

Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie

Community Intermediaries – in Conversation

FINAL REPORT

February 10, 2012



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1 Introduction

1.1 Objectives of the Study

As part of the annual labour market planning process, the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie (WPBGE) has chosen to undertake a consultation process directed towards those agencies, organizations, and individuals that support the linkage of supply and demand. For the purpose of this work, these community intermediaries are defined as those organizations that link or support the labour market connections between those that offer a service and those that need it. The WPBGE itself, is in essence a community intermediary that serves as a neutral body to identify labour market challenges and opportunities and to facilitate the identification and implementation of community designed solutions.

Findings and recommendations from this consultative process will serve to inform actions that form part of the annual Local Labour Market Plan that is released in early 2012 by the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie.

2 The Process

A total of three facilitated sessions were held across Grand Erie, specifically Haldimand Norfolk, Brant-Brantford, and Six Nations of the Grand River. A total of 73 people were in attendance during the 3 hour facilitated session. Trudy Parsons of Millier Dickinson Blais, led each group through a community conversation exercise that utilized an appreciative enquiry approach, building on the community's strengths as a means of driving positive change.

Individuals were asked two questions at the beginning of the session, with a purpose of capturing their expectations and perspectives on what change is required and how that change can be advanced. The session was delivered utilizing a very hands-on and engaging structure where all participants were provided opportunity to add input individually and through a group dialogue. A

Section 3 provides a comprehensive presentation of results from each of the three meetings and then presents a summary which captures the commonalities and unique points raised collectively.



3 Capturing the Conversation – Summary of Discussion

3.1 Conversation with Communities of Brant/Brantford

3.1.1 What do you hope will change after holding this conversation?

- "We will have a better idea of which skill areas need to be topped up in order to make Grand Erie residents/workers more competitive in the workforce"
- "More opportunities for employment"
- "Greater knowledge of local economy and current opportunities"
- "1 small achievable goal that will produce a measurable result"
- "A better understanding of the missing links between the stated needs of businesses and the people seeking to fill the jobs"
- "I hope that we will have a better link to connect community resources to create jobs and employment opportunities"
- "Recognize what skills the region is in need of"
- "Citizens will be able to find fulltime employment to sustain quality family life and not be the working poor"
- "Theories discussions actually result in timely actionable implemented solutions"
- "Bring employers and post-secondary institutions together"
- "A greater commitment to seeking and implementing creative and innovative solutions to our challenges"
- "To begin taking steps towards identifying the skill gaps in our community then influencing our educators to bridge the gaps"
- "More investment in Brantford and Brant from the employer side and business investment"
- "That people will realize that solid literacy and essential skills are required in order to be successful in the work world"
- "Direction for students in educational planning that will lead to employment"
- "Education process and competitive wages"
- "Develop a clearer definition of the labour landscape we are working to create"
- "I hope that collectively we develop the ability to be truly objective when seeking solutions and have the skills to effectively communicate and facilitate growth that is needed"
- "More up to date information. More of these types of sessions in our area"
- "I would really like to see as many individuals as possible from the labour force in Brantford to speak to students about their career and changes that are happening"



3.1.2 What is needed to power that change?

- Collaboration between sectors; economic development, three levels of government, business, education, non-profits, etc. all working collaboratively.
- Marketing to each post-secondary and employers to bring them to the table and reasons for growth. Financial assistance for training and education.
- Economic development needs to do more to attract new businesses and politicians need to help with this.
- Teachers willing to seek out community partners to speak to. Community partners willing to take time away from work to speak with youth and students.
- Clearly identified skill sets. Understanding the changing employment needs in our community.
- An understanding and sharing of our common frustrations and observations regarding employees, in particular in relation to skills.
- Understanding the gaps. Open to discussion about what is needed.
- Training. Commitment. Infusion of companies that bring different fulltime jobs and not temporary contracts.
- Identified the needs. Need to look at the qualifications/education needed. Better wages.
- An understanding of literacy/essential skill levels in our community and the levels required by employers.
- Attracting industry and workers to fill those needs.
- A clear and focused direction on one particular idea.
- Humility and an attitude of mutual respect 100% of the time.
- More sessions in our area like this one.
- A strong collaboration between the members involved in these conversations.
- City embracing new industry & technologies; attracting innovative thinkers. Creative social movement.
- Government funding models need to be revamped to reflect changing economy and diversity.
- The right players around the table and the right level of engagement from economic partners.
- Employees must be willing to learn new things, have flexible attitudes and minimum grade 12 education.
- Employers need to be willing to train and pay a living wage.

3.1.3 What does a leading-edge workforce look like?

- Innovation - all educational levels throughout life
- Flexibility - integrated applied learning and mobility
- Collaborative partnerships - understand our labour force and helping people learn how to find jobs
- Ahead of the trend, not following the trend



- Adaptable reskilling
- Value for wages
- Relevance of skills to job
- Globally competitive
- Strong skills: Finance, Math, Educated, Thinking Skills, Information Technology
- Flexibility
- Employer Change - support for them to change
- Diverse - reflective of employer needs
- Basic skills needed coming out of high school essential skills
- Workforce skills match employer needs and training matched to employer needs
- Training reflects market needs
- Encourage children to be innovative and creative, take risks; it is okay to fail and try again.
- Westmount self-directed program
- Youth with certificates
- Diverse - reflective of employers needs
- Innovative -offer ideas
- Young
- Cross training of employees

3.1.4 How can we, as a community, utilize our resources, capacity and strengths to create sustainable employment opportunities for a leading edge workforce?

- Adaptable education
- Community, business, education and government partnerships, locally, regionally and across sectors
- Transferable skills with a global perspective
- Youth engagement - think early, broad and practical
- Expand upon health care opportunities and training that exist
- Start early with primary students
- Liveable communities
- Speakers forum at secondary schools to provide diversity of opportunities to students
- Jobs for diverse levels of education
- Service clubs
- Promoting how cultural of change and resilience
- Small business promotion
- Increased community knowledge of needs of new businesses coming into the community
- Engagement between employers and post-secondary training
- Understanding the new youth demographic
- Connect new businesses with local service providers
- Right Attitude
- Focus on SMEs and entrepreneurs not smoke stacks



3.1.5 What does our community have going for it?

- Infrastructure - hard assets - industrial land
- Educational facilities
- Agricultural base - work ethic
- Geography is an asset -tourism potential
- Quality of life - affordable, social amenities, faith communities, residents active in the community, educational amenities
- Innovative mindset - retirees have innovative ideas, opportunities for mentorship, entrepreneurs, open for business
- Partnerships - strong partnerships already exist
- Grand Erie works together
- Strong work ethic
- Retiree's moving into community and bringing in wealth of experience and innovation
- Positive energy
- Open for business
- Volunteer culture
- Entrepreneurs
- Quality of life
- Welcomes new business opportunities
- Strategic opportunities - green energy
- Service clubs
- Workforce planning
- Strong infrastructure
- Tourism
- Conscious of the fact that we have an issue with youth leaving the area
- Community college
- Tourism
- Social amenities
- Affordable lakefront
- Private college



3.2 Brant/Brantford – Synthesizing Ideas into Themes

Theme 1: Proactive Development of skills/knowledge of current/future labour force	
Start Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ MTCU must refine processes for timely program change/development■ Change funding model to address immediate and future needs■ Establish technical/scientific learning centre of excellence
Continue Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Continue to nurture and grow innovation i.e. social entrepreneurship■ Improve and strengthen collaboration■ Develop shared vision for the community
Organizational Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ GRCHC "Education Works" Alliance■ GVES - recent study■ Facilitate social entrepreneurship
Partners/Supporters to Advance Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ GRCHC■ GVES■ YMCA - ISS■ March of Dimes Canada■ CareerLink■ All of these groups are willing to help and contribute
Theme 2: Collaboration	
Start Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Communication between stakeholders (within sectors) on community needs■ Centralized resource to connect all stakeholders
Continue Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Workshops on communication■ Continue collaboration and partnership between organizations



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue collaboration with employers
Organizational Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Day Collaboration between like-minded organizations to facilitate "friendly competition"
Partners/Supporters to Advance Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers Educators Employment agencies Career counsellors Developers Federal and Provincial government

Theme 3: Awareness and marketing of existing resources and assets needs to increase both within the community and to external investors	
Start Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding ways/motivating industry partners to promote their job skills in education - partnership to develop the link of training to work
Continue Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing partnership building between education and industry - co-op placement accessibility Continue partnership between community service groups and employers and educators Brant - Jobs - labour market portal
Organizational Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make young people more aware of opportunities available to them by connecting them to industry partners
Partners/Supporters to advance initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community services, industry, educational institutions Job seekers, employers



3.3 Conversation with Haldimand/Norfolk

3.3.1 What do you hope will change after holding this conversation?

- Different view in how training is delivered and funded. Zone in on skill sets needed by employers.
- Youth to jobs that will sustain them for a lifetime and maintain our economy and our standard of living.
- Youth in our community will have the skills to be competitive worldwide either as workers or entrepreneurs.
- Businesses will invest in the human resource training needed to be competitive globally.
- Educational institutions will play the key role they need to.
- Ideas to formulate strategies will come forward to strengthen and assist our communities through change that promotes development and growth.
- A common strategy to meet the high standards required by today and tomorrow's changing skill sets.
- Strategic partnerships developed to facilitate the needs of the community.
- A clear vision of what we need to achieve and how we are going to find that success.
- Actionable items and partners identified.
- A better understanding of how the Haldimand/Norfolk and Brantford/Brant/Six Nations regions can work together for greater jobs and prosperity.
- A broader understanding regionally of what tools we have, what skills we have, our strengths and where our efforts are best focused for continued growth.
- Plans will begin to be put into motion to address the issue in a timely manner. Commitment from individuals to see the plans through.
- Education system will give flexible basic learning skills which can be used across sectors.
- More working together amongst community partners.
- Awareness of opportunities. Avoidance of duplication.
- Opportunities to work together as a community to improve employment will be started.
- People will have increased knowledge of what options are available to help solve employment concerns.
- Funding made available to Norfolk County to add new programming to Fanshawe College.

3.3.2 What is needed to power that change?

- Buy-in, Collaboration and partnerships
- Fed, provincial, municipal, community organization, individuals working together to embrace and work as a coordinated team.



- A pooling of community resources working on a common goal
- Continued networking and co-operation to follow up on ideas that spark from this kind of conversation
- College needs to be on board with the change. Community employers need to be polled for their ideas. Government needs to recognize the need for money to flow into the community
- Align the influencers and service providers in our community to drill down to priority actions
- Education/inform the community in an aggressive way, the importance of the aim and ramifications of not doing anything
- Government support, educating community, curriculum changes
- Active participation and collaboration
- Involvement of all sectors and people in identifying the targets and working to achieve those. Understanding of our strengths and weaknesses. Knowing that we are not an island and success will come through working with our neighbours
- Multi-community cohesiveness and partnerships
- Educating public that children need to be educated to able to compete
- Government to react quicker to basic economic changes with adaptable funding and grant and taxation policies
- Greater understanding between regional government, entrepreneurs and associations. A combination of traditional and dynamic ideas for the new economy
- Contacts between groups no matter what their position may be to further the training of youth to skilled trades and jobs
- Clear directives established and recommendations made to empower the partnerships required
- Support from local employers and educational institutions
- Awareness in the community - get community members engaged and involved

3.3.3 What does a leading-edge workforce look like?

- Positive work values and attitudes - continuous learner, ownership of one's own journey, sense of entitlement, self-aware
- Education/skill sets to fit the needs diverse range of skills
- Responsive to changes in skills demands
- Strong foundational skills
- Creativity and innovation
- Adaptable and mobile
- Generational mentorship
- Innovative, creativity, drive change in the industry, higher value employee
- Adaptability - in educational systems, in individual skills sets literacy and basic skills, ultimately in community response
- Young educated pool - continuous learning, good soft skills, problem solving abilities, transferable skills, market themselves
- Level of unionization in labour force may impede progress to leading edge workforce



- Culture of life-long learning
- Matching to what's available
- Continuous pursuit of what's coming
- Succession planning
- Realistic understanding of their value
- Teamwork mentality
- Communication within different sectors
- Research and development
- Positive work values and attitudes
- Ability to recognize changing and emerging trends
- Ability to work with diversity

3.3.4 How can we, as a community, utilize our resources, capacity and strengths to create sustainable employment opportunities for a leading edge workforce?

- Build on current assets-develop for the future
- Recognize our existing skill sets, marketing advantage
- Market this community with surrounding communities
- Research and development opportunities
- Access comprehensive labour market information
- Increase local entrepreneurship
- Take existing manufacturing skill base, employees and increase skill base to advanced manufacturing
- Attitude in the community - want to foster long term commitment in hiring
- Accommodations for people who have different abilities
- Community incentives - drawing in talent to live here
- Transportation.
- Youth awareness of what is out there
- Collaboration of industry/workforce and educational institutions and training. Provide business plans to guide educational planning
- Promote existing opportunities
- Ensure appropriate standards are set for client transition to employment
- Collaboration - every community stakeholder, surrounding community, R&D education/training, entrepreneurship, creative class
- Assets to capitalize on - our youth, our skill base, educational opportunities/existing programs
- Location - room to grow
- Increasing diversity - acknowledge
- Surrounding communities need to be aware of our assets - investors/employers
- Trainable workforce
- Strategic Partnerships
- Leverage available educational opportunities



3.3.5 What does our community have going for it?

- Quality of Life - Affordability, green space/recreational/tourism, health care
- Location - proximity/accessibility
- Large talent pool - educated, diverse (Age, race, culture, skills)
- Room to grow - land availability
- Collaboration - community champions
- Strong First Nations Culture
- Tourism
- Vision
- Festivals
- Vibrant arts community
- Creative and innovative people
- Proximity to 403
- Recreation and cultural assets
- Green space
- Have learned from past experiences
- Lifestyle, affordability
- Diverse workforce
- Post-secondary presence
- Cohesiveness

3.4 Haldimand/Norfolk - Synthesizing Ideas into Themes

Theme 1: Innovation	
Start Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reward innovation - celebrate/promote models ■ Personal mentoring - networked, strategic suggestion boxes (coordinated) ■ Intellectual property training to mitigate risks ■ Foster change management/innovation in our youth
Continue Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Entrepreneurship awards (communities, chambers) ■ Better recording and dissemination of information about who/what is innovative in the community
Organizational Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Connect nimble college system with government programs ■ Needs to be a well thought through plan so you don't have to duplicate or reinvent a broken wheel ■ Political/org/community advocacy for policy change



Partners/Supporters to Advance Initiative

- Leading innovative businesses/entrepreneurs
- Relevant agencies
- Municipalities, senior levels of government
- Chamber of commerce, BIAs, business associations
- Unions and labour organizations

Theme 2: Collaborative Partnerships

Start Doing

- Can't avoid difficult issues/value to conversations
- Identify key players and ensure around the table
- Ground level discussions with multi-level businesses to understand their needs
- Cross sector crossover 'thinking outside box' on skills needed across sectors

Continue Doing

- Dialogue/communication what the problems are
- Continue to define actionable items so partners remain engaged
- Continue to ensure message to the right groups is strong and clear

Organizational Contribution

- Teach leadership and professionalism
- Actionable items
- Share networks
- Media promotion
- Employers working with educator
- Training and placements

Partners/Supporters to Advance Initiative

- Provincial/Federal level
- Educational partners at all levels at the table



Theme 3: Youth Engagement

Start Doing

- Invite youth to the table
- Include school boards in conversation as well as agencies who work with youth
- Understand the demographic - what motivates them
- Engage at an earlier age
- More co-op opportunities and variety of opportunities

Continue Doing

- Career fairs
- Specialist high skills major
- Dual credits
- Youth ambassador on workforce planning board

Organizational Contribution

- More welcoming physical environment for youth
- Available for classroom presentations about the industry
- All organizations available to speak to students

Partners/Supports to Advance Initiative

- Government
- School boards and youth agencies
- Parents
- Workforce planning board
- Employers

3.5 Conversation with Six Nations of the Grand River

3.5.1 What do you hope will change after holding this conversation?

- Organizations work more collaboratively
- We will have some ideas on how to make the changes
- More people will be involved in making the change



- More aware of skills available and in demand
- We can develop strategies to have a skilled workforce that will contribute to the community
- Networking with other local organizations - building relationships to meet the needs of supply/demand in the area of our skilled labour force
- A better understanding of the roles of others in support of community needs to be successful in the labour market
- Choice of employers/careers for the workforce
- Generate ideas
- More connections and partnerships
- Information that is community driven for a common goal of a healthy and prosperous community
- Better understanding of how to link workforce development with economic development
- How the community can work proactively in developing our labour force
- A well-established networking system can be developed between HR department heads and Employment Centre representatives

3.5.2 What is needed to power that change?

- Appropriate skills to meet demands for future employment
- Cooperation - Everyone on the same page
- Education, training and jobs and dollars to pay decent salaries
- Trust
- Knowledge
- Understanding
- Desire
- Passion
- Links between employer needs and training/educational providers
- A plan that prepares/enhances the knowledge and skills of the community to prosper in an ever changing global environment
- Ongoing communication and sharing
- Resources
- Apprenticeship opportunities
- Links between education, employment centres, manufacturers, construction businesses, etc.



3.5.3 What does a leading-edge workforce look like?

- Ambitious
- Creative
- Social
- Adaptable
- Self-worth
- Self-learning
- Multi-skilled
- Pride in their jobs
- Encouragement and support from the community
- Accountability
- Positive attitude
- Good salaries and employee benefits
- Educated
- Professionalism
- Instructors and facilitators
- Commitment
- Reliable
- Continuous learning
- Life skills training
- Diversity
- Respect for others
- Customer service skills
- Leaders
- Good work ethic
- Takes initiative
- Motivated
- Open minded
- Embrace lifelong learning
- Open communication

3.5.4 How can we, as a community, utilize our resources, capacity and strengths to create sustainable employment opportunities for a leading edge workforce?

- Being aware of the skills that are needed to create a leading edge workforce
- Use training programs that are available
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Outreach to employers to create programs that reach community at a younger age
- Internships
- Apprenticeship programs
- Labour market partnerships
- Connecting with post-secondary education - aware of the skills that are needed
- Developing a multi-skilled workforce
- Employers must take on a role of expressing what their needs are with employment agencies so we can better meet their needs with the most qualified people.
- Secure more funding
- Create a one stop shop for a whole host of information



3.5.5 What does our community have going for it?

- Young and growing workforce
- Increasing post-secondary graduates
- Flexibility willing to work at anything
- Tax benefits for employers and workforce
- Tight knit and supportive community
- Resilient and tolerant to change
- Culturally rooted
- Able to supply trained workforce quickly
- Centrally located
- Stable workforce – long- time residents/employees
- Committed
- Opportunity
- Variety of skilled workers
- Land mass for future growth
- Community pulls together in times of need
- Potential for economic development projects
- Largest first nations in Canada
- Lots of people
- Financing
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Role models
- Employers willing to train
- Employment training support
- Business support
- Community support
- Affordable
- A lot of potential
- Post-secondary education funding
- High speed internet
- Diversity
- Legal services
- Collection of indigenous knowledge
- Natural resources
- Professional people

Theme 1: Well Balanced and positive attitude towards self, education, employment, workplace and workmanship

Start Doing

- Motivational signs in the community (promote positive attitudes) and media messages (radio/newspaper)
- Career planning and information in grades 4 to 7
- Bring an employed parent to school day
- Funding for (under) employed people to upgrade their skills and education
- Post-employment after care and support



Continue Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Work ethics training■ Self-help workshops■ Continue providing employment and training to the community
Organizational Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Community organizations and agencies■ Employers■ Council
Partners/Supporters to advance initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ OSTTC■ INAC■ Post-secondary office - Poly tech■ Economic development■ Social services/health services■ Band Council■ MCTU■ Ontario Works■ Dream Catcher Fund■ GEDSB■ Six Nations Community Trust

Theme 2: Communication and awareness of resources and programs available for businesses/employers, job seekers and the community

Start Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Send newsletters to schools ie, success stories, programs■ Regular spots on the radio■ Exchange pamphlets■ Hosting roundtable discussions - all services■ Think tanks■ Handbook of resources
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Calendar on the website of events
Continue Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Website, Facebook, Twitter■ Newsletters■ Think tank■ Outreach■ Community awareness week■ Employer corporate challenge
Organizational Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Potential funders - both government and corporate■ Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie■ Grand Erie District School Board■ INAC, AFN
Partners/Supporters to advance initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ OSTTC■ INAC■ Post-secondary office■ Poly tech■ Economic development■ Social services/health services■ Band Council■ MCTU■ Ontario Works■ Dream Catcher Fund■ GEDSB■ Six Nations Community Trust



Theme 3: Employer Outreach

Start Doing

- ID employers within reasonable distance
- Create agreement with employers to hire
- Determine current/future skills sets and needs
- Cultural sensitivity support and training to employers

Continue Doing

- Continuation of relationship building
- SEED and other similar initiatives
- Labour market research - skills inventory

Organizational Contribution

- Everyone - needs to be community driven

Partners/Supporters to advance initiative

- GREAT, Post-Secondary, Polytech
- Ec. Dev. Department.
- Schools - elementary and secondary
- Elected Council
- Traditional Council



3.6 Major Themes Emerging through Collective Conversations

Following a comprehensive analysis of the data collected through the consultation process, five key themes emerged including collaboration, innovation, skills development, youth engagement and awareness/marketing. The following table presents themes by community.

Community	THEME: Collaboration	THEME: Innovation	THEME: Workforce Development	THEME: Youth Engagement	THEME: Awareness/ Marketing
Haldimand-Norfolk	Collaboration Partnerships	Innovation		Youth Engagement	
Brant-Brantford	Collaboration		Proactive Development of skills/knowledge of current/future labour force		Awareness and marketing of existing resources and assets needs to increase both within the community and to external investors
Six Nations of the Grand River	Employer Engagement		Well Balanced and positive attitude towards self, education, employment, workplace and workmanship		Communication and awareness of resources and programs available for businesses/employers, job seekers and the community

Employer engagement has been folded under the umbrella of collaboration as the two themes are inter-related. As key stakeholders in the local labour market, employers are the creators of local jobs and supporters of such initiatives as co-



op placements, internships, skills development and school to work transition. At the centre of collaboration is the practice of engagement. When the two are aligned, there is even greater opportunity for innovation, another key priority identified through the consultation process. Brant-Brantford indicated importance with marketing the community to potential investors and training the workforce. Local workforce development is inclusive of youth engagement and youth skills development.

The next section will articulate specific strategies and recommendations that will serve to advance Grand Erie towards its goal of creating a leading edge workforce.



4 Strategies and Recommendations for Action

4.1.1 Collaboration

GOAL: Develop Collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders to strength future growth and prosperity.

Required Actions	Potential Partners	WFPBGE	Timing
1. Develop a centralized resource to connect engaged stakeholders across the region to support information sharing and gathering	Municipalities, NGOs and agencies	Lead. Coordinator of activity, host of hub	Long-term
2. Provide face-to-face or web-based opportunities to promote learning that strengthens collaborative approaches and networking to foster greater collaboration	Municipalities, NGOs and agencies	Lead, Coordinator of activity	Short - term
3. Consciously identify key players in the community and ensure that they are invited to participate around the appropriate tables and involved in the decision-making process.	Municipalities, NGOs and agencies, educators, unions, employers.	Partner	Short-term
4. Create a channel, through such tools as web-site blog or other social media tools, to conduct outreach to local business and industry leaders to understand their needs and vision for the community	Municipalities, NGOs. Agencies, local business champions	Lead	Short-term
5. Implement a change management process that blends the two cultures of workforce development and economic development operations. (Phoenix and New York might provide models)	Municipalities, NGOs, economic development agencies	Partner	Long-term

Performance Measures:

- Number of users/amount of traffic generated through use of information blogs/social media.
- Development of workshop series and attendance to workshops.
- Increased representation of key stakeholder groups on important committees and boards throughout the region.
- Number of business visits or communications between the workforce planning board and specific local businesses.



4.1.2 Innovation

GOAL: Foster Innovation through creative idea generation

Required Actions	Potential Partners	WFPBGE	Timing
1. Celebrate and promote innovative approaches utilized in the community through an innovative awards initiative that increases local awareness of activities and their impact on the community	Municipalities, NGOs and agencies.	Lead, host of reward gala	Short-term
2. Promote innovative thinking through a mentoring program that links young professionals and business leaders/innovators in the area	Municipalities, NGOs, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Partner, facilitate mentoring program in conjunction with business organizations	Medium-term
3. Develop workshops that support skills development and new knowledge related to innovation to assist local entrepreneurs and innovators to mitigate risks in the present and future.	Agencies in the area.	Lead, coordinate activity.	Medium-term
4. Develop an information resource that showcases best practices in innovative thinking with a focus on local community impact	Provincial, national and international workforce development organizations	Lead	Short-term
5. Engage agencies that support business recruitment and expansion to aggressively use local workforce development system to support sector growth in Grand Erie.	Municipalities, NGOs, economic development agencies in the area,	Partner	Short-term

Performance Measures:

- # of innovation awards presented year over year.
- # of participants involved in the mentoring program.
- Attendance at workshop.
- # of requests for the resource developed to showcase best practices.



4.1.3 Workforce Development

GOAL: Workforce is well balanced with a positive attitude towards self, education, employment, workplace and workmanship.

Required Actions	Potential Partners	WFPBGE	Timing
1. Initiative a “Skills for High Quality Jobs” by engaging key stakeholders in an information exchange session to map available services and then examine their relevancy to increasing workforce skills that align with validated employer needs for high quality jobs in growth sectors.	Municipalities, school boards, post-secondary institutions, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Lead	Short-term
2. Generate a “Workforce Development Charter” to promote the stated goal in an effort to maximize use of common language among key stakeholders when promoting workforce development and to guide community strategies towards achieving this goal.	Municipalities, school boards, post-secondary institutions, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Lead, help coordinate communications	Short-term
3. Ensure that workers interested in retraining and skills development are aware of the programming available. Information campaigns, information sharing with key service providers and local media advertising and/or coverage are avenues that could potentially increase the knowledge of workers in the area.	School boards, post-secondary institutions, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Partner	Short-term

Performance Measures:

- # of participants in local information session
- # of stakeholders that buy-in to the concept of a Workforce Charter
- Percentage of increase or decrease in the number of workers who take part in particular servicing and programs highlighted in media campaigns.



4.1.4 Youth Engagement

GOAL 4: Develop inter-generational dialogue and youth engagement strategies that will foster youth retention.

Required Actions	Potential Partners	WPBGE	Timing
1. Strengthen understanding among community and business leaders about the importance of engaging with youth and allowing them to take part in decision-making processes. Allow youth to sit around the table on key committees and organizations throughout the community.		Lead, awareness raising.	Short-term
2. Empower youth to take an active role in identifying strategies and priorities related to community and economic development. Focus groups or a youth forum could be held to garner their opinions and to empower them to influence strategies that impact their lives and their community.	Municipalities, school boards, post-secondary institutions, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Partner	Medium-term
3. Continue and grow career fairs that showcase vocational opportunities throughout Grand Erie to graduates in high schools and post-secondary institutions throughout the area.	Municipalities, school boards, post-secondary institutions, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Partner	Medium-term
4. Continue to recruit a youth ambassador onto the board of directors for Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie to ensure that issues important to Grand Erie's youth are fairly represented.	Municipalities, school boards, post-secondary institutions, agencies, local businesses and champions.	Lead	Short-term.

Performance Measures:

- Number of youth engaged in a variety of community committees and boards specified by the workforce planning board
- The development and implementation of youth focus groups to gauge youth opinions