



Workforce
Planning Board
of Grand Erie

TOP COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

TURNING VISION INTO ACTION

October 2010

a member of

Local Boards
Network

Champions of Ontario Labour Market Solutions

Thank you to everyone in our community for bringing these actions to life.

Under your leadership and support we will:

- **Bring the educational attainment levels up to and beyond the provincial standards**
- **Prepare new workers to enter labour market**
- **Support the training needs of employers and employed workers**
- **Support laid off workers as they transition to new occupations and industries**

This update provides a snapshot of the progress we are making. If your business or organization would like to be involved, please contact jhalyk@workforceplanningboard.org or call 519.756.1116.

**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

"This Employment Ontario Project is funded by the Government of Ontario".



EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – EDUCATION: A COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

The low educational attainment levels of Grand Erie residents continue to be a long-standing concern to local industry and for economic development. The number of residents, aged 15-64 with Grade 12 or less exceeds the provincial average. Educational attainment plays a critical component in job creation. Ontario figures for 2000 through 2009 show that employment grew by 1,022,400 for individuals with post secondary completion while those with less fell by 313,500.

- 57% of Grand Erie labour force (aged 15 and older) have a high school diploma or less compared to the provincial average of 49%
- Only 13% of Grand Erie residents have a university education of some kind, well below the 24% Ontario average
- Even in the 25-34 age groups, Grand Erie lags badly behind in university education. Only 19% (Brant) and 16% (Haldimand-Norfolk) have a university education – well below the 38% provincial average

Grand Erie needs to keep building our competitive edge. The number of college, apprentices, and trade certificate holders in Grand Erie surpasses the provincial ratio. Workers in the core working age groups of 25-34 and 35-44 exceed the province by between 4% and 6%. This group is well matched to the economic base within the region and provides a strong competitive edge for existing and emerging sectors.

Considering the demand for post-secondary education and the community's capacity for education and training, we need to focus on helping residents with Grade 12 or less.

ACTION 1

To bring together a regional educational taskforce to develop strategies what will increase the level of literacy and educational attainment within Brantford, Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk.

Lead	Confirmed Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Brant County Economic Development Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board Brantford Public Library Brantford Social Services Brantford-Brant Economic Development Chamber of Commerce – Brantford Brant Fanshawe College Simcoe Grand Erie District School Board Grand Valley Educational Society Haldimand County Economic Development Haldimand County Public Library Literacy Council of Brant Literacy Link South Central Mohawk College – Brantford Norfolk County Wilfrid Laurier Brantford Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	Taskforce in place by Oct. 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a community task force. 2. Engage political and community leaders at all levels, Workforce service providers and employers. 3. Create a strategic action plan addressing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Secondary completion rates b. Access to Continuing Education c. Literacy levels d. Building the culture of individual responsibility and life-long learning

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	2 presentations made to Grand Erie school boards (completed) 1 presentation to key groups re: education statistics (completed) Meeting schedule and tasks established: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oct. 8: Establishing the issues (completed) • Nov. 19: Identifying solutions/recommendations • Jan. 7, 2011: Drafting strategic action plan • Feb. 11, 2011: Review strategic action plan/develop implementation plan Hold public forum to publicly launch strategic action plan (date to be determined)



SUPPORTING THE TRAINING NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED WORKERS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – MANUFACTURING TRAINING ANALYSIS

Throughout the manufacturing sector there has been a shift from labour-oriented production to advanced manufacturing. As a result industry now requires a workforce trained in all aspects of the supply chain to ensure they have the production, process design and development, health and safety, maintenance and quality assurance skills needed to meet customer demand. Robotics, computer applications, and technical skills will be crucial. During industry consultations the majority of manufacturing employers interviewed identified the shortage of these skills within the available workforce; one employer went on to describe the local talent pool as “Big but not deep.”

Between 2001 and 2006, employment numbers in the 3 priority manufacturing sectors, plastics and rubber products manufacturing, machinery manufacturing; and fabricated metal products manufacturing fell collectively by 1,260 – evidence that mobility within this sector is decreasing. For those workers remaining in these sectors, lower skilled workers will be at risk unless they can develop the advanced technical, software, and quality assurance training needed.

ACTION 1

Research: Interviews will be conducted with those responsible for human resources to identify what resources are available for training current employees, how the training dollars are used, promoted, and distributed amongst their workforce.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	Employment Ontario agencies Chamber of Commerce(all)	January 2011	1. Benchmark of current training allowances and usage. 2. Analysis of current learning practices within manufacturing. 3. Assessment of employee usage of training dollars.
Lead(s) to be determined	Employment Ontario		4. Potential for “purchasing” specialized industry training.

ACTION 2

Communications Program: If it is identified that there are untapped training resources available, we will look at creating a communication campaign to disseminate the ‘continual training and skills enhancement’ message to the employees within the company (particularly those low-skill levels at greatest risk.)

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	CME Brant Human Resources Network	March 2011	1. Develop an evaluation tool to measure benchmarks (start/midpoint/end). 2. Strengthen the learning culture by developing joint promotional strategies that industry can use.
Lead(s) to be determined	Literacy Council (Brant) Enterprise Brant Ontario Works-Brant		3. Track types of training requested and compare to training requirements (assess if training is appropriate/available).

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	Companies identified in 3-4 key manufacturing sectors Survey of employers designed with input from partners (Chamber of Commerce – Brantford Brant; Brant Human Resource Network) Employers in key manufacturing sectors being interviewed/surveyed (ongoing; being done in person, by phone and via Survey Monkey tool)



SUPPORTING THE TRAINING NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED WORKERS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – PLASTICS AND RUBBER PRODUCTS MANUFACTURING PILOT INDUSTRY RESOURCE SHARING: INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF TRAINING DOLLARS & RESOURCES

During the consultation process seventy-five percent of the employers interviewed in this sector noted that there is no educational program to support this industry, and employers are often required to train their own staff. As twenty-three out of twenty-eight Plastics and Rubber Products manufacturing businesses located in the Brant Census Division are classified as small/medium sized enterprises, employing 1-99 employees - creating a forum for shared resources and communication will help Grand Erie's manufacturing companies compete and train their workforce more efficiently.

ACTION 1

Research: A survey of companies within the Plastics and Rubber Products manufacturing will identify; relevant companies and organizations in Grand Erie, industry training /upgrading requirements and resources available for training. It will also review the training programs/systems currently being used, the method of training and the programs strengths/weaknesses.

Lead	Confirmed Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Mohawk College Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium	Mohawk College Enterprise Corporation	TBD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive list of enterprises in the sector. 2. Inventory of skill/training requirements. 3. Inventory of available training and education resources. 4. Network of business and community.

ACTION 2

Develop a 'Learning Network' where Plastics and Rubber Manufacturing companies in the area will; discuss the research findings (action 1), meet to discuss training needs and when applicable share training opportunities and resources for their employees.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	CME	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An industry "learning network" will allow joint sharing of training and will inform local educators on the training needs within the sector. 2. Increased access to training and cost efficiency. 3. Workers within the industry will increase skill and knowledge level.

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	A proposal framework is in place identifying the objectives, outcomes, and strategic actions required. Local Boards across Western Ontario have agreed to partner. Additional funding is currently being explored. Industry partners are invited to review the proposal and to provide input and support.



NEW WORKERS, WORKER RETENTION, AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – TRUCK TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

To identify the skills set and training that are essential for today’s modern truck driver to work in Grand Erie’s truck transportation sector.

ACTION 1

Research: Interview Grand Erie truck firms about what skills set and training they expect from drivers as the industry puts more emphasis on customer service, safety procedures and record keeping. Business management skills may be essential to owner operators, who make up a large portion of the industry.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Trucking Industry reps	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This local career information will help new entrants assess suitability of career and will; 2. Provide new entrants with info on “what to look for” in training facilities. 3. Provides framework to influence local training. 4. Provide employment service staff with industry requirements

ACTION 2

Write, produce and distribute a publication that profiles the ideal skills set, education and training that truck firms are looking for in today’s driver. This can serve as an education piece for current drivers and new entrants to the industry.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Ontario Trucking Association Employment Ontario agencies	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Local” career handbook distributed to all Employment Ontario sites and Ontario Works employment service. 2. Career handbook provided to all businesses for distribution to potential candidates.

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	Occupational profiles being developed for the truck transportation sector, focused on the role, skills and training for today’s modern truck driver. Local transportation businesses will be invited to provide input into the guide and to promote the material to job seekers.



NEW WORKERS, WORKER RETENTION, AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

Grand Erie employment in the creative-class or knowledge-based professional, scientific and technical sector is half the Ontario average (3.4% compared to 7.8%). While Canada appears to be moving towards a knowledge-based economy, the number of employers in this sector shrunk by 34 between 2008-2009 in Grand Erie – a cause for concern. Still, employment figures rank it the 4th largest.

In interviews with employers in this sector, firms identified a shortage of local employees with the education, skills, training and knowledge level they require. Firms have to hire from outside the area to meet their needs. This creates challenges: difficulty competing on wages with GTA-based firms; losing staff to GTA-based firms; and employees choosing to commute rather than relocate to Grand Erie. Meanwhile, Grand Erie residents pursuing a career in this sector often go outside the area to receive their education and training. They then choose to remain outside the area to work due, in part, to a perceived lack of opportunities in Grand Erie.

There is a need to encourage the growth of the creative-class professional, scientific and technical sector in Grand Erie by promoting awareness of its importance to the current and future economy.

ACTION 1

To write and publish occupational profiles of creative-class jobs which are included in the professional, scientific and technical sector. Profiles will include information on responsibilities, education/training standards and availability, wage ranges, and future job prospects.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Wilfrid Laurier Mohawk College Industry	February 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Career profiles for each of the 9 industry sub-sectors of the Professional, Scientific and Technical Service sector. Distribution of information to 21 secondary schools, local college and university, libraries. Promote options re types of employment e.g. self-employed, large corporations.

ACTION 2

To hold one-day career fair linking senior high school students with local businesses in this sector, with the intent of promoting post-secondary co-op or experiential education opportunities and awareness of the field as an exciting, rewarding career path.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	School College Work Initiative Wilfrid Laurier Industry within the sector	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Peer mentoring day between senior secondary students heading into the field and local professionals. Establish connections for university work terms and co-op placements (matching local residents/students and local businesses).



NEW WORKERS, WORKER RETENTION, AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

ACTION 3

Identify the needs of local companies in the professional, scientific and technical sector for continuing education. These firms normally send employees outside the area to upgrade skills. Determine whether the needs of employers can be met by linking them to area universities and colleges.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Wilfrid Laurier Colleges	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inventory of continuing education and training needs completed. 2. Feasibility plan for professional leadership program.

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	Occupational profiles being developed for the professional, scientific and technical services sector, focused on the roles, education/training standards, wage rates and future job prospects in various occupations. Once complete industry representatives and youth will be invited to connect through a mentoring/career focused information day.



NEW WORKERS, WORKER RETENTION, AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FOOD SERVICES & DRINKING PLACES: INDUSTRY RETENTION AND CAREER PLANNING STRATEGY

There is a relatively high need to attract, retrain, and retain workers within the Food Services and Drinking Places sector. This sector represents a significant portion of all business located in Grand Erie and is the largest source of SME employment in Brant (3,585) and 2nd largest source in Haldimand-Norfolk (2,360). Although the sector provides significant levels of employment, the ratio of food service/drinking enterprises comprises a smaller portion of overall business than in Ontario as a whole. This results in lower employment mobility between businesses.

During industry consultations, employers indicated employment in this industry is often viewed as a stepping stone. Very few of the new entrants are aware of the diverse careers paths or entrepreneurial opportunities within the sector, exiting the industry as a result.

ACTION 1

Create a 'Hospitality Career Guide' to educate; individuals working in the industry looking to progress their careers or who are looking for a change; job seekers, and youth (career planning) about reasons to work in hospitality, occupations, required qualifications and more.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	OTEC Liaison College Grand Erie District School Board	Dec 2010	1. 500 Career Planning guides in schools, colleges, restaurants. 2. 10% increase in student Coop/OYAP placements. 3. Increase in the number of apprentices in local businesses.
Lead(s) to be determined	Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board Tourism (Brant, Brantford, Haldimand, Norfolk)		

ACTION 2

Create a series of 'Fact Sheets' addressing specific workforce development issues to assist employers with employee retention. Possible topics would include; keeping your good employees happy, keeping employees during the early stages of their employment, helping your employees with career progression, what makes an effective supervisor, and more.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	OTEC Liaison College Tourism (Brant, Brantford, Haldimand, Norfolk)	February 2011	1. Establish business listing of 400+ businesses. 2. Distribute 500 -quarterly fact sheets to business owners. 3. Using a statistical sample of participants, measure impact of information and emerging requirements.
Lead(s) to be determined			

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	Occupational profiles being developed for the food services and drinking places sector, focused on the roles, education/training, wage rates and future job prospects. Data on food processing completed. Industry outreach planned for Nov. 2010. Students engaged in Hospitality/Tourism Specialist High Skill Majors sponsored to attend the Tourism Summit hosted by Brantford Economic Development and Tourism.



SUPPORT LAID OFF WORKERS AS THEY TRANSITION TO NEW OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – MANUFACTURING SECTOR TRANSITION

Between 2001 and 2006, employment numbers in the 3 priority manufacturing sectors, plastics and rubber products manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, and fabricated metal products manufacturing fell collectively by 1,260 – evidence that mobility within these sector is decreasing.

Employment within the manufacturing sector is shifting from labour-oriented production positions to advanced, technical positions. As a result industry now requires a workforce trained in all aspects of the supply chain to ensure they have the production, process design and development, health and safety, maintenance and quality assurance skills needed to meet customer demand. Robotics, computer applications, and technical skills will be crucial.

During industry consultation, employer confirmed that lower skilled workers are at greatest risk of lay-off. There is a need to help lower skilled workers (laid-off employees) assess their basic skill sets and to identify the best matches for occupational training and skills development.

ACTION 1

Research: Conduct a skills analysis of the Top 15 growth and the Top 15 in-decline occupations in Grand Erie’s manufacturing sector. Will use data from the Workforce Planning Board report Manufacturing: A Grand Erie Perspective and adjustment figures.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Community Resource Services Grand River Employment and Training St. Leonard’s Community Services Grand Erie District School Board Fanshawe College	January 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15 skills transitions pathway planners from declining occupations to growth occupations will be developed to assist employment counselors, career planners etc. Information kits (5-10 per organization) will be given to Employment Ontario providers, educators, etc. to assist clients in their job search, Second Career planning, etc. Information will be shared with employers to help them identify potential training for existing workers (retention).

ACTION 2

Based on the research findings identify the training and education transitions that workers need to make to move into growth occupations of Grand Erie’s manufacturing sector.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Grand Valley Educational Society	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory of short-medium and long term educational programs will provide employment service organizations, job seekers, and employers with information on the accessibility of training at the local level.

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	Career and educational planning tools are in progress to help laid off workers in high risk manufacturing occupations match their skills to manufacturing jobs experiencing growth. Presently, occupational profiles for 30 manufacturing occupations are being developed.



SUPPORT LAID OFF WORKERS AS THEY TRANSITION TO NEW OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – LAID OFF WORKERS (LOST MY JOB)

Assist Grand Erie region’s laid-off workers and employees who lose jobs in the future as businesses and manufacturers downsize and close.

ACTION 1

Reprint the popular 2008 brochure I Lost My Job! The brochure is almost out of print and needs list of local service providers updated to reflect changes announced by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	Community Resource Services St. Leonard’s Community Services	October 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tool kit revised with current Employment Ontario contact information. 2. Distribution (250) to Employment Ontario sites. 3. Media campaign to let employers know of new content. 4. Distribution of 500 to Human Resource Network. 5. Distribution to 1000 employers within region (for more orders if required). 6. Distribution to social and community agencies. 7. Distribution to Ec. Development staff for distribution. 8. Employers are using this kit to assist workers during the initial phase of lay off.
Lead(s) to be determined	Grand River Employment and Training Grand Erie District School Board Fanshawe College		

ACTION 2

Roll out the new website called Lost My Job - The user-friendly website builds on the brochure’s concept, but also incorporates social media and interactive elements to assist job hunters seeking advice and information.

Lead	Confirmed Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie	Hamilton Training Advisory Board Community Resource Services St. Leonard’s Community Services Literacy Council of Brantford and District Fanshawe College	June 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laid off workers to have online peer adjustment support. 2. Interactive components will collect information to determine gaps in information and services. 3. Supports employment service organizations by providing independent job support for laid off workers. 4. Responds to the social counseling needed that employment providers cannot offer.
Lead(s) to be determined	Community and Employment Services YMCA Hamilton, Burlington, Brantford Grand River Employment and Training AAC Action Centre Borg-Warner Action Centre Delhi Industries Action Centre Raymond Industries Action Centre Steelworkers Action Centre BrantJobs Family Counselling Centre of Brant Enterprise Brant Ontario March of Dimes CareerLink		



SUPPORT LAID OFF WORKERS AS THEY TRANSITION TO NEW OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY – LAID OFF WORKERS (LOST MY JOB)

ACTION 3

Launch community communications, marketing and advertising campaigns to promote strategy and the *Lostmyjob* website.

Lead	Potential Partners	Timelines	Expected Results
Facilitated by Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie Lead(s) to be determined	Advisory board in place: Family Counseling Mohawk MTCU Adjustment Brant Jobs Fanshawe College City of Brantford	March 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports local unemployed by providing peer-focused support at the community level. 2. Provides local agencies and social services with a tool for providing information and support. 3. Media will provide a positive focus on workforce strategies (individual and community) that will assist employers and job seekers regain their economic independence.

Progress to Date	Details
Project in progress	<p>Website www.lostmyjob.ca designed (Completed -- Spring-Summer 2010)</p> <p>Website populated with stories, photos, extensive list of community resources (Started Spring-Summer 2010 -- Ongoing)</p> <p>5 Action Centres in Grand Erie soft tested website and filled out user surveys providing feedback (Completed --Summer 2010)</p> <p>Advisory committee met and reviewed website; committee members were asked to be partners, either contributing financially or becoming "experts" for the website's Ask an Expert section, or contributing editorial content.</p> <p>Local boards (8 across Western Region of Southern Ontario) to be trained in managing website (scheduled for Oct. 29, 2010). Website administration manual created earlier to help train other boards.</p> <p>Community partners have signed partnership agreements to support the campaign, and to provide expertise and editorial content (Oct. 2010).</p> <p>Website launch to Grand Erie communities will begin the week of November 1, 2010.</p> <p>Editorial content added to website on an ongoing basis.</p>