



Niagara Training & Adjustment Board  
le Conseil de formation et d'adaptation  
de la main d'oeuvre de Niagara

TRENDS  
OPPORTUNITIES  
PRIORITIES

# TOP REPORT

January 2007

*a member of*

Local Boards  
Network

*Champions of Ontario's Local Labour Market Solutions*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of a consultative, community-based labour market development initiative that involved active participation and input from a broad range of community stakeholders. Niagara Training & Adjustment Board (NTAB) recognizes the value and important contribution of those that participated in the action planning process through community consultations, interviews and dialogue. Thank you for the interaction, knowledge and expertise shared in the building of this Niagara labour market development action plan.

A special thank you is extended to Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities for the continued commitment to the Local Boards Network.

### **Note:**

NTAB acknowledges report limitations and will continue to seek out information in areas that require further analysis and action.

### **Report Format**

This report provides the reader with the following information:

- A snapshot of Niagara's labour market trends
- A local labour force development action plan addressing issues impacting Niagara's labour force
- TOP Report Card 2006 – depicting actions and activity status for the previous year



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**NTAB is funded by:**



*The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Ontario.*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005 the Niagara Region released its economic growth strategy which outlines six directions that are intended to help steer the region towards a more prosperous future:

1. Build a Stronger Collective Voice
2. Create A Competitive Business Environment
3. Target Strategic Employers
4. Improve Transportation and Related Infrastructure
5. Re-Brand Niagara
6. Develop Niagara's Talent Pool

The 6th pillar, "Developing Niagara's Talent Pool" reiterates the importance of workforce development to the region's ability to remain competitive in a global economy. It also validates the importance of the work that the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board leads in Niagara through the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities consultation process.

Niagara is a region, not unlike many others, that is experiencing a demographic and economic shift. With one of the nation's oldest populations, a decreasing number of young people and the need to enhance international competitiveness, Niagara's need to continuously build capacity and attract and retain a skilled workforce is key to the region's economic growth and prosperity.

Driven by the increased emphasis on the link between workforce development and economic sustainability, this study identifies and responds to labour force trends, opportunities and priorities for the Niagara Region. Labour market research and local intelligence clearly depict five key trends that are impacting local labour force development:

- Economic restructuring – Niagara is experiencing a transfer of jobs from manufacturing to the service sector;
- Increased age of the regional population – Niagara continues to experience a modest population growth and out-migration of youth;
- Low labour force participation among equity groups;
- Lower education attainment at the university level (as compared to Ontario) while employer demand for higher skills is increasing;
- Lack of inter-municipal transportation system is impacting negatively on job seeker mobility across municipalities.

The implications of these trends are visible in the workforce and workplace, including composition and skills of the workforce, the nature of work, workplace arrangement and workplace learning. These present both challenges and opportunities at the local level.

A *Business Employment and Outlook Survey*<sup>i</sup> conducted between January 2005 and January 2006 by the Niagara Economic Development Corporation in partnership with Niagara Training & Adjustment Board indicates that there will be approximately 4,500 new hires between 2005 and 2007 across four sectors, those being Transportation Equipment, Automotive and Related Industries; Tourism and Wine; Agriculture, Food and Beverage; and Business, Public, Transportation and Distribution Services. In addition, is the demand being experienced in such sectors as construction, hospitality and contact centres.

A healthy economy is dependent on a skilled and ready labour force to deliver the level of productivity needed to drive it. With demographic facts validating a slowing of labour force growth, the need for a creative and innovative approach to employee recruitment and retention is critical. Solutions are not always simple or immediate. NTAB recognizes that steps toward success must be targeted, promote a collaborative approach, and have measurable goals. As NTAB facilitated the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities (TOP) consultation process during 2006, an approach that promotes greater engagement of stakeholders was utilized to drive the local action planning model.

.....  
<sup>i</sup> Niagara Region Business & Employment Outlook, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, January, 2006

## INTRODUCTION

### About NTAB ... Niagara's Workforce Development Board

Niagara Training & Adjustment Board is a community based, non-profit organization serving the geographic region of Niagara, covering approximately 1,863 sq. km and consisting of twelve communities: Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Catharines, Thorold, Welland, Port Colborne, Wainfleet, Pelham, Lincoln, West Lincoln, and Grimsby.

Incorporated since October 1997, NTAB serves the Niagara Region as a champion of workforce and labour market development. Working at the grass roots level, NTAB functions as a neutral broker of research, disseminator of information, and facilitator of collaborative partnership development. Operating as part of the Local Boards Network of Ontario, NTAB works to improve the conditions of the local labour market by:

- engaging communities in a locally-driven process to identify and respond to the key trends, opportunities and priorities that prevail in their local labour markets;
- facilitating a local planning process where community organizations and institutions agree to initiate and/or implement joint actions to address local labour market issues of common interest;
- creating opportunities for partnership development activities and projects that respond to more complex and/or pressing local labour market challenges;
- organizing events and activities that promote the importance of education, training and skills upgrading to youth, parents, employers, employed and unemployed workers, and the public in general.

Niagara Training & Adjustment Board contributes to building a strong Ontario workforce at the community level through local planning, implementation of innovative strategies and fostering horizontal community partnerships.

#### **Vision:**

NTAB will serve as the organization in Niagara promoting workforce development through stakeholder collaboration and partnership development.

#### **Mission:**

Our mission is to champion labour force development for the Niagara Region by facilitating community action on identified trends, opportunities and priorities.

#### **Mandate:**

Advocating for constituents by:

Promoting local labour force development.

Forging community partnerships.

Addressing employment, training, trends, opportunities and priorities.

## NIAGARA COMMUNITY PROFILE – AT A GLANCE<sup>ii</sup>

### 1. Total population, population (% change 1996-2001)

1996 – 403,504      2001 – 410,574      1.8% increase

Age	1996	2001	% of Change
≥65 yrs	59,870	64,980	8.5% growth
45-64	90,780	101,940	12.3% growth
25-44	117,765	112,435	-18.0% decline

### 2. Age characteristics (gender by age groups, median age)

Male: 38.8      Female: 41      Median: 40

% of the population aged 15 and over: 81.8% (male: 80.8/female: 82.7)

### 3. Language

English only: 328,880      French only: 14,255      English & French: 1,330

Languages: 60,130 (Includes responses indicating single responses of a non-official language and multiple responses. Multiple responses include cases where one of the languages is either English or French, in combination with one non-official language.)

### 4. Immigration characteristics<sup>iii</sup>

Population: 71,210      Unemployment rate: 12%

#### Immigration Trends:

Immigration to the Niagara Region occurs at a lesser rate than the provincial average. 21% of Niagara's population is immigrants, compared to 32% of Ontario's population. The most recent group of immigrants to Niagara (those landing from 1991 to 2001) make up only 1% of the region's population, whereas the most recent immigrants to the province account for 5% of that population.

#### Employment Patterns:

The unemployment rate of Niagara's most recent immigrants is 12% which is double that of the region's unemployment rate for the non-immigrant population. This high rate is not abnormal, as recent immigrants across Ontario experience 13% unemployment. Within Niagara's recent immigrant population, the greatest unemployment rates are experienced by professionals in Social Science, Education, Government Services and Religion, and Sales.

#### Urban Draw:

The greatest number of immigrants in Niagara is in St. Catharines, followed by Niagara Falls. It is typical for immigrants to first settle in larger cities. St. Catharines is home to 36% of Niagara's immigrants, and received 42% of the most recent immigrants. Likewise, Niagara Falls is home to 22% of Niagara's immigrants, and received 27% of the most recent immigrants.

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www12.statcan.ca/english>

<sup>iii</sup> Workforce Focus, Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, January 2006

## 5. Aboriginal population

Population: 5,185      Unemployment rate: 10%

## 6. Visible minority Status – top five (5) groups

Population: 17,355  
 1. Black: 3,960  
 2. Chinese: 2,780  
 3. South Asian: 2,585  
 4. Latin American: 1,570  
 5. Southeast Asian: 1,325

## 7. Education Attainment: Highest level of schooling

Niagara's labour force has consistently exhibited a lower population university-educated when compared to Ontario (from 1991 to 2001) with the province having 32.5% as compared to Niagara with 23.5%.

## 8. Average earnings of the population 15 years and over by highest level of schooling, by census metropolitan area (2001 Census)

St. Catharines-Niagara: \$30,384  
 Ontario: \$35,185

## 9. Labour Force indicators (November 2006)

Participation rate: 67.2%    Employment rate: 63.0%    Unemployment rate: 6.3%

## 10. Industry – Average Monthly Employment by Industry, Niagara CMA January – November, 2006<sup>iv</sup>

**Table 1: Average Monthly Employment by Industry, Niagara CMA January – November, 2006<sup>1</sup>**

SECTOR AND INDUSTRY	ESTIMATED LABOUR FORCE, 000s
<b>Total employed, all industries<sup>2</sup></b>	190.3
Goods-producing sector	48.5
Agriculture [1100-1129, 1151-1152]	7.5
Construction [2361-2389]	12.4
Manufacturing [3211-3219, 3271-3279, 3311-3399, 3111-3169, 3221-3262]	27.1
<b>Services-producing sector<sup>3</sup></b>	141.8
Trade [4111-4191, 4411-4543]	31.2
Transportation and warehousing [4811-4931]	8.2
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing [5211-5269, 5311-5331]	7.6
Professional, scientific and technical services [5411-5419]	6.9

<sup>iv</sup> Calculations based upon CANSIM – Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2006

Business, building and other support services [5511-5629]	12.6
Educational services [6111-6117]	11.4
Health care and social assistance [6211-6244]	19.5
Information, culture and recreation [5111-5191, 7111-7139]	12.0
Accommodation and food services [7211-7224]	18.3
Other services [8111-8141]	6.6
Public administration [9110-9191]	7.7

## 11. Average Monthly Employment by Occupation, Niagara CMA January – November, 2006<sup>v</sup>

**Table 2 – Average Monthly Employment by Occupation, Niagara CMA January – November, 2006<sup>4</sup>**

<b>MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED LABOUR FORCE, 000s</b>
Total employed, all occupations	190.3
Management occupations [A011-A016, A111-A392]	15.3
Business, finance and administrative occupations [B011-B022, B111-B318, B411-B576]	28.2
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations [C011-C183]	8.7
Health occupations [D011-D112, D211-D313]	11.8
Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion [E011-E039, E211-E217, E111-E133]	14.0
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport [F011-F154]	4.7
Sales and service occupations	57.0
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations [H011-H022, H111-H145, H211-H535, H611-H737, H811-H832]	28.5
Occupations unique to primary industry [I011-I216]	9.2
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities [J011-J228, J311-J319]	12.8

## YEAR OVER YEAR UPDATE and Significant Change Summary, Niagara 2005 – 2006

Niagara's economy is projected to grow by 3.1% in 2007, due primarily to two large power projects that are expected to get underway early in the new year.<sup>vi</sup> We can be cautiously optimistic as Niagara's labour force should benefit from this increased economic activity. Abitibi Consolidated's \$470 million recycled newsprint mill and the \$985 million<sup>vii</sup> tunnel to transport water to Queenston's hydro-electric generating station are projected to create more than 500 jobs through the life of the construction projects, and spin-off jobs in various sectors, including the transportation and communications sectors.

1 Calculations based upon CANSIM - Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2006.

2 Statistics Canada does not reveal the numbers for variables (sectors) with fewer than 1,500 people. Therefore, two sub-sectors (Forestry and Utilities) are not separately listed in the Goods-producing sector; their numbers are however included in the Goods-producing sector's total numbers

3 Rounding accounts for the minor variation between the sector total and the total when adding individual sub-sectors

4 Calculations based upon CANSIM - Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2006

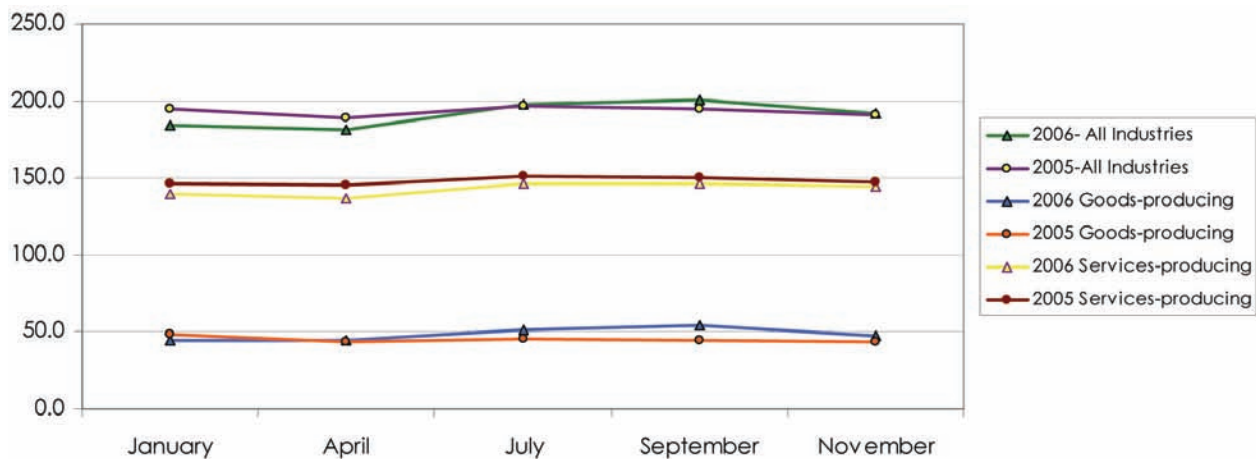
ix *Metropolitan Outlook 2B*, Conference Board of Canada, May 2005

Niagara’s average monthly labour force is projected to decline by approximately 2,700<sup>viii</sup> in 2006, which is well below the 1.2 % average annual employment growth<sup>ix</sup> projected by the Conference Board of Canada for the 2006 to 2009 period. Niagara’s services’ sector has struggled in 2006 after the gains made in 2005, whereas Niagara’s goods-producing industries appear to be ready to make a small gain with its average monthly labour force increasing by 3,200 from 2005 to 2006, largely due to the agricultural industry.

Chart 1, below, illustrates Niagara’s broad year over year employment trends, and clearly shows how much Niagara struggled through the first six months of 2006.

**CHART 1 – Year over Year – 2005-2006,  
 Change in Employment, Niagara Region**

Source Data: Statistics Canada, CANSIM – Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted) January 2005 – November & 2006



Through the first eleven months of 2006 more than 120 businesses opened in Niagara, primarily in the retail trade and commercial services sectors. Over this same period of time approximately 25 businesses in the retail trade and commercial services, and manufacturing sectors closed their doors.<sup>x</sup>

**Construction**

In 2006 Niagara’s construction sector is forecasted to record a nominal increase in employment after a modest decline in 2005, and much stronger than the decline in employment experienced in 2004. The outlook for 2007 is brighter still with the two large power projects that are expected to get underway early in the new year. The Niagara Economic Development E-news (May 2006) also identified other major developments planned including a 175 acre, \$100 million development in the City of Welland. These projects are great news, but may result in a supply and demand challenge.

**Manufacturing**

Manufacturing employment appears to have maintained a relatively level employment state in 2006, with only a nominal decline anticipated year over year. The potential closing of Hayes Dana will continue to pose challenges for the sector in 2007. Overall, Niagara’s manufacturing employment is expected to remain constant through to 2009.

<sup>x</sup> Carol Dupuis, Labour Market Information Analyst, Service Canada, Niagara Area, November 2006

## Agriculture

Niagara's agricultural industry has led the employment increase in the goods-producing sector. In 2006 employment is estimated to be up in every month, with particularly substantial increases in the latter half of the year. In 2006 the average monthly labour force is projected to increase by approximately 2,700<sup>xi</sup> for this sector, which includes greenhouses and tender fruit and grape farms. In Niagara, greenhouse operations have become a cornerstone of the local economy. The recently released Niagara Regional Agricultural Economic Impact Study depicts the regional greenhouse industry as having over 256 operators producing products valued at \$217 million annually in direct sales.<sup>xii</sup>

## Services

In 2005 employment in Niagara's services sector was projected to slow to between .9% and 1.7% annually from 2006 through to 2009.<sup>xiii</sup> The unadjusted monthly employment estimates for 2006 suggest that we may actually see a decline across most industries within the sector, which will lead to drop in employment for the overall sector. Niagara's services sector is comprised of a wide variety of services, including basic personal services such as hairstyling; leisure services such as theatre performances and golfing; community services such as health care and education; and business services such as computer repairs, and legal and marketing services.

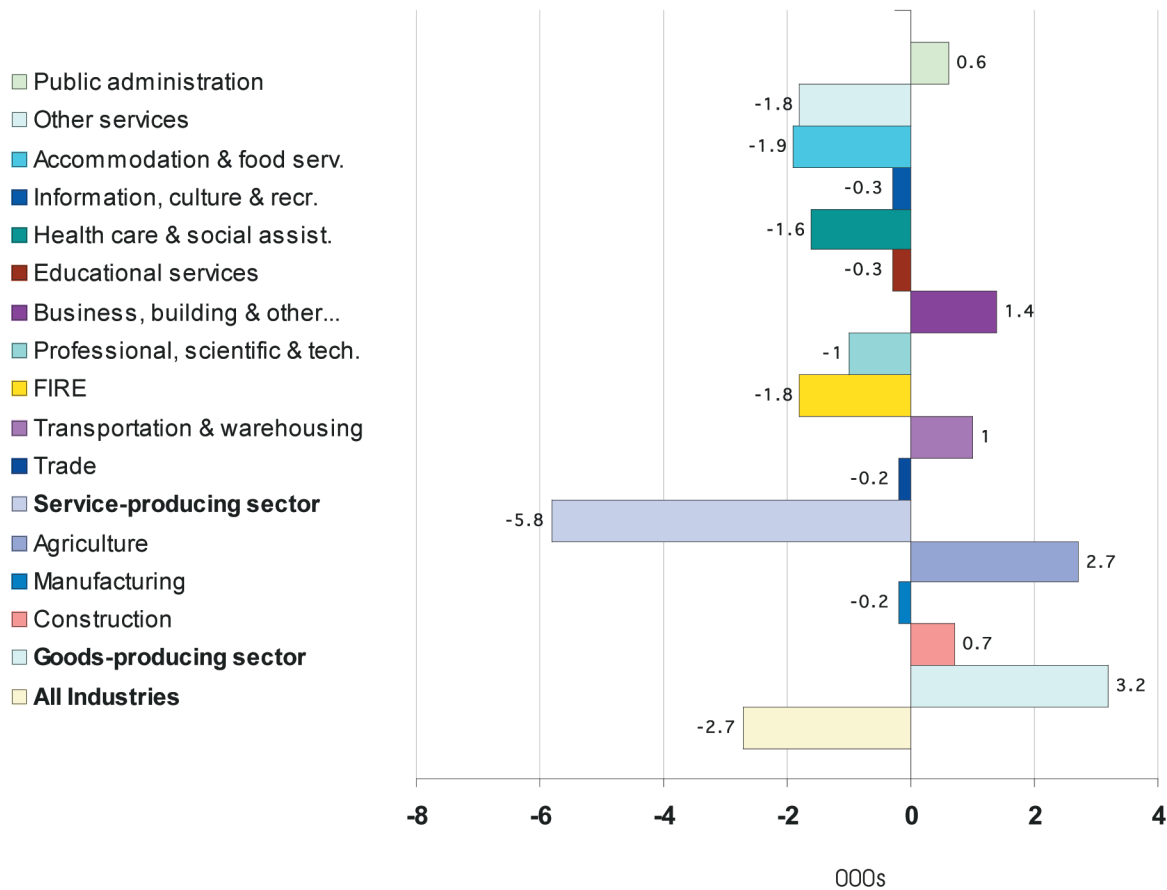
Chart 2, on the next page, illustrates the recent changes (year over year) in Niagara's employment structure, by industry sector. And Chart 3 illustrates the recent changes (year over year) in Niagara's employment structure, by major occupational clusters. Please note the changes are in thousands (000s), and reflect the difference between the projected average monthly labour force for 2006, for each industry, minus the average monthly labour force for 2005. Industry averages were calculated using the monthly data for the first eleven months of each year (January through November). So for example, if you look at the change for 'all industries', the chart shows that Niagara has employed 2,700 fewer people on average for each month from January through November 2006, than were employed in 2005.

<sup>xi</sup> Calculations based upon CANSIM – Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2005 & 2006

<sup>xii</sup> 2007 Niagara News, Niagara Economic Development Corporation Newsletter

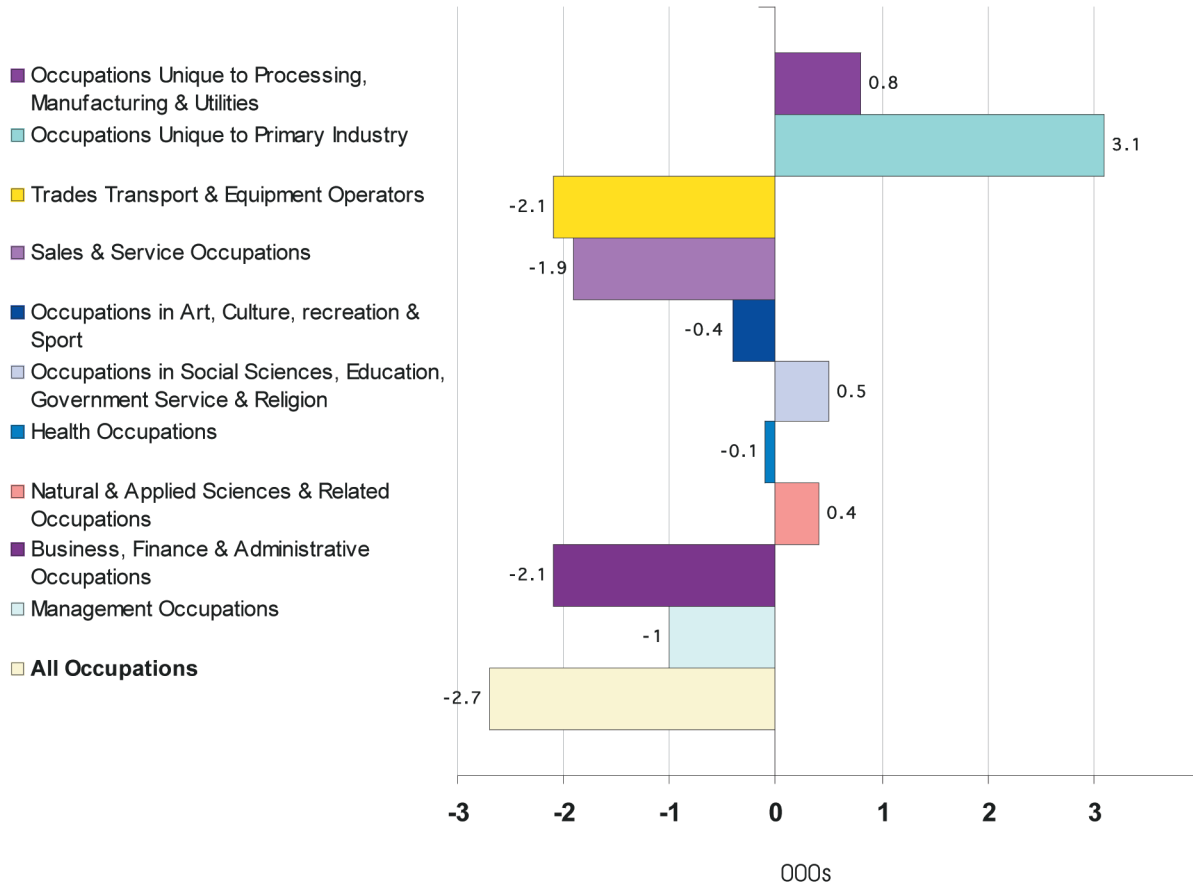
<sup>xiii</sup> St. Catharines-Niagara: Metropolitan Outlook 2B, Conference Board of Canada, May 2005

**CHART 2 – Change in Employment by Major Industries & Sectors, Niagara CMA January – November, Year over Year, 2005-2006<sup>1</sup> (000's)**



<sup>1</sup> Calculations based upon CANSIM - Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2005 & 2006. There is a small variation between the average for 'All Industries' and the average calculated when adding individual sub sectors due to *rounding*. Note also that the change in employment for each of the two major sectors (Goods-producing and Service-producing) represent sub-totals for each sector. The Goods-producing sector includes Agriculture, Manufacturing and Construction, and the Service-producing sector includes all other sub-sectors

**Chart 3 – Change in Employment by Major Occupational Clusters, Niagara CMA January - November, Year over Year, 2005 - 2006<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>2</sup> Calculations based upon CANSIM - Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2005 & 2006. There is a small variation between the average for 'All Occupations' and the average calculated when adding individual clusters due to rounding.

## STRAIGHT TALK FROM EMPLOYERS/UNIONS...

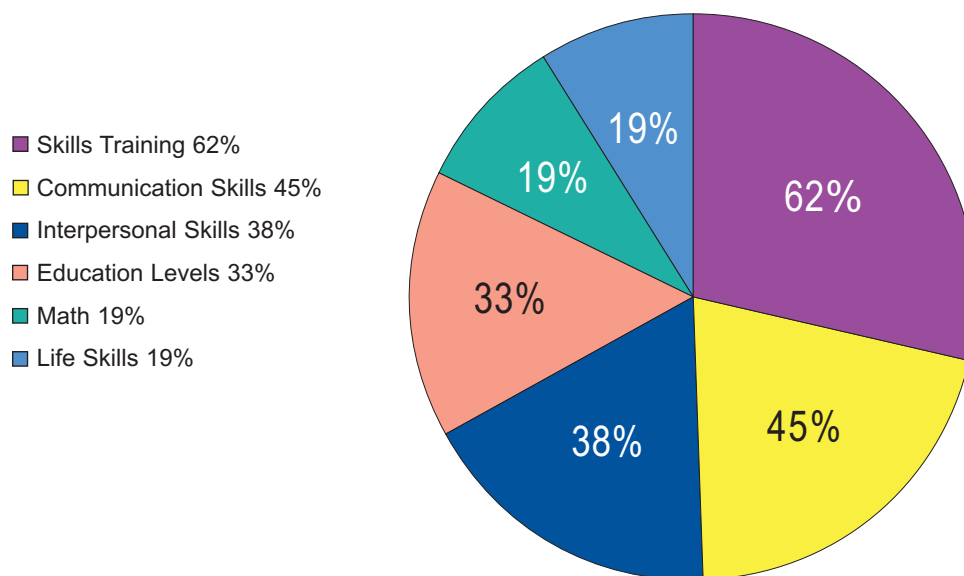
As part of the consultation process, NTAB conducted an on-line electronic survey directed at the employers/unions and designed to capture direct feedback in several key areas including:

- past and projected recruitment challenges
- current workforce skills and abilities
- identified strategies for addressing labour force needs
- top workforce issues by sector

And the survey said...

- 63% of respondents anticipate challenges in recruiting new staff over the next year to three years
- 59% experienced difficulty sourcing qualified employees to meet workforce needs during the past two years
- 56% accessed co-op education
- 54% have a labour force development strategy that includes succession planning

**Chart 4 – Top Areas for Training/Skills Development:**



## WHAT IS TRENDS, OPPORTUNITIES AND PRIORITIES (TOP)?

### ... A valuable and proven local planning process

The TOP process is an annual local planning model led in Niagara by the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board. The process results in a community-driven strategic 2-3 year plan of coordinated local activities to address labour market trends, opportunities and priorities. It is through this planning process and action plan implementation that NTAB helps build community capacity to address labour market challenges. By building on the TOP work of the year before, NTAB engages stakeholders in a labour force planning process that is ongoing from year to year and lays the groundwork for long term, sustainable solutions.

As a community action planning model, NTAB plays the lead role in facilitating a consultative and action planning process that:

- 1) Verifies trends & issues that remain the same as last year;
- 2) Identifies new, if any, trends resulting from significant changes;
- 3) Reports the progress made on community action plan activities;
- 4) Prioritizes identified issues to be addressed in the coming year;
- 5) Develops specific activities to address prioritized issues, including where possible, the identification of potential partners;
- 6) Identifies measurable outcomes to help assess progress of activities.

The TOP Report is a living document that is updated annually to reflect the emergence of new issues and the status of community driven solutions that have been identified. It serves as a reference document for community partners, key stakeholders, and government agencies to support decision making and strategic planning around local workforce development.

## REPORT METHODOLOGY

The TOP planning model and consultation process places significant emphasis on ongoing community involvement for validation and prioritization of identified labour market issues. Documented trends and resulting issues are presented to the community utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research, resulting from direct grass roots input.

A total of eight key labour market issues relevant to the Niagara Region have remained priority and the focus of action identification and implementation.

### Consultation Activities:

**Surveys:** Two separate on-line electronic surveys were conducted during September and October, 2006 targeting a sample identified to be representative of businesses/unions and

community-based agencies located in the Niagara Region. Titled “Niagara Labour Market Planning – Moving Actions Forward”, these surveys provided opportunity for respondents to identify challenges and issues impacting workforce development, recruitment, retention and anticipated labour market challenges.

**Employer Survey:** A response rate of 11% was received from the survey issued to approximately 1,300 employer/union organizations representing:

Manufacturing	6.6%	Hospitality & Tourism	8.8%
Motive Power	3.7%	Wholesale & Retail	10.3%
Construction	12.5%	Agriculture/Horticulture	5.9%
Health Care	5.9%	All other Service Sectors	10.3%
Transportation & Warehousing	.7%	Labour/Union	2.3%
Education	5.1%	Other	29.4%

**Community Survey:** A response rate of approximately 50% resulted from the survey issued to approximately 68 community-based organizations representing:

Social Development Agency	19.2%
Employment Services/Support Agency	30.8%
Education	11.5%
Other	38.5%

**Focus Group – “Flip Space Technology” Consultation:** NTAB and Niagara College co-invited fifty stakeholders from across Niagara to participate in a technology-based focus group consultation process. Participants responded to five key questions during a one week on-line dialogue and results were aggregated and formed the basis of an action plan that was shared with community stakeholders during the formal TOP Community Forum in late November.

**Formal TOP Community Forum 2006:** On November 17, 2006, eighty representatives from across Niagara took part in this half-day forum that provided opportunity for stakeholder participation in the development of a local area action plan focusing on community priorities supporting workforce development.

**Secondary Data Review:** A review of related reports and articles which demonstrated an identified link to labour market/work force development was carried out. This research provided a broader knowledge and understanding of what is already known and it further solidified and validated the issues that have been prioritized through the TOP process.

A detailed list of all participating organizations/unions is provided in Appendix A.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN – Addressing Issues with Actions

The following pages capture the actions that evolved from the TOP consultation process forming the basis of a Niagara-developed community action plan for the next two years. NTAB will continue to facilitate discussions around these actions and identify potential partners and leaders to help move priority actions forward. The timelines stated reflect action for Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the identified initiatives. NTAB recognizes that changes in the labour force, economic shifts, stakeholder priorities and budget restrictions may influence community delivery of these actions.

### TREND: INCREASED AGE OF THE REGIONAL POPULATION

When compared to Ontario, the age structure of the Niagara population shows that Niagara is:

- Less concentrated in all age categories between the ages of 0 to 49
- More concentrated in all age categories above 50 years of age

Most significant, the age group greater than or equal to 65 years saw a growth of 8.5%, ages 45-64 experienced a 12.3% growth, while the 25-44 age group declined 18%. To break this down even further, ages 25-29 experienced a 26.3% decline and those aged 0-4 saw a 17.5% decrease in population. Thus those cohorts experiencing the largest population increases were among the older categories. These larger decreases and small increases in the younger cohorts when compared to Ontario suggest that Niagara is aging more rapidly than Ontario.<sup>xvi</sup>

**Issue 1:** There is a need to increase participation of such labour force groups as youth, women, persons with disabilities, and foreign trained professionals, maximizing participation and increasing workforce supply to meet sector needs, particularly in areas where labour shortages exist.

**Issue 5:** There is a need to address the specific training and labour market needs of women including promoting education and training in non-traditional employment which could work to address differences in income between males and females as well as address skills shortages in specific areas in the labour market.

**Proposed Action 1:** Identify required job competencies for positions in sectors where high vacancy levels exist; develop educational tools for employers to promote the benefits of hiring under-represented populations – long-term impact, cost/benefits

<sup>xvi</sup> Regional Analytics, "A Profile of the Labour Market in the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board Area", April 2004.

analysis, etc. Create a comprehensive cross-sector model that supports human resources transition from industry/sectors experiencing a decrease in employee demand to sectors that have vacancies.

**Proposed Partners** – Employment support agencies representing target groups; Chambers of Commerce; Unions; NTAB; Employers, Region of Niagara; Municipal government; Economic Development agencies

**Timelines** – High Priority: 2007-09

### **Expected Outcomes**

#### **Phase 1:**

- A steering committee made up of representatives from business (2), employment support agencies (1), and consumers representative (1) of the target population will be established
- Research detailed job competency profiles for selected positions in selected industries that are experiencing job losses and recruitment challenges
- Analyze opportunities for cross-sector employment opportunities where skills and competencies would compliment

#### **Phase 2:**

- Track employee success in cross-sector employment
- Create a communication tool directed at employers to promote benefits of hiring from underutilized and transitioning populations

**Proposed Action 2:** Document post-secondary program offerings in the Niagara area and identify related job opportunities that will link youth to employment within the Niagara Region.

**Proposed Partners** – NTAB, Niagara College, Brock University, BEC, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, Employers, MTCU

**Timelines** – Medium Priority: 2007-2009

### **Expected Outcomes**

- Inventory of programs offered through local post-secondary institutions
- A documented analysis of job opportunities which match post-secondary programs offered in Niagara
- Creation of a working committee representative of education, business, union, and student population to identify next steps for data utilization

**Proposed Action 3:** Develop and deliver a workshop to parents and youth to present career pathways and employment opportunities available including sector profiles, employment statistics, etc. These sessions will involve employers who will share employer expectations.

**Proposed Partners** – BEC, Brock University, Employers, Employment Support Agencies, MTCU, Niagara College, NTAB, School Boards, School Councils; Government

**Timelines** – Medium Priority: 2007-2009

**Expected Outcomes:**

- 50 parents, students and educators will participate in a workshop that shares information on career pathways with specific linkage to employer expectations and job requirements.

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**Proposed Action 4:** Spreading the Word on Skilled Trades: This event will bring together stakeholders with an interest to increase employer engagement in the promotion of skilled trades as a career option. Emphasis will be placed on trades that offer viable employment opportunities across Niagara. Special keynote to be identified.

**Proposed Partners** – Local municipalities, Post-secondary institutions, Employers, MTCU, NTAB, School Boards, Unions, BEC

**Timelines** – High Priority: 2007-08

**Expected Outcomes:**

- 15-20 skilled trades will be promoted through activities and demonstrations
- elementary, secondary and post-secondary students will participate in hands-on activities that support skilled trades career exploration and/or skills development
- Minimum 100 employers will participate in an event promoting importance of employer engagement in skilled trades labour force development
- 4 local municipalities will work collaboratively to support skilled trades promotion in the Niagara Region

**Proposed Action 5:** Catalogue of Transportation Careers: Document career options in the Transportation sector – given the aging demographic profile, this sector will offer significant employment opportunities. The “Catalogue of Transportation Sector Careers” will follow the same model as the previous “Catalogue Series” produced through NTAB.

**Proposed Partners** – Post-secondary institutions, Employers, MTCU, NTAB, School Boards, Unions, BEC

**Timelines** – Medium Priority: 2007-09

**Expected Outcomes:**

- A catalogue of Transportation occupations in the Niagara region listing comprehensive information on each occupation in a binder form
- 250 copies of the binder will be printed and distributed throughout local education institutions, employment support agencies

## TREND: SHIFT IN LOCAL ECONOMY – CONTINUED TRANSFER OF JOBS TO THE SERVICES SECTOR – Economic Restructuring

According to the 2001 Census data, the top four largest employers by industry, following manufacturing, are Retail Trade with 12%, Health Care and Social Services and Accommodations and Food Services with 9% and Educational Services with 6%. 75% of Niagara's workforce (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2004) and more than 60% of the region's gross domestic product is in Niagara's services sector proving it a major economic driver. Approximately half (45%) of all services sector employment falls within three sectors; Accommodation and Food Services, Information, Culture & Recreation and Trade. In a 2003 report published by the Canadian Tourism Research Institute and Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation (2003), future economic impact of tourism on the Niagara Region (projected at the high end), was forecast to see up to 19.7 million visitors, \$2.29 billion in tourist spending, and over 25% of the workforce employed in the tourism sector.

**Issue 2:** Over the past decade, Health Care and Social Services (including Nursing and Residential Care Facilities) has emerged as one of the top three services sectors (9% of all employment in Niagara). However, professional occupations in health experienced a 9.4% increased share of workers in the 45 years and older cohort, threatening a continued shortage of skilled professionals in all aspects of health care. This trend is being experienced in other sectors such as transportation. As well, many skilled trades are experiencing an increased share of workers in the 45 years and older cohort.

**Proposed Action 1:** MedQuest Camp: Creation and delivery of a week-long summer camp providing youth an opportunity to explore health sector career options. There is a critical shortage of professional and technical health care workers in the local board area. This limits the quantity and quality of local health care delivery at a time when the population is aging and there is a demand for more health care provision. Recruitment activities are critical because of the sector's importance to the economy, business retention and expansion and the reality of population aging. High vacancy rates in the region exist for doctors, physiotherapists, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, speech and language pathologists and psychologists.

**Proposed Partners –** NTAB, Unions; local health sector representatives; local municipalities; Government

**Timelines –** High Priority: 2007-2008

**Expected outcomes:**

- 25 high school youth will have hands-on experience using a variety of medical equipment and simulation activities, job shadowing opportunities
- A mock disaster at the end of the camp experience, involving MedQuest participants and local emergency response services will provide a disaster training opportunity for the greater community.

**Proposed Action 2:** Create a professional job search engine in Niagara that supports employment recruitment practices. This will assist employers experiencing recruitment challenges and promote the diversity of employment opportunities in the Niagara area.

**Proposed Partners –** Not identified at this time

**Timelines –** Low: 2008-09

**Expected outcomes:**

- An on-line job posting system that supports local employer recruitment

## TREND: NIAGARA EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LAGS ONTARIO

Niagara's labour force is better educated than it was twenty (20) or even (10) years ago, with the percentage of the workforce possessing university degrees rising from 13.8% in 1976 to 18% in 2001. Relative to Ontario however, Niagara has consistently (from 1991 to 2001) exhibited a lower level of university educated labour and the gap has continued to increase. In 2001 the share of the Niagara employed labour force reporting "University" as the highest level of educational attainment was 23.5% while the same share for Ontario was 32.5%.<sup>xvii</sup>

**Issue 3:** Dynamic industries tend to locate in areas that have an available labour force that meets their educational and skill level requirements. As a result of the increase in technological change across occupational clusters, there is an increasing demand for higher skills by employers.

**Proposed Action 1 –** Create a stronger linkage between economic development planning and workforce skills development for Niagara's labour force participants. This requires a greater understanding of local labour market needs among education stakeholders and increased collaboration with business/industry sectors, unions, and economic development to support labour force development that is linked to targeted economic sectors. This will support a stronger link between skills development and skills demand.

**Proposed Partners:** Brock University; Niagara College; NTAB; School Boards; Economic Development agencies; Municipal government; Unions; Sector Councils

**Timelines –** High Priority: 2007-09

**Expected Outcomes**

**Phase 1:**

- Facilitate a meeting of interested stakeholders to discuss linkage between education system and required skills and competencies for Niagara's economic growth sectors

<sup>xvii</sup> Regional Analytics, "A Profile of the Labour Market in the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board Area," April 2004

- Identify clusters for growth industries through discussions with local economic development agencies
- Expand the “Guest Spot” opportunity whereby school classes have access to a presentations related to economic growth sectors

#### Phase 2:

- Stakeholder group commitment to continued dialogue and information sharing
- Create a newsletter or other communication tool to promote enhancements and/or successful linkages between education and employers.

**Proposed Action 2** – Expand the focus and capacity among post-secondary institutions to support student mobility between institutions and programs. This will assist with credit transfer and decrease completion time.

**Proposed Partners** – Brock University; Niagara College; Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities; Ministry of Education, School Boards; Students

**Timelines – Medium Priority: 2007-08**

#### Expected Outcomes

- Establish School-College-University working group to investigate credit transfer options

## TREND: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

As we progress further into the 21st century, accessibility to a skilled labour pool will increase employer motivation to find innovative solutions to maximize utilization of their workforce.

**Issue 4:** Employer engagement is essential in the transfer of experiential skills and knowledge between experienced workers and new entrants to the workplace.

**Proposed Action 1:** Create a case that supports employee training and skills development including support for apprenticeship, co-op, internships, experiential learning and professional development. Research best practices that demonstrate the return on investment achieved by organizations that are committed to a learning culture.

**Proposed Partners** – Brock University; Niagara College; Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities; School Boards; NTAB; Employers; Chambers of Commerce; Unions; Region of Niagara

**Timelines – High Priority: 2007-09**

#### Expected Outcomes

- A steering committee will be formed to guide the development of the business case

- Research of best practices across other jurisdictions will be conducted and evaluated for local suitability
- A report will capture findings of research and local adaptation for implementation
- Documentation of best practices to be utilized in a communication resource promoting a learning culture to Niagara employers

**Proposed Action 2:** Develop a mentorship model that supports transfer of knowledge and skills from experienced workers to new hires. The model should ensure role definitions and value differences of the multi-generational groups now found in workplaces.

**Proposed Partners –** Employment support agencies representing target groups; Employers; Unions; NTAB; Brock University; Niagara College

**Timelines –** High Priority: 2007-09

**Expected Outcomes:**

**Phase 1:**

- A steering committee made up of at least one representative from 2 business sectors, employment support agencies, consumers representative of the target population
- Document a profile of multi-generational groups in the workplace
- Research mentorship model that will support transfer of knowledge and skills from experienced workers to new hires

**Phase 2:**

- Pilot mentorship model with a local employer and conduct evaluation to measure outcomes

**Proposed Action 3:** Create a system that supports promotion of training opportunities between employers, either by sector or topically, to increase training access and reduce associated costs. This Training Network will promote skills enhancement, professional development and address common training needs including soft skills, health and safety, etc.

**Proposed Partners –** Chambers of Commerce; Unions; NTAB; Business; Training Providers

**Timelines –** Medium Priority: 2007-09

**Expected Outcomes**

**Phase 1:**

- Develop working committee to lead funding proposal submission

- Identify sector to pilot for introduction of training network model
- Develop site for pilot implementation

**Phase 2:**

- Identify ways to share the cost of training based on common needs
- Evaluate usage of training network through survey of employers and users
- Determine feasibility of expansion of training network across other sectors

**Proposed Action 4:** Research year-round employment opportunities that could be developed through employer collaboration among sectors that peak at different times of the year. This may help increase industry/sector attractiveness and support continued earning.

**Proposed Partners –** Employment support agencies representing target groups; Chambers of Commerce; Unions; NTAB; Business; Economic Development; Municipal governments

**Timelines –** Low Priority: 2008-09

**Expected Outcomes**

- Identify seasonally operational sectors within Niagara
- Analyze data to identify potential cross-sector opportunities to promote employer retention and employee year-round employment

**Proposed Action 5:** Develop a streamlined, integrated system that supports newcomer employment opportunities and promote community diversity. The system must be flexible to adjust when required and needs an evaluation component to measure impact and results.

**Proposed Partners –** Employers; Unions; NTAB; Niagara Newcomer Employment Council; Government agencies

**Timelines –** High Priority: 2007-08

**Expected Outcomes**

- A network of employment support agencies including employers that are working collaboratively to strengthen newcomer labour force participation will meet at least three times during fiscal year
- A networking event designed to bring together 15 newcomers seeking employment in the Niagara area and 15 role models/employers who have been linked based on similar careers/employment experiences

**TREND: TRANSPORTATION – a barrier to employment and job seeker mobility**

Given the lack of a regional inter-municipal transportation system, the mobility of job seekers has been extremely limited and has restricted the ability of employers to recruit candidates.

**Proposed Action 1** – Document the impact of the lack of inter-municipal transportation on clients seeking training and employment across Niagara.

**Proposed Partners:** Opportunities Niagara; Employment Support Agencies; NTAB Transportation Committee; Municipal governments; Regional Niagara; Employers

**Timelines** – High Priority: 2007-08

**Expected Outcomes**

- A tracking system that will be utilized by employment support agencies to document impact of lack of inter-municipal transit system on client mobility for job access
- A bi-annual summary of results submitted by local agencies to coordinating organization

## NEXT STEPS

Shifting economies and labour force demographics are driving a strategic and collaborative approach to community action planning. This plan provides the Niagara Region with a summary of the composition and influences impacting the labour force and labour market. There are significant actions documented in the previous pages and it will be these and subsequent activities that will challenge Niagara to action over the coming months.

Given the changing climate and the restricted resources, both human and financial, the importance of collaboration and cooperation through a partnership approach will help build a synergetic approach to solutions. Many of the issues identified in this report are long-term and indeed the full impact is still not known. Nor can we wait and see.

NTAB will utilize this report as a key resource in its strategic planning. In addition, the results of this research will be cross-tabulated with that of the Local Boards Network across the province to identify any similarities in labour force and labour market issues. This is an important step in the process as it serves to draw attention to the vastness (or lack thereof) of key social and economic indicators that tend to influence future policy, political decisions and directions. The report will be shared within the Niagara community and beyond to political leaders at all levels of government. This fluid document will be reviewed, updated and revised as initiatives are implemented and emerging trends alter priorities.

Planning for action is simply a beginning step. Through its neutral, facilitative approach NTAB is committed to taking a lead in generating activities that will bring together stakeholders, identify leaders, and support implementation of actions that will collectively have a positive influence on Niagara's labour force.

**“Population aging also has serious implications for economic growth as a result of a contraction of the potential labour force” (The Conference Board of Canada, 2005).**

## INFORMATION SOURCES

2007 Niagara News, Niagara Economic Development Corporation Newsletter

Carol Dupuis, Labour Market Information Analyst, Service Canada, Niagara Area, November 2006

CANSIM – Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, November 2005 & 2006

Conference Board of Canada 2005, Executive Action Series, No 159

Labour Market Bulletin, Human Resource Centre of Canada, Niagara Area, Volume VI, Issues II and III, 2006

Labour Force Survey Estimates (Unadjusted), Statistics Canada, January to November 2006

Metropolitan Outlook 2B, Conference Board of Canada, May 2005

New Developments Report, Business Development, City of Niagara Falls, November 2006

Niagara Economic Growth Strategy, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, 2005

Niagara Region Business & Employment Outlook, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, January 2006

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english>

Regional Analytics, "A Profile of the Labour Market in the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board Area," April 2004

Statistics Canada Customized Census 2001 Data Tables – Niagara Area

Statistics Canada – Monthly Labour Force Surveys (Unadjusted), January – March 2005 & 2006

St. Catharines – Niagara: Metropolitan Outlook 2B, Winter 2007, Conference Board of Canada, December 2006

Workforce Focus, Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, January 2006

Workforce Focus, Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, March 2006

Workforce Focus, Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, May 2006

Workforce Focus, Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, July 2006

Workforce Focus, Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, September 2006

## LISTING OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES/COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

### Labour – 2

OPSEU Local 211  
 Teamsters Local Union 879

### Business – 96

3 R's Used Books + Things  
 Abitibi-Consolidated  
 Accu-Guard  
 Algoma Central Corp.  
 Americana Conference Resort & Spa  
 Andrew Peller Limited  
 Apple Auto Glass  
 Avant-garde Emporium  
 B&C Auto & Industrial  
 Bayview Flowers  
 Bear-Paw Auto  
 Bodine Mfg.  
 Boltworks  
 Bowman's Auto Sales  
 Boyd Automotive  
 Burke Group  
 C. D. Henderson & Associates, Inc.  
 C. Stephen Carriere Realty Inc.  
 Can American Stone  
 Canadian Niagara Hotels  
 Clark Computers  
 Closet Concepts  
 Consumer Show Productions Inc  
 Convergys  
 Courteous Delivery  
 Danolin Refrigeration  
 Dekker's General Repairs and Auto Sales  
 DF Gerow Plumbing & Heating  
 Dundee Private Investors  
 Dunk & Associates  
 ECCO  
 Enns Bagbery & Tire (1993) Ltd.  
 Eric P. Jones & Associates Inc.  
 Family Recreation  
 Forgetful Dee Clown and Friends  
 Freelance Finishings Inc.  
 Garden Creations  
 Globex Security International  
 Great Wolf Lodge  
 Greely Construction Inc.  
 Harbour House Hotel  
 Helping Hands Maid Service  
 Henry Swinkels Architect  
 Hipple Farms Limited  
 HOCO Entertainment & Resorts  
 In The Mirror  
 Jazzz Footwear & Accessories  
 Jeffery's Greenhouses  
 Kremble Automotive Inc.  
 La Paloma Blanca HHC  
 Lakebreeze Flowers  
 Lakewinds  
 Landmark Landscape Contractors Inc.  
 Lifco Hydraulics  
 M&M Meat Shops  
 MacFrugals Furniture  
 Managing Imaginations Inc.  
 Merit Contractors Niagara  
 Nachem Inc.  
 Neptunus Yachts  
 Niagara Casinos  
 Niagara Health System  
 Osprey Media Group  
 Out of the Past  
 people2design  
 Pinders Security  
 Precision Surface Technologies Inc.  
 Pylypuk & Associates  
 Quality Belt Maintenance Ltd.  
 R Hobbs Electric  
 Rainbow Studio  
 Rankin Construction Inc.  
 Ridley & Associates Appraisal Services Limited  
 Sandercott & Evans Opticians  
 Shalom Manor  
 Silverdale Sports Centre  
 Solotext Editorial  
 Special Needs Computers

St. Catharines Pattern Ltd.  
Sylvia's Bed and Breakfast  
Synectics Transportation Consultants Inc.  
The Frontier Group  
The Graphix Works  
The Herrington Group Ltd  
Tim's Water Service Ltd.  
TMP  
Tom Haines British Cars  
Transition Resource Network  
Trendspire Canada, Inc.  
United Motor Collision  
United Rentals  
Valleybrook Gardens  
West Lincoln Memorial Hospital  
West Niagara Animal Hospital  
White Oaks Conference Resort & Spa  
Workplace Safety Group

#### **Business Development Associations – 5**

Niagara Economic Development Corporation  
Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce & VCB  
St. Catharines & Area Small Business Enterprise Centre  
St. Catharines and Thorold Chambers of Commerce  
Welland/Pelham Chamber of Commerce

#### **Service Delivery Agencies – 26**

AIDS Niagara  
Business Education Council of Niagara  
Canadian Access for International and Skilled Trades  
Canadian Tire Financial  
Community Care Access Centre  
Canadian Mental Health Association Niagara  
Community Care St. Catharines & Thorold  
Community Living Welland Pelham  
Employment Help Centre  
Goodwill Niagara  
Habitat for Humanity  
Information Niagara  
John Howard Society – Job Gym  
Niagara Employment Help Centre  
Niagara Support Services

Niagara West Employment & Learning Resource Centres  
Ontario Disability Support Program  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Opportunities Niagara  
Peace Bridge Newcomer Centre  
Port Cares  
United Way of South Niagara  
Welland Heritage Council/CAIPS  
West Lincoln Employment Help Centre  
YMCA of Niagara  
YWCA

#### **Education/Training – 8**

Academy of Learning Niagara  
Brock University  
District School Board of Niagara  
Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC)  
Niagara Catholic District School Board  
Niagara College  
Oxford Learning  
St. Catharines Montessori School

#### **Equity Groups – 3**

Club 2000 Niagara Inc.  
Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines  
Multicultural Centre  
Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre

#### **Government – 14**

City of Port Colborne  
City of St. Catharines  
City of Thorold  
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration  
Ministry of Small Business & Entrepreneurship  
Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities  
Niagara Regional Community Services Department  
Ontario Ministry of Tourism & Recreation  
Regional Municipality of Niagara  
Service Canada  
The Niagara Parks Commission  
Town of Grimsby  
Town of Niagara on the Lake  
Town of Pelham

# TOP 2006 – Report Card on Actions

## A Community Based Approach

**Stakeholders in Niagara have been successful in generating action on seventeen of the twenty-five proposed actions identified in the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities for the Niagara Region 2005 Report.**

### **TREND: INCREASED AGE OF THE REGIONAL POPULATION**

*The regional population is characterized by modest growth, a changing age structure and a skew towards an older population. The most dramatic changes over the past three decades include a dramatic decline in the number of individuals aged between 25 and 29 and those less than 5 years of age.*

**ISSUE 1: There is a need to increase participation of such labour force groups as youth, women, persons with disabilities, and foreign trained professionals, maximizing participation and increasing workforce supply.**

#### **Proposed Action 1 of 8**

Establish a small, influential task force to develop an integrated, regional workforce development plan, and a presence for and branding of a centralized regional workforce development service.

STATUS: Ongoing - NTAB

#### **Proposed Action 2 of 8**

Educate Ontario Works clients and employment service providers about recent legislation changes - earnings exemptions and extended employment health benefit.

STATUS: Complete - Community Services - EASO

#### **Proposed Action 3 of 8**

Promote local services available to promote and support entrepreneurship across all population groups.

STATUS: No action identified

#### **Proposed Action 4 of 8**

Conduct a three phase study of employment access/opportunities for people who are homeless. A community research advisory committee will be formed to provide input into the process and to share knowledge.

STATUS: COMPLETE: Start Me Up Niagara

#### **Proposed Action 5 of 8**

Develop a series of workforce development guides to support and engage employers in areas of human resource management, workforce diversity, recruitment and retention practices, and maximizing local workforce participation.

STATUS: Ongoing - Opportunities Niagara/NTAB

#### **Proposed Action 6 of 8**

Engage senior training and employment support agency representatives in the validation of

information on available employment programs and services in Niagara Region to gain an accurate inventory and identify gaps and areas of duplication.

STATUS: Ongoing - NTAB

**Proposed Action 7 of 8**

Gain a better understanding of how part-time employment/lack of benefits impacts labour force participation, employee wellness and work-life balance.

STATUS: No action taken

**Proposed Action 8 of 8**

Carry out research based on the 1998 Literacy Risk Index and the current data from Statistics Canada's International 2005 Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) to determine increase/decrease in literacy levels across Niagara by community.

STATUS: Funding Status Pending - NTAB

**ISSUE 4: Employer recognition of their role in the transfer of experiential skills and knowledge between experienced workers and new entrants to the occupation will result in an increase in efficiency and effectiveness of the workplace and create a best practices model for recruitment.**

**Proposed Action 1 of 3**

Capture success stories of secondary co-op student placements and their influence on career pathways of participants; promote these successes to employers.

STATUS: Ongoing - BEC/NCDSB/DSBN/NTAB

**Proposed Action 2 of 3**

Support programs and/or services targeting adult literacy and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition.

STATUS: Ongoing - Literacy Link Network

**Proposed Action 3 of 3**

Recognize employers engaged in workplace development and employee training and skills development.

STATUS: Ongoing: Training Excellence Recognition Awards & MTCU Apprenticeship Recognition Awards

## **TREND: SHIFT IN LOCAL ECONOMY - CONTINUED TRANSFER OF JOBS TO THE SERVICES SECTOR - economic restructuring.**

*Among some of the more unique aspects of Niagara's evolving labour market, has been the magnitude in its shift from goods-producing products, and manufacturing in particular, toward the services sector. The decline in its share of the region's total employment has continued since 2001, dipping to between 14% and 16% of the labour force in recent years (2002-2005). Conversely, Niagara's present-day services sector now employs approximately 75% of Niagara's workforce and accounts for more than 60% of the region's gross domestic product (GDP).*

**ISSUE 2: Over the past decade, Health Care and Social Services (including Nursing and Residential Care Facilities) has emerged as one of the top three services sectors (9% of all employment in Niagara). However, professional occupations in health experienced a 9.4% increased share of workers in the 45 years and older cohort, threatening a continued shortage of skilled professionals in all aspects of health care.**

### **Proposed Action 1 of 4**

Explore the shortage of health care workers in specific high need occupational categories through creation of a working group which discusses ways to promote careers to youth and utilize the skills of equity groups and foreign trained professionals.

STATUS: Ongoing - Niagara Health System

### **Proposed Action 2 of 4**

Identify best practices being utilized across the province to address the health care shortages and conduct a compare and contrast analysis of Niagara activities to identify potential new approaches and strategies.

STATUS: No action identified

### **Proposed Action 3 of 4**

Create a network with local employers and training/post-secondary institutions offering health-related training programs to establish opportunities for rotations, training access, co-op placements, etc.

STATUS: No action identified

### **Proposed Action 4 of 4**

Identify job specific areas where shortages are being experienced/projected with a review of vacancies based on new positions, attrition, full-time, part-time or casual.

STATUS: Complete - Niagara Employment Outlook Survey, 2005

**ISSUE 6: Niagara's transitioning economy has resulted in an increase in workers experiencing a shift from one employer/sector to another. There is a need to develop a targeted support system to assist this population and maximize their labour force participation across sectors where the job opportunities exist.**

### **Proposed Action 1 of 1:**

Support the skills development needs of displaced workers to facilitate their return to Niagara's labour force.

STATUS: Funding Status Pending - NTAB

**ISSUE 7: There is a need to increase awareness of employment opportunities available across specific services sector clusters (Accommodations and Food Services) as employers are experiencing difficulty recruiting employees to meet the rising demand for entry level positions.**

**Proposed Action 1 of 2:**

Continue to focus on career awareness strategies/events/resource tools to promote careers in Hospitality & Tourism sectors.

STATUS: Ongoing: BEC/NCDSB/DSBN/NTAB

**Proposed Action 2 of 2:**

Work with an employer group to examine employment structure of jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector including seasonality and accessibility to benefits for employees.

STATUS: No action required

**TREND: Niagara Educational attainment Lags Ontario (Interpretive Condensation of the Profile of the Niagara Labour Market, Niagara College, 2004) – employers demand for higher skills; need to increase the levels of post secondary attainment.**

*Niagara's labour force is better educated than it was twenty or even ten years ago, with the percentage of the workforce possessing university degrees rising from 13.8% in 1976 to 18% in 2001. Relative to Ontario however, Niagara has consistently (from 1991 to 2001) exhibited a lower level of university-educated labour and the gap has continued to increase.*

**ISSUE 3: Dynamic industries tend to locate in areas that have an available labour force that meets their educational and skill level requirements. As a result of the increase in technological change across occupational clusters, there is an increasing demand for higher skills by employers.**

**Proposed Action 1 of 3**

Document the return on investment for local employers across sectors to promote training and skills development; and the creation of pathways to occupations offering sustainable employment opportunities.

STATUS: Funding Status Pending - NTAB

**Proposed Action 2 of 3**

Identify the major sectors of employment growth and local employers within these sectors. Identify current risks such as lack of current/competitive skills, literacy, educational requirements or application of essential skills in recruiting for future needs.

STATUS: No action identified

**Proposed Action 3 of 3**

Develop a plan to attract, retain and support employment of highly skilled newcomers to Niagara, including a strategy to educate and inform employers.

STATUS: Funding Status Pending - NTAB/Niagara Newcomer Employment Council

## **TREND: Increased Participation of Women in the Workforce**

*Although the participation rate of women has risen dramatically over the past three decades, women still earn less than men with earnings of approximately 67% of that of men (across all occupational clusters). Their employment continues to be concentrated, and over-represented in four occupational clusters (Intermediate and Elemental Sales and Service Occupations, Clerical Occupations and Skilled Administrative and Business Occupations), and significantly under-represented in the cluster entitled Trades and Skilled Transport and Equipment Operators.*

**ISSUE 5: There is a need to address the specific training & labour market needs of women including promoting education and training in non-traditional employment which could work to address differences in income between males and females as well as address skills shortages in specific areas in the labour market.**

### **Proposed Action 1 of 2**

Implementation of a mentorship model to support increased participation of women in the labour force, including areas of entrepreneurship and non-traditional opportunities.

STATUS: Ongoing - NTAB/YWCA/Women in Niagara

### **Proposed Action 2 of 2**

Identify what support is needed - speak/survey women, talk with employers to gain their perspective of what supports should be put into place to support female participation in the labour force.

STATUS: No action identified

## **TRANSPORTATION - lack of inter-municipal transportation system impacts negatively on job seeker mobility across municipalities.**

*The lack of a regional inter-municipal transportation system is an overriding issue impacting job seeker mobility and employer recruitment. The Niagara Economic Growth Strategy Report released by the Niagara Economic Development Corporation in May, 2005 reiterated that Niagara's transportation system is a priority and its limitations are impacting local economic growth and worker, student and visitor mobility.*

## **TRANSPORTATION - Recruitment and Retention Barrier, The "Job Bus" - A Niagara Home Grown Recruitment and Retention Strategy**

### **Proposed Action 1 of 1**

Charge the Transportation Committee with the task of identifying a strategy for the continuation and potential expansion of the Niagara Job Bus Pilot Project that was utilized to link job seekers and employers in sectors experiencing a shortage of workers.

STATUS: Ongoing - NTAB/Opportunities Niagara

**For more information, please contact:**

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