

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Update Report

Cara A. Finn, Director

July 27, 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*



Devin Vandeborn
*Youth Workforce Education
Coordinator*



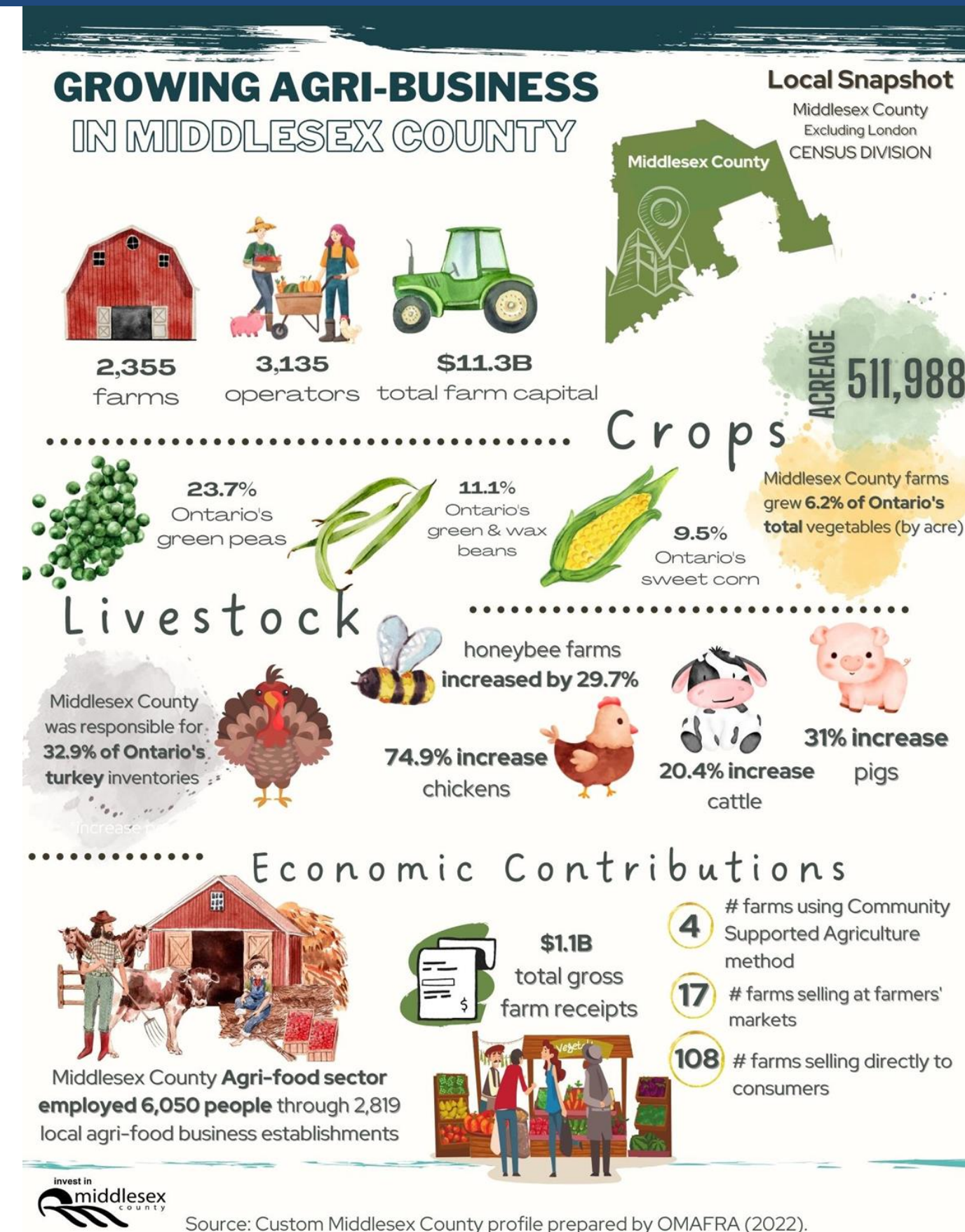
Sean Columbus
Economic Development Officer

2022 Highlights

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



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



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



2022 BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION SURVEY

Received in July 2022, these survey results highlight the experiences of Middlesex County businesses as they recover from the pandemic.
*data accuracy may have been affected based on the information provided by authorized business owners and managers with locations outside of Middlesex County.



KEY SECTORS

Middlesex County has four Key Sectors of its economy, which include Agri-Business, Manufacturing, Small Business and Tourism. All respondents answered this question. 17.95% of respondents indicated "other" when identifying the sector their business belongs to, meaning their business fit within some combination of at least two of the four key sectors notes to the right



Agri-Business

30.77% of survey respondents said they belonged to this sector.



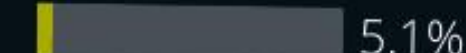
Manufacturing

5.13% of survey respondents said they belonged to this sector.



Tourism

Same as Manufacturing, 5.13% of respondents said they belonged to the Tourism sector.



Small Business

41.03% of respondents said they belonged to the Small Business sector.



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](#)



Tourism Sponsorship Program



12 Sponsorships
Awarded



\$23,742.94
Approved in Funding



\$196,755.27
Total Project Value



Foreign Direct Investment Activities

Ontario Food Cluster

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

Total Meetings Completed: 77

OMCA

- Can-Export Funding for lead generation

Total Meetings Completed: 36

Middlesex

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

Total Meetings Completed: 33

- **OFC and Middlesex partnership to develop FDI 101 Training Modules for member municipalities**

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)

- New demographic data displays



**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: \$6000000



50.38%
Male



49.62%
Female

Age Distribution



Tourism Relief Funding

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

- Winter Tourism Commercial
- Updated Photography
- Tourism Sector Video
- Bike Racks
- [Grassroutes Signage](#)
- EV Chargers
- Heritage Sign Refresh
- Makeover Middlesex - 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)



2023 Initiatives

Employer One Survey

2023 Initiatives

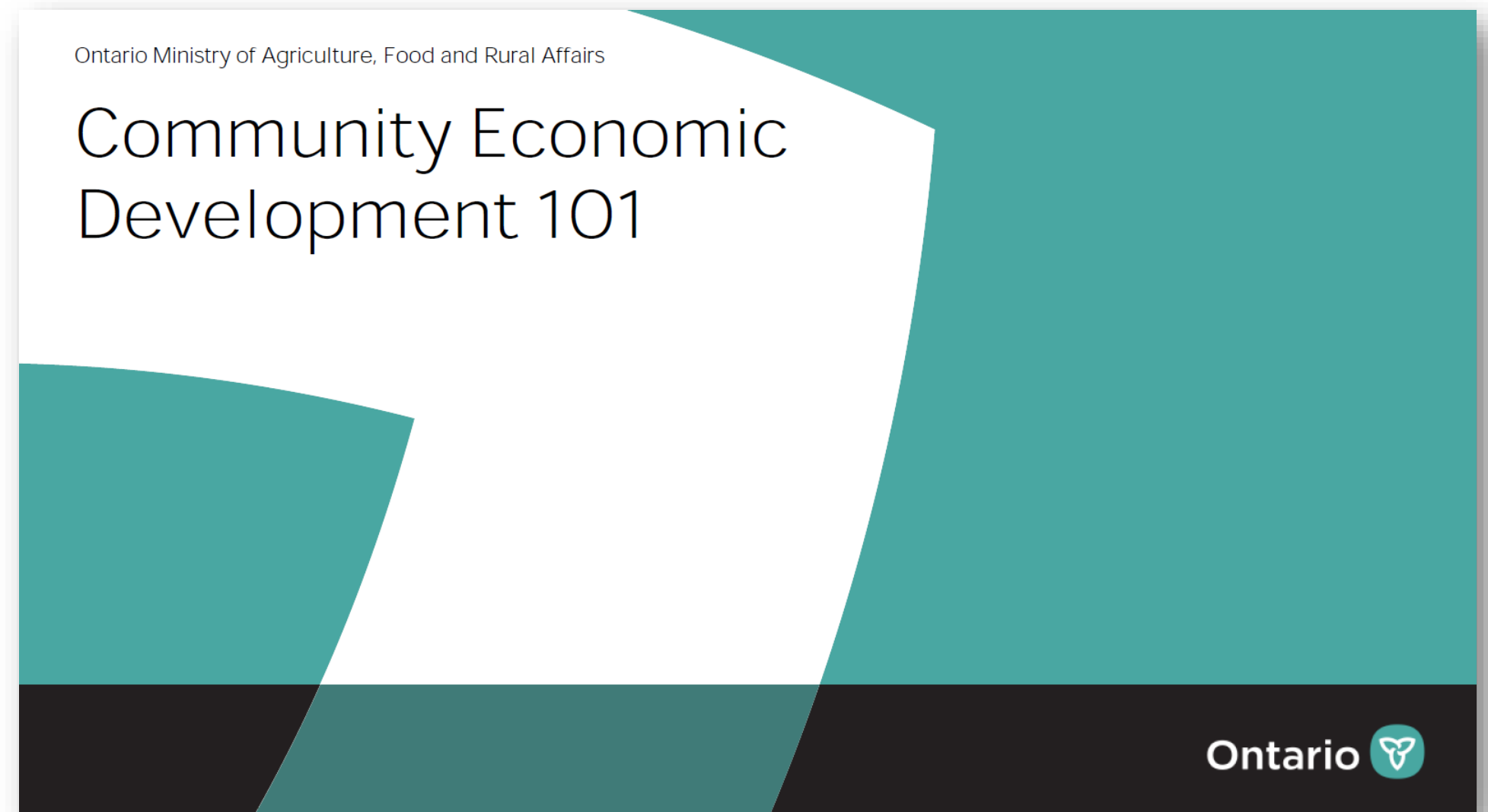
- 65 extensive surveys completed by Middlesex-based businesses in January 2023 to understand workforce needs and trends
- Middlesex, Elgin, London, Oxford partnership

 **EMPLOYER**one
survey
Your Workforce. Our Future.



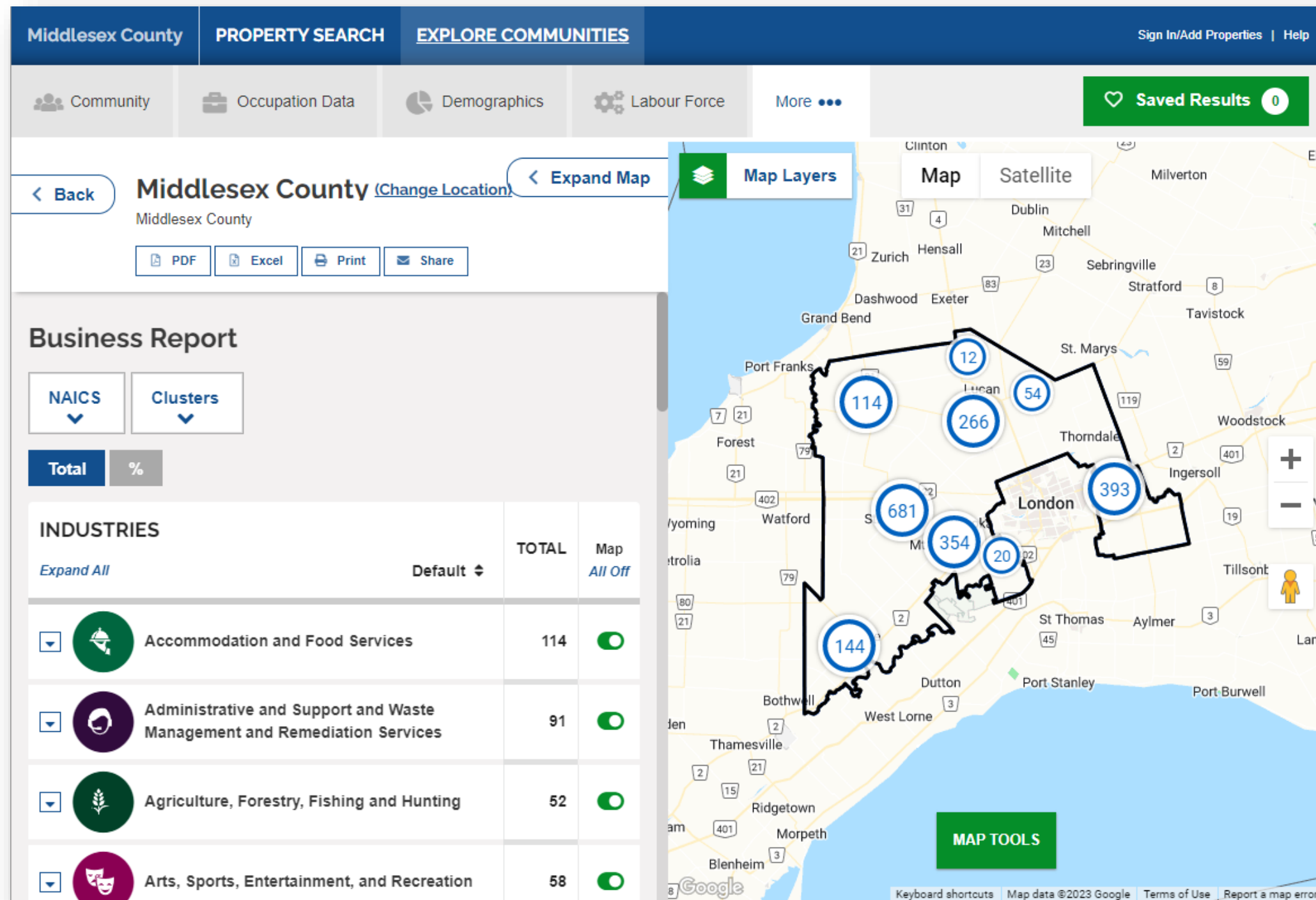
February 2023

- 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 finalized
- Extensive campaign promoting [Work in Middlesex](http://www.workinmiddlesex.ca)
- Successful funding application submitted for Workforce Development Projects for 2024 including the continuation of cooperative collaboration and trades promotion



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

- 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)

The graphic features a dark blue background with a faint image of a person's face. In the top left corner, there are logos for 'invest in middlesex county', 'FANSHAWE', 'Corporate Training Solutions', 'MIDDLESEX WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP', and 'Community EMPLOYMENT choices'. The Ontario logo is centered below these. On the right side, there is a yellow hexagonal shape and a white hexagonal inset showing a woman in a business suit giving a thumbs up and shaking hands with another person. At the bottom, the text 'Planning for Succession - The First Steps' is written in yellow and white. The website 'www.workinmiddlesex.ca' is in the bottom right corner.

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

Industrial Land Review



- Working together with local and neighbouring municipalities, as well as private owners, to properly inventory all available 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

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.

DEADLINES TO APPLY:
May 31, 2023 for post-secondary
June 30, 2023 for elementary and secondary



'PITCH YOUR PLAN'

Southern Ontario Tourism Conference & Awards

2023 Initiatives



- Middlesex-based Jireh Hills Family Homestead was honoured with the “Sustainability Trailblazer of the Year” Award at the Southern Ontario Tourism Conference in March

Tourism Symposium

2023 Initiatives

- Tourism Symposium held May 10th, 2023 at Arrowwood Farm
- This was the first tourism symposium post-pandemic
- Hosted 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.

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 MANUFACTURING
COMMUNITIES ALLIANCE**

Ontario Food Cluster

- Middlesex County Banker/Co-Chair
- New Members: Niagara, York, Durham
- 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



**ONTARIO
FOOD
CLUSTER**

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 for 2023 ([Automate](#) + [IDDBA](#) + [AAPEX/SEMA](#))
- Some of the newest companies to Invest in Middlesex include Ontario Plant Propagation, Goss Global and Norbec.
- Some of the most recent expansions include Nortera and Catalent.

Business Visitation

- Middlesex County to support local municipalities with resources from new Business Directory
- In-person business visit interviews are being 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 Tours

2023 Initiatives



- Pop-up familiarization tours are being held every quarter at sites across the County for elected officials and community leaders
- Visitation of sites including food production and advanced manufacturing businesses

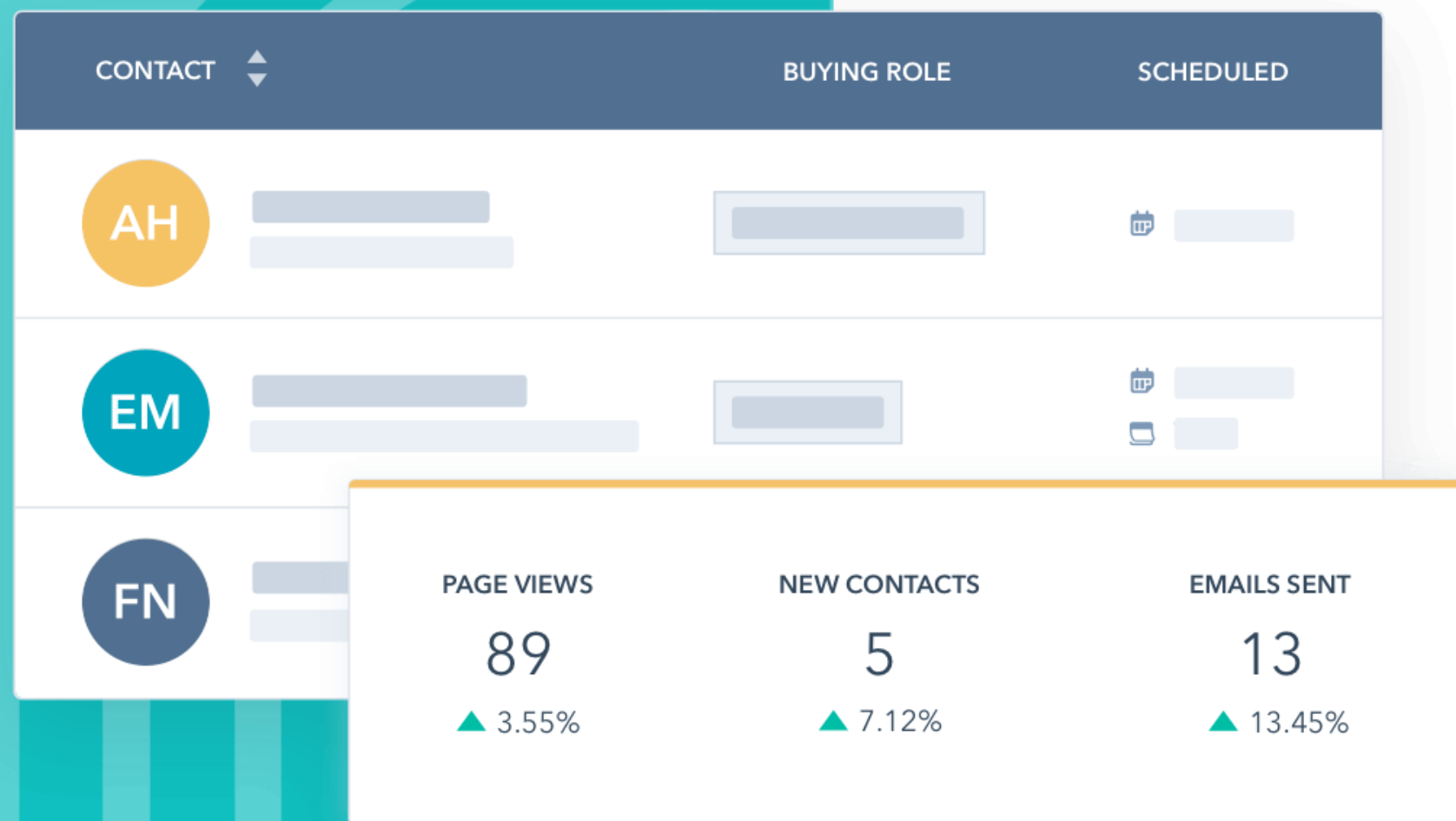
From Our Hands to Your Table

- 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)



Customer Relationship Management

2023 Initiatives



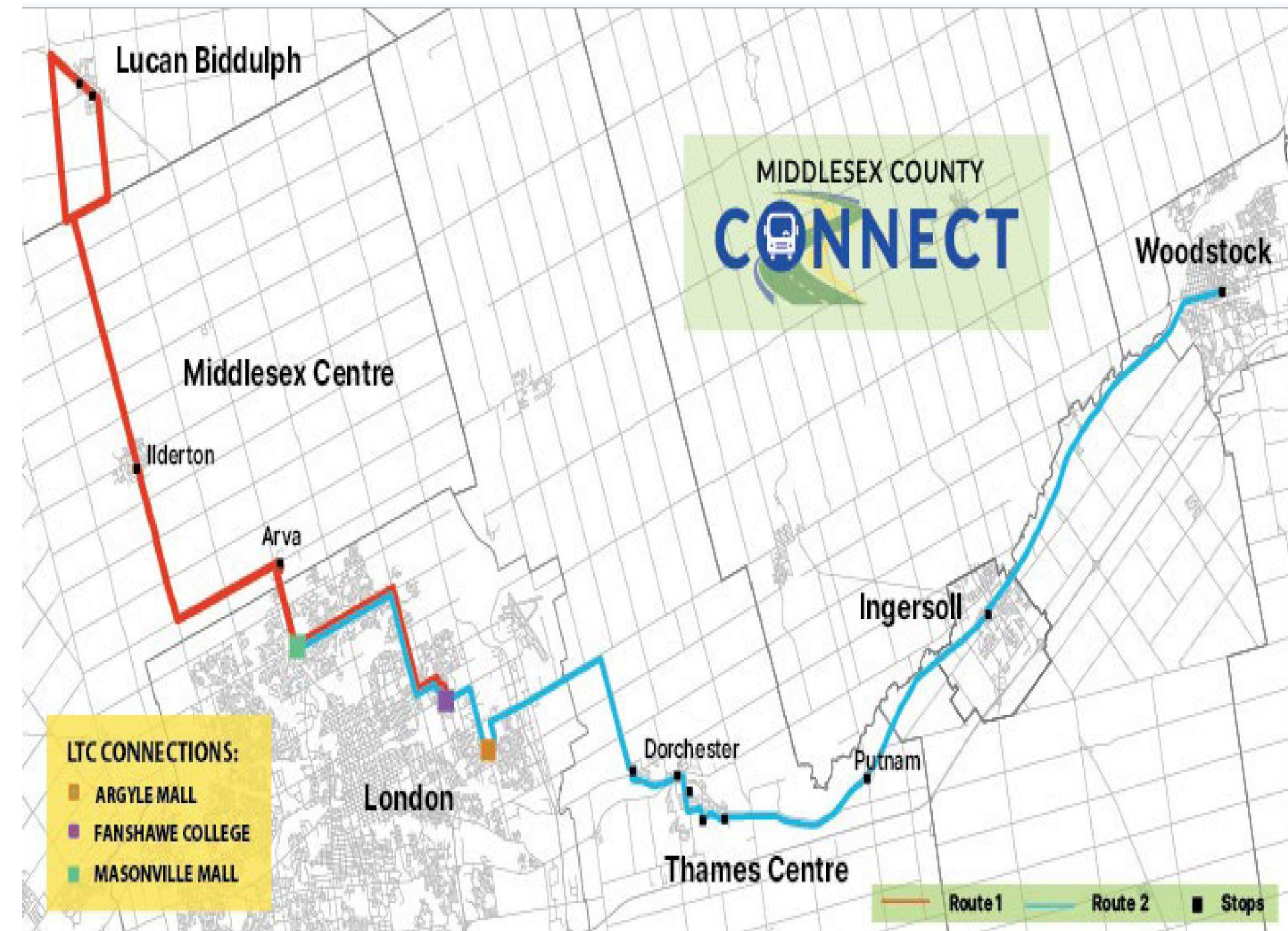
- Implementing a new CRM as an internal business intelligence platform for economic development and investment attraction



Public Transportation Pilot

2023 Initiatives

- Finalized Countywide Public Transportation Needs Assessment
- New Transportation Project Coordinator, Anum Maqsood on staff
- Reconfigured route from Woodstock to Dorchester to London
- Added new route from Lucan to Ilderton to London
- Planning regional forum in Spring 2024



Follow Along:

[Invest in Middlesex Website](#)

[Visit Middlesex Website](#)

[Work in Middlesex Website](#)



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