

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WORKFORCE WINDSORESSEX & NAFTA WORKING GROUP RELEASE RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOV'T FOR NAFTA'S MODERNIZATION

Final NAFTA Recommendations promote trade interdependence, automotive, labour mobility, experiential learning opportunities, and region's global competitiveness

Windsor-Essex, ON – Workforce WindsorEssex, in close partnership with the NAFTA Working Group, wants to ensure that Canadian NAFTA Negotiators understand our border community's interests, following the release of [NAFTA Recommendations from Windsor-Essex Report](#).

Workforce WindsorEssex worked closely with the NAFTA Working Group to develop the report, following the completion of 151 local surveys. The report and its recommendations have already been sent to key federal and provincial officials in hopes that our region's front-line perspective of sharing a major international border will be considered heading into the 8th (and potentially final) round of negotiations in Washington DC.

The report makes five key recommendations:

1. Recognize the importance of Canada-US trade interdependence;
2. Recognize Canada's automotive sector as a key priority throughout NAFTA renegotiations;
3. Protect existing mechanisms that promote cross-border labour mobility;
4. Increase opportunities for cross-border experiential learning; and
5. Support region's global economic competitiveness.

Over the past year, the NAFTA Working Group acted as a clearinghouse for NAFTA related activities and concerns locally. The group held consultations with the Canada's Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, hosted APMA NAFTA 2.0 Luncheon and successfully passed five NAFTA resolutions at City and Town councils in the region.

QUOTES:

"The impacts of a renegotiated NAFTA will be felt first in Windsor-Essex, which is why Workforce WindsorEssex was working closely with other local organizations on this critical issue. As far as we know, we were the only community undertaking this kind of work together.

The report's goal is to help federal and provincial trade officials understand border community issues and opportunities as we experience them."

- *Michelle Suchiu, Executive Director, Workforce WindsorEssex*

"This report was developed to demonstrate our commitment to providing a collective voice to government trade representatives on the modernization of the NAFTA agreement. It emphasizes that Windsor-Essex is Canada's only census metropolitan area that shares a border with a US metropolitan area and is at the core of one of North America's major trade and transportation corridors. It clearly serves to communicate that the secure, efficient, effective and safe movement of goods, services and people within North America is critical to the economy of the Windsor-Essex Region, more so than anywhere else in Canada. It was my pleasure to participate with the NAFTA Working Group team."

- *Stephen MacKenzie, President/CEO, WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation & Chair of Windsor-Essex's NAFTA Working Group*

BACKGROUND:

- On July 21, 2017 several local organizations announced that they were working together to support the Windsor-Essex business community throughout the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation, the Windsor Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Windsor-Essex, St. Clair College, the Cross-Border Institute, and the Institute for Border Logistics and Security, along with provincial and federal partners continue to be committed to providing a collective voice NAFTA's modernization.
- In the summer of 2017, Workforce WindsorEssex released a survey targeted to employers, cross-border commuters and other interested parties to gain a better understanding of what these stakeholders would like to see in a renegotiated NAFTA. This information from these 151 surveys, along with local consultations and expertise, was used by the NAFTA Working Group to help develop the recommendations contained in report.
- Five local governments endorsed resolutions citing the importance of Canada's automotive sector as a key priority throughout NAFTA's renegotiation, including Amherstburg, Kingsville, Tecumseh, Windsor and County of Essex.

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