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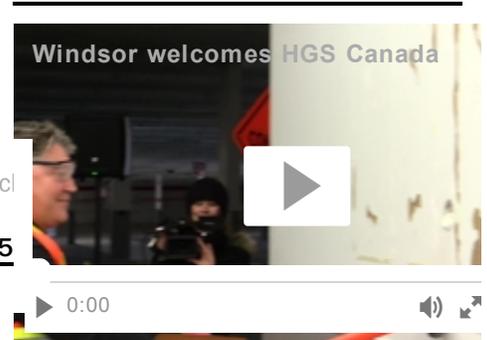
## New minivan, WAP get \$2B overhaul: Marchionne

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**Grace Macaluso**

Jan 12, 2015 - 10:40 AM EST

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Fiat Chrysler Automobiles is investing more than \$2 billion in the “best possible minivan” and one of the largest retoolings in the history of Windsor Assembly Plant, FCA CEO Sergio Marchionne said Monday.

Marchionne also said Windsor is the “natural place,” for a new, full-size Chrysler crossover, “once we determine whether we build it or

## Latest News

### Day 2: Detroit Auto Show



Windsor Star reporters and photographers are hitting the showroom floor at the North American International Auto Show for the second day. Follow their tweets.

### Major new call centre to be

not.”

The next generation minivan will be called the Chrysler Town and Country, Marchionne told reporters at the [North American International Auto Show](#) in Detroit.

The new Town and Country will be “the best possible minivan you can possibly imagine, the most technologically advanced you’ve ever seen in your life,” he said, adding that it will be on sale in the first quarter of next year.

Marchionne would not specify how much the automaker was spending on the plant’s retooling alone, however, union officials have said the lengthy 14-week shutdown suggests an investment in the \$1.5-billion range.

The plant is scheduled to shut down for three months starting in mid-February to retool for the next generation of the vehicle. Chrysler plans to eventually phase out the Dodge Grand Caravan in order to focus on a single model. But when production resumes in the spring, the plant will continue to produce the current versions of the vehicle.



The Chrysler Windsor Assembly Plant is pictured in this September 2014 file photo. (TYLER BROWNBIDGE/The Windsor Star)

The plant, which employs about 4,500 hourly workers on three-full shifts, will be running “flat out,” said Marchionne.

About 1,400 Town and Country and Dodge Grand Caravan minivans are assembled each day at the plant.

More than 1,000 skilled trades will be needed for what union officials

## announced in Windsor



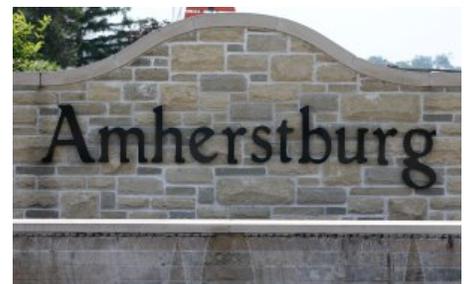
Officials will announce Tuesday that a major new call centre is opening soon in Windsor, a source close to the project said.

## Traffic Watch: Stalled train blocks traffic on Cabana Road, near Provincial



Windsor police say a section of Cabana Road East is blocked after a train stalled early this morning.

## Town of Amherstburg replaces reserve funds



Amherstburg appears to be getting its financial footing on more solid ground according to reports from the town’s director of financial services.

## \$500M of greenhouse expansion depends on more

are calling the biggest-ever retooling at the plant.

The plug-in hybrid version of the new minivan will be at the forefront of Fiat Chrysler's introduction of hybrid technology, he added.

Word of the automaker's extensive investment came as relief to Windsor Mayor Drew Dilkens, whose municipality has long battled one of the highest unemployment rates in the country.

"Absolutely it lets you breathe a sigh of relief, but we don't rest on our laurels," said Dilkens. "We realize the company has to be competitive and everyone



Windsor Mayor Drew Dilkens is pictured in this December 2014 file photo. (JASON KRYK/The Windsor Star)

involved – the city, company, employees, consumers — are all part of the equation for the success of that company."

"It's fantastic," said an ecstatic Sandra Pupatello, CEO of the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation. "It's the biggest automotive investment in Windsor since 1983, which was the advent of the minivan, itself."

Pupatello said its likely Windsor Assembly will be home to a new global platform, new product and state-of-the-art technology.

"I saw the electric minivan prototype more than two years ago," said Pupatello. "It sounds like really exciting product."

Matt Marchand, president and CEO of the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, said the investment "speaks to the quality of the Windsor workforce and the great benefits of doing automotive business Windsor-Essex."

But, both the chamber and its network as well as Unifor will continue to push for "an aggressive auto strategy in Ontario and Canada," said

## hydro to Leamington



As Leamington waits for more hydro, 660 acres of greenhouse expansion worth \$500 million is at stake, with the new power expected to add thousands of jobs and \$580 million a year to the Ontario economy.

## City committee denies request to cut into historic curb



The city's new Planning and Economic Standing Committee has denied the request of an Old Walkerville resident to allow a curb cut in front of their home to deal with the dearth of parking in the area.

## Free massages at Windsor courthouse nixed



The Ministry of the Attorney General has pulled the plug on an unconventional program offered at a Windsor courthouse

Marchand. “It’s important we embrace this investment as a great opportunity to build on this and keep the pressure on for an auto strategy.”

Industry stakeholders worry that Canada is losing out to Mexico and the U.S. southern states when it comes to automotive investments that expand production and jobs. Both the Ontario and federal governments are under pressure to establish a joint investment bureau that would focus on drawing auto investment to Canada.

Brad Duguid, Ontario minister of economic development and innovation, said he was using the Detroit auto show to meet with “high-level officials” from all five carmakers with plants in the province.

“We are going to continue to aggressively pursue new mandates for auto and other manufacturing in Ontario and that’s part of the reason why I’m at the auto show in Detroit for the next two or three days,” said Duguid. “My message will be at a time when recalls are happening at an alarming rate, the best place to invest right now is Ontario where we have the best quality workers and best quality record in the auto sector in North America.

“Ontario as a sub-national jurisdictions has won 27 J.D. Power awards for quality over the years. Mexico, as a country has only won two. So that tells us this is the best place to build vehicles if quality is your Number 1 objective.”

He also noted Ontario has enjoyed a spate of good news since last summer, starting with Honda’s plan to invest \$857 million in its Alliston facility.

“Now with another \$2 billion being invested in Windsor I think it shows there are some bright days ahead for manufacturing in Ontario.”

Earlier in the day, the Ontario and federal governments announced they will each kick in more than \$50 million toward a \$500-million expansion by Guelph-based auto parts manufacturer Linamar. The expansion is expected to create another 1,200 jobs in Guelph over the next 10 years.

Duguid said he continues to study the proposal for a federal-provincial

this month.

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## Cold weather alert issued for Windsor and Essex County



A cold weather alert has been issued by the local health unit for Windsor and Essex County, where temperatures are expected to plunge to -17C overnight.

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## Self-driving cars passing road tests



Traditional automakers like Mercedes-Benz and Audi leading the charge with autonomous driving technology

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## Duncan says he won’t run in upcoming federal election

When Dwight Duncan walked away from provincial politics two years ago he left the door open that he may take a run in the next federal election. But Duncan, 56, slammed that door shut Monday by telling The Star he has no desire to get back into politics.

auto investment bureau. “I think there’s some merit in the idea ... we always want to be improving our ability to collectively pursue mandates and right now we’re in discussions with the federal government and our auto partners to determine the best route to go.”

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Fiat Chrysler Chief Executive Sergio Marchionne speaks with reporters on the day one of the North American International Auto Show at Cobo Hall in Detroit, Michigan on Monday, January 12, 2015. (TYLER BROWNBRIDGE/The Windsor Star)

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