

Economic Development Focus Group Economic Summary and Vision for Collaboration

June 14, 2023

Outline

1. Mandate
2. Oxford overview
3. Economic analysis
4. Business environment
5. Economic development partners
6. Oxford SWOT analysis
7. Role of innovation & technology
8. Recommendations

Mandate

Whereas for the past decade, the local economy has enjoyed a period of stable growth with ultra low interest rates and inflation;

And whereas the past few months has seen a significant change in the local economic environment with higher interest rates and inflation which could potentially lead to a more unstable local economic situation;

And whereas Oxford County provides funding through their business plan and budget process to support Economic Development in Oxford County to several partners to promote healthy and sustainable economic development;

And whereas the uncertainty of the current local economic climate may require some new initiatives and adjustment as to how Oxford County and our partners address Economic Development in the future

Mandate

Therefore be it resolved that as a condition of providing grants for SCOR, Oxford Connections, The Small Business Development Centre and Community Futures Oxford as outlined in the 2023 Business Plan and Budget, that the following groups be asked to create a committee to collaborate on an overall economic development strategy to help guide our economic initiatives;

And further, that the committee be comprised of one representative from each of, the City of Woodstock Economic Development Department, the Town of Tillsonburg Economic Development Department, the Town of Ingersoll Economic Development Department, the Rural Oxford Economic Development group, SCOR, The Small Business Centre, Community Futures Oxford, and to include the Oxford County Warden and Councillors Schaefer and Wheaton;

And further, this committee is asked to bring forward a report to County Council to provide both a vision or strategy for a sustainable and robust local economy and how all partners can work collaboratively for all areas of Oxford County. This report will be due no later than June 28, 2023.

Oxford Overview

Oxford County is *diverse*, with many different *facets* and *opportunities*, which is why it is a great place to live, work and visit.

- This diversity requires multiple services to support the varied interests, small business, agriculture, industry and downtowns
- This committee was brought together to give an overview of the agencies and organizations that serve the county, how they work together and what some of the challenges and opportunities are
- The viewpoints and services discussed were as diverse as

Oxford Overview

Oxford County is diverse

TOUR OXFORD THINGS TO DO PLACES TO GO TRIP IDEAS EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES PLAN YOUR TRIP TRAVEL OFFERS ABOUT OXFORD COUNTY [Q](#)

RURAL TOWNS

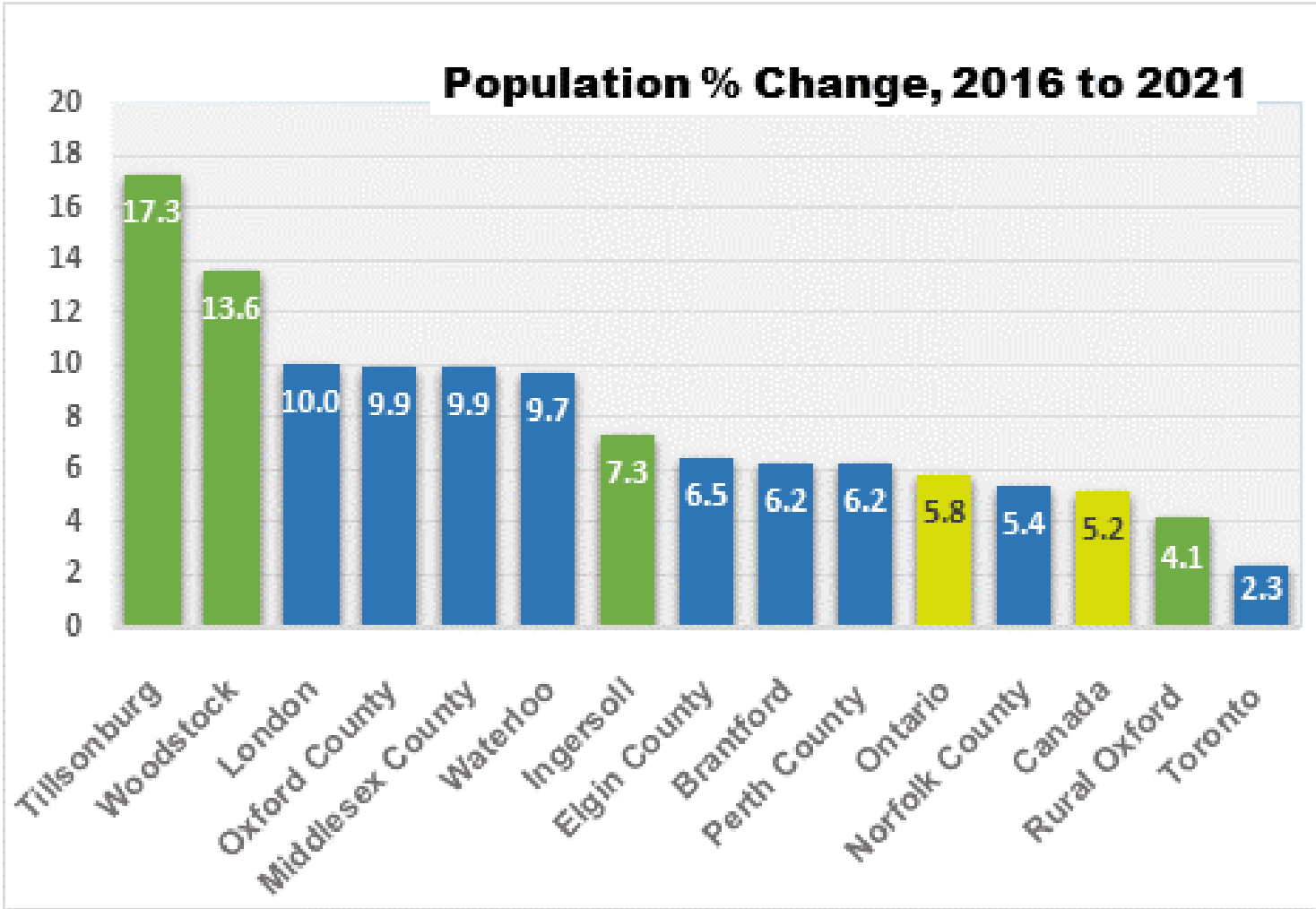
TIL TOURS AND EXPERIENCES DDSTOCK

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

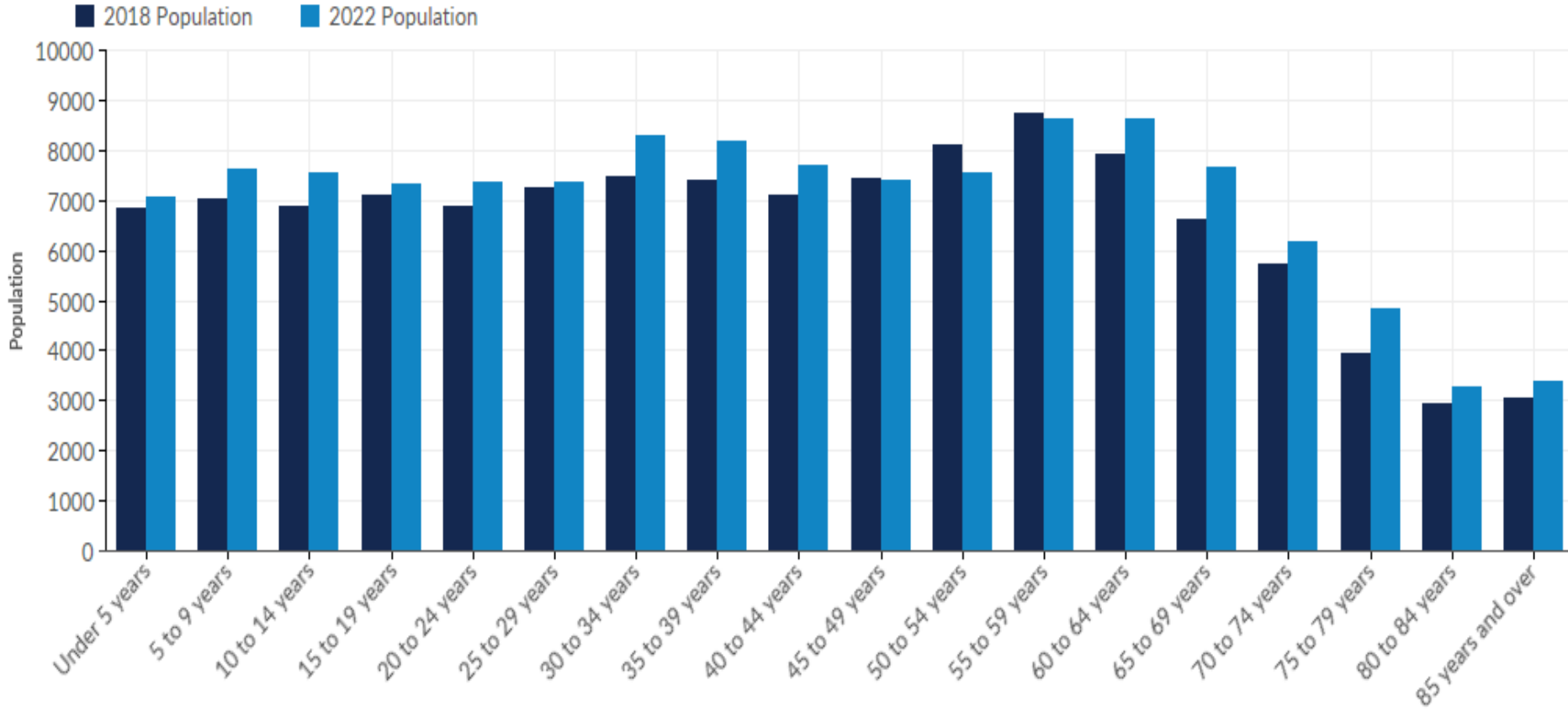
INGERSOLL



Population



Population



Location Quotient

Current economic situation in Oxford County

Highest Occupation Location Quotient						
Occupation	2018 Jobs	2022 Jobs	% Change	2018 LQ	2022 LQ	% Change LQ
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	10,179	10,461	3%	3.39	3.5	3%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	13,847	14,535	5%	1.58	1.6	2%
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	1,717	1,799	5%	1.36	1.42	4%
Unclassified	1,057	1,077	2%	1.01	1.03	2%
Management occupations	5,097	5,268	3%	0.92	0.93	1%
Health occupations	3,500	3,403	-3%	0.81	0.7	-13%
Sales and service occupations	11,999	13,064	9%	0.8	0.86	8%
Business, finance and administration occupations	7,257	7,334	1%	0.73	0.69	-4%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	2,927	3,148	8%	0.61	0.57	-6%
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	4,056	4,288	6%	0.6	0.59	0%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	746	779	4%	0.4	0.42	4%

Business Environment

Ontario Business Climate Considerations

Small Business	Large Business
Reduce/simplify business taxes	Invest in workforce development
Encourage Ontarians to buy/travel locally through marketing campaigns	Expand/improve access to mental health and addiction services
Strengthen local supply chains and, industries and manufacturing by investing in required connections and infrastructure	Address health care system capacity

Source: <https://occ.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023-Ontario-Economic-Report.pdf>

Business Environment

Local Business Climate Considerations

- Ease of starting a business
 - Oxford County has great supports in place for entrepreneurship through Small Business Centre and CF Oxford
 - Including access to capital
- Development process
 - Public works and planning internal partnerships
- Workforce

Economic Development Partners

Responsibility	Collaborating Agency
Attraction	Oxford Connection Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance Ontario Food Cluster Ontario Manufacturing Communities Alliance Local Economic Development Offices
Retention – General	Business Development Bank of Canada Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium Local Economic Development Offices
Retention – Workforce	Tillsonburg Multi-Service Centre Community Employment Services Oxford Oxford Workforce Development Partnership South Central Ontario Region Economic Dev't Corp (SCOR EDC) Western Ontario Warden's Caucus Workforce Planning Boards (Elgin-Middlesex-Oxford) Local Economic Development Offices
Retention – Industry 4.0	High Tech Mfg Action Plan Local Economic Development Offices

Economic Development Partners

Responsibility	Collaborating Agency
Entrepreneurship	Community Futures Oxford The Small Business Centre Local Economic Development Offices Tourism Oxford
Business Supports- General	BIA Chambers of Commerce Local Economic Development Offices Community Futures Oxford The Small Business Centre Tourism Oxford
Trade/Export Development	Export Development Canada (EDC)
Post-Secondary Education	Tillsonburg Multi-Service Centre Fanshawe College Conestoga College
Infrastructure	Municipality and private partnerships South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corp (SCOR EDC)
Advocacy	South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corp (SCOR EDC) Municipalities
Agriculture & Rural Issues	Rural Oxford Economic Development Corporation (ROEDC) Ontario Federation of Agriculture South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corp (SCOR EDC) Provincial Ministries

Oxford County SWOT

Strengths

Positive outlook for Oxford County

- Geographically well positioned with room to grow
- Prime Location on major transportation routes
- Strong Agricultural and Manufacturing Sectors
- Economic Development regular meetings
- Collaboration with well established relationships among staff and organizations
- Organizations providing collaborative business resources for entrepreneurs

Oxford County SWOT

Weaknesses

- Shortage of skilled AND unskilled labour
- Housing affordability
- Availability and cost of development lands
- Infrastructure related to growth and funding
- Increased capital costs
- Limited transportation options
- Access to childcare
- Inter-departmental responsiveness including service standards for all departments

Oxford County SWOT

Opportunities: Strong Opportunities for growth & development

Extension of services – south of 401	Zoning By-law Alignment
Advocacy	ARU’s parking, septic systems ARU’s in commercial spaces
Strategies for targeting agri-business lands	Licensed home childcare limit
Promoting skills – micro credentials	County Planning Model for Development Engineering
Red tape reduction	Access to transportation – prime location
Official Plan – housing development flexibility	Services development lands
Business, Retention & Expansion (BR+E) and Investment Attraction	Explore how On Farm Diversified Uses could (possibly) support both urban and rural Economic Development Objectives

Oxford County SWOT

Threats

- Interest rates and inflation
- Increased capital costs
- Population growth and migration to small urban and rural communities will come with infrastructure costs and expectations
- General workforce shortages
- Housing affordability
- Availability of industrial serviced land
 - Serviced industrial land for urban and rural

Innovation and Technology

Role of innovation and technology

- Evolution of manufacturing and supply chains
- Changes in workforce needs (skills and training)
- Innovations in agriculture/food production

Recommendations

- 1) **Make supporting local level Economic Development a priority at the County level**
- 2) **Host an exploratory discussion to see how internal county departments and local level economic development offices can work more efficiently and collaboratively to support development in the region**
- 3) **Develop a Housing Strategy to include attainable housing for entry level wage earners**
- 4) **Continue to fund the Economic Development Partners currently funded by Oxford County**
- 5) **Encourage County departments to consult with local level Economic Development Offices on strategies and master plans prior to public consultation.**
- 6) **Create an annual Economic Development forum with the following to meet at their discretion**

Local Economic Development Offices

- Small Business Centre
- Community Futures Oxford
- SCOR EDC
- Community Employment Services/ multi-service centre
- Tourism Oxford
- Director or designate from Oxford County Community
- Human Services, Corporate Services, County CAO

Questions