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Federal investment transforms warehouse into auto research centre, promising benefits to local economy

Ali Emadi, the Canada Research Chair in Hybrid Powertrain, speaks at what will be the McMaster Automotive Resource Centre. The federal government today announced an investment of up to \$11.5 million in the centre, which will allow McMaster to accelerate automotive research. Photo by Matt Terry.

The federal government's investment of up to \$11.5 million in the McMaster Automotive Resource Centre (MARC) will allow the University to accelerate automotive research, improving educational and employment opportunities across Hamilton and beyond.

Today Gary Goodyear, Minister of State for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario visited McMaster Innovation Park, the site of the centre, to announce the investment, part of FedDev Ontario's Prosperity Initiative.

"Our government is committed to making sure the people, businesses and communities of southern Ontario have the tools they need to succeed," said Goodyear. "This investment will not only create jobs, but help build an automotive resource centre putting southern Ontario at the forefront in the development of green automotive technologies."

The investment will be used to transform a former appliance warehouse into a state-of-

the art research facility, where academic, government and industrial partners will collaborate to develop new technology that can diversify Hamilton's economic base and create new employment.

The centre itself is a \$26-million project and is expected to employ 120 to 150 people when complete.

"This project, to be built in the shell of an old industrial building, is a symbol of the University's commitment to the economic redevelopment of our community through research and education," said McMaster President Patrick Deane. "Much more, we hope it will be an engine of that redevelopment."

A major focus of the new auto research centre will be the work of Ali Emadi, an internationally renowned leader in advanced powertrain technology, who was recruited from the US and holds the \$10M Canada Excellence Research Chair in Hybrid Powertrain.

"It was McMaster's reputation in sustainable automotive research that drew me to Hamilton," Emadi said. "The University's vision and the Government's commitment to develop MARC will only enhance that reputation and our ability to conduct the kind of research that will provide solutions for industry and policy-makers."

The McMaster Automotive Resource Centre will occupy about 80,000 square feet of the building, directly across from the Atrium, the headquarters of McMaster Innovation Park, itself repurposed from an office and industrial complex into a modern, open building now fully occupied by diverse tenants from the public and private sectors alike.

Earlier this year, the Government of Canada opened its new CANMET materials technology laboratory at McMaster Innovation Park, where it is expected to have close ties with MARC.