

WindsorEssex

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Regional Wine Report Provides Recommendations for Industry Growth

WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation issues report with partners for building industry capacity within Essex Pelee Island Coast Wine Country.

Windsor-Essex and Pelee Island, May 1, 2012 – A regional report developed by the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC), provides recommendations for building and supporting the wine industry.

“The day after we introduced our 5-Year Regional Economic Roadmap we were facilitating a strategic planning session with the wine industry,” explains **Ron Gaudet, CEO of the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation**. “The grape and wine sector is one of those unique industries that cuts across industry groups and provides new and diversified jobs. We see this industry as having significant potential for our region.”

The report was developed over the last year and saw input from a variety of regional partners including Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, St. Clair College, and the University of Windsor. The report also included provincial associations such as the Winery & Grower Alliance of Ontario and the Wine Council of Ontario who reviewed and provided input into the data provided.

“What this report provides are recommendations for both the region and wineries to help build our industry,” said **Tom O’Brien, President of Essex Pelee Island Coast (EPIC) Wine Growers Association** (formerly SWOVA). “For example, the need to develop a comprehensive regional signage strategy is critical for our success, as is fostering a strong relationship with our local educational institutions. Putting our efforts collaboratively into these recommendations will help to build success.”

The report also provides recommendations to promote the quality of wines, what business attraction opportunities should be pursued, and the importance of the Liquor License Act review that is up coming.

“It’s been a privilege to be working along so many passionate professionals in helping to put this report together,” said **Karolyn Hart, Vice President Marketing, Operations & Community Development for WEEDC**. “In reviewing all the historic data there was one key element that came up that the numbers in the report won’t reveal. That is, in many cases people questioned the viability for a thriving wine region where they live, and later couldn’t imagine their economic landscape without it.”

About the WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC) - The WindsorEssex Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC) is the lead economic development agency proudly representing Windsor-Essex, Ontario. One region with countless opportunities. One of the world’s Top 7 most intelligent communities (Intelligent Community Forum) and FDI’s 2011 #2 Best Economic Potential-Large City (Financial Times of London) Acting as a catalyst and network developer WEEDC works to positively impact the region by providing services including business attraction, retention and expansion, small business and entrepreneurial development, and community development activities.

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