

Municipal Government Representatives

January 27, 2020

Attendance

1. Peter Crockett, Future Oxford
2. Natalie Surridge, Oxford Workforce Development Partnership
3. Dear Bhokanandh, City of Vancouver
4. Terry Chambers, and colleague Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
5. Elaine Capes, DC Moves
6. Glen Norton, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
7. Jacquie Dover, Region of Peel Public Health
8. Stephen Lynn, City of Windsor
9. Tristan Johnson, City of New Westminster
10. Sara Annou, Region of Peel
11. Elle Richards, Vibrant Communities
12. Hannah MacDonald, Vibrant Communities

Agenda

- Welcome and Technical Considerations
- Presentation: Effective Strategies to Engage Business – Workforce Development
 - Future Oxford Plan
 - The way we have built the sustainability plan is intended to show that the economy is integral to the success of the community.
 - The sustainability plan is a plan that lays out goals, objectives, and actions that are intended to move our community to sustainability
 - Oxford Workforce Development Partnership
 - Oxford Workforce Development Partnership (OWDP) is a collaboration of 14 community partners including: EDO's, Employment Ontario providers, Post-secondary institutions, Municipal leaders, Provincial representation from various ministries and employers who have been working collaboratively for the past 10 years.
 - We have a leadership role in the identification and validation of local labour market needs, issues, gaps, trends and opportunities.
 - Most importantly, we engage local partners in a community driven process to find solutions that contribute to the improvement of local labour market conditions for Oxford County and retain the economic vitality of Oxford.
 - All our initiatives are sustainable. We work with existing resources.
 - We don't operate under a governing board – this allows us to adapt in a dynamic environment
 - We are entrenched in both the supply and demand sides of the labour market as part of our comprehensive, holistic strategy.
 - Over 300 employers and 80 Community Stakeholders contributed to our strategic plan and are continually consulted as the plans evolves.

- Reports: <http://www.workinoxford.ca/owdp/strategic-plan>
 - Report on economic prosperity in Oxford County <http://www.futureoxford.ca/Resources.aspx>
 - OWDP has been recognized as a best practice on the provincial level and concepts are being implemented across the economic region and beyond.
- Employer Engagement
 - Our primary focus in labour force development has always been understanding the current needs and challenges facing the business community and then working with all key stakeholders to ensure the local labour pool has the required skills and attributes to actively participate. As the labour market continues to contract as boomers exit, unemployment rates have dropped significantly.
 - The resulting labour shortage crisis is obviously of great concern to business. It is impacting economic growth and requires innovative solutions.
 - Ongoing sector specific focus groups
 - Meet continually with a key group of 31 employers representing all key sectors across the County to ensure our efforts are responding to their needs.
 - All employers have opportunities to discuss challenges with job developers at least on an annual basis.
 - Employer One survey provides real time data about their current and future skill and labour needs.
 - Program Director attends and participates in the Zero Poverty, Living Wage, Housing and Community Pillar to ensure our work with both populations dovetail effectively and allow us to mobilize our programming to address any gaps.
 - We are slowly but surely educating employers about the new reality of the labour market
 - Knowing our employers successes and challenges provides unique opportunities to best practices and non traditional approaches to labour attraction and retention.
- Successes
 - The remaining pool of labour and the non-participating individuals (who are essential to address the labour shortage), has forced OWDP to explore the challenges facing these groups that prevent successful labour market integration.
 - Moving out of poverty is no longer a short process of following a simple roadmap to a good job.
 - it has never been more important to find a way to break the cycle of poverty.
 - Engage with employers to educate them on the realities of the current labour market and have them help develop solutions
 - Impact requires a multi-pronged approach
 - Successes

- Oxford has achieved an integrated and collaborative service pathway that engages all key stakeholders in supporting each individual's employment plan and all the peripheral supports required for success.
- Full Integration of Employment Ontario and Ontario Works – EO & OW County Libraries)
- Tools & Resources - Workinxford.ca, Virtual counsellor, Utilization of County Libraries- All designed to ease access and address transportation challenges.
- Employer Engagement – their understanding, expectations and a willingness to hire and train employees
- Shared Local Statistical Data – quarterly report provides real time LMI for Oxford, for front line to measure impact on OW transition to employment, education and training
- Sharing LMI on competitive wages has been steadily increasing wages offered by employers to ensure they have access to employees
- Sharing and supporting creative non traditional strategies for retention
- Oxford's Community Hub
 - It's time to take concrete steps to help people now. Small changes now will make a big difference to people living in poverty.
 - Talking the plan – Voice of the Front line
 - Front line shared stories of the identified needs they see every day from clients on their caseloads. They also shared non traditional approaches to address those needs. All front line were provided these stories and best practices which further spurred creativity.
 - All partners identified the need for a Community Hub to ensure people didn't fall through the cracks.
 - In the current political environment, services are being streamlined, budgets are moving regionally. Etc. Creating a brick and mortar hub with all services isn't realistic but our model actually created a proximity Hub (above)
 - From this
 - Providers always have a warm referral and walk clients to the next appointment.
 - Bridges Out of Poverty (All Front Line Employment Ontario and Human Services Staff have or will be attending Training)
 - Circles Training for all Employment Ontario (CES) staff is supporting facilitation of "Circles " and "Getting Ahead"
 - Further integration with stakeholders is constantly increasing
- Challenges
 - Challenges remain however.
 - Some employers continue to operate on patriarchal, "old school", employment practices that are not reflective of the current state. (despite our efforts in educating employers)

- Access to services for ever increasing and complex barriers can be limited in smaller communities and core services are evolving into a regional role.
 - Rebuilding the confidence and self-esteem of clients with limited positive experience in the world of work is a difficult and lengthy process. As is the development of the essential soft skills that progressive employers have identified as a requirement for new hires.
- Lessons Learned
 - Communication is ongoing and essential with clients, employers and all stakeholders.
 - A holistic, collaborative approach is the only way forward. It is organic, will constantly evolve and shift. Collaboration is the only way to have flexibility and adaptability to successes.
- Closing Announcements
 - March 23rd or 30th
 - What are some best practices for a Collective Impact backbone?