-servicing for potash and processors – if the city invests in terminal capacity, targeted incentives and a pro-active outreach program to freight operators and mining/processing contractors

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Yorkton's strategic transport node: close to multiple provincial highways (Yellowhead/Trans-Canada), CN/CP rail links and a municipal airport supporting freight/logistics • Regional trading catchment (large agricultural area), meaning steady freight volumes.	• Limited scale of local intermodal terminals compared with provincial freight hubs
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Position as aggregation hub for agri-processing freight, potash/mining logistics hub, and cross-country distribution centre • Develop value-added logistics services (cold chain for ingredients, packaging centres, service stations for trucks)	• Potential local resistance to greater freight volumes, putting strain on existing infrastructure

Mining & Mining Services

Yorkton's proximity to major potash operations in Esterhazy and Rocanville creates a potential market opportunity for mine services and contractor support based in Yorkton. While Yorkton is not a mining town, its transport links and local industry make it potentially attractive for maintenance, logistics, housing and supply-chain firms supporting potash CAPEX. However, it will face strong competition from more established mining towns with existing clusters in the industry.

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Proximity to major potash operations (Esterhazy/Rocanville) within ~60–100 km. Yorkton can serve as a service/logistics / contractor hub • Existing workforce able to supply contractors (fabrication, maintenance, transport)	• Lack of on-site mining infrastructure and heavy mine-services clusters in Yorkton, as these are located closer to mine sites
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Mine-service contracts (workforce housing, logistics, maintenance shops, supplier yards), exploiting Yorkton's strategic positioning on transport hubs	• Other towns closer to mine sites have more established skills in workforce and greater links to local suppliers

Technology (AgTech / Automation)

Yorkton's farms, agri-processing anchors and demonstration sites (Agri-ARM) make it an excellent living lab for technologies such as precision agriculture, sensor systems and process automation pilots. The city could attract AgTech firms by offering pilot fields, fast trial approvals, co-funded demonstration projects and links to local processors for downstream testing. To scale beyond pilots, Yorkton would need to strengthen connectivity with regional startup networks, potentially offering incubator support, shared-lab facilities, and ties into provincial investor/accelerator networks.

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Strong local presence of large farms, processors and demonstration networks (Agri-ARM) make Yorkton a useful location for AgTech pilots	• Lack of a capital / startup ecosystem locally; will be hard to compete with clusters in larger cities with investor networks
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Host AgTech pilots (e.g. precision ag, grain-quality sensors, automation for processing) leveraging local farms and the agri-processing plants for downstream trials • Linking with Agri-ARM, and offering low-cost land for research	• Broadband/connectivity gaps in rural areas may limit testing (may be site specific) • High capex required to test and scale AgTech solutions

Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing

This is Yorkton's clearest competitive strength: recent investments (pea protein, canola crush expansions) prove that large, value-added processing projects are viable here. The city already offers the key ingredients investors seek – feedstock proximity, industrial land, utilities and logistics – which can be leveraged to attract downstream processors (packaging, fractionation, ingredient formulation) and complementary services (testing labs, co-packing). The fastest wins will come from packaging the industrial park as "shovel-ready," aligning incentives and workforce training, and integrating bioenergy/renewable options to lower operating carbon intensity.

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• Yorkton's biggest clear existing strength: local, active large-scale ag-processing anchor projects - LDC pea protein plant, Richardson canola expansion - showing investor confidence and providing supply-chain gravity • Logistics, labour force, and land availability make Yorkton ready for more value-added plants	• Workforce upskilling needs (for specialised, skilled processing roles) • Reliance on seasonal commodity cycles
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• Attract downstream processors • Build logistics and related service offering to act as a national distribution hub	• Commodity price variations • Competition from other prairie towns

3.6 Supply Side Analysis Findings

Combining the results of the quantitative benchmarking, stakeholder interviews, and supply side sector research, we have assessed the opportunity presented to Yorkton by each of the 7 sectors of interest, to help understand (from a supply side perspective only, for now) where the opportunities for Yorkton are likely to lie. Below is a summary of our findings:

Table 5: Summary of Findings per sector

Sector	Summary of Findings	Supply side opportunity
Advanced Manufacturing	• Limited size of workforce, and lack of workers with required skills (such as welding). • Lack of existing nearby supply partners / customers. • Some hydraulic cylinder manufacturing nearby, but this is niche, and unlikely to act as an anchor	**Medium-Low**
Energy (Renewables & Bioenergy)	• Significant canola & oilseed production locally, which could be harnessed as a bioenergy feedstock • Challenges with labour force size and skills may limit opportunity to expand beyond early stages of value chain (feedstock, pre-treatment, by-products, logistics) • Some potential opportunities in other renewable energy sources, e.g solar and wind	**Medium**
Life Sciences / Agri-Bio	• Strong farming community presents potential opportunity to play a role in Agri-bio research • But limited size of workforce, and lack of local innovation cluster may limit broader life sciences opportunity	**Medium**
Logistics & Distribution	• Highly strategic location and infrastructure links give Yorkton a key advantage, and potential to become a logistics hub for a number of adjacent industries • Ample availability of land for large facilities, and limited local competition present a strong value offering	**High**
Mining & Mining Services	• Potential for services to nearby Potash mining facilities and other mining operations further afield in Saskatchewan	**Medium**
Technology (AgTech / Automation)	• Existing innovation locally - e.g. Agri-ARM program to test products in Yorkton - could be built upon to support trials of new technologies • Potential difficulty in attracting skilled workforce	**Med-High**
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing	• Strong cluster presence in Yorkton, with existing investors who are expanding, therefore providing a very strong existing opportunity • Experienced and appropriately skilled local workforce	**High**

Source: IMK Strategies

From this assessment, the following three sectors present the strongest opportunity:

1. **Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing**
2. **Logistics & Distribution**
3. **Technology (AgTech / Automation)**

At this stage of the project, all the analysis and research has been limited to supply side factors only; we have not yet looked at international market demand or trends in these sectors (this will come in the next phase). Our hypothesis at this stage, is that these three sectors will be the ones which will make the most sense for Yorkton to pursue investment in, but this is contingent on further research and validation in the next phase of the project when we assess demand side factors.

We therefore propose to focus more on these three sectors for the demand side analysis, doing some extra, deep dive analysis into specific subsectors and niches that could present the biggest opportunity for Yorkton. We won't be limited to these sectors though, and if our analysis uncovers opportunities in the other four sectors, we will include them in the next phase of work too.

4. Demand Side Analysis

4.1 Demand Side Analysis Results

The demand-side assessment draws on national and provincial FDI trend analysis and in-depth interviews with 13 foreign-owned companies and investors to identify the investor demand signals most relevant to Yorkton. Rather than defining priority sectors, the findings highlight where investor interest is strongest and which location factors shape investment decisions once market opportunity has been established.

Across sectors relevant to Yorkton, investors emphasised the importance of predictable operating environments, integrated supply chains, workforce availability, and infrastructure readiness in determining where projects are ultimately located. At the same time, interviews identified key constraints influencing location outcomes, including labour availability, permitting speed relative to U.S. competitors, and access to applied innovation capacity to support product adaptation and technology deployment.

A summary of our findings follows (with full detail in the subsequent sections).

Table 6: Demand-Side Analysis Summary

Pillar	Importance for Priority Sectors	Rationale for Agri-Processing, Logistics & AgTech/Automation
Business Environment	**Medium**	• Important for predictable rules and permitting, but comes after market opportunity is confirmed. Relevant for food safety, transport regulation, and tech adoption, but not the primary trigger for FDI.
Incentives & Taxes	**Medium**	• Do not initiate investment, but influence final location and expansion decisions. Food processors and clean-energy-related firms rely on grants and tax credits; AgTech investors value pilot and early-stage support. Predictability is critical.
Industry Presence / Cluster Strength	**High**	• Top driver across sectors. Investors prefer locations with existing processors, suppliers, farmers, logistics, and engineering capacity, which reduce risk and speed up scaling.
Infrastructure	**High**	• A strict go/no-go factor. U.S. trucking access, cold chain, power capacity, and telecom reliability directly determine feasibility for agri-processing, logistics, and AgTech.
Innovation & Ecosystem	**Medium-High**	• Important for long-term competitiveness, particularly for AgTech and advanced food processing, but secondary to market scale and operational fundamentals during initial entry.
Labour Market (Skills & Availability)	**High**	• Consistently the biggest constraint. Shortages in trades, technicians, engineers, and food-safety roles heavily influence investment decisions.
Labour & Utility Costs	**Medium**	• Predictability matters more than cost levels. High telecom and rising electricity costs influence competitiveness but rarely drive initial location choice.
Quality of Life	**Medium-Low**	• Not a driver of FDI decisions, but affects ability to attract and retain skilled labour, especially in smaller centres with limited connectivity.

Source: IMK Strategies

4.2 Trend Review

This trend review examines historical FDI patterns relevant to Yorkton by analysing greenfield investment flows into Canada and Saskatchewan from 2020 to 2025, using data extracted from the fDi Markets database. The analysis focuses on identifying where investor demand has been strongest, how sectoral priorities have evolved over time, and which source markets are most actively driving investment.

The analysis is structured around fDi Markets' cluster taxonomy. While these clusters do not align perfectly with Yorkton's sector taxonomy, they provide a robust and internationally comparable lens through which to assess investor behaviour and demand signals. Insights from this analysis are therefore interpreted and subsequently mapped to Yorkton's sector framework.

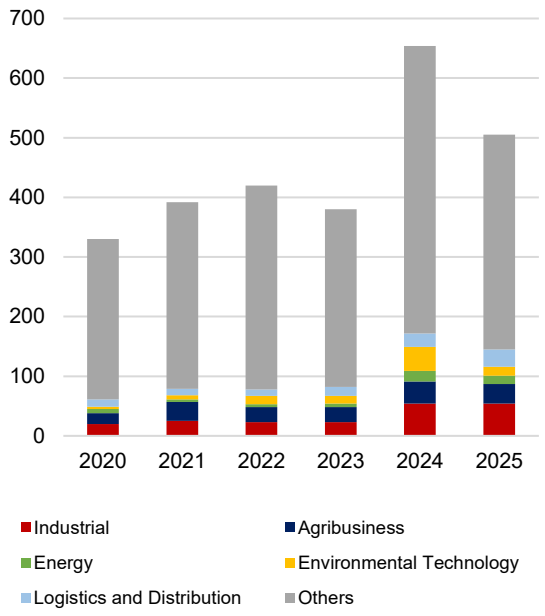
4.2.1 FDI Demand Analysis

FDI Demand by Sector Over Time: National and Provincial Trends (2020–2025)

Canada's FDI patterns from 2020–2025 (Figure 12) show a mix of **persistent baseline demand and episodic growth**. Agribusiness and industrial investment remain consistently present across the period, indicating stable, non-cyclical demand tied to food production, processing, and logistics. ICT & electronics and professional services expand over time, signalling growing demand for advanced industrial support. Energy- and environmental-related investment peaks in 2024, suggesting a temporary surge linked to transition-driven projects rather than a permanent structural shift.

Saskatchewan mirrors these dynamics at smaller scale (Figure 13). Agribusiness represents a stable demand foundation, while environmental technology activity spikes in 2024, creating short-term growth opportunities.

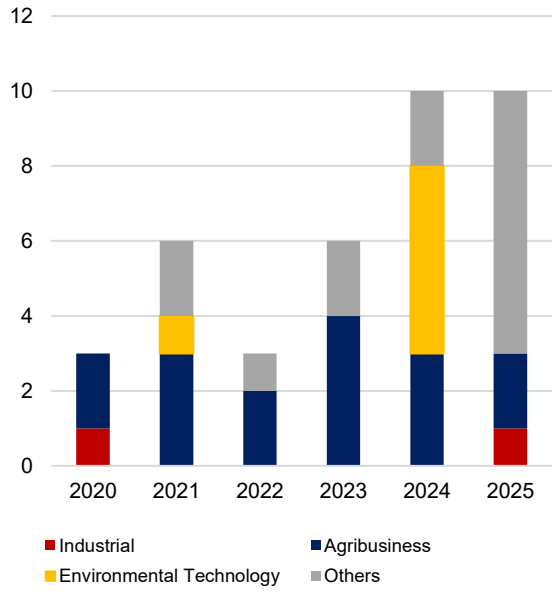
Figure 12: FDI Projects in Canada by Cluster, 2020-2025 in million USD



Total number of FDI Projects: 2625

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 13: FDI Projects in Saskatchewan by Cluster, 2020-2025 in million USD



Total number of FDI Projects: 38

Source: FDI Markets

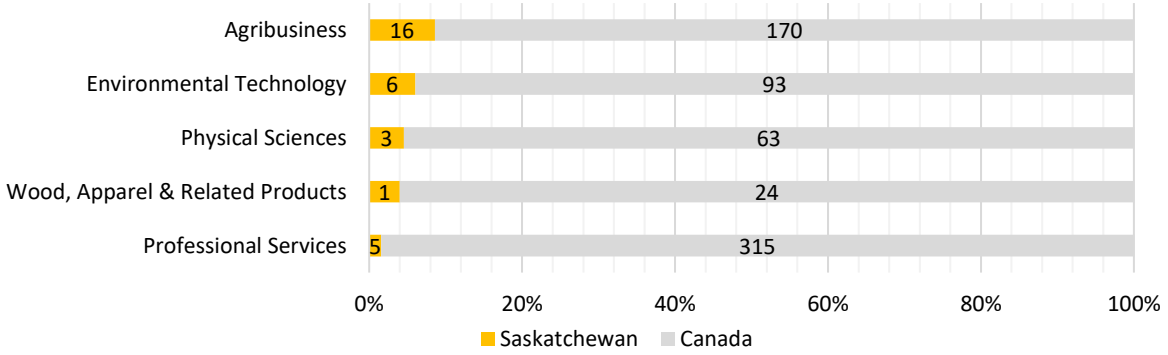
Saskatchewan's Sectoral Specialisation Within Canada's FDI Landscape

At the national level, Saskatchewan captures its highest relative share of Canadian FDI projects in **agribusiness** and **environmental technology**. Agribusiness stands out most clearly: while Canada hosts a large volume of projects nationally, Saskatchewan accounts for a disproportionately high share, indicating strong investment attractiveness for foreign investors seeking production-oriented, export-linked locations. Environmental technology shows a similar, though smaller-scale, concentration, reflecting growing investor interest in **renewable energy and sustainability-linked projects**, including recent wind and solar investments by international firms such as **Innagreen, Neoen, and DP Energy**.

By contrast, high-volume national clusters such as **ICT & electronics, professional services, financial services, and creative industries** show very low Saskatchewan representation. This confirms that Saskatchewan - and by extension Yorkton - is not competing for urban, knowledge-intensive FDI, but instead occupies a **specialised niche within production-oriented and resource-linked value chains**.

Unlike Saskatoon and Regina, which show more diversified sector mixes, **Yorkton's pattern reflects its role as a secondary hub for value-added agriculture and processing**, rather than a services or technology centre, reinforcing its alignment with globally mobile investment tied to food systems, energy transition, and supply-chain resilience.

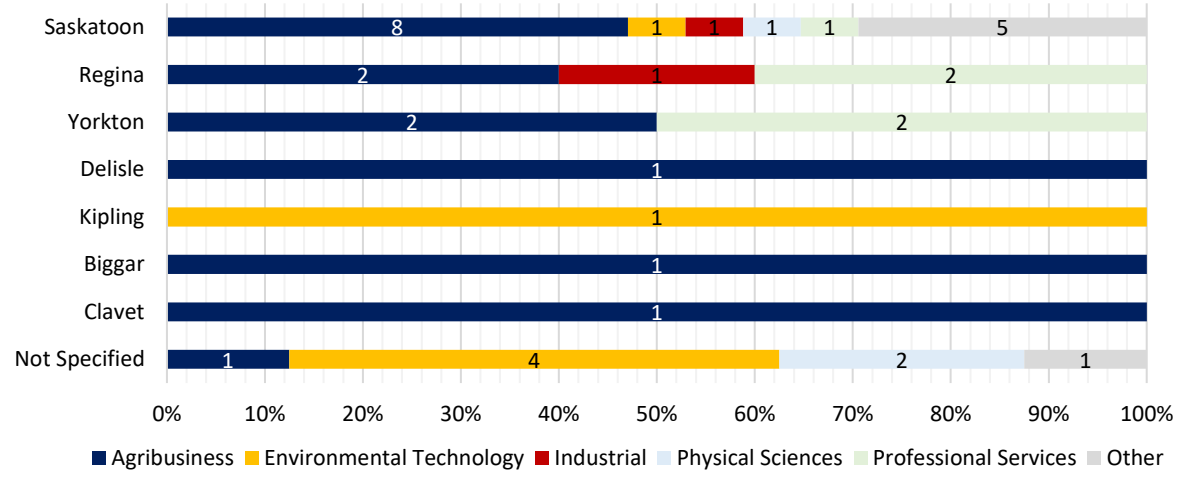
Figure 14: Top 5 FDI Clusters by Saskatchewan Share of Canadian Projects (%), 2020-2025



Total number of FDI Projects in selected clusters: 665

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 25: FDI Projects by Cluster Across Saskatchewan Cities, 2020 - 2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 18

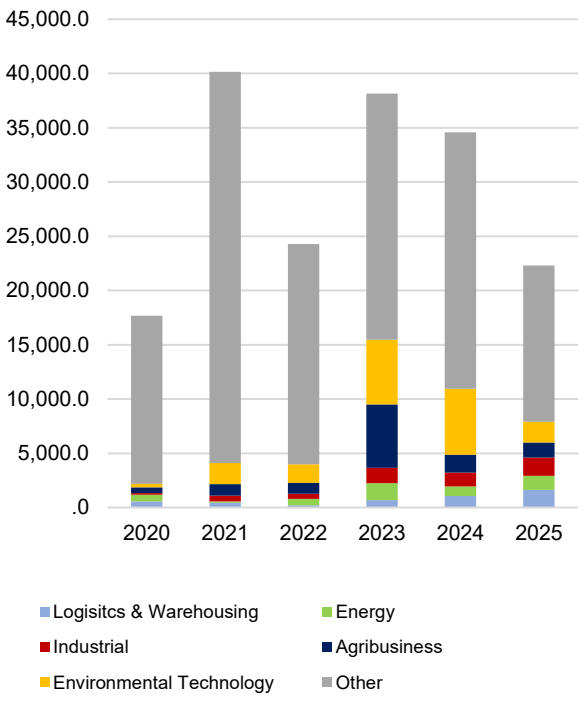
Source: FDI Markets

FDI Capex Trends: Evidence of Capital-Intensive Investor Demand

While Canada's FDI Capex (capital expenditure, i.e. the value of projects) is distributed across a broad range of sectors, Saskatchewan's capital inflows are **highly concentrated in agribusiness and environmental technology**, confirming strong and sustained investor demand in these areas. Recent investments show that investors are prioritising **processing capacity, oilseed and grain value chains, alternative proteins, and agri-industrial upgrading**, rather than primary production alone. Major international firms such as **Cargill, Louis Dreyfus Company, Scoular, and Viterra** have committed significant capital to manufacturing, logistics, and expansion projects across the province, while agri-tech investors such as **NRGene and Solinftec** point to growing interest in innovation and productivity-enhancing technologies linked to agriculture.

For Yorkton, the presence of **multiple Louis Dreyfus Company expansions** is particularly significant, demonstrating that investor demand is not confined to Saskatchewan's largest urban centres, but extends to **secondary locations offering strong feedstock access, infrastructure, and operational scale**. This confirms that current FDI demand in Saskatchewan is driven by investors seeking **capital-intensive, production-oriented agri-food projects**, a profile that aligns closely with Yorkton's existing strengths and future opportunity.

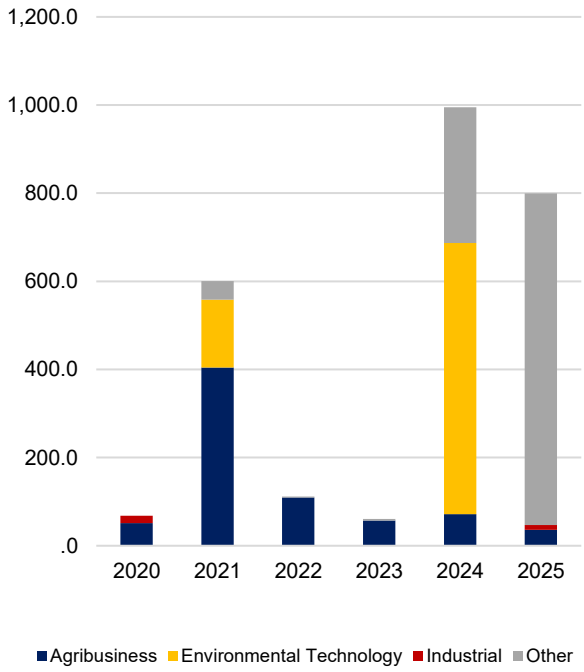
FDI Capex in Canada by Cluster, 2020-2025, in million USD



Total FDI Capex (Million USD): 177141.3

Source: FDI Markets

FDI Capex in Saskatchewan by Cluster, 2020-2025, in million USD



Total FDI Capex (Million USD): 2635.8

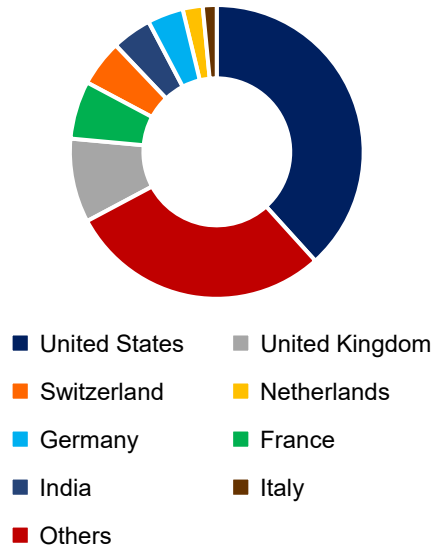
Source: FDI Markets
** Excluding BHP Group investment in 2023*

FDI Source Markets: Where Investor Demand for Saskatchewan and Yorkton Originates

Across all sectors, FDI into Canada is dominated by the **United States**, followed by the **UK and Western Europe**. Saskatchewan follows this pattern but with a **narrower set of source markets**, reflecting its production-oriented investment profile rather than broad, services-led demand. For Yorkton, relevant investor demand is therefore concentrated in **North America and selected European markets**, not in Asia-Pacific or emerging economies.

In **agribusiness**, demand is even more clearly defined. The **US Midwest** is the primary source of large, capital-intensive projects in grain and oilseed processing and logistics (e.g. Cargill, Scoular, Grain Millers, Viterra). **Western Europe**, particularly the **Netherlands, Switzerland, and France**, is the main source of value-added processing and alternative protein investments, including **Louis Dreyfus Company's expansions in Yorkton**. A smaller but strategic share of demand comes from **Israel**, driven by agri-tech and R&D investments (e.g. NRGene).

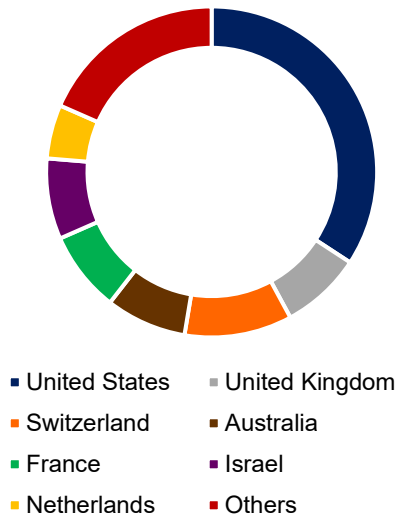
Figure 18: FDI Projects in Canada by Source Country, 2020-2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 2625

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 19: FDI Projects in Saskatchewan by Source Country, 2020-2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 38

Source: FDI Markets

4.2.2 Priority Sector Trends & Horizon Scanning

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing investment is becoming more **selective and technology-led**. In 2025, key markets - particularly the United States - faced contractionary pressures driven by rising costs, declining employment, and trade uncertainty. More than three-quarters of manufacturers responding to the National Association of Manufacturers' 2025 quarterly outlook surveys cited trade uncertainty as their top concern[42], reinforcing investor caution around large, capacity-driven expansions. As a result, capital is increasingly directed toward productivity-enhancing investments rather than scale alone.

Investors are prioritising smart manufacturing capabilities, including **automation, industrial data platforms, sensors, cloud-based systems, and AI-enabled operations**. These technologies are seen as critical to offset labour constraints, improve resilience, and manage supply-chain volatility, while **demand from data centres, semiconductors, electrification, and energy-transition equipment** continues to support investment. For Yorkton, competitiveness will increasingly depend on automation-ready sites, reliable power capacity, and training pipelines aligned with industrial and digital skills rather than labour-intensive production models.

Energy (Renewables & Bioenergy)

Across North America, investment remains concentrated in **utility-scale wind, solar, bioenergy, and battery storage**, supported by policy incentives and electrification demand. However, growth is becoming more selective. Global solar installations are expected to slow for the first time (by <10% year-on-year in 2026)[43], largely due to China's policy shift, while North America continues to add capacity through diversification into storage, grid services, and hybrid projects. In the U.S., nearly 15 GW of new battery energy storage systems (BESS) are expected to come online in 2026[44]. Bioenergy, including biofuels and waste-to-energy, remains attractive where feedstock supply chains are secure and policy frameworks support offtake certainty.

A binding constraint across renewables is grid infrastructure. **Underinvestment in transmission and distribution has emerged as a critical bottleneck**, with permitting timelines for new lines stretching over a decade in some jurisdictions. As a result, investors are prioritising projects that can connect quickly, integrate storage, or locate near existing capacity. In North America, this has shifted capital toward regions offering faster interconnection, available land, and predictable permitting. For Yorkton, this trend reinforces the opportunity to position itself as a renewables- and bioenergy-ready location by aligning industrial land, grid access, and feedstock availability with storage-enabled and grid-compatible projects rather than standalone generation.

42 Deloitte (2025)
43 S&P Global (2025)
44 S&P Global (2025)

Life Sciences / Agri-Bio

The global agricultural biologicals market is expanding rapidly, projected to grow from USD 18.4 billion in 2025 to USD 35.0 billion by 2030 (13.7% CAGR)[45], driven by tighter environmental regulations, growth in organic and regenerative farming, and demand for sustainable yield improvements. Adoption is strongest in biopesticides, biofertilizers, and biostimulants used in cereals, grains, and oilseeds, with performance gains supported by advances in **microbial formulations, precision application, and integration with digital agriculture tools.**

For Yorkton, this trend reinforces opportunities beyond primary production. Proximity to large-scale grain and oilseed systems, combined with agri-processing and logistics capacity, positions the region to attract formulation, testing, and distribution activities linked to agricultural biologicals, particularly where these inputs are paired with precision agriculture, automation, and AgTech-enabled farm management.

Logistics & Distribution

Globally, logistics and distribution investment is concentrating on **AI-driven decision-making, predictive analytics, and automation at scale.** The fastest-growing areas include control towers and digital twins that improve forecast accuracy by 20–30%[46], warehouse robotics that deliver 2–3× productivity gains, platform-based logistics using standardized APIs, and low-carbon last-mile solutions such as EV fleets, micro-hubs, and out-of-home delivery networks. Investors are prioritising technologies that reduce lead times, labour dependence, and disruption risk rather than experimental solutions.

In Canada, demand is strongest for **warehouse automation, AI-enabled planning, cold-chain logistics, and low-emission freight**, reflecting labour shortages, long distances, and stricter climate rules. For Yorkton, the opportunity lies in positioning as a regional distribution and agri-logistics hub, leveraging highway access and agri-processing demand while adopting automation and digital platforms to offset workforce constraints and improve reliability at smaller scale.

Mining & Mining Services

Globally, mining and mining services are being driven by rising demand for critical minerals and persistent supply gaps. Lithium demand could increase nearly 500% by 2040, while copper demand is expected to grow ~30%, [47]pushing companies to **invest in AI-enabled exploration, automation, electrification, and ESG-focused services** to boost productivity and manage risk. Mining services linked to digitalisation, water and tailings management, and decarbonisation are becoming core to investment decisions.

In Canada, growth is strongest in critical minerals and specialised mining services, particularly exploration support, automation, and environmental services, as labour constraints and sustainability rules tighten. Yorkton's opportunity sits in supporting roles - equipment servicing, logistics, fabrication, and technical services - serving as a regional node for Western Canada's mining supply chains.

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45 The Globe and Mail (2025)
46 Nshift (2025)
47 The Global Talent Experts (2025)

Technology (AgTech / Automation)

AgTech investment heading into 2026 is being shaped by persistent margin pressure, labour shortages, and flat global food demand, pushing farms and suppliers to prioritise automation and precision. According to McKinsey's digital agriculture research, the productivity gap between traditional and precision farming continues to widen, with data-driven operations able to cut input waste by up to 30% while stabilising yields[48]. As input prices remain volatile and consolidation accelerates, the strongest adoption is concentrated in **precision application, AI-driven decision tools, autonomous equipment, and digital farm management systems** that directly improve ROI rather than experimental tech.

Looking ahead, the next growth wave centres on integrated automation ecosystems - **RTK-guided machinery, AI-powered analytics, and robotics for spraying, seeding, and monitoring**[49] - designed to offset labour scarcity and rising compliance costs. Investors are increasingly favouring solutions that combine energy efficiency, sustainability reporting, and measurable cost savings, rather than standalone hardware. For regions like Yorkton, this points to opportunities in AgTech deployment, servicing, and integration, supporting producers as they transition toward precision and semi-autonomous operations.

Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing

Value-added agriculture is gaining momentum as producers look beyond raw commodity sales to stabilize margins and capture more of the food value chain. Heading into 2026, growth is strongest in **food processing, ingredient refinement, plant-based proteins, biofuels, and functional foods**, driven by demand for traceability, sustainability, and differentiated products. Investments are increasingly focused on **processing capacity closer to production**, improved cold storage, and technologies that extend shelf life, reduce waste, and meet stricter quality and safety standards.

On the horizon, industry experts highlight automation in processing plants, energy-efficient facilities, and digital traceability systems as the next competitive edge. In Canada, especially in agri-regions like Yorkton, this creates opportunities to expand local processing, specialty grains, oilseed crushing, and agri-input manufacturing, **reducing transport costs while strengthening regional supply chains.**

48 Allynav (2025)
49 AgriBusiness Global (2025)

4.2.3 Analysis by Pillar

This section presents a qualitative analysis of investor perceptions and requirements across key location factors relevant to FDI in Yorkton. The findings are based on in-depth interviews conducted with 13 foreign-owned companies and active investors, with a primary focus on Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing, Technology (AgTech / Automation), and Logistics & Distribution, while also incorporating perspectives from investors operating in Advanced Manufacturing, Energy (Renewables & Bioenergy), and Life Sciences / Agri-Bio.

The analysis reflects how investors assess different aspects of the business environment once market opportunity has been established, highlighting the factors that influence site selection, expansion decisions, and long-term investment commitment. Direct quotations are used throughout to illustrate investor perspectives. **A full list of interviewed companies and investors is provided in the Appendix.**

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Business Environment

Interviewed investors operating in Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing, Logistics & Distribution, and Technology (AgTech / Automation) consistently emphasised that once market opportunity and customer potential are confirmed, a predictable, fast-moving business environment aligned with sustainability expectations becomes critical to location decisions.

Several interviewees compared Canada's "European-style" permitting to the U.S., where "permits are lightning fast," while noting Canada's strength in digital government systems. Companies want regulatory stability – in food safety, environmental rules, and transport policy – and jurisdictions that welcome technological change. As one automation CEO stated, "Automation will massively reduce workforce requirements… tech transfer is critical," underscoring the importance of adaptability.

What Investors Want

- **Regulatory certainty** in food safety, transport rules, environmental compliance.
- **Fast permitting**: U.S. locations praised for *"lightning fast"* approvals; Canada seen as slower but more transparent.
- **Clear sustainability pathway**, including renewable energy options and emissions-reduction frameworks.
- **Digital-first government processes** (a perceived Canadian advantage: *"most government tasks are now online"*).
- **A frictionless environment once interest is confirmed**, following the sequence: *"business opportunity first, customer potential second, production location third."*

Incentives & Taxes

Across interviews with investors in Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing, Energy (Renewables & Bioenergy), and Technology (AgTech / Automation), incentives were consistently described as risk-mitigation tools rather than primary investment triggers.

Food processors highlighted the importance of grants and permitting support in enabling expansions in Ontario. Energy-related firms cited Alberta's 40% tax credit as a decisive advantage. AgTech companies seek early-stage support for pilots and field trials because commercial traction depends on early validation. As one executive put it, "Government

incentives can be really attractive; ROI is critical," indicating that incentives help justify expansion decisions in competitive markets.

What Investors Want

- **Targeted incentives** tied to sector needs (e.g., automation, wastewater, cold-chain, R&D).
- **Clarity and predictability**, not opaque processes.
- **Support for early-stage pilots** in AgTech (testing, trials, innovation vouchers).
- **Capital-cost relief** for agri-food expansions and plant modernisation.
- Strong examples: Alberta's **40% tax credit**, described as directly influencing investment.

Industry Presence / Cluster Strength

Interview feedback from investors across Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing, Logistics & Distribution, Advanced Manufacturing, and Technology (AgTech / Automation) indicates a strong preference for regions with established or rapidly developing industry clusters, which lower operational risk and support efficient scaling.

Agri-food companies stressed the importance of tightly integrated supply chains – *"you need just-in-time and sufficient supply"* – and value co-location with farmers, processors, packaging suppliers, and cold-chain operators. One executive explained, *"Key ingredients may be sourced globally, but they are processed on-site. Proximity to other suppliers – even packaging companies – is essential."* Logistics firms look for strong freight volumes and predictable cross-border flows, while AgTech and automation companies assess the availability of engineering talent and integrators.

Some flagged gaps in technical capacity – *"There are few engineering firms, so we rely on partners in the U.S."* – which increase perceived risk. At the same time, Saskatchewan's rising share of food and renewable projects signals cluster momentum, reinforcing that investors follow strong, resource-driven ecosystems. Leading food companies also emphasised sustainability and local integration, noting that operations often develop *"always next to the farmers."*

What Investors Want

- **Established processors, suppliers, and value-chain partners** that reduce risk
- **Proximity to farmers and primary production** for sustainability and cost efficiency
- **Strong freight volumes and reliable cross-border logistics**
- **Engineering, maintenance, and integration capacity** to support automation and expansion
- **Innovation assets supporting the cluster**, such as food labs or test farms
- **A cluster trajectory** showing growth in ag-biotech, renewable energy, or advanced fabrication
- **Co-location advantages** that support just-in-time production and quality control

Infrastructure

Interviewed investors across all relevant sectors described infrastructure quality as a baseline requirement for investment consideration. Companies expect serviced industrial land, robust utilities, and reliable transportation before entering discussions. Several highlighted "dormant assets" as an obstacle if not addressed. Reliable road and rail networks are especially crucial

for fabrication hubs and logistics-heavy operations.

Logistics-heavy firms stressed U.S. trucking access because up to 70% of output may move south, along with stable temperature-controlled logistics to minimize fluctuations and maintain product integrity. Rising energy and digital demands are also a concern, especially as telecom in Canada is "4–5× more expensive." Power reliability and grid scalability are increasingly important as automation, AI, and data-driven operations expand.

What Investors Want

- **Serviced industrial sites** with utilities ready on day one.
- **Reliable logistics**: road, rail, cross-border trucking; U.S. truck access essential for processors shipping 70%+ to the U.S.
- **Cold-chain capacity** for temperature-sensitive foods.
- **Affordable and strong telecom** (Canada noted as *"4–5× more expensive"*).
- **High-capacity electrical grid** – critical as AI, automation, and data platforms increase demand.
- Resilience to disruptions such as *"U.S. train issues."*

Innovation & Ecosystem

Interviews with investors in Technology (AgTech / Automation), Life Sciences / Agri-Bio, and advanced food processing suggest that innovation is rarely a primary site-selection driver, but is increasingly important for long-term competitiveness. As one executive put it, *"the first question is the client and market size; innovation comes after."* Still, companies emphasised the need for **test farms, pilot plants, food labs, and university collaboration** to validate products and adapt to local markets. Several firms noted gaps in sector-relevant R&D capacity, which limit their ability to localise formulations or technologies. Companies such as Soufflet and Metarom rely on applied research to develop new ingredients, while LDC indicated it would consider Canadian R&D "**if technical capacity strengthens**."

Stakeholders further highlighted that federal and provincial support for green innovation tends to become available only **after** business models are proven, shaping early-stage decisions for innovation-driven firms. AgTech and agri-food investors saw strong potential for building a **10-year agricultural biotech and processing ecosystem** in Saskatchewan, including opportunities for innovation around quinoa and special crops. However, the availability of research partners varies widely across regions. Some pointed to Ottawa's strong tech and research environment as an example of what a fully developed innovation ecosystem can look like – reinforcing the idea that innovation becomes truly valuable only when a region has the institutions, partners, and testing environments to support ongoing growth.

What Investors Want

- **Applied R&D partners** (colleges, food labs, ag research centres).
- **Test farms and demonstration sites** for AgTech validation.
- **Pilot-scale facilities** for new food ingredients and value-added processing.
- **Sector-specific knowledge institutions**, which companies say are currently limited.
- Confirmation that innovation support aligns with commercial needs: *"The first question is the client and market size; innovation comes after."*

Labour Market (Availability & Skills)

Interviewed investors across Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing, Logistics & Distribution, and Technology (AgTech / Automation) consistently identified labour availability and skills as a significant constraint. Investors consistently reported that *"hiring talent in Canada is harder due to a smaller pool and low availability,"* especially for trades, engineering,

automation technicians, and food-safety specialists. Some firms described Canadian workers as more risk-averse compared to U.S. counterparts, influencing adoption of new technologies and plant modernisation.

Despite these challenges, companies are optimistic when regions actively build training pipelines. Interviewees repeatedly emphasised the importance of **agriculture colleges, polytechnics, and technical institutes**. Food-sector leaders stressed that Yorkton needs stronger partnerships with universities to attract workers, while Hilti highlighted that upskilling programmes – like those used in Virginia – can transform small cities into strong industrial hubs. For AgTech investors, hybrid skillsets (agronomy + data systems + machinery operation) are essential, and regions that invest in these capabilities become far more attractive.

What Investors Want

- **Trades and technical roles**: millwrights, electricians, automation technicians, food-safety specialists.
- **Hybrid skills** for AgTech (agronomy + digital + mechanical).
- **Driver and warehouse capacity** for logistics.
- **Partnerships with polytechnics and universities** to build pipelines.
- Upskilling programmes like those used in Virginia: *"Workforce development in smaller cities is possible through targeted training programs."*

Market Insight: Mosaic's $4M Workforce Investment Strengthens Saskatchewan's Mining Talent Pipeline

Mosaic's recent USD 4 million investment in mining workforce development reinforces Saskatchewan's position as a province actively expanding its talent pipeline through coordinated public–private partnerships. The initiative channels funding to Saskatchewan Polytechnic, Suncrest College, Good Spirit School Division, and the Potash Mining Readiness Program, enabling these institutions to upgrade facilities, secure qualified instructors, expand apprenticeship and millwright training, and create dedicated pathways for rural and Indigenous learners. The result is a near-term increase in training capacity – such as the expansion of Churchbridge High School's Practical and Applied Arts program from 13 seats to nearly four times that capacity – and a longer-term strategy to anchor the next generation of industrial trades talent in the region. *See article here.*

For investors, these developments signal a structurally strengthening labour ecosystem. Early-exposure programs at the high-school level, apprenticeship expansion, and post-secondary alignment with industry needs help reduce recruitment bottlenecks in sectors such as potash, industrial mechanics, and instrumentation. Mosaic's commitment to re-launching the Potash Mining Readiness Program in 2026, with a curriculum focused on Indigenous participation in entry-level operations, exemplifies a shift **toward locally embedded workforce solutions** that can lower onboarding costs and improve retention.

Labour & Utility Costs (Operating Costs)

Investors are less concerned about wage levels and more focused on **cost predictability**, particularly in relation to **energy pricing and reliability**. Power reliability is valued, but rising energy costs and future capacity constraints - driven in part by increased automation and data-intensive operations - create uncertainty for investors. **Currency volatility** also affects cross-rder investors, with some interviewees noting that fluctuations in the Canadian dollar can shift

margins by up to *"50%, depending on the industry."*

More broadly, currency and financial considerations play an important role in investment decisions. While labour costs themselves are not seen as a primary driver, investors consistently favour regions with **predictable, transparent operating costs** and processes that reduce financial risk and delay. Together, these factors shape how investors assess cost competitiveness in Canada.

What Investors Want

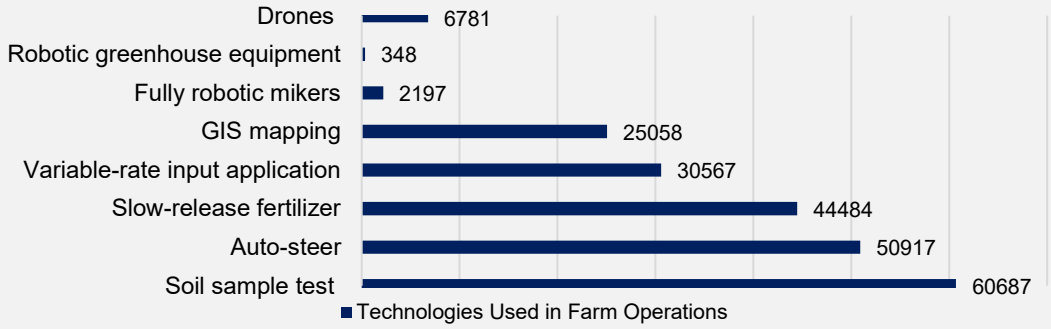
- **Predictable electricity pricing** for high-load facilities (automation, cold storage, data use).
- **Efficient access to financial services**; Canada's banking system perceived as costly.
- **Currency stability**, since swings can *"impact margins by up to 50%."*
- Reasonable labour costs, but more importantly, **labour reliability and existence**.

Market Insight: Canada's Slow Adoption of Digital Agriculture Creates Strategic Openings for Yorkton

Canada is currently **underperforming in digital agriculture,** according to a 2025 national report by the Canadian Agricultural Policy Institute and EMILI, which warns that fragmented policies, uneven adoption, high costs, poor rural connectivity, and interoperability issues are limiting competitiveness. Although large grain and dairy operations have moved ahead, smaller and more diversified farms – common across the country – continue to lag due to tighter income margins, limited access to tailored tools, labour shortages, and concerns over data privacy and equipment compatibility. Out of Canada's 107,822 farms, less than half consistently carry out basic digital practices such as soil-sample testing, illustrating how incomplete adoption has become a structural barrier. *See article here*.

For Yorkton, this national gap creates a strategic opportunity to position itself as a **regional leader in digital agriculture deployment.** Yorkton could focus on expanding connectivity around its agricultural belt, promoting pilots for sensor-based soil monitoring, autonomous or GPS-guided equipment, precision spraying, AI-supported analytics, and temperature-controlled logistics technologies. By partnering with equipment manufacturers, ag-tech firms, and post-secondary institutions, Yorkton can develop **interoperability testbeds, targeted upskilling programs, and demonstration sites** that reflect real farm conditions.

Figure 20. Technologies Used in Farm Operations in Canada, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Quality of Life

Quality of life influences talent attraction rather than investor decision-making directly. Canada's overall reputation was described as *"wilderness, friendly people, calmer business culture",* noting that these attributes can support workforce recruitment and retention, in contrast to the U.S. environment

However**, challenges arise in smaller cities** where amenities and connectivity are more limited. One interviewee highlighted the difficulty of attracting companies due to small city size and limited air traffic, which can affect both business accessibility and employee mobility. To address these perceptions, investors stressed the importance of clearly communicating positive community attributes such as safety, quality of life, and a welcoming environment to strengthen long-term workforce sustainability in less urbanized regions.

What Investors Want

- A community attractive to relocating managers, engineers, and specialists.
- **Safety, affordability, friendliness** – Canada seen as *"calmer"* and family-friendly.
- Clear acknowledgement of mobility challenges: *"Small city size and limited air traffic"* can deter talent.

4.3 Demand Side Analysis Findings

The demand-side analysis complements the supply-side assessment by examining how external investor priorities and decision-making criteria align with Yorkton's emerging economic profile. Drawing on national and provincial FDI trend analysis and in-depth interviews with 13 foreign-owned companies and investors, the findings indicate that investment decisions in sectors relevant to Yorkton are shaped less by headline growth sectors and more by operational feasibility once market opportunity has been validated.

Across Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing, Logistics & Distribution, and Technology (AgTech / Automation), investors consistently emphasised the importance of predictable operating environments, integrated supply chains, labour availability, and infrastructure readiness. These factors influence where projects are ultimately located after commercial demand has been established.

Summary of Demand-Side Conclusions

1. **Investor Demand Is Concentrated in Production-Oriented, Asset-Heavy Activities**
   National and provincial FDI trends show sustained investor demand for value-added agri-processing, logistics-linked activity, and technology-enabled agriculture, driven by processing capacity, automation, and supply-chain efficiency rather than services-led or headquarters investment.

2. **Demand–Readiness Alignment: Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing**
   Investor demand for agri-processing is consistent and long-term, focused on oilseed and grain processing, alternative proteins, and agri-industrial upgrading. Interview evidence suggests that investors seek locations with feedstock access, scalable infrastructure, and proximity to existing processors and suppliers.

3. **Demand–Readiness Alignment: Logistics & Distribution**
   Logistics-related investor demand is primarily derived from agri-processing and industrial activity, rather than driven by standalone logistics operations. Investors prioritise efficient storage, cold-chain handling, and reliable cross-border movement, especially U.S.-bound trucking.

4. **Environmental and Energy-Related Investment Is Episodic and Complementary**
   Environmental technology and renewable energy investment show periods of high capital intensity but limited project volumes, reflecting selective and policy-driven investor demand. These trends point to complementary opportunities linked to bioenergy, agri-related energy use, and supporting supply chains, rather than consistent demand for large-scale generation projects.

5. **Location Outcomes Are Shaped by Cluster Strength, Infrastructure, and Workforce Availability**
   Across interviews, investors consistently identified existing industry presence, infrastructure readiness, and labour availability as the most influential factors once market opportunity is confirmed. Integrated supply chains, logistics reliability, and access to skilled trades and automation specialists strongly influence where projects are ultimately located.

4.4 Success Stories:

Roquette Bets on Canada as a Global Hub for Plant-Based Protein

Roquette inaugurated the world's largest pea protein production facility in 2021 in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, marking one of the most significant industrial investments in North America's plant-based food sector. Backed by an estimated USD 300 million investment, the plant is designed to process up to 125,000 tons of peas annually, supplying high-purity protein ingredients for plant-based foods, beverages, nutrition products, and non-dairy alternatives. See article here.

The facility is strategically located in the Canadian Prairies, one of the world's largest pea-producing regions, placing raw material supply within a one-day transport radius. Strong road, rail, and air connectivity to the United States and global markets further positions the site at the center of a fast-growing ecosystem often described as the "Silicon Valley of Plant-Based Protein."

At the opening, Roquette's CEO highlighted the structural shift driving the investment, noting the rapid change in diets and rising global demand for alternative proteins. Industry projections reinforce this trend, with global pea protein demand expected to grow at an annual rate of 15–24% over the next decade.

The investment consolidates Roquette's position as a global leader in plant-based protein solutions while strengthening Canada's role as a strategic hub for sustainable food innovation, combining agricultural scale, logistics, and advanced processing capabilities.

Cargill Expands Canola Processing Capacity in Western Canada

Cargill's decision to build a large-scale canola crushing facility in Regina, Saskatchewan represents one of the most significant agribusiness investments in Western Canada. Backed by an estimated USD 350 million investment, the plant is designed to process up to 1 million tons of canola annually, producing canola oil for food and biofuel markets alongside protein-rich meal for animal feed, increasing the value captured from domestic agricultural production. See article here.

Regina was selected for its strategic location at the center of one of the world's most productive canola-growing regions, offering immediate access to raw supply and efficient rail and road connectivity to domestic and international markets. This positioning strengthens Saskatchewan's role as a global hub for oilseed processing and export.

The project provides Prairie producers with a long-term, stable buyer while expanding crushing capacity within the province rather than exporting raw seed. For Cargill, the facility reinforces its North American value-added processing footprint and supports growing demand for canola oil in food manufacturing and renewable fuels, contributing to regional economic development and the long-term competitiveness of Canada's agrifood sector.

ABO Energy Advances Hybrid Wind and Storage in Alberta

ABO Energy strengthened its role in Canada's renewable energy transition after receiving approval from the Alberta Utilities Commission to develop the 165 MW Fox Meadows Wind Project, supported by a 219 MWh battery storage system. This hybrid configuration directly addresses wind intermittency and enables the delivery of more stable, dispatchable clean power, positioning the project as a meaningful addition to Alberta's evolving electricity mix. See article here.

The investment builds on ABO Energy's long-standing presence in the province, where it has operated since 2017 developing wind and photovoltaic projects. Alberta's strong wind resources, open electricity market, and access to major transmission corridors provided the optimal conditions for large-scale hybrid renewable development.

Regulators approved Fox Meadows not only for its generation capacity but also for its contribution to grid reliability through integrated storage - an increasingly important factor as Alberta accelerates renewable deployment. During construction and operation, the project is expected to generate employment and stimulate local service industries, delivering both economic and environmental benefits to the region.

For ABO Energy, Fox Meadows consolidates its position as a competitive developer of hybrid renewable projects in North America, expands its Canadian portfolio, and supports provincial and national efforts to modernize energy infrastructure and reduce emissions.

Coca-Cola Canada Bottling Expands Operations in British Columbia

Coca-Cola Canada Bottling strengthened its footprint in Western Canada through a series of major investments in Richmond, British Columbia, including the opening of a new CAD 18 million distribution centre aimed at consolidating operations and improving delivery efficiency across the province. The company highlighted the strategic value of the location, noting that the facility enables it to better serve customers and communities throughout B.C. while supporting long-term operational growth. See article here.

The expansion forms part of a broader modernization strategy at the Richmond site. Coca-Cola also launched a new can-production line to increase domestic manufacturing capacity and reduce reliance on third-party suppliers, strengthening supply-chain resilience and supporting local employment. The upgrade enhances the company's ability to respond to rising demand with greater speed and reliability.

In parallel, Coca-Cola inaugurated its largest facility in Western Canada at the same location, centralizing production and distribution activities under one roof. This consolidation improves operational coordination while reinforcing Richmond's role as a key logistics and manufacturing hub on the West Coast.

Together, these investments position Richmond as a major operational center for Coca-Cola in Western Canada, expanding capacity, optimizing logistics, and creating new employment opportunities. For the company, the projects reaffirm confidence in British Columbia's economic strength while enhancing the resilience and sustainability of its regional supply chain.

5. Strategy

5.1 Target Sectors

Based on the supply- and demand-side analysis, the table below outlines Yorkton's priority sectors for investment attraction. It highlights where local strengths align most clearly with investor demand and where a more selective or reactive approach is appropriate. It also indicates the recommended share of investment attraction resources to allocate to each sector, and approach to targeting (Proactive, Reactive, etc).

Table 7. Yorkton's Priority Sectors for Investment Attraction

Sector	Priority?	Resource Allocation (%)	Rationale
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing	**Yes – Proactive, Core**	**30%**	**Supply:** Mature cluster anchored by LDC and Richardson; strong feedstock availability; high export intensity; road/rail and broadband readiness; investors already expanding locally. **Demand:** Consistent FDI flows into agribusiness nationally and provincially, with Saskatchewan overperforming its share; investors prioritise proximity to growers, existing processors, and logistics reliability—key Yorkton strengths identified in the benchmarking and interviews.
AgTech / Automation	**Yes – Proactive, Strategic**	**20%**	**Supply:** Applied innovation assets (farms, processors, Agri-ARM, Suncrest College) support pilots and deployment, despite limited formal R&D capacity. **Demand:** Investor interviews highlight automation and precision tools as responses to labour shortages and margin pressure; strongest demand is for technologies embedded in agriculture, processing, and logistics rather than standalone tech hubs.
Logistics & Distribution	**Yes – Proactive, Core**	**30%**	**Supply:** Strong inland connectivity (highway, rail), available industrial land, and high trade exposure; infrastructure scores well relative to peers. **Demand:** Investor demand is rising for resilient inland supply-chain nodes, particularly where logistics is a key cost and risk factor (agri-food exports, cold-chain, automated distribution). At the same time, Canada's push to develop the EV battery supply chain is generating spillover demand for specialised logistics, transloading, storage, and corridor-linked distribution, extending beyond major port locations.
Advanced Manufacturing (General)	**No – Reactive**	**5%**	**Supply:** Solid productivity but constrained by workforce scale, specialised skills gaps, and low innovation scores in the benchmarking. **Demand:** Advanced manufacturing FDI is increasingly selective and technology-led, favouring larger labour pools and engineering ecosystems; Yorkton is more competitive for manufacturing linked directly to local demand (equipment, fabrication, maintenance).
Life Sciences / Agri-Bio	**No – Targeted only**	**5%**	**Supply:** Limited lab infrastructure, research institutions, and patent activity compared to peer centres. **Demand:** Investors locate core R&D in major hubs; secondary locations like Yorkton can capture applied activities tied to processing anchors (testing, formulation, pilot-scale services), not large R&D mandates.
Energy (Renewables &	**No – Reactive/ Enabling**	**5%**	**Supply:** Feedstock potential and land availability exist, but constraints around grid capacity, storage, incentives, and labour limit large standalone projects. **Demand:** Strong national growth in renewables, but investors prioritise fast interconnection and scale; Yorkton's best fit is bioenergy, feedstock aggregation, and on-site or adjacent renewables that support industrial users.
Mining & Mining Services	**No – Reactive/ Secondary**	**5%**	**Supply:** Proximity to potash operations and a suitable industrial workforce support service and logistics roles, but Yorkton lacks a dense mine-services cluster. **Demand:** Mining investment decisions are driven by proximity to operations; Yorkton is better positioned to respond to specific service and contractor opportunities rather than proactive attraction.

5.2 Target Countries / Markets

This section highlights Yorkton's priority target markets based on recent FDI trends into Canada and Saskatchewan. Overall, the **United States** leads across sectors, supported by **the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Germany**, while **Israel and Australia** stand out in AgTech and **the UAE and France** in logistics.

	United States	United Kingdom	France	Switzerland	Germany	Netherlands	UAE	Israel	Japan	Australia
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing										
AgTech / Automation										
Logistics & Distribution										

High Potential | High–Medium Potential | Medium Potential | Low Potential

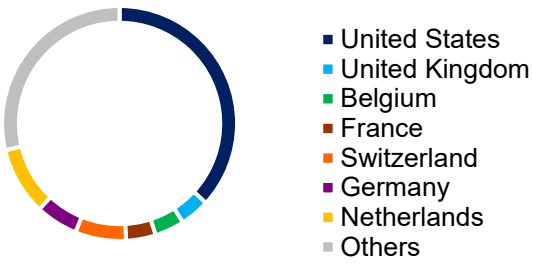
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing

Value-added agriculture and agri-processing have been among Canada's more active FDI segments in recent years. Between 2020 and 2025, total FDI capital committed to the agribusiness sector reached approximately USD 11.4 billion, rising 162% from 2020 levels. Over the same period, Canada attracted 171 agribusiness FDI projects, reflecting sustained investment activity alongside increasing capital intensity.

FDI activity is relatively concentrated among a small group of source markets. The United States was the leading contributor, with 63 projects (37% of the total) and the largest CapEx commitment at USD 2.85 billion (around 25% of total agribusiness FDI capital), indicating strong scale and consistency from U.S. investors.

Beyond the U.S., European markets—including the Netherlands (16 projects), Switzerland (12) and Germany (10)—continue to provide a steady secondary pipeline of activity.

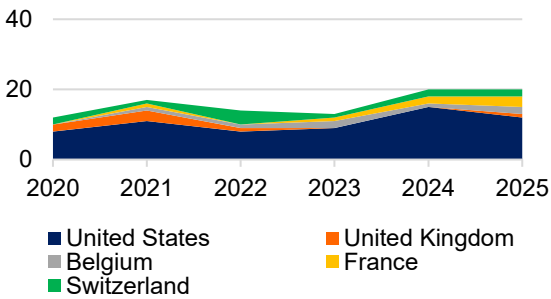
Figure 21: Number of FDI Projects in Canada in Agri-business by Source Country, 2020–2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 171

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 22: Evolution of Number of FDI Projects in Canada in Agri-business (USD Million), 2020–2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 171

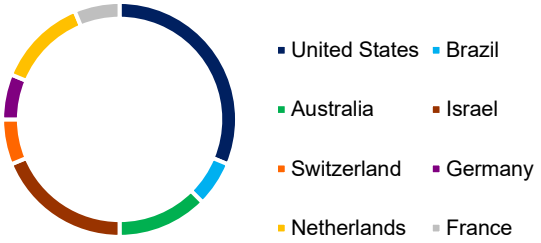
Source: FDI Markets

At the provincial level, Saskatchewan closely mirrors these national dynamics. Between 2020 and 2025, the province attracted 16 agri-business projects, with total announced CapEx of approximately USD 5.63 billion.

The United States led in project count (5), representing around 9% of total provincial agri-processing capex (USD 476 million). This was followed by Israel (3) and the Netherlands and Australia (2 each).

Notably, a significant share of provincial capital investment is driven by large-scale resource-linked projects, including the USD 4.9 billion investment in Stage Two of the Jansen potash project[50], which substantially elevates Saskatchewan's overall capex profile.

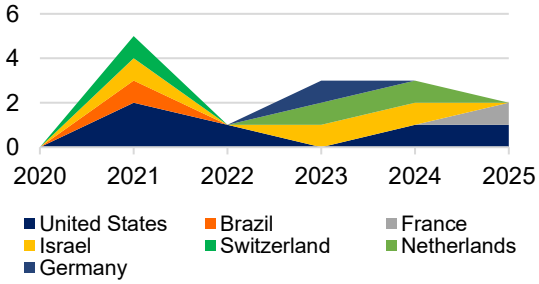
Figure 23: Number of FDI Projects in Saskatchewan in Agri-business by Source Country, 2020–2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 16

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 24: Evolution of Number of FDI Projects in Agri-business in Saskatchewan (USD Million), 2020–



Total number of FDI Projects: 16

Source: FDI Markets

At the city level, Yorkton stands out as a flagship example of this trajectory. The city has attracted capital-intensive investment from global agri-food players, notably French-founded Louis Dreyfus Company. In 2023, LDC invested approximately USD 45 million in grains and oilseeds[51], followed by a further USD 51 million investment in fruits, vegetables, and specialist food processing in 2024[52]. These projects signal strong investor confidence in Yorkton's role as a scalable, production-focused processing hub.

Indo-Pacific investors remain a modest source of agribusiness FDI into Canada, but activity has picked up noticeably since 2023, with several announcements and openings concentrated in 2024–2025. Between 2020 and 2025, Canada recorded 3 projects each from Japan and India, 2 each from China and South Korea, and 3 from Australia. This momentum has not yet translated strongly into Saskatchewan.

Project-level evidence suggests Indo-Pacific investment is often oriented toward market-entry and supply-chain functions—particularly logistics/distribution, machinery, and commercial operations—rather than large-scale processing.

Table 7: Number of FDI Projects and Capex (USD Millions) in Canada by Indo-Pacific Source

Country	Number of Project	Capex (USD Millions)
Japan	3	90
India	3	93
China	2	20
South Korea	2	20

Source: FDI Markets

50 BHP (2023)
51 Saskatchewan (2023)
52 AGCCanada (2024)

Based on agribusiness FDI inflows into Canada over the past five years, IMK suggests focusing investment attraction outreach on the following markets:

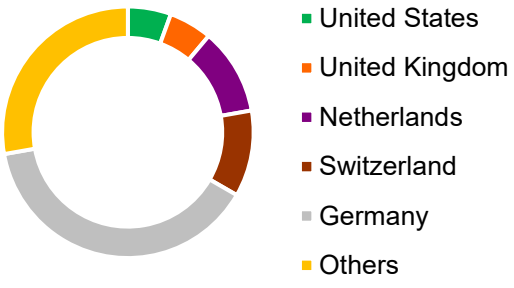
- **United States (high potential):** clear leader in project volume and capital deployment, with strong alignment to export-oriented, production-focused agri-processing relevant to Saskatchewan and Yorkton.
- **Netherlands and Switzerland (high potential):** consistent European source markets with strengths in value-added processing, ingredients, and agri-biotech, and proven track records of capital-intensive investment in Canada.
- **Australia, Japan, and India (emerging potential):** selective but growing engagement; Australia's resource-linked footprint in Saskatchewan signals downstream opportunity, while Japan and India show increasing activity across manufacturing, logistics, and commercial functions nationally.

AgTech / Automation

AgTech and automation are gaining relevance as investment themes within the broader agribusiness sector. While overall agribusiness FDI points to priority source markets such as the United States, the Netherlands, and Switzerland—and, at a strategic level, Australia, Japan, and India—technology-related agribusiness investment follows a distinct pattern. For this reason, the analysis below focuses specifically on FDI projects and trends linked to AgTech and other technology-enabled activities within agribusiness.

Between 2020 and 2025, Canada attracted 18 technology-related agribusiness FDI projects. Activity peaked in 2021, then moderated, with renewed momentum in 2023 and 2025. Germany led with five projects (28%), followed by the Netherlands (two projects; 12%) and Switzerland (two projects; 12%), while a range of other countries each contributed one project (6% each), including the United States, Israel, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland, Brazil, Chile, and Australia.

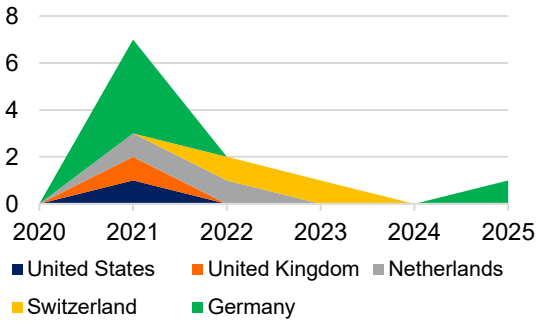
Figure 25: Figure 24: Number of Technology related Agribusiness FDI Projects in Canada by Source Country, 2020-2025



Total number of FDI Projects:

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 26: Figure 24: Evolution of number of Technology related Agribusiness FDI Projects in Canada by Source Country, 2020-2025

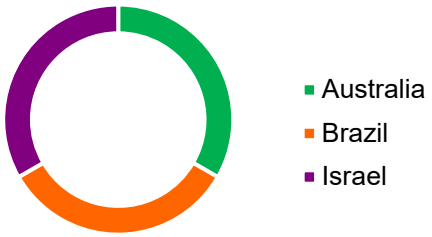


Total number of FDI Projects: 18

Source: FDI Markets

Projects are concentrated in provinces with strong agri-innovation ecosystems—mainly Alberta (5 projects; 29%) and Ontario (3 projects; 18%), followed by Saskatchewan (3 projects; 18%). The three projects in Saskatchewan were all located in Saskatoon and focused on digital agronomy, precision agriculture, and crop-focused innovation, including NRGene (Israel) (R&D and AI-enabled crop solutions), Solinftec (Brazil) (precision agriculture and farm management platforms), and BioScout (Australia) (disease detection technologies).

Figure 27: Figure 24: Number of Technology related Agribusiness FDI Projects in Saskatchewan by Source Country, 2020-2025



Source: FDI Markets

Total number of FDI Projects: 3

At the city level, Yorkton's AgTech footprint is smaller and more ecosystem-driven, focused on early-stage activity rather than large standalone facilities.

Indo-Pacific participation in AgTech-related agribusiness FDI remains limited, accounting for only a small share of projects over 2020–2025. However, the region is represented in Saskatchewan through BioScout (Australia), which established a presence in Saskatoon focused on disease detection technologies for growers.

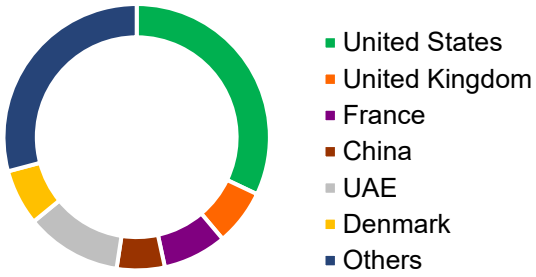
Based on AgTech-related FDI inflows into Canada (2020–2025), IMK suggests focusing investment attraction efforts on the following markets:

- **Israel and Australia (high potential):** both demonstrate a strong focus on scalable, field-tested AgTech solutions and have already shown traction in Saskatchewan, including notable projects linked to applied technologies such as genomics, sensing, disease detection, and precision agriculture.
- **Germany (core European market):** the leading European source market, accounting for five of the 17 AgTech-related FDI projects in Canada, with a clear focus on applied AgTech, horticulture and controlled-environment systems, and agricultural automation.
- **Netherlands and Switzerland (high–medium potential):** consistent source markets with established strengths in agribusiness and agricultural biotechnology, offering scope for further AgTech investment through deeper value-chain integration and downstream processing linkages relevant to Saskatchewan.

Logistics & Distribution

Logistics & Distribution has remained a stable FDI sector in Canada. Between 2020 and 2025, the country attracted 103 FDI projects in Transportation & Warehousing, led by the United States with around 32% of projects (33), followed by the UAE (12%) and France (8%).

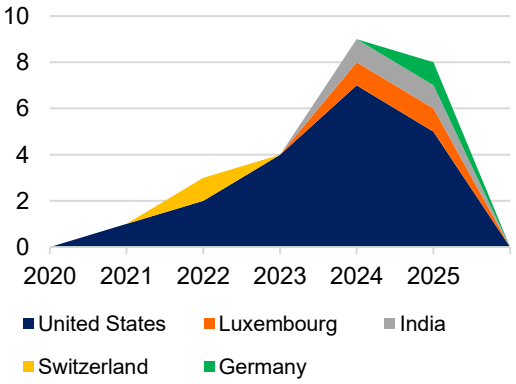
Figure 28: FDI Projects in Canada by Source Country in Transportation & Warehousing, 2020–2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 103

Source: FDI Markets

Figure 29: Evolution of Number of FDI Projects in Saskatchewan in AgTech (USD Million), 2020–2025



Total number of FDI Projects: 33

Source: FDI Markets

Logistics & Distribution has remained a stable FDI segment in Canada. Between 2020 and 2025, the country attracted 103 FDI projects in Transportation & Warehousing, led by the United States with 33 projects (32%), followed by the UAE (12%) and France (8%).

Within the agribusiness cluster, IMK identified 33 logistics and distribution-related projects—investments supporting agribusiness storage, movement, and export flows. These projects are dominated by U.S. investors (20 projects; 61%), reflecting strong integration with cross-border supply chains rather than standalone logistics platforms.

These projects tend to locate in provinces with major food corridors and gateway infrastructure—particularly Alberta and Ontario, followed by British Columbia and Quebec. Flagship investments include NewCold (Netherlands) in Alberta (USD 161.7 million) and DP World (UAE) in British Columbia (USD 106.9 million). In Saskatchewan, activity is limited but export-oriented, highlighted by Viterra (Switzerland)'s grain logistics investment in Biggar (2020).

Indo-Pacific participation remains selective, with examples from India, China, and South Korea, mainly through logistics-led market entry.

Table 7: Number of FDI Projects and Capex (USD Millions) in Canada in by Indo-Pacific Source Country, 2020–2025Table 8: Number of FDI Projects

Country	Number of Project	Capex (USD Millions)
India	2	43
China	1	14
South Korea	1	14

Source: FDI Markets

Based on FDI inflows in Transportation & Warehousing and agribusiness-linked Logistics, Distribution & Transportation activity, IMK suggests focusing outreach on the following markets:

- **United States (high potential):** clear leader in project volume and agribusiness logistics investment, reflecting deep cross-border supply-chain integration. Saskatchewan remains under-represented relative to Alberta and Quebec, creating scope as agri-processing and export activity scale.
- **United Arab Emirates and France (high–medium potential):** selective but strategic markets. The UAE shows growing interest in Canadian trade-enabling infrastructure, while France brings strong agri-food logistics and cold-chain capabilities aligned with export-oriented regions.
- **India (medium potential):** early signs of agribusiness logistics activity; **China and South Korea** remain **low potential** given isolated projects and limited evidence of sustained investment to date.

5.3 Sector-Specific SWOT Analysis

This section summarises the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for Yorkton's priority sectors, providing an investment-focused view to inform sector prioritisation, targeting, and messaging.

Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• **Business Environment**: Exports account for **~47% of Saskatchewan's GDP** and goods exports exceed **USD 36,000 per capita**, embedding Yorkton firms in global food and ingredient markets. • **Industry Presence / Cluster Strength**: Anchored by **Richardson and Louis Dreyfus Company**, supported by **218 local farms**, positioning Yorkton as a secondary hub for value-added processing rather than primary production. • **Labour & Utility Costs**: Saskatchewan manufacturing productivity of **~USD 82 per hour worked** supports competitive processing margins in oilseed, grain, and ingredient manufacturing. • **Quality of Life**: Small-city stability and safety support workforce retention for continuous, shift-based processing operations.	• **Innovation & Ecosystem:** Limited access to food labs, pilot plants, test farms, and university-linked applied R&D, restricting localisation of formulations and new ingredient development. • **Labour Market:** Shortages in **food science, automation, quality, and engineering skills**, with weaker university pipelines than Saskatoon or Regina. • **Infrastructure**: Located ~1,872 km from Vancouver's port, increasing reliance on road and rail for bulk exports.
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• **Business Environment**: Rising global demand for **sustainable food, alternative proteins, and resilient supply chains** creates a clear opportunity to scale Yorkton's **oilseed, grain, and ingredient processing**, building on **USD 5.63bn in provincial agribusiness capex (2020–2025)**. • **Innovation & Ecosystem**: Establishing **applied infrastructure in Yorkton**—such as a **pilot-scale processing centre or test-farm platform linked to Saskatchewan Polytechnic or regional universities**—would directly unlock higher-value processing and ingredient innovation. • **Industry Presence**: Strong provincial momentum (**16 agribusiness projects** led by U.S., Israeli, Dutch, and Australian investors) combined with **repeat LDC investments in Yorkton** creates opportunity to attract follow-on, capital-intensive processing projects.	• **Infrastructure**: Heavy reliance on **road and rail logistics** exposes firms to **freight cost volatility and commodity cycles**, particularly for high-volume, low-margin goods. • **Labour Market (Skills & Availability)**: Without targeted upskilling programmes, labour constraints could become a binding factor for future expansions. • **Incentives & Taxes**: Competing regions with deeper innovation ecosystems may attract higher-value processing and R&D unless local support mechanisms are strengthened.

AgTech / Automation

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• **Industry Presence / Cluster Strength**: Saskatchewan has attracted **3 AgTech projects (~USD 80m)**, led by **NRGene (USD 65m)**, confirming the province's attractiveness for **applied, production-linked AgTech** rather than pure R&D. • **Business Environment**: Yorkton sits within an active farming and processing base, creating **immediate demand for precision, automation, and integration solutions** tied to real operations. • **Innovation & Ecosystem:** Core precision tools are already in use locally (73 farms using auto-steer; 31 variable-rate; 19 GIS), providing a practical base for scaling next-generation technologies.	• **Innovation & Ecosystem**: Yorkton lacks **local test farms, pilot facilities, food/ag labs, and university-linked applied research**, pushing early-stage validation toward **Saskatoon, Regina, or out-of-province centres**. • **Labour Market:** Limited availability of **hybrid profiles** (agronomy + data + machinery), with stronger talent pools concentrated in **larger urban centres**. • **Incentives & Taxes**: Early-stage AgTech support is less accessible locally, as most provincial and federal programmes activate **after commercial proof**.

Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• **Industry Presence / Cluster Strength**: **Israel and Australia** represent high-potential source markets, focused on **scalable, field-tested AgTech** (genomics, sensing, precision systems) and already expanding in Saskatchewan, creating scope for **deployment and servicing activity in Yorkton**. • **Business Environment**: **Germany accounts for 5 of Canada's 18 AgTech FDI projects**, concentrated in applied AgTech, horticulture, and automation—well aligned with Yorkton's production profile. • **Innovation & Ecosystem**: Establishing **field trials, pilot-scale facilities, or partnerships with polytechnics and universities in Yorkton** would directly unlock early-stage investment and accelerate adoption.	• **Business Environment**: Canada's **slower permitting timelines** compared to the U.S. reduce competitiveness for fast-scaling AgTech investments. • **Industry Presence / Cluster Strength**: Regions such as **Ottawa, Saskatoon, and Alberta-based hubs** offer deeper research ecosystems and may capture innovation-led projects unless Yorkton differentiates as an **applied deployment location**. • **Labour & Utility Costs**: Rising energy and digital costs, combined with labour scarcity, increase pressure on ROI for automation-focused investors.

Logistics & Distribution

Strengths:	*Weaknesses:*
• **Industry Presence / Cluster Strength:** Embedded within Saskatchewan's agri-value chain, where agribusiness-linked logistics dominates FDI (~60% U.S.-led projects nationally), reinforcing Yorkton's relevance as a production-support node. • **Infrastructure:** Yorkton benefits from **Yellowhead/Trans-Canada Highway access, CN/CP rail, and a regional airport**, serving a large agricultural catchment with steady freight volumes. • **Labour & Utility Costs:** Logistics and technical wages sit below Alberta benchmarks, while **Saskatchewan's ~5,930 MW grid capacity** provides reliable power for logistics and automation.	• **Infrastructure**: Limited **intermodal scale** compared with Regina or Saskatoon constrains container-heavy operations. • **Innovation & Ecosystem**: Gaps in **broadband and digital infrastructure** limit rapid deployment of AI-enabled logistics systems. • **Quality of Life**: Housing availability and amenities can affect attraction of specialised logistics and technical roles.
Opportunities:	*Threats:*
• **Business Environment:** While logistics FDI has concentrated in Alberta and Quebec, Saskatchewan remains under-represented, creating room as **agri-processing and exports expand**. • **Industry Presence: UAE and France represent high–medium potential markets**—the UAE's USD 50bn investment framework with Canada signals interest in logistics and trade assets, while France brings strengths in agri-food and cold-chain logistics. • **Innovation & Ecosystem:** Global investment is shifting toward automation, AI-enabled planning, cold-chain reliability, and low-emission freight, areas where **Yorkton can compete on efficiency and reliability rather than scale**.	• **Infrastructure:** At ~1,872 km from Vancouver's port, reliance on road and rail increases **exposure to freight costs and commodity cycles**. • **Labour & Utility Costs:** High telecom costs **(4–5× U.S. levels**) and rising energy demand pressure margins for data-intensive logistics.

5.4 FDI Action Plan

5.4.1 Summary

This action plan outlines recommended next steps to translate Yorkton's FDI Attraction Strategy into a practical, staged programme of work. It is intended to help the council and the project team understand (i) which sectors and markets should be prioritised, (ii) how effort could be allocated, and (iii) what activity mix should be delivered over the next 12–36 months to build a consistent foreign direct investment pipeline.

Recommended priority focus

For implementation and grant requirements, we recommend that Yorkton concentrate approximately 80% of its investment attraction effort and resources on three priority sectors, where local strengths align most clearly with investor demand and needs. These represent the best opportunity for Yorkton, so proactive targeting of investors in these sectors is most likely to yield positive results.

While those three sectors should be prioritised for proactive targeting, that does not mean that the remaining sectors should be neglected entirely. There is still an opportunity in each of these, though they are often more of a longshot, so we recommend that these are best treated as secondary opportunities. Yorkton should spend the remaining ~20% of effort and resources monitoring and tracking opportunities in these sectors reactively, and be ready to mobilise should a strong prospect materialise.

Table 9: Recommended sectors

Sector	Recommended priority tier	Indicative resource allocation (%)
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing	Priority	30%
Logistics & Distribution	Priority	20%
AgTech / Automation (applied)	Priority	30%
Advanced Manufacturing (linked to priority sectors)	Secondary	5%
Life Sciences / Agri-bio (applied)	Secondary	5%
Energy (enabling / adjacent)	Secondary	5%
Mining & Mining Services	Secondary	5%

Recommended region/market focus

Across the three priority sectors, we recommend that Yorkton focus proactive outreach on Europe and selected Indo-Pacific markets, while maintaining an active, deal-responsive presence in the United States (while there is currently economic and political uncertainty in the US, it is still a very significant source of FDI for Canada, and should not be forgotten given its proximity, scale, and the likelihood of cross-border expansions).

In practice, this would mean defining top 3–4 target countries per priority sector, with an indicative resource split across those markets to keep effort focused and measurable.

Table 10: Recommended cross-cutting market tiers

Market tier	Recommended role in the plan	What this means in practice
Tier 1: Europe + selected Indo-Pacific	Highest proactive effort	Targeted lead generation campaigns tied to sector offerings
Tier 2: United States	Steady, deal-responsive effort	Always-on outreach and rapid follow-up to convert near-term opportunities
Tier 3: Other markets	Opportunistic	Pursue only where investor fit is strong and capacity allows

Table 11: Recommended focus markets by priority sector

Priority sector	Primary target regions	Top markets	Indo-Pacific relevance
Value-Added Agriculture / Agri-Processing	Europe + North America	U.S., Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland	Selective / emerging
Logistics & Distribution	North America + Europe + selective Indo-Pacific	U.S., Netherlands, France, UAE	Moderate
AgTech / Automation	Europe + Indo-Pacific + North America	Germany, Netherlands, Israel, Australia	Strong

5.4.2 Recommended FDI Attraction Activities

This section outlines the recommended FDI attraction activities for Yorkton. The activities are guided by the Investment Attraction Wheel, which reflects the full investment attraction cycle.

The framework comprises six interlinked stages:

- **Investment Strategy –** defining priority sectors, target markets, and value propositions
- **Investment Promotion –** communicating Yorkton's offer to priority investors and markets
- **Investment Generation –** proactively identifying and engaging potential investors
- **Investment Facilitation –** supporting investors through site selection, approvals, and decision-making
- **Investment Aftercare –** supporting existing investors to expand and remain embedded locally
- **Investment Monitoring –** tracking performance, outcomes, and lessons learned to refine strategy

Within this cycle, the Action Plan focuses primarily on strengthening the front end of the wheel—**Investment Strategy, Investment Promotion, and Investment Generation**—while ensuring these activities are designed to feed effectively into facilitation, aftercare, and monitoring functions already undertaken by the City and its partners.

Recommended Activity 1: Sector-Specific Investment Attraction Playbooks

Item	Recommended approach for Yorkton
Objective	Develop **sector strategies ("playbooks")** for each priority sector that sharpen targeting, strengthen Yorkton's value proposition, and accelerate investor conversion.
Description	Create a practical **sector-specific playbooks** for each priority sector that defines: **who to target** (ideal investor types, technologies, scale), **what to attract** (project archetypes, indicative CAPEX and jobs, supply-chain linkages), and **how Yorkton wins** (competitive advantages, key partners, incentives pathway, and investment-ready sites). These playbooks translate the broader FDI Strategy into **ready-to-use guidance for outreach and lead qualification**.
Investment Attraction Stage	**Investment Strategy**
Duration	**0–3 months**
Complexity	**High**
Level of Effort	**Medium**
Estimated Cost	Approx. CAD $20,000 – $30,000 per playbook
	Deliverables (per priority sector): ideal investor profile; target project types; sector value proposition; incentives/support map (municipal/provincial/federal); partner/ecosystem map (incl. Indigenous economic development partners where relevant); shortlist of sites (greenfield/brownfield). **KPIs (examples):** # sector playbooks completed; # incentives/support programmes embedded into sector offers.

Recommended Activity 2: Investor Marketing Platform and Promotion Toolkit

Item	Recommended approach for Yorkton
Objective	Strengthen Yorkton's investor-facing presence and promotion toolkit so priority sector offers are communicated clearly and consistently.
Description	Develop an **"Invest in Yorkton" brand and marketing campaign,** distinct from community-facing communications, supported by sector-aligned collateral and a targeted digital approach. This includes a refreshed/new investor website presence, clear value proposition messaging, visibility of the investment attraction team/sector contacts, and targeted promotion (including LinkedIn and paid campaigns).
Investment Attraction Stage	**Investment Promotion**
Duration	**3–6 months**
Complexity	**Medium**
Level of Effort	**High**
Estimated Cost	Community / investment profile / website development: Approx. CAD $20,000 – $45,000 Digital promotional materials (design + layout): Approx. CAD $15,000 – $20,000
Deliverables and indicative KPIs	**Deliverables:** "Invest in Yorkton" website/landing pages and sector pages; sector one-pagers (print + digital); core pitch deck (PPT) + email-ready intro pack; value proposition messaging suite (proof points, FAQs); "meet the team"/sector expert profiles; LinkedIn refresh + investment content plan; targeted LinkedIn ads for priority markets; optional credibility assets (case studies/testimonials/short video). **KPIs (examples):** FDI website visits (overall/by sector); LinkedIn engagement from target geographies (impressions/clicks/followers); ad performance (CTR, CPC, landing-page conversions).

Recommended Activity 3: Targeted Lead Generation Campaign

Item	Recommended approach for Yorkton
Objective	Build a repeatable pipeline of investor leads and meetings aligned to priority sectors and markets.
Description	Run structured lead generation campaigns by sector/market, combining list-building, targeted outreach and investor qualification.
Investment Attraction Stage	**Investment Generation**
Duration	**6-12 months**
Complexity	**Low-Medium**
Level of Effort	**High**
Estimated Cost	Approx. CAD $20,000 – $50,000
Deliverables and indicative KPIs	**Deliverables:** Target company lists by priority sector/market (with company profiles and fit rationale); Outreach and engagement plan; Monthly outreach performance report summarising activity and results; Qualified lead briefs (investor profile, expansion drivers, opportunity detail, next steps); Investor handling process (CRM-lite tracker, response standards, hand-offs, follow-up schedule). **KPIs (examples):** # companies added to target lists; # companies contacted; response rate; # qualified leads generated; # investor meetings secured; # opportunities progressed to active pipeline (and, where feasible, # site tours / virtual visits).

5.4.3 Considerations for future Funding Applications

The FDI action plan has been structured to directly support a strong funding application, including programmes such as CanExport Community Investments, by clearly demonstrating focus, deliverability, and community value.

Value of the project to the community

The recommended focus on priority sectors will support job creation, economic diversification, and increased local supplier activity. Investments in Value-added agriculture, AgTech, and logistics have the potential to generate both direct employment and indirect benefits across transport, construction, professional services, and supply chains, strengthening Yorkton's long-term economic resilience.

Alignment with Canada and regional priorities

Yorkton's strategic sectors align closely with Canada's FDI priorities, including Agribusiness and AgTech as national focus areas, and Logistics as an enabling sector that supports broader value chains (including advanced manufacturing and emerging industries). The approach is also consistent with Saskatchewan's investment attraction strategy, reinforcing provincial strengths and positioning Yorkton as a competitive location within wider regional and global value chains. These synergies should be noted explicitly in Yorkton's funding application

Grant-ready implementation and accountability

The FDI action plan is structured around clearly defined activities with measurable outputs and performance indicators, supporting transparency, accountability, and value for money. In the funding application, Yorkton can refer to these specific activities as potentially effective ways to improve its capacity to attract foreign investment in the target sectors, alongside monitoring progress and reporting outcomes in line with funding requirements.

Indigenous economic development and engagement

investment in Yorkton across the priority sectors (value-added agriculture, logistics, and AgTech) may be able to support stronger indigenous participation in the economy through jobs and skills pathways (e.g., processing, warehousing, transport, technical roles), Indigenous supplier and contracting opportunities in construction/logistics/site services (via networks such as the Saskatchewan Indigenous Chamber of Commerce), and early engagement on sector-specific opportunities through partners such as Saskatchewan First Nations Economic Development Network (SFNEDN) as part of investment packaging and site readiness.

6. Appendix A – List of interviews

#	Company	Contact Name	Position	Date
1	Blue Skies Minerals	Silko Barth	CTO and co-founder	07/11/2025
2	Agri-Food Innovation Council	Wilf Keller	VP Outreach	07/11/2025
3	Dehn	Ingo Rutenberg	CEO	11/11/2025
4	Hilti Canada	Omar Khodr	Strategic Business Development Executive	13/11/2025
5	American Battery Factory	Paul Charles	Co-Founder and Former CEO	13/11/2025
6	Ferrero	Stephanie Cass	VP Outreach Institutional Affairs and Corporate	26/11/2025
7	Syngenta	Ravi Ramachandran	Head of R&D, Crop Protection	04/12/2025
8	American Battery Factory	Paul Charles	CEO and co-founder	13/15/2025
9	Ebro Ingredients	Erik Bogaerts	Commercial Manager USA	12/02/2025
10	Roquette	Emily Delommez	Head of Global Business Communications	12/02/2025
11	Soufflet Malt	Sophie Trouillot	R&I Support Engineer	12/02/2025
12	Metarom	Lucie Maillard ; Josselin Flessel	R&D drinks Engineer; Digital sales representative	12/02/2025
13	LDC - Louis Dreyfus Company	Charles-Antoine Dubois	Plant Proteins Commercial Director	12/02/2025

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