



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ontario investing in job training in Perth-Wellington

Big investments to create new local opportunities for skilled trades for adults and youth

(Perth-Wellington) – New job-training opportunities are coming to Perth-Wellington, Perth-Wellington MPP Randy Pettapiece announced today at Smith Steel & Fabrication in Atwood. The Province of Ontario is investing over \$1.8 million to create a regional Technology and Skills Learning Hub. It is also contributing up to \$92,464 to the Technical Training Group (TTG) to help local youth find hands-on training in welding and metal fabrication.

“These investments will help many more people get the training they need—and will continue to do so for many years to come,” Pettapiece said. “Best of all, they will be able to get that training close to home, right here in Perth-Wellington. That’s fantastic news for local families, our economy, and the future of our small communities. It will help people land good-paying jobs.”

Funding will come from the Ontario Ministry of Labour’s Skills Development Fund. Pettapiece made the announcements on behalf of Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

“Our government is working for workers every day,” said Minister McNaughton. “Through our Skills Development Fund, we’re giving workers the training they need to fill in-demand jobs, earn bigger paycheques and advance in rewarding careers that make their families and communities stronger.”

The provincial government will contribute up to \$1,843,132 toward the Technology and Skills Learning Hub.

Pettapiece recognized the Municipality of North Perth, which submitted the proposal to create the Technology and Skills Learning Hub: “I want to thank the Municipality of North Perth—the mayor, council and staff—for their vision and I congratulate them on their successful proposal,” Pettapiece stated.

“Ecstatic isn’t, perhaps, my usual posture, but today it certainly is!” exclaimed North Perth Mayor Todd Kasenberg. “Thank you from our future, thank you for all who will benefit from this amazing intervention to skill the people of North Perth and our neighbouring areas.”

“We are excited about what this Hub means in the life of our community,” Kasenberg added. “We see support for those who are looking for work and for those who are working and want to re-skill, up-skill, and work towards strength in transactional and transformation skills, sometimes called 21st Century Skills.”

The municipality plans to create a new learning space in Atwood’s Elma Memorial Community Centre. Kasenberg said it will support participants in addressing barriers they face in their learning journeys.

Currently, North Perth residents must travel over 50 kilometres to access any form of training. That distance is itself a barrier to those without a vehicle or those who are disabled, Pettapiece explained. The project will also make the area more competitive, enhancing employers’ and individuals’ access to training, tools and education.

Pettapiece also announced a provincial contribution of up to \$92,464 to the Technical Training Group. Funds will be used to train ten youth, providing local hands-on training in welding and metal fabrication. The program is designed to help them attain full-time jobs and apprenticeship opportunities in manufacturing within 25 weeks.

“Technical Training Group (TTG) is grateful to be awarded funding to deliver a new Welding and Metal Pathway Program in North Perth,” said Cavell Fraser, Executive Director of TTG. “This locally based, tuition-free training opportunity is specifically geared towards underrepresented youth 16-25 to explore a career in the skilled trades. Through TTG’s long-standing partnership with the Avon Maitland District School Board, in-class training takes place at Listowel District Secondary School, allowing TTG to utilize their tech facilities when not in use.”

The program also includes paid-work placements with local employers, which can lead to full-time employment and apprenticeships.

“There is a huge shortage of skilled workers in Perth County and TTG’s incredibly successful model of collaboration with government, education, business and our community partners allows us to deliver the hands-on practical and safety training needed to support our local manufacturers,” Fraser explained.

Data suggests that the need to replace retiring workers is greater for skilled trades workers than for other occupations. In 2016, nearly one in three journeypersons in Ontario were aged 55 years or older. In the fall of 2021, there were more than 360,000 jobs vacant in Ontario.

For more information on the Skills Development Fund: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/skills-development-fund>

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