

## Group shares ideas to bolster innovation in King, York

As part of exploring growth and development opportunities in an around King and the Region, Mayor Steve Pellegrini met with Dr. Aditya Jha (C.M.) a founding director of SOAR Innovation and Chairman and CEO of DG Market International, and Mr. Vikram Khurana Chairman of the Toronto Business Development Centre, a leading business incubator along with Prashant Pathak the Chairman of the Kingbridge Centre and Institute in King City. The intention was to brainstorm and explore potential areas of collaboration across the innovation and business formation and startup ecosystem where King and Kingbridge can partner to attract, develop and grow new businesses including mentoring and training for startups, senior executives and founders through industry leading boot-camps, summits and conferences organized in King City at Kingbridge. Dr. Jha shared some of his insights as a well regarded and successful serial entrepreneur in Canada coming from humble roots in India and Nepal. There was ample discussion on how best to engage the growing ranks of 'new Canadian' founders and businesses towards fostering more innovation, economic engagement and business building in King and the broader York Region. Khurana and his team at TBDC are actively engaged and working with founders and entrepreneurs internationally and also as part of the broader G20 innovation efforts and Ontario's special immigration project 'Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program' Entrepreneur Success Initiative (OINP-ESI). There would be natural benefits for the township and region from collaborating on such an outreach. A number of initiatives, including a potential startup boot-camp were identified for further development and execution. These align well with the work that King and Kingbridge collaborated and launched previously as part of last year's Collision conference.