



Huron
Business Development Corporation

A Community Futures Development Corporation

**THE STATE OF THE
*HURON COUNTY ECONOMY***

January 2009



STATE OF THE HURON COUNTY ECONOMY 2009

LEVERAGING ASSETS FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent developments have brought significant new challenges to the Huron County economy. Like much of Ontario, Huron County communities and the workers that live in them are suffering the effects of the downturn in the global manufacturing economy. In 2008:

- ☑ Huron Park was hit by the closure of Dunline Rubber Products - 36 laid off;
- ☑ Exeter was hit by the closure of CanGro (formerly Nabisco) - 130 laid off;
- ☑ Goderich was hit by with closures of Signal-Star Publishing - 23 laid off and Volvo Road Machinery - 500 laid off;
- ☑ Wingham was hit with the downsizing of Wescast Industries – 230 laid off;

Total jobs lost (1,050) account for 30% of the number employed in the region's manufacturing sector. In addition to these losses, there will be significant impacts on local suppliers, with the ripple effect eventually hitting retailers and service businesses as well.

Beginning in October 2008, municipal leaders and economic development partners from across Huron County began formulating a joint response to the issues facing the local economy. These discussions began with the position that despite recent losses, the communities of Huron County possess substantial human, natural, physical and organizational assets that lend themselves well to economic development.

What has come out of these discussions is an enhanced partnership and a renewal strategy based on the community assets that have been identified. The overall strategy contains a broad selection of initiatives that can be built upon and accelerated for the purposes of fostering new economic opportunities and job creation. This enhanced partnership between the Province of Ontario; County of Huron, Huron Business Development Corporation and local municipalities will:

DIVERSIFY THE FARM ECONOMY by:

- ☑ developing new processing capacity for local beef products (Brussels Beef Plant);
- ☑ encouraging new commercial food-related enterprises (Farm to Table Incubator);
- ☑ creating a new Ontario wine region (Commercial Grapes Feasibility Study);

TAP INTO EMERGING MARKETS by:

- ☑ capturing business opportunities in renewable energy (Renewable Energy Inventory);
- ☑ targeting new opportunities for existing manufacturers (R & D for New Markets);
- ☑ attracting highly skilled research jobs to the community (Gateway Rural Health Research Institute/Centre of Excellence for Water Quality); and
- ☑ demonstrating potential for new tourism investment (Tourism Product Development including Hotel Accommodation Review);

EXPAND THE REGION'S CULTURAL SECTOR by:

- ☑ leveraging existing cultural assets (Huron County Cultural Plan);
- ☑ creating new performance venues (Goderich Performing Arts Centre); and
- ☑ training a new cultural sector workforce (Blyth Training Centre for the Arts);

ADAPT CURRENT FACILITIES TO SUIT NEW OPPORTUNITIES by:

- ☑ identifying new uses for existing properties (Volvo/Centralia College/Blyth Campground);
- ☑ building upon existing infrastructure (Goderich Harbour Redevelopment/Richard Levan Airport); and
- ☑ planning for new industrial growth (Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint);

PROMOTE OUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES by:

- ☑ enhancing our on-line presence (Website & Marketing Materials Development);
- ☑ expanding our marketing reach (Market Goderich);
- ☑ capitalizing on local market opportunities (Buy Local First Campaign);

SHORT-TERM PROJECT RESULTS

1. An **investment prospectus** targeted to potential investors for attraction of capital into a new beef processing plant near Brussels;
2. A **business plan and training program** for operation of a food incubator program near Clinton for creation of new commercial food related businesses;
3. A **technical report and investment prospectus** to encourage new investment in a wine industry located inland from the shores of Lake Huron;
4. A **shortlist of profiles for the top 10 business prospects** in the region related to renewable energy and energy conservation;
5. A **feasibility study for a water education and training centre** located at Port Blake;
6. A **market assessment identifying 10 best business prospects** for existing manufacturers to tap into new markets such as Alberta and Saskatchewan;
7. A **market feasibility for a new hotel/resort facility** to be located along the Lake Huron shoreline;
8. An assessment identifying **new potential tourism markets** (e.g. motorcycle tours) to be pursued by industry partners across Huron County;
9. A confirmation of **new medical research contracts and positions** at the Gateway Rural Health Research Institute.
10. An **operational model and implementation plan** for creation of a new Performing Arts Centre in Goderich;
11. A new **3-month skills training program** for development of theatre technicians located at a Training Centre for the Arts in Blyth;

12. A **geo-spatial assessment and virtual tour** of the former Volvo properties for use in promoting facilities and lands to prospective companies;
13. An **engineering and geo-spatial assessment** of the Centralia College property to determine its potential as a manufacturing training and incubator facility;
14. A **new weekend camping event** to be hosted at the current Blyth Campground during periods when the camp is underutilized;
15. A **plan for re-development** of the Goderich Harbour with an emphasis on international shipping opportunities for agricultural commodities and manufactured goods;
16. A **development plan** to encourage alternate and complimentary uses of the Richard Levan Airport near Wingham that will generate economic activity;
17. A **Huron County Economic Development Opportunities Blueprint** that will create long-term business strategies for all Huron County municipalities;
18. An upgrade for new and enhanced economic development websites for investinhuron.ca; smallbusinesshuron.ca; shopinhuron.ca; huronmanufacturing.on.ca and ontarioswestcoast.ca;
19. A **new marketing campaign** promoting commercial growth and residential development in the Goderich area targeted to creative workers in the information technology and cultural sectors;
20. A **new marketing campaign** to educate local consumers and promote the positive impacts of doing business locally across all sectors;

Key long-term outcomes of this activity will include:

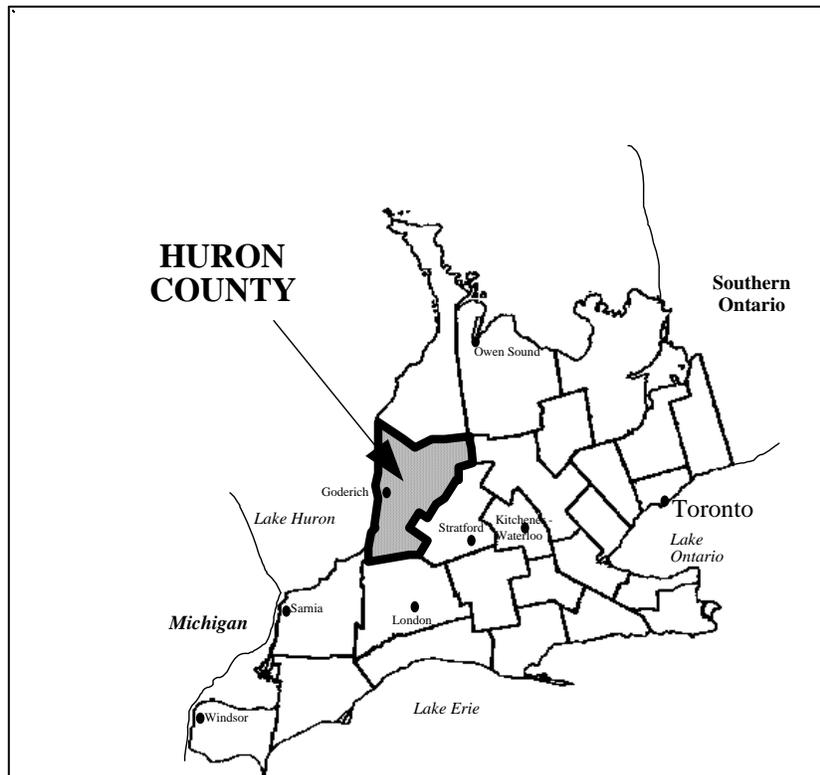
- 525 individual business enterprises, or approximately 9% of all businesses and farms in Huron County will benefit from services provided;
- 135 new business start-ups or expansions will be supported, resulting in a growth rate of 2.2% in the local economic base;
- 650 new jobs will be created and maintained throughout Huron County, resulting in a growth rate of 2% in the regional workforce;
- Over time, these 650 jobs will inject approximately \$15.3 million of employment income each year into the local economy, and provide senior level governments with approximately \$1.6 million annually in additional income taxes.

2.0 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

2.1 A BIG PICTURE VIEW OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

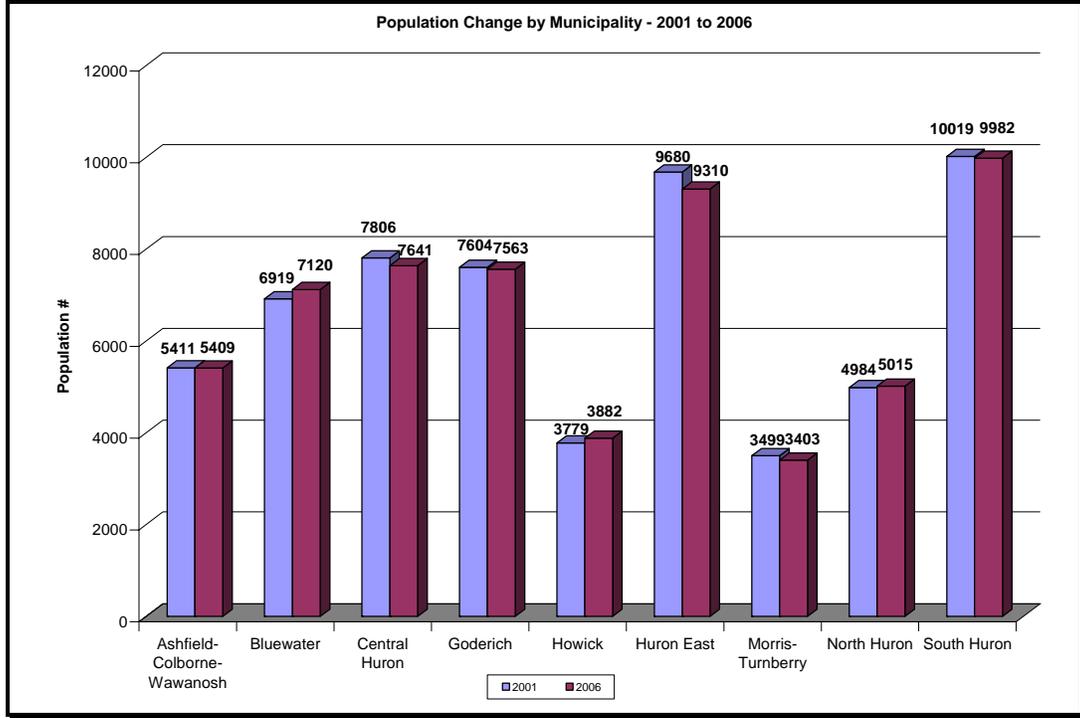
I. Geographic Location

The County of Huron is located in southwestern Ontario north of the City of London and west of the Golden Horseshoe area (see map below). The County is approximately 100 kilometres long from north to south, 50 kilometres wide from east to west. With no urban centres over 8,000 in population, a population density of just 17.7 persons per square kilometer and approximately 60% of the population living on rural farm and non-farm properties, Huron is one of the most “rural” regions of the province. Due in part to its location along the Lake Huron shoreline, residents and visitors to Huron County know this region as “Ontario’s West Coast”.



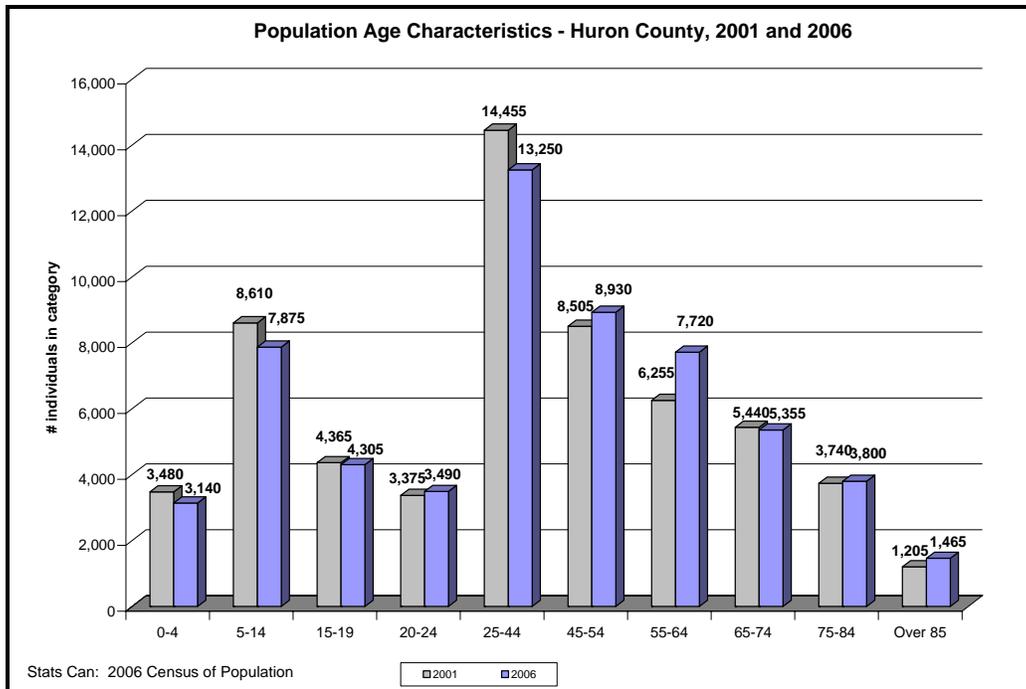
II. Demographic Profile

Huron County displays a relative stability in population numbers. Over the past 30 years, Huron’s population of just fewer than 60,000 has changed very little; from 2001 to 2006, the population declined slightly by 376 people, or less than 1%. During the same period, Ontario’s population grew by 6.6%.



Population growth and decline is not evenly spread throughout Huron County’s communities as displayed in the chart above. While many communities saw a modest decline, the municipalities of Bluewater, North Huron and Howick actually experienced modest population growth. Central Huron and Huron East were the communities most affected by population loss between 2001 and 2006, declining in population by 2.1 % and 3.8% respectively.

Despite the relative stability in overall numbers, the composition of Huron’s population continues to undergo significant changes – most notably in the age structure of the population. Between 2001 and 2006, Huron County lost substantial portions of its youth (<20 yrs) and prime working age populations (25-44 yrs). As a result, Huron’s population is proportionately older at an average of 42.3 years, compared to a provincial average of 39. Likewise, only 63.5% of Huron County’s population is of working age. This is a significantly lower proportion than that of Ontario which stands at 68.3%.

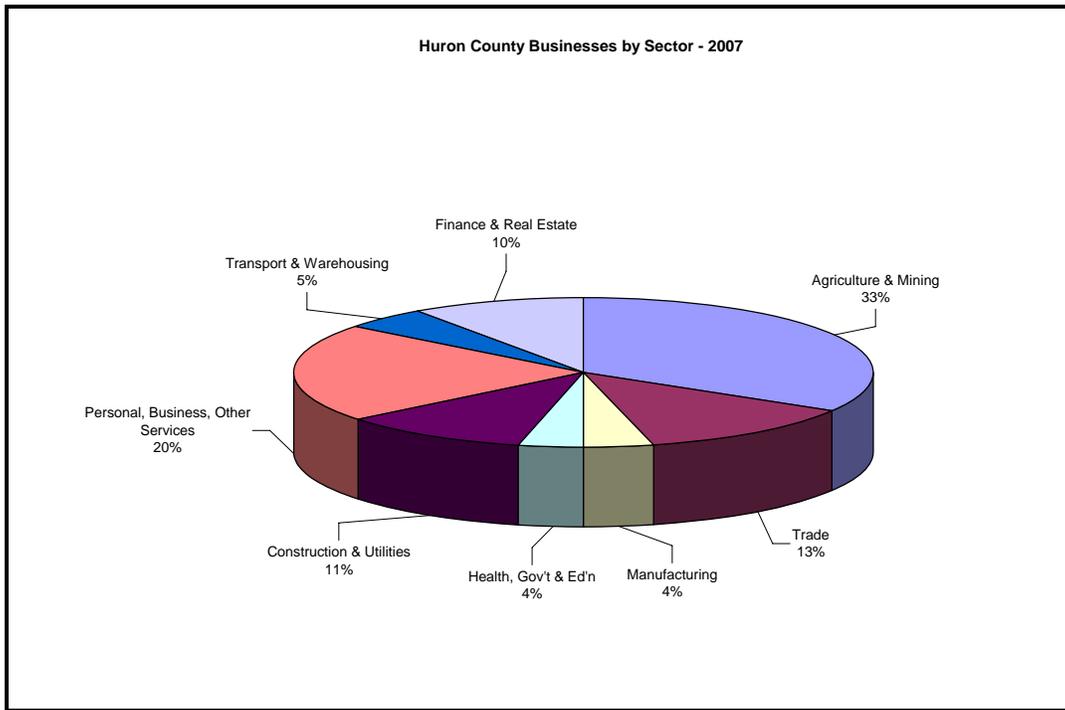


What do these population trends mean for the Huron County economy?

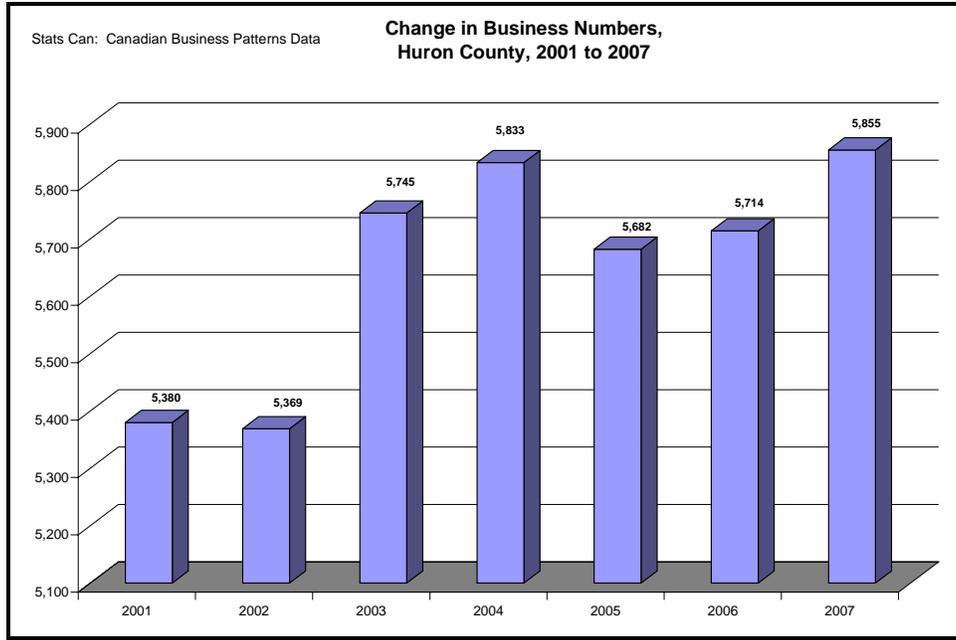
- ☑ Lack of population growth presents challenges for small businesses trying to serve a local customer market that is stagnant – most businesses will need to expand their geographic market well beyond Huron County to be successful;
- ☑ An aging population will open up new market opportunities for businesses that serve an older clientele, typically healthcare, personal and financial services;
- ☑ The chronic loss of people in the prime working ages of 25-44 presents a demographic problem that affects both the number of new business start-ups (fewer entrepreneurs) and the supply of labour (fewer workers);
- ☑ Of particular concern is the aging of existing farm and business operators, along with aging of the workforce – this combination of trends suggests the need for succession planning in all facets of the economy and labour market, including continued support to new farmers and entrepreneurs;
- ☑ Efforts to mitigate population loss, including youth retention and encouragement to newcomers, will become important strategic factors for future growth in the economy;

III. Business Profile

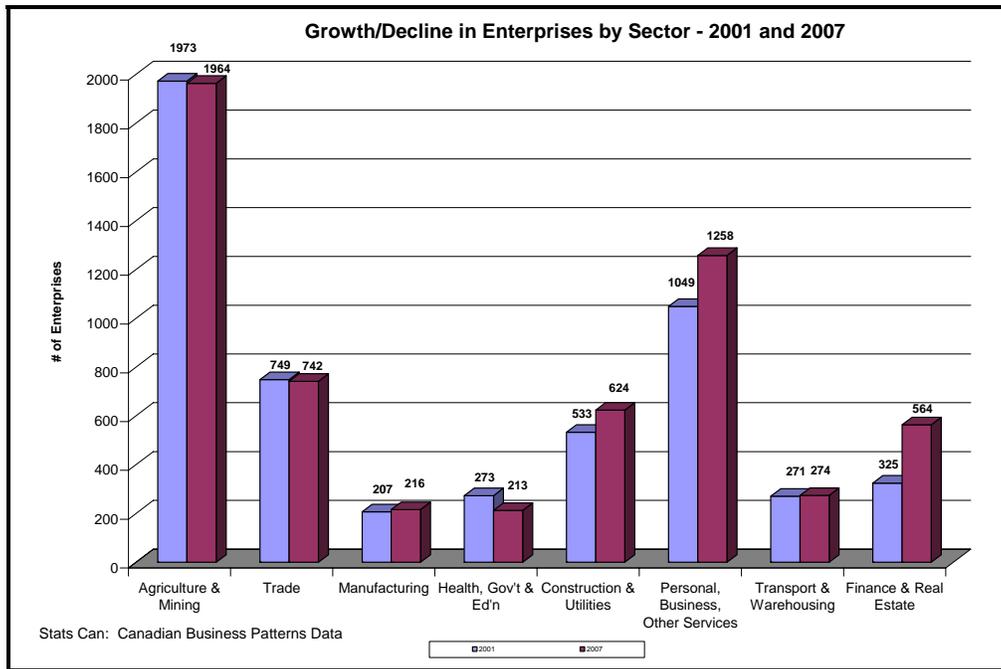
Huron County is home to approximately 5,900 farms and businesses. Primary industry (agriculture & mining) comprises 33% of all businesses, followed by personal, business and other services at 20% and retail trade at 13%. Compared to other regions of Ontario, Huron's economic profile stands out for its high proportion of farming enterprises, and relative lack of retail and service sector businesses.



Despite some year-to-year fluctuations, the number of business enterprises in Huron County has grown steadily during the past decade. From 2001 to 2007, the enterprise base grew by a net amount of 475 businesses (start-ups over closures), representing a healthy annual growth rate of 1.5%. (See following chart)

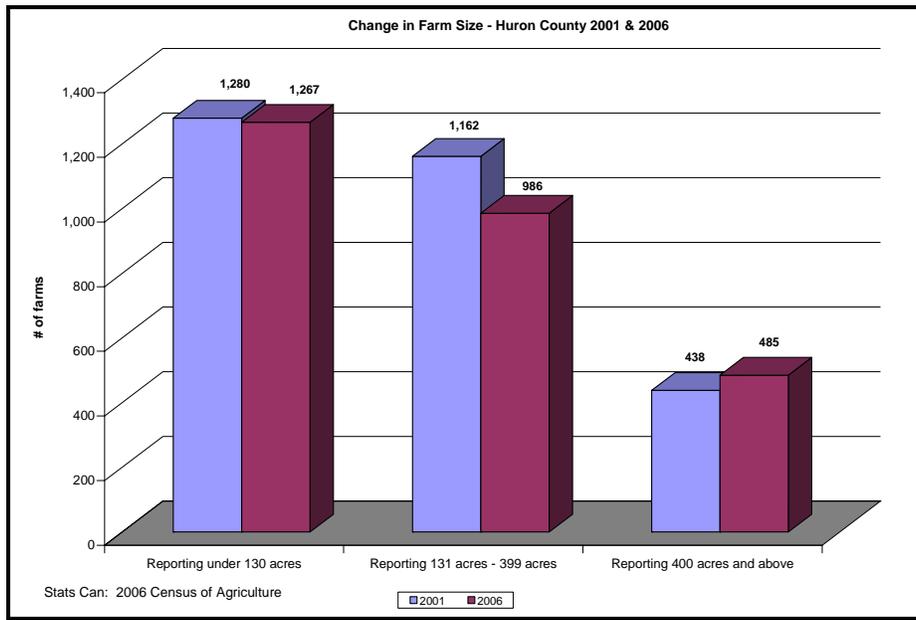


From 2002 to 2007, growth in the number of businesses was distributed across most sectors, with the exception of agriculture; retail trade; and health, government and education services. Greatest absolute growth in business numbers occurred for finance, insurance & real estate (239); personal, business & other services (209) while greatest losses were seen in the health, government & education sectors (60).

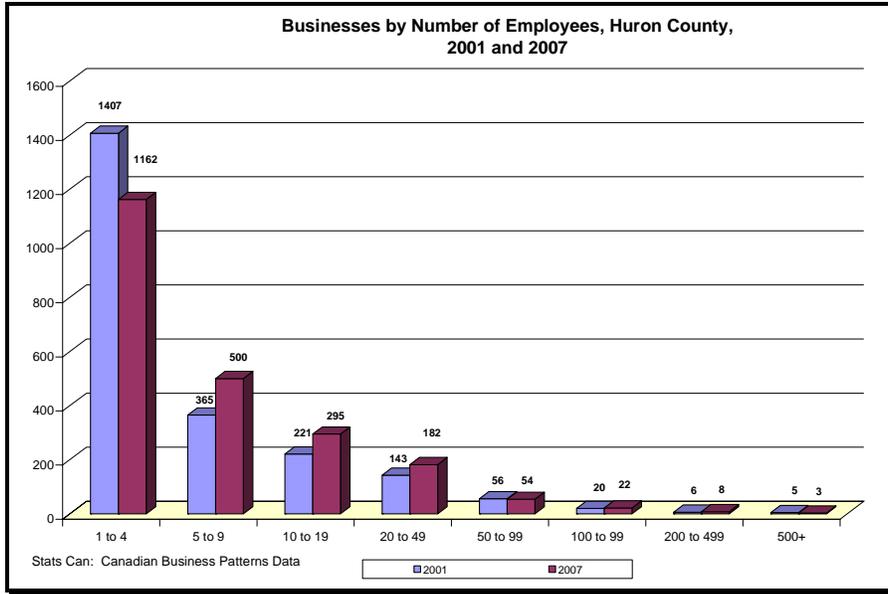


A more detailed account of changes in business numbers in the farming sector is provided by the Census of Agriculture. In Huron County, a revealing trend is apparent when looking at the change in farm numbers. Overall, the number of farms in Huron County declined by 5% between census periods - from 2,880 in 2001 to 2,738 in 2006. Like other regions across the country, this trend is the result of farm consolidation.

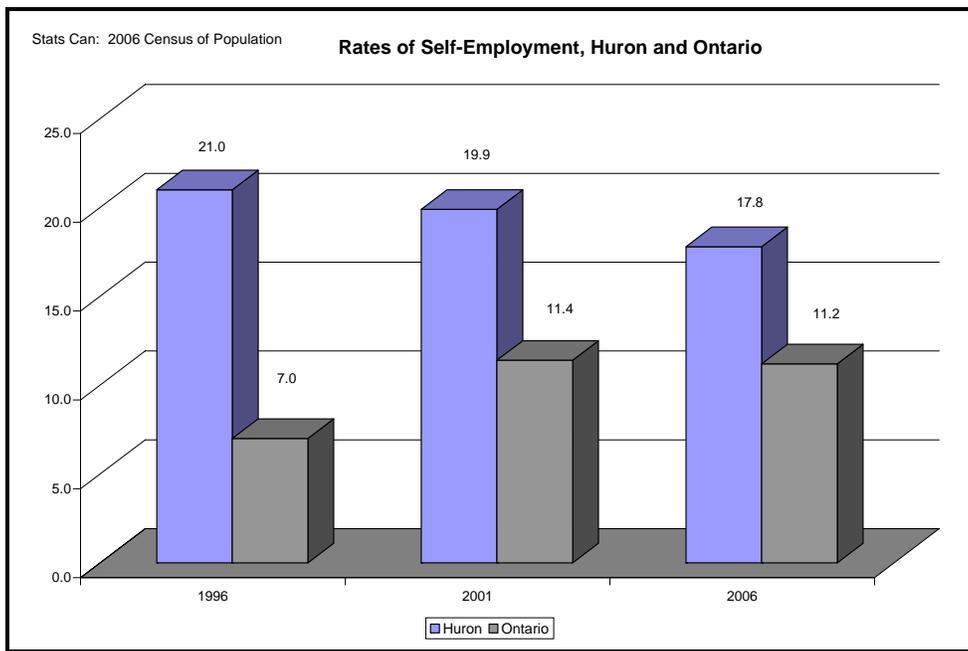
However, changes in farm size suggest that farm consolidation is affecting some farms more than others. While a substantial proportion of the agriculture sector in Huron is still dominated by smaller farms under 130 acres (47%), larger farms over 400 acres are becoming more prevalent. But, as outlined in the following chart, the greatest loss of farm numbers (176) has been in the mid-sized farms between 130 and 400 acres. This “disappearing middle” presumably represents those operations lacking economies of scale and/or sources of off-farm income to remain viable.



Finally, growth in the number of businesses by number of employees reveals some interesting trends as well. From 2002 to 2007, the most substantial growth was in the category of businesses with 5 to 50 employees. Those operations with fewer than 5 employees actually declined in number, while the number of larger companies with over 50 employees remained stable. In general, this trend is positive, reflecting a “maturing” or “graduation” of businesses as they increase their customer base, their revenues and their labour force.



This same trend is evident when examining changes to the rates of self-employment in Huron County. While Huron’s population continues to be “entrepreneurial” to the extent that high proportions of the local labour force work for themselves (17.8%), the past decade has seen marked declines in the rate of self-employment (3.2% drop between 1996 and 2006). Once again, this trend is a reflection of fewer people going into business for themselves, combined with a greater number of workers employed in mid-sized businesses with more than 5 employees.

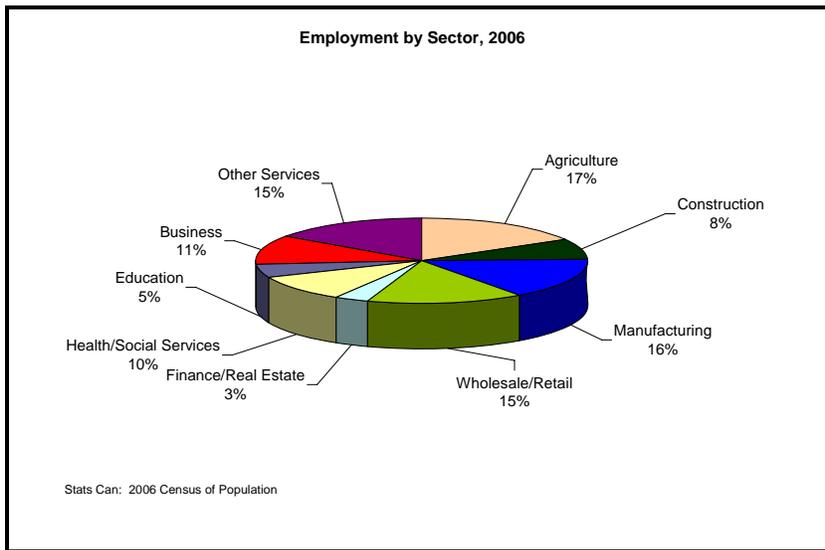


What do these changes in the business profile mean for the Huron County economy?

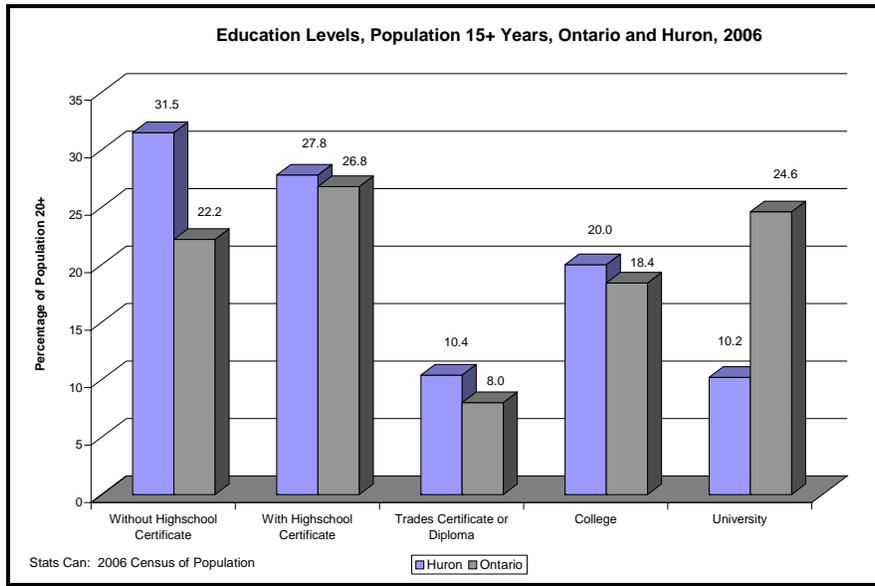
- ☑ Business opportunities continue to exist in Huron County, particularly those businesses that are serving agriculture, seniors (personal services, health, finance) and markets beyond Huron County (construction, manufacturing);
- ☑ However, it would appear that the rate of new business start-ups is leveling off, presumably due to demographic factors (shortage of entrepreneurs) and an increase in employment opportunities elsewhere;
- ☑ Lack of growth in the retail sector suggests that many of our smaller operators may be facing stiff competition – this is of particular concern to many downtowns in the region;
- ☑ If the sustainability of mid-sized farming operations is a goal of community economic development, then efforts to improve farm viability through on-farm diversification and/or off-farm income opportunities must be enhanced;
- ☑ Judging by the growth in the number of businesses with between 5-50 employees, more Huron County people are working for larger employers – this suggests that agencies serving the business community will need to focus greater attention on the challenges of expansion, including human resource strategies and workforce training.

IV. Labour Force & Employment

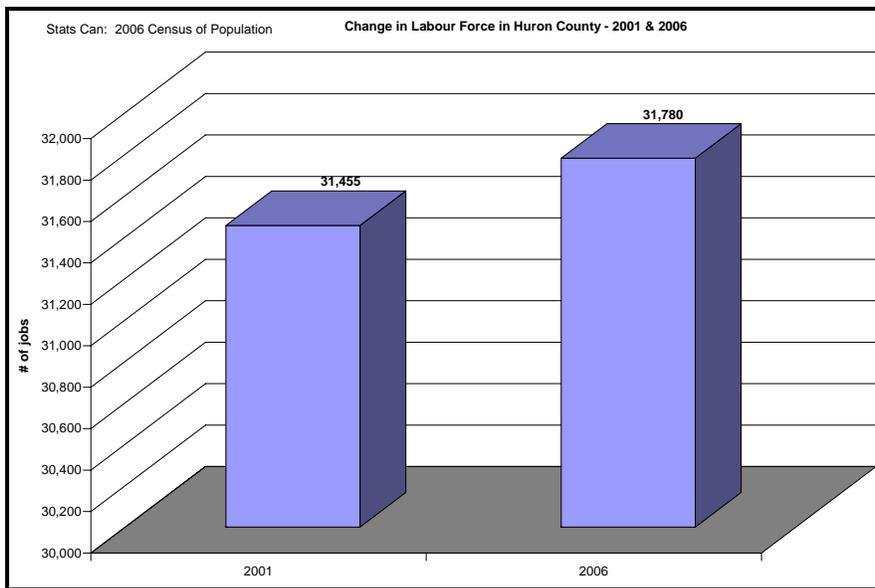
Currently, agriculture, manufacturing, and trade support roughly equal proportions of the workforce, but the major employer is the service sector (comprised of personal, business, health, education, and government). As with the business profile, Huron’s employment stands out for its high proportion of jobs in agriculture, and relative lack of retail trade and service sector jobs.



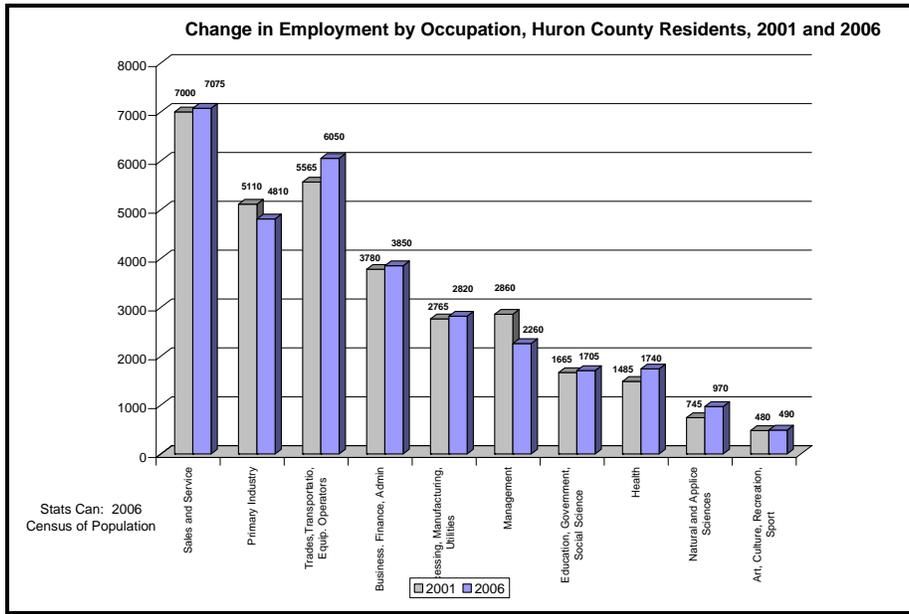
Huron County continues to exhibit a “blue-collar” workforce as shown in the following chart. Despite the fact that many of our residents upgraded their education between 2001 and 2006, Huron County still has high proportions of the population without a high school degree (31.5%). Likewise, Huron County has higher proportions of workers with trades certificates and college degrees when compared to the province, but a significant gap exists in the proportion of the workforce with a university degree (10.2% in Huron vs. 24.6% in Ontario).



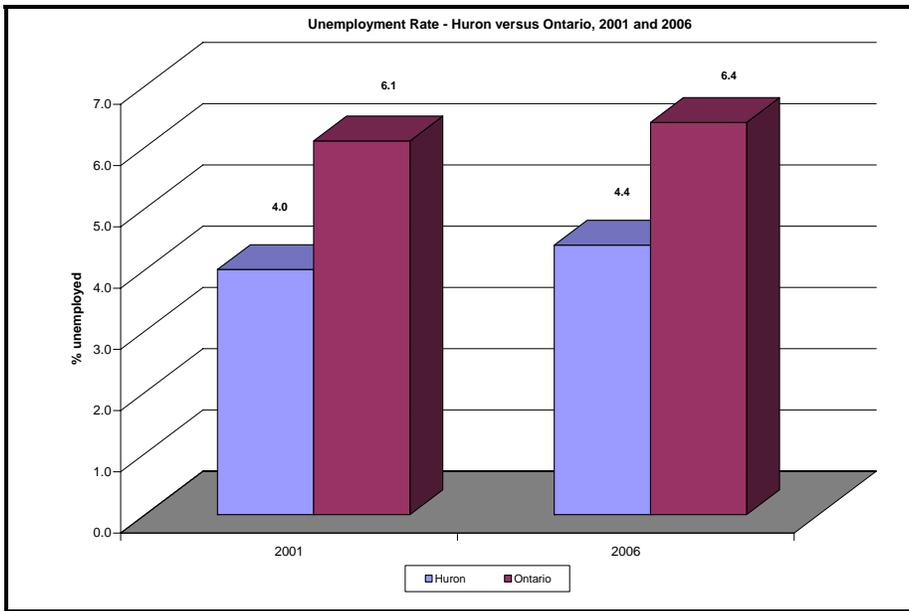
Similar to Huron’s overall population, recent growth in the labour force is noticeably stagnant. Between 2001 and 2006, Huron County’s labour force grew by a modest 1% and now stands at 31,780. During that same period, Ontario’s labour force grew by 6.2%.



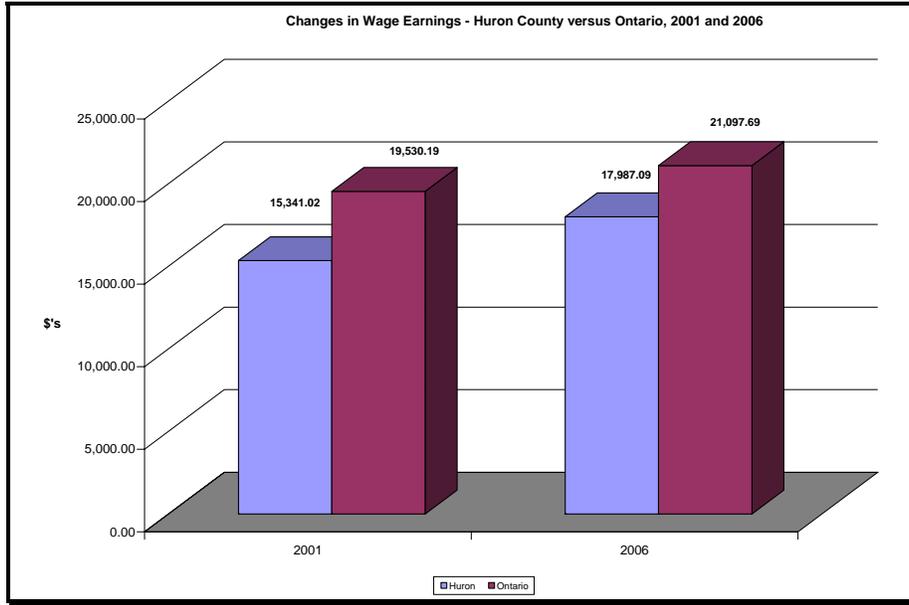
While modest, growth in jobs has been very evenly distributed across occupations, with the exception of jobs in primary industry and management that decreased from 2001 to 2006. Again, this suggests a trend towards fewer farm operators and business managers, with more opportunities for employment in mid-size businesses.



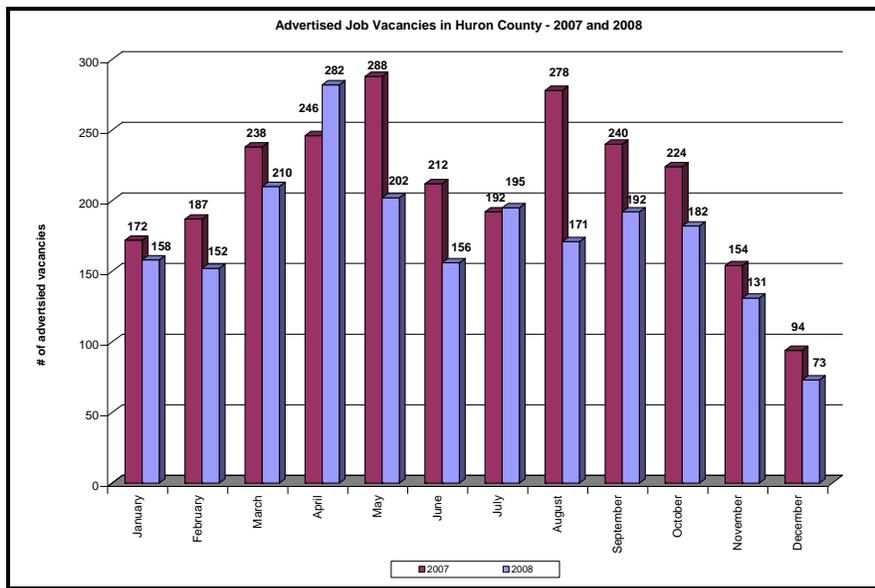
As Huron County businesses create more jobs, a tightening of the supply of labour is becoming more evident. The chart below displays how Huron County's unemployment rate remains consistently well below the provincial average. At 4.4%, Huron's unemployment rate remains one of the lowest in the country.



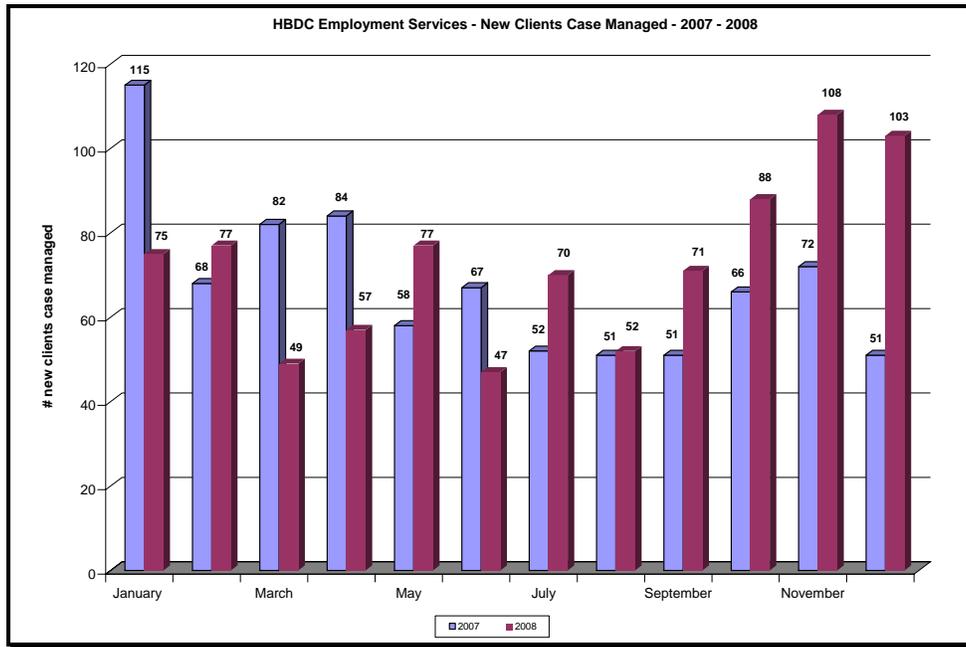
The implications of low unemployment rates are already evident, as suggested by changes in average employment earnings from 2001 – 2006. While Huron’s wage levels have always lagged behind the provincial average, the past census period experienced a significant narrowing of that gap as wages grew faster in Huron County (17%) than the province as a whole (8%).



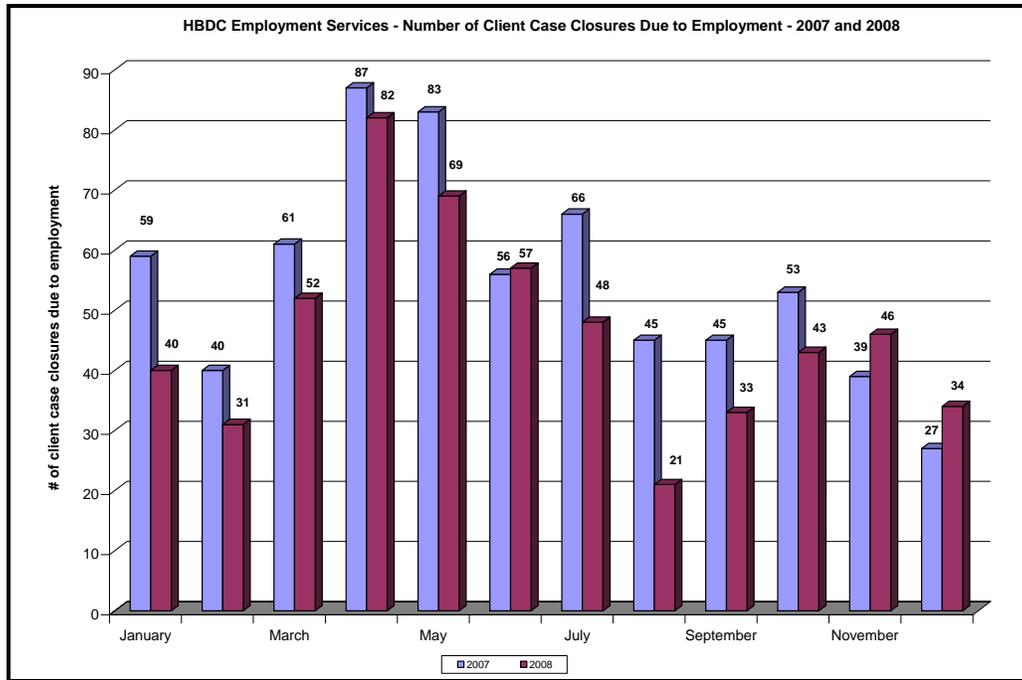
Although increases in wages are likely due to a greater demand for workers than available supply, this trend has been softened somewhat by a significant (17%) drop in the number of advertised job vacancies by employers in the past year (see chart below).



Indications of a weakening economy are also evident when examining the number of people looking for work in Huron County. In 2008, a total of 874 people were looking for work at some point during the year. This figure is a substantial increase (7%) over the same figure for 2007 (817). In particular, there was a sharp increase in month-over-month registrations at Centres for Employment & Learning beginning in August as the economy began to stagnate.



Finally, a general slow-down in the Huron County economy is confirmed when looking at new jobs created in the local labour market. While an increasing number of Huron County residents have been looking for work, fewer jobs are being obtained. A comparison of employment figures (chart below) demonstrates that the number of successful employment interventions at Centres for Employment & Learning declined from 661 in 2007 to 556 in 2008. This represents a 16% drop in the number of jobs obtained in Huron County.



What do these changes in labour force and employment mean for the Huron County economy?

- ☑ While sales and service jobs continue to offer significant job opportunities in Huron, the greatest growth in job opportunities is occurring for skilled trades, transportation equipment operators and natural and applied science positions;
- ☑ These figures do not account for the recent downturn in the region’s manufacturing sector, which has lost approximately 900 jobs in the past year; Many if not most of these workers will require academic upgrading and/or retraining to transition into new emerging jobs;
- ☑ However, even with the availability of workers resulting from those losses, demographic trends in Huron County continue to point to a deepening workforce shortage based on an aging workforce and a lack of new labour market entrants;
- ☑ Further efforts to enhance the supply of labour in Huron County will need to emphasize increased engagement of youth, strategic upgrading of both recently unemployed workers and the existing workforce, and enhanced recruitment efforts by employers, including tapping into the region’s immigration potential.

2.2 MAJOR EVENTS IN THE HURON COUNTY ECONOMY– 2008

In January 2008

- New owners of the Goderich Canadian Tire Store were looking forward to expanding the business from 21,000 square feet of retail space to 30,000. The Goderich store currently maintains an inventory of 30,000 items.
- A new 16,000 square foot Honda Car Dealership has been proposed for Exeter. Honda representatives hoped to begin construction on the new property on the west side of Highway 4 at the south end of Exeter, once zoning and site plan approval is obtained.
- Employees of JMR Electric in Exeter ratified a collective agreement that will provide them with wage increases, improved pension contributions and fully funded health care benefits over the life of the 3-year deal. JMR Electric employs over 160 electrical, plumbing and sheet metal tradespersons.
- It was announced that the Exeter CanGro vegetable processing plant will be sold or closed by March 31st, affecting 150 salaried and part-time workers, as well as a number of local contractors who grew vegetables for the plant.
- The Goderich Tim-Br Mart and Rona Cashway Building Centre stores will now be operating under one Rona franchise banner. The combined company now employs 22 people, and plans are in the works for a 20,000 to 25,000 square foot store in Goderich that may necessitate the hiring of more people.

In February 2008

- An open house was held at the new receiving facility for McCall Livestock north of Brussels. The new 80' X 296' facility modernizes the way in which McCall Livestock does business.

- By investing \$10 million in school-based libraries over the next four years, school boards will be able to hire approximately 160 more library staff, including new staff for schools in the Avon Maitland and Huron Perth Catholic school systems.
- Hog and cattle farmers are facing an income crisis due to several factors, including higher costs for grain, the adverse affects of a high Canadian dollar, and lower prices for their products.

In March 2008

- A new \$50 million fund for pork producers aimed at reducing the hog herd and increasing the competitiveness of Canada's livestock sector was announced by the federal government. The program offers local producers \$225 per sow as an incentive to leave the industry.
- Wescast Industries laid off more than 50 workers at its two Wingham locations due to a labour dispute south of the border. Wescast employs about 700 people at its Wingham sites, and over 1,900 worldwide.

In April 2008

- Ground was broken on the new recreation centre located at the Bridges to Seaforth development. It is hoped that the 18,000 square foot facility, which houses an indoor pool, party room, aerobics and billiard rooms will be open in time for the Canadian Pro Golf Tour that is coming to Seaforth in August.
- Industrial Systems Tooling Manufacturing opened in Brussels as a new division of Novy Manufacturing & Assembly in Waterloo. There are hopes that the Brussels location will become self-sustaining and expand their custom machining and tooling services further into Huron County.
- Workers at the Huron County Health Unit voted ninety-five percent in favour of a strike if a fair collective agreement is not reached with their employer. CUPE represents 42 Huron County Health Unit workers who are bargaining for better wages and benefits.

- A \$500,000 donation from the McCall McBain Foundation helped launch the new Gateway Rural Health Research Institute in Seaforth. The Institute will be the only clinical research centre of its kind in Canada, and will focus on issues such as diabetes, obesity, stroke prevention and rural depression. Dr. Claudio Munoz has been hired as the new Director of Clinical Research.
- The Giant Tiger store in Goderich relocated from the Walmart Plaza to South Street. The new building provides an additional 7,549 square feet for the retailer, which will bring total retail floor space to 16,000 square feet.
- North Huron has shown promising signs of growth and commercial progress. About 10 businesses assumed new ownership in Blyth, while at least 5 new enterprises have launched in Wingham.

In May 2008

- 42 Workers at the Huron County Health Unit ratified a new three-year contract, voting 75 percent in favour of a deal that provides wage increases of 2.85 percent in 2009 and 2010.
- Hensall District Co-op purchased the Great Canadian Bean Company, a supplier of beans, peas, lentils and chick peas. The consolidation of these two companies will allow Hensall District Co-op to increase the global food supply of edible beans and soybeans.
- Sparling's Propane of Blyth expanded its regional presence by acquiring Grand River, an established full-service propane supplier with customers throughout Waterloo-Brant-Norfolk-Halton-Peel and Niagara.
- Stewart Russell, Manager of Business Development for EPCOR Ontario addressed the need for more local manufacturers to support the region's emerging wind energy sector. EPCOR is just one of several companies planning on erecting turbines in the area, creating a growing demand for component parts that local companies can provide.
- The Southwest Economic Assembly (SWEA) received \$300,000 from the Province of Ontario to develop an operating plan for marketing and regional branding. The Ivey

School of Business will be commissioned to prepare a comprehensive report on the region's existing assets and emerging opportunities for economic development.

In June 2008

- Annex Publishing and Printing closed its Exeter location to consolidate operations in Simcoe. As a result, 4 jobs have been lost.
- According to the Huron Tourism Association Annual Tourism Report, Huron County experienced a slight increase in attendance at special events and attractions, despite a decline in foreigners visiting the county. In 2007, a total of 480,000 people visited such events and sites as the Blyth Festival, Goderich Gaol and Clinton Racetrack.
- After 60 years in business, SAAN Stores Ltd. closed all of their retail stores. The closures affect two locations in Huron County – 1 in Wingham, the other in Exeter.

In July 2008

- The possibility of a new Canadian Tire Store in Wingham moved closer to reality when a proposal was brought forward to change the zoning on a 4.3 acre parcel to accommodate a 35,000 square foot store. In addition to the Canadian Tire Store, the proposal would also see a Mark's Work Warehouse location.
- Sky Harbour Aircraft north of Goderich is moving ahead with a proposed 37,500 square foot hangar expansion. Sky Harbour Aircraft currently services 150 planes per year, but with the expansion, hopes to increase their capacity to over 200 annually.
- An official ground-breaking ceremony was held in Clinton for the Regional Equine and Agricultural Centre of Huron (REACH). The Provincial government will be providing \$850,000 towards construction of the Centre at the former St. Joseph Elementary School.

In August 2008

- After providing resources, information and other services to women for nearly 30 years, Women Today of Huron officially closed its doors. The non-profit organization had run into financial difficulties that the board felt could not be rectified.
- McCann RediMix Inc. announced plans to build a 49-unit apartment complex next to the water tower in Exeter. Construction will be completed in November. Tower View Apartments will be targeted towards people aged 55 years and older.
- An official ribbon cutting ceremony was held for Bayfield Meadows, a planned retirement community for seniors located just outside of Bayfield. Four of the planned 55 units have been completed and are on the market.
- Wescast Industries reached a three-year agreement with the Canadian Auto Workers' Union after several weeks of bargaining. The agreement, which averted a strike, affects 390 workers at the two foundry plants in Wingham.
- Seaforth Golf & Country Club hosted the Canadian Pro Golf Tour, bringing thousands of visitors to the region, and attracting national attention for Huron County.

In September 2008

- Wescast Industries laid off 38 hourly workers at its Wingham locations due to a downturn in the markets.
- Suncor Energy has signed land option agreements with land owners in Huron East to develop a wind power project over the next few years. The area being looked at for development is bordered by Winthrop Road, Manley Line, Highway 8 and Division Line.
- \$150 million was approved from the Building Canada Fund to secure and improve the water supply for municipalities that draw water from lakes Huron and Erie. As part of the project, there may be plans for a Centre of Excellence for Water Quality Research to be located near the Lake Huron Water Supply Station north of Grand Bend.

- The former SAAN store in Exeter has re-opened as The Bargain Shop and will carry a variety of brand name products for the home as well as grocery and clothing items. The Bargain Shop has also opened a brand new location on Josephine St. in Wingham.
- The newest location of The Brick was officially opened in the former Zilliax store located on Highway 21 south of Goderich.
- The historic Commercial Hotel on Main St. Seaforth will be renovated into a 15-unit apartment complex with front-floor space made available for new retail ventures.
- The Signal-Star Publishing chain of papers will no longer be printed in Huron County as the print division has been closed due to excess capacity in other regions. 23 local workers will lose their jobs as a result.
- A ground-breaking ceremony was held at Bluewater Rest Home near Zurich to celebrate the beginning of a \$10.45 million dollar re-development.

In October 2008

- Vincent Farm Equipment, with two stores in Seaforth and Exeter, has joined with Delta Power Equipment in Watford and Forest. The merger will give the new company better access to parts, equipment and product knowledge.
- It was announced that Volvo Construction Equipment will move its Goderich motor grader division to Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. The decision to consolidate operations was taken to improve the global competitiveness and profitability of the road machinery line. The move affects 500 employees and will be completed by no later than 2010.
- EPCOR Utilities Inc. announced that the company will terminate its renewable energy supply agreement for their proposed 160 megawatt Kingsbridge II project in Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh, citing difficulties in getting approvals from the provincial and local governments. The Kingsbridge II project was estimated at a cost of \$300 million dollars.

- Two retail pharmacies opened up in Goderich, including Rexall and Shoppers Drug Mart. Shoppers is located across from the Walmart Plaza and is employing 55 people. Rexall's new facility is just off the Square on Kingston St. and currently employs 30 people.
- Arthur's Fresh Company of Goderich, a wholesaler of fruit beverages and smoothies was recently recognized as being among Canadian Business Profit's 100 Rankings as they posted a 1,600% growth in sales over the past 5 years.
- 544 housing units were sold in Huron County from January to September at an average price of \$188,970. According to the Huron Perth Real Estate Board, this figure is only marginally off of last year's figures when 547 units were sold at an average price of \$189,297.

In November 2008

- Goderich Aircraft Inc., located in Huron Park, announced construction of a new 43,000 square foot hangar that will see 70 to 80 new jobs being created. Future growth in the market called for an additional hangar facility in order to meet future demands. Goderich Aircraft Inc. currently employs 130 skilled craftsmen, engineers and tradespersons drawn from all over Canada.
- Andex Metal Products announced plans for an expansion of its Exeter facilities to accommodate an initial 3,160 square foot addition to the west of its current building, plus an additional 1,860 square foot addition to the south. The expansion is being undertaken to serve the needs of additional agricultural contracts for the business.
- Wecast Industries of Wingham laid off 25 salaried workers, bringing the total lay-offs to 91 over the past few months. The company has seen a 22.6% decrease in sales over last year, in response to softness in the car market for GM, Chrysler and Ford products.

In December 2008

- A portion of the 85 employees affected by the closure of the E.D. Smith plant in Cambridge will be moving to the company's plant in Seaforth. E.D. Smith announced

- that it will close its Cambridge operations by July 2009, and transfer production to other facilities in Seaforth and Pennsylvania. Currently, the Seaforth plant employs 120 hourly and 30 salaried workers.
- Ontario's highest court awarded farm workers the right to unionize, striking down the province's Agricultural Employees Protection Act as unconstitutional. The ruling will change the way the province's large agricultural employers, many of them in Southwestern Ontario, manage their employees.
 - Sifto Canada announced that it is on schedule with expansion plans to increase production capacity at the Goderich mine to over 9 million tonnes annually by the close of 2008. The company has hired 20 new people in the last several months, and another 30 jobs are anticipated over the next two years.
 - The \$150 million Greenfield Ethanol Plant planned for Hensall will go ahead as planned in the spring of 2009. The main reason for the delay has been the volatility of the global economy – namely the financial crisis in credit markets since last August. Greenfield will be focusing its attention on new builds in Quebec and Eastern Ontario. The Hensall plant, when completed, will employ approximately 50 people.
 - The former SAAN store in Wingham will re-open as home to Fields, a division of the Hudson's Bay Company discount retailer. It is anticipated that the store will be in full operation before the end of December.
 - Volvo and its unionized employees have reached a termination agreement that will see most of the workers at the Goderich facility receive two week's severance pay for each year worked to a maximum of 52 weeks. The employees will remain on the job at the manufacturing facility until the expiration of the contract on June 30th, 2009.
 - Challenger Motor Freight of Cambridge has purchased the assets of INX PRESS, a Goderich-based special commodities carrier that focuses on heavy equipment customers. Challenger will continue to operate from the current INX PRESS location at 233 Cambridge St. with all existing services to be provided.

- The Blyth Festival wrapped up one of the most successful seasons in its 34-year history, realizing a surplus of \$175, 633 on its 2008 season. The 2008 season posted 28,341 tickets booked overall, translating into well over half a million dollars in direct revenue, and generating another \$4 million into the local economy from sales at restaurants, accommodations and tourist operators throughout the region.

2.3 SUMMARY OF KEY FACTORS AFFECTING HURON'S ECONOMY

I. Small Business Development

After a decade of remarkable growth, it now appears that the trend towards new business start-ups is leveling off. The causes are largely due to demographic factors. With Huron's older population, many entrepreneurs have started to retire; closing their businesses and selling their farms. At the same time, after years of out-migration, Huron County has proportionately fewer individuals in the prime "business start-up" age group (25-44). This, combined with growing job opportunities from local employers has led to fewer business start-ups. If business numbers in Huron County are to be maintained, greater efforts are required to encourage new entrepreneurs, develop business succession strategies and ensure the longevity of existing enterprises.

II. Economic Development

The Huron County economy is now more than ever part of a broader global environment that provides both challenges and opportunities for local businesses. On the positive side, Huron County companies have access to a well-educated workforce with a strong work ethic, combined with a comparatively lower cost of doing business. However, local farms and industries must compete against strong emerging off-shore economies such as China, where wage rates are significantly lower. Recently, the Huron County manufacturing sector has been hit hard by closures and lay-offs from major employers such as Volvo, Can-Gro and Wecast Industries. Despite these recent setbacks, Huron County possesses many assets that can attract new economic investment and provide the foundations for a strong export economy. Diversifying the farm economy; tapping into emerging markets, expanding the region's creative sector; adapting old facilities to new uses; and promoting our competitive advantages are all strategies that will help to further drive our local economy.

III. Community Revitalization

Businesses do not operate in a vacuum. They are part of a broader community that includes not only economic connections, but social, cultural and recreational linkages as well. For this reason, local communities are under increasing pressure to play a role in maintaining their economic assets in the face of changing trends. Provided the local community has the organizational, infrastructure, human and civic capacities in place, community groups can be powerful allies in helping local economies adapt and thrive through things like buy-local initiatives, local business support programs, and the provision of a high quality of life for business operators and their workforce.

IV. Youth Engagement

For decades, Huron County's greatest export has been our youth. One of every two Huron County youth leaves Huron County at some point in search of employment opportunity, representing a chronic loss of economic potential for the area. Ironically, many youth leave their communities in search of economic opportunity the same time as imminent skills shortages are emerging throughout the region. With young people continuing to leave, the future existence of the next generation of business and community leaders is in question. While outside experience is beneficial for youth, efforts to educate local youth and make them aware of local opportunities can give them added options when considering future careers in the area.

V. Employment & Training

Labour shortages are now critical in many sectors of the Huron County economy, including healthcare, hospitality and skilled trades. With over 7,000 estimated retirements over the next 5 years, combined with only 4,300 potential new recruits over the same time frame, the problem is likely to get worse. Employers will need to be more creative in recruiting and maintaining a workforce, including utilizing every available individual to their fullest capacity. As a result, the need to enhance life-long learning opportunities and basic employment skills is greater than ever. This will require strengthening co-op education programs; overcoming barriers of distance for access to training; creating awareness of new emerging occupations in the job market and raising the emphasis placed on computer literacy and business-related training programs.

2.4 A WHO'S WHO OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HURON

Perhaps Huron County's greatest asset in addressing these economic issues is the high level of co-operation and partnership exhibited amongst organizations involved in economic development and labour market adjustment throughout the region. Huron County is blessed with a multitude of economic development stakeholders that all contribute to the overall health of the Huron County economy.

I. Avon Maitland District School Board/Huron Perth Catholic District School Board

Local school boards share many of the same goals held by economic development stakeholders, particularly in the areas of youth, adult education and employment skills. As a result, they are active partners on several projects, including the Technology Skills Summer Camps, Girls Unlimited Non-traditional Careers Camp and the myspokes.ca on-line learning portal. In addition, the Avon Maitland District School Board partners in the operation of five Centres for Employment & Learning in Seaforth, Clinton, Goderich, Exeter and Wingham.

II. Bruce Grey Huron Perth Training Board

The Bruce Grey Huron Perth Training Board (BGHPTB) is a community-based non-profit corporation with a mandate to ensure improvements in the local labour market by acting as a link between employers, the community and the government. In that capacity, BGHPTB has been a partner on numerous economic development projects, most recently in co-sponsoring the Huron Perth Community Skills Map, the Lake Huron Learning Collaborative and the development of Newcomer Attraction & Retention programs.

III. Chambers of Commerce & Business Associations

(Bayfield, Blyth, Brussels, Exeter, Seaforth, South Huron, Goderich, Wingham)

Local business organizations have been instrumental in developing project ideas and contributing resources to economic development. In general, these organizations are small, volunteer driven, with limited financial resources, but they are effective in contributing valuable volunteer and staff time to co-ordinate initiatives. Currently, Chambers of Commerce and B.I.A.'s throughout Huron

are actively engaged in local Business Retention & Expansion and Downtown Revitalization exercises underway in their respective communities.

IV. Foundation for Education Perth Huron

The Foundation for Education has a proud, thirteen-year history of supporting enrichment and enhancement activities for students in Huron and Perth schools. Its mission is to develop, support, and encourage the integration of the rich and unique cultural, corporate, industrial, and agricultural resources of Huron and Perth counties into the school system and initiate new educational enrichment programs to benefit students and citizens. Through a variety of fund raising efforts, it is able to offer programs to schools and support for individual school initiatives. Over the years, the Foundation has sponsored numerous youth initiatives, including the Girls Unlimited Skilled Trades Workshops, the Technology Skills Summer Camps and the Service Excellence Certificate Program.

V. Heritage & Cultural Partnership

In 2000, the Ontario Trillium Foundation sponsored the launch of the Heritage & Cultural Partnership in Huron County. Since then, the organization has evolved from a committee of the Huron Tourism Association to become its own legal entity with a mandate to promote the arts, heritage and cultural assets of Huron County. Currently, the HCP is taking the lead on implementing a Huron County Cultural Plan that ensures the existence of resources and support for this emerging “creative” sector of the economy.

VI. Huron Business Development Corporation

The Huron Business Development Corporation (HBDC) is a not-for-profit Community Futures Development Corporation, governed by community volunteers and supported by FedNor. Launched in 1993, the HBDC is one of over 260 CFDC’s located throughout rural Canada. Like all CFDC’s, HBDC’s mandate is to help strengthen & diversify rural economies by providing business advisory services; direct investment in small business ventures and support to community economic development initiatives that strengthen and expand the local economy. Since 1993, the HBDC has worked with a total of 200 individual partner organizations on 147 different community development initiatives, investing close to \$16 million in economic

development initiatives; helping launch or expand over 1,600 businesses and creating over 6,500 jobs. These include ventures in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, cultural services, information technology and healthcare.

VII. Huron Community Matters Steering Committee

The Community Matters Steering Committee was formed in the spring of 2005 after Community Matters consultation meetings held in communities throughout Huron County indicated that the priority issues in Huron County were Economic Development, Affordable Housing, Youth and Employment & Training. The stated goals of the Committee are to involve a variety of organizations, agencies and businesses interested in employment, and training, economic development, information, affordable housing; to promote collaboration and coordinated efforts; and to organize information sharing and issue discussion related to the Community Matters priorities. Current participating members include the County of Huron Planning & Development Department, Housing and Health Unit departments, the Huron United Way, the Huron Business Development Corporation and the BGHP Training Board.

VIII. Huron County Health Unit

The Huron County Health Unit is one of 36 health units in Ontario with a mandate to provide public health programs and services in the community. In its efforts to protect and promote the health of the community, the Huron County Health Unit plays a crucial role in many community economic development initiatives. Examples include the Spark Youth Website that provides local young people with a forum to discuss issues important to rural youth; the Huron Good Food Box Program, which generates new market revenues for local food producers through purchase and resale of local food products to local consumers; funding and promotion of the Buy Local Buy Fresh Food Map; and assistance in the creation of a new Huron County Youth Council.

IX. Huron County Planning & Development Department/Economic Development Services

The County's Department of Planning and Development has been a strong proponent of community economic development for over 20 years. Strategic planning, information and research, and the contribution of staff and financial resources have all been beneficial to the economic development efforts in the past. Examples include staff assistance in operating the

Huron Tourism Association; Huron Manufacturing Association; co-location of the Huron County Small Business Enterprise Centre and related collaborative efforts such as the Summer Company Program. Currently, the HBDC and County of Huron are co-leading a 3-year economic renewal initiative called "Huron Economic Development Matters". As part of this initiative, a new Economic Development Services division has been created, with staff dedication to Economic Development, Downtown Revitalization and Tourism Promotion.

X. Huron Employment Services Delivery Network

The Huron Employment Services Delivery Network is composed of all service providers who deliver MTCU-funded Employment Assistance Services programs in Huron County. These include the Huron Business Development Corporation, the Avon Maitland District School Board, County of Huron/Ontario Works and Armstrong, Hayes & Associates. The Network meets monthly to discuss issues and challenges related to the co-ordinated delivery of employment services to the residents of Huron County.

XI. Huron Manufacturing Association

In 1999, local community leaders sponsored a manufacturing sector strategy for industries and partnering communities in Huron County. This project led to the development of a 15-point action plan for expanding growth in the County's industrial base and the incorporation of the Huron Manufacturing Association as a not-for-profit organization. In 2006, the original strategic plan was updated with the support of the Community Investment Support Program. Many of the recommendations of that report are contained in the new renewal strategy called "Huron Economic Development Matters" which includes several initiatives targeted directly to the manufacturing sector, most notably an HMA Workforce Development & Training Strategy.

XII. Huron Perth Farm-to-Table Network

The F-T-T Network is an adhoc group of organizations committed to promoting the region's value-added agriculture sector and is made up of representatives from the Huron and Perth Federations of Agriculture, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs, the Huron County Health Unit, Huron Tourism Association and sector organizations such as the Ontario Pork Producers Association and Ontario Farmers Markets Association. The F-T-T has been an

instrumental partner in several projects to date, including Bridges to Agriculture, the Huron Harvest Trail, the Huron Good Food Box Program, the Huron Perth Farm-to-Table Map, and a series of Growing Your Opportunities workshops for food producers across the region.

XIII. Huron Tourism Association

The Huron Tourism Association was launched in 1993. The Association has an active membership of over 180 tourism operators with a mandate to develop and target cost effective and results oriented tourism strategies within Huron County. Over the years, HTA has spearheaded many tourism development initiatives, including a Tour Bus Operators' Manual, the Huron Harvest Trail, Shakespeare-to-the-Shoreline, an award-winning regional marketing initiative, as well as annual publication of the Huron County Visitors Guide.

XIV. Lake Huron Learning Collaborative

In 2005, a citizens' group from Goderich came together to promote more opportunities for post-secondary learning for Huron County residents. At that time, a consultant was contracted to work with the group and develop a corporate structure, policies and procedures, and a series of new learning partnerships. As a result, the Lake Huron Learning Collaborative was formally incorporated in early 2006 with two first-year undergraduate courses offered to Huron County residents through the University of Western Ontario starting in September 2006. The Lake Huron Learning Collaborative continues its mandate to offer new learning programs based on the region's economic, social and natural assets, including most recently a Heritage Planning Certificate Program offered in conjunction with the University of Waterloo.

XV. Maitland Watershed Partnership

Like many organizations, the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority is concerned about the long-term environmental and economic health of the Huron County area. In 2000, the MVCA invited community partners to participate in several long-term community strategic planning initiatives, including the identification of opportunities for eco-tourism in the Maitland Valley watershed, and the creation of several demonstration projects for environmental stewardship. Much of the activity of the MWP is currently devoted to the health of the region's forest and woodlot sector, an often overlooked contributor to Huron's local economy.

XVI. Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

As the Province's flagship Ministry for rural economic development, OMAFRA has played a strong role in stimulating economic development activity throughout Huron County since assuming the Rural Affairs portfolio in 1991. Through the years, access to rural development funding such as Grow Ontario, the Rural Jobs Strategy and the Rural Economic Development Program have benefited many Huron County initiatives. Staff from OMAFRA continue to provide economic development stakeholders with a wide range of technical expertise in areas such as community economic analysis, trade area assessment and leadership development. Currently, OMAFRA staff are active in supporting local downtown revitalization and B, R & E initiatives.

XVII. Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities

MTCU has been a major financial contributor of dollars for CED activities in this region over the years. Currently, MTCU contracts with the County of Huron to deliver the Self Employment Benefit Program in Huron. In addition, HBDC and AMDSB hold contracts to deliver employment services to E.I. clients throughout Huron County. MTCU also sponsors several highly successful Job Creation Partnerships projects in Huron County, including Huron Community Matters and the Centre for Applied Renewable Energy.

XVIII. Municipalities and Municipal Economic Development Committees

(Bluewater, Huron East, Goderich, North Huron, South Huron)

Several communities throughout Huron County have established municipal committees mandated by their respective councils to undertake community economic development. Municipal economic development committees are similar to local business organizations in that they provide a focal point for community-driven activities supported by modest staff and financial resources. These groups offer a setting for germinating new project ideas and providing management and co-ordination services on behalf of their communities.

XIX. Network Huron

Network Huron is an information-sharing partnership of employment, self employment and training organizations from across Huron County that focuses on supporting and encouraging employability in the region. Objectives are to involve a wide variety of organizations, agencies

and services interested in employment, self employment and training; to promote collaboration and coordinated efforts; to organize information sharing, issue discussion, and training opportunities for members; and to discuss areas of need identified by members. The Network currently has 32 members.

XX. Warden's Task Force on Economic Development

In January 2006, Huron County Warden Rob Morley established the first Warden's Task Force on Economic Development comprised of the Mayors and chief staff from each of Huron's municipalities. Subsequently, representatives from the agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and cultural sectors have been added to the membership. The mandate of the Task Force is to examine the state of local economic development efforts, determine what programs and services are working well, and identify gaps in programs and services to be addressed. Currently, the Task Force is working to address the fall-out of the Can-Gro and Volvo closures and Westcast lay-offs in their respective communities.

3.0 HURON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS – A Renewal Strategy for the Huron County Economy

Working closely with community stakeholders, the County of Huron and HBDC have devised a 5-pillar strategic plan for economic development and job creation in Huron County called “Huron Economic Development Matters. As lead partners, the County of Huron and HBDC have pooled their resources to support this initiative, while matching funds have been obtained through the provincial Rural Economic Development (RED) program. The Huron Economic Development Matters Initiative focuses services and programs in the following key strategic areas:

- **Small Business Development Services** to enhance the success rate of local business ventures – services include small business workshops, mentoring and consulting, support to small business networks and venture financing;
- **Economic Development Services** to stimulate new investment in the Huron County economy – services include business planning, invest-in-Huron marketing, manufacturing workforce development and an industry call program with employers;
- **Community Revitalization Services** to create vibrant and supportive communities in which to do business – services include Business Retention & Expansion, Community Enterprise Development, Downtown Revitalization, Newcomer Programming; Leadership Training and Social Enterprise lending;
- **Youth Engagement Services** to encourage the integration of youth in the local labour force – services include workplace skills camps, development of youth enterprise and job experience through a county-wide youth internship program;
- **Employment & Training Services** to ensure the competitiveness of the local workforce – services include Centres for Employment & Learning, the Centre for Applied Renewable Energy; HealthKick Human Resources Initiative; the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service and a Human Resources Practices in Small and Medium Enterprises Pilot Initiative;

The following table provides an overview of strategies and partnerships that are contained under these 5 service pillars.

PILLAR # 1: SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	PARTNERS	DESCRIPTION	2009 TARGETS
1. Huron County Small Business Enterprise Centre	Huron County Planning & Development; Ministry of Small Business	Provides entrepreneurs with free access to a library of business development resources along with the mentoring services of a Business Consultant	1,500 small business consultations and service requests will be fulfilled each year.
2. Better Business Workshop Series	Huron County Small Business Enterprise Centre; Ministry of Small Business	Enhances business management skills through a series of workshops on various topics including business planning, financing, marketing and customer service	500 participants will take part in business management workshops
3. Self Employment Benefit Program	MTCU; Huron County Planning & Development	Offers E.I. eligible participants financing and mentoring support for up to 32 weeks while they are launching new business ventures.	30 new business will be launched with the support of the SEB program
4. Small Business Management Consulting Service	Huron Business Development Corporation;	Offers extensive consulting to area business operators to assist them in overcoming barriers to business growth and viability	25 business clients will receive intensive business management consulting leading to start-up/expansion
5. Community Futures Development Institute	Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations	Offers a range of on-line business management training courses to local entrepreneurs and their employees.	25 business clients will participate in on-line business management training
6. Small Business Networks	Heritage & Cultural Partnership; Huron Farm to Table Network; Huron Manufacturing Association; Huron Tourism Association; Huron Women in Networking; Chambers of Commerce	Sponsorship of regular business forums and marketplaces where local businesses can network; promote their products and services and celebrate successes.	500 participants will take part in business networking events each year
7. Huron Business Development Corporation Investment Fund	Local Banks & Credit Unions; BDC; Farm Credit Canada; FedNor	Provides small business loans up to \$150,000 that can help leverage other financing from traditional sources	5 businesses will receive a total of \$400,000 in start-up or expansion loans.

PILLAR # 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	PARTNERS	DESCRIPTION	2009 TARGETS
8. Business Planning Initiatives	County of Huron; Rural Economic Development	Financial assistance to commission feasibility assessments, business plans and investment offerings for major ventures	3 major ventures will be developed, in the food processing, cultural services and renewable energy sectors
9. Business Call Program	County of Huron; Huron Manufacturing Association; Huron Federation of Agriculture	One-to-one visits with area business owners to determine needs and opportunities for growth	60 Huron County companies will be visited, resulting in 5 business expansions
10. Manufacturing Workforce Development & Training Plan	County of Huron; Rural Economic Development; Huron Manufacturing Association	Management training at local industries to identify continuous improvement measures	24 companies will take part in training program
11. Invest-in-Huron Campaign	County of Huron; Local Municipalities	Image branding, information resources and a structured industrial advertising and inquiry system to promote new investment in Huron County	10 industrial inquiries will be served, resulting in the launch of 2 new business ventures
PILLAR # 3: COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION	PARTNERS	DESCRIPTION	2009 TARGETS
12. Business Retention & Expansion Initiatives	Local Business Groups OMAFRA; County of Huron ; Rural Economic Development	Assists volunteer groups undertaking and implementing a B, R & E exercise in their community	2 communities will undertake B, R & E, with 120 businesses surveyed & 6 business expansions
13. Downtown Revitalization	Local Business Groups OMAFRA; County of Huron ; Rural Economic Development	Assists groups in launching organizational, marketing, business and street-scaping strategies to enhance the economic climate of their downtowns	2 communities will develop Downtown Revitalization initiatives, with the involvement of 12 business owners
14. Community & Social Enterprise Development	Local Business Groups OMAFRA; County of Huron ; Rural Economic Development	Business planning and financial assistance to develop new enterprises that add to the social and cultural health of the community	5 initiatives will be developed with the support of feasibility, business planning and capital resources.

15. Huron County Newcomer Attraction & Retention	Citizenship & Immigration Canada; County of Huron	Works with local communities to launch recruitment programs to attract and retain new entrepreneurs and skilled workers to the area	10 new families will be attracted to Huron County, including 5 new entrepreneurs
16. Rural Leadership Survival Series	County of Huron; Rural Economic Development; River Rock Leadership	Offer leadership training to Huron County residents to encourage their engagement in local economic development	12 new leaders will be trained
PILLAR # 4: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT	PARTNERS	DESCRIPTION	2009 TARGETS
17. Summer Company	Huron County Small Business Enterprise Centre; Ministry of Small Business & Entrepreneurship	Provides financial resources and mentoring support to local youth operating businesses during the summer	5 young participants will operate summer businesses
18. Youth Workplace Skills Camps	AMDSB; Huron Perth Catholic D.S.B.; RED; Foundation for Enriching Education ; HealthKick Huron; Local Training Board 18	Introduces young men and women to the range of careers found in the skilled trades and healthcare professions	250 young men and women will take part in Skills Camps
19. Youth Enterprise	County of Huron; Rural Economic Development;	Provides youth with an opportunity to develop their own ventures around issues that are important to them	1 youth venture will be launched
20. CED Internships	County of Huron; Rural Economic Development	Offers work placements for area youth in economic development projects throughout Huron County	8 young people will gain employment experience in emerging sectors
PILLAR# 5: EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING	PARTNERS	DESCRIPTION	2009 TARGETS
21. Centres for Employment & Learning	MTCU; Armstrong, Hayes & Associates; Ontario Works; Avon Maitland District School Board; Conestoga College; Partners in Employment	Provides access to a full suite of employment services that assist all job seekers in finding sustainable employment	1,000 Huron County clients will access services, resulting in 300 successful job placements

22. HealthKick Human Resources Initiative	Rural Economic Development; Georgian College; Huron East Community Development Trust; County of Huron	Pilots new methods for recruiting & retaining healthcare professionals in rural Ontario communities	15 healthcare interns will gain job experience while 19 Registered Practical Nurses and 19 Food Service Workers will be trained
23. Centre for Applied Renewable Energy	MTCU; Countryside Energy Co-operative; CfARE Board of Directors	Will provide employment training to E.I. eligible participants in all aspects of community renewable energy	12 participants will gain employment experience and skills in the renewable energy sector.
24. Canadian Agricultural Skills Service	CON*NECT Cass Centre	Helps farm families generate new revenue opportunities by providing access to training supports.	40 farm operators will receive training with the support of the program
25. Human Resources Practices in Small & Medium Enterprises	Workplace Skills Initiative; Restigouche CBDC;	Increases the effectiveness of HR management practices within SME's	3 Huron County businesses will launch human resource plans

For 2009, key outcomes of this activity will include:

- 525 individual business enterprises, or approximately 9% of all businesses and farms in Huron County will benefit from services provided;
- 135 new business start-ups or expansions will be supported, resulting in a growth rate of 2.2% in the local economic base;
- 650 new jobs will be created and maintained throughout Huron County, resulting in a growth rate of 2% in the regional workforce;
- Over time, these 650 jobs will inject approximately \$15.3 million of employment income each year into the local economy, and provide senior level governments with approximately \$1.6 million annually in additional income taxes.

Comments or questions?
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