

# An Economic Development Strategy for the Town of Lakeshore



**2006**



The Corporation of the  
Town of Lakeshore

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Belle River, ON



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## Executive Summary

To fully realize its economic potential in the years ahead, the Town of Lakeshore must chart its economic course. To chart this course, it needs to be fully aware of the economic climate and situation it finds itself in, and Lakeshore also needs to know what its options for growth are. To achieve a prosperous and healthy economic future, action plans must be carefully planned and executed. This economic development strategy charts the course to economic prosperity for Lakeshore, identifying the growth strategies and action plans to be implemented. It's companion document, *A Situational Analysis of the Town of Lakeshore* provides a comprehensive statistical analysis of the economic situation in the Town using the most up to date data available.

While Town Council initiated the preparation of this strategy, it wisely insisted that there be significant community engagement in its preparation. Building on a solid understanding of the local economy, more than 100 stakeholders from business, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, the public sector, and education, as well as the Steering Committee have given shape to this economic development strategy. The economic development strategy process provided four major points of opportunity for stakeholders to provide input and to influence the strategy.

The strategic themes around which it was decided (through the consultation process) that action plans would be developed include:

- Manufacturing;
- Agriculture;
- Tourism;
- Small Business; and
- Retail

### The Town of Lakeshore Economic Development Strategy at a Glance

#### **What is it?**

An economic development strategy to guide the economic growth of the Town of Lakeshore over the next five years.

#### **Why was it prepared?**

The Town of Lakeshore needs a strategy to optimize its future economic growth.

#### **How will it help?**

The strategy will provide a commonly accepted direction, focus, and framework for decision-making by key stakeholders and local governments.

#### **Who prepared it?**

The firms of GHK International (Canada) Ltd. and McSweeney & Associates provided a participatory framework to enable over 100 community stakeholders and the Steering Committee to shape the development of the economic development strategy.

#### **When was it completed?**

It was completed in July 2006.

#### **Who will implement it?**

The Town of Lakeshore Council and other key business and community stakeholders will work collaboratively to implement the strategy.

#### **Who will benefit?**

Everyone who lives and/or works in the Town of Lakeshore.

#### **Where to get more information?**

David Genik, Manager Economic Development Services, the Town of Lakeshore.

#### **Process Followed**

The following page presents the process followed in graphic form.

Town of Lakeshore Economic  
Development Strategy Process



## An Economic Vision for the Town of Lakeshore

The stakeholders of the Town of Lakeshore see their future as having excellent infrastructure and services in place to support the continuous growth of a diverse, economically and an environmentally sustainable business sector. The Town of Lakeshore has achieved this by implementing strategies and mechanisms that allow it to meet the ever-changing needs of a range of small, medium and large sized businesses by providing the conditions under which business success can be achieved. The Town has a highly flexible and responsive bureaucracy that cooperates fully with surrounding municipalities and works with the Windsor-Essex Region to work towards goals common to all regional stakeholders.

Manufacturing in the Town of Lakeshore has diversified. While the automotive industry is still important, the Town of Lakeshore's efforts have contributed significantly to regional efforts to move towards the higher value added end of the automotive production chain and to diversify the manufacturing base more generally. In addition to the Town becoming a main centre for the design and production of advanced automotive systems, it has become a leader in key new clusters in plastics, pharmaceuticals and agriculturally-related manufacturing processes. This advantage is supported by local knowledge, creativity, research and development and particularly through mutual support and sharing of best practices within the local manufacturing community.

The Town of Lakeshore has an identifiable downtown area in Belle River offering a range of general and unique retail and commercial experiences. At the same time, several retail/commercial nodes have developed at key locations throughout the Town providing services to local residents and a growing tourist trade. The Town of Lakeshore has reconnected with its waterfront.

Agriculture has taken off again in the Town of Lakeshore. The success of a multi-faceted agricultural economic development strategy marked by the continuation of traditional agriculture along with the development of new manufacturing processes related to agricultural production built on the cooperation of local farmers, educational

institutions and other private investors has seen the Town of Lakeshore become a leader in the production of 'bio-related products'.



## The Purpose of the Town of Lakeshore Economic Development Strategy

The Town of Lakeshore approved the creation of an economic development function in 2005. At the highest level, the economic development strategy is designed to help in generating sustainable growth and to align the aspirations of stakeholders towards achieving this goal. On the one hand, this necessarily means recognizing that its goals and vision are compatible with those of surrounding municipalities and the Windsor-Essex Region. On the other, it means the need to provide the infrastructure and employment lands that will allow the Town to achieve its own goals and vision. Within this context, the objective of this economic development strategy is to develop the positioning for the Town of Lakeshore marketing directions, which will increase opportunities for the growth of existing businesses, the establishment and attraction of new enterprises, to increase employment opportunities, and to maintain and improve the quality of life for all residents.

The objectives of the strategy will be achieved by the seizing of strategic regional opportunities and the implementation of the actions proposed in this document.

## The Current Situation

How we arrived here...

Economic Development is a new function at the Town of Lakeshore, having been established in the summer of 2005. The primary roles for the Town's economic development department are to:

1. Develop a profile of the local economy and local businesses
2. Development and Implementation of Marketing Strategy and creating an identity for the Town;
3. Define and assess business development and attraction opportunities and implement programs to support business retention and expansion
4. Influence the economic related decisions of other levels of government
5. Coordinate and organize joint projects;
6. Open channels of communication for business and the area municipalities to develop joint approaches and share best practices.

In December of 2005, Council approved of the preparation of an overall economic development strategy. A steering committee was formed at that time to provide direction in the development of the strategy. Consultants were then engaged to facilitate the development a community based economic development strategy.

A few strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats...

There are several positive features possessed by the Town of Lakeshore including superb access to major US markets, a location on Lake St. Clair, a skilled manufacturing labour force, relatively inexpensive land and a superior quality of life. The desirability of the area is reflected in its growing population.

Opportunities for the Town of Lakeshore to build upon include developing synergies in the

pharmaceuticals, plastics, automotive, agricultural, warehousing and logistics clusters, the availability of land for industrial development and the creation of an identifiable downtown for the Town.

The Town does have some weaknesses however, including congestion on County Road 22, lack of public access to the waterfront, lack of a tourism destination, and overdependence on the auto industry and the presence of land use conflicts.

Some threats the Town faces include the rising Canadian dollar, global competition and the loss (or significant decline) of any one of the Big 3 auto makers.

Factors to build upon...

There are a number of factors that the Town of Lakeshore can build upon to ensure a positive future for its residents. These include:

- Population increased higher than the provincial rate between 1996 and 2001 (10% versus 6.1 % respectively)
- 2006 household incomes were 24% higher the Lakeshore than in the province as a whole
- Town of Lakeshore residents receive less income on average from government transfers (i.e. welfare, employment insurance etc) than Ontario residents as a whole
- There was a higher rate of job growth in Lakeshore (48%) than in Ontario (10%) over the 1996-2001 period

A look at the local economy

The Town of Lakeshore consists of both rural and urban areas and makes up a significant portion of the Windsor-Essex region. Between 1996 and 2001, the population of the Town increased by 10% reaching 26, 127. Current estimates have the population at around 34,000.

The Town's population is slightly younger than the Ontario average and it experienced job growth of 48% between 1996 and 2001. In addition, the

average income of households in the Town is significantly above the provincial average.

### Employment Profile

The manufacturing sector provided the greatest number of jobs in 2001 (3025) and was more concentrated in the Town than either Ontario or Canada. Within the manufacturing sector there are a number of dominant major employment groups, amongst them:

- Fabricated metal products industries employing 520 people;
- Transportation equipment manufacturing employing 2230 people; and
- Machinery industries employing 100 people.

Other concentrations of employment are evident in:

- Agriculture – 500
- Construction – 475
- Retail – 760
- Transportation and storage – 290
- Education - 405

### Employment Growth 1996-2001

As mentioned above, there was a 48% increase in the number of jobs in Lakeshore between 1996 and 2001. The largest employment gains were experienced in:

- Manufacturing - +2100
- Retail trade - +145
- Business services - +100
- Communication and other utilities - + 90
- Construction – +85 jobs

Within manufacturing, the largest increase in employment occurred in:

- Transportation equipment
- Chemical and chemical products
- Plastics products
- Electrical and electronic equipment

Employment losses did, however, occur in:

- Agriculture
- Health and social services
- Wholesale trade
- Government

### Labour Force

While the 2001 census indicates that there were 7350 jobs in the Town of Lakeshore, the employed labour force (number of employees who live in Lakeshore) totalled 14,885. In other words, the Town is net exporter 7,535 employees. The labour force mobility analysis conducted as part of the “Situational Analysis” suggest the following:

- there are less jobs in Lakeshore than there are employed workers
- large numbers of people living in Lakeshore and working in manufacturing, health and social services and retail trade have employment outside of Lakeshore
- many people also leave Lakeshore to work in construction, transportation and storage, communications and other utilities, wholesale trade, finance and insurance, business services, government services, educational services, accommodation, food and beverages and other services



## Assessment of Economic Foundations

There are several foundation elements upon which all economic activities depend if they are to be efficient and competitive. The Town of Lakeshore economic environment will be less than ideal, and will inhibit or restrict economic growth if there are one or more foundation elements with weaknesses. Weaknesses in the foundation elements suggest an area of potential economic development activity in the economic development strategic plan.

Strengths in a particular foundation element would suggest that there might be specific business types that would find it very desirable to locate in the Town of Lakeshore. For example, it is common to find a limited number of cities (or more often one city) within a country that is the financial centre for the nation. In that city, the financial centre often acts as an “engine of growth”, to which related businesses will be attracted and/or grow.

The Town of Lakeshore foundation elements were assessed through key stakeholder interviews, supplemented by the professional assessment of the consultant. Following is a description of how the foundations were assessed.

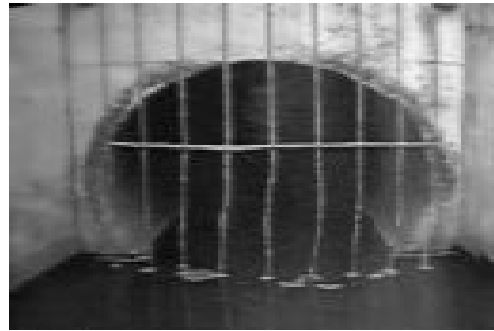
**Infrastructure:** The availability of land zoned for commercial and industrial uses is a constraint in the Town of Lakeshore. The Town of Lakeshore is fortunate to have an inventory of fully serviced industrial land adjacent to the Patillo Road Corridor, with good access to markets via County Road 22 and County Road 42. These lands are however, currently confronted with issues of traffic congestion and land use conflicts arising as a consequence of encroaching residential uses. Improvements to County Road 22 and County Road 42 are, however being planned. In the future the 401 corridor will offer appropriate sites for further industrial development. Commercially zoned land is located in variety of locations making the development of a coherent commercial area difficult. The 401 corridor presents opportunities for future industrial and commercial development but remains un-serviced at this time.

Until recently, the availability and stability of the power supply has been an issue. These problems have recently been resolved. High speed internet access is available throughout Windsor and Essex County including the Town of Lakeshore.

**Human Resources:** The availability of skilled labour was generally not perceived to be a problem

in the county or for the Town of Lakeshore. On the other hand, with recent high levels of immigration to the area, transitioning immigrants into the labour force is perceived to be problematic.

**Financial Capital:** Access to capital was not perceived to be a problem although perceptions of investment risk are high for the area amongst the banking community.



## A Vision for the Town of Lakeshore

The challenge for the Town of Lakeshore is to take decisive strategic actions to build on its strengths, exploit its opportunities, and to mitigate against the weaknesses and threats it faces.

In the summer of 2005, a Steering Committee was created to assist the Manager of Economic Development Services in the preparation of an economic development strategy. A contract to prepare the strategy was awarded to GHK International and McSweeney & Associates in February 2006.

To begin, a thorough analysis of the Town of Lakeshore economy and a review of economic development related Lakeshore documentation was conducted. A companion document "A Situational Analysis Report of the Town of Lakeshore" provides a comprehensive statistical analysis of the economic situation in the Town using the most up to date data available.

The preparation of the Town's Economic Development Strategy was rooted however, in broad stakeholder involvement. There were a number of stages at which stakeholders were engaged and their inputs sought:

1. Interviews;
2. Focus group sessions; and
3. Summit;
4. Review of the draft strategy and the setting of priorities.

### Face-to-Face Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with a variety of stakeholders from throughout the Town of Lakeshore and Windsor and Essex County. The purpose of the interviews was to acquire information on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In all 16 interviews were conducted with stakeholders from, municipal government, local chambers of commerce, private businesses and representatives of the agricultural

sector. Table 1 identifies the interviewees and their affiliations.

**Table 1 Interviewees**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization/Affiliation</b>
Roy Fritz	Brahm Industries
Professor William Crosby	Head of Biology Department, University of Windsor
Don Marsh	Windsor District Chamber of Commerce
Tony Rosati	Rosati Construction
Jenny Coco	Coco Group
Jim Lyons	Windsor Construction Association
Roman Dzus	Windsor-Essex County Commission
Robert Tuomi	Windsor-Essex County Commission
Nancy Creighton	Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
Janet Jones	Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation
Barb Burgess	Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Brad Hedderson	Quality Safety Systems
Dale Martin	Caps Canada
Bill Darmon	RPPN Inc
Rob Toyne	FlexNGate
Don Hearn	ThyssenKrupp

In general, interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour. A semi-structured interview approach was used to elicit views as to the overall strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Town and its economy.

### Focus Groups

In addition to the one-on-one interviews, a series of focus groups were held with small groups of stakeholders representing key sectors of the economy of the Town. The sectors for which focus group sessions were held included:

1. Manufacturing;
2. Agriculture;
3. Tourism;
4. Commercial Sector

In these sessions, a preliminary SWOT analysis based on the information received during the interviews was presented to each group and feedback and additional comments were requested from each group. The result of the sessions was a refined SWOT analysis that was then used to identify possible themes for which vision, goals and actions would be sought in a broader stakeholder summit.

### **The Summit**

Stakeholders from across the Town of Lakeshore were invited to attend a one-day summit to hear the results of the analysis completed to date and more importantly to participate in the development of vision, goals and actions for several key theme areas. The Summit was held on June 15, 2006 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Emeryville and was attended by more than 50 stakeholders representing a broad cross section of interests.

Much of the morning was devoted to presenting the results of the situational analysis as well as the refined SWOT which emerged out of the focus group sessions. There was considerable and lively discussion on a variety of points leading to an agreement on the themes for which vision, goals and actions was sought during a facilitated session held in the afternoon.



### **Strategic themes that emerged...**

The key themes that emerged at the summit build upon the current competitive strengths of the Town of Lakeshore. The competitive strengths and themes that were agreed upon include:

- Manufacturing;
- Agriculture;
- Tourism;
- Small Business;
- Retail

In the afternoon session, Summit participants moved into smaller groups. The groups were then asked to focus discussion on developing a vision, goals, and actions to achieve them, for one of the key theme areas. Once this discussion was completed, each group reported back to the Summit at large as to the results of the discussion.

## Building on the Competitive Strengths of the Town of Lakeshore

This strategy has developed through broad stakeholder consultation and rigorous economic analysis. It will guide the Town's economic development efforts in the years to come. This section of the report outlines a vision and actions for five key theme areas to which the Town will direct its economic development efforts. These theme areas were determined through the consultation process.

The following sections of the strategy build on the strengths of the Town of Lakeshore and generally outline the current situation of each theme area as well as a desired future state. Recommendations and actions to achieve the desired state are also provided.

### Manufacturing

The greatest number of jobs in the Town of Lakeshore are in the manufacturing sector (3025) representing a higher concentration relative to the entire labour force that either the province of Ontario or Canada as a whole.

In total, manufacturing experienced an increase of 2900 jobs between 1996 and 2001. Based on the shift-share analysis provide in the "Situational Analysis", the growth in manufacturing jobs can be attributed was greater than what can be attributed to the growth of the national economy and industry growth and therefore the vast majority of the growth in manufacturing jobs can be attributed to the growth of the Town of Lakeshore itself.

Again, the main contributors to this growth were:

- Transportation equipment
- Chemicals and chemical products
- Plastics products
- Electrical and electronic products



### Desirable Future State

The Town of Lakeshore has fully provided for the medium to long term infrastructure and services needs of its manufacturing base in a manner that supports the continuous growth of a diverse an economically sustainable manufacturing sector. The Town has achieved this through its cooperative and flexible approach to meeting the needs of a broad range of manufacturers both large and small. The Town has done this by:

- Ensuring a sufficient supply of 'ready to build' industrial land
- Ensuring a rationale pattern of land consumption focussed on already serviced land while being mindful of potential land use conflicts and through the provision of additional serviced land at strategic locations along the 401 corridor in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of competing land uses, especially agriculture

The Town' manufacturing base leads the region in terms of its diversity. It has become a leader in high value added manufacturing of auto parts and systems. At the same time, key clusters in pharmaceuticals, plastics and biotechnology have emerged. Finally, a cross-over has occurred in agriculture. Partnerships, mutual support and the sharing of best practices between the agricultural community, educational institutions and the private sector have generated a lead role for the Town in the production of agriculturally based manufactured products.



## Agriculture

### Desirable Future State

Prime agricultural land will have been preserved. The Town has an economically viable agricultural sector which has been achieved through diversification of income sources, new income sources from agricultural and farm property usage (particularly on less productive soils), and through the production of ecological goods and services (e.g. wind, bio-diesel, agri-tourism).

The general public and local residents in particular, will have a better appreciation of the importance of agriculture. This is made possible by consumer education, school education, the promotion of new industries emerging in the agriculture sector such as bio-fuels and organic produce and effective marketing of local product. A more holistic use of agricultural lands during the shoulder seasons is developed, allowing other non-agricultural activities to develop in tandem with this sector. Traditional agriculture will continue and be profitable but products will be more diversified and serve local and specialty (e.g. ethnic, organic) markets.

There will be a year round market to sell local produce to local residents. At the same time, farmers, working with local educational institutions and the private sector will have become partners in the development of bio-technology products, the green revolution and custom agriculture and the Town is known as being at the fore front of high value added agricultural production in North America. The farming community, along with the Town and educational institutions will be educating the public about healthy foods and alternative uses of agricultural products. They are key partners in the research and development of these high value added products.



## Tourism

### Desirable Future State

The coordinated efforts of the Town of Lakeshore, the Windsor-Essex Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island, and the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation have resulted in the opening up the Lake St. Clair waterfront for public use. Beaches have been beautified and they are the site of a variety of annual events including dragon boat racing and off-shore boat racing.

There are a variety of accommodation options for visitors to the Town and year round activities that they can enjoy. Agri-tourism has become a big attractor of visitors to the area.



## Small Business

### Desirable Future State

The Town of Lakeshore has a vibrant small business community located in key locations throughout the Town. The Town has ensured that key infrastructure is in place to create an environment in which small business can be creative and successful.

Communication channels between small business, the Town, the private sector and other levels of government are open and support the continued development of small business.

Key areas for the development of small business have been identified and a successful marketing strategy to attract and support small business is in place.

## Retail

### Desirable Future State

The Town's goal of allowing residents to meet all of their retail needs within Lakeshore has been met. An identifiable downtown located in Belle River has been established and is home to a variety of stores providing a wide range of high, medium and low order goods and services. It combines cultural, entertainment and retail experiences. There are no empty storefronts.

Retail/commercial centres have also been established in other key locations throughout the Town and provision has been made to accommodate both small, large and big box functions at appropriate locations. Collectively, they provide for needs of the Lakeshore's residents without competition causing any adverse impacts.

Supporting the retail functions in the Town is a public transportation system providing access to the main retail/commercial centres.



## Strategic Directions and Key Priorities: The Town of Lakeshore's Way Forward

In this section, the actions emerging out of the consultation process are distilled into a doable set of priority items that will form the basis of the Town of Lakeshore's economic development efforts.

Priorities for each theme were established based on the discussions that occurred at the June 2006 Summit.

### Manufacturing Priority Recommendations

The following are the highest priority recommendations for creating the desired future state for manufacturing in the Town of Lakeshore.

1. That a subcommittee be formed that would include local manufacturing and business stakeholders and the development community to prioritize and promote the development of business related infrastructure in the Town. The mandate for the subcommittee would include developing a rational plan for the consumption of already serviced industrial land that would help mitigate against any potential land use conflicts.

*Lead:* The Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Manufacturing Subcommittee, Windsor-Essex County Development Commission

*Timeframe:* Fall 2006

2. Supporting (where viable) the development of manufacturing clusters in **plastics, pharmaceuticals, high value added auto related production, value-added agricultural production and logistics and distribution** to facilitate the diversification of the local industrial base by:
  - a. Developing cluster profiles including an assessment of local and regional buyer-supplier relationships in each cluster and identifying gaps therein which can be filled through both BR&E and

attraction efforts and with a view to preparing specific strategies and support mechanisms for each;

- b. Developing an on-going outreach and visitation program designed to meet a minimum of business contact hours to identify cluster member requirements that can be met through Economic Development Services efforts;
- c. Facilitating the development of cluster networks that will help in the formation of strong inter-firm linkages within the Town and the region and to develop partnerships and collective marketing strategies targeting each of the clusters identified for support;
- d. Evaluate best practices in cluster networks that are in place in other jurisdictions with a view to informing what elements of each would be appropriate in the context of the Town of Lakeshore (see Appendix);
- e. Organizing independent and/or participating in provincial and federal missions (Team Canada, Team Ontario) to countries in which the Town of Lakeshore's clusters are represented and which the Town may offer unique advantages for firms wishing to expand internationally. Similarly, organize familiarization tours to Windsor-Essex and Lakeshore with businesses from other counties. These could include for example:
  - i. Auto – US, Japan, Korea, Germany, UK;
  - ii. Pharmaceuticals – US, UK, Switzerland;
  - iii. Plastics – US, UK, Germany, China;

- f. Ensuring Lakeshore's presence at international trade shows focused on its key clusters.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Manufacturing Subcommittee, Windsor-Essex County Development Commission

*Timeframe:* Winter 2006

3. To evaluate the development an industrial park along the 401 corridor consisting of strategic zones where infrastructure is put in place to match the specific needs of the various occupants. A 2006 report forecasting population, employment and employment land needs prepared for the Town of Lakeshore by C.N. Watson Associates suggest that growth in industrial sector jobs (63% to 2015; 65% to 2025 and 63% to 2031) will far outstrip the growth in jobs in any other sector and could require 8.3 million ft.<sup>2</sup> of additional floor space by 2031. This necessitates a requirement for:
  - a. A regional market analysis of the local market and demand for industrial land (serviced and partially serviced land);
  - b. An estimation of the potential future industrial land consumption needs of each cluster and a determination of the services required;
  - c. A review and analysis of the regional competitive supply of industrial land;
  - d. A location analysis of the most likely sites for development along the 401;
  - e. A preliminary feasibility analysis including estimated land and servicing costs, rate of development and absorption;
  - f. Recommendations on the feasibility of developing an industrial park(s) and next steps.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Manufacturing Subcommittee, Windsor – Essex County Development Commission

*Timeframe:* Winter 2006

#### Agriculture Priority Recommendations

The following are the highest priority recommendations for creating the desired future state for agriculture in the Town of Lakeshore.

1. That a subcommittee of council be struck with the support of the Essex County Federation of Agriculture to oversee and support the implementation of agricultural policies and strategies in the Town of Lakeshore including:
  - a. Ensuring that on-farm (including non-agricultural) businesses are not discouraged or prevented;
  - b. Permitting alternative employment-generating land uses on agricultural land of poorer quality land classes (with appropriate planning controls);
  - c. Investigating agri-tourism opportunities.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Essex County Federation of Agriculture, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada Research Branch, Greenhouse and Processing Research Centre

*Timeframe:* Fall 2006

2. Through the subcommittee determine the way forward in moving towards higher value added agricultural production including evaluating opportunities and products, identifying capacity constraints and the markets.

*Lead:* Agricultural Subcommittee

*Partners:* Essex County Federation of Agriculture, University of Windsor, University of Guelph, OMAFRA



*Timeframe:* Winter 2006

3. That the Town support and assist as appropriate, the adoption of on-farm energy generation, alternative energy generation (such as from wind), and the production of ecological goods and services (bio-diesel, pelletization of switch grass). In addition, the Town will include the agricultural community in the preparation of a Town energy strategy.

*Lead:* Agricultural Subcommittee

*Partners:* Essex County Federation of Agriculture, University of Windsor, University of Guelph, OMAFRA

*Timeframe:* Winter 2006

#### Tourism Priority Recommendations

The following are the highest priority recommendations for creating the desired future state for tourism in the Town of Lakeshore.

1. To develop a tourism strategy that would:
  - a. Identify the Town of Lakeshore's tourism assets;
  - b. Identify target segments such as agri-tourism, water-tourism, arts/culture/heritage tourism;
  - c. Identify the profiles of consumers (age, incomes, lifestyle, family status, degree of physical activity desired) of each segment to be targeted;
  - d. Identify tourism product development requirements (identify and plan to improve sub-par or needed assets, such as the need for accommodation and restaurants);
  - e. Identify product management requirements (how to use current and future assets/resources to their fullest capacity, integration of tourism product offerings);

- f. Make recommendations on planning and implementing a tourism destination marketing program with very strong consideration being given to jointly working with surrounding communities and other partners mentioned below to market the area as a tourism destination, as well as creating a mechanism for leveraging resources.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island, Ministry of Tourism

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

2. To expand agri-tourism by identifying current and potential agri-tourism businesses and to provide the regulatory framework to allow the growth of agri-tourism to occur.

*Lead:* Tourism Subcommittee

*Partners:* Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island, Ministry of Tourism, Agriculture Subcommittee

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

3. Consider a destination marketing program such as Northumberland County's "Rural Ramble" (<http://www.ruralramblefarmtour.com>) or Alberta's "Country Soul Stroll" (<http://www.countrysoulstroll.ca>) or Ottawa's Countryside (<http://www.ottawascountryside.ca>) after completion of the preceding action plan.

*Lead:* Tourism Subcommittee

*Partners:* Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island, Ministry of Tourism

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

### Small Business Priority Recommendations

The following are the highest priority recommendations for creating the desired future state for small business in the Town of Lakeshore

1. That an advisory group be formed to manage and ensure resources are adequately devoted to the management and promotion small business in the Town of Lakeshore.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partner:* Belle River BIA, Windsor-Essex County Development Commission

*Timeframe:* Winter 2006

2. In conjunction with the manufacturing sector subcommittee, promote and prioritize the implementation of infrastructure and services specific to the small business community.

*Lead:* Small Business Advisory Group

*Partners:* Belle River BIA, Windsor-Essex County Development Commission, Manufacturing Subcommittee

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

3. That the Windsor-Essex Community Futures Development Corporation and the Windsor-Essex County Development Commission, in cooperation with manufacturing sub-committee investigate the possibility of establishing a business incubator in the Town of Lakeshore.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Windsor-Essex CFDC, Windsor-Essex County Development Commission

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

### Retail Priority Recommendations

The following are the highest priority recommendations for creating the desired future state for retail in the Town of Lakeshore.

1. To determine the possibilities under Section 28 of the Planning Act of making use of a Community Improvement Plan to help in the creation of an identifiable downtown for Lakeshore in Belle River.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* None

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

2. To develop a comprehensive retail strategy for the Town of Lakeshore that would consider the requirements for developing the Belle River downtown and the development of key retail/commercial nodes located at key locations throughout the Town.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* Belle River BIA, Retailers

*Timeframe:* Spring 2007

3. Determine the feasibility of providing public transportation to support the on-going development of a new retail structure for the Town.

*Lead:* Town of Lakeshore

*Partners:* None

*Timeframe:* Summer 2007

## Action Implementation Matrices

### Manufacturing

Strategy	Action	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Partners	Resources Required	Responsibility for Follow-through	Timeline
<b>Establishment of Manufacturing Sub-committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish committee</li> <li>Prepare plan for consumption of current industrially zoned land</li> <li>Priority setting for infrastructure provision</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufacturers</li> <li>Development community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufacturing Subcommittee</li> <li>Windsor Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	Low	Economic Development Services	Immediate
<b>Support the Development of Key Economic Clusters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Cluster Networks</li> <li>Plastics</li> <li>Pharmaceuticals</li> <li>Auto</li> <li>Agriculture</li> <li>Logistics and Distribution</li> <li>Develop BRE strategy for clusters</li> <li>Develop business plan for cluster networks and BRE strategy</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic development services</li> <li>Cluster members</li> <li>Windsor-Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufacturing Subcommittee</li> <li>Windsor Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	Medium	Economic Development Services	Immediate
<b>Evaluation of the Potential for Development of a Regionally Significant Industrial Park Along 401</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate establishment of strategic zones based on BR&amp;E focus</li> <li>Identify specific infrastructure needs of BR&amp;E focus firms</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufacturing Sub-committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufacturing Subcommittee</li> <li>Windsor Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	Medium	Manufacturing Subcommittee	6 months

### Action Implementation Matrix – Agriculture

Strategy	Action	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Partners	Resources Required	Responsibility for Follow-through	Timeline
<b>Establish Agriculture Sub-committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee and support implementation of Ag policies &amp; strategies</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural Community</li> <li>Agriculture Industry Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essex County Federation of Agriculture</li> <li>Agriculture and Agri-food Canada Research Branch, Greenhouse and Processing Research Centre</li> </ul>	Low	Economic Development Services	Immediate
<b>Develop way forward higher value added agriculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate opportunities and products</li> <li>Identify potential markets</li> <li>Identify constraints</li> </ul>	Agriculture Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture Subcommittee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essex County Federation of Agriculture</li> <li>University of Windsor</li> <li>University of Guelph</li> <li>OMAFRA</li> </ul>	Medium	Agriculture Subcommittee	Immediate
<b>Support the adoption of on-farm energy generation technologies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowances for wind farms</li> <li>Allowance of alternative uses of farm lands for production of ecological goods and services</li> </ul>	Agriculture Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture Subcommittee</li> <li>Agricultural Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essex County Federation of Agriculture</li> <li>University of Windsor</li> <li>University of Guelph</li> <li>OMAFRA</li> </ul>	Medium	Agriculture Subcommittee	Immediate

## Action Implementation Matrix – Tourism

Strategy	Action	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Partners	Resources Required	Responsibility for Follow-through	Timeline
<b>Develop a Tourism Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify tourism assets</li> <li>Identify target segments</li> <li>Prepare consumer profile</li> <li>Identify tourism product development requirements</li> <li>Identify product management requirements</li> <li>Make recommendations of tourism destination marketing program</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Lakeshore</li> <li>Economic Development Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island</li> <li>Ministry of Tourism</li> </ul>	Medium	Tourism Services	12 Months
<b>Expand Agri-tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify current and potential agri-tourism businesses</li> <li>Provide regulatory framework to allow agri-tourism to expand</li> </ul>	Tourism Sub-Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Lakeshore</li> <li>Economic Development Services</li> <li>Ministry of Tourism</li> <li>Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island</li> <li>Ministry of Tourism</li> <li>Agriculture Sub-Committee</li> </ul>	High	Tourism Services	18 Months
<b>Review Destination Marketing Programs of Other Jurisdictions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northumberland County Rural Ramble;</li> <li>Alberta Country Soul Stroll</li> </ul>	Tourism Sub-Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town of Lakeshore</li> <li>Economic Development Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and</li> </ul>	High	Tourism Services	18 Months

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Tourism</li> <li>• Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor, Essex County and Pelee Island</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pelee Island Ministry of Tourism</li> </ul>			
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### Action Implementation Matrix – Small Business

Strategy	Actions	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Partners	Resources Required	Responsibility for Follow-through	Timeline
<b>Formation of Advisory Group for Small Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure resources are adequately devoted to support of small business</i></li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory Group</li> <li>• Windsor-Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belle River BIA</li> <li>• Windsor Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	Low	Advisory Group	12 months
<b>Identify infrastructure needs of small business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Prioritize needs of small business</i></li> <li>• <i>Promote needs of small business</i></li> </ul>	Small Business Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory Group</li> <li>• Manufacturing Sub-committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belle River BIA</li> <li>• Windsor Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	Medium	Advisory Group	18 Months
<b>Investigate Establishment of Small Business Incubator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish operating parameters</i></li> <li>• <i>Prepare business plan</i></li> <li>• <i>Evaluate funding options</i></li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windsor-Essex Community Futures Corporation</li> <li>• Windsor-Essex County Development Commission</li> <li>• Manufacturing Sub-committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belle River BIA</li> <li>• Windsor Essex County Development Commission</li> </ul>	Medium	Advisory Group	18 Months

### Action Implementation Matrix – Retail

Strategy	Action	Lead	Key Stakeholders	Partners	Resources Required	Responsibility for Follow-through	Timeline
<b>Identifiable Downtown in Belle River</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate possibilities of developing a Community Improvement Plan under Section 28 of the Planning Act</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Department</li> <li>Economic Development Services</li> <li>Department of Strategic Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> <li>Belle River BIA</li> </ul>	High	Economic Development Services	18 Months
<b>Develop Comprehensive Retail Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail Strategy for Downtown and additional nodes throughout the Town</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Department</li> <li>Economic Development Services</li> <li>Belle River BIA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retailers</li> </ul>	High	Economic Development Services	18 Months
<b>Public Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine feasibility of providing public transportation to support retail development</li> </ul>	Town of Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Department</li> <li>Public Works</li> <li>Department of Strategic Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	High	Department of Strategic Services	24 Months



## Additional Action Items

This section contains additional recommendations developed for each theme area, and are meant to complement and support the development of each theme. The highest priority recommendations for creating the desired future state for each theme may be found in the body of the strategy under “Achieving the Vision” and are meant to be undertaken in the short term i.e. within the next three years. The actions below represent those that should begin in the medium to long term.

### Manufacturing

#### Industrial Land Supply:

- Develop an industrial land inventory that is a regionally significant asset and which provides attractive locational options for firms considering locating in Windsor-Essex.

#### Infrastructure Development:

- The manufacturing subcommittee is to confirm and prioritize the importance of each infrastructure improvement outlined in the desired future state/vision for manufacturing.

#### Support for the Development of the Manufacturing Sector:

The Town of Lakeshore will provide support for the development of the manufacturing sector on a number of fronts. The support should be implemented through on-going cooperation with the Windsor-Essex County Development Commission.

That the Town implement a program of cooperation to include:

- Communicating the importance of the contribution of manufacturing to the local economy;
- Informal opportunities for relationship building and information exchange within the local manufacturing community;
- Developing strong relations between the manufacturing community and local educational institutions;

- Conduct Ontario Plant Tours ([www.plantvisits.com](http://www.plantvisits.com)), showcasing business excellence in manufacturing through a series of interactive factory visits. Working together with industry, government and economic development, plant tours improve the competitiveness and strength of communities by demonstrating models that work;
- Explore the possibility of developing a working partnership program between the University of Windsor, St. Clair College and other relevant educational institutions, and the Lakeshore manufacturing community to provide:
  - Scientifically challenging, industrially relevant research and development in manufacturing processes thereby providing opportunities to discover new advanced manufacturing process improvements;
  - Cooperative educational opportunities that will match the changing skills requirements of Lakeshore employers,

### Agriculture

#### Diversification of Agricultural Income and Products:

- That the Town support the development of agri-tourism related businesses.
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a local farmers' market, and provide support its establishment if feasible;
- Assist the agricultural community in developing a brand for Lakeshore produced agricultural products including a marketing plan with a particular emphasis on developing a year round local market for local residents as well as helping to determine how access to niche markets (i.e. ethnic, organic etc) is best achieved.
- Provide information on changing consumer preferences with respect to nutrition, foods, and food production (such as growth in organic or specialty product demand);
- Identify the potential for a food distribution centre ;

- Establish relationships with the University of Windsor, St. Clair College and the University of Guelph to help the agricultural community identify research projects of relevance to the agricultural community;
- Provide assistance in the identification of test sites for the production of new agricultural products.

#### Tourism

- To create & promote a broad range of tourism products, reflecting the natural assets, businesses & cultural events in the Town of Lakeshore;
- To develop effective partnerships with the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor; Essex County and Pelee Island.
- To explore options for creating a close to waterfront trail along CN line;
- Partnerships: Contract with Ministry of Tourism and the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Windsor; Essex County and Pelee Island to develop a partnership strategy for tourism with each partner identifying the products & services which they wish to be promoted by the 'partnership;'
- Develop a comprehensive promotional plan, identifying key vehicles for delivering the Town's tourism message.

#### Small Business

##### **Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support Services:**

- Document all services currently available from various sources to identify any overlaps and gaps in services to entrepreneurs and small businesses;
- Eliminate any duplication of services and attempt to fill any gaps;

- Recruit current and past business owners for a mentorship program.

##### **Business Incubator:**

- Should the initial investigation into a business accelerator indicate positive support for an incubator, the Town should prepare and seek approval of an incubator business plan which would:
  - a. Address all of the issues related to starting and operating an incubator;
  - b. Include a core group of leaders willing to champion the vision.
  - c. Address funding opportunities, such as Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's "Self-Employment Benefits" program;
  - d. Recommend the building/conversion of an appropriate building to house the incubator;
  - e. Establish a core group of business mentors.

##### **Business Financial Services and Support:**

Provide services to small business to:

- Evaluate if there are weaknesses or missing elements in business plans being prepared for investment capital;
- Determine if existing equity is viewed by potential investors as insufficient relative to investment required;
- To assist with the identification of potential investors, and to facilitate/screen business plans for potential investors;
- Effectively communicate the existence of financial resources/services and how and where to access them;
- Attempt to communicate and influence financial institutions with respect the fact that small businesses in small communities are not inherently a bad risk.

## Retail

- As key new retail nodes emerge, work with local businesses to establish Business Improvement Areas;
- Evaluate opportunities for the development of retail along the North Shore and side streets including marinas, tourism related retail, recreational services, entertainment, restaurants and hotels.

## Next Steps

The actions outlined in this report are a clarion call to the Town of Lakeshore and its stakeholders from throughout the area to move forward to guarantee a positive future for the Town and its residents. The Town will need to act as leader, facilitator and partner in this endeavour and with the assistance and participation of its stakeholders, this future can be achieved.

In addition to the actions described above, the Town of Lakeshore must determine the means by which it can keep on top of trends in the key clusters it has chosen as a focus for its economic development initiatives. This imperative, along with the significant work program that this strategy embodies will require an assessment of the resources that are currently available for economic development in the Town to determine if they are sufficient to meet the requirements of the goals laid out by the stakeholders consulted.

In order to measure the performance of meeting the goals of the strategy, the Town of Lakeshore will also need to develop a scorecard to monitor achievements on an on-going basis. Economic Development Services should prepare the scorecard in conjunction with the short and medium terms of Council with respect to the economic development of the Town of Lakeshore.

The effort required to successfully implement the strategy outlined above is significant. In this context, it will be important to determine whether existing resources (budget, staffing) allocated to economic development activities in the Town of Lakeshore are sufficient.

## APPENDIX Cluster Network Best Practices

### Society of Plastics Industry

Founded in 1937, The Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc., is the trade association representing one of the largest manufacturing industries in the United States. SPI's members represent the entire plastics industry supply chain, including processors, machinery and equipment manufacturers and raw materials suppliers. The U.S. plastics industry employs 1.3 million workers and provides more than \$345 billion in annual shipments.

### Communitech

Located in Waterloo, Ontario, Communitech is a not for profit, member supported organization that is recognized as the voice of the industry for Canada's Technology Triangle. Partnerships and collaboration are the key to all Communitech activities. Communitech brings together the initiatives and people needed for continued development of critical mass for the technology industry and the creation of a superior quality of life in the region.

Since its inception in 1997, the Association has grown to include industry leaders such as Open Text Corporation, Descartes Systems, Research In Motion, Bell Canada, and IBM Canada. Membership is diverse with representatives from almost every technology category including software developers, system integrators, telecommunications companies, internet companies, ISP's, ASP's, content developers, advanced manufacturers, and professional service companies of every sector.

As the primary hub of all initiatives and issues of concern for the area's technology industry, Communitech works diligently to remain focused on the issues that have an impact on the continued development of critical mass within the technology community of Canada's Technology Triangle

### Automation Alley

Automation Alley is a technology cluster based in Oakland County, Michigan, USA. People who work in Automation Alley and live in Oakland County,

enjoy a low cost of living, competitive wages as well as quality of life second to none. Automation Alley companies have created an exceptional business climate that promotes productivity, innovation and new business growth.

The Automation Alley Consortium is an energetic alliance of private businesses dedicated to strengthening the economic base of Oakland County and its immediate area of influence by developing and promoting Oakland County's first-class technology cluster. Our membership is made up of diverse high-technology companies from a variety of industries, including:

- computer software/hardware and information systems
- telecommunications;
- consumer products;
- industrial processes;
- automotive suppliers;
- automotive R & D;
- design and engineering;
- health care; and
- diversified (non-automotive) manufacturers and more.

The Automation Alley Consortium was established to develop programs to support members in their efforts to attract world-class, high technology workers to Oakland County. Working with government agencies, the Consortium is turning Oakland County into an internationally recognized economic powerhouse. Automation Alley's 1,800 progressive businesses compete head-to-head and brain-to-brain with national powerhouses such as California's Silicon Valley and Boston's Route 128 for the world's best employment prospects. But Oakland County's distinct advantages - including high salaries, lower-than-average cost of living, low unemployment and unparalleled natural beauty - make it increasingly more attractive than many of the country's popular high-tech areas.

Membership in Automation Alley Consortium is an investment. Members benefit not only from

increased advertising and marketing but also by helping shape the future of the organization. In the process, they help define Oakland County's long-range plans for attracting high-tech talent and new business entities to the area. Members have the opportunity to say and do something about the Consortium, the County and ultimately their own prosperity.

### **The Pittsburg Technology Council**

Since 1983, the Pittsburgh Technology Council has been the principal point of connection for companies from four primary clusters of the technology industry that are represented by a critical mass of businesses in south-western Pennsylvania:

- Information Technology;
- BioMedical Technology;
- Advanced Manufacturing/Materials; and
- Environmental Technology.

The Council help the region's technology companies grow and thrive by offering

- opportunities for meeting business contacts;
- guidance on business development;
- exclusive discounts on business products and services;
- workforce placement and development initiatives;
- knowledge-sharing forums, educational programming, and entrepreneur mentoring programs;
- TEQ and PA Manufacturer magazines, covering regional business developments, trends, and best practices;
- industry advocacy in state and federal government; and
- promotional opportunities.

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