



EASTERN WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that our office is situated on the traditional Audenosaunee Mohawk Territories with gratitude and respect, we acknowledge the significant contributions indigenous peoples have made to preserve the land around us.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

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All you need to know about Your Local Labour Market

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4 | DECEMBER 2024

WORDS FROM THE ED

Frank O'Hearn Executive Director



Season greetings from the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board and all the best in the coming year . Our region certainly benefited from a positive influx of visitors to

our region this past summer and fall . The influx of visitors to our region was certainly evident via the use of our excellent roads < infrastructure > and river systems / modern marinas . The feedback received from the employer community clearly indicated our regions hospitality and service sector had a very positive summer and fall . Our local and regional transportation systems were and are a critical piece to this exercise. Remember the movie – Field of Dreams message : “ build it and they will come “ . We do have a beautiful region and it certainly is assessable via a modern roadway . It also provides an excellent road

system for its residents .

This update will focus on some important updates re service delivery < Employment > changes in the Frontenac region . An overview on transportation , internet access in our region and the very positive news regarding investments by the Province of Ontario to North Grenville < Kemptville > and its continued growth . It also contains a brief overview of our upcoming Local Labour Market Planning report that will be released in March, 2025 . The document will close with an overview of an information update from Service Canada – Government of Canada – Strategic Services Branch pertaining to their most recent labour information products .

ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES / CLOSING – DECEMBER 20, 2024

Our office would like to take the opportunity to thank St. Lawrence Colleges Employment

Service offices for their excellent support to the community as they will be closing their Kingston , Sharbot Lake , Sydenham and Ottawa offices on December 20, 2024 . This difficult decision was made by St. Lawrence College. Elaine Lewis and her team have provided excellent support to our office and the community for a number of years in our region. We wish them well !

TRANSPORTATION / INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation and its needs are not a new discussion point for our region as it is critical to our workforce needs. It has been a local discussion topic for a number of years and the debate has always focused on who is responsible for its costs , implementation and operation . A complex subject for many . Efficient and modern road systems are a critical piece to the movement of goods and services and yes – people . A number of our citizens commute in and out of our communities to their place of work . Accordingly, these transportation

systems support our employers in the movement of raw materials , movement of products etc. . Our local economy is supported by an excellent road and water transport system / infrastructure .

I have been told that one of the primary needs/ requests of our citizens to our local municipal leaders is an efficient , modern transportation infrastructure < roads > . Accordingly , many of our citizens utilize these motorways on an ongoing basis as a means to travel to work , shop and play . Unfortunately, there are a number of citizens who are challenged regarding their use of these transportation systems as they simply do not have the resources to own and operate a vehicle . The question of available resources to own and operate a vehicle has certainly been compromised in the past few years due to the pandemic, inflation , cost of living demands etc. ... This issue has been identified by a number of our Employment Ontario offices in the past and present . The Gananoque , Employment Ontario Office reported that – “Transportation has been a significant barrier for many of our clients, particularly those in rural or underserved areas. We have made concerted efforts to meet clients where they live, conducting more in-person visits within the community, rather than requiring them to come to our office. This initiative has been essential to ensuring that we continue to provide support to individuals who may not have reliable transportation or are unable to access the office for any number of reasons.” The good news to this issue is that the Town of Gananoque in cooperation with the local KEYS Employment Ontario office partnered to set up a pilot project aimed at addressing the transportation needs of town residents. This initiative provides up to \$50 per trip, with a maximum of \$100 per resident, to help cover the costs of traveling to essential appointments in Brockville or Kingston. These appointments include crucial services such as healthcare and legal consultations, which are often inaccessible without reliable transportation. The pilot has been a positive step towards supporting those who need to attend appointments but are unable to afford transportation or lack access to public transit. “ Our office applauds the Town of Gananoque and the KEYS office in Gananoque for their investment in this initiative . Great news !

The need for transportation supports was also recognized by Augusta Township , City of Brockville , Town of Prescott and Township of Edwardsburg cardinal . The good news story is that they partnered to bring a new public transit service to popular employment areas with a bus route from Brockville to Cardinal along County Road 2 , appropriately called the River Route . Connecting with the existing Brockville transit system, the River Route begins in Brockville at the Box Store at 5:30 am. The route will continue east and bring communities to and from popular workplaces in Brockville , Augusta , Prescott and Edwardsburg Cardinal in a 2-hour loop for 12 hours each weekday. Stops near Invista , Prescott Industrial Park , Giant Tiger Distribution Centre and Ingredion Canada are strategically located to serve large employment areas . Great news indeed and we celebrate the support from the various municipalities in Leeds Grenville . Great news !

NORTH GRENVILLE

The recent announcement from the Province of Ontario to invest up to \$21.8 million < cost shared agreement with the municipality > to expand the Water Pollution Control Plant is great news in the development and construction of a provincial jail in Kemptville . Accordingly , it will improve water services for rural and business in this growing community . Great news for our region !

There continues to be positive news from this region in respect to the development of new business ventures < Kemptville Brewing Company > and the continued support from this municipality . The office of CSE Services reports that they have had an excellent response from the employer community in respect to their most recent job fairs .They are also experiencing an increase in employer demand for administrative related positions within the North Grenville community . This will be an interesting trend to follow as it may indicate an increased need for administrative supports in this region .

INTERNET ACCESS

Another issue identified by our Employment Ontario providers is the lack of reliable internet access in many of our rural areas . This issue of course limits a number of our citizens ability to communicate and interact in respect to accessing services and their own individual job search .The KEYS - Gananoque Employment Ontario site indicated that “this further emphasizes the importance of face-to-face support in many cases, as relying solely on virtual solutions is not always practical for everyone in our community.” There is no simple solution to this problem as it comes down to the need of a significant investment in this technology in rural areas and the lack of support to fill this need as a result of budgetary restrictions within various levels of government .

LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLANNING REPORT

We are pleased to advise that our next Local Labour Market Planning (LLMP) Report will be available to the community in March , 2025 . This is an annual report that our office provides to the community that highlights changes in the local labour market. The report includes statistical data on local demographics, industry and occupational compositions and job trends. It also identifies key workforce challenges and opportunities in the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board (EWIB) region. It includes some good news stories in respect to how our community works together in addressing our labour force challenges. We encourage you to review this report and our prior reports that are included in our web site . You may review our most recent 2023 – 2024 report to the community at : <https://www.workforcedev.ca/llmp-reports/>

We would also like to share with you some recent information products on our labour force that was recently provided by our federal partners at Service Canada . This information provides an overview of specific labour market issues pertaining to the Province of Ontario .

Service Canada – Labour Market and Socio-Economic Information Products:

- Ontario Job Market Snapshot (October 2024) – an overview of current labour market conditions based on the latest Labour Force Survey data (updated monthly)
- 2023- 2025 Sector Profiles for more than 20 industries across the province
- 2023-2025 Employment outlooks for occupations, searchable by job title or by 2021 NOC codes
- Wage Information for all occupations in Ontario in 2023
- Latest news on job creation and layoffs by industry and region (updated weekly)

WHAT THE BOARD IS UP TO?

LLMP REPORT:

Frank and Sandra Wright have concluded outreach. There was a presentation December 11, 2024 at the Gananoque Curling Club to provide the results of the LLMP report. The final report will be submitted to the Ministry February 21, 2025.

[Local Labour Market Report Planning LLMP Reports – Eastern Innovation Board \(workforcedev.ca\)](#)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

We are producing 4 newsletters this fiscal. There will be a focus on themes from findings during LLMP report consultations.

[Newsletters – Eastern Workforce Innovation Board \(workforcedev.ca\)](#)

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT:

The Board will continue to offer the Labour Market Information Help Desk. Sandra Wright will respond to the requests. We will promote the Help Desk through social media, career fairs and other means. Our LMI Help Desk service can answer questions such as:

- What skills are in demand in my area?
- What is the demographic of workers in my area?

- What is the demand for my occupation?
- What is the breakdown of industries in my area?

We provide answers to questions about economic trends, industry and occupational breakdowns, wages demographics and more. To ask a question, click here [LMI Help Desk - Ask a Question](#)

On our website there are videos of potential careers and details about them. Go to our website to see the videos of careers in our region.

<https://www.workforcedev.ca/career-videos/>



POVERTY IMPACTS

FOOD BANKS *Contributed by Kingston Food Banks*

The Partners in Mission Food Bank is Kingston and Loyalist Township's food bank. They have been helping neighbours in need since 1984. The food bank does not receive government or agency funding and relies on the community for food, funds and volunteers. As October 2024 here are the numbers: 17,004 food hampers have been distributed (11.5% higher than this time last year) to 3,871 households. This helped 8,359 people, including 2,581 children. All of the hamper sizes have increased over the past 4 years, but the family hampers have grown the most by 45%. This year the Mission is going to have its 4th record year in a row. With all this growth, it has reached capacity at the 140 Hickson home. The Mission is renovating a new property at 4 Harvey St and plan to move in March. In the new space they will have a shopping model, where clients will be able to choose the food their families will eat. The Mission is very excited for this change and the improved experience for their clients.

THE FEED ONTARIO HUNGER REPORT

[Hunger Report 2024 - Feed Ontario](#)

BEING POOR LIMITS YOUR CHOICES.

Contributed by Rural Frontenac Community Services

Where to live, what to eat, how you to get around and what you do.

1. Housing expenses are often higher in rural communities
 - * Rental properties are very limited and often heat and hydro is extra.
 - * Housing is very limited. Affordable housing is hard to come by.
 - * Affordable homes and rental units are not often new homes or energy efficient. It costs a lot to keep them warm and cool.
 - * There are fewer options for heating (often propane, electric or oil).
 - * Some residents have access to wood and have wood stoves or furnaces. They need to be physically able and have equipment to cut the trees, stack the wood and split it. Chimneys need to be cleaned regularly.

* In rural areas there is no shared water or sewage systems so residents need to maintain wells and septic systems. It is costly. Some older residents or off grid homes have outhouses.

* If you don't have access to water, it is a challenge to wash yourself, your clothes or maintain your home.

* There is no garbage pick up in Central Frontenac. You have to go to the dump and pay per bag.

2. Access to affordable food is very limited.

* We only have three grocery stores in rural Frontenac (Sharbot Lake, Plevna and Verona). They are smaller stores.

* You can't shop where food is on sale without driving to a town or city (Perth or Kingston or Napanee). The gas uses any savings.

* The food bank is in Sydenham or Sharbot Lake. You need transportation to pick up food.

* There are few, if any, free or affordable meal programs that you might find in a city or town.

* You can grow your own food, hunt and fish for "free". You would need to pay for a license to hunt and fish.

3. Rural transportation requires a car

* There are no taxis

* There is no public transit

* Children are bused to school but if buses don't run or you miss the bus you can't go if you don't have car.

* There is a transportation program where volunteers drive people where they need to go. The cost is \$.50 a km. A ride from Sharbot Lake to Kingston is 150 kms return. That is \$75. If you are on a fixed income and have a doctor's appointment in Kingston or need to go to a hospital that might be your food budget.

4. Cell service and internet expensive and not available everywhere. Libraries have internet but you have to get there and it may only be open limited hours a week.

5. Employment is very limited. Access to licensed childcare and subsidy is limited.

These rural challenges lead to:

- *Isolation which can lead to anxiety and mental health issues
 - *Poverty, and not being able to live and feed yourself and your family, can create frustration and anger.
 - *Lack of transportation can create dependency and limit choices.
 - *The isolation, anger, frustration and despair can lead to intimate partner violence.
- Without a car people are trapped in unhealthy situations.
- *It is hard to be single and poor. Couples might have two incomes to cover costs. If one person leaves the other is more vulnerable and

might not be able to afford to stay. This happens when people are widowed, children leave home, or relationships breakdown.

- *People who lose their housing might live in unheated trailers, tents and or couch surf. They are invisible. They are very vulnerable. Without an address the person cannot access Ontario Works.
- *Seniors on fixed incomes are vulnerable. Their health might deteriorate so they need medical services which are not accessible in the rural area. They might be widowed or their partner go into long term care reducing their income. Isolation

STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

Community Futures Grenville has The Growth Series: Winter Workshops

Workshop Dates & Topic

Gain the skills to Level Up Your Business

- Jan 8, 9am – 1pm Resiliency and Leadership
- Jan 22, 1pm - 5pm Cash Flow
- Feb 5, 9am – 1pm Market Adaptation
- Feb 19, 9am – 1pm Team
- Mar 5, 1pm – 5pm Retention and Acquisition
- Mar 19, 1pm – 5pm Operational Efficiency
- Mar 26, 9am – 1pm Succession Planning

To register and learn more about each session go to

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-growth-series-winter-workshops-tickets-1053933606789>

The Apprenticeship Connection provides a newsletter to share information about apprenticeship in Ontario and how Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) service providers can support the broader skilled trades community. Some of the topics covered in the November newsletter included an article about The Millwright Regional Council (MRC), in collaboration with key industry partners, that is excited to announce the continuation of its highly successful Introduction to Millwrighting (ITM) program. The ITM program aims to address skill gaps and encourage broader participation in this high-demand sector.

A message from Brandy Smith from Literacy Link Ontario

Hello LLEO partners and friends,

We are developing a strategic plan and asking for your help by providing your input and joining our focus group sessions.

As you all know, there have been significant changes in our sector, our region and the province since LLEO last developed a plan a few years ago. The purpose of these focus groups is to gather input on the current state and future direction of LLEO.

The sessions will last 75 minutes and will incorporate a unique virtual methodology for interactive dialogue. The results of these

sessions will inform a strategy session with the Board in February during which we will develop a three-year plan. LLEO has engaged Erik Lockhart as our consultant for this process. Erik will be leading these virtual sessions.

We will be holding two online sessions on January 14 (1.30pm-2.45pm and 3.00pm-4.15pm). We ask that you reply to me by January 6th, 2025 to let us know which time you are able to attend. In order to participate in a focus group, you will need to be on a desktop workstation or laptop (phones and ipads are not recommended) and join our zoom link (sent later).

Some of the questions we will discuss are:

1. Which of our current services and offerings do you value the most?
2. What are the things that LLEO is really good at? What do we want to keep/maintain?
3. What are the major areas for improvement?
4. What else should we consider doing (that we are not currently doing)?
5. What should be our major priorities in the next 2-3 years? If we could only focus on three things in the next three years, what would they be?

Below is some further background on LLEO

Literacy Link Eastern Ontario (LLEO) is a non-profit charity funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. Within the Employment Ontario framework, we are a Literacy and Basic Skills Provincial Support Organization operating in the Eastern Ontario region.

Our mandate and core activities are to act as a communication hub that connects and coordinates adult literacy and basics skills services providers with services and resources to enhance learner achievements and goal pathways.

Our vision is that all adult learners and literacy practitioners have access to and are empowered to achieve their goals with equitable, diverse, and inclusive literacy and adult education services.

Thank you in advance for your interest in our shared success!

LINKS TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

For Links to our community partners click on the link below to go to our website

<https://www.workforcedev.ca/community-partners/>



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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario.