

Project Title: Next Generation Manufacturing - Developing the Capacity of the Sector in Burlington

Project objectives

Today's economy is witness to a global paradigm shift. With the media reporting record job losses throughout Canada in the manufacturing sector in the last 5 years, Ontario is certainly feeling the most strain due to the high number of traditional manufacturing companies in the Province.

The Ontario Government recognizes the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area (including Burlington) as one of the main manufacturing-focused areas, therefore being impacted the hardest by the ongoing decline of the traditional industries.

Over the last number of years, however, Ontario has also seen the emergence of the advanced manufacturing sector. This sector involves new manufacturing techniques combining information technology, microelectronics, customized product design and enhanced process development. This new area of manufacturing engages research, innovation, technology and engineering and can lead to cost reduction and productivity enhancements.

The ongoing growth of the manufacturing sector will require a new mindset as the global economy adjusts to new ways of doing business.

While at this time no-one can predict with certainty what the new economy will look like, there are some trends that will have a strong influence on its direction. Collaboration, within and between companies, will become more important as companies seek to innovate and respond. The need for all manufacturers to continually improve productivity and output quality as a competitive advantage will require an increasing fusion across sectors and work disciplines. The integration of production and support services will continue as companies need to respond to customer needs and demands. These trends imply an increasing demand for individuals that work in, support and direct increasing complex and international operations.

The shift in the manufacturing sector presents different challenges to the local Burlington marketplace. With a diverse business base, Burlington is fortunate not to be faced with a crisis situation – but we are, however, faced with a challenge.

The goal of this pilot project is to collaborate with manufacturers to identify the new business models for the manufacturing sector, both traditional and emerging firms; investigate short and long-term workforce requirements; develop an action plan to support the economic growth of this sector in the community; and identify specific projects that will assist the sector to engage in next generation business practices.

The objectives of the pilot project are to:

- Undertake a detailed assessment, including an economic profile and SWOT analysis, of the existing manufacturing sector and labour force in the community; giving consideration to the traditional and emerging advanced manufacturing sectors. This meets with the LMP activities supporting the process of forecasting and planning for human resource needs.
- Build a vision for the future of the manufacturing sector in Burlington.
- Investigate the education and training implications of the future manufacturing workforce – including general business skills, industry specific skills and soft skills training
- Identify options for building synergies between collaborative networks, including post-secondary and research institutions. This type of activity will allow BEDC to sustain the strength of the manufacturing sector in Burlington through anticipated training needs – thus aligned with the LMP eligible activities.
- Identify linkages to the existing business base and collaborative project opportunities
- Look at ways to encourage innovation and new product development within the existing business base
- Engage industry experts and conduct diagnostic research on new, innovative, ways of working for the manufacturing sector (i.e. flexible manufacturing); meeting the LMP objective of identifying and assessing possible solutions aimed at a specific human resource requirement.
- Adhering to the LMP eligible activities, develop a strategy and action plan to prepare for future skill requirements and prevent skill shortages in the future manufacturing sector.
- Identify any workplace training programs or projects that will assist both the existing and future manufacturers in Burlington, looking for areas of best practice where applicable.
- Share the results of the project with other municipalities and levels of governments.

Proposed activities and timelines

The following steps are put forward as a draft workplan for the project. Consulting services will be retained through a competitive process, as needed:

Project Activities	Description	Target date
Formation of a Steering Committee	BEDC to organize	May 2009
Data collection and detailed analysis of the local manufacturing sector	Hire a project manager and external consultants to conduct research and analysis.	Completion in September 2009
Engage local business leaders of the manufacturing sector to discuss issues and opportunities for collaboration	Project manager to conduct roundtables with local business leaders.	Roundtables: June & September 2009 Completion in October 2009

Job Fair	Project Manager to work with Coop Student to develop and deliver a Job Fair; providing assistance to job seekers and workshops on the implications of the new economy.	September 2009
Internet research and company interviews on best practices, as well as community of interest networks	Project manager to conduct and oversee consultants doing online research and work in partnership with staff in carrying out company interviews.	Completion in October 2009
Preparation of a draft report on SWOT issues and vision	Draft to be completed by the Project Manager and consultants.	October 2009
Roundtable to review draft report and identify strategic directions, and training/ education actions	Roundtable to be organized and facilitated by the Project Manager, in conjunction with external consultants, to provide feedback and strategic directions on the draft report.	November 2009
Identify pilot project opportunities and partnerships	From Steering Committee, industry and labour market feedback the Project Manager, in conjunction with BEDC's Executive Director, will identify project opportunities and partnerships.	December 2009
Preparation of draft strategy and action plan	To be prepared by the Project Manager, in consultation with external consultants.	December 2009 – February 2010
Presentation of action plan to stakeholders and project participants	The Project Manager, BEDC Executive Director and Steering Committee to present findings and areas of best practice to other communities.	By March 2010
Finalize strategy and action plan	To be executed by the Project Manager for review by the Steering Committee and BEDC's Executive Director.	Early April 2010
Presentation of finding to other municipalities and levels of government	The Project Manager and BEDC Executive Director to present findings and areas of best practice to other communities.	May 2010
Project completion		May 2010

Description of the targeted participants or beneficiaries (if applicable)

Burlington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) is proposing to launch a project that addresses the transition in the manufacturing sector, and engages local companies in shaping the strategic programs for future prosperity.

The manufacturing sector represents a significant percentage of the business mix in the community, and is a strong employer in the community – with over 14,000 jobs. Manufacturing in Burlington is composed of: steel and metal fabrication, semiconductors, consumer electronics, food processing and packaging, and advanced manufacturing.

It is therefore BEDC's role to ensure the ongoing sustainability of this sector in the community, and we are looking at opportunities to support and enhance their innovation and growth capacity.

List all partner organizations, identify their roles and responsibilities

Partner	Role
10 Member Steering Committee from public, private and educational stakeholders – including those listed below.	To provide strategic direction on the training needs and education linkages for future skills supply.
BEDC staff and Board of Directors' Task Force, including the following manufacturers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadrian Manufacturing • XYZ Automation • Sound Design Technologies • Ecodyne Ltd. • Etratech Ltd. 	To provide BEDC strategic direction, as well as private sector expertise on the issues and challenges facing today's manufacturing sector.
The Centre for Skills Development & Training	Knowledge and expertise on skilled trades apprenticeships and training opportunities
Mohawk College	Linkage to educational programs for targeted market – STAART program.
DeGroote School of Business	Provide information on existing and future programs
Burlington Chamber of Commerce	Advocacy and community partners.
Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium	Program supporters and membership-based knowledge base.

Expected results

It is anticipated that the expected results derived from the *Next Generation Manufacturing: Developing the Capacity of the Sector in Burlington* project meets the OLMP's eligible activities as noted below:

LMP Eligible Activities:	BEDC: Expected Results
<p>Activities which support the process of forecasting and planning for human resource needs of an employment sector or community</p>	<p>Production of an in-depth profile of local manufacturers and their existing and future labour force requirements will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of the composition of the local economy and its challenges • Improved ability for govt. and stakeholders to plan, develop and implement policies and programs
<p>Identifying and assessing possible solutions and activities aimed at meeting human resource requirements and deciding on appropriate next steps</p> <p>Sharing of best practices related to human resource planning and management</p>	<p>A background paper of the findings from the discussion groups and interviews. This will assist in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An improved understanding of the issues and opportunities facing high value sector professionals • Identification and prioritization of possible collaboration projects • Improved capacity for local professionals to network together and with existing companies
<p>Sharing of best practices related to human resource planning and management</p>	<p>A background paper on best practices and collaborative opportunities, leading to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of emerging business models and trends • Identification of possible projects/initiatives from other jurisdictions and sectors and their results • Identification of strengths and weaknesses of collaborative networking systems
<p>Assisting a community with the development of a strategy to prepare for future skills requirements and prevent skill shortages.</p>	<p>A strategy and action plan that identifies projects for implementation, thereby identifying possible projects/ initiatives related to the use of collaborative networking systems.</p>