

March 2025



OUR WORKFORCE

Not-for-Profit Organizations

Understanding the foundational structures of our community.



Workforce Planning Board
of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

Canada 



Ontario 

Our Vision: We envision the continuous development of a leading-edge workforce.

Our Mission: Engage partners to find solutions to local workforce development needs.

Thank you to the members of our 'Supporting the Non-Profit and Caring Sectors' project Advisory Team for their help and guidance in shaping this project.

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Not-for-Profit Organizations

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Not-for-Profit Organizations

Foreword – Charlene Hofbauer, Executive Director

As we have sat at strategic planning tables and discussed growing our workforce, our staff have realized that the multi-party, long-term plans we are discussing require strong communities. The cornerstones of these plans are health care, education, sports teams, community engagement, arts and more - the caring and non-profit sectors.

We know that these industries are overwhelmed. There are increased community demands for service and frozen funding levels. It is a challenge to find and retain workers amid burnout, compassion fatigue, and reduced volunteerism. It is this workforce that we are relying on to attract and retain new residents and provide services that differentiate our communities.

For all these amazing plans to succeed, we need data to determine what will strengthen organizations from a workforce perspective. This report is the beginning of exploring workforce challenges and local supply and demand in the caring and non-profit sectors. It is meant to be used with provincial and national data and resources that give us a broader sense of industry trends.

Are you interested in what comes next? Please reach out to any of our staff, including the report author Sonya Vanderheide (sonya@workforceplanningboard.com).

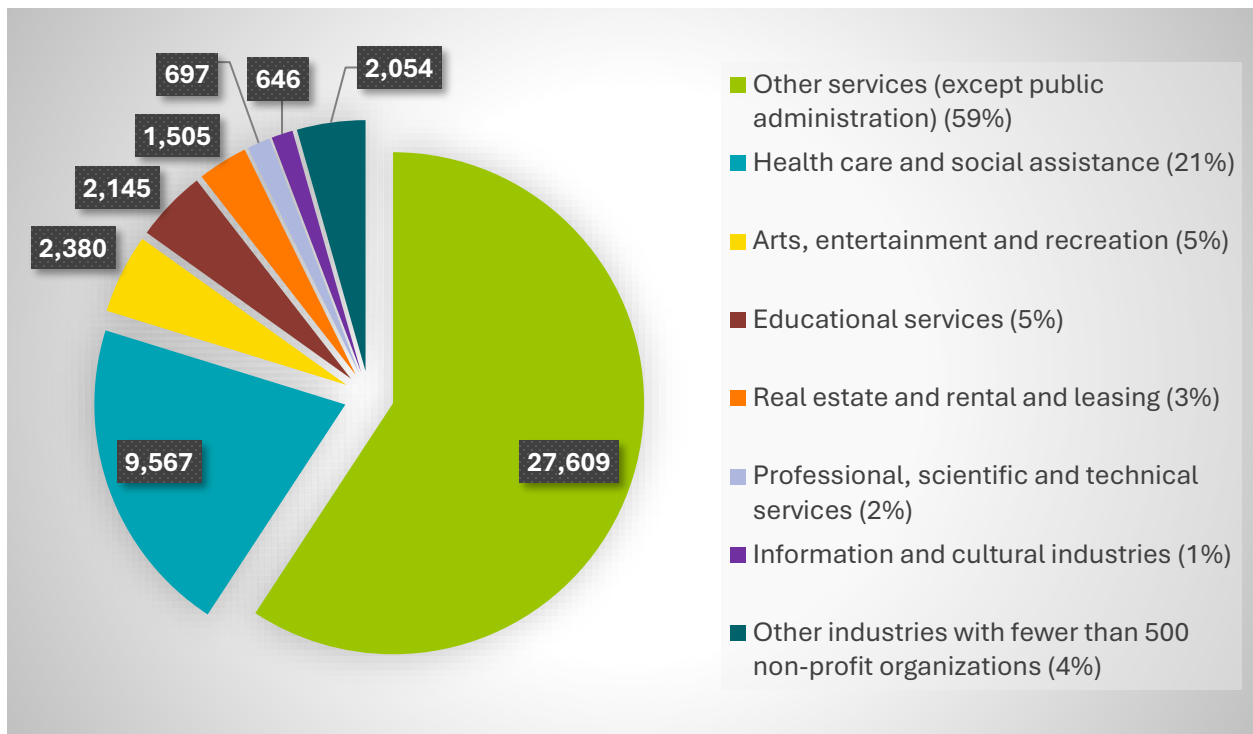
Not-for-Profit Organizations

Ontario

Non-Profits by Industry

In 2022, 80% of non-profit organizations in Ontario fell within just two industries (NAICS):

- 59% (27,503) in “Other services (except public administration)”. This can include:
 - Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional organizations
 - Personal and laundry services
 - Repair and maintenance
 - Private households
- 21% in “Health care and social assistance”



The ‘Other industries’ slice of the above pie included the remaining eleven industry categories: Retail trade (390 non-profits), Finance and insurance (260), Accommodation and food services (243), Transportation and warehousing (185), Construction (176), Management of companies and enterprises (142), Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (94), Wholesale trade (56), Utilities (33), Manufacturing (33), and Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (1).

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0108-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by industry.](#)




Not-for-Profit Organizations

Non-Profits by Activity

Between 2019 and 2022, Statistics Canada has data estimates for non-profits sorted by primary activity, using the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations (ICNPO).

This chart shows:

- most recent data estimates available (2022)
- the % change over three years (2019-2022).

Primary Activity	# Non-Profits 		# Employees 		Revenues (x \$1,000) 	
	2022	Change	2022	Change	2022	Change
Culture and arts	1,634	-6%	25,322	-26%	2,248,829	-2%
Sports, recreation, and social clubs	10,405	-1%	65,532	-3%	7,336,471	11%
Education and research	2,362	0%	563,752	4%	49,456,732	2%
Health	1,774	11%	355,839	17%	30,393,440	15%
Social Services	7,352	26%	147,803	-11%	9,315,182	-11%
Environment	181	18%	3,553	28%	210,954	29%
Development and housing	2,688	2%	57,741	5%	11,434,622	-5%
Law, advocacy, and politics	1,127	13%	12,560	11%	1,515,245	4%
Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion	4,315	11%	15,361	8%	9,308,509	-56%
Religion	9,344	0%	37,902	-9%	4,478,067	20%
Business and professional associations, unions	3,314	-1%	32,662	5%	4,969,314	-21%
Not classified elsewhere	2,107	15%	41,199	29%	2,834,231	-4%

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0109-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by activity.](#)

Not-for-Profit Organizations

Pandemic Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic hit most businesses hard in 2020. The only not-for-profit organizations that experienced revenue growth in 2020 were in the “Religion” (8%) and “Not classified elsewhere” (13%) groups. Looking further into the data, most organizations had some recovery in 2021, except “Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism” which fell -8% in 2021 and another -25% in 2022.

Negative Change (2019-2022)

- **Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion** has suffered a significant loss in revenue (-56%) since 2019. Coupled with employment growth (8%) and an increase in number of businesses (11%) over that same three-year period, sustainability in this sub-sector is a concern.
- **Business and professional associations, unions** had the second most significant decrease in revenue (-21%), a slight decrease in the number of businesses (-1%), but an increase of 5% in employment.
- **Culture and arts** businesses have had decreases across the board. A slight decrease in revenue (-2%), a decrease in number of organizations (-6%), and a significant decrease in number of people employed in this sector (-26%). In three years, this sub-sector lost 8,892 employees across Ontario.
- The number of **Social services** organizations jumped significantly (26%), with most of that growth (21%) happening in 2021. However, the number of employees and revenue each decreased by -11%. More organizations are now competing over a smaller pool of available funds.

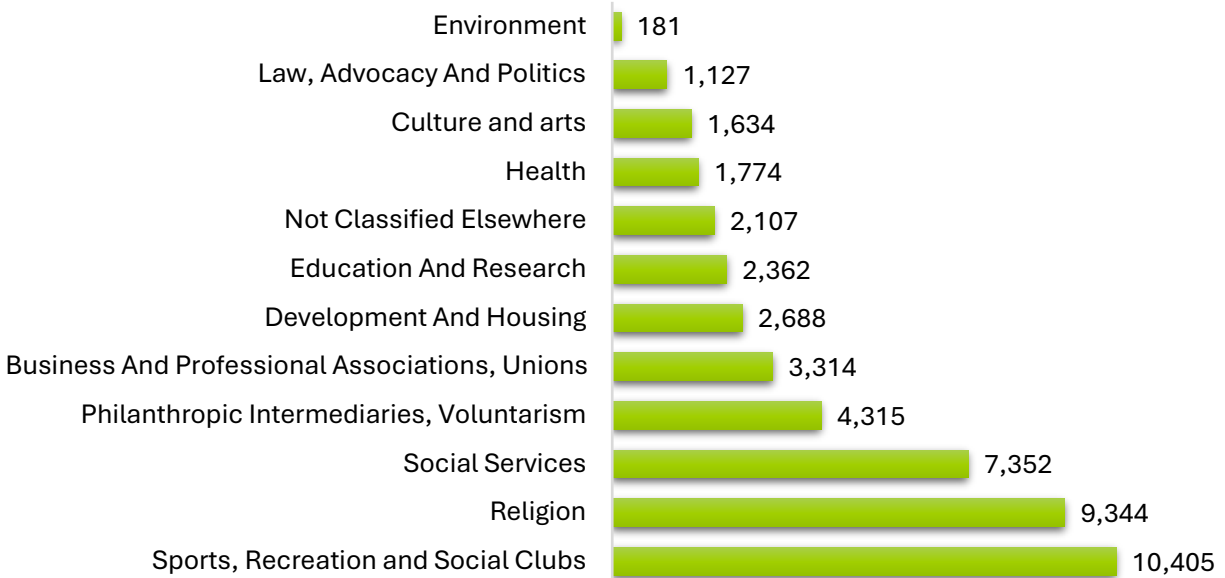
Positive Change (2019-2022)

- **Environment**-focused non-profit organizations appear to have the healthiest change, with significant growth in the number of organizations and employees, and revenue growth at a similar pace. This group saw a remarkable 36% jump in revenue in 2021 (from \$147,112,000 to \$199,899,000), and another 6% jump in 2022.
- **Health** organizations also grew in number, employment, and revenue, although revenue grew a little slower than the growth rate in employment.
- The number of **Law, advocacy, and politics** organizations grew, as did employment. Revenue grew slightly.
- **Education and research** did not shift in number but experienced marginal employment and revenue increases.

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0109-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by activity.](#)

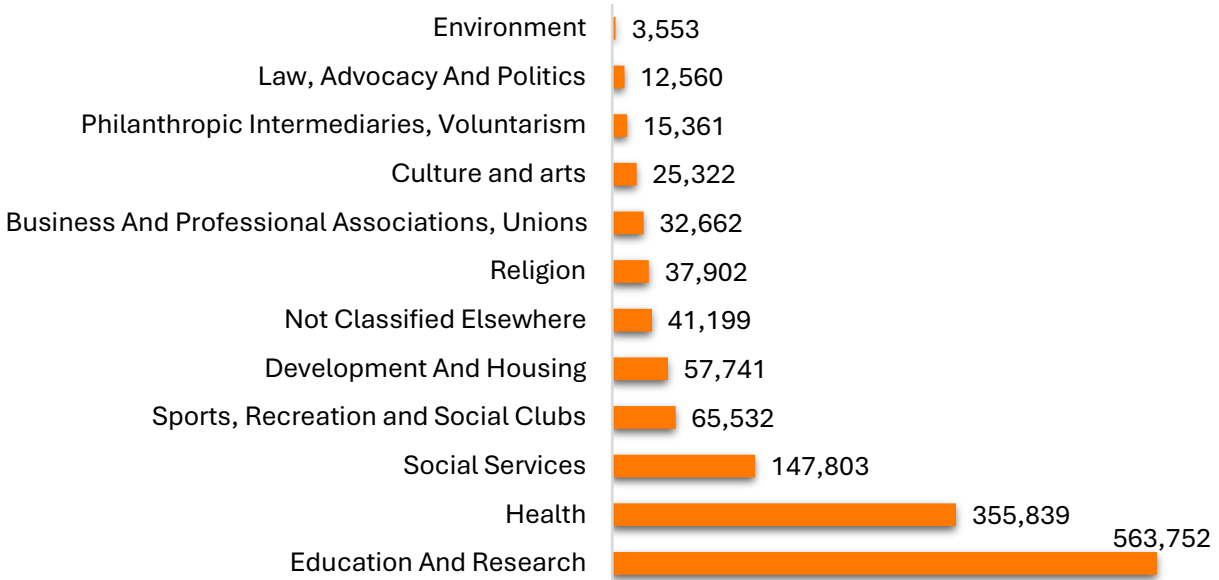
Not-for-Profit Organizations

Number of Non-Profits by Activity Type (Ontario 2022)



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0109-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by activity.](#)

Number of People Employed by Activity Type (Ontario 2022)

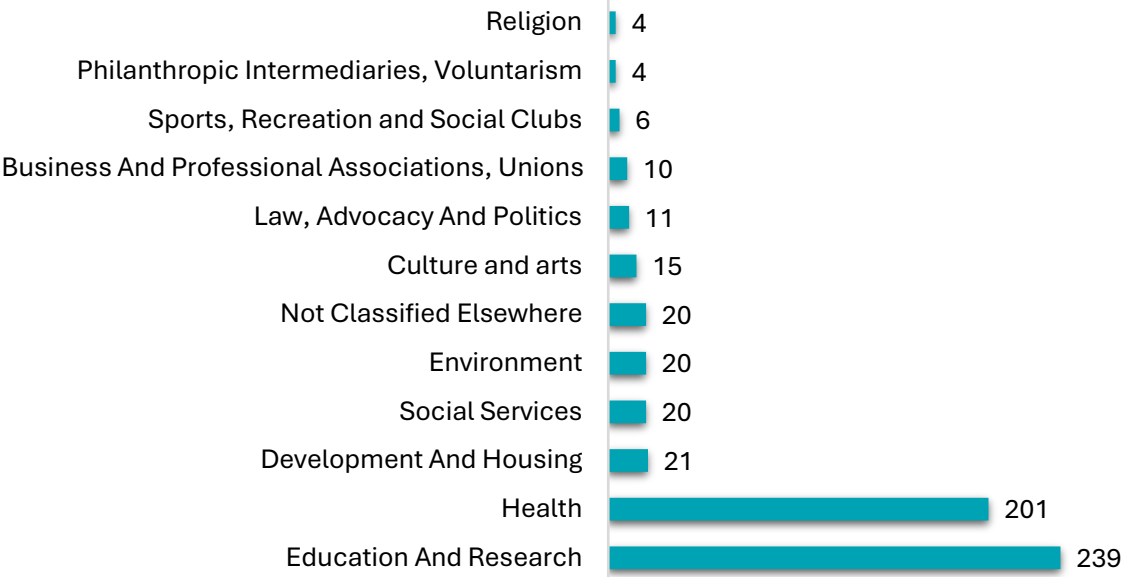


Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0109-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by activity.](#)

Not-for-Profit Organizations

Average Number of Employees by Activity Type (Ontario 2022)

Workforce Planning Board staff divided the ‘Number of People Employed’ by the ‘Number of Non-Profit Organizations’ per activity type to estimate a typical staff size for each non-profit organization type.



Source: WPB calculations using data from Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0109-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by activity.](#)

This adds needed context to the specific challenges these organizations may face.

- A small employer may need employees with a diverse skill set who can “do it all”, and find operational costs a struggle
- Large organizations may need niche experts and ways to offer open communication across large staff groups with diverse needs and opinions

Not-for-Profit Organizations

Local Perspective: Waterloo, Wellington, and Dufferin

Nearly 136,000 active non-profit organizations were operating across Canada in 2022. From 2021 to 2022, the number of non-profits in Canada increased by 0.9% in urban areas and decreased by 1.9% in rural areas.

Over the same 2021-2022 year, we found in our census divisions that

- **Wellington** was very similar to Canada-wide figures (+0.8% urban; -2% rural)
- **Dufferin** matched these directions but at stronger rates (+22% urban; -30% rural)
- **Waterloo** showed the reverse and demonstrated remarkable growth in its rural area of Wellesley (-1.7% urban; +200% rural)

of Non-profits by Geography

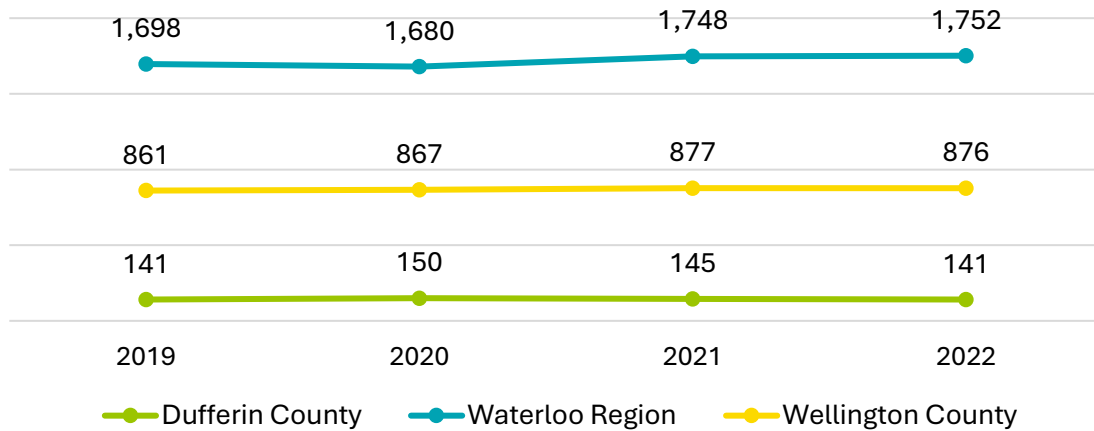
Geography (Urban & Rural)	2019	2020	2021	2022	% change over three years (2019 to 2022)
Dufferin - Urban Mono, Orangeville	81	90	81	99	22%
Dufferin - Rural East Garafraxa, Amaranth, Grand Valley, Mulmur, Melancthon, Shelburne	63	66	60	42	-33%
Waterloo - Urban North Dumfries, Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, Wilmot, Woolwich	1,695	1,671	1,737	1,707	1%
Waterloo - Rural Wellesley	9	15	15	45	400%
Wellington - Urban Puslinch, Guelph, Guelph/Eramosa, Centre Wellington	717	717	726	732	2%
Wellington - Rural Erin, Mapleton, Minto, Wellington North	150	150	147	144	-4%

Source: Statistics Canada. [The Daily: Non-profit organizations in rural and small town Canada, 2022 \(Released: 2025-02-17\)](#) and [Rural Canada Non-Profits: Interactive Dashboard](#) (accessed Feb 28, 2025).

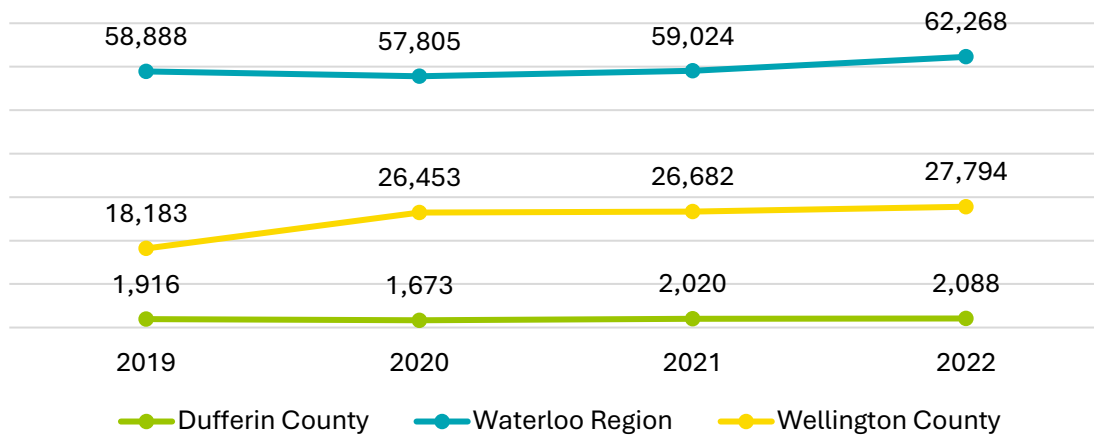
'Urban' and 'Rural' labels were assigned by Statistics Canada.

Not-for-Profit Organizations

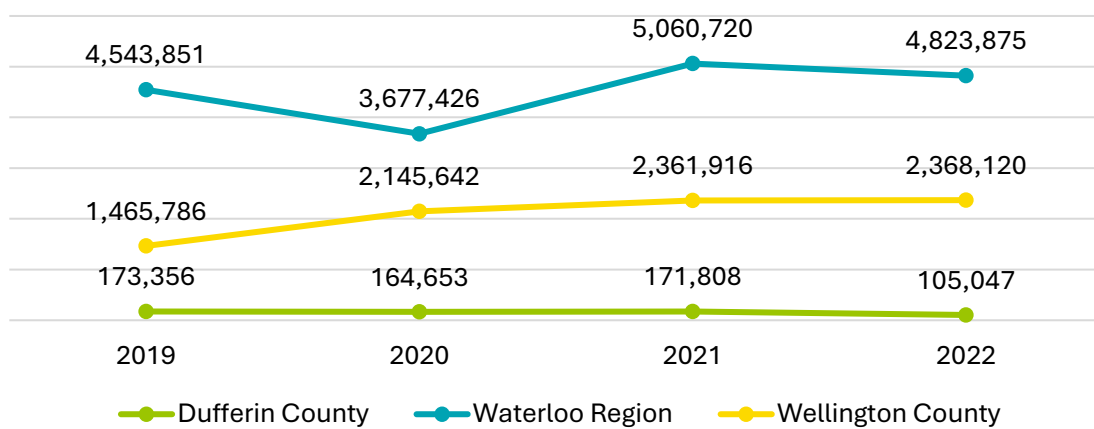
Number of Non-Profit Businesses



Number of People Employed



Revenue (x1,000)



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 45-10-0107-01 Rural Canada non-profits, estimates of active non-profit organization counts, revenues and employment by geography.](#)

Not-for-Profit Organizations

Summary

Growth by Census Division

- Dufferin's growth is small due to smaller non-profit numbers, but the percentage growth is outpacing growth elsewhere. Are there unmet needs in the community causing this non-profit growth?
- Wellington, Guelph included, is seeing non-profit numbers grow at the same rate as the province. This is healthy growth as revenues are also growing.
- Waterloo is not in line with the broader trends. There is potential movement out of urban areas. This could be about better serving clients in targeted communities or due to the rising costs of urban spaces. Waterloo urban centres may need to look at where they can identify appropriate space for non-profits to thrive.

Workforce

- Despite fewer organizations, Education and Health Care non-profits tend to be larger and employ more people.
- Development & Housing and Social Services have large workforces but also many organizations. These organizations provide 'basics of life' services in a community.
- Sports, Arts, and Culture have many organizations but a smaller workforce. They may rely on volunteers to compensate. When attracting and retaining new residents with a fulfilling way of life, these organizations are the ones we rely on.

Moving Forward

- How do we help support non-profit organizations to provide the services we need from a workforce perspective? Having a workforce to meet community needs relies heavily on revenues, often from funders, and some key sectors have seen falling revenues.
- If non-profits fail and close, how will the community be affected? We have already seen that the lack of coaches limits the ability of sports organizations to organize teams and games for registrants. If consistent service cannot be guaranteed, for both basic needs and quality of life services, could that affect local population retention rates?
- Philanthropic intermediaries, like foundations, have seen a big decline in revenues. These organizations often fund smaller ones. Sometimes the programs funded allow for the piloting of ideas that later become innovative programming. How will this affect the local non-profit landscape and its ability to attempt new approaches and innovative programming?



Workforce Planning Board
of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

73 Water Street North, Suite 407
Cambridge, ON N1R 7L6

www.workforceplanningboard.com
www.findyourjob.ca

info@workforceplanningboard.com