



Wellington County

Economic Development Strategic Plan

November 2012



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Part A: Economic Development Strategy



1 Introduction

1.1 Objectives and Outcomes

Wellington County has embarked on its first ever Economic Development Strategic Plan to foster and support a more coordinated approach to regional economic development. The preparation of the Plan has been highly collaborative and is premised on having the municipalities, local partners, and organizations that have economic development as part of their mandate working together to achieve a strong and united approach to economic development.

More strategically however, the Plan is intended to inform residents, businesses and elected officials on the challenges and opportunities that will confront the County in the years to come and identify the actions required to ensure sustainable economic growth and strengthen the County's competitive position. The plan also serves as a guide for the strategic investment of both public and private sector resources in ways that fully exploit the region's assets.

Overall guidance and direction for the creation of the Wellington County Economic Development Strategic Plan was provided by the Wellington County Municipal Economic Development Group (WCMEDG), composed of local municipalities, service agencies and economic development partners, as well as members of the County's extended leadership team. In preparing the Plan consideration has also been given to a number of other initiatives determined to have a direct impact on the overall direction for the regional economic development strategic plan. This includes the Province's Place to Grow Act, municipal strategic plans, as well as the economic development efforts of the local municipalities and the County's Economic Development Committee.

The recently created Wellington County Economic Development Office has been instrumental in ensuring a high level of public and stakeholder engagement throughout this process and is tasked with developing partnerships with local stakeholders and area municipalities, as well as other senior levels of government to advance a common economic development agenda. In doing so, the County will ensure the effective implementation of the Plan and a continuing focus on a strong and united approach to economic development.

1.2 Approach

The primary objective for any economic development strategic plan is to improve the livability and quality of life of a community or region through sustained economic growth. This in turn fosters the creation of high quality jobs attracts investment and increases wealth and opportunity for area residents.

To do this, consideration must be given to the underlying condition of a local economy and its climate for investment, both in terms of public and private sector investment. This is achieved through a solid understanding of a region's performance against a



range of economic indicators combined with an analysis of current and emerging business and industrial investment trends and input from the community at large.

This document is comprised of two major components. **Part A** provides a high level understanding of the County's recent economic performance and the opportunities and challenges that are influencing both growth and investment in the region. It also sets out the framework for achieving sustainable economic growth in the form of long term goals, together with shorter term strategic objectives and actions to guide economic development activity in Wellington County. **Part B** of the report provides the results of a more detailed economic base analysis of the region as well as summaries of the project's extensive consultation efforts.

The approach employed in the completion of this work has involved the following steps:

- **An Economic Base Analysis including socio-economic data for Wellington County providing demographics, household data, education, labour force, employment resources and the business climate.**
- **An identification of key sectors and economic opportunities within Wellington County.**
- **A review of existing economic development studies and initiatives underway at the County and the local municipalities.**
- **An assessment of the local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to provide insight to the County's locational advantages and disadvantages in attracting and retaining business investment.**
- **Input from key stakeholders and members of the public in the form of one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and an online survey on the project's website.**

The result of this process is a forward thinking, locally based action plan that is reflective of the vision, values and aspirations of the broader community.

1.3 Stakeholder Consultation

Given the importance of developing consensus around the overall direction for the County's Economic Development Plan, a strong communication and consultation effort was essential. One-on-one interviews were conducted between May and September 2012 that included business leaders, community and provincial stakeholders, economic development partners, and elected officials and senior management from Wellington County.

These discussions provided insight into trends related to the region's current economic development activity, current land use and policy issues that impact economic growth, the challenges being faced by the business community and the capacity of the local municipalities to participate in the economic development initiatives and programming.



The findings from these interviews together with the results of the economic analysis were used to inform a strategic visioning session with the members of the WCMEDG, the County's economic development partners, and municipal staff. This assisted in developing consensus for the direction of the economic development strategic plan and a vision for economic growth.



Five focus group discussions were hosted in July 2012 in various locations across the County to gain further community input on the appeal of the County as a place to live and do business and the challenges with respect to future economic growth and opportunities for economic development. Given the importance of providing a sustainable workforce to economic growth, a Workforce Development Summit was hosted in September 2012 that considered the issues and opportunities of attracting, developing and retaining a regional workforce.

An electronic survey directed primarily to the County's business community was also administered in cooperation with Wellington County and several local economic development partners. As of September 2012, input has been obtained from more than 550 members of the public and business and community leaders.

1.4 Financial and Budget Implications

The Wellington County Economic Development Strategic Plan is intended as a high level plan focused on the growth and diversification of the regional economy over the long term. It does not include specific financial cost estimates for individual projects or actions. Costing will be done through the development of an overarching



Implementation Plan that articulates the resources required to move forward with the strategy.

It must be noted that while direct investments in economic development may create fiscal pressures for the County and the local municipalities in the short term, it will be the foundation to the long term sustainability and resilience of the economy.

2 Seeing the Big Picture

The starting point for Wellington's Economic Development Strategic Plan was a comprehensive analysis of the local, regional¹ and provincial economies. The result is an understanding of the County's performance against a select range of demographic and economic indicators considered relevant to the development of the economic development strategic plan. Consideration has been given to reports, studies, and economic development programming that are seen as having a direct impact on the current and future economic development activities of Wellington County. These findings were then used to inform the subsequent stakeholder discussions and the opportunities to enhance the County's value proposition for the attraction of business, investment and residents.

2.1 The Regional Context for Growth and Investment

A Growing and Shifting Population

Wellington County's proximity to the City of Guelph and the Kitchener-Waterloo region and to a lesser extent the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTAH) has contributed to a growth in population over the last decade, with an additional 10,304 residents moving to the County since 2001 (12.7%) with the majority of that growth occurring between 2006 and 2012. Further, growth rates over the last decade have been comparatively slower than at the Provincial and Regional level, based on the strong performance from the urban areas of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area over that time period. However, the County is poised to accommodate a significant portion of population growth over the next 20 years under the *Places to Grow* plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) with an additional 27,340 residents expected within the County to 2031².

¹ For the purposes of this report, much of the data analysis for Wellington County has been placed within the context of the broader Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region, as defined by Statistics Canada. This region includes the upper- and lower-tier communities within the geographic areas of Dufferin County, Wellington County, Waterloo Region, and Simcoe County.

² Based on estimated population of 94,660 in 2011 and projected population of 122,000 in 2031, contained in the Wellington County Official Plan.



Wellington County's population is also experiencing the same broad shifts in age composition being experienced at the national and provincial level. From 2006 to 2012, the proportion of total population aged 45 years and older increased from 41.4% to 44.5%; compared to a profile of 40.6% over 45 years old in 2012 across the broader Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region. Population aged 65 years and older currently also accounts for a much higher share of total population in Wellington County than in the broader region. While the County is not alone in experiencing an aging population, consideration must be given to the impact this will have on the region's workforce, future business attraction efforts and healthcare infrastructure.

Age composition is not the only shift in the local resident population. Wellington County, like other areas of the Province, continues to attract increasing numbers of immigrants. From 2006 to 2012, the share of total population accounted for by the immigrant population in the County rose from 11.3% to 12.1%, with particular growth in immigrants from Central America and Eastern and Southern Asia over the last five years. This is particularly notable given the fact that new immigrants to Canada will play a key role in net labour force growth across the Country as a result of the broader challenges associated with an aging workforce and labour force replacement. Notwithstanding this growth, Wellington County still remains comparatively less diverse than the surrounding region, which may pose challenges for both workforce attraction and retention in the future.

A Skilled and Stable Resident Workforce

The population of Wellington County is generally well educated, with approximately 53% of working aged residents holding some form of post-secondary credential (e.g. apprenticeship certificate, college diploma, university degree); though this is slightly below the 57% of population across the economic region with post-secondary credentials. The County holds a higher share of residents with skilled trade or apprenticeship certifications than the surrounding region, and competitive shares of college and university educated residents. This skilled population is particularly concentrated in areas like architecture, engineering and related technologies; business, management and public administration; and health, parks, recreation, and fitness which suggests the local population is well positioned to support a wide range of business sectors. The impact of this skilled population is also reflected in the income levels across the County, as evidenced by the higher than average household income levels (\$97,453 in the County compared to \$92,020 across the broader region).

The skills of the local population have also contributed to the comparative stability of the local economy; even through the most recent economic recession. Over the last decade, the County's labour force continued to show lower rates of unemployment and higher rates of participation and employment than many of the surrounding areas. This is particularly notable given the emphasis of the manufacturing sector on regional labour force. From 2006 to 2012, unemployment grew by just 0.5% in Wellington County, compared to 2.1% across the broader economic region.

These results are also significant when looking at the composition of the resident workforce by industry sector and occupation. The composition and growth of the



County's labour force remains focused on the more traditional areas of the economy like manufacturing, agriculture, and construction, and is supported by a workforce in a range of technical occupations. Wellington County's labour force has not experienced the same volatility associated with employment in these sectors as many other areas of Ontario, and has in some cases experienced increased opportunity despite trends towards lower employment density and greater productivity in those industries, particularly manufacturing. Population-related and service based sectors like retail trade and health care continue to grow as well, serving the needs of a growing population across the region. By occupation, the County's population exhibits skills in business, finance, and administration and management, in addition to the strong profile of technical and service-based skills. This has contributed to a more stable economic environment over the last several years when compared to other areas of the Province.

A Mobile Labour Force

As a result of their comparative skills and the ability to access the GTA and GGH, Wellington County's workforce is highly mobile. In 2012, approximately 40% of the County's labour force commutes out of the County for work, to areas like the City of Guelph, Waterloo Region, the Western GTA (e.g. Halton Hills, Mississauga), and Toronto. It should be noted though that commuting figures vary widely across the County – municipalities like Erin, Puslinch, Mapleton, and Guelph/Eramosa have the highest levels of commuting, based on access to Highway 401 and thus Guelph, Waterloo Region, and the GTA. Wellington North and Centre Wellington are able to retain a comparatively higher share of local labour force.

The diversity of skills in the resident labour force also means that this exported labour comes from a range of sectors. Wellington County exports labour in all sectors of the economy, but manufacturing, construction (which by its nature employs a highly mobile labour force), educational services, and health care and social assistance export the highest levels of local labour force, not surprising given the County's proximity to the City of Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge.

A Diverse and Entrepreneurial Business Base

The business base in the County has developed in both industrial and professional areas of the economy, which positions the County to serve the rapidly growing regional population, existing activity in traditional areas of the economy such as manufacturing, and emerging areas of knowledge-based work in Wellington County and the surrounding GGH. The total business base of employers, including the self-employed is presently concentrated in areas like agriculture and construction, with a strong profile of businesses in professional services and real estate and rental and leasing, with employers showing concentration in additional sectors like "other" (i.e. personal and commercial) services and transportation and warehousing.

In terms of growth though, the business base in the County has seen strongest growth from its knowledge-based and population-related sectors with much of this focused on what is described as the creative economy. From 2007 to 2011, Wellington County's fastest growing sectors were information and cultural industries; arts, entertainment,



and recreation, health care and social assistance; “other” services; and finance and insurance. The County has also experienced strong growth of employers in areas like agriculture, professional services, and construction.

Like many other rural areas, the County’s business base is comparatively entrepreneurial. In 2011, businesses employing fewer than 10 people accounted for 78% of the total businesses in the County. Wellington County’s comparative stability and success (especially over the last several years) suggests that its local business base, though weighted towards smaller businesses, is highly resilient and adaptive. This is particularly positive for the County, as small businesses are generally seen as the major source of new employment opportunities, products, and ideas in a community, along with remaining agile enough to respond to changing economic conditions.

An increasing Emphasis on Creativity and Culture

Residents in creative occupations – or those that are described as ‘paid to think’ – have been a particular source of growth for the County. Between 2001 and 2012, the number of residents in creative occupations grew by 16.8%, with the majority of that growth over the last five years. Currently, the County’s creative labour force is weighted towards occupations such as teachers and professors, specialist managers, and professional occupations in natural and applied sciences. The growth in creative economy occupations is focused on specialist managers, professional and administrative occupations in finance and insurance, and nurse supervisors and registered nurses. It is important to note though, that professional and technical occupations in arts and culture have also experienced strong growth over the last decade. The County has also experienced creative-cultural sector growth in the form of photographers; painters and sculptors, and other visual artists; authors and writers; and artisans and craftspersons.



Creative businesses follow the same pattern, with composition and growth led by industries outside of the creative-cultural sector, though growth of employers in the creative-cultural industries eclipsed that of the broader creative sector. Aligning with occupational data, creative enterprises in the County are weighted most heavily towards areas like engineering and business consulting. However, there were stable rates of growth in more creative-cultural areas of the economy as well (e.g. performing arts, artists, music).

Overall, Wellington County's skilled population contains a significant number of workers in the creative industries and creative occupations. Though presence in the broader creative industries is well established, the County has an opportunity to support greater growth of the creative-cultural set of occupations and industries as a means of supporting economic development and tourism goals.

2.2 Existing Local Economic Development Efforts

Many of the County's local municipalities are engaged in some form of economic development programming, regardless of whether or not the community has dedicated staff or resources for economic development. As such, a review of current and past projects and initiatives at the local level and in other economic and community development organizations can inform the direction for a regional economic development strategy. The inventory of projects and initiatives across Wellington County is summarized in Figure 1.



FIGURE 1: AREAS OF INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Municipality/Organization	Areas of Interest	Key Projects and Initiatives
Wellington County	Tourism and local food, employment lands, Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Strategy (Current) Wellington Place Concept Plan (2011) Socio Economic Profile (Current) Industry Survey (2011)
Township of Centre Wellington	Brownfields, business retention and expansion, creative cultural industries, downtown revitalization, tourism, local food, employment lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Strategic Plan (2011) Creative Spaces (2011) Business Directory Cultural Master Plan (2012)
Town of Erin	Business retention and expansion, tourism, agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BR&E – Equine (Current) Tourism Study (1995)
Township of Guelph/Eramosa	Employment lands, tourism, recreation, agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Current) Municipal Strategic Plan (Current) Business directory (Current)
Township of Mapleton	Local food, downtown revitalization, physician recruitment, culture and recreation, employment lands, tourism, agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Strategic Plan (2012) Community Guide (2012) Business Directory
Town of Minto	Tourism, business retention and expansion, creative cultural industries, employment lands, downtown revitalization, local food, physician recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Master Plan (2011) Strategic Plan (2009) BR&E (2007) Economic Development Strategy Current)
Township of Puslinch	Employment lands, agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Strategic Plan (Current)
Township of Wellington North	Business retention and expansion, local food, downtown revitalization, physician recruitment, employment lands, tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Strategic Plan (Current) BR&E (2011) Community Improvement Plan (2011)
Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin	Labour market research, business retention and expansion, health care recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Labour Market Plan (Annual) Supply and Demand Study – Manufacturing (2011) Creative Class Study (2011)



Waterloo-Wellington Community Futures Development Corporation	Strategic planning, training and mentoring, small business financing	
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3 SWOT Analysis

Building on the findings of economic analysis and the consultations with business and community leaders in a municipality, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis provides further indication of the County's ability and capacity to support economic growth opportunities. The SWOT considers ongoing economic development programming, a review of background literature and the results of a comprehensive economic analysis, coupled with extensive input from local stakeholders within Wellington County.

For the purposes of this report, a SWOT is characterized in the following terms:

- **Strengths (Positive, Internal):** Positive attributes or assets currently present in Wellington County, particularly in comparison to the broader region and Ontario.
- **Weaknesses (Negative, Internal):** Local issues or characteristics that limit the current or future growth opportunities for Wellington County.
- **Opportunities (Positive, Internal and External):** Areas where Wellington County can remedy its weaknesses (e.g. learning from others, provincial assistance, strategic initiative, aggressive marketing, targeted investment).
- **Threats (Negative, Internal and External):** Trends that threaten Wellington County's future and attractiveness to new industry, including local weaknesses, or global changes in consumer demand and industry performance.

FIGURE 2: MAPPING THE SWOT ANALYSIS

	Helpful	Detrimental
Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
External	Opportunities	Threats

The SWOT analysis that follows provides insight into the challenges and opportunities for Wellington County in its efforts to generate and sustain economic development.



3.1 Strengths

It is essential that an economic development strategic plan identify and build on the unique strengths of a local economy in a way that will lead to sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the future. The following strengths outline the elements that can be leveraged by Wellington County to support the further growth of the local and regional economy.

Forecasted population and employment growth: As part of the rapidly growing Greater Golden Horseshoe region, the County is expected to accommodate 27,340 new residents and 11,750 new jobs by 2031³. Though this will place some pressure on the community's urban and rural areas to accommodate growth, it suggests that Wellington County will maintain a vibrant workforce while generating new opportunities for employment within the County.

Strong agricultural base: Agricultural land covers approximately 75% of the County, and it is widely considered to be among the most productive and fertile agricultural land in the Province. The County's industry is growing by revenue (13.2% growth in gross receipts), has younger operators on average than the Province, and exhibits a strong and growing profile of 'family corporation' farming operations. Presence of strong research (e.g. University of Guelph/Ontario Agricultural College, OMAFRA research farms) and business support (e.g. Wellington Federation of Agriculture, FarmStart) assets can also generate new business opportunities and support new and expanded agricultural ventures.



³ Based on estimates for 2011 and projections for 2031 contained in the County of Wellington Official Plan.



Stable labour force growth and performance: Wellington County consistently shows comparatively stable participation, employment, and unemployment rates based on the skills of its resident labour force. Approximately 53% of the resident population in the County has some post-secondary credentials, with particular strengths in apprenticeships and skilled trades programming. The population with university-level credentials is concentrated in the fields of architecture and engineering, and business and management. This has contributed to higher than average household incomes in the County as well when compared to the broader region and the Province as a whole. In terms of growth, Wellington County's labour force has consistently expanded in a range of sectors, including manufacturing and agriculture, as well as in the creative and cultural industries.

Competitive location and access to transportation: Wellington County has immediate access to the Highway 401 Windsor-Quebec corridor, as well as Highways 6, 7, and 8, which provide critical intra-provincial market access. Positioning along the Highway 401 corridor also provides Wellington with access to major infrastructure assets (e.g. Pearson International Airport, CN/CP Intermodal), major markets in the GTA, and leading university/research institutions in the GTA and Waterloo Region.

Natural and cultural heritage: The unique topography of the County, especially its rivers, the Elora Gorge, and extensive natural areas, are a significant draw for many residents and visitors and will be critical in maintaining a high quality of life experience for new residents in the future; The range of natural features present in the County are a differentiating quality of life asset listed by many consultation participants. The County also benefits from strong cultural heritage features – primarily its historic downtowns – that provide it with a defining 'small town feel' in many of its communities. This is further demonstrated by the ongoing commitment to the restoration of the County's network of Carnegie Libraries.





3.2 Weaknesses

While the previous subsection outlined strengths upon which Wellington County can build a local economy, these strengths do not necessarily ensure that Wellington is ready or able to capitalize on opportunities as they emerge. The following weaknesses may present challenges to Wellington County in accessing and supporting new economic activity.

Lack of regional business retention and expansion effort: Certain local municipalities have undertaken business retention and expansion initiatives with their local business community. However, ongoing initiatives focused on the expansion of key regional sectors (e.g. manufacturing, agriculture, food, creative cultural), and initiatives at the regional level to support lower-tier activities have been limited. The lack of a regional mechanism to undertake and support these activities can limit the initial scope of these initiatives, as well as the ongoing ability to support the growth of the business community.

Lack of community and regional profile: Though many of the local municipalities continue to build a strong profile and identity for their communities, the County lacks a similar profile and identity. This is especially relevant given proximity to the Waterloo Region and the GTA – Wellington County must forge a strong regional profile within an area currently dominated by the strong external identity of these surrounding regions. Without a strong regional identity and profile, a community's marketing and value proposition may lack the strength needed to appeal to business investors and potential residents – especially those from outside of the Region.

Migration and immigration performance: The County exhibits a comparatively lower share of immigrants and visible minorities in the total population than the broader region (Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie), Ontario, and Canada – despite the strong performance of Guelph in this regard. Further, the majority of new migration to the County is accounted for by intra-provincial migrants (or those moving from within Ontario). This seems to confirm the relative weakness of Wellington County's value proposition to external (international) or domestic (inter-provincial) migrants.

Commuting and availability of labour force: The County loses a sizeable portion of its labour force to surrounding areas for work, with approximately 40% of the total labour force commuting outside of Wellington County (primarily going to Guelph, Mississauga, Halton Hills, Waterloo Region, and Toronto). Commuting rates at the local municipality level range from approximately 55% of total labour force in Erin to 16% in Wellington North. Exported labour from the County is skilled in both professional and technical areas of the economy, suggesting barriers for supporting development in most sectors of the economy.

Serviced employment land: While the County has approximately 219 acres of vacant developable highway commercial lands and 1,570 acres of vacant developable industrial lands, only 102 acres of highway commercial (most of that only partially serviced and located in Erin) and 343 acres of industrial lands are currently serviced or have access to servicing. Presently, fully or partially serviced vacant employment lands



account for 24.9% of total vacant land inventory. Guelph/Eramosa, and Puslinch have no serviced vacant employment lands. This lack of serviced or ‘shovel-ready’ inventory and perceived quality of available lands has implications on the types of investment the County and local municipalities can expect to attract over the short-term (especially higher density office or more intensive industrial uses along major corridors), but also has longer term implications for the County’s investment attraction efforts.

Regional understanding of capital needs and requirements: There is little collective understanding of financial commitments needed to maintain existing infrastructure servicing levels at the regional level, while expanding infrastructure to enable new development across the region – especially in employment areas. Without that regional understanding, there are issues in planning for future growth, and advocating for funding from higher levels of government. When advocating for funding and an expanded range of financial tools, a more collaborative regional approach is likely to look more favourable.

Mandate and experience on regional collaboration: Many stakeholders who participated in the stakeholder consultation process noted that while the County and its local municipalities have had little experience working together on economic development initiatives, the commitment to do so is gaining momentum. It was noted however, that not all local municipalities have dedicated economic development staff and as a result, there has been little need previously to develop a mandate for a more regional economic development or secure financial support for this effort. Sustaining the momentum and commitment to this effort particularly as it relates to the implementation of the strategy will require a strong communication effort and clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the partners.

3.3 Opportunities

External factors, such as structural changes in the broader economy or shifts in demographic composition, can also play a significant role in influencing a local economy. The following opportunities represent some of the external opportunities that may offer Wellington County the best potential for economic development.

International and interprovincial talent attraction: Though the County has had success in attracting new residents from other parts of Ontario, there is also an opportunity to increase the profile of the County on an interprovincial and international level, in order to communicate with a broader range of potential residents and skilled workers. From an international perspective, there is an opportunity to work with the Guelph Wellington Local Immigration Partnership to achieve goals of immigrant attraction and retention, as well as work with the settlement agencies in the County to assist with integration and attraction of new residents. By working with Guelph, Wellington County can put forward a stronger regional marketing message to potential new residents, as well as increase the resources available for attraction and retention initiatives like marketing strategies and web-based portals currently under consideration.



Value-added agriculture, local food, and on-farm diversification: Based on the traditional strengths in the sector and underlying assets in research, there is an opportunity for increased involvement in areas of value-added agriculture like renewable energy generation, bio products, or local foods and niche products. Further, the need for farmers to diversify their sources of revenue away from solely farming activities presents the opportunity to support on-farm diversification activities like agri-tourism or agricultural-related commercial and industrial ventures. Many of the participants in the process suggested the strengths in agriculture should generate increased opportunities for local food distribution networks, as a means of supporting local farmers

Support for small and medium sized enterprises: Much of the growth of the national economy of late has been attributed to small and medium sized enterprises which exhibit innovative and entrepreneurial qualities. Approximately 78% of employer businesses in the County have 10 or fewer employees, while there are an additional 4,738 business locations accounted for in the “indeterminate” or self-employed category. The County needs to build on this larger trend and support the growth of small to medium sized enterprises through more comprehensive business retention and expansion activities and marketing and investment attraction activities.



Centralized resource for economic development information: Participants in the consultations universally agreed that there needs to be a more centralized structure for economic development information in the County. This includes a ‘one-window’ approach for engaging with investors, but also the collection, presentation, and dissemination of information that can benefit each of the local municipalities. An up-to-date inventory of commercial and industrial space in the County – both land and facilities – was noted as a specific centralized resource that should be developed and maintained by the County. The opportunity can also extend to marketing materials,



socio-economic data, or web-based resources (e.g. GIS mapping, business directory, regional mapping of cultural and tourism assets).

Facilitative role for regional partnerships and collaboration: As the upper-tier municipal economic development agency in the County, there is an opportunity to play a more facilitative role in developing regional partnerships and project-based collaboration. This role should be explored at the local level (i.e. intra-county partnerships and collaborations), but also with adjacent municipalities and organizations (e.g. Guelph, Halton Region, Waterloo Region) to build a stronger pool of regional resources to be used to support economic development. Although there is little history of intra- and inter-regional collaboration, there is willingness across the county to explore partnerships, as suggested by recent collaborations at the lower-tier level in cultural planning and mapping, and place-based tourism. Where individual municipalities may struggle to develop more regional partnerships, Wellington County offers a more coordinated platform for the municipalities to secure external partnerships and anchor internal partnerships.

Support for incentives and redevelopment: The consultation process outlined the number of Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) that have been developed at the lower-tier level as an asset for the County. While there may be opportunities to develop new CIPs where needed (i.e. in historic downtowns or underdeveloped areas of the County that do not currently have them), participants felt that the best way for the County to be involved was to add financial support to existing programs, where possible.

Tourism development based on regional strengths: The strategic plan for Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) 4 outlined two specific activities that form the core of the region's tourism offering: outdoor and sports activities and cultural performances.⁴ However, the strategic plan also recommends development of products and packaging in additional areas of arts and culture, festivals and fairs, and agri-tourism/culinary tourism. Wellington County has an opportunity to leverage the RTO's successful marketing effort and build on the regional offerings to establish and communicate a more defined tourism offering that differentiates it from strong competitors in the region (e.g. Stratford or Waterloo Region/Guelph). This includes support for basic infrastructure (e.g. accommodations and food services industries), partnerships with industry operators and tourism organizations (e.g. Canadian Sports Tourism Alliance⁵), creation of a comprehensive inventory of tourism operators, as well as greater support for creative-cultural enterprises and assets that differentiate the region (e.g. artists, festivals, performing arts, heritage downtowns and trail network).

⁴ Millier Dickinson Blais, TCI Management Consultants, GGA Management Consultants. (2011). Regional Tourism Organization 4 Strategic Destination Plan.

⁵ University of Guelph. (2012). Waterloo Wellington Community Futures Development Corporation: Sports Tourism Research.



Development of a rural creative economy: Wellington County has exhibited strong growth in the creative economy – both the number of people working in creative occupations, and the number of businesses engaged in creative pursuits. Thus, there is an opportunity for development of a stronger rural creative economy in Wellington County. This includes more support for the development of knowledge-based employment opportunities and business ventures that offer high-value impacts to the County, but also support for the creative-cultural businesses that can assist with quality of place improvement (e.g. performing arts, artisans) that will be critical in generating and sustaining opportunity within key sectors like tourism, and in attracting and retaining new skilled residents to the County.

Rural health care and education: At present, the County benefits from work being done by the Groves Memorial Community Hospital and the North Wellington Health Care Alliance to ensure the community has access to health care services and highly trained professionals. Health care services are widely considered to be a quality of place advantage for Wellington County, suggesting that these organizations have been successful. The consultation process identified that Wellington County has a continuing role to play in developing innovative solutions to rural health care delivery, and the training and attraction/retention of health care professionals. The proposed development at Wellington Place though can expand that opportunity, and offer new spaces for post-secondary training, long-term care, and supportive housing uses in close proximity to the proposed new location of Groves Memorial Hospital. Wellington County has an opportunity to maintain its service levels, and expand the capacity to train the professionals it needs within the County.



3.4 Threats

Economic development strategies are often measured by the extent to which a municipality is able to capitalize on its opportunities in an attempt to generate economic and social prosperity. Equally important though is how the municipality addresses or manages internal and external threats that can keep it from achieving economic and community development goals. There are several threats that Wellington County must consider in implementing its economic development strategy.

Continuing structural shifts in traditional industries: The most recent economic recession has accelerated the already significant impacts of longer-term restructuring in many resource-based and traditional industries in Canada. This is especially relevant of the manufacturing sector, which has lost a number of jobs over the last several decades. However, continued productivity improvements in a number of industries like manufacturing, agriculture, and transportation and logistics continue to result in lower employment densities and fewer numbers of job opportunities. Like many other areas, Wellington County faces a threat based on continued restructuring of these traditional industries, which generate and account for a significant portion of employment in the County.

Aging demographics and slow population growth: Wellington County's population aged 45 years and over continues to grow at a faster rate than the broader region and Province, while the share of total population under 20 years of age continues to decrease. An aging population is not unique to Wellington County, as many Canadian municipalities face the same challenges related to a quickly retiring workforce and new demands for services. However, Wellington County continues to experience population growth below that of the Province and broader region, which may pose challenges to replacement of the workforce over the longer-term.

Culturally diverse groups staying in GTA/Guelph: The Greater Toronto Area has attracted a diverse range of ethnic groups over the last several years, resulting in a comparatively higher proportion of the resident population accounted for by immigrants or visible minorities. Guelph, at the edge of the GTA, has been able to attract a diverse range of new residents as well, from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Though Wellington County has succeeded in attracting new residents and immigrants, it has performed comparatively weaker than the surrounding areas – a trend many other more rural areas have experienced as well. As new immigrants will compose a significant portion of new labour force in Canada in the coming years, Wellington County faces the threat that new immigrants may continue to choose more urban areas of the County over rural communities.

Infrastructure investment and renewal: Participants across the County suggested a need for infrastructure investment and renewal as a means of supporting new economic development in the County. Though not exclusively funded by provincial and federal government, infrastructure projects within Wellington County will undoubtedly be affected by continued fiscal restraint at the Provincial and Federal levels. Complicating the issue further is the vast area the municipalities cover and the



significant amount of hard infrastructure that requires maintenance and renewal. Without certainty of funding from higher levels of government (and perhaps additional revenue generation tools for municipalities), Wellington County faces a threat to ongoing infrastructure investment and renewal. In turn, this may affect maintenance of existing levels of service, and investments in new projects (e.g. Wellington Place).

Provincial policies in rural and agricultural areas: Some regulations and policies at the Provincial level appear to have an unintended negative impact on rural areas of the province. For example, land use policies like the Greenbelt Plan and Provincial Policy Statement can limit the ability of farmers to generate non-farm income in related or value-added areas on their properties (e.g. preliminary processing, agritourism). As well, recent policy decisions at the provincial level, such as the re-evaluation of the Slots at Racetracks revenue sharing agreements, threaten to undermine significant industries across the County – most notably the equine industry, and the web of suppliers and service providers that support the industry. The County and local municipalities may need to revise local policies and approaches to support local agricultural industries, as well as continue to advocate for local industries of significance.

Increasing traffic congestion: Traffic congestion is increasingly being cited as a detriment to economic development and opportunity across the GTA. The projected growth for Guelph/Wellington over the next 20 years and associated traffic on area roads, the increasing congestion on provincial highways moving through the Greater Golden Horseshoe (e.g. Highway 401), and delays in upgrades to major thoroughfares in the region (e.g. Highways 6 and 7) poses a potential threat to goods and people movement in and out of the County.

4 Major Themes

For a county-level economic development strategy to be successful, the plan requires the support for the full range of economic development stakeholders across the region. The research, review, and consultation components of the strategy development process have identified a number of major themes around which to frame an economic development strategic plan.

The major themes for Wellington County include:

- Developing a value proposition that encourages regional cooperation in economic development and become the centralized resource for economic development in Wellington County.
- Facilitating a coordinated approach to economic development marketing, communications, and promotions.
- Establishing strategies to support sustainable growth coupled with economic diversification that effectively leverages key strengths and infrastructure investment.



- Encouraging longer term sustainability in the County's agricultural sector.
- Capitalizing on surrounding post-secondary, training, research and public institutions to support regional innovation, education, and workforce development.
- Establishing stronger support for existing business community and advocate for local businesses at higher levels of government.
- Leveraging domestic and international connections of institutions, community organizations, and local businesses/community groups for talent, business, and investment attraction.
- Supporting growth of regional tourism and creative cultural industries in the County.

Facilitate centralization of economic development resources and regional coordination of activities and identity

There is strong evidence to support the fact that regional approaches to economic development can offer communities a number of benefits. Economic development opportunity does not necessarily follow political boundaries, and coordinated approaches – whether between different levels of government or different communities – can provide larger pools of resources and stronger marketing messages in pursuit of economic development opportunity.

There are a range of stakeholders in Wellington County already delivering economic development and related services across the County. As well, several of the local municipalities have either dedicated economic development staff or staff in other departments with economic development functions. Where possible the County needs to identify and clarify where it can add value to local initiatives, but also where a broader more regional approach to an economic development opportunity or issue is required. Many of the municipalities expressed a desire for collaboration and cooperation if it enabled them to leverage the knowledge and experience of the larger economic development community.

The economic development strategic plan for Wellington County needs to address both of these concerns, as well as advance actions and tactics that can enable them. Firstly, the plan must recognize the work currently being done at the local level and in other organizations across the County, and articulate a position for County-level economic development that fills current 'gap' areas of service delivery or enhances existing areas of service delivery. It must also articulate areas where new external partnerships and collaboration can advance the interests of the County or the local advocacy efforts already underway.

Some of the most prevalent suggestions from this perspective included establishing the County as a 'broker' of economic development information and research that includes business services and resources, standardized economic tools for BR+E and Downtown Revitalization, available land/space inventory, asset mapping as part of an



online GIS tool and regional marketing and communications that promote a common identity for Wellington.

Establish strategies to support sustainable growth and infrastructure investment

Municipalities across Canada face constant challenges with regards to ensuring they balance aspirational goals and objectives for growth with the need to expand infrastructure and maintain current service levels. Factors like the increasing infrastructure deficit across the County (and across its municipalities), fiscal austerity measures implemented at the Federal and Provincial level, and limited financial tools available to local municipalities to adequately respond to growth pressures compound to increase the challenges associated with sustainably accommodating growth.

Though the County has always had a strong reputation for infrastructure investment – noted as a “roads and bridges County” in consultations – there is a need for the County to continue exploring additional means by which the lower-tier communities can respond to the challenges of accommodating growth and encouraging development.

There are a number of challenges across the County from an infrastructure perspective: demand for broadband expansion in rural areas, growth pressures and the need for extended water/wastewater servicing in areas like Erin and Centre Wellington, improvement to the inventory of shovel-ready employment land across the County, and challenges of maintaining current service levels across a broad and expansive rural area given increased use and population growth.

In some ways, there are limitations on what the County can do to intervene in these challenges as some of the solutions must come from other levels of government (both higher and lower) or private enterprise. For example, Wellington County, like a number of other upper-tier municipalities in Ontario, is prohibited from acquiring land for industrial or commercial development. Thus the County may only support, rather than initiate, strategies associated with serviced industrial lands. Further, the County faces challenges in financing the infrastructure to accommodate growth in the community.

While the existing fiscal tools available to municipalities cover some of the costs of infrastructure growth and maintenance, funding or other measures from higher levels of government (e.g. new fiscal tools provided by the Province) are increasingly being called for to ensure the long term fiscal sustainability of a municipality balancing the need to accommodate growth and maintain service levels.

In short, the County needs to investigate innovative alternatives to existing municipal growth management and fiscal tools, while continuing to advocate for County-wide needs at higher levels of government and within the private sector. Part of this requires the County to continue its proactive approach to infrastructure maintenance, but to enhance this activity by advocating for its local municipalities and supporting existing programming and projects where possible.



Encourage longer term sustainability in the County's agricultural, industrial, creative cultural, and tourism sectors

In many ways, the County's economy has remained true to its industrial and agricultural roots – in 2012, approximately 41% of the County's labour force and 45% of the total business base are accounted for in agricultural or industrial (e.g. construction, manufacturing, transportation and warehousing) sectors of the economy. Despite the relative strengths of the County in each of these sectors, their prospects continue to be shaped by a range of external threats like volatile input and commodity prices, climate pressures, competition from lower-cost jurisdictions, and the continuing integration of technology to increase productivity; all of which combine to affect the longer-term sustainability of the sectors. Based on the comparative importance of each of these sectors, the economic development strategy in Wellington County needs to make particular efforts to support their sustainability.

As well, the emergence of more creative workers and industries in the County necessitates a more dedicated approach to leveraging that growth into more positive economic development outcomes for the County. At present, the community continues to attract a number of creative sectors and creative cultural workers based on its quality of place assets. However, the County continues to face challenges related to labour mobility, housing affordability, and coordination of creative sector enterprises and entrepreneurs. These issues are of critical importance to sectors like tourism as well; the creative cultural industries presently play a major role in the identity of Wellington County and the attractions and services available to visitors. Without strong support for these industries over the longer term, the County's prospects for increasing cultural tourism visitation and expenditures are more limited.

Agriculture: Priorities to support longer-term sustainability of the agriculture sector are diverse and include supporting infrastructure for the promotion of local food networks (e.g. markets, distribution hubs, procurement policies); the modification of existing policies to ensure that the agricultural industry has the flexibility to add secondary and agriculture-related uses that can diversify revenues streams (e.g. agri-tourism, value added processing, on-farm retail); and establishing connections with area post-secondary institutions (e.g. the Ontario Agricultural College) to ensure that local agricultural operations have access to emerging technology and processes and a steady stream of graduates with the professional and technical skills (as well as the 'soft' skills) needed to support agricultural operations.

Manufacturing and Industry: Priorities in industrial sectors could include connecting industry with potential sources of funding to improve productivity, streamlining processes and policies to facilitate expansions, assisting with the connection of labour force supply to available opportunities, and establishing training programs to respond to shifting workforce needs (e.g. computer literacy). Support for more industrial sectors at the County level also relies on approaches to infrastructure investment aimed at reducing congestion and improving access as well as support for investment readiness of commercial/industrial lands and facilities.



Creative Cultural: Stated priorities in creative cultural enterprises lie mostly in creating the social and professional networks that allow industries to grow in Wellington, as well as establishing connections between Wellington-based organization and organizations in adjacent larger urban areas to leverage the success that they are having (e.g. Creative Enterprise Enabling Organization in Waterloo or Guelph Arts Platform). However, there were also noted priorities in establishing a broader understanding of the creative and cultural opportunities available in the rural area – many instantly associate rural areas with lower-density and agricultural development. The County has a role to play in countering that perception, and perhaps in the early stages playing a leadership role in connecting creative cultural assets with economic development.

Tourism: The importance of tourism was established through consultation efforts. Stated priorities for the sector included the coordination of marketing across the county and with larger tourism organizations to extend reach of DMOs (e.g. RTO 4); the development of packages and messages targeted at inter-provincial and international tourists to increase tourism expenditures; the identification and networking of cultural assets and resources across the County to facilitate packaging (e.g. heritage towns and trails network); the introduction of more defined and coordinated wayfinding signage (particularly in the rural area), and collaboration with non-tourism sectors and organizations to establish synergies and opportunities associated with the sector (e.g. sports-related tourism, hosting of small scale business events in cultural and tourism institutions).

Capitalize on post-secondary education, training, and research assets to support regional innovation and workforce development

In an economy increasingly dependent on human capital and innovation, access to education and training resources has positive implications on both knowledge-based industries and industrial sectors of the economy. Post-secondary institutions are most often associated with these positive benefits, especially when looking to develop specialized knowledge locally and improve prospects for technology transfer and research and development in the County. Though there are a number of OMAFRA research facilities across the County focused on agriculture, advanced education and research programming in the County is limited.



With that said, Wellington County is in an advantageous position in terms of accessing resources in the surrounding area, and there are emerging assets that may assist with the expansion of post-secondary opportunities in the County. Throughout consultations, participants noted that the County has access to a range of programming and graduates from additional post-secondary institutions across the Region; most notably the University of Guelph and Conestoga College - Guelph and Waterloo Campus, but also the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University, McMaster University, and colleges in the Greater Toronto Area (e.g. Seneca, Sheridan and Humber). Consultations suggested that these surrounding institutions may be a source of technology transfer, training, and research partnerships to support innovation in the local business community, as well as entrepreneurship. More specifically, participants felt that should pursue these opportunities with the University of Guelph and Conestoga College related to activity in agriculture and bio based industries. Overall, Wellington County can collaborate further with institutions in the surrounding area to support innovation and technology transfer in the business community.

Participants also felt that Wellington County should assist with the expansion of post-secondary education, training, and research opportunities in the County. While distance education was noted to improve the retention of young people in the County and access to opportunities in more rural areas, a satellite campus of an institution was more consistently noted as a priority. From that perspective, there are plans to accommodate a post-secondary institution within the Wellington Place development. The attraction of post-secondary programming to the institutional areas within Wellington Place should remain a priority.



Establish stronger support for existing business community and advocate for local businesses at higher levels of government

Access to business services and financing was largely considered a priority for future business growth in Wellington County. With that said though, there was little support for the introduction of new programming. Stakeholders felt that a full range of programming already exists at the local level, delivered through local chambers of commerce, the Waterloo-Wellington Community Futures Development Corporation (WWCFDC), or the Guelph-Wellington Business Enterprise Centre. The intended role for Wellington County under this existing structure was as a facilitator and advocate; first, promoting the existing range of business support programming available to local businesses and connecting businesses with the appropriate organizations, and second advocating for the reorientation of existing programming to areas of interest for Wellington County (e.g. agri-tourism, value-added agriculture, advanced manufacturing).

Further, a number of lower-tier communities have undertaken business retention and expansion exercises. BR&E was noted as a priority for the County with the role being envisioned as a supporter of these initiatives – addressing issues in the business community that fall under the County’s sphere of influence, cataloguing the findings of ongoing BR&E exercises, creating resources that assist businesses with strategic planning (e.g. business inventories), and providing administrative support and guidance for municipalities that lack dedicated economic development resources.

Further, as the County begins to gather county-wide consensus from the business community and a more unified voice related to any issues, it can begin to become an advocate in higher levels of government on these high priority issues. As part of this work, the County should work with lower-tier municipalities to establish a more detailed understanding among the business community of the jurisdictions responsible for regulatory and legislative approvals. With an understanding of the issues and a county-wide consensus on the needs of the business community, the County may become a logical avenue to advocate for change in areas such as provincial land use policy or federal business financing.

Leverage domestic and international connections for talent, business, and investment attraction

Wellington County currently lacks the profile of surrounding urban areas with regards to the attraction of new residents and investments. Though many of the lower-tier communities continue to build their profile, in some cases with the assistance of the business community, the external identity and value proposition at the County level is comparatively weak. This is highlighted by slow in-migration – both interprovincial and international. Further, the County has lingering difficulties in reaching its youth population, particularly after those individuals have completed their post-secondary education outside of the County.



Overall, there are a range of assets and potential partners for Wellington County to increase its profile and enhance opportunities for resident and business attraction. Structures in the City of Guelph like the Guelph-Wellington Local Immigration Partnership or the Guelph-Wellington Immigrant Services represent significant potential partner. The City does a comparatively better job at attracting new immigrants – in many ways, the attraction and retention of new immigrants in Wellington County will rely on a coordinated approach with agencies and organizations in the adjacent urban area.

Reaching the youthful ‘expatriates’ of Wellington County, new young professionals and skilled workers may be slightly more difficult. Again, institutions in the City of Guelph – most notable the University of Guelph and Conestoga College – can play a role in this. Both institutions engage with youth and the local business community through co-op programming, and the expansion of these opportunities in Wellington County may facilitate additional opportunities for resident attraction.

Lastly, increased involvement in BR&E initiatives may also provide opportunities for new investment and business attraction. Wellington County has a number of large and small businesses that are accessing external markets and international value chains, and a more comprehensive business inventory may identify further opportunities to leverage those connections for investment attraction.

5 Strategy Framework

Clear and attainable economic development goals and objectives coupled with programs, activities and partnerships that can effectively achieve the desired outcomes are essential to the implementation of an economic development strategic plan. Staff and resource capacity, on-going fiscal constraints at the local county, and provincial level and the complexity of relationships among local, national, and international markets make it necessary to establish priorities and develop a more realistic approach to economic development.

Given the current organizational structure of economic development within Wellington County, the implementation of the Economic Development Strategic Plan will rely heavily on the good will and partnership opportunities that emerge between the local municipalities and the broader economic development community. Nonetheless, the plan for Wellington County must be clear on the determined direction for the community and convey the appropriate message as to what is expected in terms of the economic growth potential for the County in the future.

5.1 Vision Statement

Vision statements present an image of future success, based on what is attainable in reality – it should be built on the strengths, opportunities and capacity of a community.



In preparing a VISION for the Wellington County Economic Development Strategic Plan we have drawn from strategic planning efforts of the local municipalities as well as the input that emerged from the public and stakeholder consultation process. The Official Plan presents a vision for the community based on sustainability, stewardship, and health. The vision for Wellington County must take these components into account, as well as the guiding principles for regional economic development developed during the study process (e.g. regional commitment). From that perspective, the economic development vision is:

“Wellington County will be a collaborative community that protects and enhances its natural and cultural heritage assets while supporting the longer term economic and social prosperity of its residents and business community.”

5.2 Goals, Strategic Objectives

By definition, economic development goals should seek to build on local strengths, mitigate the weaknesses and convey the desired outcomes of the strategic planning process and speak directly to the aspirations of the community. Objectives will define what is to be accomplished while the actions outline the steps to make this happen.

The **GOALS, OBJECTIVES** and associated **ACTIONS** that follow are built around the County's desire to assume a greater leadership role with respect to engaging regional stakeholders and fostering a supportive and innovative regional economy.

GOAL	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
GOAL 1: Increase the Competitiveness and Success of Wellington Businesses	To support programs that contributes to the sustainability and competitive position of the County
GOAL 2: Build a Strong Regional Profile and Brand	To build awareness of the County's economic development goals
GOAL 3: Create a Community Where People Want to Live and Entrepreneurs Want to do Business	To foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial activity
GOAL 4: Develop Lasting Partnerships that Advance the Economic Sustainability of the County	To promote a collective understanding of the role resource and infrastructure investments play in ongoing community prosperity



5.3 The Path Forward

GOAL 1: INCREASE THE COMPETITIVENESS AND SUCCESS OF WELLINGTON BUSINESSES

Strategic Objective: Support programs that contribute to the sustainability and competitive position of the County

Action: *Provide a centralized resource for economic development in the County*

- Develop readily accessible economic and demographic data, business directory, and competitive intelligence (both print and online), but also the ability to provide answers and information to potential investors, visitors, and residents, as well as the existing business community and lower-tier municipalities.
 - Maintenance and creation of data will be a collaborative effort, but the County will become the 'broker' of all relevant economic development data and resources in Wellington County.
- Timing: Short term
- EDO Role: Lead

Action: *Prepare an employment land inventory and strategy*

- Build on existing resources at the County and municipal level to create a comprehensive inventory of municipally and privately-owned vacant employment lands within the County, supported by digital mapping and a database of attributes to describe the opportunities at the parcel level (e.g. ownership, availability, zoning, servicing status, net developable area, and owner/representative contact information).
 - Information should be available in a format that allows for the quick distribution to potential investors, or ongoing presentation on County and local municipal websites.
- Undertake a County-wide employment land strategy to ensure that vacant employment land resources have the necessary capacity and locational attributes to accommodate future employment growth and encourage investment attraction and business expansion in industrial (e.g. manufacturing, transportation) and office sectors.
- Timing: Medium term



- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Complete a high level assessment of infrastructure requirements*

- Conduct a high level review of county-wide physical infrastructure requirements over the medium to longer term (e.g. roads, bridges, water, wastewater, electricity, and broadband) as a means to support sustainable economic development.
 - Assess the current capital commitments of the local municipalities and infrastructure investments requested by business and community partners; and assess required future capital commitments based on projected population and employment growth.
 - Build the capacity of the County and the local municipalities to understand ongoing fiscal requirements, advocate for solutions from senior levels of government, and develop strategies to address fiscal sustainability.

- Timing: Long term

- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Identify financial solutions for having the necessary infrastructure and services in place to support employment growth and employment areas*

- Advocate for the development of appropriate fiscal strategies and solutions to respond to growth-based requirements.
 - Seek provincial and federal commitments to funding growth-related projects in the County, as well as promoting an understanding at the provincial level of the fiscal needs, potential solutions, and preferred strategies to addressing constraints related to municipal fiscal tools

- Timing: Long term

- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Develop an investment and community profile*

- Undertake a more detailed investment and community profile initiative that builds on the annual efforts at the County level tied to the Credit Review and better illustrates the strength of the existing business community by key sectors.
 - A more detailed investment-oriented profile should be developed that outlines the County's characteristics as they relate to key economic sectors (e.g. agriculture and agri-food, tourism, manufacturing, transportation, creative industries), including locational data specific to sector-based requirements and profiles of innovative local companies in each sector.



- Investment and community profiles for the County should demonstrate the strengths of the County in each of its key sectors, and the ability to support further investment within each key sector and its value chain.
- Timing: Short term
- EDO Role: Lead

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of vacant employment lands across the County mapped and included in employment land inventory database
- Leveraged funding to support major infrastructure projects
- Amount of infrastructure funding commitment to support strategic employment areas
- Telecommunications percentage coverage across Wellington County
- Number of investment/business inquiries responded to at the County level
- Number of conversations/discussions with entrepreneurs and businesses who are expanding/relocating



GOAL 2: BUILD A STRONG REGIONAL PROFILE AND COUNTY BRAND

Strategic Objective: Build awareness of the County's economic development goals

Action: *Develop and implement a marketing strategy and implementation plan for Wellington County*

- Build on the results of the economic analysis to develop a marketing and branding strategy that gives consideration to the tools, tactics, media and resources required to raise the profile of the County as an ideal place live, operate a business and invest.
 - Initiate a County led branding and imaging program that promotes the unique brand attributes of Wellington County including creative responses to perceptions within and outside of the region.
 - Incorporate a social media strategy that considers how to further promote the economic development goals of the County and solicit ongoing input and feedback from stakeholders, visitors, residents and business
 - Reference local business success stories as a way to illustrate the capacity of the local business community and workforce
- Timing: Short Term
- EDO Role: Lead + Partner

Action: *Create an online presence dedicated to economic development*

- Communicate the character of Wellington County in a way that will appeal to new businesses, investors, new residents and visitors as way to support the development of a diverse and sustainable regional economy.
 - Actively promote the use of the site by local businesses, area municipalities, and other economic development type organizations.
- Timing: Short Term
- EDO Role: Lead

Action: *Develop a Creative Economy Handbook to support and build capacity in the County's creative economy.*

- Develop an online creative economy handbook that assists with the attraction of creative economy workers and enterprises. Identify the network and capacity of



local professionals, practitioners working in creative economy development (e.g., EDO's, representatives from BIA's, Chambers of Commerce, tourism destination marketing organizations, and others with interests in the area) as a way to attract new investment and entrepreneurs to the County and ensure the sharing of information, ideas and best practices among the local municipalities.

- Include a listing of government programs and services that support business and product development
 - Develop local profiles of creative businesses, entrepreneurs or organizations that are contributing to the growth and success of the region's creative economy
- Timing: Medium Term
 - Role of EDO: Partner

Action: *Improve directional and highway signage within the County*

- A signage analysis should be conducted to assess the location and quality of existing signs and evaluate the potential need for more directional (way-finding) and informational signage in the County
- Timing: Short Term
 - Role of EDO: Lead

Performance Measures:

- Annual unique visits to Wellington County economic development website
- Number of participants in County-led social media networks (longer-term evolution to measurement tools available for specific social networks and dashboards)
- Leveraged funding commitments from regional economic development stakeholders to support regional economic development marketing
- Number of downloads of County marketing materials
- Number of business locations in creative and cultural industries.



GOAL 3: CREATE A COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE AND ENTREPRENEURS WANT TO DO BUSINESS

Strategic Objective: To foster an environment and culture conducive to entrepreneurial activity and growth

Action: *Create a master directory of business services available in the County*

- Work with local municipalities and small business support organizations to create a master directory of business services and support available to local business and entrepreneurs. This should include a master list of external public sector funding programs available to business.
 - Work with community stakeholders to identify a list of mentors and ‘ambassadors’ willing to provide business assistance and coaching to business starts and entrepreneurs
- Timing: Medium Term
- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Promote the range of business support programming available to local business*

- Promote the existing range of business support programming available to local businesses and advocate for the reorientation of existing programming to areas of interest for Wellington County (e.g. agri-tourism, value-added agriculture, advanced manufacturing).
- Timing: Ongoing
- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Support the job creation efforts of the local municipalities*

- Develop standardized economic tools that will support the job creation efforts of the local municipalities including a Business Retention + Expansion toolkit that includes implementation guidelines, surveys, database templates and funding source and streamlining of county-level approvals; and
- A Downtown Revitalization Toolkit that fosters local creativity while providing guidelines to ensure that this creativity is applied in a consistent manner throughout the County



- Work with local EDOs to develop/complete interview program, (50 -100 per sector) and have the County collect and report on the regional findings
- Timing: Short Term
- EDO Role: Lead

Action: *Identify the top 25 companies in the County*

- In collaboration with the local municipalities establish a list of the top 25 companies in the County that should be jointly visited on an annual or biannual basis. These should include companies that are on a significant growth trajectory, are major employers and contributors to the regional economy, have high value-added products, or likely export a high percentage of their products
- Timing: Medium Term
- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Prepare a County Cultural Master Plan and Asset Map*

- Prepare a Wellington County Cultural Master Plan and Asset Map to support the development of the arts, culture, recreation and tourism in the County. Leverage the work undertaken by local municipalities in the creation of a searchable database and asset map of tourism and cultural resources in the County.
- Timing: Short Term
- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Develop a local/regional food and distribution network*

- Leverage the success of the Guelph Wellington *Taste Real* Program to pursue the opportunity to develop a local/regional food and distribution network as a way to increase the supply of fresh, seasonal produce across the County and further educate area businesses, institutions and community organizations of the opportunities associated with local food.
 - Publish advice and guidance on the best ways to tackle distribution issues. This should include best practice research into existing projects throughout the country

**Performance Measures:**

- Number of mentors available in local business community
- Number of mentor relationships developed
- Use of locally available business services by local businesses/entrepreneurs
- Number of joint key company visits
- Number of business retention/expansion activities undertaken across the County
- Number of creative cultural assets mapped
- Funding secured through provincial agencies (e.g. OMAFRA Rural Economic Development, MTC Tourism Development Fund) to support creative cultural businesses
- Membership and participation in Taste Real programming and initiatives



GOAL 4: DEVELOP LASTING PARTNERSHIPS THAT ADVANCE THE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COUNTY

Strategic Objective: Promote a collective understanding of the role resource and infrastructure investments play in ongoing community prosperity

Action: *Undertake and implement a workforce development and attraction strategy*

- A strategic approach is required to support the development of talent from within the local community, and the attraction and retention of workers from around the world. Based on community needs, Wellington County's workforce development and attraction strategy should identify:
 - Emerging industry and workforce demands and the required educational and training infrastructure to support industry.
 - Opportunities for worker replacement and retraining programs to address workforce demand created by retiring labour force and emerging industry requirements.
 - Mechanisms to attract and retain skilled youth by creating experiential and co-operative learning opportunities and youth entrepreneurship programs.
 - Potential partnerships with surrounding communities and institutions (e.g. City of Guelph, University of Guelph, Conestoga College) to address issues with immigrant attraction/retention and youth engagement/retention.
 - Opportunities to provide improved training and skills development to local employers and employees through surrounding secondary and post-secondary institutions.
- Timing: Short Term
- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Enhance connections between business and the education sector*

- Build partnerships with surrounding institutions to encourage technology transfer, expand training and education opportunities, and facilitate research partnerships to support innovation in the local business community.
 - Pursue opportunities for local industrial businesses and agricultural producers based on OMAFRA-University of Guelph research themes related to bioeconomy-industrial uses (e.g. bio products derived from agriculturally-derived biomass), product development and enhancement through value chain research (e.g. utilization of waste



streams, extraction of high value functional ingredients), and food for health (e.g. development of new or expanded markets).

- Outline clear career pathways between secondary school programming and employment opportunities in the County, with specific emphasis on skilled trades programming and pathways in partnership with Conestoga College, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, and local industrial employers.
- Establish connections with post-secondary institutions (e.g. the Ontario Agricultural College) to ensure that local agricultural operations have access to emerging technology and processes and a steady stream of graduates with the professional and technical skills (as well as the 'soft' skills like communications and project management) needed to support agricultural operations.
- Support opportunities to build a more inter-regional platform for the engagement of the education sector with the regional business community and workforce development stakeholders.

- Timing: Long Term
- EDO Role: Lead + Partner

Action: *Attract post-secondary programming to Wellington County*

- Investigate opportunities to connect with post-secondary institutions in the surrounding area to improve access to education and training programs in the County. Efforts should consider support for the expansion of programming available within the County, the expansion of programming at institutions in close proximity relevant to key sectors, and the development of facilities within Wellington County.
 - Support longer-term plans to accommodate a satellite post-secondary institution within the Wellington Place development.

- Timing: Long Term
- EDO Role: Partner

Action: *Develop an agricultural sector strategy that provides directions on retaining, sustaining, and expanding the sector*

- Develop a sector strategy that provides clear and concise direction to local municipalities and the agricultural community on matters related to the economic sustainability of the agricultural economy in the County. The strategy should include at a minimum:
 - An assessment of the limitations related to municipal, provincial and federal legislation, policies, programs, and implementation tools that



restrict the County's ability to support prosperity in the agricultural and rural areas.

- Identification and prioritization of opportunities (e.g. research and development, value-added agriculture, renewable energy) and challenges (e.g. policy, climate, costs) relevant to Wellington County's agricultural community.
- Identification of the County's goals and objectives related to retention and expansion in Wellington's agricultural sector.
- An implementation plan with short, medium and long term actions that could be taken by Wellington County, local municipal partners, and agricultural stakeholders in Guelph-Wellington (e.g. Wellington Federation of Agriculture) to realize the goals of sustainability in the agricultural sector.
- A performance measurement mechanism to assess the progress being made towards the preferred outcomes.

- Timing: Medium Term
- EDO Role: Partner

Performance Measures:

- Number of joint projects undertaken to engage youth and attract/retain immigrants
- Research partnerships between local business and academic/research institutions
- Amount of private sector funding raised to support joint research projects
- Number of private sector partners in workforce development projects (e.g. career pathways)
- New jobs in the agricultural sector
- New capital investment in the agricultural sector

6 Implementation

The findings from the supporting background research and analysis presented in Part II of this project have informed the development of the goals, objectives and actions contained in the economic development strategic plan. Taking into consideration the current delivery structure for economic development across Wellington County, the outcome from the strategy development will enable a more collaborative effort and targeted approach to economic development activities and programming.

Economic development is a dynamic landscape however, impacted by a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. This becomes apparent when consideration is given to the scope and variety of projects that can be described as "economic



development”, many of which are contained in the strategic plan. These efforts can include investment attraction, business retention and expansion, marketing, workforce development, cultural development and planning, delivering services for small businesses and entrepreneurs, brownfield redevelopment, downtown revitalization, shop local programs, and development of events and festivals.

Given this range of activity, one of the key considerations in the implementation of the proposed economic development program for Wellington County will be an understanding and communication of how the strategy is to be resourced. This includes the financial resources required to move forward and clarity of roles and responsibilities between economic development staff at the County and local level. This is relevant from the perspective of potential investors and their desire for a one stop approach to gathering information and assistance but also in terms of how to leverage partnership opportunities. With a high level of community interest and engagement in economic development, consideration must be given to a delivery model that will achieve the greatest results for the County over the long term.

With the completion of the Economic Development Strategic Plan the County's Economic Development Office has begun the business planning and budgetary process that reflects the 2013 priorities and the resources required to move forward with the strategy implementation.



Part B: Background Research and Analysis



1 Economic Base Analysis

Wellington County is a community of 91,447⁶ located in Southwestern Ontario and spans an area of over 2,569 km². The county is comprised of seven member municipalities including:

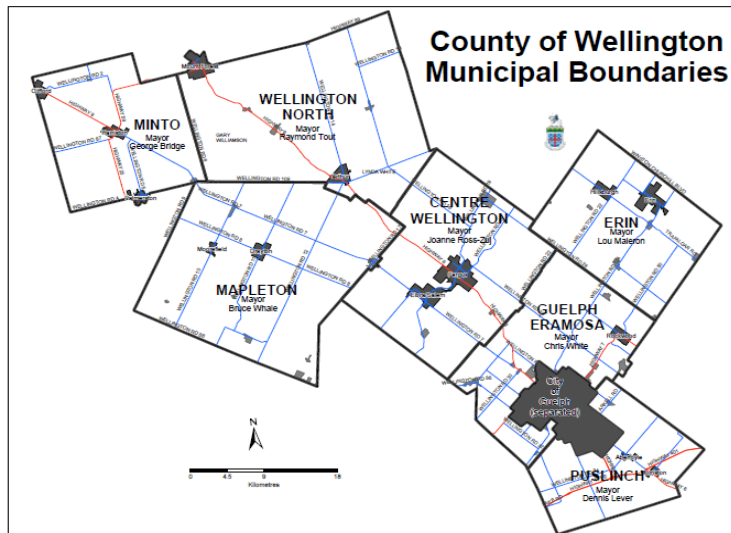
- Centre Wellington
- Erin
- Guelph/Eramosa
- Mapleton
- Minto
- Puslinch
- Wellington North

Agricultural land covers nearly 75% of the region's entire land area, with 14 settlement areas located throughout the County. In addition to the various towns and hamlets that make up the urban system of Wellington County, Puslinch Township and Guelph/Eramosa Township in south Wellington surround the separated City of Guelph. As a result, the growth pressures within the City of Guelph contribute to both challenges and opportunities within the Wellington County, in terms of accommodating new population growth and infrastructure investment, and maintaining existing infrastructure based on increased use. At the western edge of the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) though, the County is in a unique position to experience increasing pressure to accommodate growth and development as infill and greenfield opportunities are absorbed in the rest of the Region.

⁶ Manifold Data Mining. (2012). Custom Tabulation.



FIGURE 3: WELLINGTON COUNTY MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES



Source: Wellington County, 2012

An economic base analysis has been undertaken to provide a basic understanding of the socio-economic conditions and trends in Wellington County that have a strong bearing on the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The analysis employs a wide variety of data to generate an accurate composition of Wellington County. Every effort has been made to ensure consistent geographies, time series, and that the most recent data has been used. However, due to the timing of the analysis, some data is only available in Census years (i.e. 2001, 2006, and 2011). Where possible, 2012 data from Manifold Data Mining Inc. was used to supplement 2006 Census data.

Data for Wellington County, the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region⁷ and the Province of Ontario has been used in the base analysis. It is important to note that the Statistics Canada definition for the Wellington County Census Division includes data for the City of Guelph, despite the fact that Wellington County and the City of Guelph do not have an administrative relationship. Thus, for the purposes of this report, data for the City of Guelph has been extracted from Wellington County where possible, in order to provide a more detailed analysis of the demographic and economic conditions in the County.

1.1 Key Findings

- The County's population grew by 12.7% from 2001 to 2012, with the majority of that growth occurring between 2006 and 2012 (7.0%). This was comparatively

⁷ The Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region is defined by Statistics Canada, and includes of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Wellington County, Dufferin County and the County of Simcoe.



slower than both the broader Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region (12.3%) and Ontario (11.1%) over the same time period.

- The County has higher shares of population over the age of 45 (44.5%) and under the age of 20 (25.2%) than the broader economic region (40.6% and 24.4% respectively). It also has a comparatively lower share of total population between the ages of 20 and 44, which represents a major part of a community's labour force.
- Immigrants continue to account for a higher share of total population in Wellington County, moving from 11.3% in 2006 to 13.1% in 2012. The rate of growth in the immigrant population across the County remains behind national, provincial, and regional growth rates, as recent immigrants continue to choose more urban areas of the province.
- The fastest growing segments of recent immigrants (those that arrived between 2006 and 2012) to the County are from Latin America and Eastern and Southern Asia. This is in contrast to the traditional sources of immigration to Wellington County from countries in Northern, Western, and Southern Europe. Though immigration remains comparatively slow, the County is attracting a more diverse range of new residents.
- Approximately 53% of Wellington County's population holds some form of post-secondary credentials (e.g. apprenticeship certificate, college diploma, university degree); slightly below the 57% of population across the broader Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region. Wellington County holds a higher share of residents skilled in trades than the broader region, and strong concentrations of skilled workers in architecture, engineering and related technologies; business, management and public administration; and health, parks, recreation, and fitness.
- The average household income of \$97,453 in the County is higher than the average income of \$92,020 across the economic region. In contrast, the County also exhibits a higher share of households with an average income below \$30,000 though.
- Wellington County has a stable and engaged labour force; from 2006 to 2012, unemployment grew by just 0.5% in Wellington County, compared to 2.1% across the broader economic region, and the total labour force in the County grew by 8.9%.
- Resident labour force is concentrated in manufacturing (20.1%), retail trade (8.9%), health care and social assistance (8.7%), and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (8.4%) sectors of the economy. Growth over the last decade has been led by labour force in health care and social assistance (27.3%) and manufacturing (12.1%) sectors, in addition to smaller knowledge-based sectors (real estate, information and culture, professional services).
- By occupation, the County's labour force is employed in trades, transport and equipment operators (19.3%), sales and service (18.8%), business, finance, and administration (15.2%), and management occupations (9.8%). Health occupations, occupations in social science, education, government service and religion, and business, finance, and administration led that growth.



- Of resident labour force with a usual place of work, 39.5% presently commute outside of the County. The majority of commuters travel to the City of Guelph, with Mississauga, Halton Hills, Waterloo Region, Toronto, and Milton capturing the majority of remaining commuters from the County. Labour is exported across all sectors of the economy, with the manufacturing sector accounting for the largest share of exported labour.
- Between 2001 and 2012, the number of residents in creative occupations grew by 16.8%, with the majority of that growth over the last five years. The County's creative labour force is weighted most heavily towards teachers and professors, specialist managers, and professional occupations in natural and applied sciences.
- The growth in creative economy occupations is focused on specialist managers, professional and administrative occupations in finance and insurance, and nurse supervisors and registered nurses.
- The total number of businesses in the County declined 2.9% from 2007 to 2011; employer businesses increased 4.9% over the same time period.
- In 2011, businesses employing fewer than 10 people accounted for 78% of the total businesses in the County, with businesses employing fewer than five people accounting for approximately 58% of total businesses..
- The business base of the county is currently focused in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (22.2%), construction (12.5%), professional, scientific, and technical services (9.7%), and real estate and rental and leasing (7.6%). Considering just employers, the business base is distributed among construction (16.5%), services (10.9%), transportation and warehousing (10.4%), and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (10.1%).
- Sectors showing the highest growth by number of businesses between 2007 and 2011 include information and cultural industries (47.1%), arts, entertainment, and recreation (26.3%), health care and social assistance (14.8%), and other services (12.8%).

1.2 Demographic Characteristics

1.2.1 Population Change

Wellington County has experienced steady growth over the last decade, with population growing by an estimated 12.7% from 2001 to 2012.⁸ Growth over the time period was fairly balanced, with growth between 2006 and 2012 (7.0%) slightly eclipsing growth between 2001 and 2006 (5.3%).⁹ It should be noted though, that population estimates from mid-2012 include the undercoverage from the 2011 census, which may slightly inflate population growth estimates.

⁸ Manifold Data Mining. (2012). Custom Tabulation. Statistics Canada, Census of Population 2006.

⁹ Ibid.



To place this growth in the broader context, Figure 3 demonstrates the rate of growth in Wellington County compared to that of the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region and the Province of Ontario between 2001 and 2012. Wellington County's population growth rate from 2001 to 2012 was comparatively lower than Regional (12.3%) and provincial (11.1%) growth over the same time period.

FIGURE 4: COMPARATIVE POPULATION GROWTH, 2001 TO 2012

Population	2001	2006	2012	% Change	
				2001-2006	2006-2012
Wellington County	81,143	85,482	91,447	5.3%	7.0%
Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie	1,053,891	1,155,186	1,297,286	9.6%	12.3%
Ontario	11,410,046	12,160,282	13,505,900	6.6%	11.1%

Source: Statistics Canada Census of Population, 2001, 2006, CANSIM Table 051-0001, Manifold Data Mining, Custom Tabulation, 2012

Though not necessarily indicative of a community's potential for economic development, a growing population can signify a healthy local economy. It suggests an economy that has the quality of life features and employment opportunities that can appeal to a wide range of new residents. When considering the need to attract new workers from across Canada and the rest of the world, these factors take on greater relevance, and a growing population can work as an indicator for success. It is worth noting that Wellington County has taken note of slower population growth, and has worked to develop a number of resident attraction strategies including a joint *Local Immigration Partnership Strategy* with the City of Guelph.

Although Wellington County has not experienced the same rapid population growth as other communities in the GGH in recent years, it is expected to experience increased growth in the future. In 2006, the Province of Ontario released the *Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, which established target population and employment levels for municipalities throughout the GGH region. Under provincial planning policy, Wellington County has been forecasted to grow to approximately 122,000 by 2031.

As a result, the County must plan for new housing, commerce, employment and services for over 32,000 new residents over the next 20 years. Under the *Places to Grow* legislation and the resulting Conformity Amendment adopted to the Wellington County Official Plan (OPA No. 65), 83% of the population growth in Wellington County is to be accommodated in the County's 14 settlement areas. The remainder will largely be directed to hamlets and secondary rural areas across the rest of the county. The population forecasts, as well as the forecasts for percentage of population concentrated in urban areas, number of households and total employment from 2006 to 2031 are represented in Figure 4.



FIGURE 5: PROJECTED GROWTH IN WELLINGTON COUNTY TO 2031

	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Total Population	89,540	94,660	101,700	108,300	115,130	122,000
% of Population in Settlement Areas	49	51	53	55	56	58
Households	30,030	32,320	34,870	37,220	39,660	42,100
Total Employment	39,240	42,250	45,700	49,130	51,560	54,000

Source: Wellington County Official Plan: Amendment No. 65, 2009.

Along with projected population growth, the total employment forecast under the *Places to Grow* legislation shows employment in Wellington County increasing by 37.6% from 2006 to 2031. This is a significant increase in the number of jobs located within the county. This economic development strategic plan is intended to provide a vision for the County moving forward in economic development planning and allow the County to play a leadership role in coordinating and facilitating this expected growth across the settlement areas of the County.

1.2.2 Population by Age

The age distribution of Wellington County's population was very similar to that of the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region in 2006 as identified in Figure 5; however, it is important to note that the demographics in 2012 have illustrated a substantial shift. Figure 6 highlights Wellington County's estimated 2012 population by age and highlights a clear shift in the growth of the population aged 45 years and older. This growth of older residents across the county far outpaced the growth of the same age group at the regional and provincial level. However, it is important to note that Wellington County, though exhibiting the trend at a slightly higher rate, is not alone in facing challenges related to an aging population. Recent census figures continue to highlight the aging population across Canada and most of the Provinces, including Ontario.

It is also notable that the percentage of the population under 20 decreased from 28.2% in 2006 to 25.2% in 2012. The data suggests that the county is experiencing an increase in proportional share of older residents at the expense of its younger population. This is characteristic of most rural areas, where there is a loss of young residents (who move to more urban areas to pursue educational and employment opportunities) paired with an older population, without strong rates of internal migration and natural increase to offset an increased proportion of older residents. From an economic development perspective, this places pressure on the County to attract young residents back to the area (once they complete post-secondary programs) and

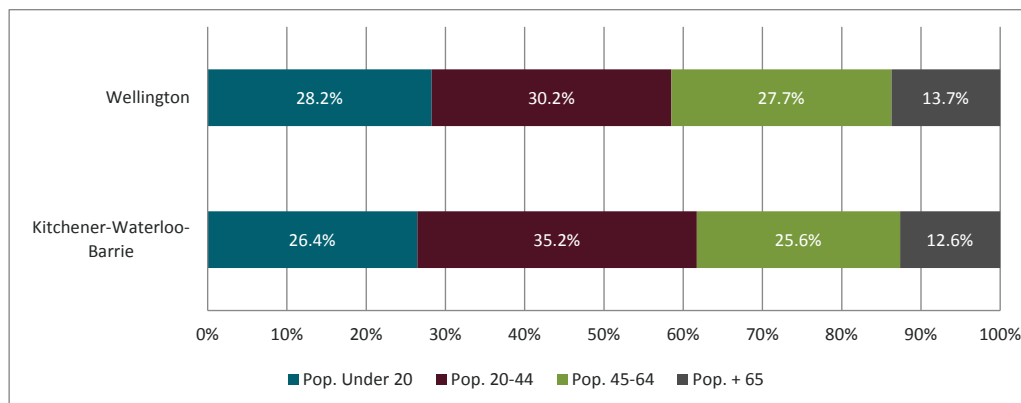


new migrants to the area (inter-provincial and international) to support the aging population.

However, it could also represent a latent source of expertise and mentoring which may be available to support economic development, as well as drive investment in certain sectors. Wellington County has a highly skilled population (as outlined later in this section), and the presence of older residents may translate into opportunities to support new business ventures from experienced workers, or to access the available professional and technical expertise to support business development in the region. The present population of “baby boomers” maintains a more active lifestyle and generally works longer into previously defined “retirement years” than generations before it. While an aging population may present challenges for the County, it may also present niche opportunities.

In addition to this, as residents of the county age, additional programming and support services - such as adult-oriented facilities, apartment/condo style developments, or health and wellness industries (e.g. ambulatory health care, personal services) – may see increasing levels of investment. In turn, new developments and population-related health and wellness businesses (e.g. personal services) may attract new residents to the community or positively affect tourism industries (e.g. spas, resorts)

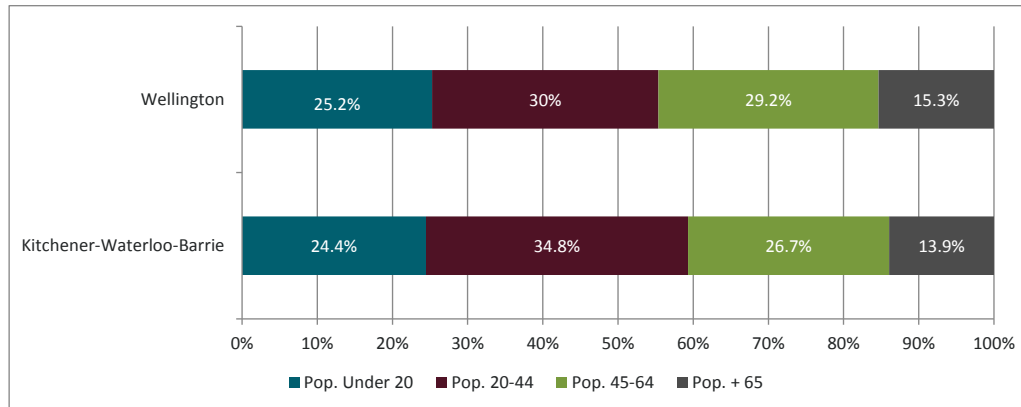
FIGURE 6: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY MAJOR AGE GROUP, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada Census of Population, 2006

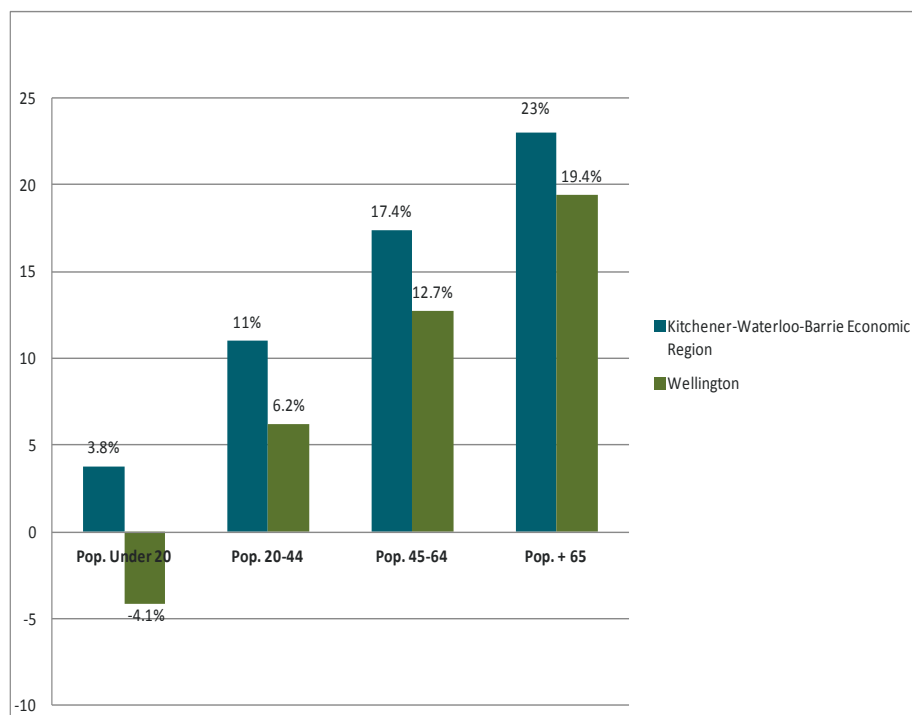


FIGURE 7: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BY MAJOR AGE GROUP, 2012



Source: Manifold Data Mining Custom Demographic Report, 2012.

FIGURE 8: POPULATION GROWTH BY AGE GROUP, 2006 TO 2012



Source: Statistics Canada Census of Population: 2006, Manifold Data Mining Custom Demographic Report: 2012

From 2006 to 2012, Wellington County's population under the age of 20 decreased by 4.1%, whereas regionally the population under the age of 20 increased by 3.8%. In addition, the population aged 20-44 increased by 6.2% across the County from 2006 to 2012, compared to the 11% increase throughout the region. In each of the major age groups, the County's rate of growth lags behind the broader region. This could suggest that the County is lagging behind the region in the attraction of new residents. Though the County and broader region (as well as the Province and Canada) continue to show



an aging population, strong growth rates in each major age group could suggest that the area remains an attractive destination for new residents of all ages (but particularly those 20-44 years of age), which has positive implications on the local labour market.

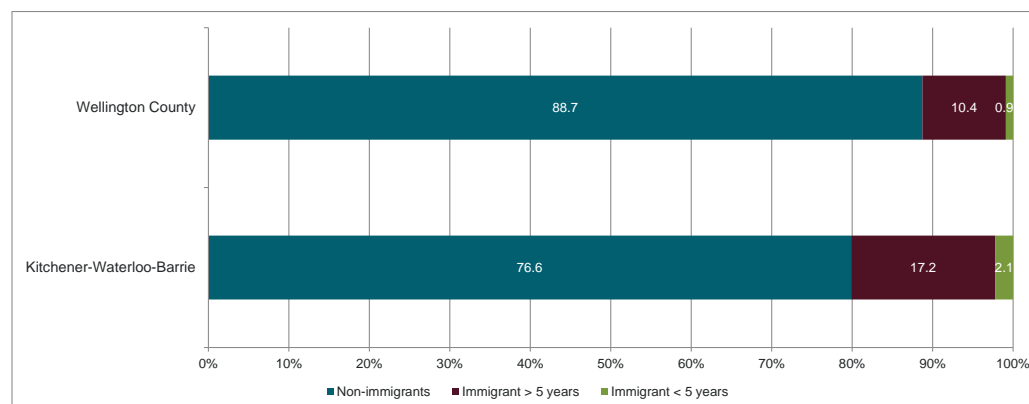
1.2.3 Growth/Change in Immigrant Population

Statistics Canada continues to note that immigrants will play an increasing role in net labour force growth over the next several decades, as a result of Canada's aging demographics and consistently low rates of natural increase. Like most other communities in Canada, Wellington County must look to tactics like immigrant attraction and settlement services to offset these challenges and ensure that the community's labour pool can match employer demand.

Recognizing this, Wellington County has worked with the City of Guelph to develop the Guelph-Wellington Local Immigration Partnership. The intent of the organization is to ensure that newcomers to the region have the programming and support they require. For a primarily rural region like Wellington County, which competes with larger and more urban areas in the GGH and GTA, these types of services which assist with settlement of new immigrants and their entire families play a critical role in retention.

In 2006, 19.8% of Canada's population, 28.3% of Ontario's population, and 19.3% of the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie region's population were foreign born. Though the County has a history of attracting new Canadians – tied to its agricultural roots – just 11.3% of Wellington County's population in 2006 was foreign born. Of the total population in Wellington County, 0.9% are "recent" immigrants - defined in the 2006 Census as those that arrived between 2001 and 2006. The comparative proportion at the national (3.6%), provincial (4.8%), and regional (2.1%) levels are again higher than Wellington County, suggesting stronger rates of recent immigrant growth.

FIGURE 9: IMMIGRATION STATUS BY PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION, 2006



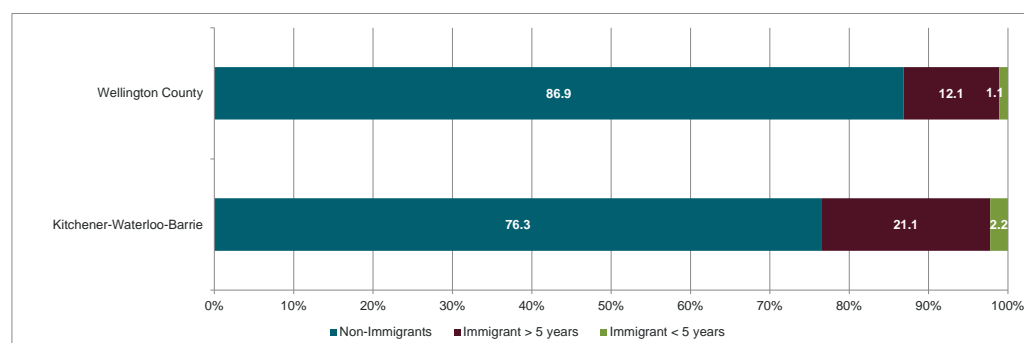
Source: Statistics Canada Census of Population: 2006

Estimates for 2012 suggest that the share of total population attributed to all immigrants rose to 13.1% in Wellington County. Similarly, the number of recent immigrants (or those that settled in the County in the last five years) increased to 1.1%.



Figures at the regional level are again comparatively higher than in Wellington County; immigrants accounted for 23.4% of total population, while recent immigrants accounted for 2.2% of total population. Though the County's immigrant population is growing, the region continues to have more success in immigrant attraction, being home to a number of mid-sized cities like Guelph, Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and Barrie. With that said, as a proportion of total population, Wellington County attracted a larger share of recent immigrants than the surrounding population over the last five years.

FIGURE 10: IMMIGRATION STATUS BY PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION, 2012



Source: Manifold Data Mining: 2012

Diversity and population growth can be a positive indicator of economic development in any rural region. With its interconnectivity to a number of surrounding urban regions like the GTA and the Kitchener-Waterloo area, as well as the City of Guelph, the County has an excellent opportunity to attract immigrants seeking a more rural quality of life, while maintaining connections to larger urban areas. Newcomers bring a range of connections and aptitudes that are important to cultivate to facilitate development in communities. As a result, immigration is likely to play a key role in ensuring the competitiveness of Wellington County's labour force, necessitating approaches to immigrant attraction and settlement in the economic development strategy.

1.2.4 Migration

Over the five years, 90.4% of new migrants to Wellington County came from other areas in Ontario (Intraprovincial). External migrants or those coming from outside of Canada, constituted 6.0% of total in-migration to the County over the last five years, while interprovincial migrants accounted for 3.6% of total migration over the last five years. Though migration to Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie was also weighted heavily towards intraprovincial migrants over the last five years, the proportion of in-migration attributed to external migrants almost doubled migration at the County. This mirrors the comparatively stronger rates of immigration at the Regional level, outlined in the previous section.

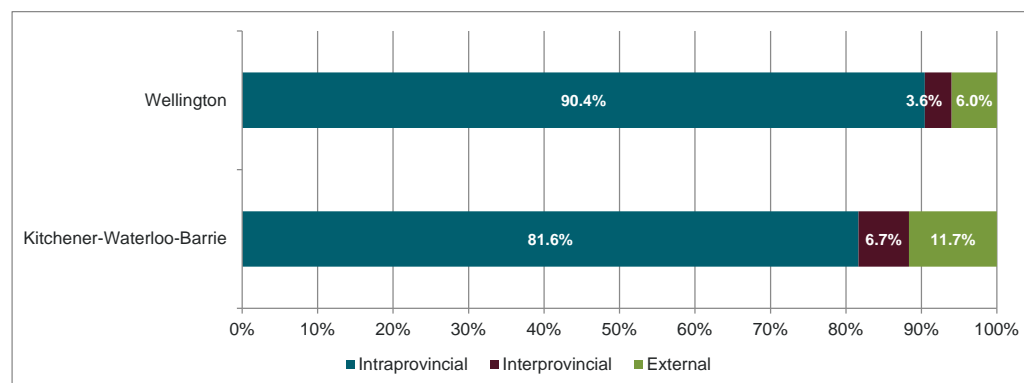
New residents can be attracted to rural areas like Wellington County for a number of reasons, such as quality of life/rural life amenities and a lower cost of living. By



identifying and marketing the key attributes of the County that have attracted new residents, Wellington County can develop more effective marketing messages.

However, the county should also aim to reduce its reliance on intraprovincial migrants as a component of population growth, and develop more effective marketing and programming focused on drawing skilled residents from across Canada and the Globe. As noted earlier, labour force growth is increasingly reliant on immigration. Thus it is critical that the County and its municipal partners develop an understanding of the factors that can support external in-migration. Further, communities across Western Canada have (and continue to) look elsewhere in Canada for the most skilled residents in order to maintain a labour pool for their local business community. For example, municipalities like Calgary and Wood Buffalo in Alberta continue to undertake extensive successful marketing campaigns aimed at attracting young professionals and skilled workers from other parts of Canada, in addition to immigrant attraction strategies. A successful talent attraction strategy considers all potential markets for new talent.

FIGURE 11: COMPARATIVE MIGRATION PROFILE, LAST FIVE YEARS, 2012



Source: Manifold Data Mining, 2012

1.2.5 Ethnic Diversity

The ethnic diversity of a community presents further considerations for economic development, including offering insight into international investment attraction and trade development prospects. It also provides insight into the types of community services that may need to be offered in a community to support settlement and retention of new residents, or the specific focus of potential language and skill training initiatives that can be offered through workforce development agencies.

Overall, the visible minority population in Wellington County accounted for 1.7% of total population, unchanged from 2006. Across the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region, visible minorities accounted for 8.8% of total population in 2012, up slightly from 8.6% in 2006. The visible minority population in Wellington County increased by an estimated 7.4% from 2006 to 2012; which was slightly lower than the growth of the non-visible minority population (8.2%) over the same time period. In contrast, the 16.1% growth of the visible minority population across the economic region from 2006



to 2012 was much stronger than the 13.2% growth of non-visible minority population over the same time period.

FIGURE 12: POPULATION BY VISIBLE MINORITY STATUS, 2006-2012

Visible Minority Status	Wellington County			Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie Economic Region		
	2012	2006	% Change	2012	2006	% Change
Not a visible minority	89,926	83,100	8.2%	1,183,582	1,044,870	13.2%
Total Visible minority population	1,521	1,415	7.4%	113,703	97,935	16.1%
Chinese	263	225	16.8%	16,785	14,500	15.7%
South Asian	363	320	13.4%	29,740	24,420	21.7%
Black	231	220	5.0%	17,686	15,610	13.2%
Latin American	219	210	4.2%	11,093	10,065	10.2%
Southeast Asian	113	100	13.0%	10,402	8,975	15.8%
Filipino	91	95	-4.2%	6,513	5,635	15.5%
Japanese	64	70	-8.5%	1,761	1,580	11.4%
Multiple visible minority	63	55	14.5%	3,739	3,225	15.9%
Korean	42	40	5.0%	3,086	2,735	12.8%
West Asian	28	30	-6.6%	5,013	4,375	14.5%
Visible minority, n.i.e.	30	30	0.0%	3,085	2,650	16.4%
Arab	12	20	-40.0%	4,800	4,130	16.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2006, Manifold Data Mining: 2012

In terms of visible minority population in Wellington County, the Chinese, multiple visible minority, and South Asian groups increased the fastest from 2006 to 2012, by 16.8%, 14.5% and 13.4% respectively. A number of visible minority groups decreased in the area though, including the Arab population (going from 20 residents in 2006 to an estimated 12 residents in 2012), as well as an 8.5% decrease in the Japanese population, a 6.6% decrease in the West Asian population and a 4.2% decrease in the Filipino population. In comparison, the economic region experienced growth in all visible minority groups.

Figure 12, highlights the country of origin of the total immigrant population in Wellington County in 2012. European immigrants account for the largest share of all immigrants in Wellington County, similar to immigrant profiles at the National and provincial level. Approximately 36.5% of the total immigrant population in 2012 originated in Northern Europe (e.g. United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Finland), with 23.1% from Western Europe (e.g. Germany, France, Netherlands), and 10.4% from Southern Europe (e.g. Italy, Portugal, Spain).

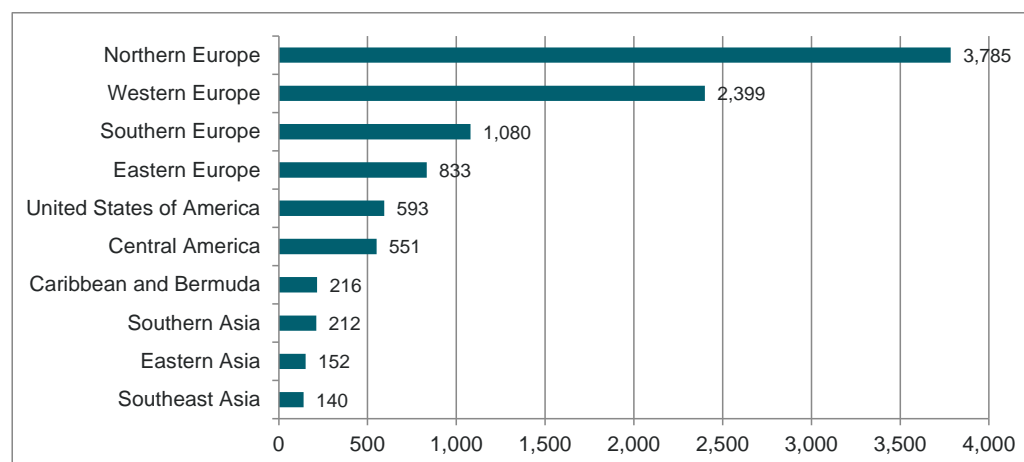
Recent immigrants to Wellington County illustrate a slightly different pattern. Though Northern and Western Europe continue to account for a significant share of immigrants (17.7% and 11.0% respectively), Central America accounted for the largest share of recent immigrants at 29%. Though still under 1,000 residents in 2012, Wellington



County's Central American population has almost doubled over the last five years (95.3%). Though not significant in absolute terms, Wellington County's fastest growing segments of immigrant population over the last five years in addition to Central America have been Eastern and Southern Asia.

Although the attraction of immigrants is an important component of labour force growth in Wellington County most of the immigrants being attracted to the region continue to originate from European countries. This is in contrast to national and provincial level trends over the last several decades, which have illustrated strong growth of immigrants from Asian countries. Though the County's profile of immigrants is becoming increasingly diverse, absolute growth remains quite low. As noted before, Wellington County continues to compete with more urban areas in the GGH and GTA for new residents and the levels of services and amenities available in those areas complicates the attraction of immigrants to the County. Thus the County may not necessarily attract the same immigrant segments as the rest of the province and country, perhaps missing opportunities to leverage business connections through these growing communities, without concerted efforts in that regard. Continued partnership with the City of Guelph (and other urban areas in the GTA/GGH) may be a logical step in that direction.

FIGURE 13: TOTAL IMMIGRANT POPULATION BY SELECT COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2012



Source: Manifold Data mining, 2012

Popular commentary, backed by strong academic research, has confirmed that a diverse community generates social and economic prosperity. Richard Florida and other scholars have noted the important signalling effect of diversity – that is, it reflects that a community is open to and supportive of newcomers, new businesses and new ideas, such that a diverse community is highly correlated with its ability to attract talent and high-technology employment. Furthermore, having citizens from a wide range of ethnic or cultural backgrounds also generates access to new economic opportunities that may otherwise be hidden. Opportunities can include the leveraging of business networks and tying to export markets and client bases. Thus, Wellington County should

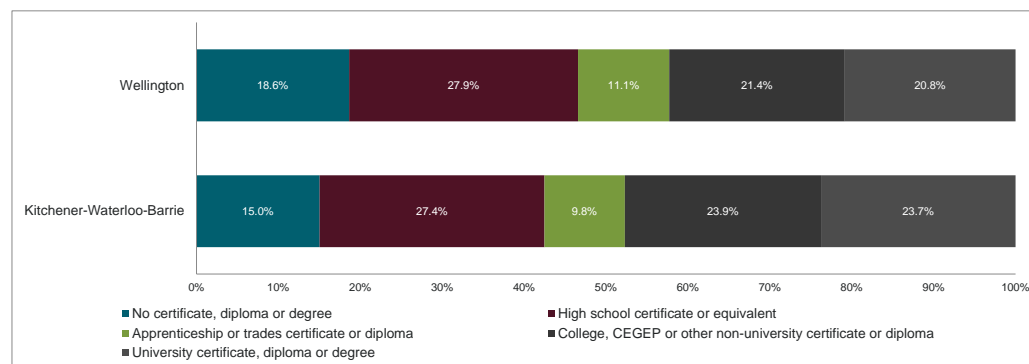


continue to engage with larger urban areas to attract new residents with diverse cultural backgrounds.

1.2.6 Educational Attainment and Field of Study

Of the major economic shifts occurring in the Canadian economy over the past several years, the transition towards more knowledge-intensive industries is one of the more prevalent. Wellington County's population is generally well educated, with 53.3% of the population having obtained post-secondary accreditation from apprenticeship, college or university programming. This is a positive factor for Wellington County, as higher educational attainment is generally needed to provide employers with the skills and aptitudes needed to engage more fully in an increasingly competitive and globally-oriented economy.

FIGURE 14: COMPARATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROFILE, % OF POPULATION AGED 25 TO 64, 2012



Source: Manifold Data Mining: 2012

Wellington County's educational attainment was similar to that of the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region with only a slightly lower level of college and university graduates than the region in 2012. The population's educational attainment positions the County well in the new knowledge-based economy that needs a highly educated workforce to develop in order to generate opportunities for growth. The presence of the University of Guelph and Conestoga College within Guelph, and access to other post-secondary institutions in the region (e.g. Laurier University, University of Waterloo) is an enormous asset to the current and future training and workforce needs of Wellington County.

Figure 14 illustrates the major fields of study for the 25,627 residents of Wellington County that have postsecondary qualifications (i.e. apprenticeship certification of college/university credentials). Based on Manifold data for 2012, the predominant fields by number of graduates are:

- Architecture, engineering and related technologies (6,823)
- Business, management and public administration (4,533)

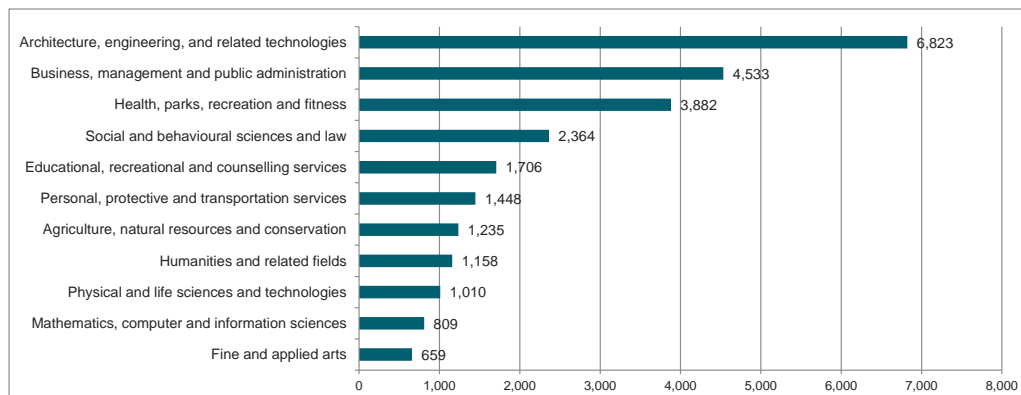
Other fields showing strong concentrations include:

- Health, parks, recreation and fitness (3,882)



- Social and behavioural sciences and law (2,364)
- Educational, recreational and counselling services (1,706)

FIGURE 15: POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PROFILE BY MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2012



Source: Manifold Data Mining, 2012

The five fields of study outlined above accounted for over three-quarters (75.3%) of the post-secondary credentials held in Wellington County in 2012. These figures have significant bearing on the kinds of businesses and enterprises that are located in the County, the labour pool that can support the attraction of new industry, and the kinds of services and training programs required to meet labour force needs. Wellington's particular strength in engineering and business graduates suggests the County's workforce holds highly transferable and desirable skill sets, which are well suited to – and often in high demand - in both knowledge-based industries and technology-intensive industrial industries. Further, the concentration of skills within health, parks, recreation, and fitness fields could signal support for a range of population-related and non-industrial sectors like health care, recreation and wellness, and tourism industries. By educational attainment, the resident labour force in Wellington County exhibits qualities that make the County competitive for supporting development in a diverse range of sectors. However, a critical factor of this is the extent to which Wellington County's business community is able to access and retain these skilled workers on a daily basis. Labour force flow and commuting data will be explored later in the section.

1.2.7 Household and Personal Income

An additional determinant of a community's socio-economic composition is the average income of its population. Figure 15 provides information on private household income for Wellington County as well as the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region in 2011. Wellington County's average household income of \$97,453 is slightly higher than that of the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region (\$92,020).

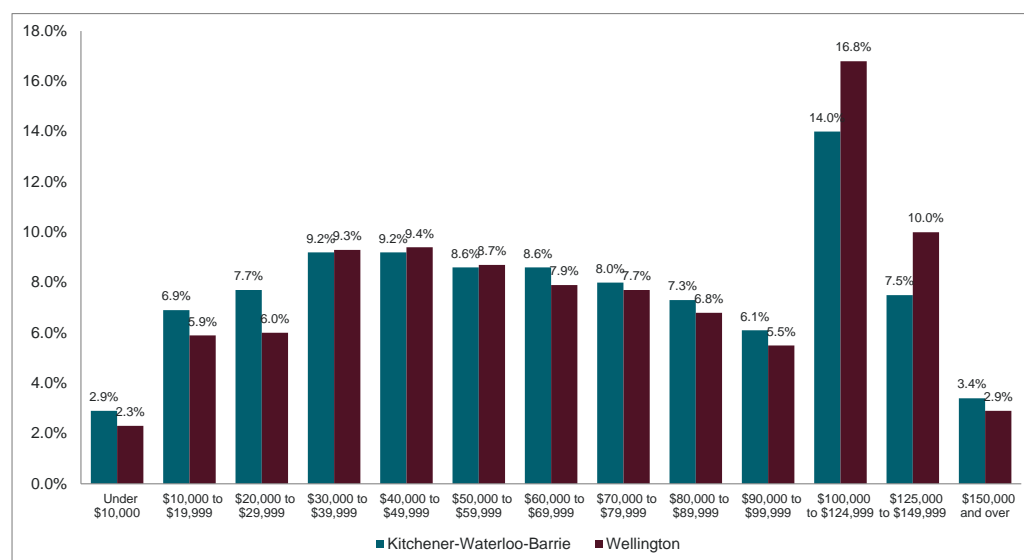
Beyond simply conveying the income levels of the population, these figures can reveal further insights into the social and economic issues facing a community. A high



average income could suggest high levels of disposable income, which has implications for the community's ability to support local goods and services-producing business targeted at the resident population. Considering creative cultural enterprises or tourism industries, a high level of local disposable income can provide incentive to develop these industries locally and can provide a strong local market to support these industries through fluctuations in revenue due to factors like seasonality or funding cycles. In turn, the high levels of disposable income locally can strengthen these industries and make them more appealing to visitor segments.

However, the distribution of households across the given income brackets also speaks to the level of income inequality in the community. As seen in Figure 15, Wellington County exhibited a higher proportion of its households making over \$100,000 than the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region. In contrast, it also has a larger proportion of its households in the lowest income brackets (from under \$10,000 to \$29,999). For economic and community development service providers, this suggests that emphasis needs to be placed on the equitable provision of social services, income support and employment programs in the areas of the County that require it.

FIGURE 16: COMPARATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2011



Source: Manifold Data Mining: 2012

1.3 Labour Force Profile

A strong component of Wellington County's overall economic position is its labour force profile. The following section outlines resident labour force¹⁰ characteristics and growth patterns, labour force composition by industry and occupation, place of work for Wellington's resident labour force, and commuting patterns. These provide greater

¹⁰ That is, the individuals in the labour force that live in Wellington County, regardless of where the individual is employed.



detail on potential prospects, opportunities and initiatives which may be employed by the County and its local municipalities to support economic development. The previous section outlined the skill levels and growth factors that impact the resident labour force. The following section provides insight on specific industries in which that skilled labour force is employed, the occupations they occupy, and the regions they work in.

1.3.1 Labour Force Characteristics

Between 2001 and 2012 Wellington County's labour force grew by an estimated 7,891 people, or 17.7%, to a total of 52,401. It is important to note that these figures describe the industries in which residents are employed, regardless of whether or not those jobs are in Wellington County.

This growth lags slightly behind the growth exhibited by the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region (21.2%) over the same time period, but is still quite substantial. Labour force data from Manifold Data Mining indicates that between 2006 and 2012 the county's labour force grew by 4,311 people, or 8.9%. This trend suggests continued growth and stability in the local economy from a resident labour force perspective. In other words, it does not necessarily mean that Wellington County's labour force growth has positively impacted its local businesses, but rather local businesses have access to a larger labour force.

Unemployment rates for 2006 provide a more detailed perspective to the labour force picture. Wellington County's rate of 3.4% is far lower than the provincial average of 6.4% and the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region's unemployment rate of 5.3%. The participation and employment rates are both higher in Wellington County than the province and the economic region, suggesting that Wellington County's resident labour force is comparatively more engaged in the labour market and more employable. For the population 25 years of age and older – or those that make up the majority of the workforce after exiting secondary and post-secondary institutions, Wellington County exhibited a similar trend of lower unemployment and higher participation/employment.

Wellington County's labour force appears to have performed comparatively well through the recession of 2008/09, with unemployment rates increasing by just 0.5% from 2006 to 2012. This is in contrast to an increase of 2.1% in the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region. Further, participation rates decreased by 2.2% in Wellington compared to a decrease of 4.5% seen in the economic region. Again, the comparative differences are similar for the labour force aged 25 years and over as well. In the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin's *2012 Local Labour Market Update* this sentiment is reiterated. Currently there is relative stability in the local labour market with participation rates much higher than those of the province. Many of the manufacturing businesses who came through the recession are now successfully serving new or existing markets and are doing well.



FIGURE 17: COMPARATIVE LABOUR FORCE PROFILE, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

	Wellington County			Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie Economic Region		
	2012	2006	2001	2012	2006	2001
Total population 15 years and over	74,877	66,995	61,980	1,065,527	920,020	819,055
In the labour force	52,401	48,090	44,510	703,912	648,920	578,030
Employed	50,308	46,420	42,955	653,230	614,205	548,600
Unemployed	2,093	1,665	1,555	50,682	34,725	29,430
Not in the labour force	22,476	18,910	17,470	361,615	271,095	241,015
Participation rate	70.0%	71.8%	71.8%	66.1%	70.5%	70.6%
Employment rate	67.2%	69.3%	69.3%	61.3%	66.8%	67.0%
Unemployment rate	4.2%	3.4%	3.5%	7.2%	5.3%	5.1%

Total population 15-24 years by labour force activity	12,804	11,440	10,475	177,636	159,890	139,380
In the labour force	8,806	8,430	7,715	113,942	113,970	101,160
Employed	8,100	7,750	7,035	96,582	99,900	89,865
Unemployed	707	680	685	17,360	14,070	11,290
Not in the labour force	3,997	3,005	2,760	63,694	45,915	38,215
Participation rate	68.8%	73.7%	73.7%	64.1%	71.3%	72.6%
Employment rate	63.3%	67.7%	67.1%	54.3%	62.5%	64.5%
Unemployment rate	8.0%	8.1%	8.9%	15.2%	12.3%	11.2%

Total population 25 years and over by labour force activity	62,073	55,555	51,500	887,891	760,125	679,665
In the labour force	43,595	39,650	36,790	589,969	534,950	476,870
Employed	42,208	38,670	35,915	556,648	514,305	458,725
Unemployed	1,387	985	870	33,321	20,640	18,140
Not in the labour force	18,479	15,900	14,705	297,921	225,175	202,795
Participation rate	70.2%	71.4%	71.4%	66.4%	70.4%	70.2%
Employment rate	68.0%	69.6%	69.7%	62.7%	67.7%	67.5%
Unemployment rate	3.2%	2.3%	2.4%	5.7%	3.9%	3.8%

Source: Statistics Canada Census of Population: 2001 and 2006, Manifold Data Mining: 2012

Youth employment issues continue to be a major topic of discussion among public sector agencies and educational institutions. Generally speaking, Canada's population between the ages of 15 and 24 have exhibited generally higher rates of unemployment than their older counterparts over the last decade; an issue which has been exacerbated by the most recent recession and the resulting uncertain economic conditions. In April 2012, unadjusted unemployment for those aged 15-24 was 14.4% across Canada, and 16.5% across Ontario – well above the 7.5% across Canada and



7.7% across Ontario exhibited for the entire labour force. Similarly, participation rates and employment rates were lower in this age group than across the entire labour force in both jurisdictions.

Manifold estimates made in April 2012 suggest that Wellington County's unemployment rates for youth 15 to 24 are significantly lower than the broader economic region, as well as rates at the provincial and national level. Similarly, participation and employment rates are comparatively higher in the County for the age group. Like older age groups, the labour force aged 15 to 24 years old is generally more engaged in the labour force. The larger profile of apprenticeship, trades, and college-level credentials in the County support this.

The increasing number of residents not in the labour force is also of note. In older age groups, this may signal increasing retirements, or an increasing number of residents that are unable to find work and are unable to continue receiving unemployment benefits (and thus out of the labour force). However in younger age groups, it may signal an increasing number of younger residents pursuing post-secondary and advanced education while still residing in the County, rather than an exit from the labour force. It is difficult to determine why the number of residents not in the labour force has increased by looking at data alone. However, the generally higher levels of educational attainment across the County seem to make the former – increasing numbers of residents in post-secondary programs – a more likely scenario. If this is the case, Wellington County should look to engage with these young residents, in order to ensure they remain in the County (or return to the County) once they complete their studies. Continuing economic uncertainty in the broader economy may also signal a lack of opportunity for residents in this age group. Overall, both scenarios require consideration from Wellington County.

1.3.2 Labour Force by Industry

To develop a more detailed understanding of local labour force trends, it is important to examine employment by industrial classification across the County. The composition of the resident labour force has remained relatively stable from 2001 to 2012. As shown in Figure 17 the industries with the highest proportion of the county's overall labour force in 2012 are:

- Manufacturing (20.1%)
- Retail trade (8.9%)
- Health care and social assistance (8.7%)
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (8.4%)

Manufacturing's share of employment moved from 19.7% of the total labour force in 2006, to an estimated 20.1% in 2012. This shows a steady increase in the number of residents employed in the manufacturing sector. This is surprising, given the decline of the manufacturing industry throughout Ontario that has been occurring over the last several decades. This is likely a result of increased investment in Wellington and



surrounding communities (such as the Canadian Solar investments in Guelph or continuing expansions at companies like TG Minto in the County and Linamar in Guelph), and speaks to the employability of Wellington's resident labour force.

Retail trade increased to 8.8% of total labour force in 2012 (from 8.7% in 2006), while health care and social assistance increased to over 8.6% of the total labour force in 2012 (up from 8.4% in 2006). Both of these industries are considered population-related, and have likely increased as services expand in Wellington and surrounding areas to meet rapid population growth in the GTA and GGH. Agriculture also saw an increase in its share of the total workforce from 8.1% in 2006 to 8.4% in 2012, which speaks to the continuing relevance and significance of agriculture and related industries in the county (e.g. animal production, agricultural support services).

FIGURE 18: LABOUR FORCE BY INDUSTRY, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

Industries (NAICS)	2012	% of Total	2006	% of Total	2001	% of Total
Total - All Industries	52,108	100%	47805	100%	44250	100%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	4,379	8.4%	3910	8.2%	4120	9.3%
Mining and oil and gas extraction	152	0.3%	135	0.3%	65	0.2%
Utilities	247	0.5%	295	0.6%	235	0.5%
Construction	3,996	7.7%	3,705	7.8%	3,400	7.7%
Manufacturing	10,474	20.1%	9,420	19.7%	9,210	20.8%
Wholesale trade	2,678	5.1%	2,520	5.3%	2,425	5.5%
Retail trade	4,626	8.9%	4,185	8.8%	4,120	9.3%
Transportation and warehousing	2,685	5.2%	2,345	4.9%	2,310	5.2%
Information and cultural industries	786	1.5%	670	1.4%	510	1.2%
Finance and insurance	1,363	2.6%	1,375	2.9%	1,155	2.6%
Real estate and rental and leasing	824	1.6%	685	1.4%	455	1.0%
Professional, scientific and technical services	2,896	5.6%	2,695	5.6%	2,320	5.2%
Mgmt. of companies and enterprises	63	0.1%	105	0.2%	95	0.2%
Admin. and support, waste mgmt. and remediation services	1,966	3.8%	1,790	3.7%	1,260	2.9%
Educational services	3,080	5.9%	2,825	5.9%	2,595	5.9%
Health care and social assistance	4,518	8.7%	4,035	8.4%	3,285	7.4%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	877	1.7%	885	1.9%	855	1.9%
Accommodation and food services	2,433	4.7%	2,240	4.7%	2,095	4.7%
Other services (except public administration)	2,627	5.0%	2,585	5.4%	2,320	5.2%
Public administration	1,438	2.8%	1,395	2.9%	1,420	3.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012



Over the last decade, the manufacturing (1,264) and health care and social assistance (1,233) sectors exhibited the largest absolute increase in labour force to 2012.

However, when looking at percentage growth, the largest increases in resident labour force were accounted for in mining and oil and gas extraction (57.2%), administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (35.9%), and information and cultural industries (35.1%). It should be noted, however, that the actual number of workers is still relatively low in each of these sectors. Rapid growth in these smaller sectors could be tied to factors like increased aggregate extraction activity in the region, as well as increasing activity in the environmental sector and increasing activity in the area's cultural and tourism-related industries.

Over the last five years, the largest increase in resident labour force was experienced in real estate and rental and leasing (16.8%) and information and cultural industries which increased (14.7%). These industries employ many workers in the knowledge-based economy and represent a shift away from Wellington County's agricultural and manufacturing base towards the creative economy. There was also growth in resident labour force related to the arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodations and food services sectors of the economy as well – both of which have positive implications on the tourism sector in the County (in addition to retail trade growth noted above).



FIGURE 19: LABOUR FORCE GROWTH BY INDUSTRY, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001-2012

Industry (NAICS)	2001-2012	2006-2012
Total - All Industries	15.1%	8.3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	5.9%	10.7%
Mining and oil and gas extraction	57.2%	11.2%
Utilities	4.9%	-19.4%
Construction	14.9%	7.3%
Manufacturing	12.1%	10.1%
Wholesale trade	9.5%	5.9%
Retail trade	10.9%	9.5%
Transportation and warehousing	14.0%	12.7%
Information and cultural industries	35.1%	14.8%
Finance and insurance	15.3%	-0.9%
Real estate and rental and leasing	27.1%	16.9%
Professional, scientific and technical services	19.9%	6.9%
Management of companies and enterprises	-50.8%	-66.7%
Admin. and support, waste mgmt. and remediation services	35.9%	9.0%
Educational services	15.8%	8.3%
Health care and social assistance	27.3%	10.7%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	2.5%	-0.9%
Accommodation and food services	13.9%	7.9%
Other services (except public administration)	11.7%	1.6%
Public administration	1.3%	3.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

1.3.3 Labour Force by Occupation

A useful supplement to the industrial composition of Wellington County's labour force is its occupational composition. By looking at the occupational composition of the resident labour force, a more detailed understanding of the specific competencies and skills of the individuals living in the County can be built. Figure 19 illustrates the concentration of labour force by occupational category in Wellington County for 2001, 2006 and 2012. The occupations that held the highest shares of labour force in 2006 and 2012 (estimated) were:

- Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (19.0% in 2006, 19.3% in 2012)
- Sales and service occupations (18.8% in 2006, 19.0% in 2012)
- Business, finance and administration occupations (15.2% in 2006, 15.4% in 2012)
- Management occupations (9.8% in 2006, 9.7% in 2012)



These four occupational categories also held the highest shares of labour force across the broader Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie economic region, as well as across the Province of Ontario in 2006. Each of these occupations make up a large portion of the occupations involved in the manufacturing, agricultural and retail sectors, which supports the findings of the labour force growth by industry.

FIGURE 20: COMPARATIVE LABOUR FORCE BY OCCUPATION, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

Occupations (NOC)	2012	% of Total	2006	% of Total	2001	% of Total
All occupations	52,128	100.0%	47,805	100.0%	44,250	100.0%
Management occupations	5,067	9.7%	4,705	9.8%	4,615	10.4%
Business, finance and administration occupations	8,016	15.4%	7,245	15.2%	6,340	14.3%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	2,184	4.2%	2,025	4.2%	1,965	4.4%
Health occupations	2,776	5.3%	2,480	5.2%	2,005	4.5%
Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion	3,288	6.3%	3,110	6.5%	2,410	5.4%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	1,286	2.5%	1,270	2.7%	1,065	2.4%
Sales and service occupations	9,891	19.0%	9,145	19.1%	8,325	18.8%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	10,043	19.3%	9,090	19.0%	8,565	19.4%
Occupations unique to primary industry	4,656	8.9%	4,205	8.8%	4,585	10.4%
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	4,919	9.4%	4,540	9.5%	4,365	9.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

Figure 19 outlines the growth of resident labour force by occupation. Between 2001 and 2012, health occupations (38.5%), occupations in social science, education, government service and religion (36.4%), and business, finance, and administration occupations (26.4%) exhibited the fastest growth. In terms of absolute growth, business, finance, and administration (1,676), sales and services occupations (1,566), and trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (1,478) led growth from 2001 to 2012.

Figure 20 below highlights the rates of growth of each of the occupational classifications since 2006. The fastest growing occupational classifications by resident labour force were:

- Health occupations (11.93%)
- Occupations unique to primary industry (10.72%)
- Business, finance and administration occupations (10.64%)



- Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (10.48%)
- Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities (8.34%)

The growth rates show the continued importance of both the manufacturing and agricultural sector along with the emergence of occupations related to health care and management. Local investments in the health care infrastructure of Wellington County have developed a strong health care infrastructure. The development of Groves Memorial Hospital as a new state of the art facility, slated to open in 2017-2018, should continue to generate growth in the health care field in the County, as services expand to meet the growing population.

Overall, labour force in all occupational categories showed strong growth over the last decade. This growth trend indicates a healthy diversity in the labour force composition of Wellington County's residents by occupational skills.

FIGURE 21: LABOUR FORCE GROWTH BY OCCUPATION, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001-2012

Occupations (NOC)	2001-2012	2006-2012
All occupations	17.8%	9.0%
Management occupations	9.8%	7.7%
Business, finance and administration occupations	26.4%	10.6%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	11.1%	7.9%
Health occupations	38.5%	11.9%
Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion	36.4%	7.4%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	20.8%	1.3%
Sales and service occupations	18.8%	8.2%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	17.3%	10.5%
Occupations unique to primary industry	1.5%	10.7%
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	12.7%	8.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

1.3.4 Labour Flow and Commuting Patterns

A labour flow pattern analysis provides useful context to the above industry and occupational data, by identifying the difference between the employment composition of Wellington County and the composition of resident labour force by industry. This distinction is important, as planners and policy makers seek to achieve a balance between employment and population growth within their boundaries, in an effort to develop more complete communities. Generation of more local employment in the



community can benefit current and potential residents by decreasing commute times and increasing local consumption; trends that also benefit the county's economy.

Figure 22 below illustrates the composition of the jobs within Wellington County (regardless of where the employee lives). Manufacturing constitutes 21.3% of current local employment in the county, with agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (12.2%), and retail trade (9.7%) rounding out the top three industries by local number of jobs. Manufacturing (19.6%), health care and social assistance (8.5%), and construction (7.8%) account for the highest share of resident labour force in the County.

Wellington County exports labour in every industry aside from mining and oil and gas extraction where there is an inflow of 30 additional workers into the county. The five industries with the highest levels of labour outflow include:

- Manufacturing (2,510 residents)
- Construction (1,975 residents)
- Educational Services (1,435 residents)
- Health care and Social assistance (1,175 residents)
- Retail trade (1,070 residents)



FIGURE 22: NET INFLOW/OUTFLOW OF LABOUR FORCE, WELLINGTON COUNTY 2006

Industry (NAICS)	Total Jobs	Labour Force	Net Inflow/Outflow
Total	30,950	46,415	-15,465
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3,760	3,885	-125
Mining and oil and gas extraction	145	115	30
Utilities	70	270	-200
Construction	1,620	3,595	-1,975
Manufacturing	6,595	9,105	-2,510
Wholesale trade	1,975	2,460	-485
Retail trade	2,995	4,065	-1,070
Transportation and warehousing	1,500	2,270	-770
Information and cultural industries	350	650	-300
Finance and insurance	490	1,345	-855
Real estate and rental and leasing	310	665	-355
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,535	2,635	-1,100
Management of companies and enterprises	80	105	-25
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	790	1,730	-940
Educational services	1,285	2,720	-1,435
Health care and social assistance	2,750	3,925	-1,175
Arts, entertainment and recreation	780	860	-80
Accommodation and food services	1,775	2,105	-330
Other services (except public administration)	1,615	2,540	-925
Public administration	530	1,370	-840

Source: OMAFRA Labour Flow Analysis 2006.

Within the manufacturing sector, the motor vehicle manufacturing subsector, the hand tool manufacturing subsector, and pharmaceutical manufacturing subsector experience large outflows of labour from the County, with over 600 workers commuting from the county to outside municipalities to work. This is likely driven by the presence of major manufacturing operations in the City of Guelph like Linamar and Johnson & Johnson (formerly McNeil), as well as pharmaceutical and automotive manufacturing operations in the western GTA (e.g. Mississauga, Brampton, or Milton).

As a result of the rapidly expanding residential areas in the surrounding GTA – especially at the western edge of the GTA - the construction sector experiences a large outflow of labour in the residential building construction subsector as well as building equipment contractor subsector (e.g. electrical and plumbing trades). Having urban



centres experiencing this level of growth within commuting distance equates to large outflows of construction labour from Wellington County.

Based on the labour flow analysis, the County is a net exporter of labour in a range of different sectors. Having established that, a further consideration is where these potential employees are travelling for work. Figure 22 illustrates the top ten destinations for commuters from Wellington County based on the 2006 Census.¹¹ Of resident labour force with a usual place of work, 39.5% presently commute outside of the County¹². The majority of commuters in Wellington County travel to the City of Guelph to work; the City attracted 7,030 commuters from Wellington County in 2006. In addition to Guelph, Mississauga, Halton Hills, Waterloo Region, Toronto, and Milton account for the majority of remaining commuters from the County.

FIGURE 23: TOP 10 PLACE OF WORK LOCATIONS

Place of Work	Total Commuting Workers
Guelph	7,030
Mississauga	1,450
Halton Hills	1,070
Waterloo	1,050
Cambridge	1,040
Kitchener	1,005
Toronto	990
Woolwich	940
Milton	705
Orangeville	540

Source: Census Canada Topic by Tabulation, Commuting flow for Residents 2006.

Overall, Wellington County exports a significant proportion of its labour force on a daily basis, particularly to communities in bordering regions of the Greater Golden Horseshoe and GTA. Further, the exported labour force has skills in a range of sectors, and is likely exporting both professional and technical skills based on labour force composition and educational attainment. Though this has assisted the County in maintaining lower than average rates of unemployment and generally higher levels of employment and participation, it may be a barrier to further business development in the county as existing and new businesses search for the talent needed. This is already occurring in some sectors, as manufacturing employers in the County – particularly in the northern communities – and in the City of Guelph struggle to find adequate levels of labour force outside of their communities to enable their continued growth.

¹¹ The most recent data available to the census subdivision level is from the 2006 Canadian Census of Population.

¹² Manifold Data Mining. (2012). Custom Data Tabulation.



Recovering these exported workers is a significant task, especially given the range of knowledge-based and advanced industrial opportunities available in the surrounding region of the GTA and GGH. However, addressing the export of these skilled workers to the surrounding areas – which represent much of the County's closest competition – will be a key element of ensuring that the County has the correct labour force in place to support business retention/expansion, small business development, and investment attraction activities.

1.4 Creative Economy

1.4.1 Defining and Understanding the Creative Economy

There is growing recognition across Canada, and particularly in rural parts of Ontario, of the importance of creativity, culture and quality of place in growing local economies. Many communities are now recognizing that enhancing quality of place and creating attractive amenities can draw talented people, which in turn attract business investment, as well as draw visitors and investment to the community in the form of tourism. Given that this “creative” labour force values diverse cultural experiences, as well as interesting heritage and access to the natural environment, it is imperative for Wellington County to understand and cultivate their cultural resources to drive economic development.

It is within this broader policy context that broader definitions of the creative economy have emerged to suggest that creative and knowledge-based work underlies all sectors of the economy. Creativity can be applied to the introduction of new processes, the creation of new products, and the design of systems in fields from construction to craft-making. In this sense, the creative economy is defined by the skills and ideas that people employ, and is typically measured using occupational data. Creative industries and occupations encompass a wide range of knowledge-based jobs in which innovation and creativity drives value creation. These industries and occupations encompass sectors such as science and medicine, financial services, engineering, among others.

Wellington County has already been actively involved in understanding the creative economic assets that are present in the region. The Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin developed a white paper entitled *Creative Class Workers in Wellington County* in 2011 and found that 32 creative class occupations have a high local concentration compared to Ontario in Wellington, with many of these occupations being specific to the natural and applied science occupational classifications and health care industries. In addition to this the Town of Minto and the Township of Centre Wellington have also undertaken creative economy projects, with the Town of Minto developing a full Municipal Cultural Plan in 2011. At the County level, activity has been more focused on the Tourism sector with leverage from RTO 4. The County has benefited from a number of tourism initiatives, such as the Butter Tart Trail developed by Wellington North, to capitalize on the unique rural creative economy that exists within the region.



In a model of economic development premised on culture and creativity, it is important to understand how notions of the creative economy are measured and defined. People take centre stage in this model – what they know, what they do, and where they work. Understanding these characteristics can help communities position themselves and differentiate on the basis of their unique local assets and economic structure.

Creative occupations can exist throughout a range of industries; consider an industrial designer on the shop floor of an automotive plant, or an architect on the work site of a new project. However, the creative economy can also be understood in a more traditional fashion – that is, by the industries that are fundamentally driven by ongoing innovation, adaptation, and the generation of intellectual property.

Creativity in the Labour Force: Occupational Categories:

- **Creative occupations**– the growing number of people who are paid to think. These include scientists and technologists, artists and entertainers, and managers and analysts.
- **Service occupations**– where work involves little autonomy, and occupations are focused on the delivery of services, including food-service workers, janitors, and clerks.
- **Physical occupations** – consisting of people who use physical skills and carry out relatively repetitive tasks, such as tradespersons, mechanics, crane operators, and assembly line workers.

According to the definitions above, a distinguishing feature of creative occupations is their ability to cut across industry sector lines in a way that can impact both traditional and emerging industries, and the degree to which these occupations translate to a well-paid and highly skilled workforce. This is particularly true if one considers the skills needed for creative occupations are more heavily weighted towards analytical and social intelligence skills, both of which play a significant role in a knowledge driven economy in Wellington County.

1.4.2 Creative Economy Profile

Figure 23 compares the rates of growth in Wellington County the three major occupational categories discussed above - creative occupations, service-based occupations (i.e. routine), and manufacturing-related occupations (i.e. physical). Creative occupations are an increasingly important part of Wellington County's economy growing 16.8% over the past decade, with most of that occurring in the past five years. Service-based occupations illustrated the most prominent growth patterns over the time period, with a 23% increase over the past decade and 12% increase from 2006 to 2012. As noted previously, this is characteristic of growth at the provincial and national level as well, with service-based work slowly replacing more industrial employment in the economy. As such, these two sectors will likely continue to grow in prominence as the manufacturing sector continues to transform and reorganize. For Wellington County, where manufacturing employment still contributes significantly to



the local economy, the challenge will be translating the growth of creative and service-based labour into positive impacts for the manufacturing sector as well, as a means of supporting manufacturing sector occupational growth.

FIGURE 24: CREATIVE, SERVICE-BASED AND MANUFACTURING OCCUPATIONS, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

Occupational Classifications	2012	2006	2001	2001-2012 % Growth	2006-2012 % Growth
Creative Occupations	14,632	13,740	12,530	16.8%	9.7%
Service-Based Occupations	17,003	15,475	13,810	23.1%	12.1%
Manufacturing and Related Occupations	15,547	13,425	14,270	9.0%	5.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

Overall, the resident labour force in creative occupations across Wellington County increased by 9.7% from 2006 to 2012. The highest percentage increase was in specialist managers and finance and insurance administrative occupations (31.1% and 29.4% respectively). A number of other creative occupations saw significant growth as well, including:

- Professional occupations in art and culture (26.3%)
- Nurse supervisors and registered nurses (24.0%)
- Professional occupations in business and finance (23.1%)
- Teachers and professors (21.4%)

As mentioned above, creative occupations as a class of work generally require higher levels of education, analytical skills, and social intelligence skills, and are also typically rewarded with higher wages than routine-class occupations. As such, the trends in creative occupational employment should be of importance in crafting an economic development strategy for Wellington County. The continued concentration and growth of high value creative occupations and professions has significant implications for the kind of business development trajectory the county is able to pursue.

FIGURE 25: CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

Occupations (NOC)	Wellington County			
	2012	2006	2001	2001-2012 % Growth
Total creative occupations	14,632	13,740	12,530	16.8%
Senior management occupations	710	635	775	-9.2%
Specialist managers	1,553	1,475	1,070	31.1%
Managers in retail trade, food and accommodation services	1,180	1,120	1,330	-12.7%
Other managers, n.e.c.	1,625	1,480	1,445	11.1%
Professional occupations in business and finance	813	825	625	23.1%



Finance and insurance administration occupations	964	845	680	29.5%
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	1,172	1,055	970	17.2%
Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences	1,013	965	1,000	1.3%
Professional occupations in health	537	570	470	12.5%
Nurse supervisors and registered nurses	809	705	615	24.0%
Technical and related occupations in health	547	455	495	9.5%
Judges, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, ministers of religion, and policy and program officers	653	665	595	8.9%
Teachers and professors	1,769	1,680	1,390	21.4%
Professional occupations in art and culture	570	580	420	26.3%
Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	717	685	650	9.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

Creative occupations can be broken down further, to indicate the strength of a local economy in areas like the creative-cultural industries. While both broader and specific definitions have a bearing on the quality of place and human capital in a community, a more defined look at the creative-cultural occupations may provide further insight into assets and trends within related areas of the economy, such as tourism. The figure below outlines growth in creative-cultural occupations in Wellington County from 2001 to 2006. Generally, creative cultural occupations grew 5.8% from 2001 to 2006, slightly behind the growth of the broader creative economy. Many of the creative-cultural occupations actually declined during the time period. However, a number of creative-cultural occupations grew significantly over the five year period, with two occupational classifications - producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; and conductors, composers and arrangers – growing from zero in 2001. Other than these two occupational classifications, the leading areas of creative-cultural enterprises were:

- Photographers (63.2%).
- Conservators and curators (50.0%).
- Painters, sculptors, and other visual artists (40.0%).
- Authors and writers (26.3%).
- Artisans and craftspersons (13.0%).

As noted previously, these findings can have implications on other areas of the economy as well, perhaps the most notable being the tourism sector, where creative-cultural enterprises can play a key role as attractions an assets in the area's tourism offering. While the assessment can provide an indication of the size of the creative cultural industries, more detailed analysis needs to be undertaken to identify these assets, and determine how best to support and leverage them in economic development and tourism service delivery.



FIGURE 26: CREATIVE CULTURAL OCCUPATIONS, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001 AND 2006

Creative-Cultural Occupations	2001	2006	2001-2006 % Growth
Total	810	860	5.8%
Actors and comedians	10	5	-100.0%
Architects	20	10	-100.0%
Archivists	10	0	0.0%
Artisans and craftspersons	100	115	13.0%
Authors and writers	70	95	26.3%
Conductors, composers and arrangers	0	15	100.0%
Conservators and curators	5	10	50.0%
Dancers	25	15	0.0%
Editors	35	35	0.0%
Graphic designers and illustrators	150	125	-20.0%
Industrial designers	30	20	-50.0%
Interior designers	55	30	-83.3%
Journalists	35	15	-133.3%
Landscape architects	15	5	-200.0%
Librarians	25	25	0.0%
Musicians and singers	110	105	-4.8%
Other performers	5	5	0.0%
Painters, sculptors and other visual artists	60	100	40.0%
Photographers	35	95	63.2%
Producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations	0	35	100.0%
Theatre, fashion, exhibit and other creative designers	15	0	0.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, OMAFRA REDDI data, 2001 and 2006

Service-based occupations are differentiated from creative occupations in that they are more routine-oriented, and require less autonomy. They are found in a range of sectors, but are routinely associated with industries like retail trade, hospitality, and tourism. Overall the number of residents in service-based occupations grew by 12.0% across the County from 2001 to 2012. Given that these occupations comprise the fastest-growing segment of Wellington County's workforce, it speaks to the need to ensure that the service-based occupations that are seeing the highest rates of growth



are those that are tenable as full-time, living wage careers. Otherwise, the county will potentially be confronted by growing inequality and polarization of incomes, which may lead to increased demands on social assistance and service-provision agencies.

The top five service-based occupations by growth in total resident labour force are:

- Assisting occupations in support of health services (49.7%)
- Wholesale, technical, insurance, real estate sales specialists, and retail, wholesale and grain buyers (31.8%)
- Clerical occupations (30.2%)
- Cashiers (29.7%)
- Sales and service occupations, n.e.c (27.0%)

FIGURE 27: SERVICE-BASED OCCUPATIONS, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

Occupation (NOC)	Wellington County			
	2012	2006	2001	2001-2012 % Growth
Total service sector	17,003	15,475	13,810	23.1%
Secretaries	766	770	895	-16.8%
Administrative and regulatory occupations	776	745	830	-7.0%
Clerical supervisors	271	235	225	17.0%
Clerical occupations	4,427	3,830	3,090	30.2%
Assisting occupations in support of health services	884	745	445	49.7%
Sales and service supervisors	136	185	215	-58.1%
Wholesale, technical, insurance, real estate sales specialists, and retail, wholesale and grain buyers	1,283	1,200	875	31.8%
Retail salespersons and sales clerks	1,797	1,630	1,535	14.6%
Cashiers	597	575	420	29.7%
Chefs and cooks	331	355	445	-34.4%
Occupations in food and beverage service	553	510	535	3.3%
Occupations in protective services	511	500	475	7.1%
Occupations in travel and accommodation, including attendants in recreation and sport	211	195	175	17.1%
Child care and home support workers	557	540	800	-43.6%
Sales and service occupations, n.e.c.	3,903	3,460	2,850	27.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

It is well-known that manufacturing as an industry sector has been declining in both Ontario and North America as a result of broader structural shifts in these economies. Wellington County's continued strong performance in this sector is thus particularly notable, with labour force growing at a strong rate (9.0%) between 2001 and 2012. However, the local labour force in the sector saw a much lower growth rate than both



the creative and service-based sector. Many firms in the manufacturing sector have shifted from low skilled work to developing value-added processes that need semi-skilled and skilled workers to remain competitive. The county needs to support the growth of manufacturing occupations as well as the creative sector to become increasingly competitive in the knowledge and technology-based manufacturing sector.

FIGURE 28: MANUFACTURING AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2001, 2006 AND 2012

Occupations (NOC)	Wellington County			
	2012	2006	2001	2001-2012 % Growth
Total manufacturing sector	15,547	13,475	14,270	9.0%
Contractors and supervisors in trades and transportation	521	435	500	4.0%
Construction trades	1,675	1,050	1,360	18.8%
Stationary engineers, power station operators and electrical trades and telecommunications occupations	530	515	530	0.00%
Machinists, metal forming, shaping and erecting occupations	1,184	1,120	1,135	4.1%
Mechanics	1,660	1,555	1,530	7.8%
Other trades, n.e.c.	402	420	350	12.9%
Heavy equipment and crane operators, including drillers	494	370	480	2.8%
Transportation equipment operators and related workers, excluding labourers	2,175	1,910	1,960	9.9%
Trades helpers, construction and transportation labourers and related occupations	1,402	1,200	1,265	9.8%
Primary production labourers	585	485	625	-6.8%
Supervisors in manufacturing	412	400	315	23.5%
Machine operators in manufacturing	1,579	1,615	1,385	12.3%
Assemblers in manufacturing	1,759	1,355	1,725	1.9%
Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	1,169	995	1,110	5.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population: 2001, 2006; Manifold Data Mining: 2012

1.4.3 Creative Businesses and Enterprises

An analysis was also undertaken to identify the creative establishments present within Wellington County, using Canadian Business Patterns data provided by Statistics Canada. Relying on a review of secondary sources, creative businesses and enterprises can be categorized in the following areas:

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Artists
- Business Consulting
- Heritage
- Marketing
- Museums
- Music



- Design
- Education
- Engineering
- Film
- Games
- Performing Arts
- Photographic Services
- Web + Software
- Public Relations
- Publishing
- Radio + Television

The number of creative businesses in Wellington County changed very little between 2007 and 2011, decreasing by 0.4% from 1,609 in December 2007 to 1,603 in December 2011. As shown in Figure 28, the largest creative industry sub-sectors in Wellington in 2011 were Engineering (760 businesses), Business Consulting (230 businesses) and Marketing & Photographic Services (126 businesses).

The highest rates of business growth during the same period, excluding those industries with less than 25 establishments, were in Design (16.7%), Marketing & Photographic Services (13.5%) and Education (8.8 %).

FIGURE 29: CREATIVE INDUSTRIES, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2007 AND 2011¹³

Industry	2007			2011			% Change Total	% Change Subtotal
	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal		
Advertising & Public Relations	30	19	11	28	19	9	-6.7%	-18.2%
Architecture	102	65	37	98	57	41	-3.9%	10.8%
Artists	56	38	18	56	35	21	0.0%	16.7%
Business Consultants	242	182	60	230	166	64	-5.0%	6.7%
Design	36	28	8	42	30	12	16.7%	50.0%
Education	68	35	33	74	38	36	8.8%	9.1%
Engineering	753	512	241	760	495	265	0.9%	10.0%
Film	15	11	4	10	5	5	-33.3%	25.0%
Games	43	24	19	30	16	14	-30.2%	-26.3%
Heritage	4	3	1	2	1	1	-50.0%	0.0%
Marketing & Photographic Services	111	71	40	126	80	46	13.5%	15.0%
Museums	5	3	2	3	1	2	-40.0%	0.0%
Music	2	2	-	5	4	1	150.0%	
Performing Arts	13	9	4	13	8	5	0.0%	25.0%
Publishing	17	8	9	15	5	10	-11.8%	11.1%
Radio & Television	3	2	1	2	1	1	-33.3%	0.0%
Web & Software	109	70	39	109	66	43	0.0%	10.3%
Totals	1,609	1,082	527	1,603	1,027	576	-0.4%	9.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Patterns, 2007, 2011

In terms of composition, the creative business profile in Wellington County is most heavily weighted towards more technical areas with total (including self-employed and employers) establishments and employer establishments dominated by engineering firms. With proximity to quickly growing areas of the GTA, as noted previously, this

¹³ The "Indeterminate" category in Canadian Business Patterns Data includes the self-employed or those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners).



could be expected as firms have opportunities to service a number of regional markets from Wellington County. The business consulting, architectural, and web and software fields likely enjoy the same benefits, and as such, represent a significant share of creative enterprises as well (both employer and self-employed). In a way, the concentration of enterprises in these sectors of the creative economy seems to validate that Wellington County is a competitive destination for highly skilled individuals and the industries that employ them.

Creative enterprises can be broken down further to identify the creative-cultural enterprises in a community. The broader creative economy assessment indicated that subsectors like artists, film, and music, have shown moderate growth as well. The figure below outlines Wellington County's creative-cultural enterprises.

FIGURE 30: CREATIVE-CULTURAL ENTERPRISES, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2007 AND 2011

Industry	2011			2007			% Change	
	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	Total	Subtotal
Total	574	323	251	605	382	223	-5.1%	12.6%
Advertising	28	19	9	30	19	11	-6.7%	-18.2%
Antiques	11	6	5	14	9	5	-21.4%	0.0%
Architecture	98	57	41	102	65	37	-3.9%	10.8%
Art dealers	35	15	20	35	18	17	0.0%	17.6%
Book stores	4	1	3	13	11	2	-69.2%	50.0%
Culture and support services	80	40	40	69	34	35	15.9%	14.3%
Design	42	30	12	36	28	8	16.7%	50.0%
Independent artists, writers and performers	21	20	1	21	20	1	0.0%	0.0%
Libraries and archives	1	1	0	2	2	0	-50.0%	0.0%
Motion pictures and video industries	5	-1	6	16	11	5	-68.8%	20.0%
Music stores	32	15	17	49	29	20	-34.7%	-15.0%
Museum and heritage sites	2	1	1	4	3	1	-50.0%	0.0%
Performing arts	11	6	5	11	9	2	0.0%	150.0%
Photography	151	91	60	136	85	51	11.0%	17.6%
Pottery and ceramics	2	0	2	5	3	2	-60.0%	0.0%
Printing	18	9	9	24	12	12	-25.0%	-25.0%
Publishing industries	19	6	13	21	11	10	-9.5%	30.0%
Radio and television	2	1	1	3	2	1	-33.3%	0.0%
Software Publishers	4	1	3	4	3	1	0.0%	200.0%
Sound recording	8	5	3	10	8	2	-20.0%	50.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Patterns, 2007, 2011

Like the broader creative enterprises, total (indeterminate and subtotal) creative-cultural enterprises in Wellington County declined, while employer (i.e. subtotal) enterprises increased. Growth of creative-cultural enterprises was led by design firms, culture and support services, and photography firms, while growth in employer enterprises was led by software publishers, performing arts, design, sound recording, and book stores (though it should be noted that each of these sectors accounts for only small levels of absolute growth). Larger subsectors of the creative cultural economy that grew include photography (17.6%), art dealers (17.6%), culture and support services (14.3%), and architecture (10.8%).

Growth in creative-cultural enterprises is a positive trend for Wellington County, as differentiated tourism attractions and quality of place assets can have significant impacts on the ability to attract visitors and new residents to the community. Though these industries do not seem to have as direct a bearing on the productivity and output



of the economy, they play no less of an important role in economic development based on their contributions to quality of place and attractiveness. As such, their growth and sustainability should be considered by economic development and tourism organizations in the County.

1.5 Industry Sector Analysis

1.5.1 Location Quotient Analysis

In order to determine the level and degree of business and industrial specialization, thus the economic diversity that may be developing in Wellington County, location quotients (LQs) have been calculated to identify and measure the concentration of industry/business activity by major sector and sub-sectors.

LQs are a commonly used tool in local/regional economic analysis. They assess the concentration of economic activities within a smaller area relative to the overarching region in which it resides. For the purposes of this study LQs have been calculated to compare the concentration of labour force and employment (i.e. jobs) within Wellington County (excluding the City of Guelph), relative to the Province of Ontario.

An LQ greater than 1.0 for a given sector indicates a local concentration of economic activity as compared to the overarching region (either Ontario or any other region) and may be an indication of competitive advantage with respect to the attraction of that industry sector. An LQ equal to 1.0 for a given sector suggests that the study area has the same concentration of economic activity as the overarching region. Finally, an LQ of less than 1.0 suggests that the community does not have a strong competitive advantage in that sector.

In theory, an industrial or business concentration that is greater than the overarching regional average may also represent the export base of the participating municipality (both in terms of products or services). Businesses that make up this export base may have chosen to locate in the community due to certain local or regional competitive advantages. These competitive advantages can be used to attract additional investment, in the same or complementary industries. At present, the most detailed and current data with which to calculate labour force and employment LQs to the industry subsector level is from the 2006 Census of Population, which has been used in this report. While a comparable assessment using the data from the 2011 Census will likely illustrate similar relative concentrations of labour force and employment against the provincial economy, further assessment will be needed at the subsector level once labour force information is released by Statistics Canada to identify any changes that have occurred through the most recent economic recession. For that reason, current Canadian Business Patterns data has been used to assess changes in the business environment over that time period.



Based on labour force LQs, the following industries in Wellington County show the highest relative concentration (compared to Ontario) of labour in 2006¹⁴:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (4.74)
- Manufacturing (1.41)
- Construction (1.30)

The LQ analysis using the labour force data reflects an economy that is heavily dependent on more traditional industries, such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction. In addition to these three sectors, management of companies and enterprises exhibited a high LQ but only represents 0.1% of the labour force compared to Manufacturing – 20.1%, Agriculture – 8.4% and Construction 7.7%.

The high LQ for the agricultural sector reflects the fact that there are 2,588 farms in the County covering nearly 75% of the region's entire land area. The region has a rich farming history and so it is not surprising to find that the farming subsector has an LQ of 5.23. Further, the large concentration of agricultural land and employment in Wellington is likely supporting other industries such as meat product manufacturing, animal food manufacturing and remediation and other waste management services; all of which also have LQs above 1.25.

The high LQ for the manufacturing sector is significant for the County, in that a strong manufacturing base is known to translate into labour or industry specialization. Between 2001 and 2006 the LQ for manufacturing as a whole increased, indicating that the manufacturing sector in Wellington County has declined less than the province as a whole. Three of the strongest manufacturing subsectors found in the County are: household appliance manufacturing (10.82), textile and fabric finishing and fabric coating (10.47), and agricultural, construction and mining machinery (7.7).

In addition to agriculture and manufacturing, the LQ analysis shows that the County is also strong in construction. Considered a local cluster, the construction sector is the third largest in Wellington County by labour force (3,595) and grew by 9.3% between 2001 and 2006. The growth in the construction sector is a positive sign as it reflects long term capital investment in the County in residential and commercial property.

FIGURE 31: LOCATION QUOTIENTS FOR 2-DIGIT NAICS INDUSTRIES, WELLINGTON COUNTY LABOUR FORCE, 2001 AND 2006

LQ Classification	2006	2001
High	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (4.74) Management of companies and enterprises(1.73) Manufacturing (1.41)	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (4.59) Management of companies and enterprises(1.77) Construction (1.38)

¹⁴ Management of companies and enterprises has an LQ of 1.73 but is too small as a share of the total labour force (0.2%) to be considered significant.



	Construction (1.30)	Manufacturing (1.27)
Average	Other services (except public administration) (1.17) Wholesale trade (1.12) Transportation and warehousing (1.03) Health care and social assistance (0.89) Educational services (0.88) Arts, entertainment and recreation (0.85) Retail trade (0.79) Professional, scientific and technical services (0.78) Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (0.77)	Wholesale trade (1.19) Other services (except public administration) (1.16) Transportation and warehousing (1.12) Educational services (0.95) Arts, entertainment and recreation (0.94) Health care and social assistance (0.83) Retail trade (0.82)
Low	Mining and oil and gas extraction (0.63) Utilities (0.75) Information and cultural industries (0.52) Finance and insurance (0.59) Real estate and rental and leasing (0.73) Accommodation and food services (0.71) Public administration (0.55)	Professional, scientific and technical services (0.73) Accommodation and food services (0.72) Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (0.66) Public administration (0.63) Utilities (0.63) Real estate and rental and leasing (0.58) Finance and insurance (0.54) Mining and oil and gas extraction (0.43) Information and cultural industries (0.40)

Source: OMAFRA, REDDI Data, 2001 and 2006

Similar to LQs by labour force, the LQs for employment (i.e. jobs) in Wellington County in 2001 and 2006 signal the local significance of the agriculture, construction and manufacturing sectors. In addition to those sectors, the LQ analysis identifies a local concentration of employment in the wholesale trade sector as well in 2006. This is likely as a result of the County's location and access to markets – centrally located along the Highway 401 corridor and offering larger-scale employment land opportunities and access to transportation providers - the County offers a competitive location for distributors. Employment in the sector across the County is particularly concentrated in food distribution, new automotive parts distribution, and agricultural/farm equipment and machinery.



FIGURE 32: LOCATION QUOTIENTS FOR 2-DIGIT NAICS INDUSTRIES, WELLINGTON COUNTY EMPLOYMENT BASE, 2001 AND 2006

LQ Classification	2006	2001
High	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (6.78) Management of companies and enterprises (1.87) Construction (1.66) Manufacturing (1.44) Wholesale Trade (1.30)	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (6.76) Construction (1.59) Wholesale Trade (1.32)
Average	Mining and oil and gas extraction (1.21) Transportation and warehousing (1.20) Arts, entertainment and recreation (1.20) Other services (except public administration) (1.09) Health care and social assistance (0.88) Accommodation and food services (0.87) Retail Trade (0.82)	Manufacturing (1.17) Other services (except public administration) (1.15) Arts, entertainment and recreation (1.12) Transportation and warehousing (1.10) Accommodation and food services (0.90) Retail Trade (0.89) Health care and social assistance (0.88) Educational services (0.84)
Low	Professional, scientific and technical services (0.66) Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (0.65) Educational Services (0.60) Real estate and rental and leasing (0.49) Information and cultural industries (0.41) Public Administration (0.29) Utilities (0.29) Finance and insurance (0.29)	Mining and oil and gas extraction (0.68) Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (0.62) Professional, scientific and technical services (0.58) Real estate and rental and leasing (0.44) Public administration (0.36) Information and cultural industries (0.32) Finance and insurance (0.31) Management of companies and enterprises (0.25) Utilities (0.23)

Source: OMAFRA, REDDI Data, 2001 and 2006

1.5.2 Business Patterns Assessment

Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Patterns Data provides a record of business establishments by industry and size. This data is collected from the Canada Revenue



Agency (CRA). The business data collected for Wellington County includes all local businesses that meet at least one of the three following criteria:

- Have an employee workforce for which they submit payroll remittances to CRA; or
- Have a minimum of \$30,000 in annual sales revenue; or
- Are incorporated under a federal or provincial act and have filed a federal corporate income tax form within the past three years.

The Canadian Business Patterns Data records business counts by “Total”, “Indeterminate” and “Subtotal” categories. The business locations in the “Indeterminate” category include the self-employed (i.e. those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners). It should be noted that the Canadian Business Patterns Data uses the CRA as a primary resource in establishment counts; therefore, businesses without a business number or indicating annual sales less than \$30,000 are not included. The population of these small, unincorporated businesses is thought to be in the range of 600,000 in all of Canada.

A detailed review of the business patterns data for the period between 2007 and 2011 for Wellington County (excluding the Guelph census subdivision) provides an understanding of the growth or decline of businesses over the five-year period and the key characteristics that define the County’s business community. When combined with the broader industry analysis, the business patterns information will assist in understanding the key industry opportunities for the Wellington County.

Understanding the trends in business growth in the community provides valuable insight into the shape that future growth and investment in the county might take. It also provides an indication of where the priorities of the county should lie, especially with regards to program development and delivery, and strategic planning.

In terms of concentration, the following sectors (identified in Figure 32) exhibit the highest proportion of total (i.e. subtotal and indeterminate) business locations in Wellington County in December 2011:

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (1,737 businesses, 22.2% of total)
- Construction (980 businesses, 12.5% of total)
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (760 businesses, 9.7% of total)
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (592 businesses, 7.6% of total)

However, when the indeterminate category (self-employed) is removed, the four sectors with the highest business establishment proportions are:

- Construction (509 businesses, 16.5% of subtotal)
- Other Services (except Public Administration) (335, 10.9% of subtotal)
- Transportation and Warehousing (322, 10.4% of subtotal)
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (311, 10.1% of subtotal)



FIGURE 33: NUMBER OF BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS BY INDUSTRY AND SIZE, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2011

Industry	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-199	200-499	500 +
11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,737	1,426	311	229	45	26	8	1	2	-	-
21 Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	11	3	8	3	2	-	3	-	-	-	-
22 Utilities	9	1	8	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-
23 Construction	980	471	509	300	126	50	25	7	1	-	-
31-32 Manufacturing	311	111	200	76	48	24	23	10	11	8	-
41 Wholesale Trade	326	149	177	89	35	27	21	3	2	-	-
44-45 Transportation and Warehousing	537	215	322	141	88	54	29	6	4	-	-
48-49 Retail Trade	331	214	117	72	17	15	9	4	-	-	-
51 Information and Cultural Industries	49	24	25	17	7	-	1	-	-	-	-
52 Finance and Insurance	378	272	106	65	16	9	13	2	-	1	-
53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	592	511	81	62	11	2	6	-	-	-	-
54 Services	760	495	265	205	30	21	9	-	-	-	-
55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	284	259	25	17	1	1	2	4	-	-	-
Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	308	147	161	93	34	20	9	4	-	1	-
61 Educational Services	74	38	36	26	4	6	-	-	-	-	-
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	243	65	178	84	37	29	14	8	3	3	-
71 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	125	77	48	28	9	4	5	-	2	-	-
72 Accommodation and Food Services	211	62	149	40	35	39	25	6	4	-	-
81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	532	197	335	230	74	27	3	-	-	-	1
91 Public Administration	14	2	12	2	2	3	2	2	1	-	-
Total	7,812	4,739	3,073	1,782	622	361	207	57	30	13	1

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Patterns, 2007, 2011

Overall, business establishments in Wellington County are overwhelmingly characterized by small companies and enterprises that employ less than 10 people. In 2011, excluding the businesses consisting of the self-employed – which themselves are small enterprises – there were 1,782 businesses (58% of the subtotal) that employ 1-4 people. An additional 622 businesses, or 20% of the subtotal, employed 5-9 people. The five industries with the highest number of establishments employing fewer than 10 people were:

- Construction (426 businesses)
- Other Services (except Public Administration) (304 businesses)
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (274 businesses)
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (235 businesses)
- Transportation Warehousing (229 businesses)

It is also important to note the scarcity of medium and large firms in the County's economy. This is of interest because small, medium and large firms are generally believed to provide different economic functions within an economic region. Small firms are generally seen as the major source of new products and ideas, while large firms typically develop as products become more homogenous and firms begin to exploit economies of scale. The lack of mid-size and large business in Wellington County could be a concern, as these firms are typically more export oriented and



generate higher operating surpluses¹⁵. Thus the support of small firms, so that they may expand to medium and large businesses, and the attraction of medium (and where possible large) firms should remain priorities in the County's economic development plans.

It is also valuable to examine the growth in businesses by industry, so as to better understand areas of emerging opportunity and importance. Wellington County's economy provides an indication of the growth in business establishments by two digit NAICS codes from 2007 to 2011. The industries that have experienced the highest rate of growth (exclusive of the self-employed, and those industries with 25 or fewer establishments) include:

- Information and Cultural Industries (47.1%)
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (26.3%)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (14.8%)
- Other Services (except Public Administration) (12.8%)

FIGURE 34: NUMBER OF BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS BY INDUSTRY, WELLINGTON COUNTY (GUELPH EXTRACTED), 2007 AND 2011

Time Period		December 2007			December 2011			2007-2011	
Industry (NAICS)		Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	Total	Indeterminate	Subtotal	% Change Total	% Change Subtotal
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,898	1,616	282	1,737	1,426	311	-8.5%	10.3%
21	Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	8	1	7	11	3	8	37.5%	14.3%
22	Utilities	18	3	15	9	1	8	-50.0%	-46.7%
23	Construction	990	522	468	980	471	509	-1.0%	8.8%
31-32	Manufacturing	418	169	249	311	111	200	-25.6%	-19.7%
41	Wholesale Trade	370	179	191	326	149	177	-11.9%	-7.3%
44-45	Transportation and Warehousing	572	266	306	537	215	322	-6.1%	5.2%
48-49	Retail Trade	400	259	141	331	214	117	-17.3%	-17.0%
51	Information and Cultural Industries	51	34	17	49	24	25	-3.9%	47.1%
52	Finance and Insurance	351	257	94	378	272	106	7.7%	12.8%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	487	412	75	592	511	81	21.6%	8.0%
54	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	753	512	241	760	495	265	0.9%	10.0%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	327	298	29	284	259	25	-13.1%	-13.8%
56	Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	293	147	146	308	147	161	5.1%	10.3%
61	Educational Services	68	35	33	74	38	36	8.8%	9.1%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	193	38	155	243	65	178	25.9%	14.8%
71	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	125	87	38	125	77	48	0.0%	26.3%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	206	73	133	211	62	149	2.4%	12.0%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	504	207	297	532	197	335	5.6%	12.8%
91	Public Administration	12	-	12	14	2	12	16.7%	0.0%
Total		8,044	5,115	2,929	7,812	4,739	3,073	-2.9%	4.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Patterns, 2007, 2011

15 <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0027m/2011069/part-partie1-eng.htm>



Overall, the number of business establishments (reporting employees) in Wellington County increased by 4.9% from 2007 to 2011, or from 8,044 establishments to 7,812 establishments. The largest absolute increase in number of establishments was in the Real Estate and Rental and Leasing sector which added 105 businesses from 2007 to 2011. The largest absolute decrease was in Agriculture which lost 161 establishments over the same period.

In supporting future growth and investment in Wellington County, it is essential to understand and support the needs of the small businesses that appear to dominate the economy in most sectors. This is not to suggest that the County and its partners disregard the larger business community. Quite the opposite, the large businesses within the manufacturing and other sectors should continue to be a focus of retention and expansion activities. However, in light of existing research and trends which suggest that an overwhelming percentage of new business investment in a community is derived from companies already located there, and a significant amount of job creation and innovation is increasingly being driven by small to medium sized businesses, small to medium sized businesses should continue to be a significant focus of economic development programming.

2 Infrastructure Assessment

2.1 Broadband Telecommunications Services

In today's economy access to broadband telecommunications is a basic economic necessity. High speed and reliable access to the internet has the potential to affect every business. Whether a business is looking to sell goods online or simply participate in community forums to learn about trends in the industry, internet access can directly provide a competitive edge.

In 2009, Wellington County and the Province of Ontario announced plans to build local broadband infrastructure for residents and businesses in rural parts of the County. The plan was made possible by the Rural Connections Broadband Program (Rural Connections) run by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). The program, which was launched in 2007, has invested \$31.4 million in 54 rural broadband projects to date. In addition to the investment by the Province, the telecommunications sector agreed to fund up to two thirds of the cost of each municipal project.

Since announcing the project, \$3 million has been invested in Wellington County to build broadband infrastructure. The infrastructure, designed and built by Xplornet included 18 towers with high speed wireless capabilities. Figure 34 and Figure 35 show the county's broadband coverage before and after the project was completed.



Despite the investment, Wellington County still struggles with broadband coverage. OMAFRA funding was only available for areas of the County that previously had 75% coverage. As a result there are now parts of the County, such as Erin, where broadband is accessible to only some residents of the municipality.

The recent launch of Xplornet's 4G satellite is expected to improve transmission by eliminating the blockage or degradation of signals. It should be noted that satellite communications can often cost more than competing technologies. Though the new investments will likely increase coverage across the underserved areas of the County, it is possible that problems with access and availability will still persist in rural areas – which may have negative potential impacts on the continued development of the rural creative economy.

FIGURE 35: BEFORE, BROADBAND COVERAGE 2008

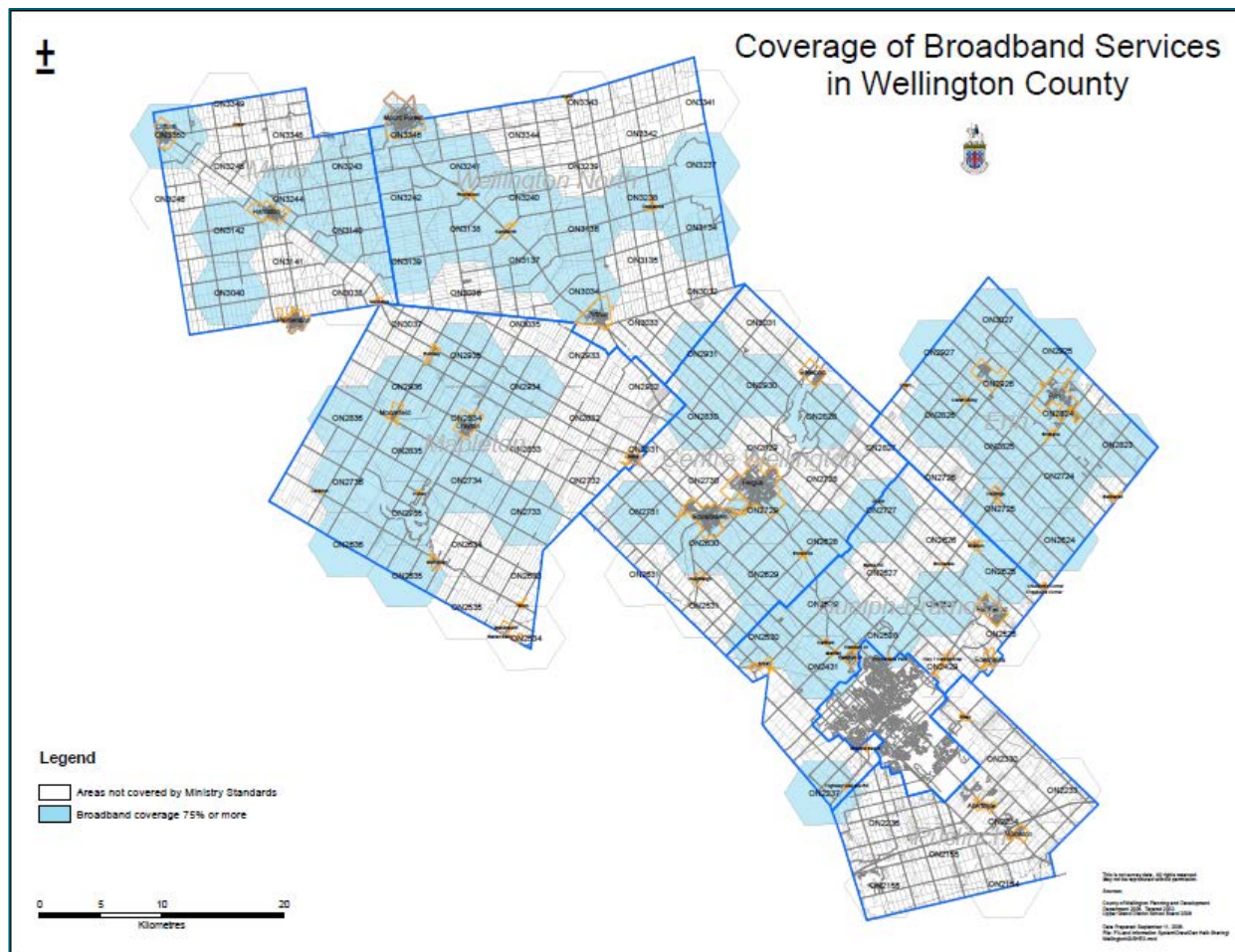
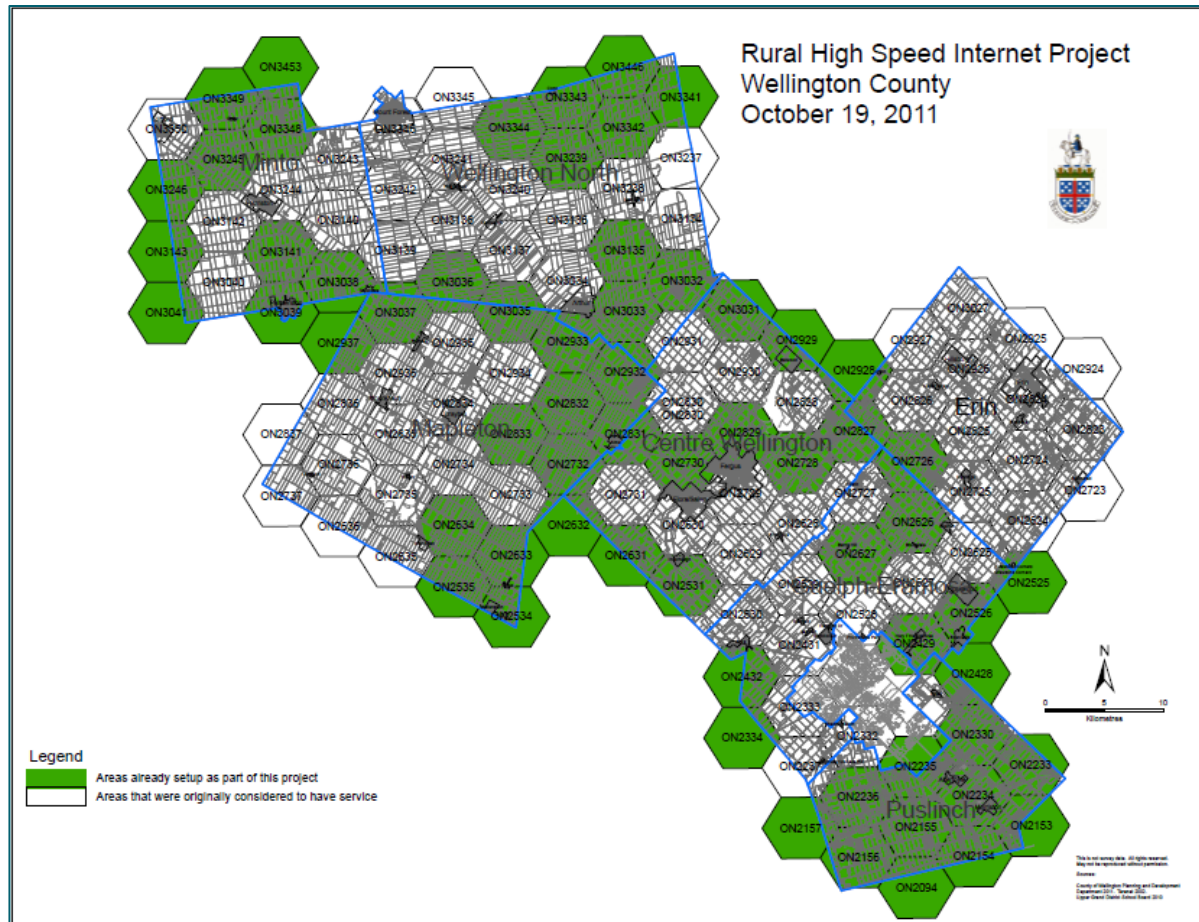




FIGURE 36: AFTER, BROADBAND COVERAGE 2011



2.2 Transportation Linkages

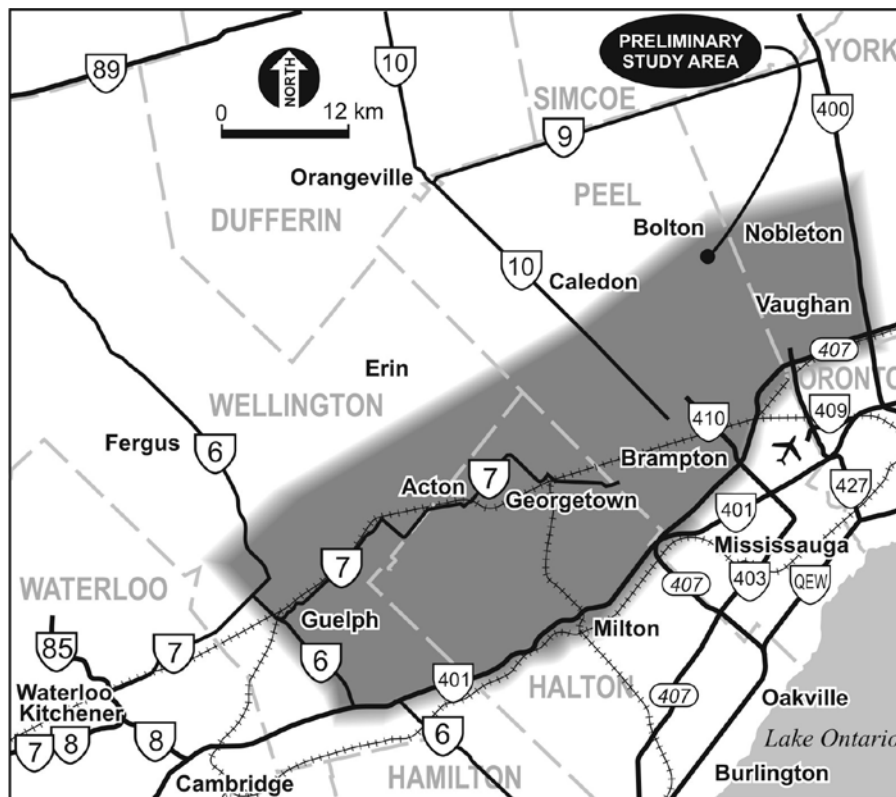
The Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) has grown from a Toronto-focused employment area to a multi-centred region with several areas of economic activity. The concentration of people and employment in areas like Guelph-Kitchener/Waterloo has resulted in a greater dispersion of travel and greater demand on the transportation system. As the GGH has grown, congestion has become an ever greater problem affecting the movement of both people and goods. It has been estimated that congestion costs the Greater Toronto Area \$3.3 billion dollars annually, and another \$2.7 billion in lost opportunities for economic growth. To manage the growth and infrastructure needs of the GGH under strong projected growth, the Province of Ontario released the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Places to Grow)* in 2006. The plan provides strategic direction and policies for managing the growth and development of the entire region for the next 30 years.



Under the Growth Plan, Guelph/Wellington and Waterloo Region, is projected to be part of one of fastest growing economic centres in the province. Over the next 20-25 years 750,000 new job opportunities are expected to be created in Wellington County, Waterloo, Halton, Peel and York. In Wellington county (including the City of Guelph) employment is expected to reach 158,000 people by 2031; a 60% increase from 2001. That increased density of both population and employment in the area presents some unique challenges.

A GTA West Corridor was defined in the Growth Plan, which includes parts of the regions of Waterloo, Wellington, Hamilton, Halton, Peel and York (Figure 36), in order to handle this population and employment growth.

FIGURE 37: GTA WEST CORRIDOR MAP



The GTA West Corridor is currently served by eight provincial highways (four 400-series highways): Highway 400, Highway 401, Highway 410, Highway 6, Highway 7, Highway 10, and Highway 407. While each of these serves an important function to the region, only HWY 401, HWY 6 and HWY 7 cross parts of Wellington County. Below is a brief description of the current highway network affecting travel and goods movement across Wellington County, as well as a discussion regarding the municipal road network.

- **HWY 401** - is a six lane freeway extending across the south end of the County. It has been estimated that around HWY 6, the 401 carries upwards of 100,000 vehicles daily.



- **HWY 6** - is a major North-South artery connecting Guelph-Wellington and HWY 401 to HWY 403 at the City of Hamilton, and is estimated to carry approximately 45,000 vehicles per day. The section north of Guelph carries approximately 13,000 vehicles daily including 1,100 trucks. While the majority of HWY 6 is four lanes, it has had to remain two lanes from Puslinch to Morriston due to property constraints. The County has been in discussion with Ministry of Transportation to create a by-pass that would address safety and congestion issues. In addition the HWY is not aligned north and south of Highway 401, requiring travelers to use the 401 as a connecting link.
- **HWY 7** – connects the urban areas of Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Rockwood, Acton and Georgetown. While the highway stretches all the way past Peterborough, the province recently transferred the section running from Woodbridge to Markham to York Region.
- **Municipal Road Network** – The county road network throughout Wellington connects the municipalities and provides access to the highways listed above. Residents and businesses of Wellington can access Highway 6 via County Roads 30, 124, 50, 37 and 34, which act as the county's main east-west roads. County Road 124, is of major importance as well. Formerly part of the provincial highway network, it runs through the City of Guelph eventually connecting to Highway 9 in Peel Region. The primary north-south roads in Wellington include Watson Road and County Roads 39, 38, 29, 27, 24 and 125.

Based on projections developed by the Province of Ontario, both HWY 6 and 7 are expected to experience significant levels of congestion by 2031, which has detrimental effects on the movement of goods, regional tourism, and economic development for the region.

In response to the transportation challenges facing the GGH, the Province of Ontario announced a major transportation plan, MoveOntario 2020 in 2007. The plan identified that travel across the GGH had become increasingly difficult due to congestion. When it was announced the \$17.5 billion dollar investment by the province and federal government was expected to create a total of 175,000 jobs, 920 KM of new rapid transit, and eliminate 300 million automobile trips from Ontario roads. Among the various projects announced as plans for the future were expansions to Highways 6 and 7. The province has completed environmental assessments for both projects, but neither project has been given an anticipated time of completion. The projects are outlined below:

- **Expansion of Highway 7 Between Kitchener and Guelph** - In 2007 an environmental assessment was completed for a new 18 km stretch of highway connecting Highway 86 in Kitchener to the Hanlon Expressway (Highway 6) in Guelph. The project, which is expected to support economic development opportunities between Waterloo Region and Guelph/Wellington County, has been delayed due to a lack of provincial funds. Originally slated to be completed by



2014, the earliest completion date is now 2020 according to a recent resolution released by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

- **HWY 6 (Freelton to Guelph)** - The Ministry of Transportation conducted an Environmental Assessment of HWY 6 to create a new 16.9 km route connecting the City of Hamilton to the Wellington County boundary. In the 2005 Guelph/Wellington Transportation Study, four recommendations were made to improve the Highway: widening of the highway northerly up to Maddaugh Road in the Township of Puslinch; construction of a new four-lane roadway from Maddaugh Road to HWY 401, construction of a connecting road and interchange north of the Morriston settlement area, and changes to the Brock Road interchange; the extension of realigned HWY 6 to HWY 401 and the reconstruction of the Hanlon Expressway (Highway 6 North) and Highway 401 interchange; and improvements to the Hanlon Expressway from HWY 401 to a new connecting road interchange north of Wellington Road 34. Currently this project is not funded by the Ministry of Transportation.

The current road infrastructure in Wellington County may not be sufficient to support local economic growth across the entire County, as well as accommodate continued population growth without new forms of inter-regional transportation to alleviate congestion. Further, the differences in road infrastructure - both quality and capacity – and proximity/access to markets between the southern municipalities and the northern municipalities may result in different economic development issues and opportunities in different areas of the County. Accessibility via road and other forms of transportation are a key consideration for companies looking to either relocate or expand in an area. Companies have to consider the reliability of transportation in the area and how the local transportation options affect the size of its potential employee pool.

2.3 County-wide Employment Lands

Wellington County is expected to accommodate a significant amount of new employment over the next 20 years. However, if Wellington County's employment growth is to keep pace with forecasts, the County requires a marketable inventory of available and shovel-ready employment lands to accommodate that growth.

Provincial policy, including, in particular, the Greenbelt Plan and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Places to Grow) directly impact where development can occur throughout southwestern Ontario. The Greenbelt Plan has essentially created a natural and agricultural buffer between the GTA and southwestern Ontario through Halton Region. With development pushing westward into southwestern Ontario, Wellington is strategically positioned to attract and support large scale development.



FIGURE 38: EMPLOYMENT LAND IN WELLINGTON COUNTY, ACRES, JULY 2011

Municipality	Total Designated		Vacant ¹⁶ , Developable ¹⁷			
			Total		Served	
	Highway Commercial	Industrial	Highway Commercial	Industrial	Highway Commercial	Industrial
Centre Wellington	101	801	130	206	30	72
Erin	43	262	40	89	40	89
Guelph/Eramosa	3	792	4	394	0	0
Mapleton	44	419	3	129	2	12
Minto	97	597	11	180	9	79
Puslinch	3	876	0	245	0	0
Wellington North	119	899	31	327	22	91
Wellington County (Total)	410	4,646	219	1,570	102	343

Source: Wellington County, Planning Department, Township of Centre Wellington Planning Department, 2012

Wellington County's employment land supply generally appears robust, with approximately 1,570 acres of vacant and developable industrial land available and 219 acres of vacant developable highway commercial land. The majority of industrial land though (78%) is rural industrial or dry industrial accommodated primarily in Guelph/Eramosa or Puslinch Township. Only 343 acres across the entire County – the majority in Wellington North, Erin, Minto, and Centre Wellington – are serviced or have services available at the lot line (Figure 38).

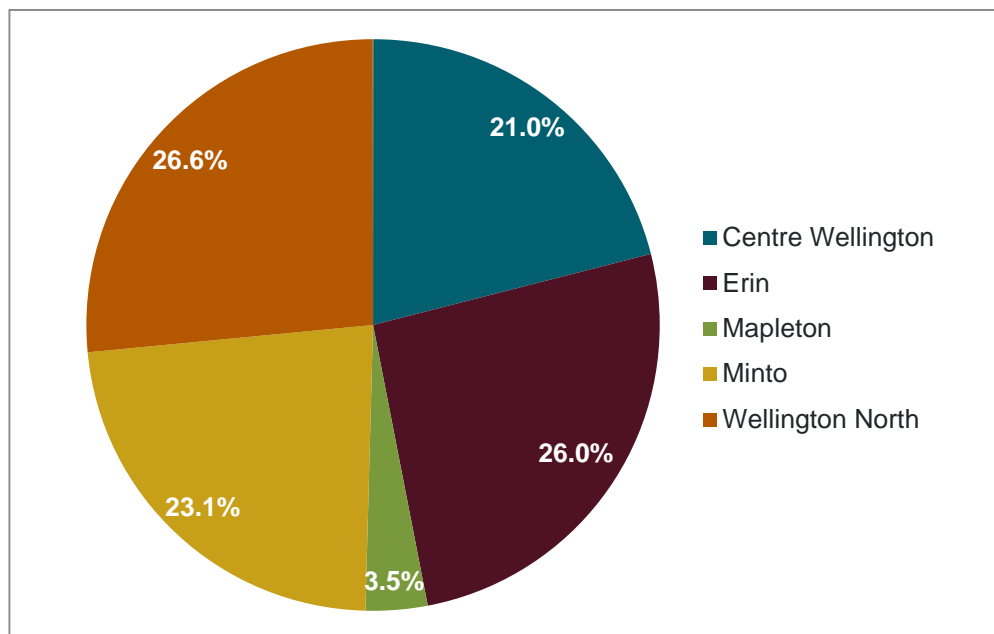
The supply of vacant and serviced highway commercial employment lands follows a similar pattern, with Erin, Centre Wellington, and Wellington North holding the majority of the supply, and limited serviced opportunities in Minto and Mapleton. Both Puslinch Township and Guelph/Eramosa Township have no vacant, serviced highway commercial lands, though Guelph/Eramosa has a limited supply of vacant highway commercial lands (approximately four acres) in the rural area.

¹⁶ Vacant means a building permit had not been issued as of July 2011.

¹⁷ Developable means either of two things, as defined by the Planning Department at Wellington County: 1) where information was available or where a detailed site-specific assessment was conducted, planning staff excluded known areas for infrastructure, sloping grades, etc. or 2) a 20% reduction factor was applied to large parcels to exclude land for infrastructure requirements such as roads and stormwater management facilities, where detailed information was not available and a site-specific assessment was not conducted.



FIGURE 39: SHARE OF SERVICED VACANT/DEVELOPABLE INDUSTRIAL LANDS, WELLINGTON COUNTY, 2012¹⁸



Source: Wellington County, Planning Department, Township of Centre Wellington Planning Department, 2012

Approximately 26% of the county's serviced industrial land is available in Wellington North and is owned by the local municipality. This land available in Arthur and Mount Forest is serviced and accessible, but over an hour's drive north of the main freight corridor along the 401. While it represents a healthy supply of vacant and marketable lands, the distance from major markets along the Highway 401 corridor may be a detriment.

Many of the local municipalities have no serviced industrial land, including Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch. Despite this, both communities still hold a major share of the total vacant developable industrial land in the County at 25.1% and 15.6% respectively. Both are also ideally situated on Highway 401 and on land adjacent to the City of Guelph. The County, in conjunction with the local municipalities should work to understand the feasibility of servicing these lands, the ideal lot configurations and sizes, and the range of business uses and building forms that may be appropriate for those lands – either as dry or serviced industrial-commercial. There are many industrial uses that need limited servicing and these municipalities are ideally suited to attract large scale businesses of this type (e.g. distribution, warehousing, or assembly/packaging). Attracting commercial office-type uses, even at a low density, may be slightly more difficult in unserviced areas though.

¹⁸ Please note, both Puslinch Township and Guelph/Eramosa Township contain no vacant, serviced industrial lands, and have been left out of the figure.



Consultation with business owners and developers identified another issue related to land development in the County, particularly at major gateways to the City of Guelph. County lands adjacent to Guelph were largely dismissed as priorities for future development, due to a one kilometre development buffer around the City of Guelph which has been ratified in both Wellington County's and the City of Guelph's Official Plans. In the past, this policy has presented challenges to development in the adjacent municipalities of Puslinch and Guelph/Eramosa, especially with regards to location and design of buildings within these adjacent areas.

This same policy may pose challenges in the large industrial area along Whitelaw Rd. at Highway 124 in Guelph/Eramosa zoned rural industrial. Regulatory approvals are in place to attract businesses to the site and approximately 30 acres are presently available. However, the City of Guelph's current stance on the development of lands adjacent to their boundary, as well as the potential re-routing of Highway 124 in the area, may pose challenges to marketing available employment lands.

Overall, the County initially appears to have a healthy supply of employment lands that are strategically positioned to garner significant interest from developers looking to move west along the Highway 401 corridor. The supply of serviced employment lands though, especially in close proximity to major infrastructure and highway corridors, is quite limited. It is important that the County work with local municipalities to understand the feasibility of servicing additional parcels of land that are currently un-serviced, but also that Wellington County work with the City of Guelph to ensure a mutually beneficial compromise is reached on the development of lands adjacent to the city's boundary, and any potential efficiencies driven by sharing infrastructure costs are generated.



Appendix I: Public Consultations

Online Survey – Summary

As part of the effort to engage the community and consider the perspective and opinions of local businesses and residents an online survey was conducted. The survey was structured around four main topics: Business Characteristics; Business Growth and Operations; Wellington County's Assets, Opportunities and Challenges; and Wellington County's Economic Development role.

This section of the report summarizes the results of an online survey of businesses and community members across Wellington County. There were a total of 338 respondents to the survey, of which 202 completed every question in the survey. The detailed results and tables follow the summary.

Business Characteristics

In general, the survey received responses from a wide range of business types, the majority of which had been in operation for over ten years and employed fewer than 20 people. The sectors with the highest representation by survey respondents included public administration, other services, accommodation and food services, and arts, entertainment and recreation companies. Noticeably absent from the sample was the agriculture sector which did not have a single respondent.

Business Growth and Operations

The businesses that responded to the survey were optimistic about the next two years with 55.5% of the respondents indicating that they expect their performance to be “somewhat stronger” or “much stronger” than the previous two years. While many held a positive outlook, only 39.5% indicated that they had plans to upgrade or expand their operations in Wellington County. When respondents were asked to choose from a list of ten criteria and pick which one has the greatest importance to ensuring the future growth of their businesses, the top three answers were: availability and quality of high-speed telecommunication, affordable energy costs, and access to business services. The factors that businesses were most satisfied with in the County were the availability and quality of high-speed telecommunications, proximity to supply and/or market chains, access to business services, and access to financing.

Wellington County Assets, Opportunities and Challenges

It is believed that the County's location along the 401 between Waterloo and Toronto is an advantage that allows the local municipalities to maintain their small town and sense of community while still offering urban amenities. The challenges and opportunities are closely linked, with many of the biggest opportunities, such as improving infrastructure, talent attraction and retention, and economic development



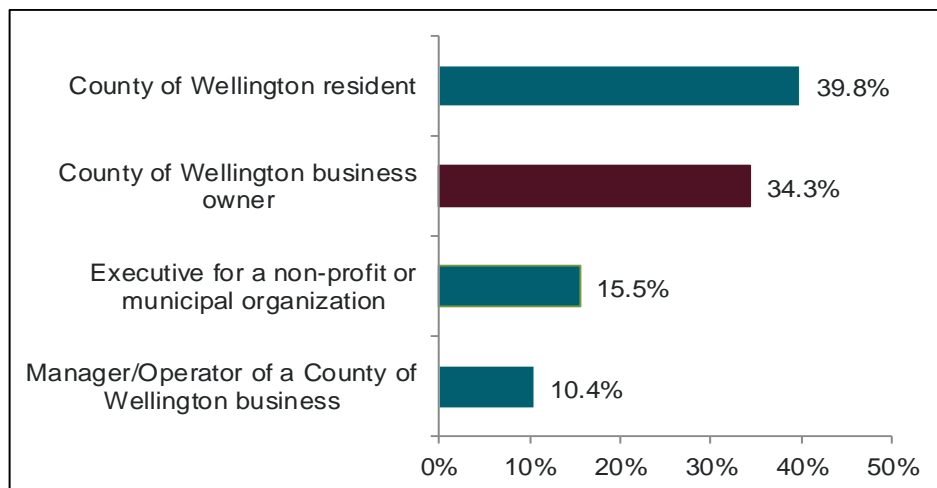
and tourism planning being a direct response to perceived issues and problems experienced by respondents.

Wellington County's Economic Development Role

Over the next five years, respondents believed that the County as a whole must do more to create an environment that attracts both workers and businesses, with respondents suggesting assistance related to business networking, workforce development, and marketing. Improvements to local infrastructure, (such as building and improving high-speed internet service, water, energy and the transportation infrastructure) was one of the most important issues upon which the economic development office should focus. Along with new infrastructure, the responses clearly indicated that efforts need to be made to streamline assist with reducing costs to operate a business in Wellington County.

Online Survey – Detailed Findings

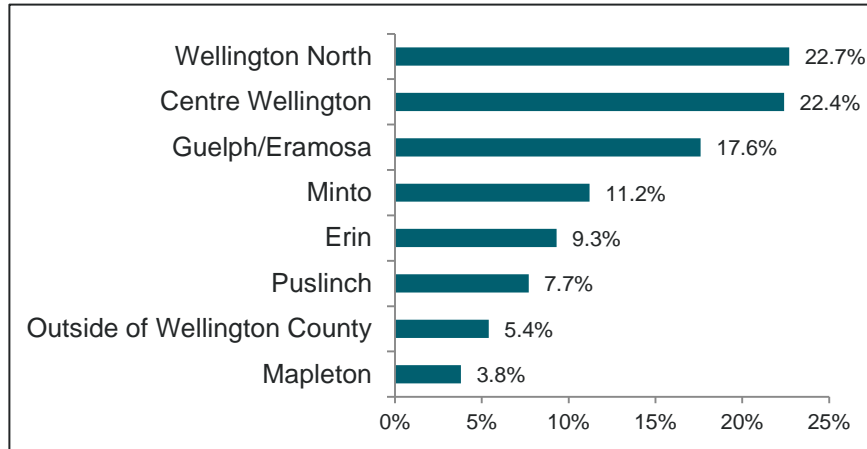
1. ARE YOU RESPONDING AS A:



Other responses: Wellington County employees, Township employees and investors from surrounding area.

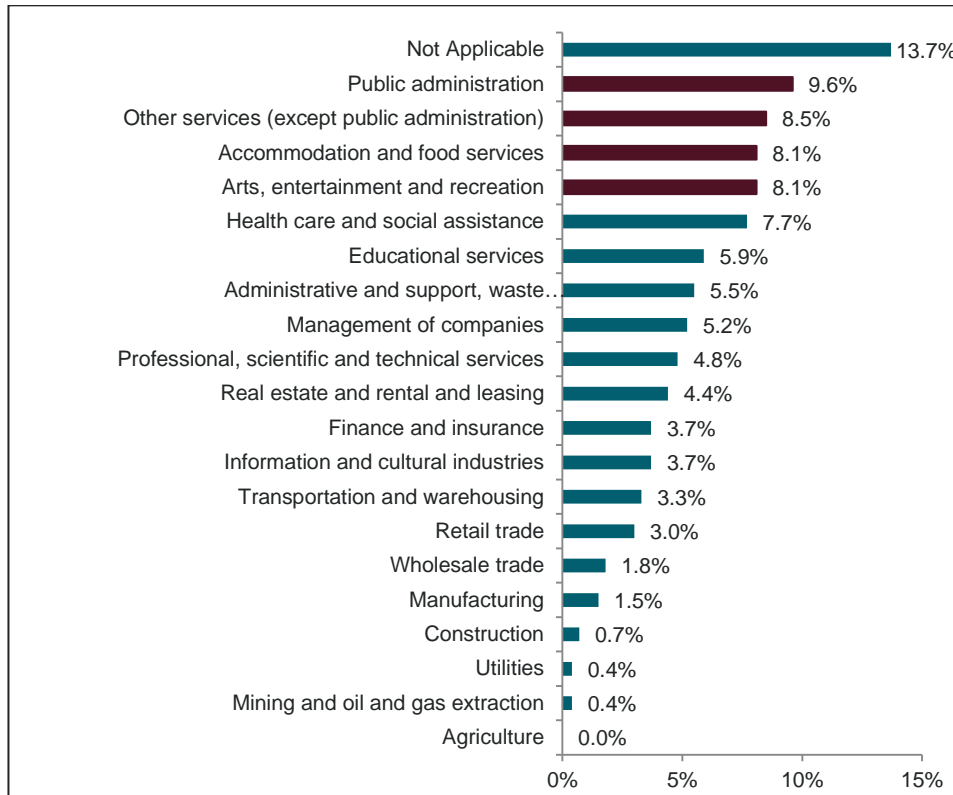
2. WHAT MUNICIPAL AREA ARE YOU OPERATING YOUR ORGANIZATION FROM?

The majority of responses came from three municipalities: Wellington North, Centre Wellington and Guelph/Eramosa.

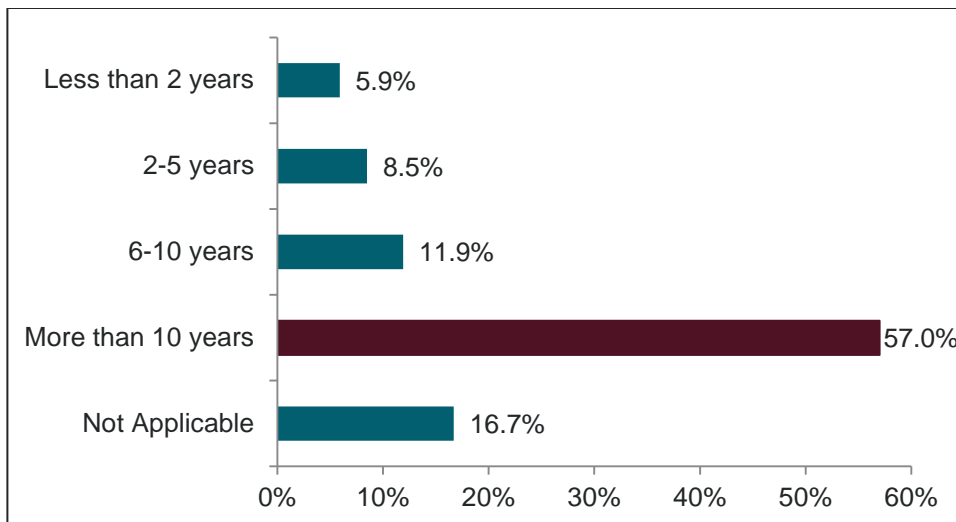


3. WHAT IS YOUR PRIMARY TYPE OF BUSINESS?

The online survey received responses from a wide range of business types. Unfortunately there were no businesses from the agricultural sector represented in the survey, though this may be a reflection of some respondents choosing to categorize themselves within value-added areas of the sector (e.g. tourism, manufacturing). Among the types of businesses most represented in the survey were Public administration (9.6%), Other services (8.5%), Accommodation and food services (8.1%) and Arts, entertainment and recreation (8.1%).

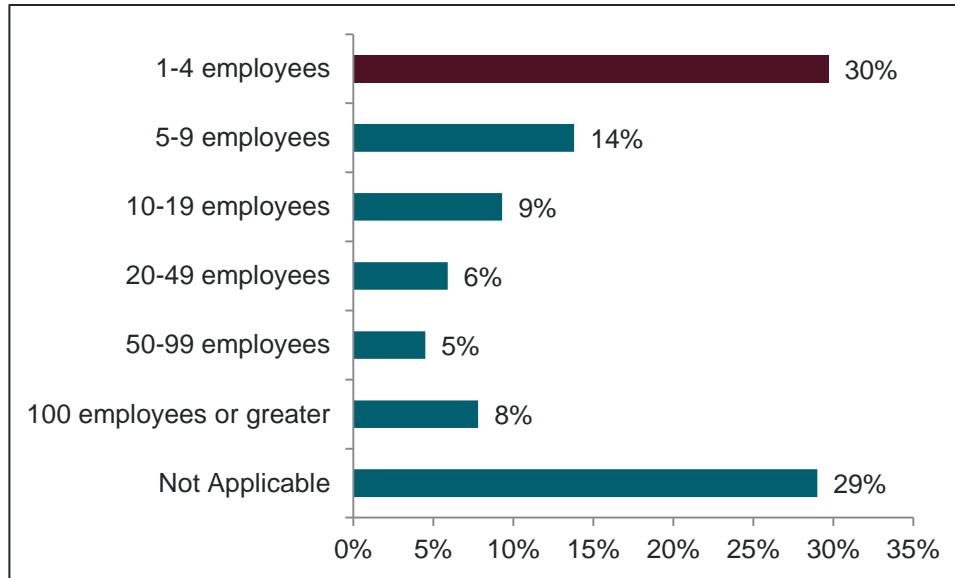


4. HOW LONG HAS YOUR BUSINESS OPERATED IN WELLINGTON COUNTY?

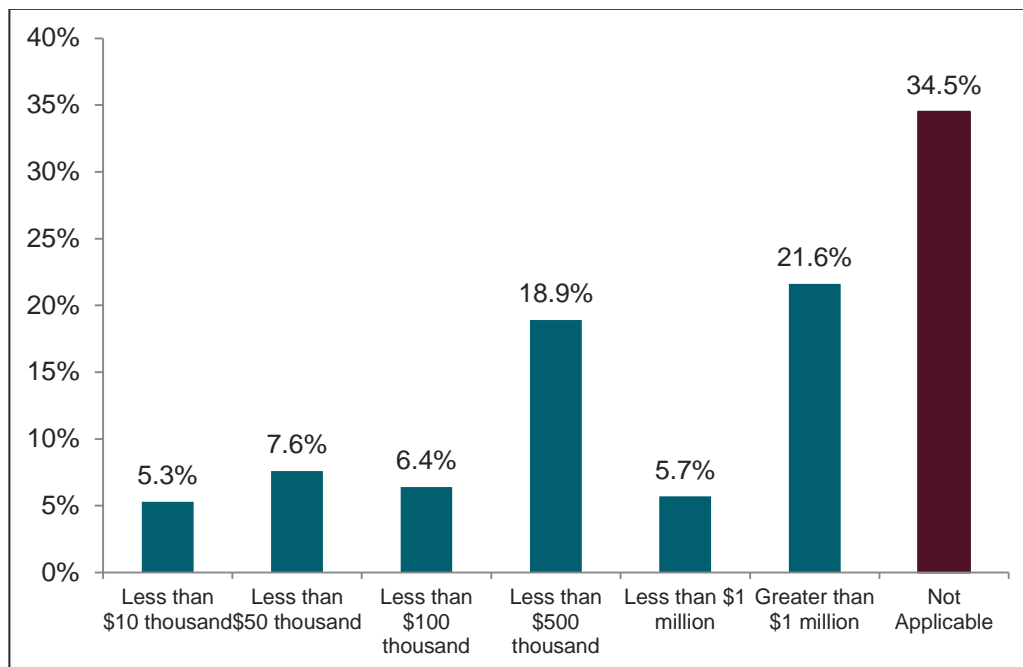




5. HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU EMPLOY? (FULL-TIME OR FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT)?

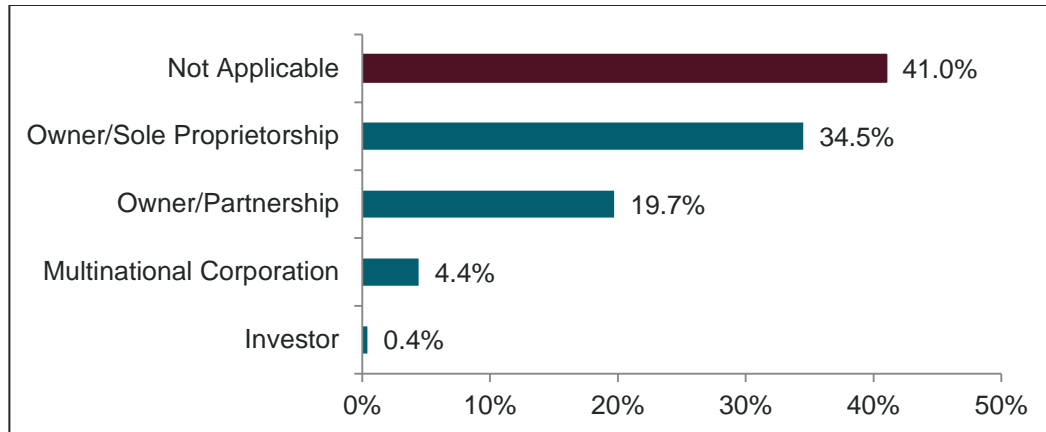


6. WHAT WAS THE APPROXIMATE GROSS REVENUE FOR YOUR COMPANY IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR?





7. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST CLASSIFIES YOUR BUSINESS OWNERSHIP?



Other Responses: Not-for-profit, Cooperative, Government Corporation.

8. USING A SCALE FOR 0 TO 10 WHERE 0 IS “NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT” AND 10 IS “VERY IMPORTANT”, PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA TO INDICATE THE LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE EACH ONE HAS, IN ENSURING THE GROWTH OF YOUR BUSINESS.

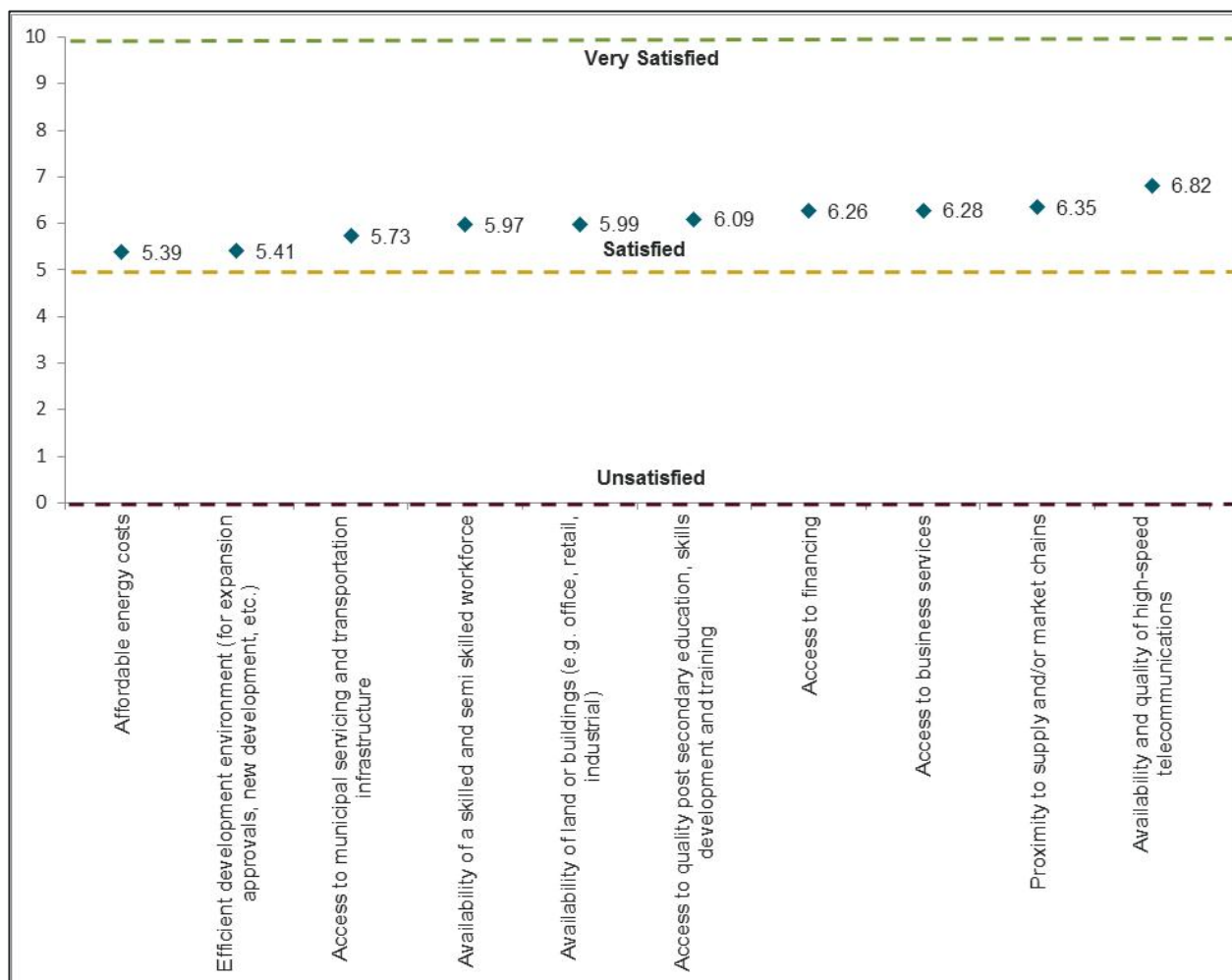


The local business community identified availability/quality of high-speed telecommunications, energy costs, access to business services, availability of a skilled



workforce, and an efficient development environment as the highest priority criteria for supporting business growth. This has strong implications on the economic development strategic plan. While the County can do little about the cost of energy, the business community has identified infrastructure (e.g. telecommunications), business services, skilled workers, and efficient permitting and approvals processes as priorities. Thus the economic development strategic plan for the County must address each of these areas to ensure support is targeted at the areas relevant to Wellington County's business community (e.g. workforce development, infrastructure investment, promotion of existing business support programs).

9. USING A SCALE FOR 0 TO 10 WHERE 0 IS "NOT AT ALL SATISFIED" AND 10 IS "VERY SATISFIED", PLEASE RATE EACH CRITERION TO INDICATE THE LEVEL OF YOUR SATISFACTION WITH WELLINGTON COUNTY AS A PLACE TO OPERATE A BUSINESS.



The operation factors that respondents indicated being the most satisfied with were high-speed telecommunications infrastructure, proximity to market, and access to



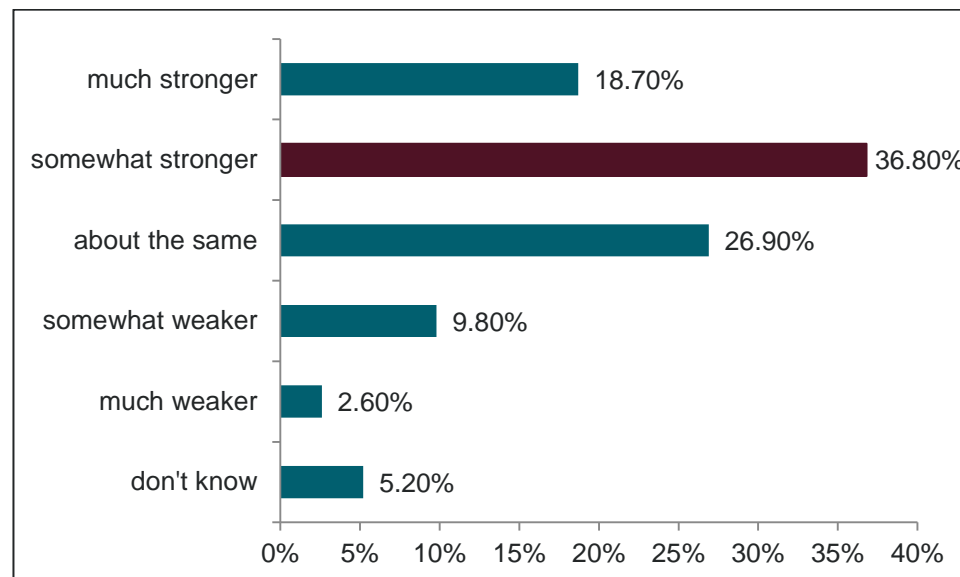
business services. From an economic development strategic planning process, these factors can be promoted to prospective investors and businesses.

While none of the operation factors rated below five on the scale, respondents were most unsatisfied with municipal servicing and transportation infrastructure, the development environment, and energy costs. With the exception of energy costs, these factors should represent areas in which the economic development strategic plan directs resources – with the intent of improving local satisfaction with each of these factors.

10. WHAT IS THE PRIMARY REASON FOR LOCATING YOUR BUSINESS IN WELLINGTON COUNTY?

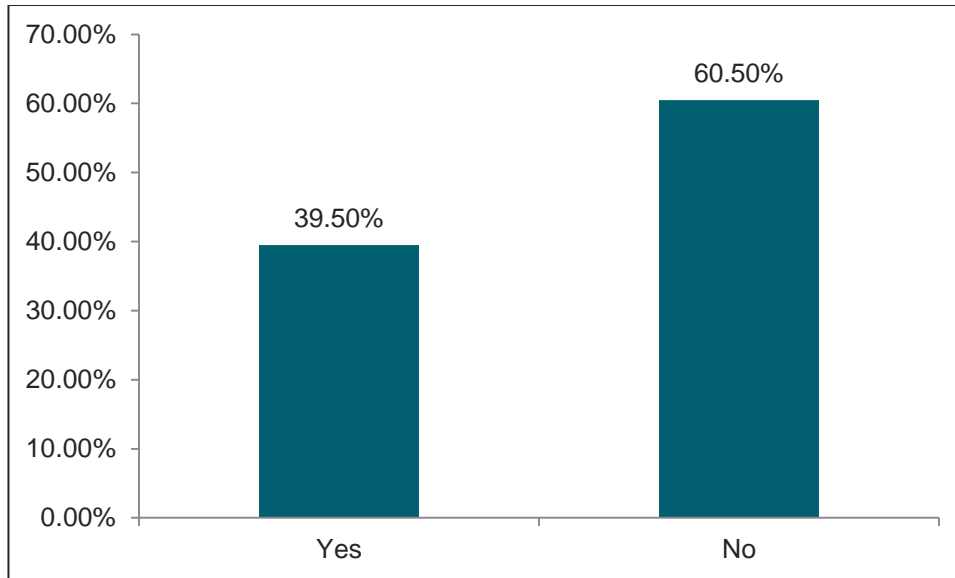
Common Responses: The primary reason for locating in the Wellington County identified by the 146 respondents was the proximity to where they live. Other responses included the availability of agricultural land and the affordability of office space.

11. HOW DO YOU EXPECT YOUR COMPANY TO PERFORM IN THE NEXT 2 YEARS COMPARED TO THE LAST 2 YEARS?



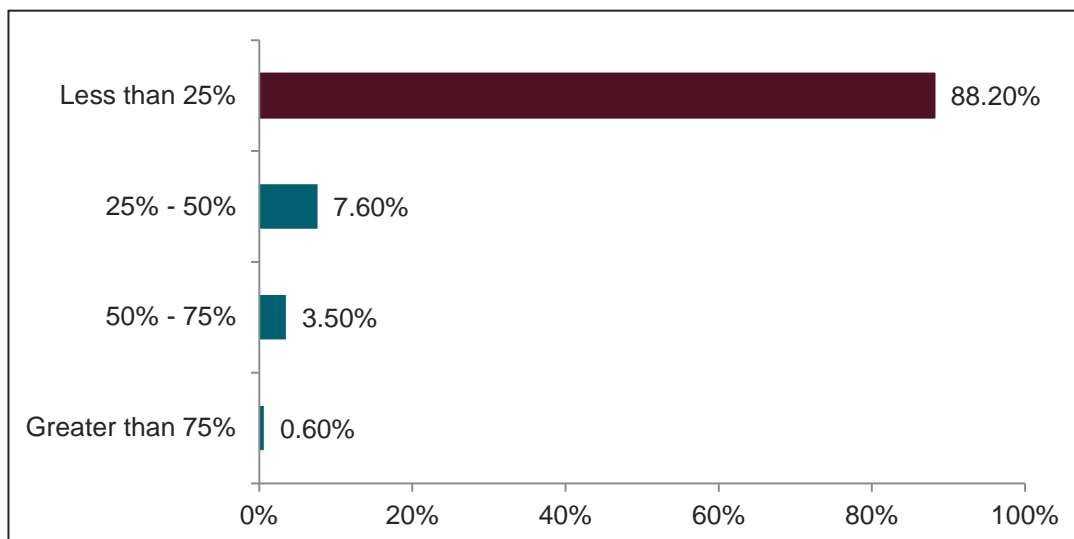


12. DO YOU HAVE PLANS TO UPGRADE/EXPAND YOUR WELLINGTON COUNTY OPERATION?



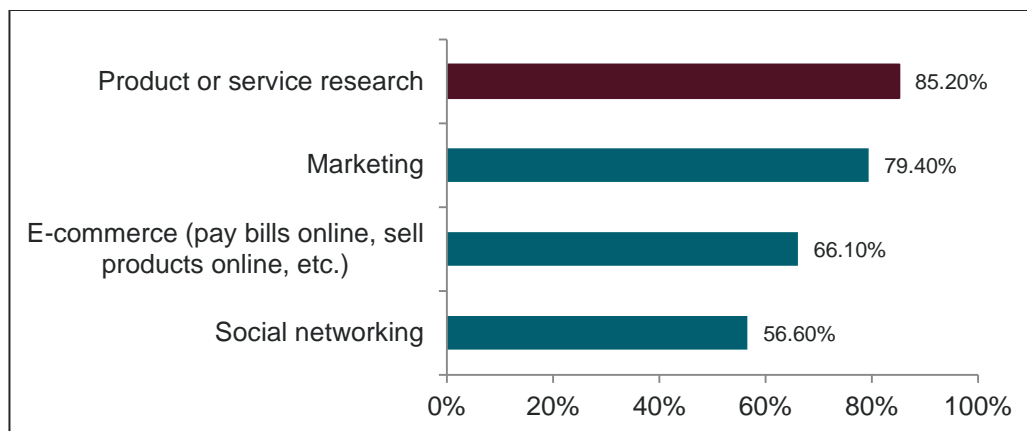
The majority of respondents do not have plans to upgrade/expand their operations in Wellington County at this time. Answers to the question ranged from two years to five years with many responses identifying the conditions under which an expansion would occur. Business owners intending to upgrade or expand their business are planning on doing so to meet demand, employ additional staff, save costs or establish new locations.

13. WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR ANNUAL SALES ARE FROM AN EXPORT MARKETS (OUTSIDE OF ONTARIO)?



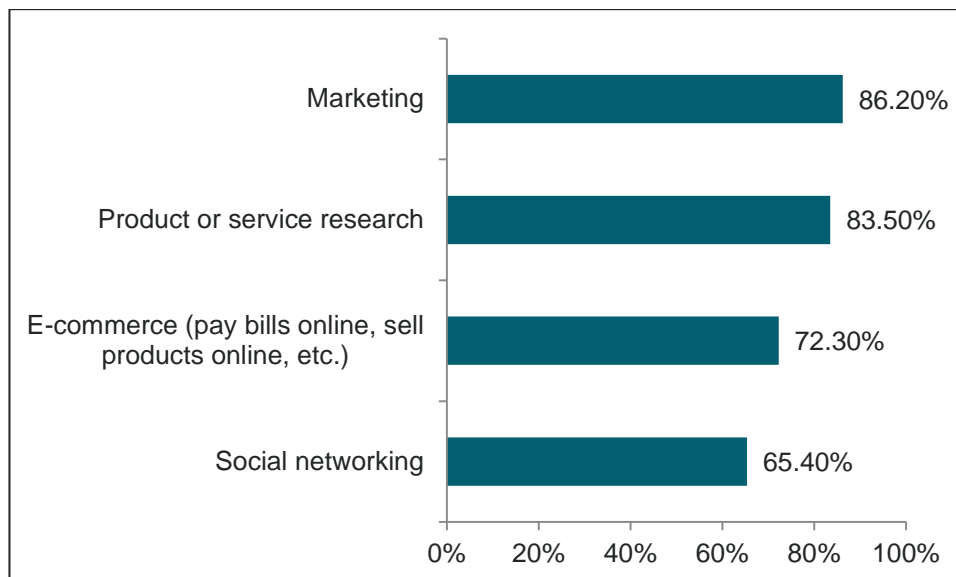


14. HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY USE THE INTERNET FOR YOUR BUSINESS?



Other Responses: Communication and software development

15. HOW DO YOU PLAN ON USING THE INTERNET FOR YOUR BUSINESS IN THE FUTURE?



Other Responses: Communication and advertising

16. HOW DO YOU GENERALLY FEEL ABOUT WELLINGTON COUNTY AS A PLACE TO LIVE?

The majority of the 178 responses to the question had a favourable opinion of living in Wellington County. Despite the positive opinions, there were a number of responses that were critical of the infrastructure and taxes in the County.

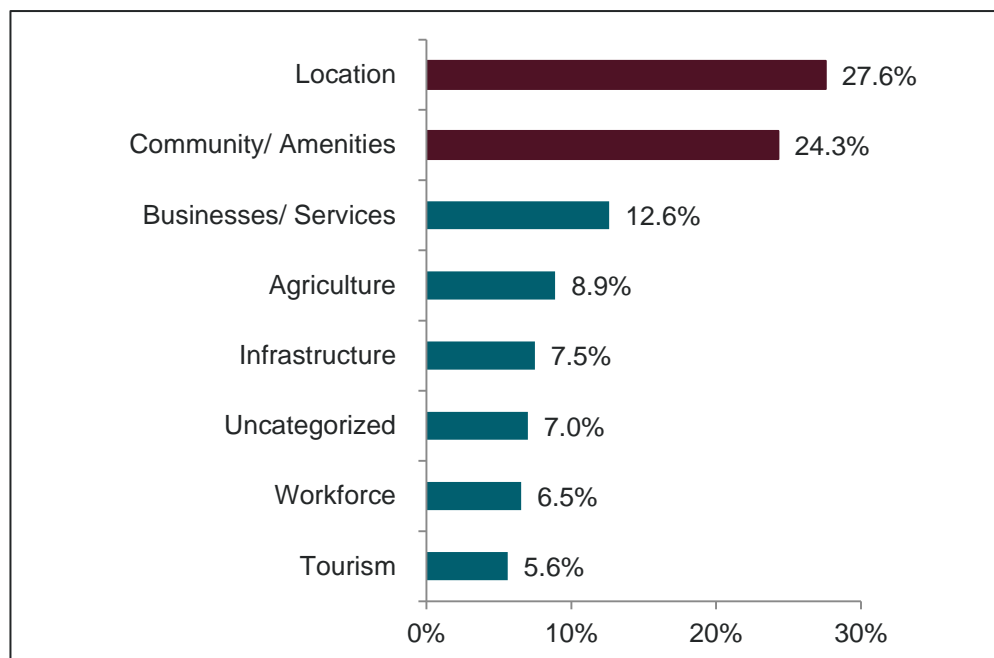


The table below highlights some of the positive and negative responses to the question:

Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitudes of people – friendly, welcoming A wonderful place to be in, with access to the rural countryside and any service necessary In the country, but close to Toronto Great Place to raise a family and grow a business Diverse, safe, low traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property taxes are too high for services provided Roads are maintained poorly Great place to live but does not seem economically competitive Somewhat rural and lacking services Zoning makes it difficult to get severances

17. WHAT DISTINCTIVE ASSETS OR ADVANTAGES DOES WELLINGTON COUNTY HAVE IN WHICH TO BUILD A STRONG ECONOMY?

The 152 responses to the question were categorized in order to better understand the results. The most distinctive assets or advantages for Wellington according to the respondents are location, community/amenities and business/services (each of which is described below).



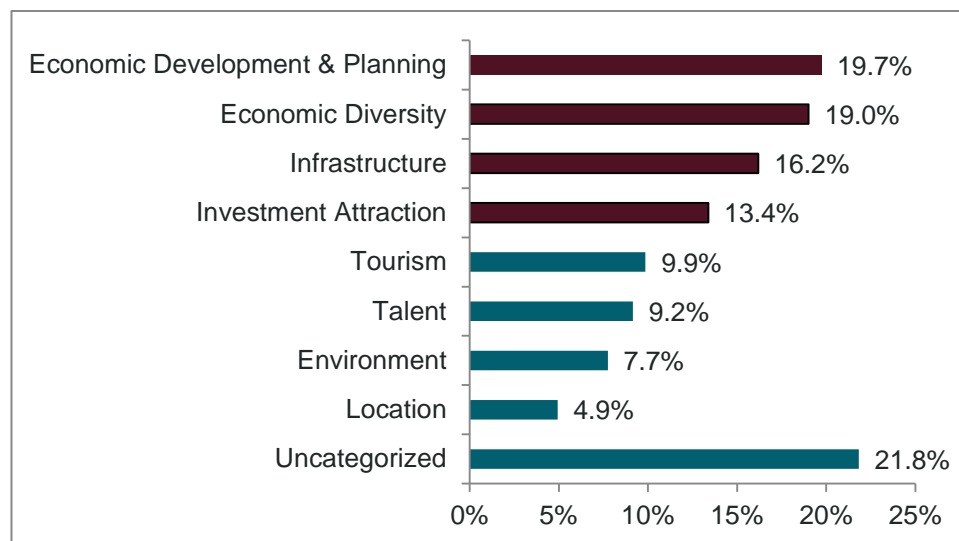


Location: Located along the 401 between Waterloo and Toronto, Wellington is within an hour of major business markets, universities, airports and amenities.

Community/Amenities: Communities across Wellington have a small town charm, heritage, and rich culture. The people are friendly, have a strong sense of community and believe in protecting the environment. In close proximity to the GTA, the County has maintained its natural environment and offers excellent quality of life amenities to attract businesses.

Businesses/Services: The diversity of the economic base and the services already available from both the private and public sector are seen as a distinct regional advantage. Wellington has strong manufacturing and agricultural sectors. A large number of small businesses suggest that products and services are supported by owners who take pride in their work and community.

18. WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE TO STRENGTHEN WELLINGTON COUNTY'S REGIONAL ECONOMY?



- **Economic Development & Planning:** Wellington can strengthen its regional economy by providing greater support to businesses. This support can take many forms, but generally includes better support for small and medium size businesses and improvements to the business environment by decreasing property taxes. As the regional population continues to grow, it is important that economic development function and planning work hand-in-hand to ensure that development protects the natural and cultural heritage and environment in the County.
- **Tourism:** The tourism sector is an important economic sector in Wellington. There are opportunities to increase the number of tourist visits to the region. To increase tourist traffic, Wellington needs to do a better job of promoting its amenities to both residents and visitors. The communities should also focus on improving their



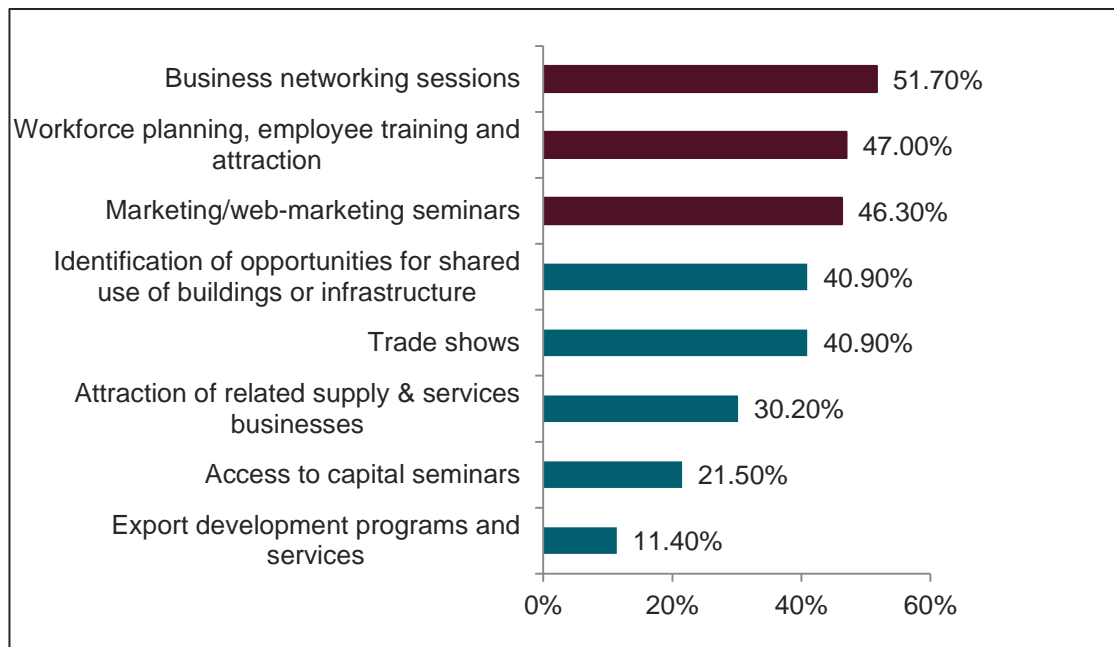
downtowns, the availability of parking, and on adding additional festivals and events.

- **Infrastructure:** Improving the current infrastructure and planning for growth are important to supporting future economic development. To support economic growth Wellington needs to improve access to water, sewers and energy, as many areas are not services or currently under services. Transportation infrastructure remains a concern for residents and businesses. Given the size the of the County, there is an opportunity to be a role model for other regions by developing an efficient rural transportation system that links the small communities together and eliminates the need for multiple services. It is important that planned highway expansions and improvements to bridges and other infrastructure move forward in a timely fashion as well.
- **Investment Attraction:** As the County grows there is an opportunity to strengthen the economy by pro-actively attracting new investments to create jobs in the County. Wellington has much to offer in the way of available land, access to labour and proximity to major markets. A consistent, long-term marketing effort is need to enhance Wellington's image among potential business investors.
- **Talent:** Wellington County has problems with attracting and retaining young workers. The County should strengthen ties with post-secondary institutions and strengthen workforce development activities aimed at attraction and retention of talent. There are jobs in manufacturing and other sectors of the economy that are currently available but employers are struggling to find qualified applicants.

Many of the responses identified multiple opportunities to strengthen Wellington's regional economy including Economic Development & Planning, Economic Diversity and Infrastructure. Over one quarter of the responses were not categorized. These uncategorized responses recommended improving networking opportunities, some form of telecommuting and a regional communications strategy.



19. PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE WELLINGTON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE COULD ASSIST YOUR BUSINESS SECTOR?



20. WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES YOU WOULD LIKE WELLINGTON COUNTY TO ADDRESS IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

Over the next 5 years, respondents believe that the three most important economic development issues facing Wellington County are:

- 1) Labour Force and Business Attraction:** The County must do more to create an environment that attracts young workers and allows them to raise their families in Wellington. Part of attracting young workers is ensuring that there are quality job opportunities for them in the region. Economic development efforts need to be focused on creating a virtuous circle of attraction and retention of both workers and employers.
- 2) Infrastructure:** Without improvement to infrastructure, communities will not be able to support economic growth. The County should actively promote the interests of local businesses across the county, including by building and improving high-speed internet service, water, energy, and quality transportation infrastructure as necessary.
- 3) Business Costs:** Economic development should focus on reducing the cost of doing business in Wellington County. More specifically, development fees, municipal taxes, energy costs, and real estate costs were noted.



21. DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS¹⁹?

- Seek out the opinions of local business leaders and engage them on important issues.
- Promote economic development services.
- The area should discourage the 'not in my backyard' mentality and stop fighting progress in green fuels, just for the sake of resisting change.
- The County, its Council and its staff are doing a very good job, generally. County councillors need to take some what they learn at the County level back to their local councils and municipal staff to help them to improve. Most local governments in Wellington simply are not as prepared for the future as they should be.
- Performance measure should be developed to track economic development across the Wellington County.
- Economic Development is all about making Wellington County "the" place to be. If we can focus on that, strong people and the right types of businesses will come. We need to have clear objectives for economic development and, most importantly, develop a core of individuals that become the "go to" team whenever an inquiry is made to the County.
- Economic development is too important to be left as an optional activity for municipalities. Just as the County Official Plan directs local Official Plans, the County Economic Development Strategy should direct local strategies. The County should set some minimum standards to ensure that each municipality does a good job of promoting itself, and that the efforts are coordinated to promote the regional economy.

¹⁹ Please note, comments and quotes from the survey have been edited and condensed for the purposes of reporting out to the community, in order to ensure anonymity of survey respondents.



Community Focus Groups

The project team, in association with Queen's Executive Decision Centre, conducted community consultations in Wellington County in June and July, 2012. The purpose of the sessions was to solicit input and advice from the broader community on economic development. The five groups explored the following questions:

1. What unique strengths and assets does the County have that will attract and sustain investment in the future?
2. What new opportunities are there to stimulate business development, investment, and interest in the county? Are there any quick wins?
3. How do we make this happen in Wellington County? Suggest 1-2 specific actions (e.g. projects, tools) for each opportunity.
4. What is getting in the way of stimulating economic development in the county?

This section identifies the key findings generated from the community focus group component of the project.

Assets and Strengths

- Small town “feel” and lifestyle with access to urban amenities.
- Location, location, location: Proximity to large urban centres, good transportation routes. With growth in tri-city area, we are well positioned (“the middle of everywhere”).
- Good agriculture - Most fertile Class 1 land/soil in Ontario.
- Natural and recreational areas: Rivers, conservation areas, recreational space.
- Diverse topography and beauty/Natural heritage (e.g. Drumlins, Bruce Trail proximity, escarpment, Grand river historical transportation routes, Rockwood Conservation Area, Elora Gorge)
- Beautiful downtowns and well maintained heritage buildings: Elora, Fergus, Erin
- Proximity to excellent research and education institutions.
- Access to good healthcare.
- Strong commitment to sense of community from residents ...wonderful volunteer sector.
- Fast Internet infrastructure - in certain areas (Minto, North Wellington).

Economic Development Opportunities

- Business retention and expansion program – remove barriers to growth (e.g. red tape, regulations, legislation)
- Business attraction strategies (e.g. incentives)
- Marketing and branding – showcase area and tourism
- Embrace local food and distribution network
- County infrastructure development/renewal
- Reach out to international investors to showcase County
- Partner with local universities, specialty niche areas (e.g. food, health care, agriculture)



- Structure/framework for better collaboration across municipalities on economic development
- One stop shop for potential investors
- Satellite post-secondary institutions and programming

Barriers and Challenges

- Lack of strategy with a reasonable timeline to accomplish goals.
- Lack of leadership at county-wide level - a strong advocate to get it organized and one vision for all Municipalities within the County.
- Lack of Economic Development personnel/champion in every part of the region. (e.g. Erin)
- Red tape, barriers, and often an unwillingness to help at the municipal level.
- Level of trust and competitive nature between municipalities, though progress being made.
- Transportation – automobile dependency, several bottlenecks within County.
- Lack of understanding that economic development is part of the political leadership role.
- Awareness and education: Different understandings of what economic development is - ED means different things to different people.
- (Lack of) fair taxes County-Wide.
- High cost of rent for businesses.



Appendix II: Summary of Interviews with Mayors and CAOs

Centre Wellington

- Boundaries need to be seamless, need to understand the big picture
- Too many issues at the local level trying to influence the broader perspective
- Need a strong regional brand – no collective identity for all players – no unified voice to communicate identity
- Lots of success here – but there is a driving need for a County/regional perspective
- SCOR is a big region, SWEA too – both benefit from provincial money - Wellington County is a large geography but does not have a strong voice
- Concerns with who sits on the Economic Development Committee – who's on it and why
 - Need people who know about grants approvals process, have or are building relationships with MEDI, OMAFRA
 - Big knowledge curve still evident
 - Learning about SWEA, SCOR
- County needs to understand:
 - The product
 - The vision
 - Need material to present
 - How do we work with Guelph, the university
- Need to understand how our small businesses fit into the global supply chain
- Clarity around the role of Centre Wellington and others in economic development – as compared to Wellington County
- Programs need to be leveraged regionally so we don't duplicate efforts and waste money
- Value proposition
 - Location is exceptional
 - Substantial rural area
- Have planning in house – very important to understand where you are going
- Municipal Council is an asset – very fiscally conservative
- Financial sustainability is a concern – rural areas are straining us
 - Reduced taxation on rural agricultural lands
 - Slot revenues at risk
 - Gas tax still in place
 - Plans for a business park between Fergus and Elora will be challenged as a result
- Local economy is pretty healthy but we need to understand building permit activity at a County level
- County strategy needs to provide support for:
 - BR+E



- Downtown Revitalization
 - Marketing
 - Investment Attraction
 - Agricultural Expertise
 - Industrial Directory
- Need to understand the pros and cons of the model for delivering economic development – arm's length corporation vs. internal department
- If there was a corporation then consideration may be given to having the County take over some responsibilities for tourism

Township of Puslinch

- Historically rural/ agricultural
- Today a lot of people have moved out of urban area and want to experience 'rural' living in large homes but they also expect urban standards for services
- A lot of heritage elements, a very historical community
- Businesses came because of cheap land and no municipal services requirement
 - Warehousing, logistics
 - Limited manufacturing
 - Other services
- Need to expand employment lands as there is not much left – but we have a narrow focus because of lack of services
- 7th largest producer of gravel in Ontario
- Can the County advance the Hwy 6 by pass or improvements to the interchange with 401
- Can the County buy and develop employment land
- Not capitalizing on the 401 from an investment attraction perspective or a workforce attraction perspective
- Change is coming to the agricultural community as there is a lack of support for equine farming
 - Not realizing the impact on farmers who grow the hay
 - Other businesses that support other aspects of equine industry may also suffer
- Competitive market and investment attraction must be done collectively
- How do we share the tax burden though
- Need to attract small businesses/spinoffs from universities – need a focus on creative professionals
- If there is an investment lead how do we handle/manage it
 - How fast
 - One window/valet service
 - Customer service approach with other departments needed
- How do we deal with infrastructure needs, debt load, development charges – need to deal with financial sustainability



Township of Guelph Eramosa

- One of challenges is the lack of an electronic business directory – don't know who's here
- Need better engagement with the business community
- Have a great range of natural/heritage assets
 - Guelph Lake (attracts a lot of festivals)
 - Trails system and continuing to acquire lands and associated heritage
 - Martin Field House
 - Class 1, 2 and 3 lands
- Yet still 45 minutes to Yorkdale Shopping Centre
- Availability of undeveloped industrial land in proximity to urban areas, but there are challenges to service
- Need to protect existing tax base
- Trying to acquire and bring additional industrial land on line – reality is we can't have any more residential, need to have commercial and industrial in order to diversify tax base
- Doing a parks and recreation master plan
 - Including a community garden
- Rockwood is a major urban area for township – major investment is also being attracted
- Tourism attracted to Rockwood Conservation Area – but signage is a big issue
- Working on trails development
- Need to identify linkages between the university and the County's agricultural activity/opportunity
 - Can we facilitate discussion between agriculture and UG related to commercialization research/product development on farmland
- How are we addressing the growing seniors population that is emerging in the county
- County OP needs to provide greater flexibility in industrial development/designation
- Need more flexibility in agriculture – decline of equine industry could have serious implications, need to consider secondary uses in agricultural areas
- Places to Grow requirements will be a challenge – can the County influence the density allocations
- Need to have dedicated economic development person locally, need a valet service for investors
- Need a lead protocol with the County

Town of Minto

- Family oriented community
- Small tax base has challenges and needs to grow 4-5% each year in order to maintain current operating level
- High speed internet is here



- Need to have the same across the County
- TG Minto (automotive) employs 500 people
- Viable downtowns need to be a concern for attracting and keeping people
- Minto has city quality infrastructure in a rural setting
 - Recreation, pool, fire, water/sewer, cultural amenities, medical clinic
 - Partnerships have emerged as a result
 - Tannery park partnership with Kinsmen
- Community partnerships will be needed in the future but an aging population is putting this at risk as communities are losing their volunteer base
- Cultural plan complete and actively looking at incubation opportunities
- RED funding for downtown revitalization – Clifford, Harriston, Palmerston
- Need to stop giving tax rebates on empty properties and rewarding absentee landlords
- Hosted an open house for all available commercial properties that was very successful
- Labour force is a challenge – 4% unemployment means businesses having a difficult time attracting workers
- Limited by age, skilled trades still in demand
- Retaining youth is an issue - what about apprenticeships, how do we get our youth interested in these opportunities
- Three universities on doorstep – how do we capitalize on them along with the colleges
- How can we keep youth/attract youth to farming
- How do we leverage Mennonite community, how do we engage them in economic development
- Changing patterns of immigration – what can be done to attract more new Canadians to area
- Transportation and highway improvements are needed
- County needs to communicate information for future growth – roads needs and expansions to accommodate industrial growth from the 401 to the north part of the County
- Downtown revitalization is a big opportunity – look at the ‘spruce the bruce’ initiative
- Need to complete cultural mapping on a regional level
- Need to get away from competing with each other, we all benefit from investment
- Economic development dollars need to consider what the ‘region’ will benefit from

Township of Wellington North

- Some diversification is happening
 - Strong local manufacturing
 - Strong sense of community and a good volunteer network at the local level



- Balanced growth in terms of residential/non-residential
- Haven't grown much lately, but haven't lost anything either
- Good infrastructure but costs coming – water infrastructure, bridges, roads
- Not a question of do we spend but when do we spend
- Carrying capacity is limited because of current debt load
- Low unemployment
- Strong Mennonite base of farming - this is good and bad for the community
- Proximity to Breslau/Waterloo (45 minutes) Hanover (30 minutes)
- Strong location for manufacturing but labour force availability is an issue
 - Cost is low
 - Labour has the needed skills
 - Outside of influence of unions
 - Proximity to 401
- Need the County to be a strong advocate/voice for local and regional issues
 - Website, marketing, festivals and events guide, collaboration with other partners, branding etc
- Need to deal with the structure of delivering economic development
- What are the guiding principles around how County economic development will operate
 - How do we make this work
- Vacant buildings – what do we do with them, tax rebates are ineffective
- Can the County bring attention to this issue

Town of Erin

- Hamlets are located in the greenbelt therefore constrained
- Settlement servicing master plan being undertaken
- 300 acres looking to be added with one owner – will double the size of Erin
- High percentage of community out-commuting because of proximity to GTA
- Predominantly rural in nature and don't want to see growth – dealing with a 'put it in Erin' mentality
- Perceived to be safe community
- Transitioning from rural to urban/rural
 - Need affordable housing
 - Need services
 - Need to keep youth
- One small serviced industrial park
- Housing prices are perceived as high not able to attract families, don't have the range of options needed to attract
- Built a medical centre/clinic and attracted a tim hortons
- Get calls for secondary uses in rural area and for transportation warehousing
 - Trailer storage, outside storage – not high value
 - Continue to get enquiries about dry industrial land
- Would like to see the County provide economic development services to Erin



- Need to map the Town's cultural assets – this is something the County could help with

Township of Mapleton

- Strong agricultural heritage
- Future opportunities for agriculture relate to streamlining operations, local markets, higher productivity
 - What about supply chain opportunities, need to understand better
- Some manufacturing
 - Make home hardware products
- A lot of farms are also manufacturing - predominantly Mennonite (Simeon Bonham – SMB Manufacturing)
- Some shipping from these farms goes around the world
- Doing some on farm tours
 - There is a need to look at these opportunities as a way to expand farm operations
- Serviced industrial land is available to support these expansions but tax structure is higher
- County needs to support the attraction of businesses to industrial parks
- Need to consider cottagers that come to county during the summer
- Not capitalizing on cultural assets – Drayton Festival
 - Can we identify retail opportunities – 60,000 people come to festival
 - What marketing opportunities can be leveraged
 - Very few B+B's to support visitors
- How do we enhance agricultural operations – need to talk to OMAFRA, OFA
- Need to do a sectoral BR+E for agriculture
- Need more funding for cultural planning
- Need to consider the impact and implications of an aging population
 - Aging at home program
 - Health care facilities
 - Retail, recreation etc.
- Structure for economic development – needs to be a coordinating role, promoting role, but needs to show leadership
- Losing young people because they don't know where the jobs are
 - What about mentoring, fostering job opportunities
 - Hosting a "working in Rural Wellington" initiative
 - Work with colleges and universities



Appendix III: List of Stakeholders Interviewed

Name	Organization
Chris Bailey	Brighten Up-Erin
Peter Black	Drayton Entertainment
Bruce Cowper	Mallot Creek
Mary Cunningham	TD Bank
Mark Granger	Wellington Employment Services
Harry Hall	Aberfoyle Metal Treathers Ltd.
Glen Hall	OSiM Interactive
Laura Holtem	Wellington Long Term Care
Gerry Horst	OMAFRA
Steven Karcher	Drayton Entertainment
Robert Milburn	Milburn's Auto Sales and Service
John Mohle	Wellington Construction
Brian Padfield	Padfield Realty
Jerome Quenneville	North Wellington Health Care Alliance
Kerry Reibeling	Norwell Dairy
Don Vallery	Highland Pines
David Walden	Property Owner
Greg White	Conestoga College
Rick Whittaker	Wellington -Waterloo Community Futures Development Corporation
Paul Wightman	Wightman Telecom
Archie Wilson	C&M Seeds/Palmerston Grain
John Wood	Woodland Properties