

Memorandum

PDS-C 12-2024

Subject: Workforce Coalition

Date: April 10, 2024

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee

From: Marco Marino, Associate Director, Economic Development

The Workforce Collective (formerly the Niagara Workforce Planning Board) in partnership with Niagara Economic Development (NED), area municipalities, Niagara College, Brock University, Niagara Industrial Association (NIA) and employment agencies announced the formation of a Workforce Coalition to integrate workforce planning and development in Niagara. The intention of this work is to move our community closer to realizing a thriving local economy, powered by decent work and collaborative talent attraction and retention efforts that can speak to our value proposition when looking to attract future investment to the region. Given the international struggle to attract and retain talent we strive to remove the siloed approach to the ongoing labour issue and integrate all of our relationships, expertise and skill sets in identifying creative and collaborative solutions that meet existing and future employer needs.

To solve these challenges, the Coalition aims to engage key leaders in systemic change and align with community-wide initiatives (such as Regional Council's Growing Better Together Strategic Priorities for ensuring a Prosperous Region, also in line with NED's 10 Year Economic Development Strategy and the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy). We need to work across employment, education, and training systems to address the growing mismatch between the skills workers have and those employers are seeking.

Through working together, we plan to:

- Develop a workforce strategy that guides workforce planning and development activities.
- Share data and knowledge between partners (to coordinate, increase capacity and reduce duplication); and mobilize information to employers, educators, and service providers.

- Strengthen partnerships and proactively engage in initiatives to develop our workforce.

Marco Marino

Associate Director, Economic Development