

Grand Erie's Post Pandemic Economic Scenarios

March 2021 Report



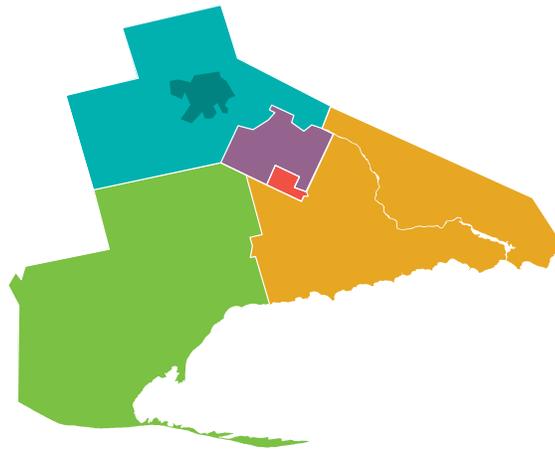
Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie
Commission de planification de la main-d'oeuvre de Grand Erie



Workforce
Planning Board
of Grand Erie

OUR VISION

A skilled, resilient workforce contributing to dynamic communities and their economies



Ontario 

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Danette Dalton, Executive Director, Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie

Prepared by: Wynona Mendes, Labour Market Analyst, Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie

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“Scenarios are stories about what the future may look like, created through a structured process, that aim to help organizations stretch their thinking, challenge their traditional assumptions, and drive better strategic decision-making.”

— Monitor Institute by Deloitte*



Amidst the many uncertainties that surfaced as a result of COVID-19, the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie – in collaboration with 8 other workforce planning boards from across Southwestern Ontario – undertook a scenario planning project.

Our goal was to support local community organizations, governments, educational institutions, businesses, and the workforce in navigating the labour market shifts that would take place as a result of the pandemic within the Grand Erie area – encompassing the indigenous communities of Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the New Credit, Counties of Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk, and the City of Brantford.

The Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie acknowledges Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation communities have a unique relationship with the land, its resources and the workforce, which continues to shape the history and economy of the area today. The WPBGE recognizes the unique role that Indigenous peoples have had and will continue to have in the growth and development of the Grand Erie area.

This document is intended to broaden conversations about next steps in addressing the present and future economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Grand Erie. It begins with an overview of the local labour market before COVID-19 and the shifts that took place over the course of 2020. Following this, it dives into the scenario planning process undertaken by the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force, starting with the question: “What new practices, programs, and other interventions will need to be put in place in order to address the needs of the labour market in Grand Erie in 12-24 months?”

Considering this question, a number of factors that would affect the recovery of the Grand Erie area were identified, including workplace safety and confidence, shifts in skills-in-demand, the transition to remote work and more.

From there, two critical uncertainties that would have significant and lasting implications on Grand Erie’s economy were selected: **Workforce Resilience and Strategic Responsiveness.**

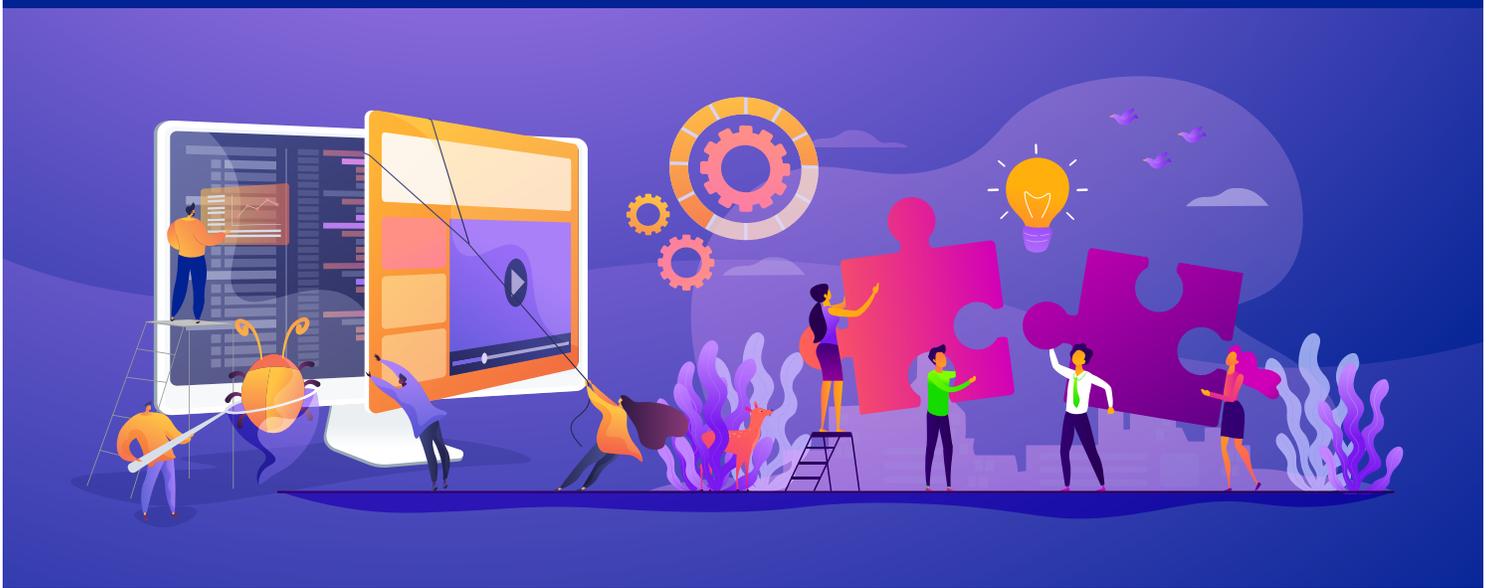
When placed on a 2-by-2 matrix, these critical uncertainties led to the creation of four ‘What If?’ questions that formed the basis of Grand Erie’s 4 scenarios:

- Disruption – wherein most or all labour market groups will struggle, and Grand Erie’s economic progress may be stifled
- Restoration – wherein most or all labour market groups will struggle in the short-term, and the rebound will be gradual, but likely
- Marginalization – wherein most labour market groups will thrive, but some – significantly impacted by COVID-19 – will become further marginalized
- Innovation – wherein most or all labour market groups will be thriving in 12-24 months

This report dives deeper into these four potential Grand Erie futures, identifying current and projected skills shortages, key trends, and recommendations for businesses, economic development, government, education and skills development organizations. It concludes with a list of 20 priorities, identified by the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force Working Groups, that emphasize the need for collaboration, adaptability and continuous learning.

This report, and the accompanying interactive **Grand Erie Scenario Tracker***, are designed to present stakeholders in the Grand Erie area with the data and insights they need to make important decisions about how to support Grand Erie’s labour market on its journey to recovery. Readers are encouraged to remember that all scenarios present opportunities for growth. The Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie thanks all of our stakeholders for their time and commitment with this project.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



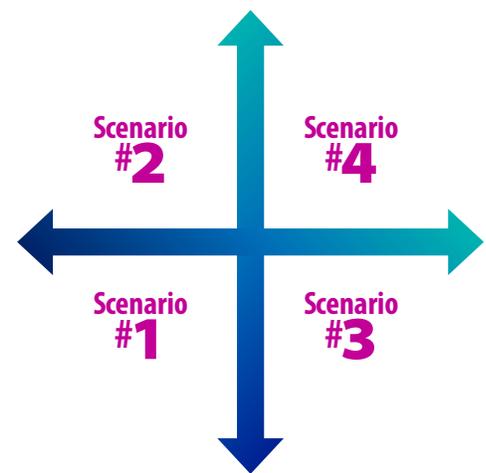
This document is intended to broaden and deepen conversations about next steps in addressing the present and future economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Grand Erie area, which encompasses the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County, Norfolk County, Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the New Credit.

It provides...

- ...an overview of the recovery timeline, describing four stages of recovery that are our conceptual basis for how the economy as a whole, individual sectors, and individual businesses will progress through the crisis
- ...a summary of the past, describing issues since the start of the pandemic that are not relevant to the current situation but provide important historical context
- ...an overview of the present, describing the impacts that have already been felt, impacts we can anticipate, initiatives that have already been launched, and other ideas for potential actions that are being explored in the region
- ...an overview of the future, describing a set of preliminary socio-economic scenarios that have been developed by the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force
- ...recommendations and the preliminary design of potential labour market and workforce initiatives up to June, 2022

Benefits of scenario-based planning

- Provides framework for managing the unprecedented uncertainty posed by COVID-19
- Supports proactive decision-making by identifying challenges, opportunities, and potential actions well in advance
- Encourages a holistic and collaborative approach to planning that manages system complexity and ensures the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plans will be robust, comprehensive, and capable of withstanding all future scenarios



Using this current status overview and this set of preliminary future scenarios, Grand Erie Recovery Task Force members – comprised of community organizations, businesses and governments – may continue discussions to identify initiatives that can be put in place today, and in future scenarios. Refer to [Appendix A](#) for a complete list of task force members.

The next step in developing strategic plans will be to elaborate the scenarios and their indicators further to account for impacts on specific industries, and then to identify scenario-based recommendations for action to overcome the challenges and identify opportunities that each of these scenarios could present to our community.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This report is designed to provide stakeholders and project partners tools to be better equipped to strategically plan. It will assist decision makers to lead changes that proactively address challenges and opportunities that arise through four probable future scenarios and as the COVID-19 situation evolves.



Scenarios tell a story of what the future could look like under certain circumstances. They are a world in which different, unexpected outcomes are possible.

In each of the four scenarios, discuss how your organization would be impacted if this scenario occurred. Consider how you would manage the current and projected skills shortages. Plan how your organization would navigate through the React, Recover, and Resiliency stages. Questions to consider are:

- What stage are you currently in?
- What programs and supports do you need to support you in this new reality?
- How would you mitigate the problems in each of these scenarios?
- What are the challenges?
- Where are the opportunities?
- What recommendations will help your organization?

The report's accompanying **dashboard*** includes pertinent labour market intelligence that will help decision makers:

- Gain knowledge, review evidence, and examine community-supported recommendations for actions that improve labour market conditions across Grand Erie
- Identify current and projected skills shortages resulting from the economic impacts and government investments in Grand Erie's key sectors
- Identify current and emerging issues impacting labour market adjustment in key sectors including Accommodation and Food Services, Manufacturing, and Retail and Healthcare
- Identify areas for potential value-added growth and innovation that emerge as a result of the pandemic's restructuring of consumer and business needs.
- Recommend potential initiatives that will bridge the gaps between labour market supply and demand up to June 2022.

Some of the scenarios discussed may seem unlikely. However, it is important to think outside of the box and consider how your organization would react.

Asterisks (*) = hyperlink to source. Superscript (!) = footnote or source. Underscore = hyperlink/jump to page

SCENARIO-BASED PLANNING TIMELINE

The major steps involved in the scenario-planning project



In **March 2020**, WPBGE took on the scenario-planning project alongside workforce planning boards from across Southwestern Ontario. Key factors that would influence recovery were identified by the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force in **April and May**. Between **June and August**, critical uncertainties were identified and the Grand Erie scenario matrix was built. In **the fall of 2020**, WPBGE established 4 working groups – economic development, skills development, education and businesses

supports – to build out, revise and validate scenarios and action plans. In **October and November**, each working group shortlisted their top 5 priorities, and identified existing programs, gaps and challenges as they pertained to each area of focus. As of early **December**, members of the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force were beginning to engage in conversations around collaborating and incorporating the identified priorities into their organization's deliverables.

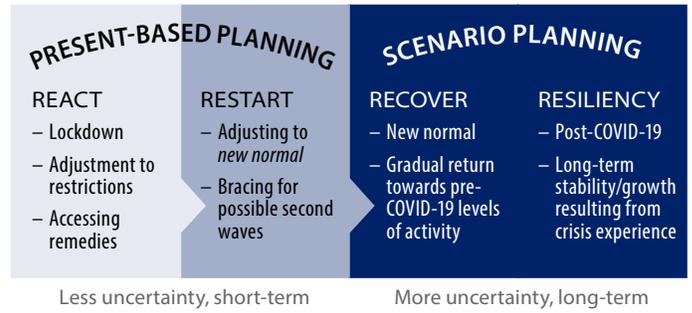
RECOVERY TIMELINE

Economic recovery, for our region and for individual sectors or businesses, can be divided into four stages: REACT, RESTART, RECOVER, and RESILIENCY. They are defined as follows:

- **REACT:** Adjusting to lockdown conditions and new restrictions, accessing remedies, taking short-term and reactive actions. Priority is staying afloat.
- **RESTART:** Adjusting to new, more stable conditions that permit a certain level of business activity, while still relying on temporary remedies and preparing for potentially serious threats including new lockdowns. Priority is reaching a new steady state.
- **RECOVER:** A new steady state, or new normal, is sustainably achieved. Depending on the sector, this may represent a return to pre-COVID-19 levels of activity. Businesses may still be dealing with the impacts of downturn in other sectors or in the economy as a whole. Priority is long-term investments and changes to business models that enable success in the new normal.
- **RESILIENCY:** The benefits of investments and long-term changes made in the recovery phase are felt. Whether as a result of these changes, or the end of the COVID-19 crisis as a whole, businesses become impervious to negative impact related to COVID-19. Priority is growth beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

Through previous discussions with the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force, we have identified and acted upon recommendations for the REACT and RESTART phases, which are summarized in the next section of this document.

While we continue to identify immediate challenges to overcome and opportunities to seize, the next step in developing a recovery plan is to begin planning for RECOVER and RESILIENCY phases, which could span from today to 3+ years into the future. Continued uncertainty about the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and its long-term impacts on the global economy mean that a scenario-based approach is required to plan proactively for these stages of recovery.



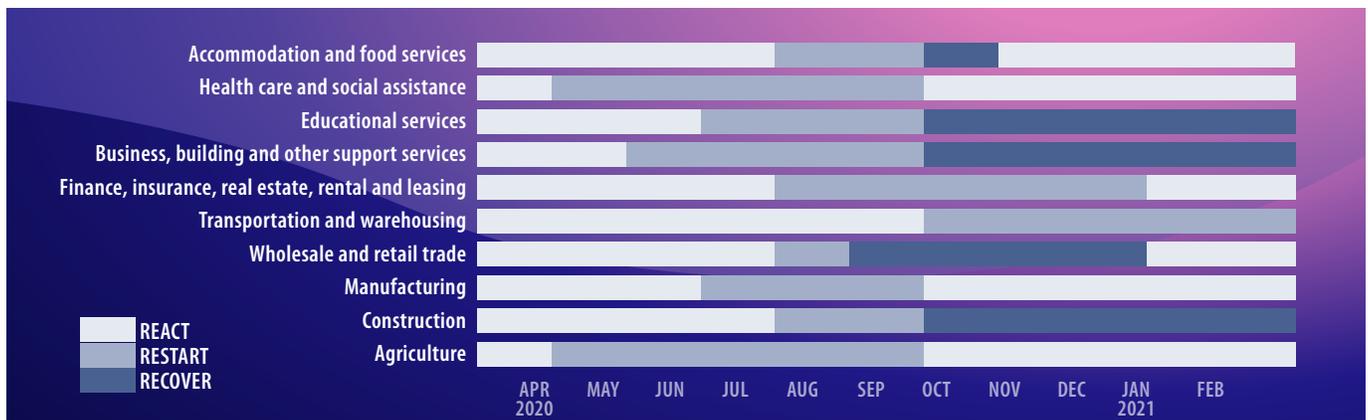
Not every sector will progress through these stages at the same rate. As of mid-March 2021, the Grand Erie region has just emerged from the second lockdown. As a result of this recent wave of closures, some may still be transitioning from REACT to RESTART, while others are entering the RECOVER stage. Below is a timeline of how key sectors in the Grand Erie area have progressed through the crisis to date, based on our knowledge from discussions with local industry stakeholders.

Diagram of Industry Progress

Below is a diagram of progress made by Grand Erie’s key industries, developed by WPBGE. Using an number of labour market resources such as the Labour Force Survey, Grand Erie Jobs data, EMSI/Analyst data and local intelligence (collected through discussions with local employers, industry groups and municipal economic development departments), it illustrates where each sector is – as of February 2021 – based on the react-restart-recover-resiliency framework.

The progress of sectors varied significantly, and as of mid-March 2021, many sectors appear to have moved towards the recovery stage. However, there are some – such as healthcare, manufacturing and agriculture that have returned to the ‘react’ stage as a result of broader supply chain issues, lockdown restrictions and a limited availability of qualified workers. These sectoral shifts will be examined in greater detail below.

GRAND ERIE INDUSTRY PROGRESS MAP



THE PAST: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF HOW FAR WE HAVE COME



A key characteristic of Grand Erie's workforce is its diversity – encompassed within the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County, Norfolk County, Six Nations and New Credit is a wide range of sectors and skillsets.

Grand Erie's thriving manufacturing sector employed approximately 18% of the region's workforce over the past 5 years. The region is also home to a growing retail sector, which employs around 16% of the region's residents. Other dominant industries include healthcare and social assistance (employs 13% of the workforce), food services (employs 6% of the workforce) and educational services (employs 6% of the workforce). Approximately 5% of Grand Erie's workforce is also employed in each of the following sectors: agriculture, construction, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing and other services.

The skills make-up of Grand Erie is equally varied. Individuals in professional occupations (requiring university education) make up around 20% of Grand Erie's labour force, while people in labouring occupations (requiring no formal education) make up around 15%. Of the remainder, approximately one-third are in technical and skilled occupations and the other third are in intermediate occupations.

Over the past 5 years, Grand Erie's labour force grew significantly, and across a number of sectors. Employment rose by approximately 14% between 2015 and 2019, with increases in part-time work leading this growth. The goods-producing sector rose by 11%, with over 1,000 new employees in both construction and manufacturing businesses. The service-producing sector growth was even more significant – 14% between 2015 and 2019. The wholesale and retail trade sector led this growth with 2,300 employees gained over 5 years. The healthcare and social assistance, transportation and warehousing, and information, culture and recreation sectors

grew significantly as well. Occupational data suggests that growth was distributed across jobs of all skill levels.

In November 2019, Brantford CMA hit a record low unemployment rate of 3.1%. Almost all individuals participating in the workforce were employed, but based on the recent Job Seeker and Employee survey* and EmployerOne survey* results, skills mismatches were prevalent and growing.

A significant proportion of individuals with university or college education were underemployed (i.e. they did not have enough paid work or were not doing work that makes full use of their skills and abilities). Over a third of our region's employees did not feel their job was a good match for their qualifications and skillsets.

Meanwhile, around 30% of employers noted the availability of qualified workers to be poor in 2020, up 4% from 2018. 61% of businesses noted difficulties in hiring for certain positions, including many manufacturing, construction, healthcare and food services businesses. As a result of difficulties in hiring for certain positions, many professional occupations were filled by those with secondary school diplomas/trades certificates.

The skills mismatches caused high turnover; around a quarter of employed individuals in Grand Erie left their jobs in 2020, with a key reason being that they felt overworked. Around 59% of employers indicated struggling with retention. As a consequence, employers reported reduced productivity, increased pressure on existing staff members and negative impacts on customer service.

While many who quit were able to find other employment relatively easily due to surges in hiring by local employers, some were unsuccessful. The region saw a dip in labour force participation over the course of 2019, indicating that

THE PAST: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF HOW FAR WE HAVE COME

a growing proportion of Grand Erie's residents had stopped looking for work. When asked about why they had difficulties finding employment, many of our region's job seekers cited insufficient job postings with good pay, lack of transportation options, insufficient postings in their field of work and growing education and skills requirements among employers. The number of assisted clients in employment services doubled in 2019 as a result of this.

In the months leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic, Grand Erie's workforce was faced with a complex set of challenges. As a result of skills mismatches and growing barriers to unemployment, certain businesses and labour force segments were strained. These pre-existing conditions, coupled with the drastic shifts to employment triggered by the pandemic, will have lasting impacts on the region's employment landscape and its economy.

Scenario planning allows us to examine the potential impacts that may be faced by various labour market groups and to prepare for these changes by developing the appropriate supports.

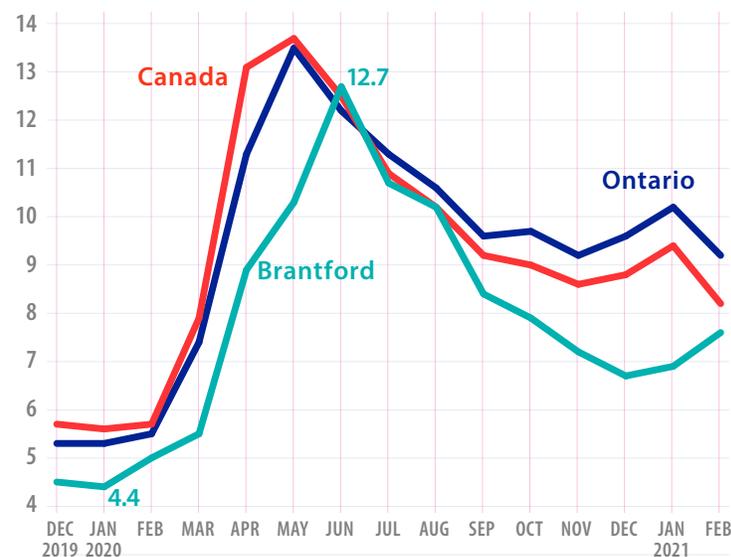
Impacts we have already felt

As of March 12, 2021, the Brant County Health Unit reported 1,570 cases of COVID-19*, and the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit reported another 1,479 cases*. Both regions were recently placed in the orange zone (restrict) after province-wide lockdown restrictions were lifted in mid-February. Six Nations has reported 411 cases as of March 12th. On December 2nd, Six Nations of the Grand River's emergency control group released their own framework to determine risk level, and, as of March 12, are in Level 5 (Black) according to this framework*. Public health data indicates that cases within the Grand Erie area have not been as widespread as in surrounding regions such as Hamilton, Waterloo and Guelph. Case counts, however, have been on the rise, with many new outbreaks declared in November and December in long term care homes, hospitals and schools. Workplace outbreaks were relatively sparse, and concentrated in the manufacturing/industrial sector* as many businesses in these sectors continued to operate throughout the second lockdown while other industries shut down.

While the impact of COVID-19 on public health has not been particularly severe in Grand Erie as compared with other communities in Ontario, pandemic related business closures and supply chain shifts hit Grand Erie's workforce hard, bringing the unemployment rate up to almost 13% by June 2020. Current trends indicate that people with pre-existing vulnerabilities experienced the greatest impacts. Youth were

disproportionately affected by these job losses, as were part-time female workers within service-sector businesses and full-time male workers in lower-skilled manufacturing and warehousing jobs. It is also likely that gig workers were severely impacted by consumer behaviour changes – such as decreased interest in ride-sharing transportation options, temporary accommodations and meal delivery services – that occurred due to COVID-19, but there is limited local data to confirm this.

LOCAL, PROVINCIAL & NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE¹



¹ Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0294-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months

Between March and June 2020, over 2,500 jobs were lost in Brantford CMA alone, primarily in manufacturing, construction, transportation and warehousing. Many of these individuals were core-working age adults in full-time jobs. Meanwhile, some industries gained jobs during this period including the agricultural sector, the finance sector and public administration.

From an occupational perspective, majority of job losses during the first few months of the pandemic were within intermediate (Skill level C) occupations. Meanwhile, managerial/professional (Skill level A) and labouring occupations (Skill level D) grew in the early months of the pandemic.

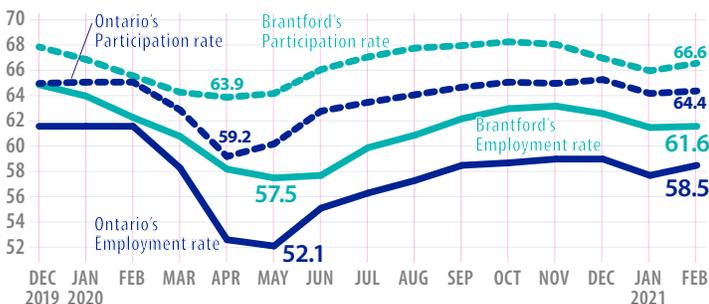
THE PRESENT: IMPACTS AND ACTIONS IN THE SHORT-TERM



The sizable economic recovery efforts, coupled with easing pandemic restrictions, have yielded some positive impacts. As of February 2021, both Brantford's employment and participation rates have returned to pre-pandemic levels, and remain higher than the provincial rates, signalling that the Grand Erie area is recovering faster than surrounding communities. However, the impact that the pandemic has had on certain sectors and populations remains significant.

Manufacturing saw a small rise but has since dipped again, likely as a result of limited labour supply. This was somewhat offset by growth within the construction sector, prompted by an increase in consumer demand for home renovations as well as new apartment and business buildings. In fact, the County of Brant broke records in terms of building permits issued in 2020*. Along with growth in the construction sector, the region saw moderate growth in employment within business, building and other support services.

LOCAL & PROVINCIAL EMPLOYMENT/PARTICIPATION RATES²



² Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0294-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months

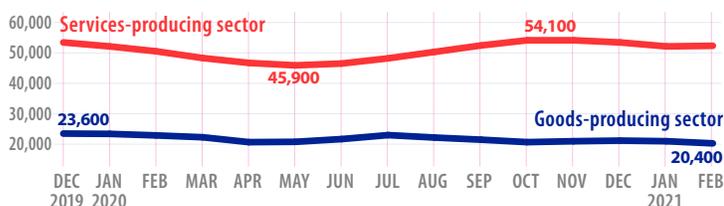
Impacts felt by Grand Erie

As lockdown restrictions were lifted during the summer and fall months, the external drivers of employment in Grand Erie became more apparent. While employment in the service sector bounced back, employment in the goods-producing sector continued to drop. In February 2021, employment in the goods-producing sector dropped to 20,400, hitting a record low since June 2019.

Between July and December 2020, the service sector gained 5,000 jobs, primarily in food services, wholesale and retail trade, and education. However, around 1000 jobs – many part-time – were lost in these sectors during the second lockdown in early 2021.

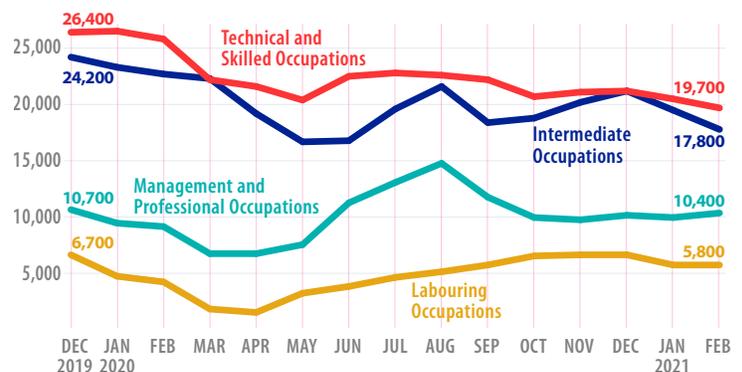
As a result of these shifts, many of the jobs gained were labouring occupations (Skill level D) in the service sector. Meanwhile, more people in intermediate occupations (Skill level C) lost their jobs, as did many in professional occupations (Skill level A).

EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN BRANTFORD CMA³



³ Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0097-01 Employment by industry, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, census metropolitan areas (x 1,000)

EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN BRANTFORD CMA⁴



⁴ Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0313-01 Employment by census metropolitan areas and occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000)

Examining this data by gender, we see that a lot of the professional jobs lost were held by female workers, while the intermediate occupations were more commonly held by males.

February 2021 job demand data suggests that only around 15% of jobs available were for individuals with university degrees*. Among these, the most common job postings were in healthcare and finance – specifically registered nurses, general practitioners and family physicians, retail and wholesale trade managers and financial officers. Many of the healthcare jobs took particularly long to fill. Job search data, however, indicates that 40% of Grand Erie’s job seekers are looking for professional occupations, and this interest was concentrated among education, social service and management jobs*.

Similarly, there were more job seekers looking to get back into their trades positions in manufacturing and construction, relative to the number of postings for such occupations. The most in-demand Skill Level B jobs were in healthcare (practical nurses) and education and social services (social and community service workers, early childhood educators). The demand for cooks also increased as the food services sector picked back up in the summer, but based on posting length data, many businesses are struggling to fill these positions.

A vast majority – 61% – of job postings in February 2021 were for intermediate and labouring occupations such as general farm workers, material handlers, retail salespersons and customer and information service representatives. While many of the top jobs were in demand even before the pandemic, a few – such as delivery and courier service drivers, light duty cleaners and bus drivers – have increased in demand over the last few months.

It is also worth noting that Brantford’s participation rate has seen a slight dip in recent months, and this decline is primarily among core-working age women. Based on local news reports and stakeholder consultations, this is attributable to the fact that many women who lost their part-time jobs in the service sector are unable to find other part-time work/remote work, and cannot assume full-time, in person jobs due to other responsibilities like childcare. Many of these individuals are also hesitant or unwilling to re-enter service sector jobs where physical distancing is not always possible.

Impacts we can anticipate through the RESTART phase

Mental Health

In April 2020, WPBGE conducted a Worker Impact Survey to measure immediate impact of COVID-19 on area residents/employees*. Results revealed that while many lost their jobs, around 19% – primarily in healthcare, transportation and warehousing – were working more. This was true for remote workers as well. For many parents of young children, this meant

juggling parenting and an increased workload simultaneously. The survey also highlighted significant levels of concern among recently laid-off individuals about being able to pay for groceries, rent and other monthly bills. These changes have brought additional levels of stress to the workforce. A Nanos survey revealed that 2 in 5 Canadians had poorer mental health than before the pandemic. Heightened stress and anxiety levels have led to increased alcohol consumption, which can have significant impacts on the health of our workforce*.

Programs such as CERB were able to keep some of these concerns at bay, but only temporarily. StatCan’s 2021 Q1 Survey on Business Conditions revealed that many businesses, particularly in accommodation and food services and arts, entertainment and recreation, are anticipating declines in profitability in the short term and some are concerned about their survival*. Due to these stressors, there is growing concern about the mental health and well-being of Grand Erie’s residents during the winter months. Further, access to mental health care has been negatively affected by COVID-19*. Supporting wellness, thus, is of top concern, and critical to holistic workforce development. There is an urgent need to broaden the scope and reach of mental health services in the Grand Erie area and beyond.

Remote Work

During the summer months, WPBGE also surveyed local businesses, revealing widespread concerns among business owners about challenges hiring in the current atmosphere, and a number of barriers to remote work*. These stressors are equally damaging to workforce development, and highlighted the need for a consolidated support system to address business owners’ concerns and challenges. Some of these concerns – such as obstacles to remote working – will continue to prevail as people move outside the GTA in search of affordable housing*. Broadband infrastructure needs will continue to grow and will need to be addressed to ensure that all residents can continue to find and maintain suitable employment. A recent piece by Deloitte also emphasizes the need to create adaptive workplaces – through addressing employee well-being and engagement – as a means of enhancing productivity amongst remote workers*.

Skills Mismatch

Additionally, as a result of changes to the employment landscape, we can anticipate that the skills mismatch will continue to become more pronounced in the upcoming months. As government supports expire and job seekers become more desperate, Grand Erie may see many of their university and college educated residents taking up the

available labouring occupations. Supporting these individuals – be it in the form of improved transportation options to access more suitable jobs or internet infrastructure to enable remote working – is critical to preventing the skills loss that can occur when an individual's skillset is underutilized.

There also needs to be a bigger emphasis among business owners on supporting skill development in the workplace. According to LinkedIn Learning's 2021 Workplace Learning Report, soft skills – like resilience – and technical skills – like digital fluency – will continue to grow in demand*. Despite growing evidence of the positive impact and return on investment from literacy and essential skills upgrading*, many employers do not offer such training due to barriers such as transportation issues, cost and time*. That said, some employers are becoming more open to seeking out skills training supports for their employees. In 2020, about 27% of manufacturing employers claimed they spent \$250 or less on skill development activities per employee, and another 15% spent between \$251 and \$500⁵.

Housing and Transportation Infrastructure

Data on migration patterns has revealed that a growing number of Ontario's residents are choosing to call Grand Erie home. Given the rising cost of housing across Ontario and the emerging opportunities for remote working, the Grand Erie area is likely to experience a population influx as GTHA residents move out in search of more affordable living options. The Grand Erie community must work together to find ways to improve transportation and housing infrastructure, including roads, water and sanitation systems, to support and encourage community mobility and quality of life.

Existing, ongoing and planned REACT and RESTART initiatives

Community organizations have been proactive, and have implemented a number of initiatives, as detailed below, to support the recovery of Grand Erie's key sectors. This, coupled with provincial and national strategies, have been instrumental in supporting the workforce throughout the pandemic. That said, the application of a consolidated approach and data-driven decision making must remain in focus in the upcoming months.

Agriculture

COVID-19 hit at the start of the 2020 agricultural season. Given the predominance of agricultural businesses in Grand Erie, specifically in Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk Counties, it was essential that this sector be supported. Economic

development organizations, post-secondary institutions and other community organizations came together to support this sector, forming an Agriculture Task Force that focused on consolidating available resources and getting this information to farmers. In addition, this group made significant strides in a marketing campaign to attract local workers to available agricultural jobs that could no longer be filled by temporary foreign workers. As a result of this, the sector hit record high employment in the summer of 2020. Further, Conestoga College, in partnership with the County of Brant, SCOR EDC and WPBGE, developed a new Agricultural Equipment Operator program which began in January 2021*.

Retail and Food Services

Supported by funding and community marketing campaigns, the retail and food service sectors also sprung into the restart phase by early summer. Business regulations – such as rules around outdoor patios – were relaxed to allow for more flexibility. The City of Brantford, as well as the Counties of Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk all joined Digital Mainstreet Ontario to help their downtown businesses develop an online presence. Further, Chamber of Commerce groups have been working towards promoting their members' retail businesses and encouraging residents to shop local. The Brantford-Brant Chamber of Commerce* and the Simcoe Chamber of Commerce* hosted Christmas shopping events in early December, with extended business hours and prizes for participants. Haldimand County's Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee also developed an online marketplace to support e-commerce efforts of small businesses in retail as well as in food services.

Manufacturing and Warehousing

Grand Erie's harder hit manufacturing and warehousing sectors experienced greater challenges in transitioning from the react to the restart phase. Hiring has slowed significantly within these sectors, and continues to do so as of February 2021. December 2020 business counts data indicates that the manufacturing sector lost around 25 businesses between December 2019 and December 2020, including three medium sized employers in food, machinery and metal production manufacturing. Layoffs were also reported by around 55% of manufacturing businesses in the Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula, according to the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) 2021 Economic Report*.

That said, the recent months have seen some manufacturing businesses – such as Battlefield International*, Apotex Pharmachem*, Brooks Signs*, and more recently, Upfield Canada Inc.* and Hershey Co.* – continue to innovate, grow and expand

⁵ EMC's Manufacturing GPS

in Grand Erie. Optimism and confidence in this sector's ability to rebound is also relatively high according to the OCC.

The focus for this group has been on employee retention. Certifications and seminars are being offered by the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) to help employers improve productivity, reduce absenteeism, apply intrinsic motivational strategies, and better understand health and safety regulations*. To a lesser extent, the manufacturing industry is also focused on work-integrated learning opportunities* that benefit both students (who gain valuable skills and experience) and the company (which receives government subsidies for each placement).

Healthcare and Social Assistance

The healthcare and social assistance sector was significantly affected as well, but transitioned to the restart phase relatively quickly due to the demand for their services. Many of their clients – unemployed or underemployed individuals – have lower incomes and lacked access to a computer or the internet, making it difficult for them to access the services offered by Literacy and Basic Skills organizations*. While programs offered by colleges were able to mobilize online educational technology tools that their clients could use, community programs were slower to shift to remote delivery. However, the sector has since made several strides in incorporating technology into both their educational curriculums and program administrations – with some local EO service providers offering tablets to clients to get them connected.

Infrastructure

Many community stakeholders have also come together to address broader workforce issues such as transportation and housing. This has been challenging due to limited labour supply; according to the 2021 Contractor Survey*, 56% of construction businesses found it more difficult to access skilled labour due to COVID. That said, the outlook is positive for 2021, with 35% of contractors in Southwestern region anticipating more work*. Alongside, SCOR EDC, in partnership with regional municipalities, is in the process of developing the Southwest Community Transit (SCT) network to connect residents to public transportation options across the communities they serve*. As part of this effort, WPBGE recently conducted a transportation survey to understand the needs of Grand Erie's residents.

Additionally, demand for housing – both by current residents and prospective ones – has prompted the City of Brantford and the County of Brant to come together to form the Mayor's Housing Partnership Task Force*. Alongside, SCOR EDC, WOWC

and the MPPs of Brantford-Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk* are engaged in advocacy efforts to make housing more affordable and attainable.

Ideas for additional REACT, RESTART and early RECOVER initiatives

Below is a list of additional suggestions that businesses, economic development, government and community partners can take on to support the recovery of the region:

- Educate job seekers who have lost jobs in declining industries about skills transferability
- Identify sectors and occupations in demand and develop training programs with integrated experiential learning opportunities
- Conduct a thorough assessment of all training programs in Grand Erie to understand what's available, overlaps and gaps and demographics being supported and missed by these services
- Analyze and share health and employment data on demographic differences (gender, race, ethnicity, income levels, skill levels) in impact
- Build up Grand Erie's entrepreneurial environment and promote Grand Erie as a place to do business
- Emphasize/market the value of upskilling and lifelong learning among employers and labour market participants

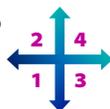
31% of Grand Erie's businesses anticipated that soft and essential skills – namely adaptability, flexibility communication, resilience, teamwork, interpersonal skills and customer relations – will grow in demand as a result of pandemic related shifts to the employment landscape. EMC's 2020 Employers' Survey results echoed this finding - over 75% of manufacturing employers reported lack of good work ethic and job commitment as the primary reason for hard to fill vacancies⁶.

Stakeholders noted that some employers have been integrating new technologies into their workplaces, such as digital programs to support remote work and to a lesser extent, automation software to fill labour shortages. As a result of this, there is a greater demand for technical training to incorporate these technologies into the job responsibilities of workers. The demand for soft, essential and technical training, thus, will likely become much more prominent in the upcoming year. If local employers see benefits of this, it may prompt a long-overdue shift in business practices towards retention strategies. It will be up to our area's Employment Ontario (EO), Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS), and educational institutions to unify and pool resources together to ensure that these training demands are met.

Further, the labour market disruption caused by COVID-19 may create some opportunities for economic development efforts focused around cluster development and education around career opportunities. Some action has already taken place in these areas. Local governments and colleges are investing more in the development of the agri-foods industry*. LBS organizations, schools and WPBGE are also working more closely on educating students and the workforce about career pathways.

Two critical uncertainties

To systematically address the labour force challenges presented by COVID-19, the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force embarked on a scenario planning project, used frequently by businesses and governments to plan for the future*. Stakeholders from across Grand Erie (listed in Appendix A) were invited to identify the most critical uncertainties facing the workforce, which would then be used to develop 4 probable Grand Erie futures. The critical uncertainties selected are detailed below.



1: Workforce Resilience

This is defined as the preparedness, flexibility and adaptability of Grand Erie's workforce, comprising of employers, employees, jobs seekers and students.

Workforce resilience can either be **hindered**, defined as 'obstructed by mandated closures, supply chain disruptions,

changes in consumer behaviour or any other barriers faced by employees and employers', or **transformed**, defined as 'the workforce's ability to adapt in response to barriers posed by COVID-19'. Key Indicators include:

Local survey data, measuring shifts in responses by businesses in the following areas:

- Consumer demand and preferences
- Workplace safety and confidence
- Skills in-demand
- Remote working

Canada Business Counts data

- Shifts in sectoral distribution

Labour Force Survey data

- Participation rate by age/gender

Job demand data

- Top occupations in demand

EO/LBS service users' data

2: Strategic Responsiveness

This refers to the accurate identification of opportunities and obstacles by governments and community service organizations, and their ability to respond in ways that mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19 on Grand Erie's labour market.

Strategic Responsiveness can either be **fragmented**, defined as 'uncoordinated community efforts that result in some labour market groups being isolated/neglected', or **consolidated**, defined as 'the collective movement of all labour market groups towards recovery'.

It is important to note that no single entity is responsible for/can independently influence this uncertainty. Rather, consolidated strategic responsiveness relies on all workforce agencies continuously working together to discuss, debate, and learn from failures and successes, both in the present and post-pandemic world. Key Indicators include:

Community programs data

- Number of new programs developed
- Effectiveness of programs developed, measured through program KPIs

EO/LBS service users' data

Labour Force Survey

- Employment rate
- Employment counts by industry/occupation

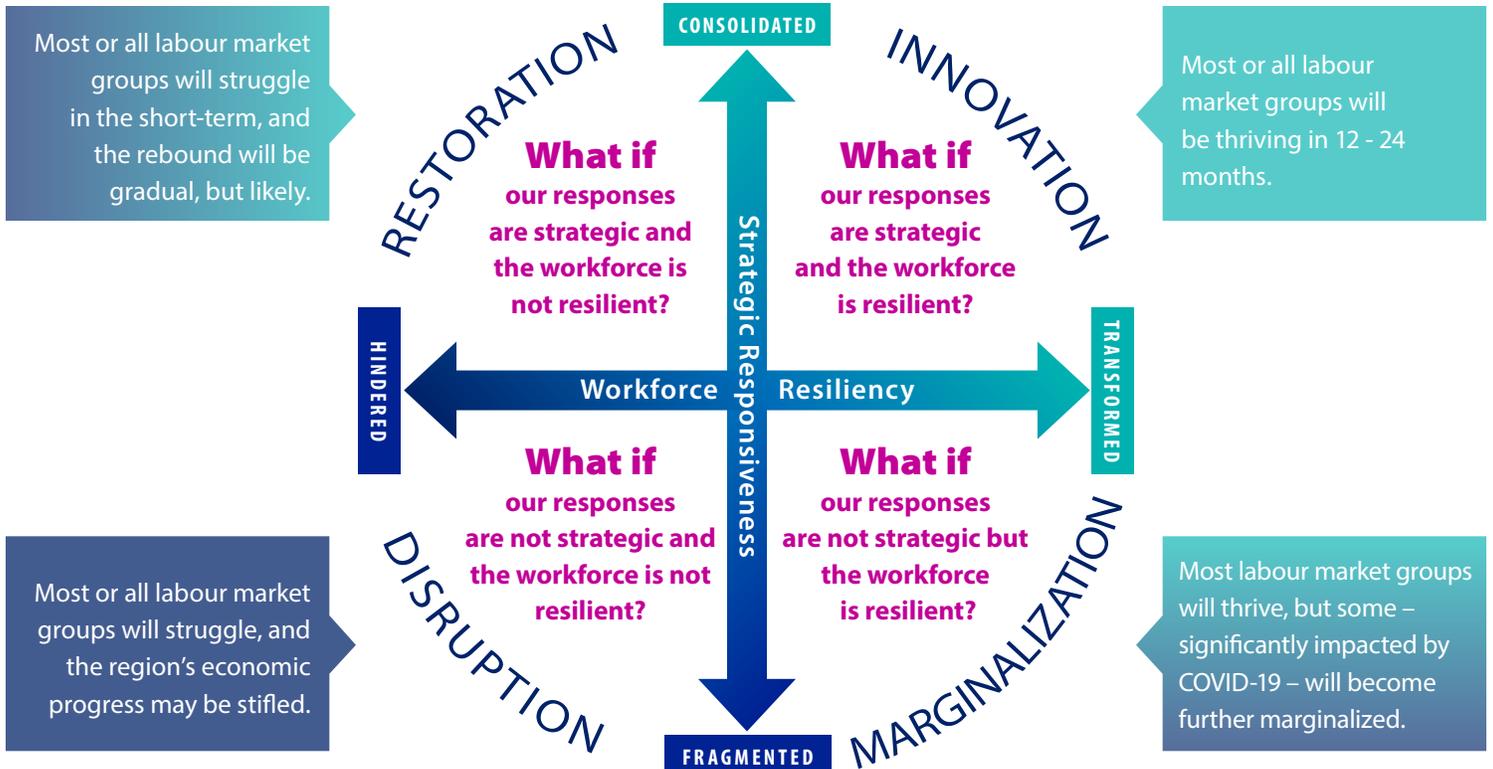
Job search and demand data

- Number of Grand Erie job site users
- Length of postings

THE GRAND ERIE COVID-19 RECOVERY TASK FORCE SCENARIO PLANNING MATRIX

Four scenarios in detail

Based on the possible interactions between the two identified critical uncertainties, the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force has drafted the following four scenarios (**What if...**):



These scenarios ARE...

- ...hypothetical narratives that represent probable realities.
- ...descriptive of the entire economy, not just a specific sector. Within each of these scenarios, each sector will experience varying levels and types of impacts, contingent on the global evolution of the COVID-19 crisis, and also contingent on the impacts of other local sectors.
- ...the outcome of global and national trends that are beyond our control. What would be within our control is how we, as a community, react to the challenges and opportunities that emerge in each scenario.
- ...a first version of scenarios. They are meant to start a conversation about how the Grand Erie area could overcome challenges and seize opportunities in each of these potential futures.

These scenarios ARE NOT...

- ...predictions about the future. For now, we are not suggesting which of these scenarios is more likely.
- ...complete. We rely on community and industry partners to complete the image of what these possible scenarios might look like.
- ...final. We will adapt these as the situation evolves. Specific scenarios may be reformulated, ruled out, or added in the future.
- ...attributions of value or likelihood. We are also not suggesting which scenario is better than the other.

All scenarios present opportunities for growth. Depending on the scenario, economic growth for the region is simply a matter of how, when, and in what activities.

Some current trends – such as the distribution of vaccines, the continued support of provincial and federal governments and the public health response to changes in the spread of COVID-19 – are

expected to remain consistent across all of the scenarios to follow.

Each of the scenarios present a unique set of benefits as well as challenges, and must be carefully considered to avoid overlooking opportunities and threats.

SCENARIO #1: DISRUPTION

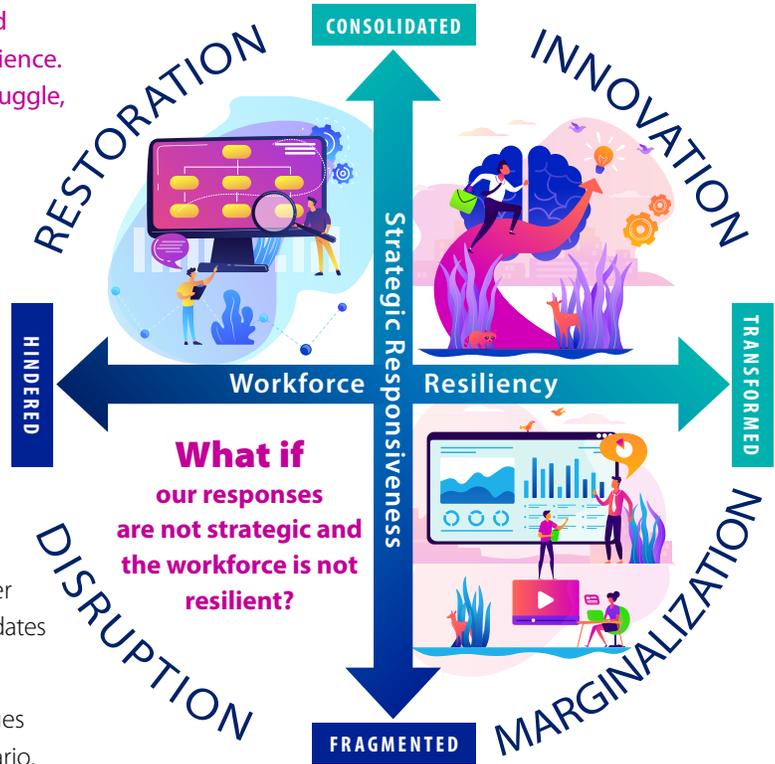
The first scenario lies at the intersection of fragmented strategic responsiveness and hindered workforce resilience. In this scenario, most or all labour market groups will struggle, and the region's economic progress may be stifled.

Over the next two years, consumer demand decreases, and subsequently so do the number of businesses and the number of jobs. Unemployment goes up and our employment service providers will likely feel this impact through a drastic increase in their caseload.

Current and projected skills shortages

Year-after-year, Grand Erie's EmployerOne results reveal that prospective and current employees lack soft and essential skills. Employers agree that while technical skills can be taught within the workplace, competencies such as communication, team work and adaptability are harder to teach, and are thus key requirements for suitable candidates across a variety of positions and industries.

Below is a shortlist of current and projected skills shortages within Grand Erie's top industries in the 'disruption' scenario.



DISRUPTION scenario skillsets	IN-DEMAND sectors							
	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Healthcare and social assistance	Construction	Education	Food services	Public administration	Agriculture
Communication Skills (oral/written)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Organizational Skills	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teamwork/collaboration	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Detail-Oriented	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Problem Solving	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Customer Service	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Computer Literacy	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Knowledge of Microsoft Suite		■	■		■	■	■	
Cleaning	■	■	■	■		■		■
Time Management	■	■	■		■		■	■
Resilience	■	■			■	■	■	■
Adaptability	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Data-driven decision making	■	■	■		■		■	■
Civic skills			■		■		■	

Methodology: Based on LFS industry and occupational trends, job demand data, stakeholder input and WPBGE's scenario projections, occupations (by 2-digit NOCS) in demand within each of Grand Erie's 4 scenarios were identified (Appendix C). Using the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development job profiles data*, a list of skills requirements by occupational category was then developed. These are included in the scenario skillset matrices (as above). Employers, skills development organizations and EO services are encouraged to use these matrices to inform their skills training programs.

Note: Data on Grand Erie-specific skills shortages within smaller sectors such as public administration and agriculture is limited at this time. Research from recent regional publications and employer consultations on skills-in-demand and skills in hard-to-fill jobs was used to supplement this section.



RECOVER stage

September 2020 to May 2021

In this scenario, Grand Erie's businesses will continue to struggle for a prolonged period of time. Many more manufacturing, transportation and warehousing jobs will be lost over the next few months, and some may not return for several years. However, people in professional occupations such as business and finance, education and nursing may also lose their jobs as the demand – and available funding – for these positions decreases.

Other industries, such as construction, building supports, and rental/real estate, may rise marginally over the next few months. However, these industries rely on demand, and as the number of available jobs in the region declines, interest in moving to the region may taper off as well, causing a decrease in demand for construction services.

In this future, unemployment increases in the short-term, and spending habits change as a result. The retail and food service sectors, which have been coping relatively well thus far, might see a decrease in demand for their products, especially so if the prices of consumer goods increase*.

Many of these businesses will need to be supported by regional and sectoral organizations, but may struggle to navigate through the available resources due to time constraints. Some may be connected with the appropriate supports or may benefit from government funding/tax cuts, but many others will not. This will result in business closures in some cases, and mass lay-offs in others.

Early RESILIENCE stage

June 2021 to September 2021

In the 'disruption' scenario, by mid-2021, Grand Erie's businesses will begin to stabilize, and gradually, return to pre-pandemic levels of activity. This may mean a resurfacing of trends that dominated the region's employment landscape in 2019, including skills mismatches and high turnover.

Employment Ontario and Literacy and Basic Skills organizations will experience a drastic increase in caseload as job seekers look to develop the skills they need to re-gain suitable employment. However, without a consolidated support system, it is unlikely that the obstacles their clients currently face – such as lack of broadband access and limited transportation options – will be resolved. Many job seekers may struggle to even access the services available to them. This is likely to augment mental health issues among unemployed or underemployed individuals.

As more companies opt to take on remote workers, higher-skilled residents may look for work elsewhere while continuing to live in Grand Erie. People in intermediate occupations may opt to do the same, but since these jobs are hands-on, we could see a slight decline in the number of skilled tradespeople living and working in Grand Erie. In the event that this happens, the region may need to invest more resources into attracting apprentices and providing them with the supports they need to become journeypersons.



Recommendations for businesses in this scenario

- Focus on developing digital marketing material where possible
- Connect with Business Resource Centers (i.e.: Brantford-Brant Business Resource Center, Venture Norfolk, Enterprise Brant, Grand Erie Business Centre) to access funding to manage debt
- Connect with Business Resource Centers to get support with creating contingency plans/reforming business model in response to shifts in consumer demand
- Focus efforts on employee retention- offer wage increases, training and HR support as needed to all employees

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW POLICIES, INVESTMENTS, PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS

From an economic development and government perspective

- Boost consumer confidence in shopping local through marketing campaigns
- Invest in broadband infrastructure to help connect residents to external job opportunities
- Advocate for transportation and housing to attract and retain new residents
- Share detailed labour market information with businesses and the community routinely
- Support businesses in accessing available funding options
- Advocate for increased financial support for new cleaning protocols
- Adjust legislation to allow employers more flexibility

From an education and skills development perspective

- Develop transferable skills training curriculum and market this towards job seekers recently laid off from sectors in decline
- Identify the most marginalized populations (i.e.: youth, rural residents, low-skilled manufacturing workers, gig workers) and target affordable and accessible skills development programs towards them
- Develop and deliver digital literacy training to job seekers and employees
- Offer health and safety training for all employees
- Offer training on labour rules and regulations to HR staff persons
- Subsidize education/training materials for incoming post-secondary students
- Promote opportunities for apprenticeships among uncertain students/ recent graduates
- Ensure the availability of mental health support for youth and other marginalized groups

SCENARIO #2: RESTORATION

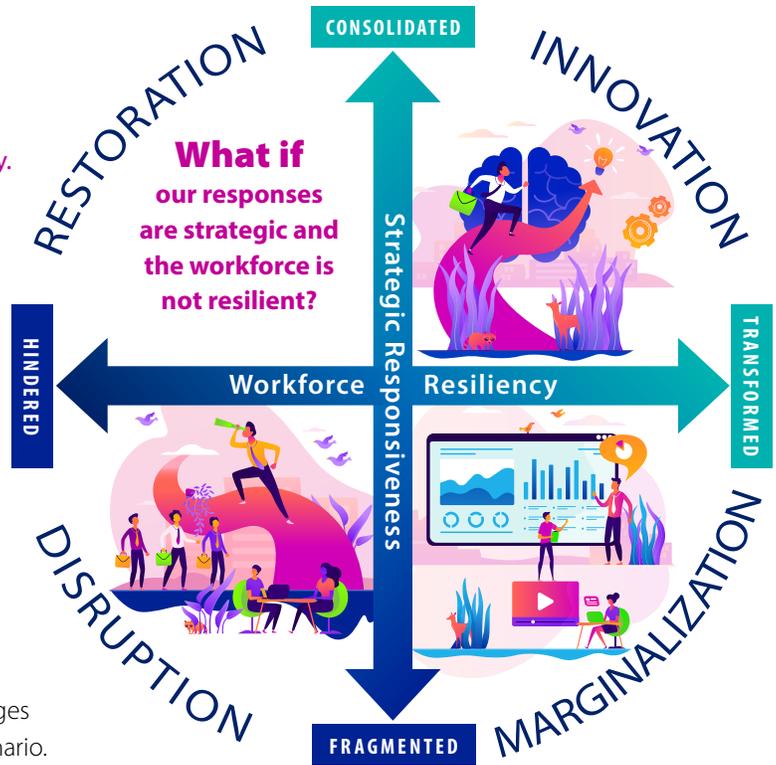
In our second scenario, strategic responsiveness is consolidated but workforce resilience is hindered. Most or all labour market groups will struggle in the short-term, and the rebound will be gradual, but likely.

The businesses and sectors most significantly impacted by COVID-19 – like the accommodation and food services sector for instance – will decline. This will leave a large group of workers unemployed, and they may struggle to find other employment in the short term.

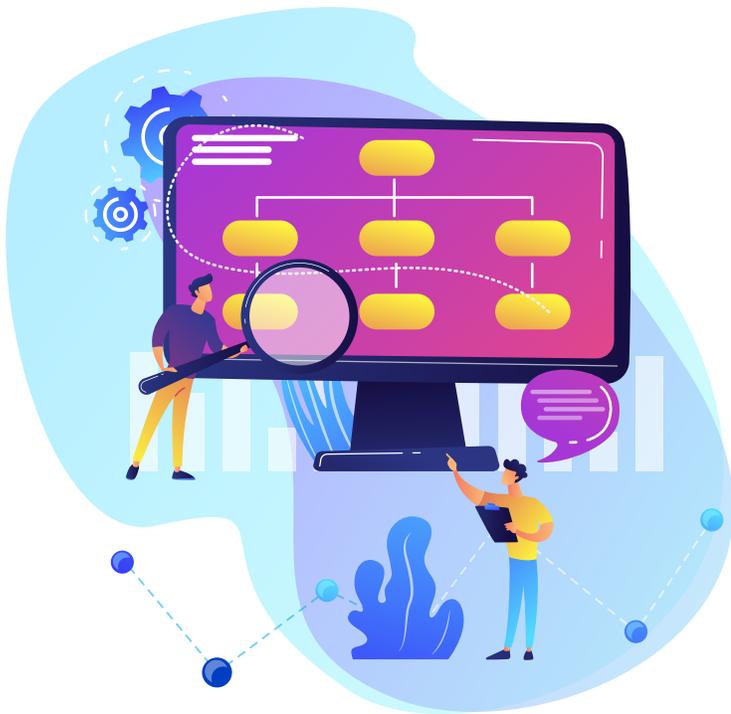
This scenario envisions our support system being consolidated. By understanding which sectors are growing and what skills they need, we will be able to help re-skill these individuals so they can rejoin the workforce.

Current and projected skills shortages

Below is a shortlist of current and projected skills shortages within Grand Erie's top industries in the 'restoration' scenario.



RESTORATION scenario skillsets	IN-DEMAND sectors							
	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Healthcare and social assistance	Construction	Education	Food services	Public administration	Agriculture
Communication Skills (oral/written)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Organizational Skills	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teamwork/collaboration	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Detail-Oriented	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Problem Solving	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Customer Service	■	■		■	■			■
Computer Literacy	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
Knowledge of Microsoft Suite		■	■		■	■	■	
Cleaning	■	■	■	■		■		■
Planning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Time Management	■	■	■		■		■	■
Resilience	■	■			■	■	■	■
Adaptability	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Data-driven decision making	■	■	■		■		■	■
Civic skills			■		■		■	
Independent learning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Technical micro-credentials	■		■			■	■	



RECOVER stage September 2020 to May 2021

Business impact will be similar to that outlined within the ‘Disruption’ scenario above. Grand Erie’s key manufacturing, construction, and warehousing sectors will decline, and so will demand for food services and retail trade.

A top concern for smaller retail and food businesses is the high cost of third-party delivery services. According to a study by Food Retail Environment Study for Health & Economic Resilience (FRESHER), around 20% of Brantford-Brant food service businesses rely on third party delivery services*. These costs, coupled with decreasing government supports and weather conditions that prevent outdoor shopping/dining, have made it difficult for small businesses to sustain themselves. According to StatCan reports and local intelligence, small businesses have already been disproportionately affected by the pandemic by all measures – decreased revenue, layoffs, and need for credit to sustain themselves*. These trends will continue, and the area may lose a significant number of smaller employers.

Education, healthcare and social assistance may see employment numbers plateauing as a result of limited availability of qualified workers and funding, but will be able to leverage existing and new partnerships to obtain the resources they need to support the region’s workforce.

Early RESILIENCE stage June 2021 to September 2021

Currently, Grand Erie’s manufacturing industry produces a number of different types of goods, including fabricated metal, food, machinery, furniture and other miscellaneous products. This diversity makes it difficult to support technical skill development, since each of these sub-sectors operate very differently. There may be opportunities for Grand Erie’s economic development organizations to strengthen the area’s manufacturing stronghold by supporting the development of clusters. By identifying particularly resilient sub-sectors and leveraging them to attract similar types of businesses to the region, Grand Erie may be able to gain a competitive edge in certain types of manufacturing. This will allow businesses to better support each other through knowledge and resource sharing.

Other sectors will likely bounce back over time too, but some small businesses across a number of different sectors may be lost in the process. This scenario sees community services playing a critical role in identifying industries in decline and offering training opportunities to recently laid-off workers to prepare them for in-demand jobs. Micro-credentials will grow in-demand within several industries. These certifications will not only help workers transition to industries in growth, but may also boost income levels*. By offering specific and practical trainings to job seekers, there may be opportunity to alleviate some concerns among employers about the availability of suitable candidates.

In this future, there will be a demand for HR training on retention, change management, business planning and more. Governments, economic development representatives, and other community service organizations will also work together to support marginalized individuals by offering childcare and transportation. Businesses will place a more human lens on business planning and start offering alternative work arrangements as a rule, flexible working hours, and benefits such as childcare, shuttle service, transit passes, and wellness programs. Over time, this will lead to better skill matches between job seekers and jobs, and possibly, increased retention of staff as well. Successful matches between talent and jobs will lead to happier and more productive employees.

Housing, transportation and broadband infrastructure needs will rise as a result of better employer-employee matches, and there will be high demand for sustainable planning initiatives to support this growth.



Recommendations for businesses in this scenario

- Develop a crisis response plan to prepare for the event of an outbreak
- Develop contingency plans to guide your business through anticipated market shifts
- Connect with Business Resource Centers to access funding and programs designed to provide support through COVID-19 (e.g.: remote working guides, software, etc.)
- Explore and create opportunities for training and upskilling within your workforce

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW POLICIES, INVESTMENTS, PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS

From an economic development and government perspective

- Identify specific business needs in key sectors
- Offer financial support to small businesses, rural businesses and businesses in heavily affected sectors (e.g.: manufacturing, tourism).
- Design and deliver HR training resources and workshops (on inclusivity, staff retention, strategic planning, organizational development, change management) to help businesses navigate through COVID-19 smoothly
- Design digital inclusion supports for Grand Erie residents and employers with limited internet access
- Develop a consistent “one-stop shop” for information, resources etc.
- Implement policies and changes that support workers by limiting layoffs & enabling paid sick leave
- Establish clear and industry-specific guidelines to help businesses operate through COVID-19. Communicate these guidelines to businesses using a variety of mediums
- Promote diversity and inclusiveness within the Grand Erie community

From an education and skills development perspective

- Work with businesses to design custom staff training programs that meet the needs of their organizations
- Promote and subsidize software that enables remote working, and train employees to use these tools effectively
- Use labour market information to identify emerging skills in demand and develop programs to upskill/reskill jobs seekers accordingly
- Increase the promotion of skills training programs and ensure that they are made accessible to all businesses
- Broaden the scope of experiential learning by connecting students to businesses that offer such opportunities
- Prioritize apprenticeship training to fill gaps within region’s businesses
- Invest in technologies that enhance learning and skill development
- Strengthen collaboration between school boards, post-secondary institutions and workforce planning organizations to ensure workforce development needs are being met

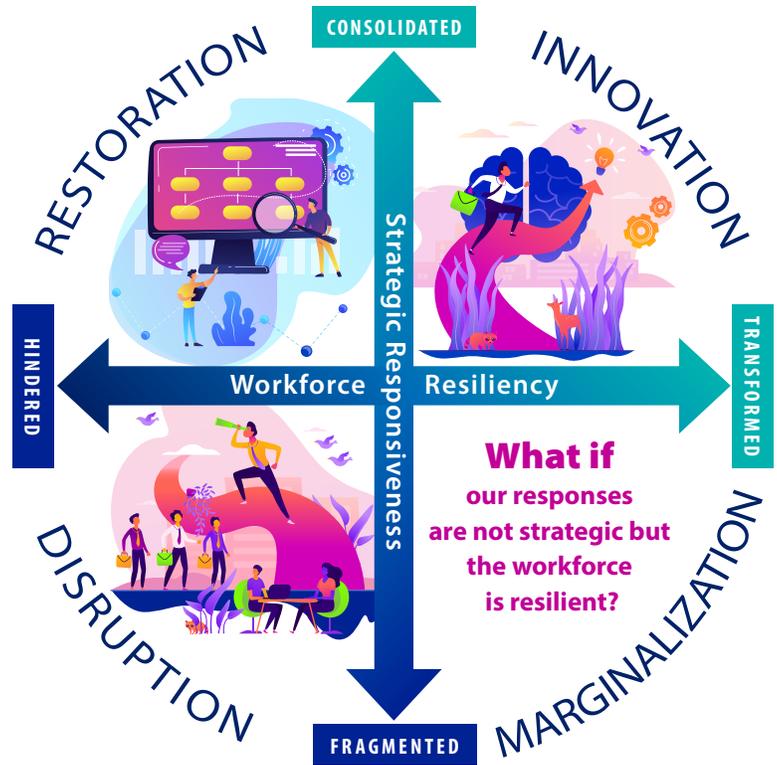
SCENARIO #3: MARGINALIZATION

In this scenario, Grand Erie’s workforce is resilient, but our strategic responsiveness is fragmented. As a result, most labour market groups will thrive, but some – those most significantly impacted by COVID-19 – will become further marginalized.

It is likely that in this scenario, unemployment will go up for groups like low skilled workers, rural residents, and youth, and that some small businesses will be forced to close. In this scenario, EO may find themselves struggling to support our new job seekers, who have vast and complex needs.

Current and projected skills shortages

Below is a shortlist of current and projected skills shortages within Grand Erie’s top industries in the ‘marginalization’ scenario.



MARGINALIZATION scenario skillsets	IN-DEMAND sectors							
	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Healthcare and social assistance	Construction	Education	Food services	Public administration	Agriculture
Communication Skills (oral/written)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Organizational Skills	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teamwork/collaboration	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Detail-Oriented	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Problem Solving	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Customer Service	■	■		■	■			■
Computer Literacy	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
Knowledge of Microsoft Suite		■	■		■	■	■	
Resilience	■	■			■	■	■	■
Adaptability	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Data-driven decision making	■	■	■		■		■	■
Civic skills			■		■		■	
Independent learning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teleworking skills (online collaboration/facilitation)			■		■		■	
Technical micro-credentials	■		■			■	■	

SCENARIO #3: MARGINALIZATION



RECOVER stage

September 2020 to May 2021

Small businesses make up a significant portion of businesses in healthcare, wholesale and retail trade, and construction. While employment in some of these sectors has been on the rise, it is likely that much of this employment growth is among medium or larger businesses. Other industries – such as arts, culture and recreation – that have a large number of small businesses will also struggle.

Within the workforce, youth may continue to struggle to find work. Educational institutions and the EO network will have to work closely with businesses to connect these youths to experiential learning opportunities in the community. This scenario also sees a growing number lower skilled service workers – particularly those with childcare/eldercare responsibilities – leaving the workforce because they are unable to find part time-work. It is also likely that other previously marginalized groups – gig workers, indigenous people, people with disabilities, newcomers and immigrants – may experience greater challenges in finding suitable employment. As a result of this, these individuals are likely to experience higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression, and may struggle to find the supports required to help them cope with/overcome their mental health concerns.

Similar to the ‘restoration’ scenario, micro-credentials are expected to be in demand among marginalized groups affected by the pandemic. These individuals may have other barriers such as childcare, transportation and limited finances, so it will be important to consider what external supports are required to upskill them. As an example, WPBGE offers a skill development program, Skills2Advance for Manufacturing and Warehousing*, that is open to members of the workforce who are out of work, looking for a second career, or as an incumbent worker being referred by their employer to upskill. In addition to training and certifications, the program also offers supports for participants. All Grand Erie Manufacturing and Warehousing businesses should connect with the program as a business partner.

Early RESILIENCE stage

June 2021 to September 2021

In this future, the strategic responsiveness of community stakeholders will be fragmented, and due to this, it will be difficult for marginalized groups to find the supports they need to rejoin the labour force. This will be particularly true for residents of Grand Erie’s rural communities; limited transportation and broadband will continue to be significant barriers for this group. Funding directed at vulnerable groups will become particularly important in this scenario.

The region’s most resilient businesses may step up to this challenge. As they see the need and value in collaborating, they may form/strengthen industry networks. As these medium and large businesses grow, they may experience greater labour shortages. Innovative business leaders and industry groups will tackle this by establishing private transportation options and expanding their focus on entry-level training, and through this, will be able to tap into the pool of marginalized groups that were previously struggling to find employment. In this scenario, marginalized workers may take on work they are overqualified for out of necessity, leading to skills loss.



Recommendations for businesses in this scenario

- Seek out opportunities (through industry groups, Chamber of Commerce groups, BRCs) to connect with other similar businesses to collaborate on developing solutions to common challenges
- Advocate for infrastructure requirements to support your workforce (i.e.: broadband lines, transportation, housing)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW POLICIES, INVESTMENTS, PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS

From an economic development and government perspective

- Identify and offer financial support to struggling businesses/industries
- Focus on developing broadband infrastructure, transportation, housing and childcare to facilitate the connection between job seekers and jobs
- Incentivize experiential learning opportunities within businesses
- Support the development of industry networks through seminars and networking events

From an education and skills development perspective

- Increase promotion and delivery of EO services, targeting marginalized groups and rural areas
- Support soft-skills training within the workplace
- Offer health and wellness training to employees and job seekers
- Connect with marginalized groups to offer free/subsidized transferable skills training
- Subsidize education and training for post-secondary students
- Focus on interdisciplinary training to educate students for a diverse set of work futures
- Connect secondary and post-secondary students as well as job seekers with meaningful co-op opportunities at local businesses
- Enhance education around career pathways among both students and parents
- Strengthen connectivity between career counsellors and industry professionals

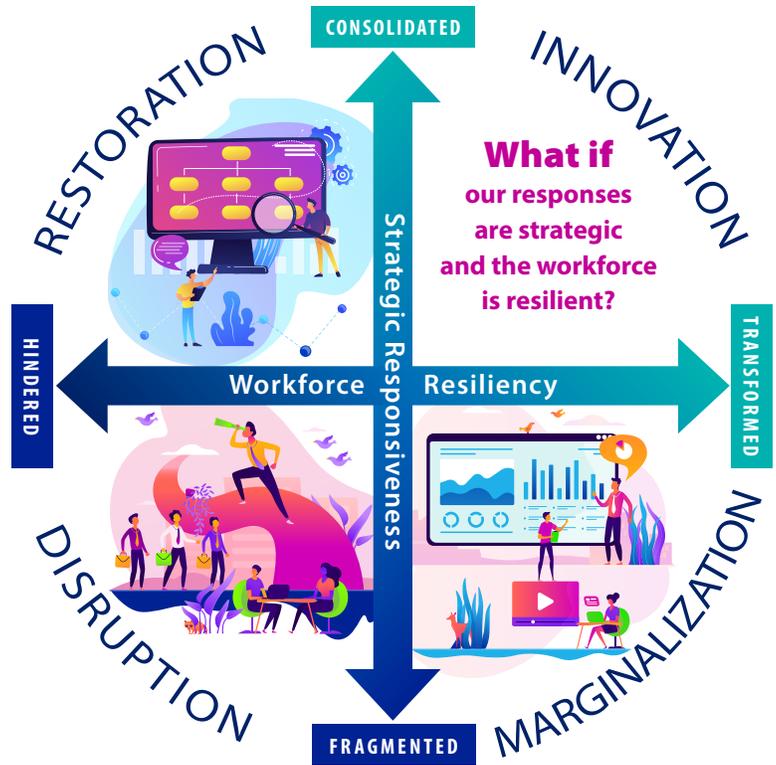
SCENARIO #4: INNOVATION

This scenario, formed at the intersection of a transformed workforce and consolidated strategic responsiveness, sees most or all labour market groups thriving in 12-24 months.

Consumer demand will increase, as will number of businesses. Many of these businesses will grow, leading to job vacancies that are quickly filled by job seekers that have been adequately trained for these jobs by Employment Ontario.

Current and projected skills shortages

Below is a shortlist of current and projected skills shortages within Grand Erie's top industries in the 'innovation' scenario.



INNOVATION scenario skillsets	IN-DEMAND sectors							
	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Healthcare and social assistance	Construction	Education	Food services	Public administration	Agriculture
Communication Skills (oral/written)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Computer Literacy	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Knowledge of Microsoft Suite		■	■		■	■	■	
Organizational Skills	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teamwork/collaboration	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Detail-Oriented	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Problem Solving	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Customer Service	■	■		■	■			■
Cleaning	■	■	■	■		■		
Planning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Time Management	■	■	■		■		■	■
Planning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Resilience	■	■			■	■	■	■
Adaptability	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Data-driven decision making	■	■	■		■		■	■
Innovative/interdisciplinary thinking	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Willingness to learn	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teleworking skills (online collaboration/facilitation)			■		■		■	
Technical micro-credentials	■		■			■	■	

SCENARIO #4: INNOVATION



RECOVER stage

September 2020 to May 2021

Stakeholders from across the region will collaborate with businesses to offer integral and sustainable supports to those who need it. More employers in manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, retail and other industries with high turnover rates will recognize the need to focus on retention. There will be a greater emphasis within workplaces on upskilling and continuous learning.

During the early stages in this scenario, the skills mismatch may become more prominent. Some of these gaps may be particularly difficult to fill due to lack of qualified workers, and longer term attraction strategies will need to be implemented to fill this void. That said, through a clear identification of skills gaps (an initiative that Literacy Link South Central has recently taken on), service providers will be able to develop and deliver training programs that meet the needs of many employers, and will do so in a manner that considers employer time and resources. Following the example of Venture Norfolk, business resource centers may also be able to create co-working spaces across Grand Erie (in vacant commercial buildings, for example) for individuals who lack broadband access.

Businesses in education and healthcare will innovate to fill their vacant positions. According to a Statistics Canada survey, telework is plausible for around 85% of jobs in the educational sector, and we may see more schools consider this option in the longer term*. Similarly, around 17% of manufacturing jobs can be done remotely. Where possible, these sectors will become more conducive to remote working, and will broaden their marketing efforts to reach professionals outside of Grand Erie. This will likely augment pre-existing shortages in access to computers and broadband, as well as in digital literacy skills. A proactive, regional approach will be required to address these issues holistically.

EO and skills training organizations may also take a more proactive approach to remote service delivery, investing in devices that they can lend to clients to get them connected. They will work together on delivering in-demand training to job seekers. Due to efforts around consolidating and sharing labour market data, they will become more informed about career pathway opportunities, and will relay this knowledge and – the required training – to job seekers.

Early RESILIENCE stage

June 2021 to September 2021

As a result of newly developed training programs and funding – such as the grant received by County of Brant to promote value added agriculture – Grand Erie's agriculture and food processing business will see significant growth in local employment by the summer of 2021. As with the restoration scenario, this may present opportunity to focus on cluster development that takes advantage of and builds upon existing agricultural production businesses. Similarly, the recovery of the manufacturing sector will be accelerated by efforts such as the Manufacturing Recovery Support Program by EMC*.

Educational institutions will work with sectors such as healthcare, education, public administration and even advanced manufacturing to identify specific higher-skilled labour shortages, and will begin developing programs that attract interested students to the area. Given the number of post-secondary educational institutions in Brantford and surrounding areas such as Simcoe, the city could see itself become a bigger student hub.

Within the next few years, this scenario sees economic development, government and planning representatives come together to develop much-needed infrastructure, such as affordable and accessible housing, a well-connected public transit system, and stronger/more widespread broadband connections to support a growing remote workforce.



Recommendations for businesses in this scenario

- Enable the use of technology within the workplace
- Focus on training workers to integrate these new technologies
- Strengthen connectivity with other industry businesses to share best practices and discuss collaboration opportunities

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW POLICIES, INVESTMENTS, PROGRAMS AND SUPPORTS

From an economic development and government perspective

- Identify competitive sectors and work towards attracting similar businesses to build clusters
- Create opportunities for collaboration between businesses within the same industry
- Encourage businesses to adopt sustainable business practices/models
- Attract green businesses to Grand Erie region
- Strengthen connectivity between local economic development departments across Grand Erie and Western Ontario
- Work towards developing infrastructure – transportation, housing, broadband – to support a growing workforce

From an education and skills development perspective

- Increase digital/technical skills development within and outside the workplace
- Create an overarching workforce strategy that informs parents and educators and outlines a clear path to workforce succession planning
- Advocate for broadband infrastructure in rural communities
- Enhance computer/ technical training for all students and workers
- Increase the integration of digital skills training and technology into core courses in elementary and secondary schools
- Educate students on opportunities (of various skill levels) to work in Grand Erie
- Focus on individualized career-driven training plans for students of all ages

PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a list of priorities and recommendations identified by the Grand Erie Recovery Task Force Working groups:

Business Supports Working Group Priorities:

- Advocate for adjustment of legislation to allow employers more flexibility
- Increase financial support for new cleaning protocols
- Design digital inclusion supports for Grand Erie residents and employers with limited internet access
- Support industry network development
- Develop a consistent “one-stop-shop” for information, resources etc.

Economic Development Working Group Priorities:

- Advocate for forgivable loans and grant programs
- Identify business needs in key sectors
- Increase promotion of skills training programs
- Advocate for affordable and attainable housing
- Share insightful labour market data

Skills Development Working Group Priorities:

- Increase digital/technical skills development
- Design and deliver HR training for employers
- Develop transferable skills training curriculum
- Support soft-skills training within the workplace
- Align labour market information with skills training focuses

Education Working Group Priorities:

- Enhance education around career pathways
- Find new ways of engaging/involving parents/families about education and career pathways as early as primary grades
- Increase integration of digital skills training and technology into core courses
- Broaden the scope of experiential learning
- Strengthen connectivity between career counsellors and industry professionals

Many community agencies have already begun working towards addressing these priorities, and more have plans to integrate them into their deliverables for the upcoming year.

For a detailed list of community partners, existing projects and gaps, please refer to [Appendix B](#).

CONCLUSION

This report offers Grand Erie’s stakeholders with an overview of the past, present and probable futures of Grand Erie’s workforce, highlighting key labour market shifts and recommendations for practices, policies and other interventions that will need to be put in place to support the recovery of the region. While the scenarios outlined above are not predictions, they do offer opportunities for government, economic development organizations, community stakeholders, educators, employers, employees, and jobseekers to respond proactively and strategically. By observing labour market shifts in real time – using the [Grand Erie Scenario Tracker*](#) – stakeholders will be able to identify the scenario we are moving towards/the labour market groups that will be most negatively impacted and implement sustainable strategies that can support overall workforce development.

While both businesses and community agencies have undeniably showcased innovation and adaptability in the

face of COVID-19, the region’s outlook remains uncertain. Employment is projected to rise in 2021 along with a drop in unemployment, but Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula businesses reported limited confidence in the region’s ability to thrive, according to OCC’s 2021 Ontario Economic Report.

The development of the 4 working groups and identification of priorities within each is a significant stride towards supporting workforce development through and beyond COVID-19, but, much more work will be needed – by governments, employers, service providers, educators and the workforce. Through continuously learning, adapting and collaborating with one another, stakeholders can play an important role in ensuring that all labour market groups have the support they need to be thriving in the next 12-24 months.

APPENDIX A: GRAND ERIE RECOVERY TASK FORCE MEMBERS

The Grand Erie COVID-19 Recovery Task Force was established by WPBGE in early March in an effort to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 and to develop partnerships to respond to specific issues facing the community. It was formed as an extension of the Employment Planning Advisory Committee (EPAC), which meets several times annually to discuss workforce planning and to inform the annual Local Labour Market Plan

Grand Erie Recovery Task Force members:

- Adam Hardman – Scotty’s Refrigeration
- Alison Earls – Haldimand County Economic Development
- Angelica Smith – Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association
- Ann Myhal – Grand Erie District School Board
- Ashley Maracle – Six Nations Polytechnic
- Becky Lala – City of Brantford
- Bernadette Bomberry – NPAAMB
- Beth Gurney – Wilfrid Laurier University
- Bonita Johnson – FedEx
- Brandon Webb – County of Brant Economic Development
- Brian Jones – Mabe
- Brigitte O’Neill – Brantwood Community Services
- Cathy Smith – NPAAMB
- Chris Garwood – Norfolk County Economic Development
- Chris Swick – IBEW Local 105
- Cindy Swanson – Enterprise Brant
- Colleen Miller – Grand Valley Educational Society
- Colleen Vandaele – Kelly Services/WPBGE Board
- David Bailey – County of Brant Mayor
- David Prang – Chamber of Commerce Brantford-Brant
- David Suess – Canadian Skills Training and Employment Coalition
- Diane Finley – MP Haldimand-Norfolk
- Earla Smith – Conestoga College
- Elisha Stuart – Brant Skills Centre
- Fred Sebring – Stelco/WPBGE Board
- Gary Beemer – Haldimand & Norfolk Social Services
- Geoffrey McDonald – Stelco
- Graham Carroll – WPBGE Board
- Heather Mitchell – Six Nations Development Corp.
- Heather Vanner – Community Resource Services
- Ian Howcroft – Skills Ontario
- Ian Rabbits – Toyotetsu/Norfolk County Councilor Ward 5
- Jacqui Huszczo – R&W Metal
- Jason Burgess – County of Norfolk
- Jaymie Nelson – Haldimand County Economic Development
- Joanne Wolnik – Southwestern Ontario Tourism Corporation
- Juliana Tu – Adidas Group
- Justin Lafontaine – Ontario Tourism Innovation Lab
- Kate Burns Gallagher – Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus
- Kathryn Kissinger – Kissinger HR Services
- Kevin Dekok – City of Brantford Economic Development and Tourism
- Kim Earls – South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corp.
- Kristal Chopp – Norfolk County, Mayor
- Kristine Carey – Venture Norfolk
- Lil Pemsukh Singh – Conestoga College
- Lily Lumsden – YMCA
- Linda Branderhost – Simcoe Chamber of Commerce
- Lisa Favero – Wilfred Laurier University
- Lisa Savoy – Fanshawe College Community Career and Employment Services
- Lori Bruner – Brant Skills Centre
- Mae Legg – Brantford-Brant Business Resource Center
- Malcolm Whyte – St. Leonards
- Mandy McIntyre – YMCA
- Maria Fortunato – Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association
- Mark Ellerker – Brantford Building & Construction Trades Council, Hamilton
- Marlene Smith – Haldimand & Norfolk Social Services
- Mary Fuke – Six Nations Polytechnic
- Mat Vaughan – County of Brant
- Mike McDonald – Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board
- Milan Novakovic – Brantford-Brant MPP Office
- Nancy Faulds – Tulsar/WPBGE Board
- Nick Kinklel – OMAFRA
- Pat Kitchen – YMCA
- Peter Wright – The Planning Group
- Robert Ham – City of Brantford Economic Development and Tourism
- Russell Press – County of Brant Economic Development
- Scott McLeod – Libro Credit Union
- Stacey Hawkins – Wilfrid Laurier University
- Stephen Speers – Conestoga College/WPBGE Board
- Sue Hardy – St. Leonard’s Community Services
- Tamara Kattari – Literacy Link South Central
- Tara Buchanan – Community Living Brant
- Will Bouma – MPP Brantford-Brant
- Zach Gable – County of Brant Economic Development
- Zvi Lifshiz – Norfolk County Economic Development

APPENDIX B: GRAND ERIE TASK FORCE PRIORITIES

	BUSINESS SUPPORTS	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	EDUCATION
PRIORITY # 1:	Advocate for adjustment of legislation to allow employers more flexibility	Advocate for forgivable loans & grant programs	Increase digital/technical skills development	Enhance education around career pathways
PROJECT PARTNERS	Industry Reps. HR service providers	Economic Development Reps. (incl. SCOR) Business Resource Centers/ CFDCs Six Nations Development Corporation OMAFRA	Skills training programs Post-secondary institutions	School Boards -Bridges to Success -GELA -CareerLink
EXTERNAL SUPPORT PARTNERS	Economic Development Reps. Municipal/Provincial Government Reps. Ontario Chamber of Commerce Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters	Credit Unions CFIB Banks	Business Resource Centers/CFDCs Credit Unions (eg: Libro) Industry Reps. School boards - Bridges to Success - GELA - CareerLink LBS partners - Literacy Link - Brant Skills - Fanshawe Employment Services Health and Social Services – Haldimand-Norfolk St. Leonard’s Employment Services GVES STA GREAT NPAAMP SAOs Skills Ontario Diversity Institute OMAFRA	Skills training programs LBS (eg: Literacy Link) SNP Conestoga Fanshawe WLU Skills Ontario Fanshawe Employment Services Health and Social Services – Haldimand-Norfolk St. Leonard’s Employment Services GREAT NPAAMP JACAN YSC
EXISTING PROJECTS	City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports (C.D. Howe Institute, Conference Board, Think Tanks, Fed Dev	Brant Skills Centre’s Free Computer and Essential Skills Programs Conestoga’s Academic Upgrading Courses (Computers) City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Skills2Advance: Manufacturing and Warehousing Construct Your Career Skills4Steel Agriculture Equipment Operator Program – Conestoga College	Career Laddering OLMP project Grand Erie Jobs Epic Jobs Edge Factor Platform (GEDSB, BHNCSB subscription) FedCap SSM Prototype
GAPS/ CURRENT CHALLENGES	Diversity of employer needs make it difficult to focus on the most needed changes	Limited knowledge of employer needs makes advocacy efforts challenging	Marketing of community resources needs greater support and understanding by the greater community	Practical Experience Marketing of resources Access to existing resources Integrating/connecting academia with life experience

APPENDIX B: GRAND ERIE TASK FORCE PRIORITIES

	BUSINESS SUPPORTS	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	EDUCATION
PRIORITY # 2:	Increase financial support for new cleaning protocols	Identify business needs in key sectors	Design and deliver HR Training for employers	Increase integration of digital skills training and technology into core courses
PROJECT PARTNERS	Industry Reps. Chamber of Commerce Groups	Economic Development Reps.	Post-secondary institutions	School Boards Ministry of Education Municipal/Provincial Government Reps.
EXTERNAL SUPPORT PARTNERS	Business Resource Centres/CFDCs GREAT Six Nations Development Corporation Economic Development Reps Ontario Chamber of Commerce Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters	Industry Reps. WPBGE	HR service providers Business Resources Centers/CFDCs Credit Unions (eg: Libro) Economic Development Reps. GREAT Skills Ontario Diversity Institute	Industry Reps. Skills training programs Conestoga Fanshawe WLU Skills Ontario SNP
EXISTING PROJECTS	SCOR's Business Loans and Funding Programs List Venture Norfolk's COVID-19 Business Resources List Conference Board of Canada's Future Skills Podcast CFIB Small Business Resources (COVID-19) City of Brantford Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	City of Brantford Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	Various HR Consulting Firms Kissinger HR Services BHRN Enterprise Brant Venture Norfolk City of Brantford Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Agriculture Equipment Operator Program – Conestoga College	SHSM – IT CanHack FIRST Robotics U of W ESQ Camp Brickworks Academy OYAP JACAN YSC
GAPS/ CURRENT CHALLENGES	Information overload reported by businesses	Employers' survey fatigue	Limited understanding among business owners/HR reps about the value of holistic business planning (talent attraction, employee wellness, satisfaction & retention, organizational management, succession planning etc.)	Most programs come at an additional cost to families Most programs are limited to specific areas of the Province. Transportation and access become issues Not yet fully integrated into Academia Process to integrate into curriculum

APPENDIX B: GRAND ERIE TASK FORCE PRIORITIES

	BUSINESS SUPPORTS	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	EDUCATION
PRIORITY # 3:	Design digital inclusion supports	Increase promotion of skills training programs	Develop transferable skills training curriculum	Broaden the scope of experiential learning
PROJECT PARTNERS	Industry Reps.	Economic Devpt. Reps. (inc. SCOR) Business Resource Centers/ CFDCs	Skills training programs Post-secondary institutions	School Boards
EXTERNAL SUPPORT PARTNERS	Business Resource Centers/CFDCs Skills Training Programs SWIFT Rural Broadband Niagara Regional Broadband Network Ontario Chamber of Commerce Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters	Chamber of Commerce groups	School boards - Bridges to Success - GELA - CareerLink LBS partners - Literacy Link - Brant Skills - Fanshawe Employment Services Health and Social Services – Haldimand-Norfolk St. Leonard’s Employment Services GVES STA GREAT NPAAMP SAOs SNP WLU Conestoga Fanshawe	Industry Groups WPBGE Grand Valley Education Society (GVES) School Work College Initiative (SWCI) Post-secondary institutions STA CareerLink JACAN YSC
EXISTING PROJECTS	Venture Norfolk Co-working space ICON Program (funding) City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	Grand Erie Jobs Portal Grand Erie Job Developer Marketing Tool for Employers City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	Laurier’s Transferable Skills Workshop City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Skills2Advance: Manufacturing and Warehousing Construct Your Career Skills4Steel Agriculture Equipment Operator Program – Conestoga College LLSC’s Employer Skills Assessment	OYAP SHSM Co-op Community service hours (40) JACAN YSC Skills Ontario
GAPS/ CURRENT CHALLENGES	Broadband infrastructure Limits on access to computer services (due to COVID-19)	Business time and cost constraints Limited marketing resources for extending business outreach A lot of programs from a lot of different organizations causes confusion for employers Amount of paperwork turns away prospective employers		More business connections are needed to create more experiential learning opportunities More programs/marketing is needed to provide exposure to all careers

APPENDIX B: GRAND ERIE TASK FORCE PRIORITIES

	BUSINESS SUPPORTS	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	EDUCATION
PRIORITY # 4:	Support Industry Network Development	Advocate for affordable and attainable housing	Support soft-skills training within the workplace	Find new ways of engaging families re: education & career pathways as early as primary grades
PROJECT PARTNERS	Industry Reps. Chamber of Commerce Groups	Economic Devpt. Reps. (inc. SCOR) Municipal government reps. MPs/MPPs	Skills Training Programs	School Board Trustees
EXTERNAL SUPPORT PARTNERS	Economic Development Reps. Business Resource Centers/CFDCs Ontario Chamber of Commerce Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters OMAFRA	Construction Businesses Development community (Municipal Councils, Planning Departments, Building Departments, home builders associations)	Business Resource Centers/CFDCs Chamber of Commerce groups Economic Development Reps Skills Ontario Diversity Institute	Parent Councils Grand Erie Elementary and High Schools WPBGE LBS JACAN Industry Reps Industry Organizations
EXISTING PROJECTS	SCOR's Sector Development Programs List Brantford-Brant Chamber's Christmas Business Blitz (retail focused; promotes shop local) Brant Business Network (appears inactive currently) Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev City of Brantford Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund	Brantford-Brant Mayors' Housing Partnerships Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	Conestoga's Corporate Training (in Kitchener) City of Brantford Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Skills2Advance: Manufacturing and Warehousing Construct Your Career Skills4Steel Agriculture Equipment Operator Program – Conestoga College	OLMP Career Laddering Project GEDSB Multi-Year Plan Development GVES – Regional Centre for Educational Excellence JACAN
GAPS/ CURRENT CHALLENGES	Distance between regions makes connecting difficult	Limited knowledge of population growth within the next 10 years High construction costs associated with home building	Comprehensive nation wide skills database (in development by Future Skills Centre) Limited marketing resources for extending business outreach	Creating/updating policy documents which lay out project requirements for each Parent Council. In turn, Parent Council By-laws must conform and commit to family engagement activities specific to careers as well as other topics such as health and wellness, curriculum and family fun. Families need more support to achieve a balanced life and support child education and wellbeing

APPENDIX B: GRAND ERIE TASK FORCE PRIORITIES

	BUSINESS SUPPORTS	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	EDUCATION
PRIORITY # 5:	Develop a consistent “one-stop shop” for information, resources etc.	Share insightful labour market data	Align labour market information (LMI) with skills training focuses	Strengthen connectivity between career counselors and industry professionals
PROJECT PARTNERS	WPBGE	WPBGE	WPBGE	WPBGE School Boards
EXTERNAL SUPPORT PARTNERS	Skills training programs Business Resource Centers/CFDCs Chamber of Commerce groups Economic Development Reps	Industry Reps. Economic Development Reps	Industry Reps. Skills Training programs Economic Development Reps Skills Ontario OMAFRA	Industry Reps. Ministry of Education Municipal/Provincial Government Reps Industry Organizations
EXISTING PROJECTS	Grand Erie Jobs City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	Grand Erie Business Edge Newsletter City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Chartered Banks Economic Reports C.D. Howe Institute Conference Board Think Tanks Fed Dev	Grand Erie Labour Market Connection Newsletter City of Brantford Mayor’s Economic Recovery Task Force #BrantWorksTogether Norfolk County Economic Recovery Task Force Haldimand County COVID-19 Business information and Resources Six Nations Economic Development Trust, Emergency Relief Fund Skills2Advance: Manufacturing and Warehousing Construct Your Career Skills4Steel Agriculture Equipment Operator Program – Conestoga College	Grand Erie Jobs Business Tours (Manufacturing Month) Edge Factor (GEDSB and BHNCD SB subscription)
GAPS/ CURRENT CHALLENGES	Staff time/resources Marketing has been an identified gap. With the implementation of the new Marketing Strategy, WPBGE hopes for improved awareness	Currently released infrequently Limited knowledge about what info. businesses/EcDevs are seeking	Currently released infrequently Limited knowledge about what info. community partners are seeking	Industry Experience Awareness of local businesses A lot of demand on time for health and wellness concerns child education and wellbeing

APPENDIX C: OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND IN GRAND ERIE

The table below summarizes occupational groups that are projected to grow in demand in each of WPBGE's 4 scenarios. It was developed using a number of sources, namely LFS industry and occupational trends, job demand data, stakeholder input and WPBGE's scenario projections.

	Scenario #1	Scenario #2	Scenario #3	Scenario #4
	DISRUPTION	RESTORATION	MARGINALIZATION	INNOVATION
NOC 00 Senior management occupations	■			■
01-05 Specialized middle management occupations			■	■
06 Middle management occupations in retail and wholesale trade and customer services		■	■	■
07-09 Middle management occupations in trades, transportation, production and utilities	■	■	■	■
11 Professional occupations in business and finance		■	■	■
21 Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences				
30 Professional occupations in nursing	■	■	■	■
31 Professional occupations in health (except nursing)				■
40 Professional occupations in education services	■	■		■
41 Professional occupations in law and social, community and government services	■	■		■
51 Professional occupations in art and culture				
22 Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences		■		■
32 Technical occupations in health	■		■	
42 Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services		■	■	■
43 Occupations in front-line public protection services				
44 Care providers and educational, legal and public protection support occupations	■	■	■	■
52 Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport				
12 Administrative and financial supervisors and administrative occupations	■	■	■	■
13 Finance, insurance and related business administrative occupations				
14 Office support occupations	■		■	
15 Distribution, tracking and scheduling co-ordination occupations				
62 Retail sales supervisors and specialized sales occupations	■	■		■
64 Sales representatives and salespersons - wholesale and retail trade	■	■		■
66 Sales support occupation		■	■	
63 Service supervisors and specialized service occupations	■	■	■	■
65 Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	■	■		■
67 Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c.	■	■		■
34 Assisting occupations in support of health services		■		
44 Care providers and educational, legal and public protection support occupations	■	■	■	■
72 Industrial, electrical and construction trades	■	■	■	■
73 Maintenance and equipment operation trades		■	■	■
74 Other installers, repairers and servicers and material handlers	■	■	■	■
75 Transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations	■	■	■	■
76 Trades helpers, construction labourers and related occupations	■	■	■	■
82 Supervisors & technical occupations in natural resources, agriculture & related production	■		■	
84 Workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production	■	■	■	■
86 Harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers	■		■	
92 Processing, manufacturing and utilities supervisors and central control operators		■	■	■
94 Processing and manufacturing machine operators and related production workers		■	■	■
95 Assemblers in manufacturing			■	■
96 Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	■	■	■	■



Workforce
Planning Board
of Grand Erie

The Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie
1100 Clarence Street South, Suite 101, Box 12, Brantford, ON N3S 7N8
Phone: 519-756-1116 | Fax: 519-756-4663
www.workforceplanningboard.org