



Workforce WindsorEssex



STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

February, 2009

Revised April, 2012



BACKGROUND & PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Workforce Windsor Essex (legally Workforce Development Board Windsor Essex) was established in October 2008. The Board is comprised of representatives from business, labour, education, government and other sectors of the local economy with an interest in workforce development. The mandate of the Board is to serve as a catalyst to engage community partners in a local labour market research and planning process, to initiate joint projects and work in conjunction with regional economic development strategies to promote local workforce development.

The Windsor Essex community was one of seven regions selected by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) to serve as a pilot project for an integrated Local Labour Market Plan (ILLMP) initiative, resulting in an evidence-based rolling three-to-five-year plan for workforce development for the region. The resulting Integrated Local Labour Market Plan was published in August 2009 to inform and guide Workforce Development.

In January 2009, the Board engaged in a strategic planning exercise that had the following objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for continued collaboration amongst community partners and strengthening of the Workforce Development Board
- To develop vision, mission and values statements for the WDBWE
- To explore factors impacting local labour force development (SWOT analysis)
- To identify and prioritize strategic objectives and associated goals to guide decision making and focus resource allocation over the next 2-3 years

The outcome of this process, the WDBWE Strategic Plan, is supplemented by the ILLMP and annual Local Labour Market Planning Reports and Action Plans.



PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategies or directions and making decisions about how to allocate resources to pursue these directions. It is the process whereby participants combine existing knowledge and skills with lessons learned and develop a plan to better position the organization for the future.

In order to determine future direction, organizations need to know exactly where they stand, then determine where they want to go and how to get there. The resulting document is called the "strategic plan." Then detailed action or work plans are developed, which identify the activities that must take place within specified timeframes to ensure the organization moves beyond present performance to enhanced future performance.

The Board followed the process depicted below in developing its vision and strategic objectives.

PROCESS	DEFINITIONS
VISIONS	Visions convey the goals and values of the organization - what is possible and what the organization aspires to in the future, while providing clear decision-making criteria.
MISSIONS	Missions define an organization's fundamental purpose for existing, concentrating on the present. Discussions about the mission, naturally lead to reflections on values and principles.
VALUES	Core values are the essential and enduring principles that guide work, behaviour, relationships and decision making.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Strategic objectives are broadly defined targets that an organization must achieve to realize its vision. Strategic objectives are further defined by goals.
GOALS	Goals depict how the opportunities and challenges the organization is facing will be addressed. Goals define the activities that need to take place in order to achieve your strategic objectives.
ACTIONS	Actions detail the steps to be taken to implement each goal. Action plans must delineate timelines, and individuals or teams responsible for completing defined tasks.

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Considering the core functions of Workforce WindsorEssex, members reached consensus on the following vision, mission and value statements.

VISION

WindsorEssex invested in a world-class workforce.

MISSION

To support the development of a strong, sustainable local economy by:

- Fostering understanding of current and future workforce needs, and
- Facilitating strategic investment in education, training and employment opportunities.

OUR VALUES

Collaboration	We value teamwork, working together to find solutions to local challenges and building relationships that will strengthen our community.
Results Orientation	We value goal setting and performance measurement as a means of ensuring both personal and organizational accountability and achievement.
Innovation	We value resourcefulness, creativity and investment in continuous learning to inform planning and develop leading edge labour force strategies.
Versatility	We value flexibility and the ability to adapt and respond quickly to changes in economic indicators and evolving labour force trends.
Transparency	We value open, honest exchange of information and effective communication with all stakeholders.
Respect	We value and respect the contributions of the diverse community we serve and of each other.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN [SWOT ANALYSIS]

Prior to establishing strategic objectives, Board members engaged in a SWOT analysis; exploring strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could potentially impact the work of the Board over the next 2 to 3 years. The following chart captures the outcomes of this environment scan.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large, highly skilled labour pool • A motivated and willing workforce • Strong manufacturing base • Flexibility of workforce to work anytime • Low cost of living • Ongoing research and development activity • Existence of WFWE and individual member energy and commitment • Diverse community • Location along 401 corridor • Transportation infrastructure • Strong local educational institutions • Positive relationships with MTCU • Family-friendly, diverse community • Existence of local industry associations • Downtown Windsor Business Accelerator • WEtech Alliance • Labour movement leadership now often taking collaborative approach in interest-based bargaining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low participation in post-secondary education • Heavy reliance on auto industry • Local negative attitude-perception of a highly unionized workforce • Negative external perception of a rigid, unionized workforce. • Workforce mentality of entitlement' • Some employers resistant to change • Location-isolation • Low workforce literacy • Competition among agencies and industry groups • Non-diversified manufacturing base • Indecisiveness of local politicians
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continental infrastructure projects • Develop health care sector • Location-transportation;logistics • Cross border collaboration • Economic diversification • increase profile of region • Retention of skilled immigrant base • Attract foreign investment • Capitalize on mature workforce • Emerging R & D capabilities-commercialization of R & D • Re-emergence of WEEDC • Collaboration with local associations • Manufacturing diversification • Apprenticeship programs - incentives for youth • WE Prosper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher unemployment rates • Rigid mentality of some employers and workers • Domino effect of lay-offs in auto industry • Fluctuations in Canadian dollar • Global recession • Cross border drain-skilled workers acquiring jobs elsewhere • Companies have limited access to capital • Drain of skilled workers to the GTA and other regions • Traditional image of Windsor-more frequent references to ghost town • Environmental challenges • Skilled trades shortage • End of infrastructure projects • Lack of employer participation in apprenticeship programs

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

After examining the outcomes of the SWOT analysis, the Board developed a list of business strategies necessary to achieve the vision. Five (5) strategic objectives critical to achieving the newly developed vision were developed.

The Board subsequently established the activities (goals) necessary to achieve each strategic objective. The strategic objectives and corresponding goals are reflected below.



1. Sustain a strong Workforce Development Board

- Support a governance structure.
- Ensure the Board is appropriately resourced.
- Enhance the knowledge base of the Board.

2. Expand strategic networks and partnerships.

- Develop a stakeholder profile.
- Act as a catalyst for greater investment in workforce initiatives.
- Coordinate and partner with key stakeholders.

3. Understand the state of local workforce development.

- Lead integrated local labour marketing planning.
- Develop and maintain a profile of employer needs and workforce knowledge and skills.
- Identify and communicate knowledge and skill gaps.

4. Identify, support and promote local workforce development opportunities.

- Advocate for appropriate education, training and job investment.
- Establish a process to inform the community of local workforce opportunities.
- Support the development of alliances.
- Promote life-long learning.

5. Lead workforce development in Windsor Essex.

- Enhance the profile of the Board to ensure recognition as the lead for local workforce development.
- Develop an evaluation framework to measure WDB impacts.
- Report to the community on a regular basis.

MOVING FORWARD – GOALS & ACTIVITIES

The following chart details the actions that will be taken to ensure goal achievement.

1. Build and sustain a strong Workforce Development Board.	
Goals	Activities
1. Maintain a governance structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Board bylaws up to date • Develop policies and procedures as needed.
2. Ensure the Board is appropriately resourced for sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Board infrastructure necessary to achieve stated goals. • Pursue a growth plan.
3. Enhance the knowledge base of the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a library of workforce development resources. • Incorporate a learning and development component into Board activities.
2. Develop strategic networks and partnerships.	
Goals	Activities
1. Maintain stakeholder profile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop productive relationships with each stakeholder.
2. Act as a catalyst for greater investment in workforce initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in projects to maximize investments.
3. Coordinate and partner with key stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for joint initiatives. • Develop an implementation plan for activating and supporting projects.
3. Understand the state of local workforce development.	
Goals	Activities
1. Lead Local Labour Market planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Annual Labour Market Plan Report • Update and maintain the plan, as appropriate.
2. Develop and maintain a profile of employer needs and workforce knowledge and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information on current and future employer needs, and current workforce knowledge and skills.
3. Identify and communicate knowledge and skill gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare employer needs to current workforce skills. • Identify; catalogue workforce skill matches and gaps. • Develop a plan to communicate findings to the stakeholder community.

MOVING FORWARD Continued...

4. Identify, support and promote local workforce development opportunities.	
Goals	Activities
1. Advocate for appropriate education, training and job investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize need for education, training and jobs investment. Identify and implement short-term and long-term projects to support required investment.
2. Establish a process to inform the community of local workforce opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communication plan. Implement plan to communicate key messages to stakeholders.
3. Support the development of alliances (i.e. training, job fairs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and share information on existing alliances. Promote collaborative efforts among employers, education and labour groups that make the best use of human and financial resources.
4. Promote life-long learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host forums to promote best practice in workforce development.

5. Lead workforce development in Windsor Essex.	
Goals	Activities
1. Enhance the profile of the Board to ensure recognition as the lead for local workforce development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correspond with key stakeholders marketing Board mandate, strategic objectives and achievements. Explore strategic partnerships and mergers.
2. Develop an evaluation framework to measure Workforce WindsorEssex impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a logic model detailing inputs, outputs, outcomes and community impacts. Develop benchmarks for measuring performance.
3. Report to the community on a regular basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate efforts towards goal achievement. Develop an annual Report to the Community'.