

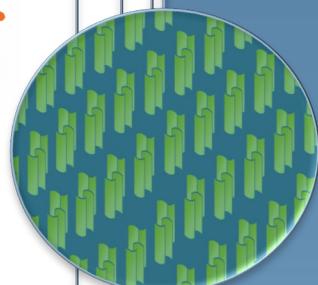
# Annual Report 2020-21

This report shares accomplishments of the Four County Labour Market Planning Board's delivery of its Strategic Plan.



Gemma Mendez-Smith, Executive Director

9/20/2021



# Annual Report 2020-21

## Co-Chairs Message

Year two in our COVID world! Likely several months yet before we see our way into a space that would seem familiar. Of course, many of us have had to be front and center in the workplace since the onset of the pandemic and words of gratitude seem to pale in comparison to what frontline and essential workers have done to keep us all going. Now, this is not to suggest that the vast numbers of people that had to adapt to paradigm shifting work arrangements have not contributed. Such contributions are profound, perhaps monumental, and integral to our recovery also.

The FCLMPB has much to be thankful for. After all, we stayed vibrant and active though every up and down of the past 18 months and our future is no less full of promise and strength. How did we do this? Look no further than our staff and then recognize that our volunteer board never faltered in their commitment to get the work of the board done in month after month of virtual meetings.

Late in 2020 a quote came to our attention; “the pandemic has made good people better and bad people worse”. We don’t know how to define “bad people”, but we know we can define “good people”. All we have to do is look at our staff, our board and our ministry support. Not to mention our various contractors, all of whom have made such a difference in making us better and better and more and more the place the community looks to.

2021 and beyond is a bit of betting person’s paradise. “When will we get through the pandemic, when will we be able to travel, when will we be able to return to work”. One sure bet is that the FCLMPB is going to get better and better and just as life will hopefully be after COVID, we will make the new world even better than the one we left behind us those 18 months ago.

Dave Trumble and Shirley Keaveney



## Executive Director's Message

It has been a year of ups and downs. COVID-19 has created space for opportunities and caused a world of grief. Our staff worked tirelessly to devise a plan of service delivery that address the safety realities of a global pandemic and ensure that we would the needs of our program participants and community. This was no small feat! With tenacity, they quickly created online solutions that met the needs of our connect2SKILLS program delivery as well as our community consultations and research goals. In the 12 months following the announcement and reality of a global crisis we have seen many successes, both for our organization as well as the individuals and organizations we serve. We focused our attention on providing relevant information to support recovery throughout and after the pandemic. This required a quick change to our business plan deliverables which our funders willingly supported. Five significant reports were produced as foundational pieces that would help guide workforce development through several lockdowns. While we are not yet out of the woods we do have a strong understanding of who has been affected and can use these data to build strong recovery programs and supports.

connect2SKILLS programming took on a different look and delivery method to meet the restrictions implemented due to COVID-19. It took a couple of months, but by June 2020 program delivery resumed in an online format. The platform redesign addressed learning needs by offering real-time sessions and independent work all the while offering supports through our program coordinators, facilitators and Literacy and Basic Skills partner agencies. This delivery method, new and challenging, taught us a lot about patience, empathy and rewards.

It has been a year of growth, both professional and personal. We have become stronger as individuals and a team at Four County Labour Market Planning Board. Thanks to all of our partners for being a part of the growth.

Gemma Mendez-Smith



## Acknowledgments

Our mandate of accomplishments through collaborations has been the guiding light through this dark tunnel of COVID-19. The extended hands of our partners help us keep on the path and helped us accomplish our lofty goals. Introducing innovative techniques and delivery models didn't deter our community, clients and team. We all soldiered through the unknown and emerged stronger and more resilient. Not bad! Embracing the strength of others and digging deep into ourselves to find our own strength has proven that this too shall pass and we will survive. To those in our local and global community who have experienced the harshest realities through this pandemic. We support and respect you.

## How we serve you

We are Twenty-four! WOW. We continue to serve our region by taking a leadership role in labour market research. From the introduction of the connect2JOBS.ca jobs aggregator, which offers a range of career planning tools, to a deep dive into the prevalence of Precarious Employment in our region we have been able to spotlight the most pressing needs of local employers and the local workforce. These research projects have paved the way for even more focused and deliberate action planning to address local workforce issues.

Over the last 24 years, the Planning Board has partnered in 249 projects and leveraged over \$8,782,000 in workforce development activities supporting the local community.

In 2020-21 the Planning Board delivered the following major projects:

- COVID-19 Worker Impact Report
- Labour Market Education Resource
- EmployerOne Sector Retrospective Reports
- Precarious Employment in the Four County Region
- Job Vacancy Aggregator/LMI Portal – connect2jobs.ca
- EdgeFactor Community Hub - <https://edgefactor.com/fourcounty>



We continued to deliver, with some success, even during a pandemic, the SkillsAdvance Ontario funded program connect2SKILLS across the four county area in two areas:

- Manufacturing
- Hospitality & Tourism

Working with local employers, employment and social service agencies we supported individuals to gain valuable skills to participate in the labour market. We are extremely grateful to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, through Employment Ontario, for the funding we receive to continue to make a different in workforce development through research and training programs. Programs are also funded in part by the Government of Canada.

## Staff

Our team is not made up of well-rounded members but it is made up of people who always bring their personal best to whatever they do. I am humbled by the dedication of the Planning Board team to always put the community and our clients at the epicentre of their consideration of success. They challenge the norms, define success one project and one person at a time, but most importantly they are focused on finding ways for everyone to win. This is how we know that we have the best team! Well....let's meet the TEAM!

Raisa Abraham, Marina Angeli, Madison Baumbach, Dayna Becker, Stacey Feldskov, Kee May Ip, Jordan Meisel, Lee Rogister, Dana Soucie, Jason Wilson, Tingting Zhang

Consultant Team: Debbie Davidson, Nathan Gilmour, Paul Knafelc, Jeff Staller

MLTSD Employment Training Consultants: We would also like to extend a warm hand of gratitude to Kimberly de Miranda and Susie Webster for your continue guidance and support.

Some stay for a short time and some for longer, but no matter, the value they have brought to our team cannot go unrecognized. Thanks to these awesome individuals that served our team: Amy Clark, Sarah Pelton, Alison Wilson



## Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors are committed to the mission and mandate of our organization. Ensuring a strong strategic direction and current action plan for delivering our work is what the members value most. Their review of key performance indicators ensures our focus is achieving the results we expected. Measuring our activities for value and impact is a key emphasis for the Board.

Meet the individuals that devote their time to ensuring our success.

Waleed Aslam	Visible and Racial Minority
Karen Galbraith	Business Perth & Treasurer
Karen Gventer	Labour Grey
Rozella Johnston	Indigenous Peoples
Shirley Keaveney	Business Grey & Co-Chair
Larry Livingston	Business Huron
Emily Morrison	Women
Sharif Rahman	Business Grey
Lisa Taylor	Education & Training Bruce Grey
Dave Trumble	Labour Bruce & Co-Chair

We thank Andrew Coghlin who served the board for a full 9-year term and held key executive positions for the majority of his tenure. Hazel Pratt-Page for her leadership on the executive. Andy Swan, who never let us lose sight of our commitment to equality in the workplace. Gail Walden, for her leadership on our policy review committee. We say a huge THANK YOU for your time and dedication to ensuring that we stay on track to accomplish the important work of the organization.

**“WHAT WE NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN AN EVER CHANGING ECONOMY IS  
RELENTLESS ADAPTABILITY”**  
**Gemma Mendez-Smith**

