Contents

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 3

2. Summary of Background Documents .................................................................................................. 5
   2.1 Western Ontario Wardens Caucus Economic Development Strategy (2017) ....................... 6
   2.2 Workforce Development in Rural Ontario, Rural Ontario Institute ........................................... 8
   2.3 Workforce Planning West – COVID-19 Workforce Scenarios .................................................... 9
   2.4 Beyond the Big City ........................................................................................................................ 15
   2.5 Affordable Housing Action Plan (2021), City of Brantford and Count of Brant ...................... 15
   2.6 CMHC Housing Supply Challenge ................................................................................................. 16
   2.7 Making Affordable Housing Sustainable, Federation of Canadian Municipalities ................ 17
   2.8 Lighthouse Labs - Micro credentials ............................................................................................ 19
   2.9 Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities: Programs and Services .................. 19
   2.10 Immigration Matters ....................................................................................................................... 20
   2.11 Small Towns, Big Opportunities, Ontario Real Estate Association ........................................... 20
   2.12 Over 55 London: The Longevity Economy .................................................................................. 21
   2.13 South Centre Ontario Region (SCOR) transportation Plan ......................................................... 22
   2.14 Société Économique de l’Ontario: Workforce Development ..................................................... 23
   2.15 Eastern Ontario regional economic development strategy, ......................................................... 24
   2.16 Eastern Ontario Leadership Council: Recovery and Resilience Project .................................... 27
   2.17 Wellington County Housing Plans and Policies .......................................................................... 27
   2.18 Media Reports on Economic Trends .............................................................................................. 29

3. Regional Workforce Strategies Case Studies ....................................................................................... 32
   3.1 Appalachian Regional Commission: Investing in Appalachia’s Future ........................................ 32
   3.2 Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute Rural Workforce Development ........................ 34
   3.3 Regional Australia Institute, The Future of Regional Jobs .............................................................. 35
   3.4 Rural Councils Victoria (Australia) ................................................................................................. 36
   3.5 Rural Ireland .................................................................................................................................... 38
   3.6 Rural Minnesota ............................................................................................................................... 41
   3.7 Transatlantic Council on Migration ................................................................................................. 42

4. Next Steps ............................................................................................................................................. 45

5. Appendix .............................................................................................................................................. 46
1. **Introduction**

The Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus (WOWC) received funding from the Ontario Labour Market Partnership Project to support the development of the Western Ontario Workforce Strategy (WOWS).

The objectives of the project are:

- To strengthen the access and quality of labour market intelligence to address the needs of businesses and create opportunities to bring together businesses, economic developers and educators to strengthen the alignment between business needs and education programming.

- To assemble intelligence that will inform municipal business retention and succession planning activities.

- To improve the region’s access to skilled and talented labour pool that is poised and positioned to respond to changing economic conditions.

The resulting action plan is expected to include the following:

1. Ways to mitigate local labour market issues through an attraction and retention strategy. Subsections of this include:
   a. The development of regional market ready kits that are designed to attract business immigrants and migrants into Western Ontario. This should include profiles of businesses looking for succession buyers and lifestyle opportunities that exist across the region as examples.
   b. A report that lays out a model for the development community to build rental and/or attainable housing and for Municipalities and Economic Development offices to facilitate the development of rental/attainable housing with a focus on rental

2. An appropriate marketing/communication process to ensure recognition of what communities will need to do, to be attractive to migrants. There is a need to position the region’s marketing and promotional efforts to highlight the non-industrial development advantages of Southwestern Ontario. This includes narratives that showcase the region’s quality of life, recreational and cultural assets, and the strong work-life balance.

3. Required knowledge transfer training, education and delivery methods to support transition activities

4. The creation of strong, committed, trusting collaborative structures to carry the work forward

5. Lessons learned - An optimized process to carry into other communities
The process of developing the Western Ontario Workforce Strategy will consist of three phases: Background Study, Consultation and Analysis and Strategy and Implementation.

This Background Discussion Report marks the completion of Phase One. It includes a review of relevant documents assembled in anticipation of launching this study. It also includes a review of other regional workforce strategies that could provide some guidance to the development of the Workforce Development Strategy for the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus.

**Figure 1: Western Ontario Workforce Strategy: Strategic Planning Process**

- **Phase 1**
  - Background Study
  - Document Review
  - Workforce Strategy Review
  - Background Discussion Report

- **Phase 2**
  - Consultation & Analysis
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Attainable Housing
  - Labour Market & People Attraction
  - Marketing & Communications
  - Issues & Opportunities Report

- **Phase 3**
  - Strategy & Implementation
  - Draft Attraction Strategy
  - Finalize & Design Strategy
  - Implementation Plan
  - Market – Ready Kits
2. Summary of Background Documents

The consulting team conducted a thorough review of background documents, research and media reports on workforce development relevant to the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus. The purpose of this exercise was to gain a better understanding of the workforce development trends as well as future issues and opportunities for consideration in the development of the Western Ontario Workforce Strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Source</th>
<th>Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Western Ontario Wardens Caucus</td>
<td>Economic Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rural Ontario Institute</td>
<td>Workforce Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Workforce Planning West</td>
<td>Workforce Scenarios Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pathways to Prosperity Canada</td>
<td>Beyond the Big City: How Small Communities Across Canada Can Attract and Retain Newcomers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. City of Brantford, County of Brant</td>
<td>Mayor’s Housing Partnerships Task Force, Affordable Housing Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation</td>
<td>Housing Supply challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Eastern Ontario Leadership Council</td>
<td>Economic Modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Federation of Canadian Municipalities</td>
<td>Making Affordable Housing Sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Immigration Matters Community Conversations Toolkit</td>
<td>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Lighthouse Labs</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities</td>
<td>Programs and Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ontario Real Estate Association</td>
<td>Small Towns, Big Opportunities The Longevity Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Over 55 London</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Société Économique de l'Ontario</td>
<td>Workforce Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. South Central Ontario Region (SCOR)</td>
<td>Transportation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Wellington County</td>
<td>Wellington County Housing Plans and Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Various Media Outlets</td>
<td>Summary of Media Reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus Economic Development Strategy (2017)


The 2017 Economic Development Strategy for the WOWC put an emphasis on working regionally in areas where a regional response will lead to better outcomes such as broadband infrastructure and workforce planning. Business and community leaders consulted in the development of the strategy indicated “workforce skills, broadband, innovation services, and transportation infrastructure issues as the top priorities”.

When asked to indicate the advantages and disadvantages of doing business in southwestern Ontario, the top cited disadvantage was the lack of broadband and the second most cited was the workforce (43%). Interestingly 44% cited the workforce as one of the main advantages of the region.

In ranked priority, improving the skills/education of the existing workforce was considered a ‘high’ priority and expanding the pool of workers was considered a ‘medium’ priority.

In consultations with the region’s workforce planning boards, four out of seven indicating firms in their region were having trouble hiring staff (in 2015).

Among the key themes emerging from the consultations was the misalignment between formal education and workforce requirements.

The “increased probability and scale of job dislocation” needed to be addressed.

Ultimately the regional workforce planning became the first priority among four strategic priorities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Priority</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Regional Workforce Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Priority</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regional Infrastructure Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Priority</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Regional Sector Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Priority</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Regional Marketing and Promotion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Western Ontario Wardens Caucus Strategic Priorities
Within Strategic Priority #1 Regional Workforce Planning there were three objectives identified (note these became the three objectives in the 2018 workforce development strategy discussed below):

**Objective 1**: To strengthen the access and quality of labour market intelligence to address the needs of businesses and create opportunities to bring together businesses, economic developers and educators to strengthen the alignment between business needs and education programming.

**Objective 2**: To assemble intelligence that will inform municipal business retention and succession planning activities. Included in this objective is the need to advocate for improved programming support.

**Objective 3**: To improve the region’s access to skilled and talented labour pool that is poised and positioned to respond to changing economic conditions.

A series of short and longer term objectives were established to address these three objectives:

**Short-term:**

1. Strengthen local labour market intelligence through a validated local job demand vacancy reporting system (e.g., Magnet) that is further informed through the region’s Employer One survey results. The job vacancy reporting system should capture near real time labour market demand by such criteria as industry activity, occupational demand, education, wages, municipality and/or county and/or Southwestern Ontario.
2. Create a Workforce Working Group to inform strategic thinking on regional workforce issues and alignment of programming that advances employment growth and job retention across Southwestern Ontario. Solicit participation from upper and single tier municipalities and external agencies and organizations that are actively engaged in site location decisions, business development and workforce planning.
3. Advocate for programming support from Southwestern Ontario Development Fund (SWODF) streams (and other programs) that include assessment criteria and thresholds categories for small business and balances job creation with job retention indicators.
4. Host a bi-annual regional workforce conference that highlights local intelligence sources and best practices on workforce development issues such as technology integration, mobile training and other activities.

**Longer Term:**

5. Assist the Western Ontario Workforce Planning Board in completing a comprehensive Workforce Strategy for Southwestern Ontario that validates labour supply and demand at the municipal and regional level. Using this intelligence to develop an evidence-based workforce strategy will ensure a collaborative approach to creating a skilled, resilient labour force that is poised to meet local employer demand, now and looking forward, and more effectively leverage the workforce planning efforts of community partners and the Province.
6. Build collaborative relationships between economic development organizations and educational institutions in support of the rollout of the workforce strategy to support the type of programs/curriculums that educators should be building. Information may
flow from an on-site business visitation program between businesses and educators, where interest in experiential learning (co-op, internship, etc.) may be identified.

7. Create a “Western Ontario Online Training Network”; a portal for suppliers of education and training services in Southwestern Ontario to showcase their course offerings and assist with youth retention and re-attraction. Enable users to search by key word or topic and ensure provider responsibility for updating content. Include links to Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and employment agencies, home-based business associations; and links to innovation services and entrepreneurship.

8. Assist in the development of regional market ready kits that are designed to attract business immigrants and migrants into Southwestern Ontario. This should include profiles of businesses looking for succession buyers and lifestyle opportunities that exist across the region. Another option is to explore collaboration with The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), through the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP). CIIP prepares newcomers for economic integration while still in their country of origin and also helps immigrants prepare for economic success by providing information, planning and online support through partners in Canada.

The workforce-related actions in Strategic Priority 3 – Regional Sector Strategies follow:

16. Collect, create and maintain comprehensive sector profiles for each of the region’s target sectors and host the profiles on the WOWC website. Each sector profile should contain statistics on the number of businesses, the number of occupations available, export and import figures and characteristics of the sector’s workforce (age, skill level, where job growth is occurring etc.).

18. Map and profile Southwestern Ontario’s Innovation Ecosystem… … including “relevant workforce development programs”.

2.2 Workforce Development in Rural Ontario, Rural Ontario Institute

Source: [https://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/knowledge-centre/foresight-papers](https://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/knowledge-centre/foresight-papers)

In 2019 the Rural Ontario Institute published a paper on workforce development initiatives underway in rural and smaller community Ontario. The report cited the objectives of the 2018 WOWC Workforce Development Strategy and mentioned the two related conferences in 2018 and 2019. The objectives are:

**Objective 1:** To strengthen the access and quality of labour market intelligence to address the needs of businesses and create opportunities to bring together businesses, economic developers and educators to strengthen the alignment between business needs and education programming.

**Objective 2:** To assemble intelligence that will inform municipal business retention and succession planning activities. Included in this objective is the need to advocate for improved programming support.

**Objective 3:** To improve the region’s access to skilled and talented labour pool that is poised and positioned to respond to changing economic conditions.
The report cites numerous initiatives in the WOWC region to address workforce development and population attraction including:

- Huron County Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategy (WARS)
- Minto Alumni Attraction Program (www.comehometominto.ca)
- Efforts to attract unemployed/underemployed immigrants living in the GTA
- Bringing transit to rural areas (Huron Shores, etc.)
- Attracting workers initiatives (Live and Work Wellington, etc.)
- Youth retention (North Wellington Youth Connections, etc.)

2.3 Workforce Planning West – COVID-19 Workforce Scenarios

Source: https://www.workforcewindsorsussex.com/workforce-scenarios/

Workforce Planning West, a coalition of nine workforce planning boards in Southwestern Ontario, with assistance from project partners Libro Credit Union, Ontario Tourism Innovation Lab, and Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus, have published their Workforce Planning West Scenario Planning Report, along with nine local scenario planning reports, following six months of industry consultation involving more than 250 stakeholders and key informants.

Each report describes how the supply and demand of the labour market in southwestern Ontario may shift in the next 12-24 months as a result of COVID-19 and identifies specific actions and initiatives that employment and training services, government, secondary and post-secondary education, and community leaders can implement in the near future to mitigate impacts or bridge skills gaps that emerge in each of the future scenarios. The reports are accompanied by an interactive online dashboard of key scenario indicators that determine the scenario-based labour market outcomes.

Workforce Planning West has developed a Scenario Planning Toolkit to help organizations develop workforce plans coming out of COVID-19.

The four scenarios are shown in Figure 3 below. For each of the four scenarios there are recommendations for businesses and recommendations for new policies, investments, programs, and supports.
Scenario 1: BACK TO NORMAL: Minimal change to the workforce and society. Due to the uncertain status of the pandemic outside Canada, international travel is still restricted.

Current and Projected Skills Shortages
- Businesses that struggled to find staff prior to March 2020 continue to struggle.
- Training opportunities are difficult to access because education providers have not expanded their online offerings.
- The digital gap excludes people in rural communities who may not have reliable internet access.
- Reskilling and upskilling opportunities are difficult to access because they are not offered when and where people can learn.
- Healthcare saw an exodus of talent out of the sector after the pandemic.
- Manufacturing continues to expand and increase hiring but will struggle to find staff.

RECOVER Stage (September 2021 – June 2022)
- For the most part, society and the workforce are largely how they were in early 2020. Workforce challenges will need to be a primary focus.

Early RESILIENCE stage: (June 2022 - December 2022)
- The international COVID-19 crisis is under control in most countries and the vaccine effort continues in countries with populations that are more difficult to reach. International travel resumes and the tourism season has a strong year.

Recommendations:
- Apprenticeship programs will need to be a focus.
- Work-integrated learning outside of apprenticeships needs to be expanded.
- Training in communication, conflict management, curiosity, customer service, motivation, and teamwork will be needed.
• Training in digital skills will be required.
• Most importantly, there needs to be a multi-channel advertising campaign so the general public is aware of all of these services and programs.

Scenario 2: A WHOLE NEW WORLD: In this scenario, there are dramatic changes to society but minimal changes to the workforce. There is a huge shift in consumer behaviour that impacts how and where we consume goods and services. Businesses will have to adapt and invest in the digital marketplace, warehousing, delivery, and solving the last mile. This is particularly true for rural areas, which shifts to more online shopping and curbside service models. People are permanently changed from their pandemic experience.

Current and Projected Skills Shortages
• Need to be an increased focus on mental health and wellness in the workforce.
• Construction labour shortages will continue in Scenario 2. Manufacturing is continuing to grow and expand. People are continuing to move from large urban centres to smaller towns and cities. This will require housing construction and expansion of services to meet the needs of a growing population.

RECOVER stage (September 2021 – June 2022)
• The workforce mostly reverts to how things were in early 2020.

Early RESILIENCE stage (June 2022 - December 2022)
• Organizations are quick to discontinue their pandemic-related practices and return to how they conducted themselves prior to the pandemic. In contrast, society has shifted to one that is more focused on personal and community health and well-being.

Recommendations
• As society shifts its focus toward health, wellness, and quality of life, investments in lifelong career development will be required.
• People will focus more on their own personal and professional development. They in the short-term, these changes will require expanded educational opportunities that are flexible in their delivery.
• Prior to the pandemic, we had already begun the shift away from one person, one career, where people were changing jobs and careers more frequently. This will accelerate in Scenario 2.
• Real estate agents have considerable insight into who is looking for a new home from outside the area and who is selling their current home. Include real estate boards and realtors in researching who is moving in and out of your area. If people who are relocating are already employed and will be working remotely, this does not necessarily increase the talent pool for your community.
Scenario 3: THE MORE THINGS CHANGE: In Scenario 3, businesses continue to drive change in automation, the digital marketplace, the green economy, harnessing technology, and artificial intelligence. Strategic investments are made to advance technology and infrastructure. The culture of innovation becomes more widespread.

This transformation in the world of work results in career transitions happening more frequently.

Current and Projected Skills Shortages

- There is an urgent need to upskill and reskill. Lifelong learning becomes the norm as structural changes in the workforce become common. Work and job duties evolve with technology and fast, efficient training programs offered through more flexible channels are required so people can keep their skills current and relevant.
- This change to how and where training is delivered means training needs must be quickly understood so programs can be developed and delivered as soon as possible. Companies that need staff urgently but cannot find the talent with the skills they need begin hiring part-time workers and sending them to paid training for the remainder of the work week. Training delivery channels will more frequently include online learning, LinkedIn Learning, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and private career colleges.
- More companies move to employee ownership models to increase employee engagement and morale.
- Organizations recognize the need to develop skill plans for employees and provide more frequent training so they are not constantly faced with lack of skills, turnover, and never-ending talent acquisition cycles.

RECOVER stage (September 2021 – June 2022)

- The demand for labour will decrease the unemployment rate, and increase participation and employment rates. Individuals who do not have the skills needed for these jobs will need assistance finding and accessing training, upskilling, and reskilling programs.

Early RESILIENCE stage (June 2022 – December 2022)

- Training efforts are starting to catch up to the growing demand but are still not sufficient to meet the demand for labour.

Recommendations

- In this scenario, government investment in small business, R&D, and innovation have paid off. Organizations are putting the pandemic behind them and are moving forward with plans for growth and expansion.
- Training in digital literacy and soft skills is also a need in Scenario 3.
- People who find their skills obsolete, especially those who are mid- and late-career, will need training, reskilling, and upskilling offered where and when it is convenient.
- People established in their communities cannot relocate to where the program they want to take is located.
- Post-secondary institutions and training providers will have to offer programs that are flexible and virtual so people can learn where and when they need to.
Scenario 4: THE ROARING 2020s: In Scenario 4, the health and economic crises begin to resolve by Fall 2021. The Canada-United States border opens to non-essential travel by October 2021.

A future with dramatic structural changes to the workforce and society would mean an increased need for affordable housing and infrastructure in smaller communities as people move out of large urban centres. Productivity is the focus, not where people physically do the work. Conscious capitalism emerges more where organizations move from being solely profit-oriented to also purpose-driven.

Current and Projected Skills Shortages

- As more work can be done remotely, employers will have access to a larger talent pool. Jobs that require people to be on-site will still see skills shortages in the short-term.
- Skilled trades shortages will persist as there are not enough people entering and completing apprenticeship programs to meet the demand for their labour.
- Organizations with jobs that were previously hard-to-fill will continue to struggle to find talent.
- Government investment in training will result in a cultural shift to a society and workforce with an increased focus on reskilling, upskilling, and lifelong learning. More people will gain skills for in-demand occupations where there are most readily jobs available. This includes Healthcare, Manufacturing, Construction, and Public Administration.

RECOVER stage: (September 2021 - June 2022)

- The pace of workforce and societal change will be accelerated.
- The demand for labour will decrease the unemployment rate and increase the participation and employment rates.
- Individuals who do not have the skills needed for available jobs will need assistance finding and accessing training, upskilling, and reskilling programs.

Early RESILIENCE stage (June 2022 - December 2022)

- Summer 2022 will be the first summer since 2019 that is not impacted by COVID-19. Most international travel resumes and the tourism sector is recovering. Hiring increases to levels not seen since summer 2019.

Recommendations

- New financial supports need to be developed to support people who are considering professional development and career shifts.
- Timely labour market information can be provided by the Workforce Planning Boards in digital formats, so it can be collected, maintained, and disseminated in real time.
- In this scenario, it’s critical that every person in the province has reasonable access to place-based digital labour market tools for career development and planning.
- Workforce Planning Boards can play a key role in supporting digital labour market tools and strengthening the alignment between industry and education, while publicly reporting on the skills gap. In-demand jobs
and skills can be shared widely by local stakeholders to keep occupational and sectoral training initiatives relevant.

The report includes a series of stakeholder specific recommendations as follow:

**Recommendations for government:**

1. Include a Career Day in the grade 10 Career Studies curriculum.
2. Strand B of the grade 10 Career Studies course includes learning about local, provincial, national, and global labour market information through looking at the websites of organizations that provide this data.
3. Career guidance for adults is needed.
4. A component of a lifetime career guidance system is a standardized framework/employment support system that allows individuals to explore how to use their transferable skills.
5. A database of training and support resources is needed for every community in the province.
6. Wrap around supports in health and well-being, including mental health, are needed.
7. Coordination and investments in professional development for all ministry-funded service providers.

**Recommendations for education and training providers:**

1. People who have lost their employment can benefit from targeted and focused micro-credentialing training for local in-demand occupations.
2. Significant investments are needed in training for future jobs in automation technology, auto-mobility transition, cyber security, artificial intelligence, internet of things, big data analytics, green technology, mechatronics, engineering, science, and the skilled trades.
3. Career guidance in post-secondary institutions needs a greater focus.

**Recommendations for local/regional service providers/stakeholders:**

1. Career coaching can assist workers in identifying and communicating their skills to potential employers.
2. Workforce Planning Boards play a key connector role between the supply and demand sides of their local labour market.
3. Develop a Local Labour Market Council consisting of representatives of employers, educational and training institutions, government, service providers, and industry groups to work on labour market research and data, as well as talent attraction, retention, and development strategies for the local area.
4. The 26 Workforce Development Boards in Ontario consist of networks, relationships, and knowledge of the employment, training, and workforce sectors and information about local and regional projects. This is an opportunity for knowledge sharing and exchange across the province. A forum to be better connected to each other, including an interactive website and an annual conference that brings province-wide stakeholders of the 26 boards together, provides opportunities to showcase their work and share projects, successes, knowledge, and best practices.
In addition to the main report, there were region-specific reports for Windsor-Essex, Chatham-Kent, Sarnia Lambton, Elgin Middlesex Oxford London, Bruce Grey Huron and Perth Counties, Waterloo Wellington & Dufferin, Brantford, Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk, Hamilton and Niagara. These reports included region-specific information (e.g. job postings, etc.) and specific recommendations based on the local workforce.

2.4 Beyond the Big City

How Small Communities across Canada can attract and retain Newcomers’ Pathways to Prosperity Victoria Esses and Charlie Carter.

Pathways to Prosperity: Canada is “an alliance of university, community, and government partners dedicated to fostering welcoming communities and promoting the integration of immigrants and minorities across Canada.” This report provides a summary of research in small communities across Canada into newcomer retention and attraction efforts.

Key findings from the report include:

- Perceptions of the community, presence of family friends and other immigrants, employment opportunities, educational opportunities, access to cultural and religious amenities employer support and desire for a small town living all contribute to where immigrants chose to live
- Same factors that influence resident attraction also determines retention rates factors include lack of large immigrant population culture and religious amenities, settlement services, employment opportunities for spouses, public transportation, housing racism and intolerance

The report includes the following recommendations to increase immigrant attraction and retention:

- Enhancing mobile settlement supports
- Promote value of immigrant talent and newcomer contribution to communities to potential employers
- Support international student connections to local communities
- Investments in broadband infrastructure, affordable childcare, rural and remote training and education, affordable housing and transportation

2.5 Affordable Housing Action Plan (2021), City of Brantford and County of Brant


In 2019, Brantford City Council approved the creation of the Mayor’s Housing Partnerships Task Force (the Task Force) with the goal to build partnerships to create more housing options, more quickly, across the housing continuum. The Task Force began work in early 2020, delegating
teams to tasks that would help to understand housing challenges and opportunities in the two municipalities. Tasks included housing inventory assets and needs, a review of municipal financing options, and an inventory of available land and buildings.

The work of the Task Force resulted in the Affordable Housing Action Plan (the Action Plan), published in early 2021. The Task Force, the City of Brantford, and the County of Brant are committed to ongoing engagement and collaboration to achieve the deliverables in the Action Plan. Action Plan items have associated timelines and project team members/leads. These include:

- **Inventories and Mapping Team** – Inventory housing assets and needs by neighbourhood community; Outline a potential process to speed up the zoning and planning approvals required to build more affordable housing options.
- **Financial Options Team** – Review municipal financing options; Identify potential sources of existing funding that utilized for affordable housing projects.
- **Mentorship Program Team** – Engage new potential partners; Continue to inventory available land and buildings.
- **Joint Application Team** – Develop a joint funding application process to acquire funding from CMHC; Create inventory of potential grant opportunities.
- **Future Focused Action Team** – Use funds from recent sale of municipally owned property to be used to fund new housing initiatives; Maintain an inventory of potential grant opportunities; Review the exemption for Development Charges for in-fill developments in the downtown core.

Based in the study area for the WOWS, the City of Brantford and Brant County Task Force and Action Plan provides a strong local example of housing strategy. This is also relevant to contextualize housing issues in the study area that are unique to Southwestern Ontario as opposed to general housing trends in Canada and Ontario.

### 2.6 CMHC Housing Supply Challenge


The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Supply Challenge invites citizens, stakeholders, and experts to propose solutions to the barriers to new housing supply. The challenge will distribute $300 million in funding over 5 years.

Successful submissions that address barriers to supply will receive funding to prototype or incubate their proposal. Following the prototype stage, several selected finalists will share a pool of additional funding to implement their proposed solutions.

There will be six rounds in the challenge. Each round will award proposals that address housing supply barriers such as building timelines, construction productivity, and improving data on land availability. CMCH has completed Round 1 of the challenge. Round 2 is currently underway. Details of Round 1 and Round 2 are provided below:

**Round 1: Data Drive Landing Page**
• **Purpose**: The Data Driven round considered data solutions aimed at improved decision-making for housing supply in addressing challenges and solutions that assist policy makers in increasing housing supply.

• **Shortlisted Applicant Example: Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus (EOWC)**
  - The EOWC application sought to address the shortage of proper housing data in rural eastern Ontario.
  - This challenge presents proper planning and construction of affordable housing development.
  - Through the Housing Supply Challenge, the EOWC will build streamlined digital tool to fill the housing info gap.
  - The tool will support municipalities in the planning and development of affordable housing.
  - The project aims to support not for profit builders in overcoming barriers.

**Round 2: Pre-Development Process**

• **Purpose**: Round 2 looks for ideas to address existing barriers in the pre-development phase of building housing. If selected, successful applicants will share a pool of up to $38 million to implement their solution.

• **Potential Challenges**: Potential pre-construction barriers include inflexible processes, long approval timelines, community resistance to projects, lack of collaboration tools, mismatches between policy and implementation, etc.

• **Status**: Round 2 applications will be open until August 25, 2021. Successful shortlisted applicants will be notified in October 2021 and will be provided with funding to incubate their project.

The CMHC Housing Supply Challenge provides a good overview of current, on-the-ground solutions seeking to address common housing challenges across Canada. These examples may be informative for the Housing Review to provide possible solutions to housing challenges.

2.7 Making Affordable Housing Sustainable, Federation of Canadian Municipalities

The “Making Affordable Housing Sustainable” webinar, hosted by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), provides an overview of FCM’s $300 million initiative to increase the quality, affordability, and energy efficiency of buildings.

This program fills a gap in the affordable housing sector. The $300 million fund will be allocated and disbursed to eligible recipients as a combination of grants and loans. Over seven years, $52 million will be dispersed in loans and grants annually. The additional funds will be dedicated to capacity building.
Environmental objectives are at the core of the fund. Economic and social benefits are also prioritized. These include:

- **Environmental** – Reduce energy and GHG intensity.
- **Economic** – Increase energy and housing affordability.
- **Social** – Improve building quality, increase resident comfort, health and quality of life.

For an organization to be eligible for the program, the lead applicants must be a municipal government, a municipally owned corporate or a non-profit, mission driven affordable housing provider. The program looks for buildings that are owned and operated by these organizations.

For a project to be eligible, there are energy and affordability requirements:

- **Affordability** – Rents for at least 30% of the units are less than 80% of the local median market rent.
- **New builds** – Must aim to achieve net-zero energy ready or net-zero energy.
- **Retrofits** – Minimum 25% reduction in energy consumption.

The program can support projects with funding for any stage, including planning, studies, pilot projects, and capital projects (e.g., retrofits or new builds). FCM provides the amount of funding available for each stage through the program, this includes:

- **Planning** – Up to $25,000 for 80% of eligible costs to get an energy efficient project off the ground. This could include public engagement opportunities or initial contact with professionals for project scoping.
- **Study** – Up to $175,000, 50% of eligible costs, to analyze energy efficiency options in detail, or to assess and model energy outcomes.
- **Pilot Project** – Up to $500,000, 80% of eligible costs, small-scale tests that puts innovative, high environmental performance solutions to test in order to confirm the approach will work on site. Generally, pilot projects lead to capital projects.
- **Capital Project Financing (Retrofit)** – Up to $10 million, 80% of eligible costs, to retrofit existing homes to save on energy. The grant amount increases with greater energy savings.
- **Capital Project Financing (New-Build)** – Up to $10 million, 20% of eligible costs, 50% grant to build new homes to a higher energy performance standard targeting net zero energy. This can be met with a range of standards (e.g., Passive House standard). This grant addresses a common concern regarding the increased cost associated with building more sustainable buildings.
Example Project: Retrofit Project, City of Toronto
A retrofit of seven existing buildings operated by Toronto Community Housing Corporation with a total resident population of 1,500. This project was able to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions from these buildings by 30%. The majority of improvements in this project were restricted to the mechanical system. By rebuilding the ducting system, TCHC was able to significantly reduce heating inefficiencies. This project enabled TCHC to save $500,000 per year on operating costs.

This funding opportunity provides an example funding mechanism to improve housing affordability and stock, while ensuring that housing development proceeds in an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable manner. The Housing Review will consider this fund, and example case studies, as part of a best practice review.

2.8 Lighthouse Labs - Micro credentials
Source: https://www.lighthouselabs.ca/
Lighthouse Labs is an “outcomes driven” remote education company that provides coding education from “newbie to professional developer”.

This is one example of companies providing micro credentials, reskilling and upskilling programming. The company website lists reference programs in web development and coding, data science and data analytics - programs as short as four days and bootcamps of 12 weeks full time and immersive work study bootcamps of 30 weeks aimed at international students.

2.9 Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities: Programs and Services
Source: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/
The Ontario Ministry provides a variety of workforce development related programs listed below:

**Foundational Skills**
Literacy and Basic Skills: Assisting adults to develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to transition to employment, secondary, apprenticeship or post-secondary education and increased independence.

**Apprenticeship**
Apprenticeship combines on the job and in school training for employment in skilled trades. Programs related to apprenticeship include:

- Achievement Incentive Program
- Apprenticeship
- Apprenticeship Capital Grant (ACG)
- Apprenticeship Classroom Training
- Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program (CODA)
- Group Sponsorship Grant (GSG)
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)
- Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program
Employment and Training
The Ministry oversees or supports a variety of programs directly related to employment and training including:

- Adjustment Advisory Program (AAP) - including Community Adjustment Committee (CAC) and Labour Adjustment Committee (LAC)
- Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG)
- Employment Service (ES)
- Employing Young Talent Incentive (discontinued)
- Global Experience Ontario (GEO)
- Ontario Bridging Participant Assistance Program (OBPAP)
- Ontario Bridge Training Program (OBTP)
- Ontario Employment Assistance Services (OEAS)
- Ontario Job Creation Partnerships (OJCP)
- Second Career (SC)
- SkillsAdvance Ontario Pilot (SAO)
- Supported Employment
- Youth Job Connection (YJC)

Labour Market and Post-secondary Education
These programs include:

- Local Boards
- Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC) Pilots
- Ontario Labour Market Partnerships (OLMP)
- Ontario Human Capital Research and Innovation Fund (OHCRIF)

2.10 Immigration Matters
Source: Canada.ca/immigration-matters

Immigration Matters is a Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship Canada initiative focused on promoting the impact of immigrants across various industries including health care, business, sports, science and technology, arts and culture, food services and philanthropy.

A series of infographics provides data on the percentage of immigrants in various occupations per sector. Excerpts from these infographics are included in the appendix.

The program includes a toolkit to show the benefits that temporary and permanent immigrants are playing in Canada’s response to COVID-19 recovery efforts. In addition to city and newcomer profiles, the toolkit provides tips on developing immigration stories and social media efforts.

2.11 Small Towns, Big Opportunities, Ontario Real Estate Association

Unlocking growth in Ontario’s Rural and Northern Communities
Source: https://www.orea.com/Political-Advocacy/RuralHousing

This policy paper from the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) reports that non GTHA towns and cities have been losing talented youth to more urban centres and a move away from traditional goods producing economies.
According to OREA, “COVID-19 created a number of challenges but also renewed opportunities for smaller communities”. It states that “The attractiveness of the big city has been replaced by the lure of small-town life.”

The report says that the option for remote working has accelerated plans for Ontarians to move to smaller more relaxed location with many returning to where they were raised. The report says that with the right policies the provincial government could help rural communities turn this short term rebound into long-term growth.

It includes the following recommendations:

- Establish Rural Opportunity Zones with investment incentives
- Tax holidays and tax deferrals to qualifying investors in rural communities
- Establish an office relocation strategy to move eligible bureaucracies and agencies outside of the urban core
- Review the provincial funding formula and ensure equitable funding for rural infrastructure
- Continue to expand natural gas to lower the cost of business and cost of living in rural Ontario
- Eliminate barriers to broadband installation
- Accelerate the conversion of commercial properties into mixed-use residential sites
- Enable micro-credential program offerings in post-secondary satellite campuses in rural Ontario
- Encourage new Canadians to settle in rural municipalities by expanding rural Immigration Pilot, local immigration support services, Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program stream
- Provide incentives for recent graduates to move to rural Ontario
- Promote jurisdictional clarity for development approvals, accelerate timeline for new builds
- Accelerate approvals for construction, operation and maintenance of communal living facilities for elderly
- Eliminate existing Rural Growth Plan Targets
- Develop rent to own program for affordable units, creating access to housing, worker retention and affordable alternatives for would be home buyers.

### 2.12 Over 55 London: The Longevity Economy

Source: www.worklonger.ca

This study supported by Over 55 London, considers the economic impact of mature workers.

The authors identified financial and psychological reasons for mature workers to continue to work; many mature workers need to continue to work financially but many want and need to stay active professionally.
Among its observations:

- Mid-career counselling would help individuals to switch careers later in life.
- The mature worker population is growing. Government investment, specifically for the mature market, is required.
- Labour market shortages are not expected to slow down in next 10 years. Strategies to keep people working longer will compliment workforce recruitment efforts.

The report provides a series of recommendations by various types of mature workers.

- **Retired**: mid-career coaches to develop individualized purpose-oriented post-retirement plan. Foster networking and volunteering opportunities, provide volunteer training.
- **Transitioning Jobs or Industries**: job placements for sectors with skills shortages, transitioning career support and rapid reskilling programs.
- **Unemployed or underemployed**: centralized career planning systems, coordinated case management, work experience programs, job search services.
- **Those working past traditional retirement age**: technology adoption to support aging or barriered workers, mature workers associations and advocacy.
- **Those considering entrepreneurship**: fast track supports, mentorship for sectors facing skills shortages, ongoing supports and spaces for entrepreneurs.
- **Employers**: programs designed for mature workers such as benefits, jobs grants, employment agencies and awareness campaigns, age-friendly workplace accommodations, addressing ageism, mentorship programs.

### 2.13 South Centre Ontario Region (SCOR) Transportation Plan

**Source**: [http://ridesct.ca/](http://ridesct.ca/)

The South Centre Ontario Region (SCOR) Transportation Plan includes the following jurisdictions within the WOWC:

- Grey County, Huron Shores
- Middlesex County
- Norfolk County
- Perth County
- Sarnia, Strathroy-Caradoc & City of London
- Tillsonburg

The mandate of the plan is to:

- Provide a seamless and integrated customer experience for passengers using each of the Member inter-community public transportation services;
- Promote inter-community connections between the Member public transportation services;
- Identify and share best practices for the planning and delivery of inter-community public transportation services;
• Identify potential operating efficiencies and capital savings that may arise from Members pooling their resources or purchasing as a single entity;
• Present a unified voice to the Province of Ontario and other key stakeholders with regards to matters that deal with the long-term sustainability of inter-community public transportation service in southwest Ontario.

The members have committed to address the following responsibilities:

• **Fare Structure and Policy:** Work towards schedules that accommodate seamless transfers between connecting Member systems.
• **Accessibility:** Develop common practices and policies for accessible bus stops, training, access, and other accessibility topics.
• **Technology:** Work together to utilize technology that is either used by all Members or can integrate with Member systems, with the objective of planning a seamless customer experience across systems.
• **Advocacy:** Work together to present common issues and concerns to senior levels of government and other key stakeholders in order to sustainably facilitate the success, coordination, and extension of Southwestern Ontario Community Transportation Grant Program projects into the future.
• **First Mile-Last Mile Integration:** Develop strategies and supporting policies / programs to facilitate local ‘first-mile/last-mile’ opportunities to enhance inter-community connectivity and feeder services to Member inter-community transit services and passenger rail corridors, while improving local mobility.
• **Service Standards:** Work together to identify and develop a common service standard to guide service delivery and measure performance through a series of Key Performance Indicators.
• **Bus Stop Identification:** Utilize a bus stop identification design template for all fixed-route inter-community public transportation services.
• **Planning and Scheduling:** Identify and validate inter-community travel patterns. Work towards schedules that accommodate seamless transfers between connecting Member systems.
• **Marketing and Communications:** Support Member transit services by developing communications, marketing and promotional activities that promote inter-community transit services and generate awareness.

2.14 Société Économique de l'Ontario: Workforce Development  
Source: [https://seo-ont.ca/](https://seo-ont.ca/)

The Société Économique de l'Ontario works on projects to support the Francophone workforce across Ontario. One of the main focus areas now is the attraction of French speaking immigrants to the province. The organization provides services and support to companies and immigrants coming to Canada with a work contract under the Mobilité Francophone program.

It has established a French-language business incubator program in Hamilton meant to support immigrant Francophone entrepreneurs.
2.15 Eastern Ontario regional economic development strategy,

Eastern Ontario Leadership Council

The 2019 Eastern Ontario Leadership Council Economic Development Strategy put a significant focus on workforce development. It was one of three strategic priorities including: technology integration and innovation; and integrated and intelligent transportation systems.

Feedback from employers in the region indicated that “workforce issues are an acute concern across the region”. The report concludes “Eastern Ontario will need a significantly greater emphasis on attracting, retaining and re-skilling workers” in the years ahead. Differentiating between what can and should be done collectively versus locally is a theme in the plan as the “workforce is distributed across a 50,000-square kilometre area.”

The workforce integration between rural and urban areas in Eastern Ontario was identified, however most of commuting flow is one way with 110,000 rural residents commuting to urban for work.

The report documents that many lower wage occupations are becoming the hardest to fill. It also indicates that export-industries will grow if they are comfortable the workforce will be there to meet demand in the years ahead.

**Strategic Priority: Workforce Development and Deployment - Aspirations**

- Eastern Ontario is recognized as having the capacity to identify and respond quickly to changing labour market conditions.
- Pan-regional data, analytical capability, and collaborative relationships are in place to accelerate matchmaking between employers and workforce talent.

The strategy included a number of near term and mid-term actions to meet these aspirational outcomes including:

**Near-Term (12-24 months)**

1. Continue to invest in labour market intelligence by purchasing 3rd party data and analytical tools. Connect with existing job vacancy portals that target key sectors (ex. ONWARD for municipal government job vacancies). The additional labour market intelligence should inform:
   a. Employer One Survey Results
   b. Local Workforce Development and Skills Training Strategies and Programs
   c. Local Economic Development Programs (i.e. BR+E)
   d. Post-Secondary Curriculum Development
   e. Employer search strategies
   f. Region-wide talent attraction strategies and programs

2. Working alongside the Eastern Ontario Workforce Training Boards, the Postsecondary Task Force, regional school boards, and municipal economic development organizations provide essential data and workforce services to support Eastern Ontario’s Workforce Development objectives. Specific tactics include:
a. Identifying and promoting sources of funding to support businesses/industries’ capabilities towards the recruitment and retention of workers.

b. Working with regional school boards to improve educational facilities and curricula for pre-K-12 and higher education that reflect the diversity of career pathways in the EO economy.

c. Identify opportunities to build partnerships between schools and high growth businesses through apprenticeships, mentoring programs and other training/resource sharing programs.

d. Continue to collect and gather current (real-time) labour demand and labour supply data to determine where gaps are anticipated and evaluate the strength of the regional talent pipeline.

e. Working with the Workforce Training Board, address training and adult skills development (reskilling) associated with technology investment and innovation in the workplace.

3. Monitor and develop initiatives to act on insights from available labour market information (both demand and supply). Data should be collected on:

   a. Migration patterns of Eastern Ontario residents who leave for postsecondary. Track where they go, what programming they complete, and if/when they return (to Eastern Ontario).

   b. Occupations and skills associated with Eastern Ontario residents who commute for employment outside of their main resident community.

   c. Current labour supply trends, training and post-secondary preferences of students, and the emergence of new jobs as a result of technology and economic shifts.

   d. Current and probable labour demand trends across businesses (i.e. emergence of new skillsets required across industries and sectors).

4. Engage area municipalities in the promotion of preferred job posting services across the region. The marketing campaign should address:

   a. Local and regional job posting services available to businesses (approved by local and regional economic development offices).

   b. Local and regional career pathway support for job seekers (workforce boards).

**Mid-Term (25-60 months):**

5. Continue to regularly engage regional businesses and high growth potential businesses on the impact of technology and automation on productivity and job creation and retention. The discussion should seek to inform:

   a. Local success stories on the positives of technology introduction/innovation in the workplace and use of existing programs and supports.

   c. Local approaches to multi-skilling (constant retraining/rotation of duties) existing labourers and the opportunities/challenges associated with that process.

   d. Innovative ways to address unemployment caused by technology investments.

   e. Opportunities to enhance business productivity through the integration of technology and automation.
6. Advocate for increased and improved career pathway counselling and training for teachers/guidance counsellors through consistent education on jobs in the region’s key sectors (ex. Health Care, Public Administration, Manufacturing, Retail, Tourism and Agriculture). Consider opportunities to:
   a. Develop a program of business tours, seminars, and hands-on learning opportunities for students to demonstrate the broad range of employment opportunities in Eastern Ontario (ex. improve student perceptions on “dirty” manufacturing jobs by showcasing modern manufacturing facilities and higher-skill jobs).
   b. Share employee experiences as testimonials that can be shared through local economic development marketing campaigns that are targeting new residents and families.

7. Convene an annual summit with economic development, employment agencies, chambers, employers and post-secondary institutions to evaluate skill and occupation needs and opportunities in the region and match those needs with available training programs.

8. Explore opportunities to increase the migration of new residents (ex. immigrant attraction, Indigenous integration) and re-entry to the labour force as a means to supporting local workforce demand and address declining population. Consideration should be given to:
   a. Becoming a major partner in the Ontario Labour Market Partnerships’ immigrant focused workforce development project.
   b. Building relationships between Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal’s international airports to increase Eastern Ontario’s presence at the airports’ international student and newcomer booths.
   c. Supporting workforce related content on regional immigration portals.
   d. Supporting the development of second career opportunities through better integration of First Nations workers, former entrepreneurs, individuals returning from social assistance programs.

**Defining Successes**
- At least one workforce attraction program/campaign has been executed into a proximal city/urban area.
- A workforce development program/project has been developed and implemented for each of five high-importance sectors.
- At least two projects have been implemented to increase workforce mobility in commuter sheds without comprehensive public transit.

**Possible Performance Metrics**
- Net change in employment
- Number of job vacancies and hires
- Number of workers with defined qualifications
- Number of qualified workers for target sector and occupations
- Educational/skill levels of jobs by industry
- Jobs filled by graduates in the community
- Employment by sector and by location
- Hiring patterns of growing sectors
- Employment gap by age
2.16 Eastern Ontario Leadership Council: Recovery and Resilience Project


The EOLC undertook several workforce planning initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. One project involved a literature review of the impact of other recent crises on the labour market and other aspects of the economy. This literature review concluded:

- It is key to have a flexible labour market specifically “a flexible, adaptable and multi-skilled labour force”. After other economic disruptions there was a considerable shift in labour market needs and the areas with the most flexible labour markets were more successful.
- Having a more educated workforce does not appear to make a region’s workforce more resilient. It is more important to have the right mix of skills for the jobs emerging post the economic crisis (the demands of the labour market).

The EOLC also developed a detailed model of the economic impacts of COVID-19 based on a number of different scenarios. NOTE: As of May 28 the modelling is no longer available online.

2.17 Wellington County Housing Plans and Policies

Wellington County has several plans, policies, and programs available to Guelph-Wellington residents to ensure that everyone can maintain an appropriate, safe, and affordable home. The County’s plans, policies and programs aim to improve housing outcomes for individuals and families across the housing continuum. The following provides a brief overview of some key initiatives from the County:

Wellington County Official Plan (2021 update)

Source: https://www.wellington.ca/en/resident-services/pl-landusepolicies.aspx#Wellington-County-Official-Plan

The Wellington County Official Plan (OP) is a legal document intended to give direction over the next 20 years to the physical development of the County’s seven member municipalities: Town of Minto, Township of Wellington North, Township of Mapleton, Township of Centre Wellington, Town of Erin, Township of Guelph Eramosa, and Township of Puslinch.

According to the OP, the County will ensure that residential growth can be accommodated for a minimum of 10 years through residential intensification, redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for new residential development.

The County will maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

Policies in the OP relevant to the housing review include those for residential intensification, greenfield housing, affordable housing, additional residential units, and garden suites. Relevant examples are identified below:
• **3.3.1 Targets** – A minimum of 25% of new housing in the County will be affordable to low and moderate income households.

• **4.4.3 Residential Intensification** – The OP contains policies encouraging intensification in urban centres and to a lesser extent, hamlets. The strategic approach to intensification intends to retain small town character and revitalize downtown areas. Policies promote intensification above commercial uses and a broader mix of housing types than has been the norm in small towns.

• **4.4.4 Greenfield Housing** – The County will encourage increased densities and a broader mix of housing in greenfield areas. This will include requirements for new developments to achieve minimum density targets of 40 persons and jobs per hectare. Specifically, medium density housing types in new subdivisions and other Greenfield areas will be encouraged.

• **4.4.5 Affordable Housing** – This section defines affordable housing based on different tenures (e.g., ownership housing versus rental housing). To ensure affordability, the Council will ensure that opportunities exist to provide housing to moderate and lower income households. In Wellington, Additional Residential Units (ARUs) will provide the bulk of affordable housing options.

• **4.4.6 Additional Residential Units** – ARUs (e.g., basement apartments, secondary suites, etc.) are identified in the OP as an effective form of intensification and increase the stock of affordable rental housing in the community. ARUs are required to be serviced by water and wastewater services. It is the policy of the OP to authorize:
  
  o a) The use of two residential units in a single-detached dwelling, semi-detached dwelling or rowhouse; and
  o b) The use of a residential unit in a building or structure ancillary to a single detached dwelling, semi-detached dwelling or rowhouse.

• **4.4.7 Garden Suites** – Subject to Section 13.4 of the OP, a garden suite is allowed provided it is established near farm buildings an/or main residence on a property and adequate water supply and sewage disposal systems are available. The OP outlines local municipal authority to enact zoning provisions.

**Wellington County Attainable Housing Strategy (2021)**


Attainable housing is a priority for the County and its member municipalities. The purpose of the Attainable Housing Strategy (the Strategy) is to provide recommendations to assist the County with its attainable housing shortage. This document recognizes that the scale of this issue is significant, particularly for the County’s workforce.

The Strategy recognizes that the lack of attainable housing is linked to workforce attraction, among other interrelated factors (e.g., geographic location). The Strategy broadly establishes strategies appropriate for all low and moderate-income households with the understanding that addressing the County’s attainable housing shortage will require more than one recommendation. The Strategy establishes three types of recommendations categorized as:

• **Policy-based recommendations** – Including but not limited to the establishment of an attainable housing growth target, density bonusing, streamlined planning approvals, etc.
• **Financial incentives** – Including but not limited to Development Charge reductions or exemptions, reduction in Parkland Dedication requirements, and Planning Application and Building Permit fee reductions.

• **County action-oriented initiatives** – Creation of Community Land Trust (CLT), Demolition Control By-laws, Public-Private Partnership Task Force, etc.

The County developed a Working Group in May 2021 to review and evaluate the various recommendations presented in the Strategy and will continue to prioritize actioning the Strategy moving forward.

**Wellington County 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Guelph-Wellington (2019 update)**


Under the Housing Services Act, 2011, the County is responsible for developing, approving, and overseeing the implementation of a 10-year strategy. In 2014, the County developed the 10-Year (2014-2024) Housing and Homelessness Plan (HHP) entitled "A Place to Call Home." This process brought the community together with a common vision that “Everyone in Guelph-Wellington can find and maintain an appropriate, safe and affordable place to call home.” In 2019, the County released an annual update on the HHP, representing the fifth and final report for the initial 2014 plan.

The 2019 annual report identifies actions taken by the County of Wellington and community partners to meet the goals of the HHP. Actions relevant to the Housing Review and workforce strategy include:

• The County allocated over $3 million in Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative funding to create new affordable housing stock in the County and the City of Guelph.

• The County provided a 25-year forgivable loan to Guelph Independent Living to add two affordable housing units for adults with physical disabilities.

• The County started testing an online housing application, which will improve intake, applicant management, and communication with applicant households.

• The County launched RideWell, a public transit service, which uses a rideshare model, improving transportation for service access across the County and into the City of Guelph.

• The County allocated additional investment of $180,000 in Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative funding towards repairs for existing community housing stock.

Moving forward, the County looks to strengthen partnerships and collaboration between key partners, including the province, municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations, housing providers, and other stakeholders. These partnerships will be crucial to advance all forms of housing in the County.

2.18 **Media Reports on Economic Trends**

This section provides a summary of various media reports on economic trends related to workforce development that will help inform the development of the Workforce Development Strategy.
In May 2020 the media were reporting on the increased demand for rural properties as online rural property searches increased across Ontario.

US media outlets were seeing trends of city dwellers moving from urban areas to more rural settings. Experts were reporting “profound psychological change” due to the pandemic with city dwellers and suburbanites fleeing urban areas.

Motivations for urbanites leaving the city included seeking a safer surrounding due to COVID-19, the trend to working remotely; many companies announcing the remote work would continue indefinitely. The pandemic has resulted in families reevaluating their homes with a desire to live closer to family (especially aging parent), seeking more affordable homes and craving nature and open spaces available in rural areas.

At the same time the media was reporting on strains to rural community resources based on COVID-19 and growing populations. They pointed out that rural areas don’t have the infrastructure such as connectivity, education, and healthcare that urbanites expect.

In Canada media reports in the summer of 2020 showed increase real estate demand by residents from across the country for renting and purchasing homes. Reports also referenced the increased use of digital tools to buy and sell properties and in many cases, purchasers were buying properties they have not yet seen.

Media reports the large-scale movement out of urban cities to more rural remote areas was attributed to individuals who could work from home and younger first-time buyers looking for affordable properties.

Reports quoted industry representatives estimating that one third of the working population could telework 100% of the time and another one third could do it most of the time. Reports also noted that teleworking could represent an opportunity for companies to cut costs.

The media referenced Statistics Canada’s reports in January 2021 showing that Canada’s biggest cities had experienced record-breaking loss of residents as they moved to smaller communities with more affordable homes.

The annual U-Haul Report reported on the top 20 cities in Canada seeing an influx of people in January 2021. In that report four of the 20 cities referenced (Chatham, Sarnia, St. Thomas and Brantford) are in the WOWC region. The report attributed the population gains to the lower cost of living, including lower rent and housing prices than in larger cities. Related reports suggested that smaller communities would benefit from the growing population and tax revenue but also with the extra discretionary spending power of these newcomers due to their “urban rate pay cheques.”

In 2020 the Canadian Ministry of Immigration announced federal government plans to attract more newcomers to London region to fill jobs that will be needed to fuel post-pandemic recovery. These initiatives included

- The existing International Student Program
- Preparing to launch a Municipal Nominee Program to align local economic needs to the skills, experience and talent of aspiring newcomers
Starting with domestic temporary immigrants and international students
Utilizing digital tools and application processing

Communities seized on the population migration trends with campaigns targeting GTA residents including Owen Sound’s Work from Home Capital of Canada program and the London Economic Development Corporation’s Don’t Tell Toronto Campaign.

The impact of increased demand in rural areas was increasing housing prices. In March 2021 there were reports that the average Canadian home prices had increased by $100,000 in just six months. According to the report national home sales increased by 6.6% from January to February 2021. The biggest increase in WOWC region was a 35% increase over previous year in Oxford County.

A report on affordable housing showed similarities between Canada and New Zealand indicating that in both countries, the availability of affordable housing was the second most common concerns among residents, with COVID-19 the top concern. In both counties experts were expressing their fear of speculative investment in housing due to high demand, low interest rates and rising prices. Unlike Canada, New Zealand has begun efforts to discourage speculative purchases by requiring residents to put 20% down and investors to put 40% down on home purchases.

Article references are included in the appendix.
3. Regional Workforce Strategies Case Studies

A study of regional workforce strategies in other regions can provide some key insights for the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus. These case studies provide a foundation for discussions on what is feasible in the Western Ontario region, the capacity available in the community as well as similarities and differences in the needs of the community. These case studies can also position WOWC members to have informed discussions about their future vision of workforce development in the region.

The following section provides summaries of programs and research reports from the following regions or organizations:

- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute
- Regional Australia Institute
- Rural Councils Victoria, Australia
- Rural Ireland
- Rural Minnesota, US
- Transatlantic Council on Migration

3.1 Appalachian Regional Commission: Investing in Appalachia’s Future


The Appalachian Regional Commission’s five-year Strategic Plan includes the following strategic investment goals:

1. Economic Opportunities
2. Ready Workforce
3. Critical Infrastructure
4. Natural and Cultural Assets
5. Leadership and Community Capacity

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) was established in 1965. The Commission includes state and federal levels of government, with local participation through multi-county local development districts and support from community, business and civic leaders. Its primary function is project funding allocation based on an agreed set of regional strategies.

Priority areas for funding are: the need for more jobs, higher educational attainment, more investment to improve health status, and more investment in areas of persistent and severe economic distress. The overall focus of ARC is; “investing in the future by helping the Region’s communities seize opportunities that both reduce disparities and advance prosperity”.

ARC partners with private and not for profit organizations, regional and national philanthropic institutions and federal agencies to leverage its resources for the benefit of Appalachia’s people and community.
The commission prepares a strategic plan every 4 to 6 years. The current plan identified the following areas of opportunity: which included local food systems, tourism, health care, manufacturing and diversified energy. The related strategic investment goals are:

- Investment in entrepreneurial and business development,
- Increase the education, knowledge, skills and health of the local residents,
- Investment in critical infrastructure (broadband, transportation, waste and water systems,
- Strengthening the regions natural and cultural heritage assets
- Building the capacity and skills of the current and next generation leaders and organizations to innovate, collaborate and advance community and economic development.

Within the strategic investment goal of a ready workforce ARC identified that the actions that focus on increasing the education, knowledge, skills and health of the residents to work and succeed in the community. Post-secondary education was identified as a “key component of the business and entrepreneurial ecosystem and a primary economic driver”.

ARC’s funding programs are aimed at connecting the interests of business, education and the workforce in an integrated system that lets young people succeed both within the current system and prepares them for the future. The program includes targeted funding to support numeracy, literacy and problem solving as well as soft skills such as communication, time management and interpersonal skills. STEAM: Science, technology, engineering, arts and math) funding programs are a priority.

The strategy includes recommendations to work collaboratively with the educational players, business community and students. The plan includes the development and support of career specific education and skills training for students and workers, especially in sectors experiencing growth both locally and regionally and that provide advancement opportunities.

The strategy recognizes the interdependence of health and wellness programs to education and addresses affordable and high-quality health care, removing barriers for access and utilizing health practices to establish sustainable clinical services specific the community.

**Insights for the WOWC Workforce Strategy**

1. Community needs must be accurately identified, and the strategies must be designed to support those needs. Each community has its own identified needs.
2. New and less traditional partnerships should be considered.
3. Innovative approaches will be required to both build and strengthen economic growth.
4. Many of the challenges identified are not significantly different than those identified by the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus and therefore represent an opportunity to learn from their experience.
3.2 Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute
Rural Workforce Development

This report assessed the growing gap of unskilled workers in the Columbia Basin, comparing the types of skills that workers obtained versus the skills that are required by employers. The paper outlines several concerns related to workforce development including training, recruitment and retention challenges.

The operational definition of workforce development used in this study was “the coordination of public and private sector policies and programs that provides individuals with the opportunity for a sustainable livelihood and helps organizations achieve exemplary goals, consistent with the societal context.” To this end the focus is not only job training and recruitment but retention and advancement.

The report focused not only on the challenges in workforce development but also the strategies that might be employed recognizing that there is no magic solution and that there is no one formula for success.

Challenges to workforce development included globalization, technology, the new economy, political change (increased openness to foreign and private ownership and the declining influence of unions) and demographic shifts (Baby boomers, Millennials, Gen X). The challenges are further complicated when recognized that all these factors are interrelated.

The paper identifies the following strategies for workforce development practitioners and researchers. The most effective workforce development strategies “target higher wage jobs, mix job readiness and contextualized skill training, provide post-employment services and supports and provide upgrade training in the context of identified career pathways”.

The focus of recruitment strategies is particularly challenging in rural communities and must be specific to each community. The benefits and risks must be understood as the strategies are formulated. The increasing emphasis on inclusivity must be a cornerstone of recruitment and retention initiatives.

Retention strategies identified include creating advancement opportunities and providing training help for rural business. Workers can be motivated to stay if there are opportunities to continue to learn and to advance. Employers need to be aware of generational differences and as an example, allow for, or support more mature employees to continue to work part time/ flexible hours to act as mentors or trainers.

Critical to any workforce development plan is the role education must play. High school education should include workforce development programs that support high skills majors and make pathways to post-secondary easier. Post-secondary programs should focus on specialized training, and support educators in negotiating with employers to hire well-trained new graduates. Cross training and lifelong learning should also be considered.

Collaboration within educators, companies, community-based agencies, governments and other stakeholders play a critical role in any workforce development strategy.
The authors recommend the establishment of Workforce Development Networks. Workforce Development Networks are partnerships, collaborations or alliances that typically involve community-based organizations, education and training institutions, employers and public sector organizations whose primary objective is to provide stronger linkages between the supply and demand sides of the labour market.

Workforce Development Networks provide several benefits including:

- Increasing the information regarding availability of jobs and the skills required to both workers and employers.
- Smoothing the transition of young workers from school to work by improving information flow between educational institutions.
- Helping employers overcome the collective action problem of wanting a well-educated and trained workforce while no individual employers wanting to risk investing in training and employee they might lose to a competitor.

**Insights for the WOWC Workforce Strategy**

1. Collaboration with all stakeholders in the identification, design and implementation of any workforce development strategy in critical.
2. The strategies must align with the region’s economic development plan both in the short and longer term.
3. Understanding the “community” is critical in developing a plan that will work and that ensures that retention and recruitment are successful.
4. Education never stops, it is a lifelong activity.
5. Informal partnerships could provide the foundation for a Workforce Development Network.

### 3.3 Regional Australia Institute, The Future of Regional Jobs

This report considers the opportunities and challenges of future work across Australia’s regions. It discusses the shift from primary and secondary industries to the service industry, considers the impact of these shifts, transitions for workers and regional economies and projects employment changes and outcomes.

The report focuses on Regional Learning Systems (RLS). Based on previous research the authors suggest future skills for new jobs will require a mix of high tech, personal contact (high touch) and high care capabilities as flexibility and creativity. They are optimistic that locally driven strategies have great potential to impact the local workforce and create positive outcomes.

Young people are facing barriers to entering the workforce as technology eliminates entry level jobs. A learning systems approach should be used to monitor and forecast labour market trends, the education, training and marketing and how employers are using and sourcing the required skills.

All stakeholders, including employers, young people, educators, older job seekers, families and the local community must be involved in ensuring the alignment of skills supply with skills
demand. The success of the system requires full and equal participation of all stakeholders. The success factors include:

- Alignment of school and community/local government goals and priorities,
- Close connections with community/employers/industry/education and training partners,
- Availability of infrastructure,
- Providing students with a sense of “what’s next” and the pathways to get there, and
- Equipping students with multiple skill sets.

To build human capital the report proposes that any intervention must carefully consider the users. Interventions should be education-lead, flexible, place-based. When done effectively they can shape the local economy.

Understanding the current job market and economic trends and predicting future job trends is a challenge both locally and regionally.

In-demand jobs will include combine high tech, personal contact and care activities. Students (future workers) will need a mix of both technical and soft personal skills to be successful in the 2030 market as future jobs will be flexible, entrepreneurial and dynamic.

The authors predict lower skill jobs will disappear and be replaced by automation. Many jobs which were previously medium and high skill jobs will be systematized and automated. New job creation will focus on technical specializations while high demand jobs will focus on high touch, education and care occupations and activities.

**Insights for the WOWC Workforce Strategy**

Community led efforts to influence and improve local and regional labour markets do affect change. These efforts must be multifaceted and need to involve all stakeholders to be successful. Alignment of skill supply and skill demand will require active and innovative education and training practices.

In order to prepare for future changes, it is imperative that students and potential job seeks are prepared with both technical and soft skills to ensure adaptability and success.

**3.4 Rural Councils Victoria (Australia)**

**Overview:**

The State of Victoria in Australia is home to 6.6 million people most of whom live in the Greater Melbourne metropolitan area. There are also 10 regional cities with the rest of the population living in rural areas. Rural Victoria has been growing both its population and workforce significantly in recent years. In addition, the share of the workforce over the age of 55 is now above 30 percent and in some sectors is nearly 40 percent of the total. These trends prompted the Rural Councils organization (similar to WOWC) to develop a plan to address the growing shortage of workers in the rural areas.
The background research for the strategy uncovered some interesting findings:

- Public sectors of the economy are growing and potentially crowding employment and growth in the private sector. This is a big concern because a number of key private sector industries have been growing strongly in recent years.
- The construction sector workforce is particularly challenged in rural Victoria.
- Students are working less than in the past (only 50% employed) making it harder to fill part time jobs normally filled in large part by students.
- While the topline unemployment rate is very low (4.4%), there is considerable ‘underemployment’.
- Many small businesses are finding it harder to recruit staff compared to larger businesses and organizations.
- There have been multiple organizations forecasting workforce demand in rural Victoria and the projections have been all over the map. There needs to be greater clarity.
- In general workers in rural Victoria have less access to training.
- Fostering more startup companies can play an important role in addressing workforce demand.

The workforce development strategy for rural Victoria has thirteen initiatives:

1. Host a Rural Workforce Development Summit
2. Do a better job of identifying and promoting employment opportunities in rural communities
3. Support the development of improved recruitment capability of businesses in rural Victoria
4. Pursue a greater engagement of rural residents into the rural workforce
5. Advocate for improved career advice resources
6. Foster the relocation/settlement of more refugees to rural Victoria
7. Collaborate with the Office of the Victorian Skills Commissioner to bring more resources to the rural communities.
8. Advocate for equitable access to vocational training resources
9. Advocate for equitable access to employment services
10. Advocate for rural-based merit criteria in Government-funded “Skills Development” programs
11. Establish a start-up pilot
12. Advocate for improved transport services for rural workers
13. Advocate for policy that supports a growth in the availability of rental housing

Insights for the WOWC workforce strategy

- It is important to identify and promote job opportunities in the region. Collective efforts can be particularly beneficial to SMEs.
- Making the business case for people attraction/workforce development is important (i.e. proving it is needed to shore up the quality of public services, the local tax base, etc.).
• Encouraging small business development can help solve workforce shortages. Instead of the person working for an employer, they set up a small company to do the same work (presumably at a higher income level).
• Refugees can fill gaps in the workforce. Rural Victoria is deliberately targeting more of the refugee population that settles in Australia each year to help address workforce demand (even though they can require significant investment in training and language).
• Target industries with the most need. The area has set up specific industry workforce development taskforces for sectors having the biggest challenges: agribusiness, construction, visitor economy and health care.
• A deliberate and focused marketing campaign meant to attract people to live and work in rural and smaller communities can be effective.
• Ensure the region has broad-based vocational training. Rural Victoria is advocating with state and national governments for more vocational training.
• Rental housing is critical. The plan calls for building more rental housing in rural Victoria.
• Some people could be attracted from cities to commute into smaller communities for work each day. The Rural Victoria workforce development plan includes a focus on attracting workers from regional cities by offering shared or subsidized transportation services. This applies to individual businesses that are bringing workers in from the cities.

3.5 Rural Ireland

Over one-third of Ireland’s population (1.7 million) lives in settlements of less than 1,500 people and in the countryside, and this proportion increases to half of the population if smaller towns and villages are included. Some rural areas are close to large population centres with relative ease of access to public services and others are remote or peripheral. In 2021, the national government released its new strategy to grow the rural population and ensure there are enough workers to meet demand into the future. It is one of the most ambitious plans globally to encourage working and population renewal in rural areas.

Insights for the WOWC workforce strategy

• Widely available broadband should be a cornerstone of rural and smaller community population growth strategies.
• Government has a central role to play ensuring there are adequate and affordable housing options in rural regions.
• Vacant or derelict buildings can be converted to address housing shortages. Relaxing municipal planning regulations could result in more flexible housing development opportunities (e.g. ‘over the shop’ housing).
• Higher levels of government have an interest in ensuring rural and smaller communities address workforce demand and foster population growth. In Ireland a mix of legislative, tax policy and financial incentives are being used to revitalize rural regions.
• Deliberately marketing to promote job opportunities can be successful.
Taking steps to make smaller communities more attracting to young people is important (e.g. bringing them into leadership/decision making, focusing on places and spaces attractive to young people, building out transportation infrastructure to meet their needs/biking/hiking/ride-sharing services).

Key initiative #1: Promote remote working in rural areas

Sample actions:
- Rollout the National Broadband Plan and explore how the project can be accelerated to deliver connectivity as soon as possible to rural areas.
- Convert vacant properties in Town Centres into use as Remote Working Hubs.
- Develop an integrated network of over 400 remote working facilities in rural areas, with shared back-office services and a single booking platform for users.
- Utilize remote working facilities to support the retention of skilled people in rural communities and attract mobile talent to rural areas.
- Introduce legislation in 2021 to provide employees with the right to request remote work.
- Examine the potential to introduce specific incentives to encourage remote workers to relocate to rural towns. This includes potential tax breaks.
- Encourage the civil service to live and work in rural areas by offering co-working and hot-desking hubs for civil servants in a number of regional towns. Move to 20% home or remote working in the public sector in 2021, with further annual increases.
- Use the country’s economic development organizations to promote and enable the uptake of remote working across their client base to support regional job creation.
- Provide funding to local government to run innovative marketing campaigns targeted at attracting remote workers and talent to their county.

Key initiative #2: Revitalizing Rural Towns and Villages

The government realizes that people want to live in towns and villages that are thriving.

Sample actions (housing focus):
- Revitalization of rural town centres through a €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.
- Bring vacant and derelict buildings and sites back into use for residential occupancy.
- Examine the potential of new financial supports to encourage increased residential occupancy in rural towns.
- Make it easier to convert vacant commercial premises and “over the shop” type spaces to residential uses (make it easier to get planning permission).
- Provide seed capital to local government to provide serviced sites at cost in towns and villages to allow individuals to build homes and encourage town living.
- Examine the feasibility of introducing ‘meanwhile use’ legislation so that empty buildings and shopfronts on main streets can be brought back into use on a short-term, temporary basis as pop up shops, street markets, exhibitions spaces and other purposes.
- Invest significantly in the development of parks, green spaces and recreational amenities in town centres to make them vibrant hubs for community enjoyment, and to increase footfall for local businesses.
Key initiative #3: Jobs for Rural Ireland

Sample actions:

- Target half of all new economic development investment attraction projects to regional locations, supported by the construction of Advanced Technology Buildings and landing space in 19 strategic regional locations.
- Support rural enterprises to diversify into new sectors and markets by taking advantage of high-speed broadband and new technologies.
- Invest in and deliver more university education in the regions to help support regional growth and to act as an anchor for regional economic development, research and investment.
- Publish a new Action Plan for Apprenticeship to ensure that a modern and responsive apprenticeship programme in rural areas.
- Deliver a suite of new measures to support the development of Social Enterprises in rural areas to increase their social, economic and environmental impact and contribute to job creation locally.

Key initiative #4: Rural Living

Sample actions:

- Develop a pilot scheme to support the use of rural pubs as community spaces and hubs for local services.
- Increase remote and blended learning to enable young people in rural areas to access further and higher education courses through online learning while living in their local communities.
- Invest €70 million into a rural leaders development program.
- Ensure that public transport services in rural and regional areas are accessible to persons with disabilities and reduced mobility.
- Develop a subsidised ride-sharing system in designated areas of rural Ireland which are too small or remote to support a full-time taxi service.
- Establish a Rural Youth Assembly to allow young people living in rural Ireland to make an on-going contribution to issues that impact on them and their future.
- Hold a regular series of Rural Ideas Fora to enable Government to respond to the emerging needs and issues of rural stakeholders.
- Develop and implement a new Adult Digital Literacy Strategy so that everybody, regardless of age, can capitalise on the new rural broadband infrastructure.
- Build capacity for community development through provision of mentoring/training for community development leaders, with a particular focus on young people between the ages of 18 and 25.
- Further enhance the Public Participation Network and Local Community Development Committee structures to ensure that local communities are fully involved in, and contribute to, decisions affecting their local areas.
- Work in consultation with local community and voluntary groups and with local decision-making structures to help welcome and integrate newcomers to rural towns and villages and to support cohesion more broadly.
3.6 Rural Minnesota
Source: https://extension.umn.edu/rural-brain-gain-migration/making-it-home

Minnesota is having success attracting population aged 30-49 into rural and smaller communities across the state. The University of Minnesota Extension is playing a coordination and support role to these efforts. The university’s Making It Home program creates a positive conversation about what the community can offer newcomers. It then mobilizes community members to create an action plan.

The university has staff and partners located across the state to help communities develop customized recruitment plans, develop the value proposition for moving to the communities and help them promote themselves.

Insights for the WOWC workforce strategy

- The University of Minnesota Extension is playing a key role helping communities develop people attraction plans, developing video testimonials, rural business succession planning, rural entrepreneurship development and research reports covering topics related to rural population attraction.
- There can be regional templates, but the most successful people attraction and workforce development initiatives are local – in the community.
- Personal testimonials from young people who have moved to rural Minnesota are an important part of the promotional toolkit.
- Successful people attraction initiatives benefit from the personal touch in smaller communities. The Greater Mankato Community Navigators initiative matches every newcomer to a personal guide to help with the community onboarding process.
- Myth busting is important. For example, the myth that rural K-12 education is worse than in the big cities.
- The proximity of smaller, rural areas to larger urban centres is a key selling feature. People seem to be more likely to move to a smaller community that is within a reasonable commute of a larger services centre. Most population in the WOWC region live within a ‘reasonable commute’ of an urban centre (e.g. Sarnia, Windsor, London, Chatham, Owen Sound, Barrie, Kitchener, etc.).

Services provided by UMINN Extension to support rural population growth

- Community success stories/testimonials
- Community research and workshops
- Coaching and training for local business retention
- Community leadership series
- Community economics webinars
- Downtown Market Analysis Toolbox
- Retaining businesses in your community
- Supporting rural business succession
- Strengthening community support for entrepreneurs
- Understanding local economies
• Development relevant research reports (e.g. Economic Impact of New Residents; Regional Recruitment: Strategies to Attract and Retain Newcomers; New Residents Surveys, etc.)

Example population attraction campaigns

Live Wide Open campaign
Source: www.livewideopen.com/
Promotes the high quality of life in West Central, Minnesota. The website features newcomers who are glad they made the move. For people looking to move to the area, someone will help them as they search for a job. If they are looking to start or buy a business, they will get personalized support as well. The campaign focuses on the lower cost of living, wide open spaces, recreational opportunities and the intimate quality of living in a small town where people know and support each other. There is a particular focus on the quality of K-12 education as that is a concern of young families moving into smaller areas.

Greater Mankato Community Navigators
Source: https://greatermankato.com/greater-mankato-growth-launches-program-welcome-newcomers-community
A Community Navigator is a super connector with a robust knowledge of the community. Newcomers can connect with these navigators online and Greater Mankato Growth will assist in matching them with a personal guide. People will be matched with similar interests in hopes of making the transition of moving to the community a smooth process.

ReGen
Source: www.regenironrange.org
In northern Minnesota, a group of young adults launched the nonprofit ReGen in 2015 after the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) started an advisory board of young adults asking what they needed to stay and live there. ReGen tries to help retain young professionals by organizing social events like snowtubing and game night while fundraising to revamp towns.

Since its inception, ReGen has successfully held events ranging in attendance from 50-100+ with a focus on helping young people get involved in local communities. There is a mentorship program with the local community college to connect college students to careers and young members of the Iron Range business community.

Other rural resident recruitment initiatives:
https://extension.umn.edu/vital-connections/get-know-minnesotas-rural-resident-recruitment-initiatives

3.7 Transatlantic Council on Migration

Building New Skills: Immigration and Workforce Development in Canada
Source: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/Skills-MyersConteFINAL.pdf

Despite Canada’s recognition as world leader in acquisition of skilled human capital through a carefully calibrated immigration points system, immigrants face a number of challenges in
finding meaningful employment. This report seeks to identify and address some of the challenges and solutions in addressing some of the negative trends in immigrant employment.

Although workforce development is a provincial jurisdiction, federal-provincial agreements have been expanded recently to provide funding to support low-skilled and vulnerable workers. Programs such as mentoring or bridge training for immigrants have also been employed to support immigrants’ transition into the workforce.

The report suggests that immigrants are underrepresented in individual and employer provided training. Barriers for immigrant training include addressing complexity of providing services, access to programs and evaluating current programs to ensure that they are meet immigrants’ needs and actually work. The report does show however that a small investment in the right kind of training it can “unlock” immigrants’ skills and move them out of poverty. Employer engagement is imperative to program success.

The report recommends continued research in the effectiveness and efficiency of mainstream and targeted services. It recommends a shift from traditional supply driven system that has not involved key stakeholders. It points out that when employers design training, identify skill sets and provide internships or on the job training programs there are lasting positive results. Engaging employers remains a significant challenge and is in some cases is prohibitive.

The paper explores some of the statistics regarding newcomers, discrepancies in policy and practice; and addresses the knowledge gap that exists from an immigrant’s perspective.

Funding for workforce development is shared between federal, provincial and territorial governments. Division of responsibility is laid out in several agreements, Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs) address eligibility for employment insurance and Labor Market Agreements (LMA’s) which are designed for those individuals without employment insurance.

Individuals eligible for employment insurance can access a variety of employment programs through the LMDAs which help gain the tools, experience and skills needed to find and keep jobs. Individuals who are ineligible for employment insurance, can access a wider range of programs though the LMAs that fund community-based literacy programs. The effectiveness of these supports for vulnerable workers has not yet been determined.

In Ontario, the provincial government administers a wide range of employment and training services though several different ministries. The ministries at the time of the report included the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU), Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism (MEDT)¹. (MTCU) is

¹ This report from the Transatlantic Council on Migration was produced in 2013. At the time of writing this report (June 2021), the various ministry names and responsibilities had changed. Economic development is now directed by the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Tourism is managed by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. Education is managed by the Ministry of Education while post-secondary education directed by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. Social services is now the responsibility of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.
responsible for the majority of these programs through its employment and training network- Employment Ontario. MCSS has a budget of more than $200 Million for employment support for social assistance clients. The Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism oversees several funds including the Strategic Jobs and Investment Fund (SJIF) and the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund. These funded projects are often operated as pilot projects, not part of MTCU programming and linkages are often operated separately from Employment Ontario.

The Ontario government over the last ten years has made significant investments in programs and services to support newcomer’s settlement. These programs fall into four categories: Employment Support Services, Bridge Training Programs, Mentoring and Internships.

Language skills are critically important to newcomers finding employment and successfully integrating into their new community. The federal government is the primary funder for these types of programs. The program administration resides largely at the provincial level.

Programs highlighted by the author include:

- Language instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), the main language training program,
- Enhanced Language Training Initiative (ELT); higher level newcomer instruction to allow them to enter the labour market as quickly as possible and
- Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT) that helps newcomers learn the vocabulary they need to work in their field.

For other specialized training pilots, there is general consensus that mentorship, and bridge training programs are effective in helping new immigrants acquire the additional skills that they need to meet employers’ expectations and enter the job market at a level equal to their skill level.

The paper highlights a Toronto based innovative program called TRIEC (Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council). This successful program brings together multi stakeholder leadership to create and champion solutions to better integrate skilled immigrants in the Toronto region labour market.

**Insights for the WOWC workforce strategy**

- Language skills remain crucial to newcomer success. Strategies to ensure effective introduction and uptake of training programs is important to newcomer success.
- The TREIC model is worth further study. Bringing together all relevant stakeholders, including service providers, post-secondary training partners, employers, employer associations, professional associations and regulators and remaining client focused be the key to a successful immigrant integration program.
4. Next Steps

Following the WOWC Economic Development Sub-Committee’s review of the Background Discussion Report, the consulting team will proceed with Phase 2: Consultation and Analysis. This stage will include a series of community workshops throughout the WOWC region along with industry specific focus groups to address specific issues and opportunities in manufacturing, agriculture/agri-business, housing, the talent pipeline/education, people attraction, and small business.

Phase 2 will also include analysis on attainable housing, labour market and people attraction efforts and marketing and communications initiatives to support the WOWC resident and talent attraction programming.
5. Appendix

5.1 Media References:

The following media reports were summarized in section 2.18 in this document:

- Demand for rural homes shows 'profound, psychological change' due to coronavirus, [https://cnb.cx/2WYX6PL](https://cnb.cx/2WYX6PL)
- Why some people are choosing country life over the city: [https://tgam.ca/2DItd0i](https://tgam.ca/2DItd0i)
- Article from Washington Post [https://wapo.st/32duOor](https://wapo.st/32duOor)
- New York Times: [https://nyti.ms/2DMSh6u](https://nyti.ms/2DMSh6u)
- Globe and Mail: [https://tgam.ca/3m2BwFv](https://tgam.ca/3m2BwFv), [https://tgam.ca/2ZobJOi](https://tgam.ca/2ZobJOi)
- Politico: [https://politi.co/3hfJ1Wb](https://politi.co/3hfJ1Wb)
- These two Ontario cities have launched campaigns to attract GTA residents [https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/london-owen-sound-marketing-campaigns-1.5931238](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/london-owen-sound-marketing-campaigns-1.5931238)
• Canada and New Zealand both have hot housing markets, but only 1 has plan to cool things down [link](https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/canada-and-new-zeland-both-have-hot-housing-markets-but-only-1-has-plan-to-cool-things-down-1.5942438)

• Posthaste: Average Canadian home prices have shot up $100,000 in 6 months — but don’t expect a market crash anytime soon [link](https://financialpost.com/executive/posthaste-average-canadian-home-prices-have-shot-up-100000-in-6-months-but-dont-expect-a-market-crash-anytime-soon)

### 5.2 Immigration Matters Infographics Examples

Source: [link](https://www.cic.gc.ca/ftp/immigration-matters-toolkit.asp)

**Sector Infographic**

**Immigrant Representation by Sector**

---

**IMMIGRATION MATTERS**

to Canada’s health-care sector

Visit: Canada’s immigration matters

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

Immigrants make up 1 out of 4 health-care sector workers, including:

- **36%** of physicians
- **23%** of registered nurses
- **37%** of pharmacists

Immigrants in Canada’s health-care sector between 2011 and 2016:

- **>40%** were employed in:
  - Mental health facilities
  - Home health-care services

Projected shortages in the health-care sector:

- Almost **500,000** workers are aged 55+ with many retiring in the next decade.
- Immigrants can help fill these important jobs.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, 2016 Census.
**IMMIGRATION MATTERS**

to Canada’s Business Sector

1 in 3 business owners with paid staff is an immigrant.

600,000+ self-employed immigrants across the country

260,000+ of them have paid employees

Percentage
of business
owners who
are immigrants,
by sector:

- Restaurants 50%
- Computer systems design and services 51%
- Grocery stores 53%
- Truck transportation 56%

Immigrant entrepreneurs and business leaders play an important role in ensuring that Canada has a growing and successful economy.