



**Creating Work Opportunities
for Youth in London CMA
Strategic Plan**

October 2008

Introduction, Background and Objectives

The London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) is "... committed to improving the economic well being of Londoners through the growth and expansion of local business and the attraction of new businesses". Increasingly, in surveys conducted by the LEDC, London employers indicated a growing concern with respect to access to appropriately experienced and qualified workers.

To address this need, the LEDC created a Workforce Development Taskforce in 2003 and invited a range of community partners to the table. Their role is to help assess and act on activities which will position the London region to be able to meet the needs of new, growing and changing business as we transition the retiring Baby Boom population, increase numbers of newcomers joining our community and workforce and deal with the fewer workers predicted from a declining birthrate.

Activities to date include Experience Works, Global Talent, Enhancing the HR Practices of Small Businesses, Business Workforce Briefings, Student-2-Business Networking Conference and the creation of the London Works web site – www.londonworks.ca – to name a few.

The 2008 focus for the Workforce Portfolio has been Youth. To this end, the LEDC received funding from Service Canada for this project to help local businesses grow and meet their workforce needs by developing the skills and connection of youth to work. The project deliverables include a strategic plan that addresses issues relating to youth employment in the London CMA (Census Metropolitan Area) as well as three key tactical project activities targeted for immediate implementation.

Because the goal of the project is to develop a community strategy, this was a collaborative initiative with a Project Committee – listed at the back of this document - comprised of a cross section of community partners, including educators, community and not-for-profit leaders and employers. Stakeholder input was gathered through consultations, interviews, focus groups and written submissions from youth, employers, community groups, outreach workers, funding agencies and others. Distribution of the report and presentations to stakeholders will ensure the strategic plan and three tactical projects will be widely shared with the community.

It is noted that a lot of great work is already being done in London and the surrounding communities to address youth employment issues, however we know we can do more. This report details the findings and includes three project outlines which provide the opportunity to make a difference to youth employment and engagement with employers and support the future growth of our communities.

If you are interested in commenting or in participating in any of the projects or future discussions around youth employment please feel free to contact Jeny Wallace, Director of Workforce Development at the London Economic Development Corporation, Telephone 519 661 4526 or email jwallace@ledc.com.

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Executive Summary

The changing demographic landscape in the London CMA (Census Metropolitan Area), like in the rest of Canada, is likely to produce a number of challenges with respect to the labour force. The community within London CMA must be proactive to ensure the needs of both the supply and demand sides of the employment equation are met. Specifically, action will need to be taken to:

- Create employment opportunities, including entrepreneurial opportunities that will either encourage young workers to remain in the London CMA or to come to the London CMA.
- Provide better matching of education and training with the actual, current needs of employers and at the same time, ensure a solid educational base for youth which will support the continuing education that will be required to meet employers' needs in the future.

Other considerations identified through consultation include:

1. Given the area's modest growth, London CMA needs to retain young workers and to attract those with the skill sets that are in short supply. To attract and retain this segment, employers need to provide opportunities for full-time work/advancement/careers versus 'jobs'.
2. Young people are "hearing" the message that school is important but there is a mismatch between the qualifications needed for many jobs and educational levels many young people attain. This results in under-employment/under utilization of skills.
3. Employers need to be realistic about the level of education required for competence in various positions. It may be easier to 'screen' job applicants by education level but setting minimum levels that do not correlate with actual needs causes situations of poor 'fit' and creates artificial barriers to entry.
4. There is risk at both "ends" of the continuum with young people who don't graduate or don't achieve literacy/numeracy levels that will allow them to succeed, as well as those who stream into universities to obtain a bachelor degree.
5. There is an inability on the part of some youth to translate 'entry level' jobs for which they may be 'over qualified' into experience/skills they can leverage in the future.
6. Teens first jobs are typically in the retail/hospitality sectors; as the proportion of this population decreases, it will be increasingly difficult for employers to rely on this segment to fill positions.

Through the Creating Work Opportunities for Youth project and its analysis of stakeholder input, we are able to identify that future projects will need to focus on four critical areas.

1. Helping youth "connect the dots"

The path to identifying and preparing for a career takes time and requires information about the environment and oneself. Although the educational system has been increasing the emphasis on experiential learning with respect to the world of work, youth are having difficulty in making the connections between:

- their formal educational experiences,
- volunteer experiences,
- personal interests and aspirations,

- current and long term career/employment prospects and the need for ongoing learning, and
- the needs of employers.

2. Helping youth make transitions

Counselors, educators, employers, parents and youth themselves identified transition stages as difficult. To a large extent the difficulties relate to knowing how and where to access information and support when making a transition.

3. Recognizing the importance of role models

The central role of parents, peers and others in creating work opportunities for youth needs to be formally noted. Programs developed to help youth succeed will need at a minimum, their support. The Challenges Summary suggests that solutions to this issue will need to recognize the shared responsibility of parents, youth, educators and employers.

4. Improving communication linkages

While a number of study participants including youth, mentioned that there is a large and varied support network already in place, almost everyone who participated in the project mentioned some kind of a gap in finding the right type of information or support at the right time. Building bridges or communications links between service providers, the various ministries, various educational institutions, professional groups, labour associations, employers, community workers, educators, employers, parents and youth is a formidable challenge but greater awareness of the resources already available in the community is needed.

Based on the four critical areas outlined above, three project themes have been identified and project outlines developed as part of this report.

1. Creating a Foundation

The goal of this project is to engage key stakeholders and target populations interested in the issues of youth employment. The approach should be multi-faceted and phased, so that activities build on preceding efforts. Leveraging the "United Way" model, which relies on a network of companies/organizations in the community, combined with a volunteer base to execute activities, was suggested as a way to link employers with youth.

2. Providing Exposure to Entrepreneurial Options

Programs that focus either exclusively or partially on entrepreneurship have been started and exist in various communities in Canada including London. However, with little uptake of opportunities this project could help London re-think the entrepreneurial environment for youth.

3. Linking the "Information/Communications" pieces

Most of the stakeholders who participated in this project mentioned an information/communications gap of some type. Access to the right kind of information at the right time, to help make informed choices or provide assistance is needed by youth, parents, employers and service providers.

Although only three potential projects are outlined in the document, readers should consider how the full list of gaps which the project participants identified are relevant in their own context and how they might be addressed by specific programs and organizations with the local community.

Demographic Overview

The impact of the 'Baby Boom' generation on various aspects of society has been well studied and documented. This began many decades ago with the cohort's entry into the educational system and continues to more recent assessments of changes to the labour force and the impacts on the adequacy of old age security and pension funds.

Most Canadians are aware that:

1. fertility rates have been declining, which means the proportion of younger people in the general population is getting smaller,
2. declining mortality rates in Canada, like other industrialized countries, are reflected in the increasing life expectancies, and
3. immigration will be a key variable affecting the size of the population in the future.

These variables, along with the fact that Canada has a very large 'Baby Boom' generation are combining to impact the age structure of the Canadian population in very significant ways. Population projections (see: Fig. 1, Belanger et al., 2005) indicate that:

- Canada will experience a rapid aging of its population in the next 25 years
- the median age of Canadians will rise to between 43-46 years by 2031 and 45-50 years in the next fifty years
- by 2031, about 1 in 4 Canadians will be a senior and that proportion may increase to 1 in 3 by 2056
- the number of seniors will surpass the number of children in the middle of the next decade and depending on the projection scenario, by 2031 those aged 65 and over would number between 8.9-9.4 million compared to 4.8-6.6 million children
- the proportion of the working age population declines through the 2010s and 2020s to about 62% by 2030

A consequence of the trends described above, is that the dependency ration - or the number of children (0-14) and seniors (65 years and over) compared to numbers of those in the working age groups - is expected to increase from 44 in 2005, to 61 by 2031.

At the same time as the demographic changes have been occurring, a couple of trends likely to affect the core workforce have also been observed:

- young people "... are spending more years in formal education before moving to full time work" (McMullin, 2004:18).
- while many of us remember parents or grandparents who worked until the 'gold watch' was presented at age 65, it had become increasingly common for people to think of retirement in terms of 'Freedom 55'. Specifically a, "... trend toward early retirement and toward lower labour force participation by people above age 50" (McMullin, 2004:18) has been observed, but more recently, it appears this trend towards early retirement is changing. One explanation is that "... workplace policies which encourage early retirement have become less common in recent years than they were throughout the 1990's (McMullin, 2004:19).

The Next 25 Years: Changes in the Demographic Profile of Canada

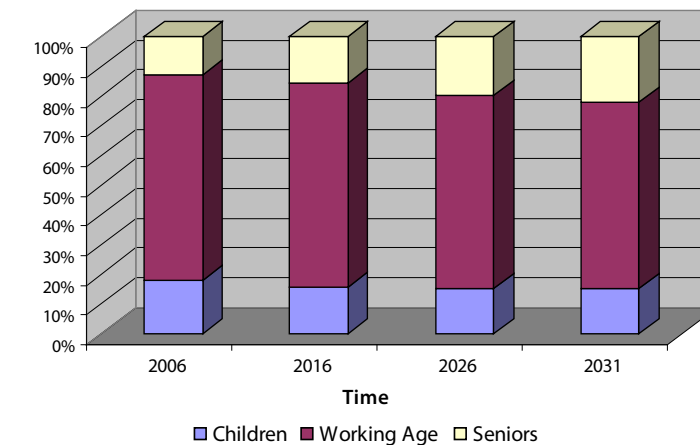


Fig. 1: Population projections over the next 25 years (created from data in: Belanger et al., 2005).

The fact that these demographic and lifestyle changes are likely to affect both the composition and size of the core labour force is not disputed; however, there is disagreement with respect to the potential impact of these changes on the labour force in terms of the availability of appropriately skilled workers. McMullin's (2004) research suggests that the following variables have the potential to impact skills shortages:

- labour force aging
- length of time to train/cost to train for various occupations
- geographic mobility
- immigration policies
- characteristics of some occupations (McMullin, 2004:31-32)

Having said this, any disagreement about the potential impact of a changing demographic landscape is not an excuse to adopt a 'wait and see' attitude. The London area will be competing with other communities across Ontario and the rest of Canada for appropriately skilled talent. There is an immediate need to anticipate and prepare for the needs of this area, to close existing gaps in the system and to put in place supports and processes that will help mitigate negative impacts as they unfold.

London CMA

The 2006 census data (Appendix A) indicates the London CMA has grown modestly; the population was almost 458,000 in 2006, which represents an increase of 5.1% from 2001. Within the CMA, Middlesex Centre (9.5%) and St. Thomas (8.8%) experienced the highest rates of growth. Over 80% of the population lived at the same address, or within the same census subdivision five years ago. Almost 12% moved to the London CMA from within Ontario, 1.4% came from another part of Canada and 3.5% moved from another country.

The long term demographic trends outlined above are reflected in the London CMA. The median age has increased 1.7 years to 38.6 between 2001 and 2006 and the core workforce (ages 25-54) has declined 1.3% from 44.2% in 2001 to 42.9% in 2006. In the London CMA 15-24 year olds represent 14% of the population compared to only 13% in Ontario overall (see: Appendix A. Statistics Canada, 2006).

Current youth employment situation

The good news is that youth employment has increased 21.1% from 1997 to 2004, while the segment as a whole has grown only 7.8%. Although, 58% (+7% from 1997) of youth had a job in 2004, this is still down from the peak of 63.3% in 1989. Participation rates have also increased from 61.5% in 1997 to 67% in 2004 and unemployment rates have decreased 2.9% to 13.4% (Usalcas, 2005:5).

It should be noted that employment patterns for youth aged 15-17 are different than for those aged 18-24. The recession of the 1990's had a greater impact on the employment rates of the younger group, and the gap that was created at that time is still seen today (Usalcas and Bowlby, 2006).

The likelihood that students are working has increased for all ages, but the 18 to 24 year olds are more likely to be working (46%) than students in the 15-17 year old group (31.2%) (Usalcas and Bowlby, 2006).

The rates increased faster for young women than for young men, especially for those 15-19:

- young women's growth rates were up 24.7%
- young men's rates were up 17.7%
- for those aged 15-19 years the rate was 26.1% versus 18.2% for those aged 20-24 years

(Usalcas, 2005:5-6)

Young women are more likely to work while in school. In fact, the employment rate gap between female students and male students for all age groups has never been greater than at present:

- for 2004-2005 school year, 34.3% of females versus 28.2% of males aged 15-17 worked
- for those aged 18-24, 50.5% of females worked compared to 40.7% of males

(Usalcas and Bowlby, 2006)

While the proportion of youth with jobs was highest in the Western Provinces, Ontario ranked above the national average in overall employment growth from 1977-2004, as well as in youth employment (Usalcas, 2005:9). In the London CMA specifically, the unemployment rate for 15-24 year olds has been generally declining, with lower unemployment rates and greater participation rates when compared to Ontario as a whole.

While "[y]ouths have made significant strides in the labour market during this recent period of economic growth" (Usalcas, 2005:9) between 1997 and 2004, one still has to question why the unemployment rate for youth remains almost twice the total unemployment rate? And, considering the current, unstable economic climate, can we expect to see erosion of these generally positive trends of recent years?

What types of jobs do youth work in?

The retail trade sector accounts for about half the growth for those aged 15-19, and a greater proportion of these jobs went to young women. In 2004, 35% of female teens worked in the retail sector, up 6% from 1997 as compared to 30% of teenaged boys (up 3% from 1997) (Usalcas, 2005:6).

The second largest employment sector for youth is accommodation and food services where the same trends were observed. The fact that in 2004, most teenagers (82%) attended school explains why 67% of the new jobs during the school year were part-time positions (Usalcas, 2005:7).

As mentioned above, for those aged 20-24 years, employment grew at about 18% but in contrast to the younger group, growth in new jobs in this age group, was largely full-time work (77%) (Usalcas, 2005:8).

Again, young women got a greater proportion of the new jobs with the greatest increases noted in health care and social assistance, information, culture and recreation and educational services. "[C]onstruction; business, building and other support services; and finance, insurance, real estate and leasing" (Usalcas, 2005:9) were the growth sectors for young men.

The share of jobs teens gained in the retail, and accommodation and food services sectors increased but for those aged 20-24 the proportion in these sectors declined and did not keep pace with overall employment growth (Usalcas, 2005:9).

Future Careers: The Information Age & The New Economy

Another factor that needs to be addressed in this discussion is that, in the decades since the Baby Boom, the world has experienced significant technological change at an increasingly rapid rate. As Canada has moved into the 'Information Age', the education and skills people require to compete in the new economy have changed. This can be seen in the changed educational attainment levels of our current youth population.

In the London CMA, a comparison of the educational attainment of the total population aged 15 and over with that of those aged 25-34 (who are assumed to have completed their schooling) shows that the 25-34 year olds have higher educational attainments and fewer people achieving trades qualifications.

- Those without certificates, diplomas or degrees in the 25-34 age group comprise only 8.5% of that population compared to 21.4% of the total population aged 15 and over. These statistics suggest that increasingly, young people are completing secondary school and are attending post secondary institutions and completing additional credentials.

- However, and not surprising given the discussions around skilled trade shortages, the proportion of the population that has earned an apprenticeship or trades certificate is lower in the 25-34 year old segment than in the total population - true for both London CMA and Ontario.

- In the 25-34 year old group, there are almost 4.5% fewer individuals with a university certificate, diploma or degree, in the London CMA compared to the rest of Ontario.

(Appendix A: Statistics Canada, 2006).

We also found that in Canada, the employment rate for youth/young people is strongly affected by their educational attainment:

- the proportion of those with high school and university/college who are working is between 19-37% greater than those without secondary school;
- on average, post secondary education provides a clear benefit for both employment and earnings (Saunders, 2007).

Some of the literature has identified two sets of issues based on the educational success of youth. The well educated but under-employed/under-achieving segment experiences a different set of challenges than the poorly educated segment (Betcherman et al., 1998:78-80). The reasons for falling into this second category are many and varied including personal, physical, family and other challenges.

Saunders (2008) goes on to report two interesting findings relating to opportunities for youth relative to their educational attainment:

1. In Canada, like other OECD countries, a high school diploma **improves the chances of getting a job**; however, in Canada, unlike other OECD countries, a high school diploma **does not increase the odds of finding a skilled job**. It appears employers expect some other certification or credential in addition to a secondary school diploma.
2. "... while post secondary provides, on average, clear benefits in terms of employment rates and earnings, one-third of employed 25-29 year olds with a post-secondary diploma or degree in Canada ... have a low-skilled job – the highest proportion among OECD countries" (Saunders, 2008:2). Again, there appears a mismatch between educational requirements of jobs and educational attainment of the youth who fill these positions.

These findings are supported by research done by Li et al., (2006), who found that in 2001, 20% of the workforce with a university education worked in jobs that required only a secondary school education. This represents an increase of almost one-third in the number of individuals with university education who are over qualified for their work. It also found that older workers are more likely to remain over qualified than younger ones. Two explanations are presented to help explain this finding:

1. People may work at jobs that do not "match" their educational level when starting out. Rather, they chose jobs to learn about particular industries or to acquire specific skills that will help ensure success in future, higher level jobs. In other words, according to this theory (career mobility theory) entry level jobs provide opportunities for learning. Those who are successful in amassing and leveraging transferable skills and experiences move on to higher level positions that are a better fit with their educations while those who are unable to do this, stay in positions for which they are overqualified (Li et al., 2006:8).
2. On the other hand, individuals who are starting out on their career paths can be described as relatively experienced, even in terms of finding the "right" job for themselves. According to this explanation (matching theory), they are unable to match their educational credentials and their own needs and wishes, with what they know and understand to be true about particular jobs. Defining the 'right' job for oneself takes experience, and as young workers learn more about employers, various positions and themselves, they eventually find positions that are a better fit. For older workers who remain in positions for which they are apparently over qualified, the choice to remain in a particular position may be predominantly driven by personal career and lifestyle objectives (Li et al., 2006:8).

The Li et al. (2006) study also found that the greater the university certification – or completion of more advanced degrees - the less likely it was that people would find themselves in a situation of over qualification, which suggests that those with specialized training or knowledge find better 'matches' than those with general university educations. For example, although those who obtained bachelor's degrees in sciences and health were found to be at lower risk of remaining in overqualified situations, those who had completed only a bachelor degree "... were twice as likely to remain overqualified 100% of the time as people with higher degrees ..." (Li et al., 2006:10). In other words, students who want to attend university need to either identify educational paths that are in demand such as sciences or, build on basic degrees with specialized or advanced degrees.

In summary, these studies suggest that we need to:

1. understand how to create better matches between the educational requirements of various jobs and the educational attainment of people who are hired to fill them
2. provide youth with information on jobs and careers and what educational requirements are for needed for them
3. provide a solid educational foundation that will allow employees to take advantage of continuous learning as their work environments change
4. provide learning opportunities on-the-job that will allow those with post secondary education to leverage their educational foundation – to 'connect the dots' - and make greater contributions. A variable often cited as a key success factor in the new economy is innovation; underutilization of talent and human resources is a loss not only to the employer but to society as a whole
5. provide youth who complete only secondary school with the 'right' skills to find and keep jobs; provide them with the education that first, allows them to start to work in skilled jobs and second, gives them the foundation on which to continue to learn

Implications of the demographic changes for London CMA

What do the demographic changes mean for the London CMA? Some of the key implications of the preceding overview are highlighted below:

1. Given the area's modest growth, London CMA needs to retain young workers and to attract those with the skill sets that are in short supply. To attract and retain this segment, employers need to provide opportunities for full-time work/advancement/careers versus 'jobs'.
2. Young people are "hearing" the message that school is important but there is a mismatch between the qualifications needed for many jobs and educational levels many young people attain. This results in under-employment/under utilization of skills.
3. Employers need to be realistic about the level of education required for competence in various positions. It may be easier to 'screen' job applicants by education level but setting minimum levels that do not correlate with actual needs causes situations of poor 'fit' and creates artificial barriers to entry.
4. There is risk at both "ends" of the continuum with young people who don't graduate or don't achieve literacy/numeracy levels that will allow them to succeed, as well as those who stream into universities to obtain a bachelor degree.
5. There is an inability on the part of some youth to translate 'entry level' jobs for which they may be 'over qualified' into experience/skills they can leverage in the future.

6. Teen's first jobs are typically in the retail/hospitality sectors; as the proportion of this population decreases, it will be increasingly difficult for employers to rely on this segment to fill positions.

The London CMA needs to be proactive to ensure the needs of both the supply and demand sides of the employment equation are met. Specifically, action will need to be taken to:

- Create employment opportunities, including entrepreneurial opportunities that will either encourage young workers to remain in the London CMA or to come to the London CMA.
- Provide better matching of education and training with the actual, current needs of employers and at the same time, ensure a solid educational base for youth which will support the continuing education that will be required to meet employers' needs in the future.

Stakeholder Research and Analysis

Methodology

For the purposes of this project, "youth" did not receive an age definition. It was agreed that age definitions not be imposed on this research project as they are applied by funding organizations around their specific funding requirements. The ages being dealt with in local organizations currently receiving funding cover 15-35 with many different age-brackets applied within this range for example, 16-25 or 15-29, etc as set by the funding body.

As noted in the background information, this project was conceived as a collaborative effort to develop a community based strategy to address work opportunities for youth. To that end, a wide variety of individuals were invited to provide their input and opinions on the topic including:

- Youth – newcomers, at-risk, rural/urban, teens/older youth
- Employers – various sectors
- Teachers/counselors – at risk youth, special programs
- Program coordinators/service delivery personnel, and
- Educators, administrators in the educational system

For details of those who participated in the project, please see Appendix E.

Stakeholder input was gathered using primarily one-on-one interviews; however, some participants created a 'small group' session by including one or more of their key team members in the interview session to help provide specific examples and additional detail about their work. In a few instances respondents preferred to respond in writing.

Questionnaires were used to gather basic descriptive information prior to the focus groups and were used to refine the discussion.

Insights from Stakeholder Interviews & Focus Group Meetings

The participants represent a wide variety of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. In order to summarize their input, their observations, insights and comments with respect to the challenges or issues facing youth vis-à-vis work opportunities have been grouped on different dimensions and are presented below in the “Challenges Summary”.

Challenges Summary

Individual

- The age group itself has challenges! It's a time of change/turmoil which makes the target population something of a challenge
- Increasingly, a greater proportion of clients have other challenges/barriers such as ADHD, chaotic early years, and sociological issues (families are different, parenting changes). A lot of issues are not dealt with
- For at risk youth --- the challenge is to help them create a path to a meaningful life through alternative ways of preparation for life after school
- Youth who don't finish school don't have good chances of getting work/creating meaningful lives

Societal

- Need to be aware of generational changes with respect to work, family, 'sabbaticals', retirement ... values/goals/objectives.
- There has been a focus on careers. Youth are told to choose “what they want to be”. Rather, there should be a focus on strengths/interests. Today there are more opportunities to explore, experience.
- Parents don't have a good understanding of the environment and how it's changing. Parents don't have the information/knowledge to help their children.
- High risk youth don't have role models/First Nations youth don't have role models for life 'off the reserve'; newcomers need role models.
- There are stigmas attached to getting certain kinds of assistance – labeling.
- Many newcomer parents 'push' children to university.
- Students coming out of general programs at universities are not able to connect the dots, to make/take the next steps to develop a career path from an entry level job.
- Helicopter parents - involved in job searches, interview follow-up, scheduling of interviews, intervention in internal company matters ... Youth that are unable to make decisions, plan and execute, take responsibility ...
- Skills mismatches – academic/formal training (go to university) is not what's needed in many jobs.
- A good number of those requiring social assistance are youth who have completed post secondary degrees and certifications.

Structural/Systemic

Education System

- Responsibility rests equally with Boards, teachers, parents, employers & youth.
- How to keep youth engaged? In school? Youth who don't finish school don't have good chances of getting work, creating meaningful lives.
- Expectations in secondary school are too low and don't prepare youth for university/work realities.
- The transition from elementary to secondary is difficult because we (youth) are given too much freedom in high school. Expectations are low. There are no consequences to anything.
- Availability of apprenticeships. There aren't enough co-op placements.
- Transportation issues for students in the co-op programs. Cost of transportation (in urban area) as well as availability of transportation (rural).
- The careers course is too late since many are already looking for jobs/already have resumes in Gr. 10; need resume/interview piece earlier, then need another “career” course.
- Need 'tracks' to connect vocational/academic programs ... make it easier to switch between/ create stages to match workplace needs.
- The structure of universities makes it difficult to implement co-op programs. For example, need ½ courses that allow students flexibility to move in/out of classrooms. Most faculty have no “real world” experience and resist co-op.
- Need more emphasis from University management on careers. Involve alumni. Mentoring program through email.
- Little support from educational institutions. Nominal follow-up in the university/college setting where the focus is on student development and not career development.
- Youth need to get solid foundation that will allow them to continue learning as new jobs are created and others disappear.
- Skills mismatches: academic/formal training (go to university) is not what's needed in many jobs.
- Youth don't understand the concept of continuous learning.

Support system: Counseling, Training

- Youth who finish general programs in University have difficulty in landing entry level jobs and figuring out how to move within a company.
- Need greater communication between service providers on programs, available resources/ collaboration.
- Limited resources.
- Connectivity to the next likely support system – transitions - is the issue.
- Biggest problem is rules around funding. Challenge is to work together to cover the gaps.
- Labour market awareness/information is important now. Need to make clients aware of projections, changes in technology, soft/hard skills needed for new jobs, where these jobs are, what skills are transferable, what jobs have been lost in community/geographic areas.
- Get students away from focusing on careers - focus on skills, continuous learning piece.

- There has been a focus on careers. Youth are told to choose “what they want to be”. Rather, there should be a focus on strengths/interests. Today there are more opportunities to explore, experience.
- Need to take the longer term view. Many of the programs are short-term interventions with a focus to get the person job ready, but not to launch a career.
- Kids whose parents don’t have networks have a harder time finding jobs. Newcomer youth don’t have parental ‘links’ to employers/opportunities.

Communications, Networks, Availability of Information

- Recognize urban/rural issues, for example, the type and availability of jobs (for co-op, part-time and summer), transportation issues.
- Need to keep the labour market perspectives in mind – what’s happening in large centres? Out West? Need some resources to support them in jobs to keep them locally.
- Accurate information from employers. Impacts of a Just-In-Time economy, changing economic variables. Difficult, but need to forecast workforce needs.
- Labour market awareness/information is important now. Need to make clients aware of projections, changes in technology, soft/hard skills needed for new jobs, where these jobs are, what skills are transferable, what jobs have been lost in community/geographic areas.
- Better publicity for occupational projections – better info on both supply and demand sides.
- Communications to employers is very important. It is key in maintaining co-op placements, success for individual students ...
- Teachers should not be career counselors... their experience is university. This is what they know; this is what they “push” students to do. Need people who understand more about the world of work!
- Teachers don’t know about all of the agencies/supports that are available to help youth.
- Internet advertises many jobs, but youth need to understand how to filter these. Internet is great if you know how/where to look.
- Youth don’t make links between courses and future work.
- Youth don’t make link between volunteer experiences and learning about themselves/interests.
- Youth don’t know what’s available in terms of supports and programs. Youth don’t know where to look for information/support. There was low awareness of support/job programs.
- Bulletin boards, posters at school/libraries are frequently used sources of information. Youth prefer to ‘network’ with other youth to get information versus research the Internet.
- Need greater communication between service providers on programs, available resources/ collaboration.
- Communications to employers is very important. It is key in maintaining co-op placements, success for individual students ...

Employer Related

Employer - Employee Relations

- Are employers getting what they want/need in terms of soft skills, attitude, productivity, innovation?
- How can employers make jobs interesting? Create career paths? Keep young workers engaged? Manage expectations?
- Employers are looking for quality employees in terms of technical skills and soft skills (training, attendance, attitude ...).
- There are biases/perceptions about youth workers. Often employer perceptions of youth are based on one (bad) experience. Some old issues. Generalizations.

HR Practices (Planning, Equity, Skills Assessment, Hiring and Separation)

- Employers want people with experience.
- Employers are willing to train new employees on technical/industry specific/company specific knowledge. Not willing to teach soft skills (attendance, conflict management, punctuality, team work etc.)
- Accurate information from employers. Impacts of a Just-In-Time economy, changing economic variables. Difficult, but need to forecast workforce needs.
- Unions/quotas prevent youth from accessing certain jobs.
- Employers need to think ahead about the jobs they’re going to have.
- Greater linkages between universities, colleges ... career classes, guidance, co-op all need to be linked.
- Management doesn’t do a great job of recruiting suitable people, then orienting and training people so it’s easier to do job, fit in.
- Skills mismatches – academic/formal training (go to university) is not what’s needed in many jobs.

Work Organization (Culture)

- Low tolerance for diversity.
- Other employees give those who don’t fit/who aren’t “like me” have a difficult time.
- Youth report being treated with little respect.
- Employers want a fit with the culture of the company.
- Management doesn’t do a great job of recruiting suitable people, then orienting and training.
- Insufficient leadership (in many firms). Need to get their house in order.
- Differences come to light when compare the ‘traditional’ boomer culture to new workers culture/values.
- Need to be aware of generational changes with respect to work, family, ‘sabbaticals’, retirement ... values/goals/objectives.
- Expectations of many youth regarding promotions, compensation, and their value are unrealistic (Promotions, compensation ...). Youth don’t see that many companies hire from within --- the “growing up” in a company, understanding its clients, challenges, culture etc is often key to a company’s success and an individual’s success within it.
- Out migration from rural areas is significant and has impact on employers.

Where are the gaps?

From the challenges summary a number of gaps that appear to afford the greatest opportunities were identified. These are outlined below:

1. Helping youth “connect the dots”

The path to identifying and preparing for a career takes time and requires information about the environment and oneself. Although the educational system has been increasing the emphasis on experiential learning with respect to the world of work, youth are having difficulty in making the connections between:

- their formal educational experiences,
- volunteer experiences,
- personal interests and aspirations,
- current and long term career/employment prospects and the need for ongoing learning, and
- the needs of employers.

2. Helping youth make transitions

Counselors, educators, employers, parents and youth themselves identified transition stages as difficult. To a large extent the difficulties relate to knowing how and where to access information and support when making a transition.

3. Recognizing the importance of role models

The central role of parents, peers and others in creating work opportunities for youth needs to be formally noted. Programs developed to help youth succeed will need at a minimum, their support. As mentioned in the Challenges Summary, solutions to this issue will need to recognize the shared responsibility of parents, youth, educators and employers.

4. Improving communication linkages

While a number of study participants, including youth mentioned that there is a large and varied support network already in place, almost everyone who participated in the project mentioned some kind of a gap in finding the right type of information or support at the right time. Building bridges or communications links between service providers, the various ministries, various educational institutions, professional groups, labour associations, employers, community workers, educators, employers, parents and youth is a formidable challenge but greater awareness of the resources already available in the community is needed.

What are the opportunities?

First, this section outlines the decision framework and overarching principles the Committee used to guide its decision making process. Second, it includes a description of three key opportunities designed to address the gaps identified from the challenges summary.

Decision Framework

In order to facilitate the process by which potential projects would be identified, best practices identified from a review of international projects were used as a guideline. Factors that were kept in mind when assessing work opportunities for youth included the importance of:

- comprehensive and integrated support services and programs,
- a dual client model that considers both the perspective of youth and employers,
- viewing young people as assets,
- comprehending the diverse contribution that the private sector can play,
- the promotion of self employment as a positive and as a possible youth employment option,
- critical industry sectors, and
- sharing international experience

(Kenyon, 2008)

In addition, the committee felt that the opportunities that are identified and selected in the context of this project should take an ‘integrative’ approach. Stakeholders should not see the solutions identified here applicable to only one subset of employees, namely youth, but rather as solutions that can be leveraged for other demographic groups including the disabled, experienced workers, newcomers and women. The projects that are defined as a result of this work will help develop processes that build upon existing co-operative relationships between stakeholders to move to a collaborative model that includes all community partners.

The committee agreed that their ultimate objective in this exercise is to initiate systemic change, rather than ‘stand alone’ projects or programs. They envision the ‘solutions’ as organic. In other words, these projects should not be seen as an end in themselves but rather, as a beginning point for closing current gaps and implementing processes that will help identify and develop solutions to evolving gaps. The committee, which is comprised of stakeholders from all key constituencies in the London CMA, does not see its role as ending with the completion of this research and strategy project. They are committed to an ongoing role that will advance not only the proposed solutions but also future endeavours that will build on this initial effort and to engaging others in these undertakings.

In this context, three key themes emerged and were used to organize thoughts and suggestions surrounding the development of the project concepts. Each project should address at least one of the following:

1. Getting engaged (how to get the target populations interested, involved)
2. Making good choices (what to do - the information/communications pieces), or
3. Employer education (creating opportunities for employers to fill HR needs with youth)

Project 1: Creating a Foundation

Overview and Project Objective

The Creating Work Opportunities for Youth (CWOY) research and strategy project, which was completed for the London Census Management Area (CMA) in October, 2008, identified a number of opportunities to help close some of the current informational, educational and systemic gaps that exist and to ensure the needs of both the supply and demand sides of the employment equation are met.

The goal of the "Creating a Foundation" project is to engage both the key stakeholders and the target populations. Specifically, the project aims to provide a solution to the 'information gap' that students, teachers, parents and employers identified as part of their experience when identifying potential career options and/or preparing for careers through formal educational channels as well as voluntary and other experiential paths.

An approach to this project would ideally:

1. be multi-faceted and phased,
2. focus on industries and sectors, rather than specific employers,
3. leverage a "United Way" model, which relies on a network of companies and organizations in the community, combined with a volunteer base to help execute activities, and
4. involve "insiders" who know and understand various industries and their specific opportunities and issues.

As a first phase, the project will involve the development of a speakers bureau of business and industry representatives who will be available, upon invitation, to attend school events and address students, teachers and parents on their industry, its skills needs, what employers look for in job applications, how applicants are screened, and so on. Human resources personnel will be key contributors to the project.

These sessions could be panels covering a range of businesses/industry sectors. This concept is similar to the LEDC's Business Workforce Briefings and their Industry Panel at Student-2-Business Networking Conference which target different audiences.

As a second phase, the project could facilitate the participation of 'champion' employers at a specific school for a "Job Scholarship" program that could reward a student(s) with part-time or summer jobs. This would be done through a series of employer presentations – similar to those outlined above - but very specific to the company and its needs, followed by resume workshops and then interviews to select students for the available positions.

In a third phase, the project could undertake development of a session called, "The Economics of Going to Work" which mirrors Junior Achievement's 'Economics of Staying in School'.

To make a project like this successful, a number of factors will need to be kept in mind. The program should:

- build on processes, programs and structures that are already in place,
- leverage and use the support of community partners,
- create a model and then use it consistently as content changes to reflect the current environmental situation,
- develop uniform processes and formats,
- develop consistent materials/messages, thinking in terms of program definition with standards,

- develop a 'trained' delivery channel (volunteers or retirees),
- make it easy for employers to participate, building commitment/engagement to a point where participation and support for a program like this is part of the fabric of the school and its culture, and
- deliver where the client is.

This program would provide mechanisms to help:

- teachers/parents and students get current information,
- employers regularly connect with youth on an ongoing basis,
- employers actively participate: many can find time to attend or present at events but do not have time/skill sets to organize or co-ordinate a program like this, and
- build an awareness of employment and job issues/opportunities in schools and help expose students to a variety of industries and opportunities/careers.

This could become an integral part of the culture within our schools instead of a haphazard approach.

The project will be delivered to the London (CMA) in partnership with area school boards. Buy-in from school board leadership is critical specifically to support the work of educational 'champions' within the system and to identify pilot sites.

Rationale

With the predicted labour shortages of the future – resulting from retiring baby boomers/aging workforce and declining birthrate – business will need to be proactive and creative in meeting its workforce requirements.

According to the 'Creating Work Opportunities for Youth' report, there is a mismatch between the qualifications needed for many jobs and educational levels many young people attain. This results in under-employment/under utilization of skills. Getting employers and students involved with each other is likely to promote better decisions and solutions in the long run.

On the one hand, employers need to be realistic about the level of education required for competence in various positions. It may be easier to 'screen' job applicants by education level but setting minimum levels that do not correlate with actual needs causes situations of poor 'fit' and creates artificial barriers to entry. Employers also need to proactively engage in thorough workforce planning to ensure potential shortages in un/skilled labour needs are planned for.

On the other hand, students need to consider all educational pathways, including apprenticeships and internships, to ensure they qualify for careers they are interested in and at the same time do not end up 'over-qualified' and under-employed'.

Project Funding

Funding would be required to employ the Project Manager who would work with the voluntary project committee to deliver the project over a 2-3 year period. The upfront costs and establishment of clear project processes over an initial 2-3 year period would then allow for sustainability with low ongoing funding/cost requirements.

The Project Manager would need to be located within an appropriate organization for day-to-day support to their activities. No \$ figures are provided as these would best be determined at time of funding application. In-kind contributions would be assessed for project committee involvement and the project sponsor organization. Annual expenses would need to be allocated for each of the following: Project Manager, Overheads/Administration, Promotion/Marketing, Event hosting costs, Printing & Materials, Audit and Insurance.

Project 2: Providing Exposure to Entrepreneurial Options

The following project timelines assumes project committee formation and then commencement of project (month 1) at time of funding. Regular reporting to project funder would be added. Allowance needs to be made for summer break pending project timing.

Proposed Activities and Timelines

Activity	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1. Promotion of project to interested stakeholders and community.	Copies of releases/articles printed in local media, sent to schools and industry representatives/employers.	Throughout project period
2. Define/recruit project manager; define roles & responsibilities; time commitments, meeting dates, agree on timeline/critical path/activities, specific objectives of Phase 1 – Business Industry Speakers Bureau	Roles and responsibilities documents, objectives, schedule/timeline documents	Month 1-2
3. Develop communications plan: • Define targets, messages and channels • Include volunteers/change agents/champions as well as broader audiences	Communications plan document	Month 2-3
4. Identification of employers or industry sector organizations, educators. Engagement of: • ‘pilot’ school(s) • industry sectors • volunteers/industry representatives • content, approach (panels/presentations), handout materials	Documentation of pilot school (s)/ teachers identified and on board Draft presentation outline – key content areas to be addressed Draft presentation schedule (Sept – June) drafted	Month 2-4
5. Preparation & Distribution of promotional materials, presentation format, feedback tools, performance indicators, etc	Promotional materials, presentation templates, feedback tools	Month 2-5
6. Project Kick-off	Kick-off event	Month 5
7. Launch Speakers Bureau	Questionnaires/interview outlines	Month 6 onwards
8. Complete ongoing feedback and analysis • use input for refining ongoing Speakers events • use information for Phase 2 ideas/planning	Document findings/analysis	Month 6 onwards
9. Assess/evaluate Phase 1 overall: • review feedback overall to determine what works well/what doesn't and adjust program • improvements, changes?	Evaluation/assessment document Draft recommendations for improvements/changes	Month 12
10. Phase 2 planning: • identify preferred approach/activities/project	Updated Speakers Bureau plan for school year starting Year 2 Project/communications plan for new activities starting in Phase 2	Month 17
11. Report on outcomes	Report to sponsors and partners covering distribution, presentations, feedback and including numbers associated with each activity	As required
12. Follow-up Committee Meetings and Reports		As required

Overview and Project Objective

The Creating Work Opportunities for Youth (CWOY) research and strategy project, which was completed for the London Census Management Area (CMA) in October, 2008, identified a number of opportunities to help close some of the current informational, educational and systemic gaps that exist and to ensure the needs of both the supply and demand sides of the employment equation are met.

Programs that focus either exclusively or partially on entrepreneurship have been started and exist in various communities in Canada and in London. Those working in entrepreneurship in London have identified that there is under-utilization of entrepreneurial supports available for youth and so this would indicate an opportunity to improve on the local situation.

An example of a successful youth entrepreneurship can be found in Nova Scotia's Centre for Entrepreneurship, Education and Development (CEED), located in Halifax. This organization is "... devoted to helping people discover and use entrepreneurship as a vehicle to become self-reliant" (www.ceed.info/ceed/about_ceed/) and has a range of programs that could be reviewed for local adaptation.

A "Providing Exposure to Entrepreneurial Options" project could be described as a change project; which will evolve as participants learn and understand for example, what programs work and don't work, and what the needs of the target populations are. Ideally, it would be a project that combines:

- an entrepreneurial training aspect,
- social entrepreneurship, and
- leverages the engagement model (see Appendix F) which starts by asking what we can do for youth and then moves youth to the next level to ask what youth can do for themselves.

The goal of the first phase for the "Providing Exposure to Entrepreneurial Options" project is to determine how to proceed. As a first step, a search conference would bring interested organizations and individuals together to learn how centres such as CEED were started, how they've evolved and what could be developed locally based on their experience. Search conferences have been used to develop new organizations and networks, new policies in a variety of organizations and new processes in mergers/amalgamations as well as community futures and corporate projects. According to Cabana, they are useful in situations which involve:

- Changing the rules of the game in an industry environment/system relationship
- Creating alliances within and across industry boundaries, or
- Creating partnership with customers, suppliers or government regulators, etc...

The outcomes of the conference would form the basis for a second phase which would focus on specific activities and a course to execute the vision.

This project would need to involve those agencies in the area that have a focus on entrepreneurship. These include the Small business Centre, TechAlliance and the business faculties at Western and Fanshawe.

Rationale

While the large metropolitan centres – Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver (MTV) – will continue to grow and attract labour pools, living in a large metropolitan centre is not attractive to everyone. Smaller centres across Canada will have to compete to attract skilled and talented individuals, who would prefer to settle outside “MTV”.

Entrepreneurial Ventures

- provide opportunities for creative/innovative people to make contributions locally,
- potentially create new employment opportunities,
- provide direct and indirect benefits for the communities in which they operate,
- provide opportunities for people to become self-reliant,
- allow individuals to develop areas that are personally interesting and engaging.

An entrepreneurial centre that focuses on programs for young entrepreneurs and educating youth about entrepreneurial work alternatives may provide the London CMA with a competitive edge in terms of retaining youth who currently live in the area and in attracting others who are looking to establish themselves in a smaller community. Ideally this project would evolve with youth taking the lead in the activities.

Project Funding

In the initial stage, funding would be required to cover the costs of running the search conference. This could be as little as \$5,000 or \$20,000 depending on the cost of facilitating the event. Expenses would include the cost to engage a conference facilitator, venue and refreshment expenses – assuming participation of 20-50 community members and possible expense of engaging an organization eg CEED to participate. A project sponsor could be sought or funding sought from an appropriate agency to undertake the activity.

The project timelines assumes formation of an appropriate project committee at time of launch of project.

Proposed Activities and Timelines

Activity	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1. Develop budget (consultant, any research needed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define timelines • identify moderators/experts/consultants who have experience with entrepreneurial centres for youth 	Create project document – budget, timeline roles & responsibilities. RFP for consultant/search conference moderator(s) as/if required.	Month 1 and 2
2. Identify research and data that will be required for the search sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eg, often key stakeholders are interviewed on their perceptions of the environment/needs • determine if additional resources are required to collect data 	Document gaps and action plan to compile required information/data.	Month 2
3. Collect data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include reports, statistics, current research, stakeholder insights and information about the current state of the external environment 	Compile reports, statistics. Complete an overview/summary document of the current environmental situation.	Month 2 and 3
4. Organize search conference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hire moderator/consultant(s) • finalize participants list 	List of participants. Documents required for sessions (research/orientation documents ...)	Month 2-4
5. Conduct search conference	Conference event	Month 5
6. Report on outcomes	Document findings, and proposed next steps to sponsors, partners and other stakeholders.	Month 6
7. Follow-up Committee Meetings and Reports	Periodic committee reports to funders as required	As required

Project 3: Linking the Information/Communications Pieces

Overview and Project Objective

The Creating Work Opportunities for Youth (CWOY) research and strategy project, which was completed for the London Census Management Area (CMA) in October, 2008, identified a number of opportunities to help close some of the current informational, educational and systemic gaps that exist and to ensure the needs of both the supply and demand sides of the employment equation are met.

Almost all of the stakeholders who participated in the CWOY project mentioned an information/communications gap of some type. Access to the right kind of information and the right time in order to help make informed choices or provide assistance is needed by youth, parents, employers and service providers.

Information and communications gaps vary by stakeholder group so there is likely a wide range of other potential improvements that could be investigated and considered as a part of this undertaking. Some of the solutions may be quick and easy to execute, while others may take considerable coordination and resources.

Two specific projects are proposed and are outlined below:

1. Explore and identify the electronic connection of youth to the labour market here in the London CMA

Increasingly employers use Facebook to establish contact with job seekers. A project to assess this communications tool from both sides may help answer questions like:

- What are employers doing on Facebook that works to attract qualified candidates?
- What kinds of information do youth want on a Facebook page?
- How do youth look for jobs across the country?
- How do employers use this tool to hire?
- How can London become defined as a 'destination'?
- How should the opportunities here in the London CMA be presented/marketed to those outside the area? We need to recognize that Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver are going to continue to draw large numbers of youth but at the same time, need to present the benefits and advantages of choosing this area to those who are exploring options
- How to connect youth to the opportunities that exist in the London CMA needs to be better understood. This needs to be done "... in their language, in their place!"
- Can we leverage local experience, for example MindyourMind experience in creating an electronic presence?
- Can we involve the Emerging Leaders group?
- What barriers do we need to be aware of? As an example, about 50% of youth do not have access to a PC.

2. Create an 'employment' calendar that links employers, youth and other stakeholders

- Feature employers who hire youth and co-op/summer/intern students - highlight success stories.
- Provide information on 'employment' events like SLOME, conferences and other activities.

Both these projects would provide mechanisms to help:

- youth and other interested parties easily get current information,
- create a channel for employers to communicate with youth
- raise awareness of employers who participate in various programs, events
- build awareness of employment and job issues/opportunities in the community and help expose students to a variety of industries and opportunities/careers.

Web sites need to be kept current, and timely updates are required to ensure conference and event notifications reach the desired target audience. Consequently, it is important to recognize that an undertaking of this kind would require a dedicated resource.

Rationale

Although considerable information on various topics is available, participants representing various stakeholders in the CWOY project indicated difficulty in finding the right kind of information at the right time. Awareness of employment programs, resources, labour market information or occupational projections was typically limited.

Information presented in a channel that is popular with youth and allows for:

- linkages to other information sites
- interaction/networking between users
- regular/timely updates should help break down information silos and help youth access information they need.

Project Funding

Determination for funding requirements for the first project within this area needs further work. The project timelines provide an overview of one approach to deliver such a project utilizing a consultant, however, alternative paths might be considered. Utilizing the consultant approach, it is anticipated that funding of \$75-100,000 could be required to deliver the project.

Publication of a calendar will vary according to style, finish quality, publication number and distribution method. We have not included an indication for the cost to publish such a calendar as this work would need to be done after consideration for designs have occurred.

Both project timelines assume project committee in place at time of commencement.

Proposed Activities and Timelines

Electronic Channels

Activity	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1. Definition of project: define roles & responsibilities; time commitments, meeting dates	Project committee terms of reference	Month 1
2. Promotion of project – releases to key stakeholders to raise awareness, identify opportunities to contribute content, outline activities/progress	Copies of media releases and copies of articles printed in local media	Month 1
3. Develop Consultant's Brief and Terms of Reference	Approval and publication of Consultant's Terms of Reference	Month 1
4. Advertise/Distribute Request for Proposals	Call for submissions through Request for Proposals – draft attached	Month 2-3
5. Consultant selection and appointment	Review of submissions and appointment of selected consultant with signed contract	Month 2-3
6. Research electronic channel potential (strengths weaknesses, opportunities, barriers)	Report with recommendations Full listing of literature and resources with source information	Month 4-8
7. Consultation with employers, employer organizations, recruiters • present findings re electronic channels and potential to use this channel • get input • discuss recommendations and consider options	Report (including participant details) on results from consultations. Action plan highlighting which recommendations are accepted and the actions to be undertaken to implement these.	Month 4-8
8. Development and design of electronic channel content	Content pages/materials	Month 9-12
9. Pre-test content with a sample of youth/ employers and revise as required	Summary of improvements and changes required	Month 9-12
10. Promotion of electronic channel	Media releases	Month 13
11. Launch events	Launch activities with partner groups	Month 14
12. Distribution of information packages to other employers who potentially participate in the program as it expands and grows	Distribute information to local businesses – use on-line package?	Month 14
13. Channel maintenance	Monitoring usage statistics, checking to ensure materials are operational and current, maintaining links to other sites	Month 14-24
14. Report on outcomes	Report to sponsors and partners covering distribution, presentations, feedback and including numbers associated with each activity	As required
15. Follow-up Committee Meetings and Reports	Periodic committee reports to funders as required	As required

Employment Calendar

Activity	Performance Indicator	Timeline
1. Define/recruit project team; define roles & responsibilities, time commitments, meeting dates;	Terms of References	Month 1
2. Promotion of project –releases to key stakeholders to raise awareness, identify opportunities to contribute content, outline upcoming activities and progress	Copies of media releases and copies of articles printed in local media.	Month 1
3. Development and design of calendar • input from employers, employer organizations, NFP's, other organizations which would submit content/events information • compile list of events • determine which employers would be featured (nominate? Criteria?) • discuss recommendations and consider options	Report (including participant details) on results from consultations	Month 2-6
4. Publication	Calendar print run	Month 6
5. Promotion and distribution of calendar	Media releases, mail out, partner distribution	Month 6-7
6. Report on outcomes	Report to sponsors and partners covering distribution, presentations, feedback and including numbers associated with each activity	As required
7. Follow-up Committee Meetings and Reports	Periodic committee reports to funders as required	As required

Final Words

While the London CMA provides youth and employers with many resources and supports and a host of interested, informed and dedicated individuals offer a variety of programs and services, this project uncovered a number of gaps in the paths that lead youth to employment.

Some of these gaps will be relatively easy to close, especially in the context of specific programs and services. However, we do need to step back and take a look at the larger picture. A number of the issues that were identified cross organizational boundaries and the best solutions will come from looking at the problems and solutions in an integrated or systemic way. These solutions will require not only the commitment of people like the committee members involved in this project, but employers, parents, educators and governments at all levels.

Although only three potential projects are outlined in this document, readers are invited to consider how some of the other issues that project participants identified are relevant in their own context. Readers should think about how these might be addressed within specific programs and organizations they are involved with.

There are many opportunities for involvement and we encourage all to take action: the benefits of finding good solutions will accrue not only to youth, but to everyone in the communities in which they live and work. They are, after-all, our future.

As referenced earlier in the document, the project committee has committed to continue to work together and with other partners to see the three identified projects into reality in the coming years. If you are interested or know an appropriate agency that could be interested please feel free to contact Jeny Wallace, Director of Workforce Development at the London Economic Development Corporation, phone 519 6614526 or email jwallace@ledc.com to register your interest.

Appendices List

The appendices to this report, including the bibliography, have not been included in the print publication but are available on the disk provided as part of the document. They include:

- Appendix A: Demographic Support Information
- Appendix B: Employment Support agencies
- Appendix C: Schools, College listing
- Appendix D: Funding Sources
- Appendix E: Interviews & Groups listing
- Appendix F: Youth Engagement Model

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