

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Report of County Officers  
Cara A. Finn, Director  
May 9, 2023



# Strategic Priorities

## *Middlesex County 2021-2024 Strategic Plan:*

- Promote and support community wellness
- Attract, retain, and engage youth in our community
- Champion and encourage active transportation and public transit opportunities
- Support opportunities to create a stronger and sustainable agricultural sector
- Create an environment that enables the attraction and retention of businesses, talent, and investments
- Attract visitors to Middlesex County
- Support the development and prosperity of downtown core areas in Middlesex County

## *Economic Development 2021-2025 Strategic Plan:*

- Invest in people and places via rural revitalization
- Entice talented workers and entrepreneurs to relocate here by leveraging the pace of rural life and nearby urban amenities
- Attract investment in tech-based manufacturing, food production, and ag-tech
- Advocate for investment readiness and implement improvements in business development services

# The Team



Cara Finn  
*Director of Economic  
Development & Tourism*



Anne-Marie Flood  
*Economic Development and  
Tourism Assistant*



Taylor Rummell  
*Economic Development  
Communications Coordinator*



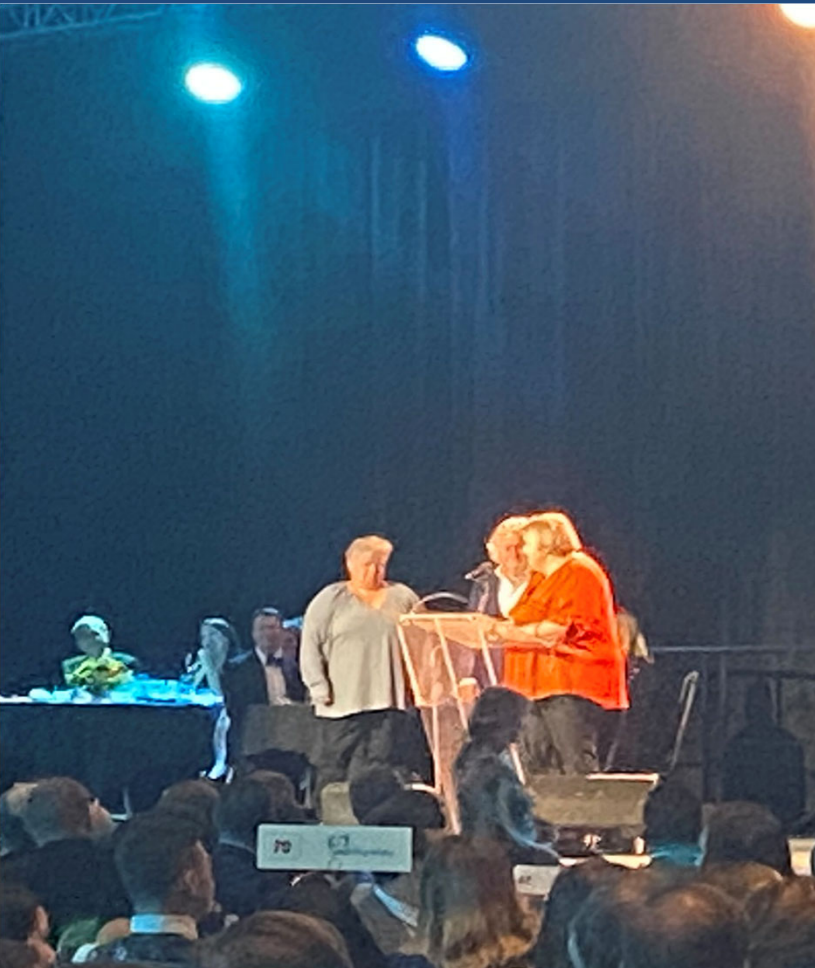
Holly Parks  
*Youth Workforce Education  
Coordinator*



Sean Columbus  
*Economic Development Officer*

# 2022 Highlights

# Economic Development Advocacy

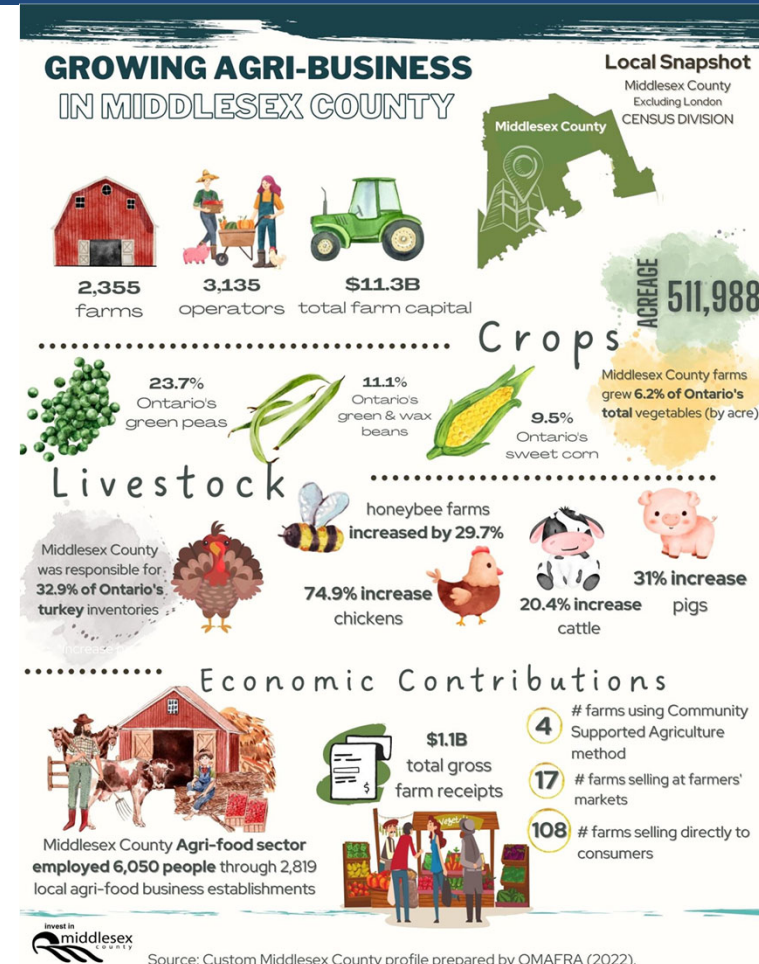


- Collaboration with neighboring Counties/Regions, local municipalities, and Provincial and Federal sources on upcoming EcDev opportunities
- Membership in the following organizations: MWDP, SWOTC, SCOR, WOWC, OFC, OMCA, EDAC, EDCO, MLFPC, EMOLTB, Chamber of Commerce (London & Strathroy)

# Agriculture Sector Support

2022 Highlights

- Support and advisory with Planning Department on Official Plan/Ec. Dev alignments
- Crop education sign program in partnership with OFA and MFA
- Ag-census analysis; presentation of County sector information
- Agri-business engagement in all relevant committees (i.e. Middlesex Workforce Development Partnership)
- Department representation on Middlesex London Food Policy Council



# Housing Development

- Advisory on Middlesex County Attainable Housing Strategy (Planning and Social Services)
- Support for CIP development and implementation inclusive of housing investments



Lucan Woods II – SEM Construction

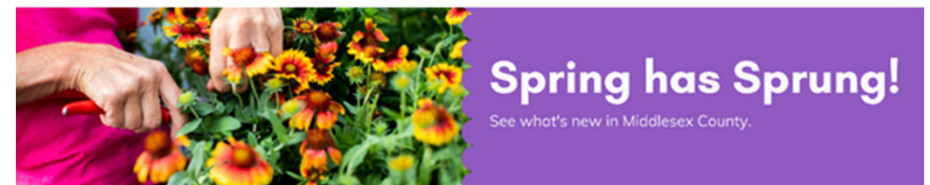
# Marketing & Promotions

- Social channels for Invest, Visit and Work in Middlesex Brands (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter)
- Production and distribution of tourism maps, investor's guides, success stories brochures, and a wide variety of promotional items...
- Quarterly Newsletters featuring local business, program and promotional highlights



April, 2023

**Invest in Middlesex Spring Issue**





# Marketing Recognition



- (4) Hermes Creative Awards were presented to the Department for Middlesex County Marketing Material including Tourism Map, Commercial, etc.
- Ontario Tourism Award for Collaboration presented to the department for the 'From our Hands to Your Table' Project

# Community Improvement Plans (CIPs)

- Partnered on the development of the Adelaide Metcalfe Community Improvement Plan
- Bringing total number of local municipal Community Improvement Plan (CIP) programs to six
- County partnership extends to the implementation of CIP incentives

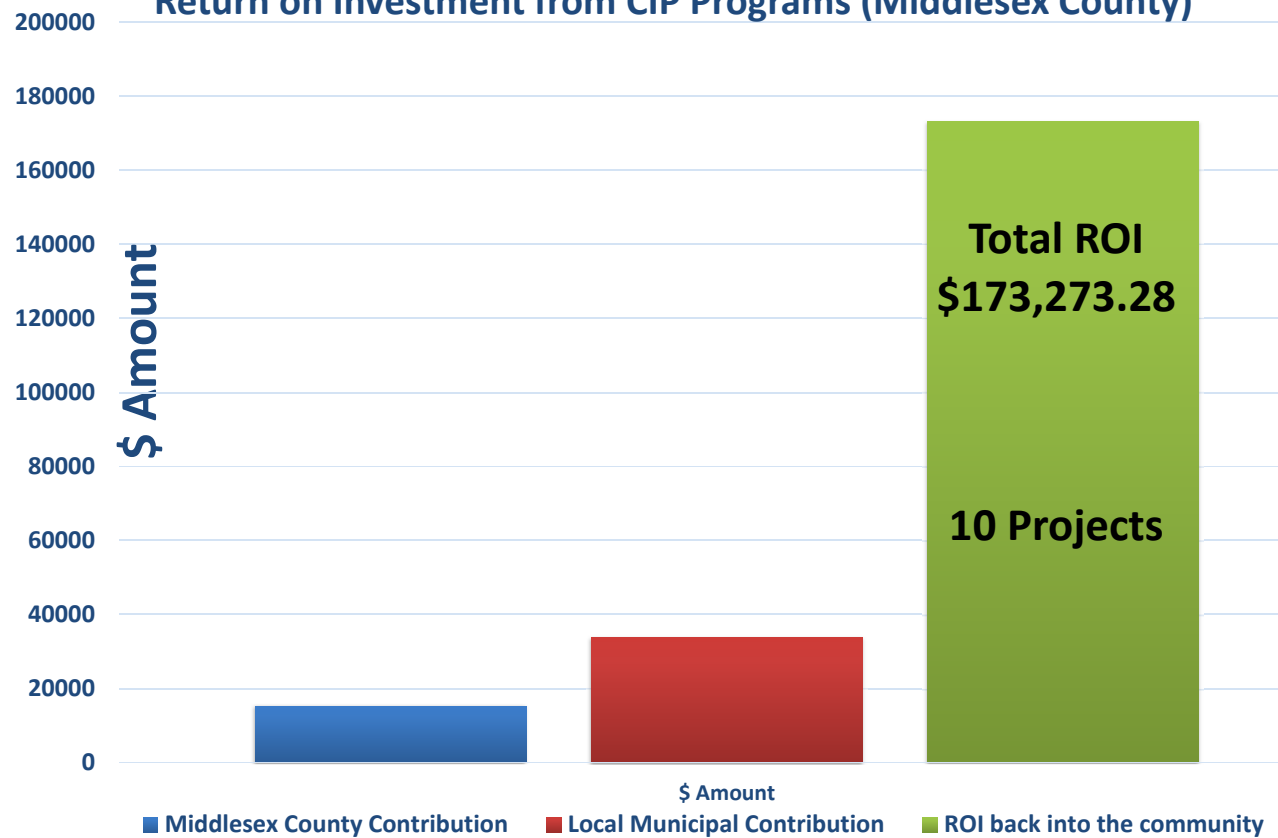


# 2022 CIP Results

2022 Highlights

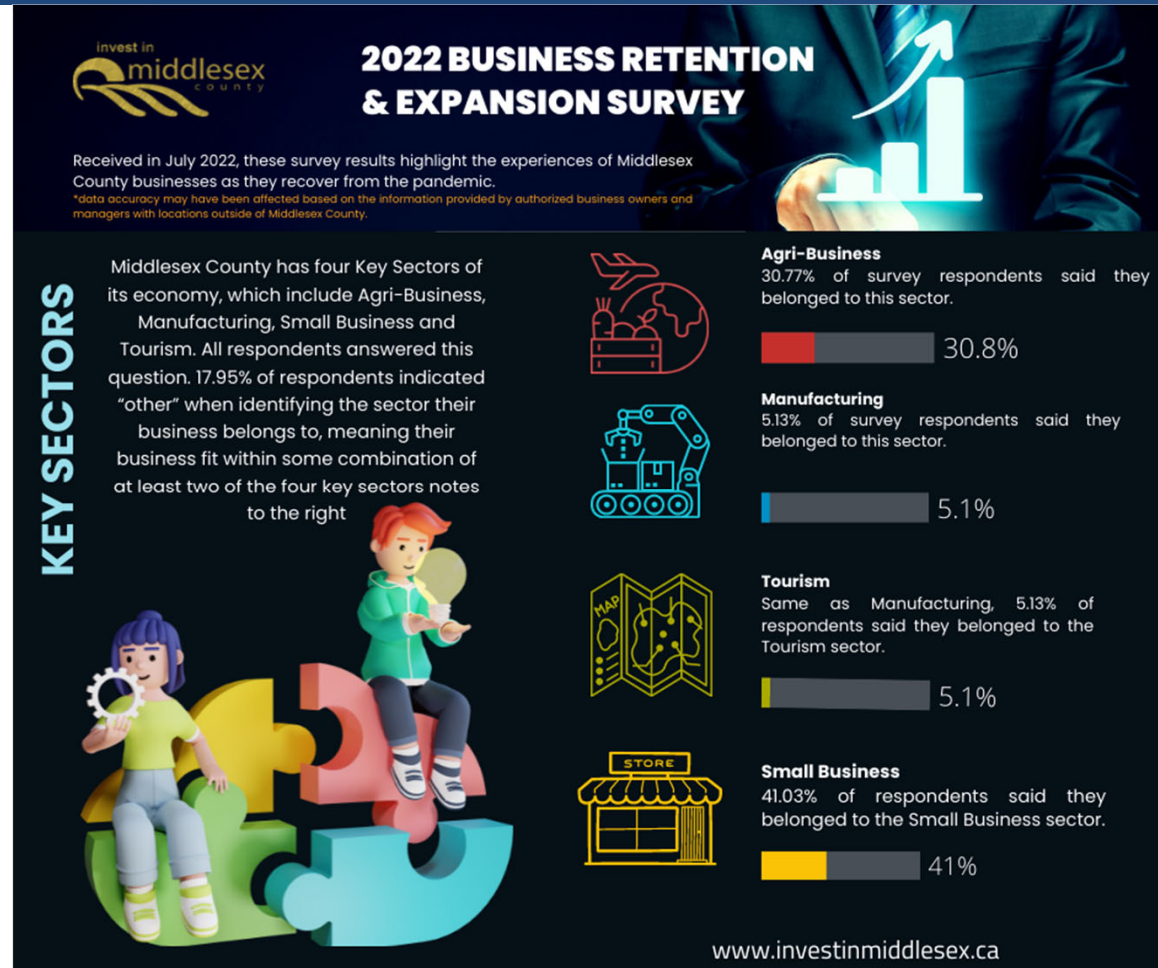


### Return on Investment from CIP Programs (Middlesex County)



# Business Retention & Expansion Survey

- 25 total questions
- 39 eligible businesses responded to the survey
- Follow-up one-on-one interviews conducted; with more planned into 2023



# Key Business Sector Video Series

The launch of the Sector Video series began with Agri-Business and Manufacturing. The remaining videos will be released throughout 2023.

1. [Agri-Business](#)
2. [Manufacturing](#)
3. [Tourism](#)
4. Small Business



# Ontario Food Cluster (OFC) FDI

## Three trade events

- IFT Chicago
- SIAL France
- PLMA Chicago

**Total Meetings Completed: 77**

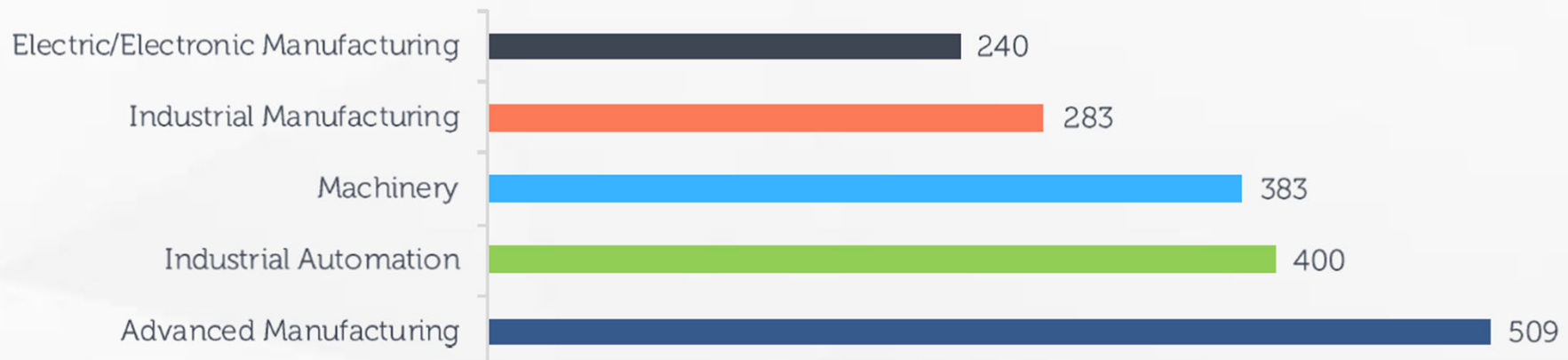
- Successful Can-Export Funding application for lead generation, travel, and training
- FDI 101 Training Modules available for local municipalities



# Ontario Manufacturing Communities Alliance (OMCA) FDI

2022 Highlights

## Most represented industries on target list (YTD)



36

Number of meetings



2921

Target companies



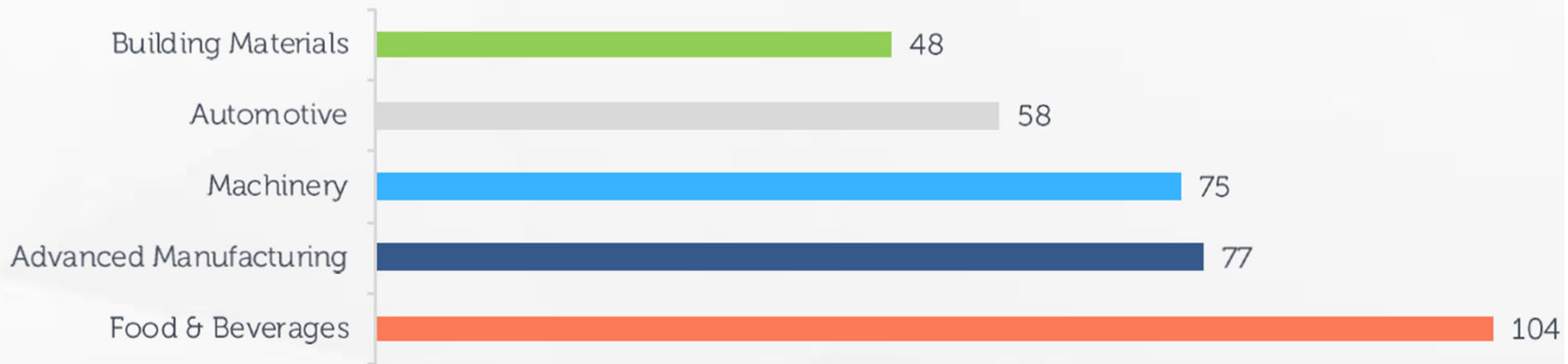
100%

Contract completion

- Successful Can-Export Funding application for lead generation

# Middlesex County FDI Attraction

## Most represented industries on target list (YTD)



33

Number of meetings



100%

Contract completion



657

Target companies

- Successful Can-Export Funding application for lead generation, travel and training



# Making it in Middlesex

2022 Highlights

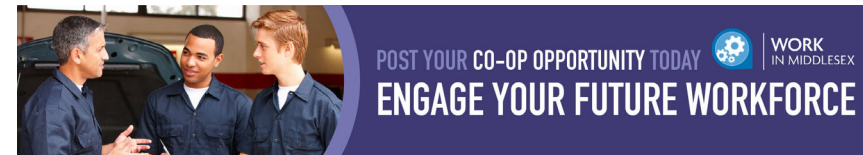


- The new ‘Making it in Middlesex – Stories of Business Success’ project launched profiling businesses in our 4 key sectors
- 2022 Profiles included:
  - [Small Business - Just in Time Solutions](#)
  - [Manufacturing - Cynergy Composites](#)
  - [Tourism - Kustermans Berry Farms](#)
  - Agri-Business - Watermelons Plus

# Middlesex Workforce Development Partnership

- Chaired by Middlesex County
- Acquisition of 2 (OMAFRA RED) grants
- Young Entrepreneur Business Plan Contest
- Work Integrated Learning (WIL) project launch
- Level Up Trades Fair - Fall 2022
- London and Area Works \_ Job Fairs; CTV News Campaign & Website

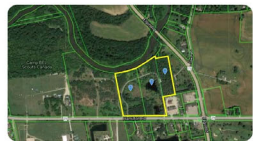
[Check out the Work in Middlesex website!](#)



# New GIS Planning Tools

2022 Highlights

- New format for site selection (commercial/industrial/residential listings available in real time)



**5050 Hamilton, Dorchester, ON**

PROPERTY TYPE: Land  
LIST PRICE: \$5495000



**22399 Adelaide, Mount Brydges, ON**

PROPERTY TYPE: Land  
LIST PRICE: \$245000



**273 Caradoc S, Strathroy, ON**

PROPERTY TYPE: Commercial  
LIST PRICE: \$450000



**299 Hastings, Parkhill, ON**

PROPERTY TYPE: Land  
LIST PRICE: \$349900



**3198 Concession, Glencoe, ON**

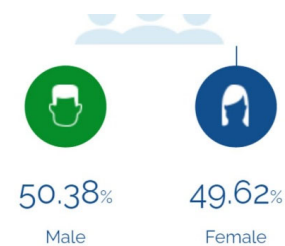
PROPERTY TYPE: Land  
LIST PRICE: \$549900



**8028 Walkers, Strathroy, ON**

PROPERTY TYPE: Land  
LIST PRICE: \$600000

- New demographic data displays

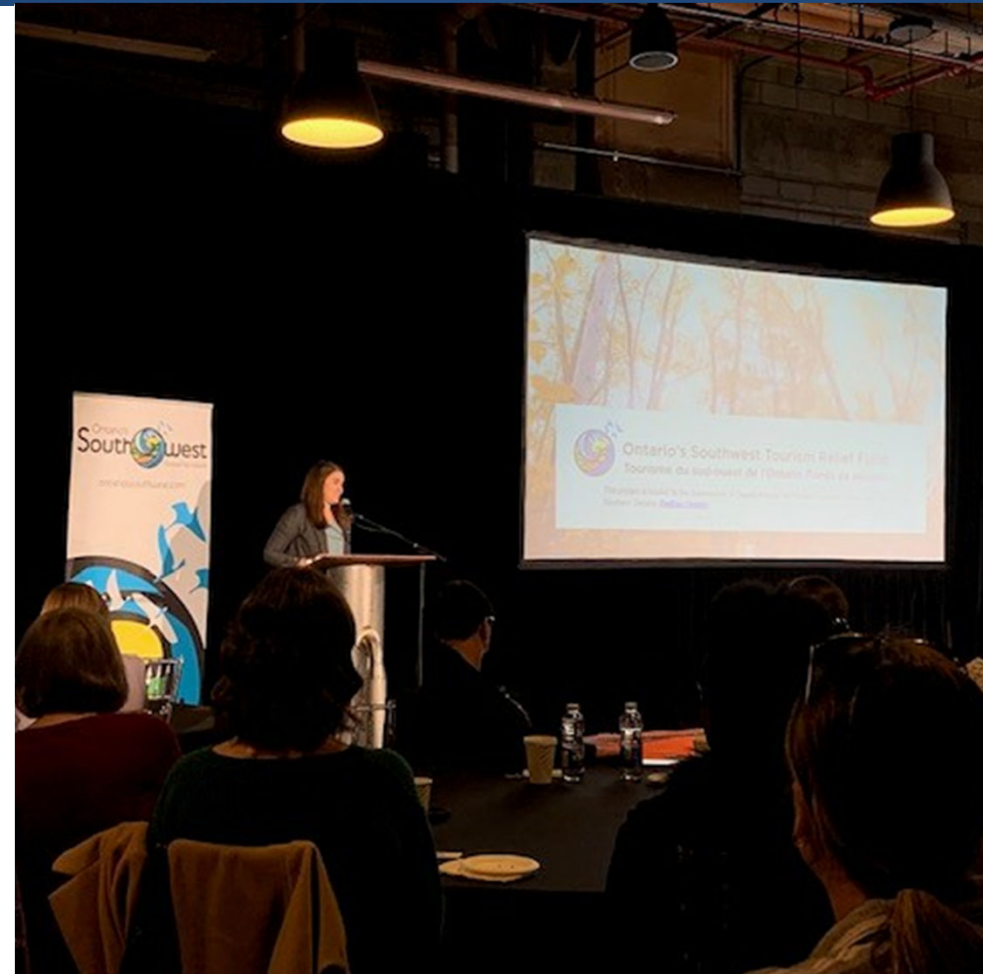


Age Distribution



# Tourism Sector Advocacy

- TSNO – Tourism Skillsnet Ontario (Workforce Development Network for Tourism & Hospitality ongoing collaboration)
- Partnership with Tourism Organizations (RTO 1 – SW Ontario, TIAO, TIAC)



# Tourism Relief Funding

*Successful acquisition of \$100,000 in Federal Funding to complete the following:*

- Winter Tourism Commercial
- Updated Photography
- Tourism Sector Video
- Making it Middlesex – Tourism Business Profile Video



# Tourism Relief Funding

2022 Highlights

- Bike Racks
- [Grassroutes Signage](#)
- EV Chargers
- Heritage Sign Refresh
- Makeover Middlesex Program -  
Public Art Campaigns



# Spark Program

- A new program aimed at sparking tourism ideas for year-round accommodations, collaborations between culinary tourism and agricultural providers, and recreational/sport tourism in Middlesex County launched September 20th, 2022
- Following a virtual Pitch Session, 3 winners were selected to receive mentorship and a \$3,000 seed grant from the Ontario Tourism Innovation Lab
  - Jireh Hills Family Homestead  
(Farm and Forest Revival program)
  - Rusty Wrench Brewing Company  
(brewery tours and experiences)
  - GF Farms  
(ecotourism, zip line, and off-grid bunkies)
- We will be catching up with our winners on May 12<sup>th</sup>



# Tourism Sponsorship Program



12 Sponsorships  
Awarded



\$23,742.94  
Approved in Funding



\$196,755.27  
Total Project Value





# 2023 Initiatives

# Employer One Survey

2023 Initiatives

- 65 extensive surveys completed by Middlesex-based businesses in January 2023
- 2023 Results released in March; Middlesex only data being extrapolated to understand workforce needs and trends

The logo for the Employer One Survey features a green checkmark icon to the left of the text. The word "EMPLOYER" is in blue, "one" is in green, and "survey" is in blue. The text is in a sans-serif font.

**EMPLOYERone  
survey**

*Your Workforce. Our Future.*

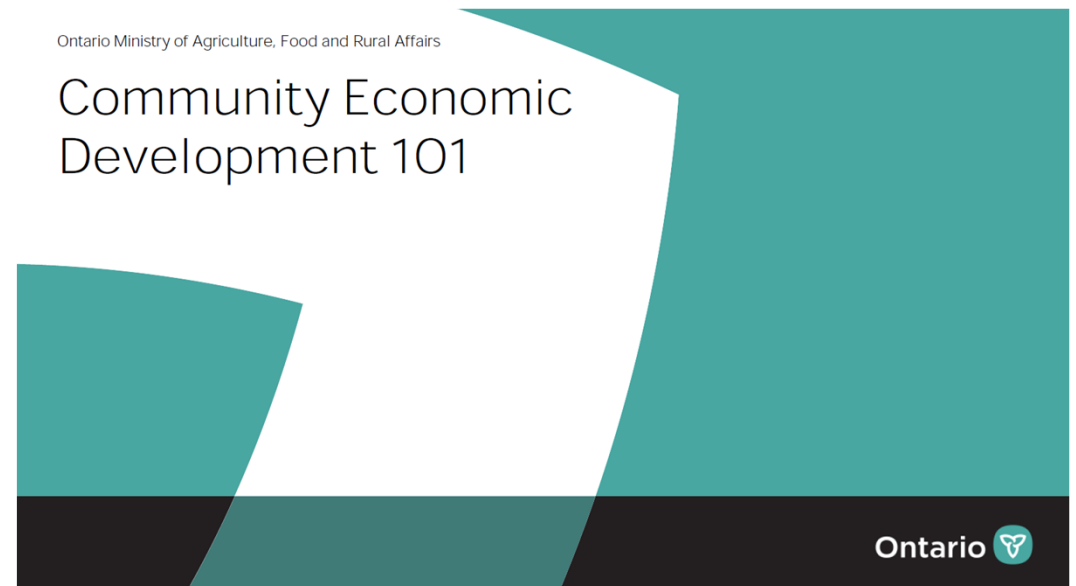


# CED 101 Training

2023 Initiatives

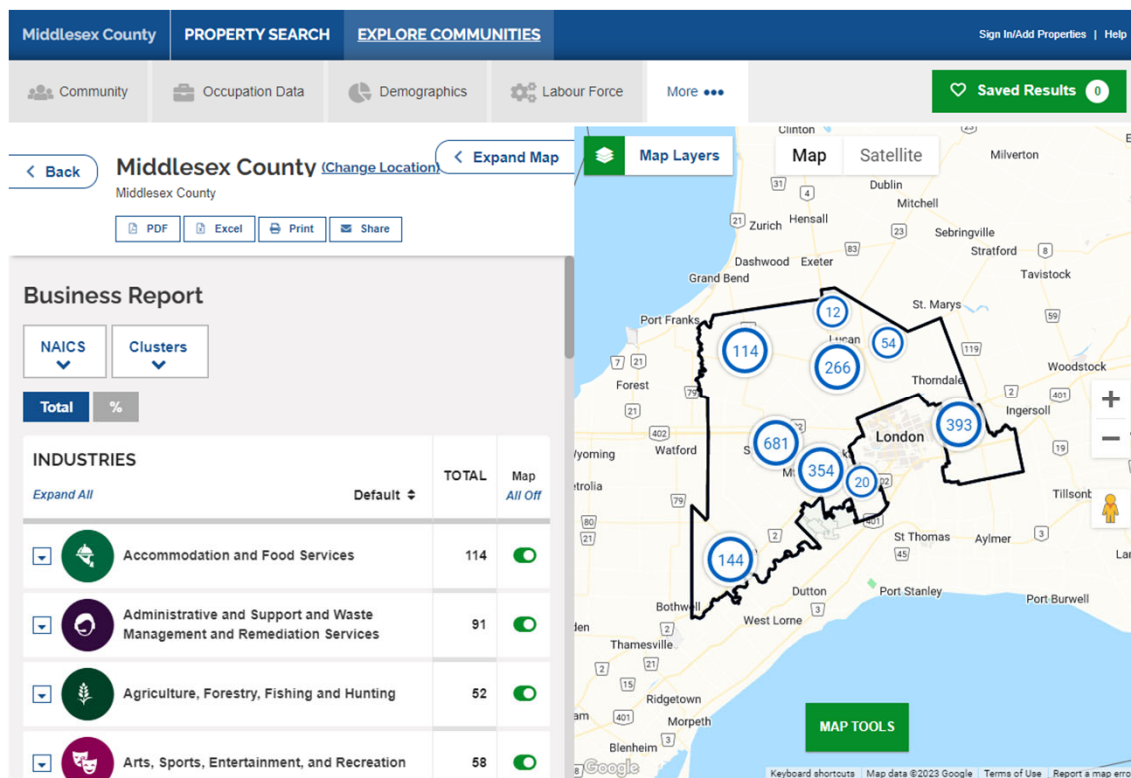
*February 2023*

- Middlesex selected to deliver workshop in partnership with the Province of Ontario
- Education for elected officials and local leaders regarding Community Economic Development projects and supports



# Revamped Business Directory

2023 Initiatives



- User-friendly platform for investors and developers
- Ability to sort business industries by sector and municipality
- Interactive mapping for site selection (cluster mapping)

# Middlesex Workforce Development Partnership

- 3 Career Fairs attended in Q1 2023
- Outreach to numerous businesses, educational institutions and community partners
- Work Integrated Learning videos being finalized
- Extensive campaign promoting [Work in Middlesex](#)
- Provincial grant application submitted for Workforce Development Projects for 2024 including the continuation of cooperative collaboration and trades promotion (awaiting word Spring 2023)



# International Women's Day

2023 Initiatives



*March 8, 2023*

- Jamie McMillan, Founder of KickAss Careers met with us at North Middlesex High School to discuss how young women can overcome the barriers of entering the trades.
- Focused on embracing equity: the fair treatment, access, equality of opportunity, and advancement for everyone in accessing careers

[Video on YouTube for use of teachers and parents](#)

# Dress Your Downtown

*2023 Initiatives*

Organized downtown walkabouts of Strathroy and Ailsa Craig were led by Gregg McLachlan and Leslie Fournier of Your Town Rising. This event provided a learning opportunity for businesses and community stakeholders regarding streetscape and storefront enhancement.



# Employer/Business Workshops

2023 Initiatives

- ‘Influencing with an Impact’ workshop facilitated in partnership with Fanshawe CTS and Community Employment Choices in March 2023
- County sponsorship of workshops will continue throughout 2023





# Business Succession Planning

2023 Initiatives

- 4 Succession Planning Training Modules developed
- Training to assist business owners on preparation of selling their business
- Partnership with Fanshawe College Corporate Training Solutions (CTS)



invest in middlesex county  
FANSHAWE  
Corporate Training Solutions  
MIDDLESEX WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP  
Community EMPLOYMENT Choices  
Ontario

**Planning for Succession -  
The First Steps**

[www.workinmiddlesex.ca](http://www.workinmiddlesex.ca)

# Industrial Land Review



- Exploring opportunities to work together with local and neighbouring municipalities, as well as private owners, in order to properly inventory, ready and market additional industrial land

# Young Entrepreneurs Contest

- Expanded Business Plan Contest for youth in Middlesex County to include Elementary, Secondary and Post-Secondary School categories
- Streamlined online application including video pitch implemented for 2023
- 3 total prizes featuring a Chromebook and prize pack

MIDDLESEX COUNTY YOUTH

## Have a **BUSINESS** idea?

ENTER THE CONTEST FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A CHROMEBOOK PRIZE PACK!

Submissions accepted in three categories:

- Elementary (ages 8-14 AND in grades 2 through 8)
- Secondary (ages 13-18 AND in grades 9 through 12)
- Post-Secondary (ages 17-22 AND in first through final year)

Prizes will be awarded for each category. Students residing in the City of London are ineligible. For full contest guidelines and eligibility requirements, please visit [www.investinmiddlesex.ca](http://www.investinmiddlesex.ca).

**DEADLINES TO APPLY:**

- May 31, 2023 for post-secondary
- June 30, 2023 for elementary and secondary

YOUR NAME HERE

MIDDLESEX COUNTY YOUTH  
Invest in middlesex county  
Community Futures Middlesex  
The Business Help Centre  
WP Workforce Planning & Development Branch  
Ego Hudson Culture

# 'PITCH YOUR PLAN'

# Southern Ontario Tourism Conference & Awards

*2023 Initiatives*



- SWM-based Jireh Hills Family Homestead was honoured with the “Sustainability Trailblazer of the Year” Award at the Southern Ontario Tourism Conference in March
- After being referred by Middlesex Economic Development, Murals in Metal was selected to design and produce the awards for all Southwestern Ontario winners at the 2023 conference

# Tourism Symposium

*2023 Initiatives*

- Tourism Symposium set for May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at Arrowwood Farm
- This will be the first tourism symposium post-pandemic
- Hosting our tourism operators to enjoy networking, and share best practices and industry resources



# Tourism Initiative Sponsorship

*2023 Initiatives*



Sponsorship of **new events and experiences may not exceed 50% and/or \$2500** of the cash budget per project.

Sponsorship for **returning annual events may not exceed \$1000** and sponsorships overall may not exceed \$5,000 in total per operator/organization per year.

All projects must be geared to the attraction of visitors from outside Middlesex County

[Applications](#) are open now.

# Publication Update

- [Updated Grassroutes Tourism Maps](#) have recently been printed and are available for distribution
- Middlesex County Trails Guide is currently in the process of being updated
- Our Culinary Guide update is also projected for late 2023



# Advertising Campaigns

A variety of campaigns are in the works for the Invest in Middlesex and Visit Middlesex brands. We look forward to adding more to this list throughout the year.

## Invest in Middlesex

- Expansion Solutions Magazine
- Digital Media Advertising (social media)
- Business Facilities Magazine
- Business Xpansion Journal Magazine

## Visit Middlesex

- CTV (Summer Tourism Commercial)
- Summer Fun Guide
- Destination Ontario
- Culinary Tourism Alliance
- Digital Media Advertising (social media)





# Business Appreciation Program

*2023 Initiatives*



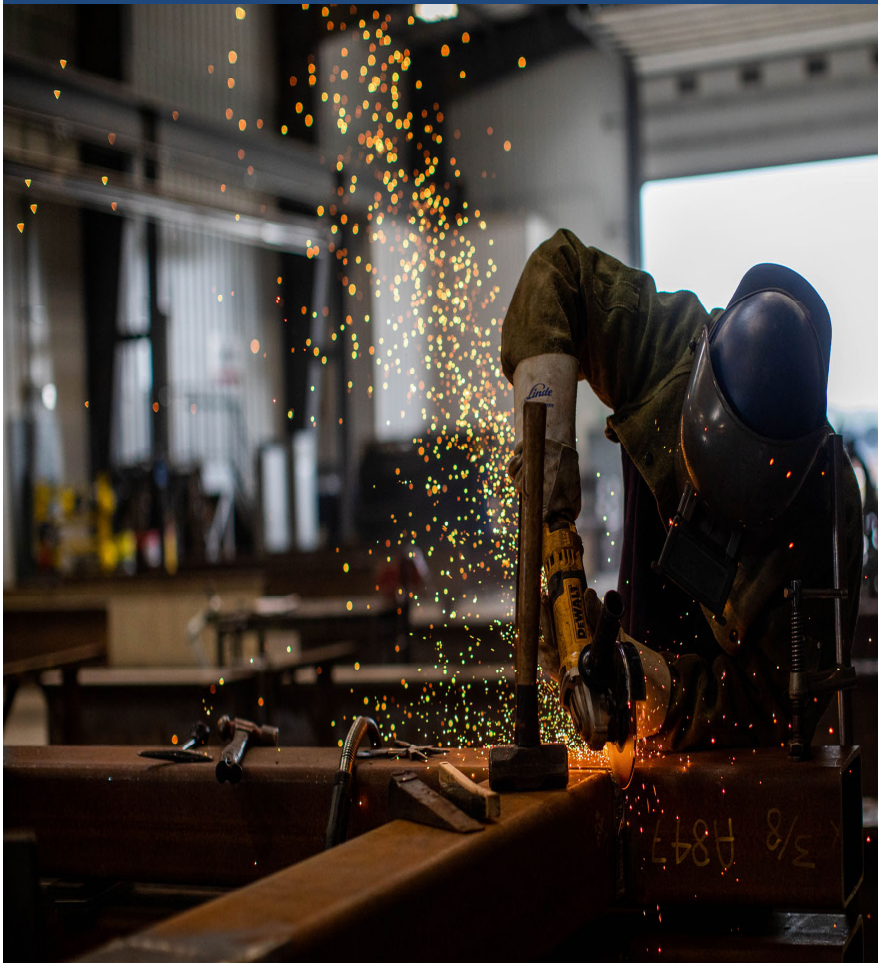
Celebrates significant milestones including business and organization anniversaries, special accomplishments and new business and organization openings

- Certificate of appreciation and Invest in Middlesex gifts issued
- [Application](#) available on Invest in Middlesex website
- Red Carpet and ribbon-cutting scissors are available

# CIP Partnership

- Funding is available for 50% reimbursement of local municipal contributions for the development and implementation of Community Improvement Plan projects align with the County's Economic Development Strategic objectives
- Working with Thames Centre on the development of a new CIP; six other CIPs in the implementation phase.





- Partnering on Five Shows for FDI opportunities:

[Hannover Messe](#)

[Automatica](#)

[IAA Mobility](#)

[Fabtech](#)

[eMove360](#)

- Successful application for CanExport Funding



# Ontario Food Cluster

- Middlesex County Banker/Co-Chair
- Niagara Region – new member (14 in total)
- Successful acquisition of CanExport Funding for FDI Lead Generation, Travel, and Strategic Activities Plan for 2024-2026

## Tradeshows:

[IFT](#) - July 16-19, Chicago, USA

[Anuga](#) - October 7-11, Cologne, Germany

[PLMA](#) - November 12-14, Chicago, USA



# Middlesex County FDI



- Successful CanExport Funding application for FDI Lead Generation and Staff Travel
- Research FDI Lead Generation Consulting contracted for 2023
- 3 North American FDI shows planned for 2023 ([Automate](#) + [IDDBA](#) + [AAPEX/SEMA](#))

# Business Visitation

- Middlesex County to support local municipalities with resources from new Business Directory
- In-person business visit interviews will be conducted in partnership with local municipalities (local municipalities to define their anticipated visitation targets)
- Interview questions prepared by County to assist on BR&E objectives



# Manufacturing FAM Tour

*2023 Initiatives*



- Plans are in the works for a bus tour for local economic development staff and elected officials in June 2023
- Visitation of sites including food production and advanced manufacturing businesses

# From Our Hands to Your Table

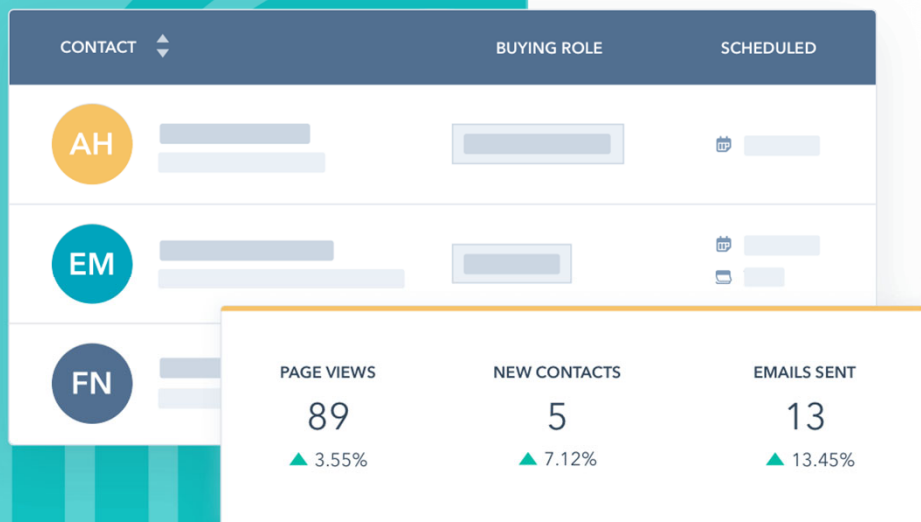
- The next series is underway with filming set to begin late spring/early summer
- The fourth installment will be focused on increasing awareness of the brand – with 2 partnership videos (1 from each Middlesex and Lambton County) and the addition of a value-added project similar in structure to ‘Londonlicious’
- Middlesex will be featuring Arva Flour Mill, Arva Grain and Arva Millhouse Bakery





# Customer Relationship Management

2023 Initiatives



- Implementing a new CRM as an internal business intelligence platform for economic development and investment attraction
- Migration of platform to take place in Q2 - 2023



# Follow Along:

[Invest in Middlesex Website](#)

[Visit Middlesex Website](#)

[Work in Middlesex Website](#)



Visit Middlesex  
Invest in Middlesex  
Work in Middlesex



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