



Your monthly news & updates

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SWIFT Expands Broadband Access in the Region



Announcing Gary McNamara as SWIFT's New Board Chair

- Following the 2021 Annual General Meeting, Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) is pleased to announce that the SWIFT Board of Directors elected current board member Gary McNamara as the new Board Chair. McNamara, the Warden of Essex County, will serve for a one-year term effective April 9, 2021. The board extends its sincere gratitude to outgoing Chair David Mayberry who will remain on the Board as a Director.

SWIFT Announces \$15M Broadband Expansion Plan for Huron County

- Huron County to receive \$15 million in broadband upgrades to support 10 fibre-to-the-home projects.
- The newly announced projects will collectively service 335 kilometres of underserved roadway within the region to bring better broadband connectivity to 1,854 households and businesses.

SWIFT Broadband Projects Rolling out in Grey and Bruce Counties

- SWIFT announced that service providers EH!tel Networks and GBTEL have begun construction to bring high-speed internet access to more than 1,200 underserved homes and businesses within the counties of Grey and Bruce.

[View the full press releases](#)

Bruce County works to address home shortage



Bruce County officials are working to increase the supply and mix of homes in the region.

Published highlights from the latest council meeting reported The Plan the Bruce: Homes Project has identified thirteen policy directions for consideration. One direction relates to policies that permit additional residential units in single-detached, semi-detached, and rowhouse dwellings, and in an ancillary building to these dwelling types.

[Full news coverage](#) and [Plan the Bruce website](#)

Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation Rebrands as Invest WindsorEssex



WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation, the lead economic development agency for the region, has changed its name to Invest WindsorEssex. The rebrand reflects the continued efforts to promote Windsor-Essex as a competitive location for both foreign and local investment. The agency serves the region and its stakeholders through advancing economic growth and sustaining prosperity.

Invest WindsorEssex has also launched a new corporate website at investwindsoressex.com.

This past year has further stressed the need for online data tools and platforms to effectively communicate information to clients and partners. The new Invest WindsorEssex website will allow for easier access to data and information relevant to site selectors and local businesses for the purpose of investment, expansion and talent attraction.

[View the press release](#) and [Visit their new website](#)

Sarnia-Lambton Given Foreign Trade Zone Status



Sarnia-Lambton is now an official Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) Point.

This designation will boost efforts to grow the area as a hub for international trade and investment. This exciting announcement is also important in strengthening market access for existing businesses – this is essential as we continue to grow and diversify the local economy.

[View the press coverage](#)

Middlesex County COVID-19 Business Check-in Survey Report



On April 8th, 2021, Middlesex County's Economic Development Department released the 5-5-5 COVID-19 Business Check-In Survey and it was open to the public until April 12th, 2021.

The purpose of this survey was to collect front-line observations and input in order to provide high level reporting to all levels of government. The analyzed the data shown in this survey and developed a report to show the result of impact COVID-19 has left on local businesses at this time.

A total of 130 businesses completed the check-in survey.

[View the report](#)

Enhancing Capacity for the Next Generation of Leaders in Ontario

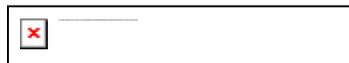
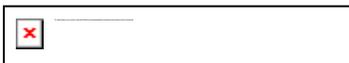
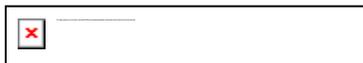


To address ongoing municipal and agricultural challenges and opportunities, we need strong leadership and governance in Ontario. However, communities and organizations struggle to engage and attract new individuals, and specifically the next generation under 40 years old, to positions of leadership.

This research project is part of an assignment for Class 18 of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program.

This survey is for representatives from municipal, agricultural and non-profit organizations who are willing to share best practices of how they are attracting the next generation of leaders. The deadline to complete the survey is Friday May 21st, 2021. Thank you for your participation.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSXQCKY>



Canadian Rural and Remote Housing and Homelessness Symposium

The first national event to elevate uniquely rural and remote approaches to tackling homelessness and housing.

The Rural Development Network and the Rural Ontario Institute are taking things virtual for the second Canadian Rural and Remote Housing and Homelessness Symposium.

Expect a unique program with over 30 concurrent workshops and panel sessions, and renowned keynote speakers including:

Ontario Supporting Business Investment and Prosperity

The Ontario government is proposing new red tape and burden reduction measures intended to minimize existing barriers on businesses and support a long-term recovery plan.

Today, Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction, announced Ontario's Spring Red Tape Reduction Package and introduced the Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act.

"Our government is committed to keeping Ontario workers and

Working from Home Productivity and Preferences

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a significant increase in telework since mid-March 2020. At the beginning of 2021, 32% of Canadian employees aged 15 to 69 worked most of their hours from home, compared with only 4% in 2016.

A change of such magnitude raises several questions. To what extent are teleworkers more or less productive now relative to when they were at their usual place of work? For those who are less productive, what are the main barriers to productivity? Once the pandemic is over, how many Canadians would prefer to

Architect Avi Friedman, named by Wallpaper Magazine as 1 of 10 people "most likely to change the way we live".

Jesse Thistle, best selling author of "From the Ashes", Indigenous Rights Activist and Assistant Professor of Metis Studies, York University.

Margaret Pfoh, CEO of Aboriginal Housing Management Association

families safe and healthy, while protecting the environment while laying the foundation for a strong recovery and an even stronger future in the years ahead," said Minister Sarkaria.

The proposed legislation is the latest in a series of actions that will help businesses and government deliver clear, modern and effective rules that promote public health, safeguard the environment and create jobs.

work most of their hours at home or outside the home?

Answers to these questions are crucial to inform discussions about the sustainability of telework in a post COVID-19 context.

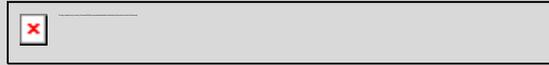
To shed light on these questions, this study uses the supplement to the Labour Force Survey of February 2021.

[Register now](#)

[View the press release](#)

[View the full report](#)

WOCFDCA: Regional Relief Recovery Fund Huge Success



The Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) was a huge help to all businesses in the Western Region of Ontario. The number of businesses that WOCFDCA was able to help with this fund was truly amazing.

All the hard work the CFDCs put into ensuring that the money was delivered cannot go unmentioned. Thank you to all for your hard work and dedication to your business communities. Believing in the value SMEs bring to communities all over is what makes the Community Futures Program one of the driving forces behind rural success.

[Learn more about your CFDC's here](#)

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