



THE MONIESON CENTRE

CREATING VALUE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Discovery Workshop Report Grenville

November 5, 2008

INTRODUCTION

This report is part of The Monieson Centre's Knowledge Impact in Society (KIS) Project, a three-year endeavour to connect academic knowledge with economic development needs in Eastern Ontario. The report is a summary of information collected at a 3-hour workshop in Kemptville, ON. Fifteen community leaders and business people from the Grenville region gave feedback on their community's economic development needs and research questions. This information, along with similar information gathered in 14 other communities in Eastern Ontario, will guide the research pursued over the course of the KIS project.

The workshop was hosted by Heather Lawless, Executive Director of the Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation. Dr. Yolande Chan, Director, The Monieson Centre, introduced the KIS project and Erik Lockhart, Associate Director, Queen's Executive Decision Centre, facilitated the workshop. Special thanks belong to Carolyn Kuipers Law and Jeff Dixon for their coordination of the workshop. The KIS project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. For more information, visit www.easternontarioknowledge.ca.



QUESTION 1

What are the challenges and needs with respect to rural economic development and making Grenville a vital community?

Top Issues:

1. **Fragmentation of efforts.** There is a need for integration of economic development activities among Grenville communities that have traditionally been individual development silos.
2. **Small business needs.** Business start-ups have various challenges including: capital, labour, access to resources, punitive property tax structures etc.
3. **Exodus of knowledge workers.** There is an out-migration of professional knowledge workers and skills and we have no strategy to stop/reverse this. For example, we do not have the social-health infrastructure that these folks are looking for.
4. **Resources for skilled trades.** We are need of education, training and information on the benefits of skilled trades.
5. **Entrepreneurial black hole.** There is insufficient awareness of funding, training, and support available to entrepreneurs and new business owners for business development.
6. **Infrastructure and utilities.** Improved cell and broadband connectivity are particular priorities.
7. **Focus on the forest potential.** We need to understand access to cellulosic biomass for use in energy development projects. This includes under-utilized forest resources and agricultural land that could be used to grow biomass for energy and used to replace overreliance on fossil-fuel based energy sources that result in dollars flowing out of the community;
8. **Youth retention and engagement.**
9. **Attitude adjustment.** There is strong resistance to change and a massive urban/rural divide in terms of objectives and needs.

QUESTION 2

If you had access to our researchers for a year, what would you ask them to study? Given the immensity of the research “wish list” and scarcity of available resources, what are your research priorities?

1. **What’s our niche?** Identify the unique economic opportunities in our region, i.e. what makes us different and could give us a competitive advantage? It would be useful to define the five main strengths of the region which we should be promoting to attract new private capital investment. In addition, what industry should we be focusing on in our community?
2. **What can we learn from demographics?** We need a central repository of development and demographic data for regional use. What existing databases are currently available to businesses (i.e., Rural Secretariat database)?
3. **What are the attributes we seek?** Create a priority list of successful businesses/industries that we might be able to migrate here from the city. Start with identifying the characteristics and attributes of potential businesses.
4. **What drives migration?** Explore immigration/migration strategies to drive economic growth including youth exodus, i.e.: why do people move, what are they taking with them, what potential resource is our community losing in the process, etc.
5. **What is the potential of value-added wood products?** Outline best practices on the development of bio-based and wood-based value-added products and cleantech industries. Highlight emerging/different business models for forest-based businesses and connections to emerging energy technologies.
6. **How can we support entrepreneurship?** Identify what programs are available for new businesses/entrepreneurs and how we can successfully get the information to them. For example, conduct a market study for knowledge of available resources and needs that should be addressed for small business start up.
7. **How can the various community groups, economic development boards and levels of government in our community collaborate?** Research why fragmentation takes place and how to bring consensus to the development process (i.e.: economic development groups, local communities, county administration, etc.).
8. **What is the relationship between education and skilled trades?** What are educational institutes doing to address the shortage of skilled workers? To what extent do Guidance Counselors direct students to take post secondary education in areas where shortages exist?
9. **What are other communities doing?** What best practices of integrated community sustainable planning (ICSP) are being used in similar sized regions with multiple communities?
10. **What tourism opportunities exist for us?** Create a tourism development study, including an analysis of opportunities and best practices.
11. **How can we succeed as a bedroom or hub community?** What issues, opportunities, and best practices exist for us as a bedroom community? What models exist for transitioning to a "hub community"?

QUESTION 3

What local resources (organizations, reports, past work etc.) might contribute to addressing the issues identified above?

1. What's our niche?

- Variety of studies have been undertaken across Leeds & Grenville (Economic Analysis, Strategic Plans, Skills Trades) - Cty of Leeds & Grenville.
- Proximity of the Capital city and its advantages (ex: taxes are lower, health, education and physical security are better than city).
- Brockville Chamber of Commerce (contact Dianna Dodge).
- Industrial parkland (contact Patrick Sayeau, Councillor)
- First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE) and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). (Contact town of Prescott, Rob Haller)
- BUILD CANADA INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (Contact Patrick Sayeau Councillor)
- Opportunities that exist to partner with the assets already developed at the Port of Prescott Elevator. Examples include Rural Agricultural products, wood-related products, aggregate products, goods moved by Ship/Rail/Truck. Also the acceptance of materials into the Port by ship. (Contact Bob Hennessey, Port Manager)
- Two bridges to USA - main Hwy 401, Hwy 416, Hwy 15 Rideau Corridor, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Arch Biosphere (Contact Don Ross) and Rideau Heritage Tourism Association (Contact Anne Marie Harbec).
- Greenfield Ethanol at Edwardsburg cardinal, Port of Prescott and available industrial development land for "green" focus.

2. What can we learn from demographics?

- 1000 Islands Region Workforce Development Board (contact Sandra Wright)
- City of Leeds & Grenville Economic Development is prepared to be the central repository of economic and development data.
- United Counties Educational Development Center (EDC) Dept (contact Cheetam)

3. What are the attributes we seek?

- OMAFRA - The Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program (contact Brian Ritchie at 613 283-7002)

4. What drives migration?

- CIC Small Community Toolkit (contact Allen McGuire)

5. What is the potential of value-added wood products?

- SUNY - Dr. Tom Ammadon biomass and purpose grown willow
- Northern Clay Belt Agri Network Bob Cheetham (Smooth Rock Falls) Biomass and Land Inventory database
- Renfrew CFDC on Biomass development
- EOMF Tony Bull (tbull@magma.ca) 613-722-7087 as liaison to address this question
- Brian Barkley from Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) 613-258-3428, is connected to:
 - o Dr. Ed White and SUNY research

- o FSC certification
- o Chain of command
- o Sustainable forestry
- o U of T contacts
- o Lemondade report regarding opportunities after Domtar plant closed
- Ontario East Wood Centre and Eco-Industrial Park: Brian Barkley, Sandra lawn 613-925-5568, Frank Noccey (Edwardsburgh/Cardinal Council and others from Edwardsburgh/Cardinal 658-3055
- Dr. Peter Hall EOMF Science committee regarding international bio-energy effort
- Technology road Maps - Denny Doyle of Doyletech
- Development of bio mass products: Patrick Sayeau, Diane Mckinnon of Renfrew County Community Futures Development (RCCFDC), Chris Reese, Dr. David Deyou

6. How can we support entrepreneurship?

- ServiceOntario centres, i.e. Brockville, Smiths Falls
- Local Chambers of Commerce: North Grenville Chamber - Executive Director Wendy Chapman - 613-258-4838
- Leeds Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre Contact Wendy Onstein 613-342-8772 x 470 wonstein@brockville.com
- Community Development Corporation 1,000 Islands and Grenville. (Contact Tom Russell or Heather Lawless)
- Eastern Ontario Development Program (EODP)
- OMAFRA
- Development Model: Greenfield Ethanol and the township created a successful partnership. Contact Patrick Sayeau, Councillor

7. How can the various community groups, economic development boards and levels of government in our community collaborate?

- Rural Secretariat funding program
- RED (OMAFRA) funding

8. What is the relationship between education and skilled trades?

- Skills Development Canada
- St. Lawrence College Community College Centre for Training & Development - Loraine McKinley
- Upper Canada District School Board
- Catholic District School Board of EO
- Algonquin College
 - Algonquin offers a Career Sampler program in the summer for 14-17 yr olds (one-week camps). It is offered to the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB), but most of the uptake is from the Ottawa school boards. (Contact Lisa Taylor)
 - Currently a major expansion beginning for a new trades and technology centre at Woodroffe Campus of Algonquin
 - Pembroke undergoing new campus feasibility study (funding dependent)
 - Perth campus expansion planned, but no funding yet
- University of Guelph Kemptville Campus

- Ministry of Education
- Community Future (CF) intern programs
- Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) programs. (Contact Karen Gunn, Lucie Rondeau)

9. What are other communities doing?

- City of Leeds & Grenville - Frontenac Arch Biosphere
- Annapolis valley International Customer Service Professionals (ICSP)
- Whistler ICSP
- Green Municipal Fund
- Calgary ICSP
- Contact Bob Cheetham, Don Ross

10. What tourism opportunities exist for us?

- Brockville chamber of commerce did a tourism study in 2007
- County of Leeds & Grenville Economic Development is taking a lead towards regional tourism development; contact Anne Weir

11. How can we succeed as a bedroom or hub community?

- We have top notch recreational, educational and health resources
- Quinelle is a world class golf course residential community

12. What are motivators to employment?

- Department of Human Resources and Social Development (HRSDC)
- Local Employment Resource Centres - KEYS, ON-TRAC - Job Connect, CSE Consulting

In-kind support:

- City of Leeds & Grenville - space, in-kind time, coordination
- Bill Gooch office space for student

QUESTION 4

If this project is to be successful, what are the things that you would see in place in the next two years?

Feasible Indicators

1. County of Leeds & Grenville Economic Development should lead in a successful Region wide ICSP process.
 - KIS can contribute information to ED
2. Development of an "evergreen" repository of ED resources available to the region.
3. Hwy 416 Corridor would be developed as the "Green" Corridor with a cluster of energy, bio-based and wood based value added products producers based on best practices.
 - KIS can provide info & models.
4. Greater collaboration among and between communities on economic develop strategies and increased focus on business attraction and retention.
5. Research provided would generate a focus for our economic development committee
6. Resource document for each "topic" on where to find experts, success stories, models etc.
 - KIS is developing knowledge synthesis reports.
7. The research provided would augment local knowledge and lead us in a direction that would achieve results. Start up would be immediate and would provide support to committee.
 - Information is being collected at www.easternontarioknowledge.ca
8. Framework for sharing economic development information, best practices, etc. between Eastern Ontario communities and stakeholders. And reporting to each other on an ongoing basis (i.e. Collaboration).
9. Greater collaboration between all educational, training and research institutions in the region.
10. A positive approach and outlook to community economic development.
11. The region will have benefited from a collaborative approach to motivating people throughout the region towards a common vision for Leeds & Grenville.
12. County Council will have recognized the need to work collectively towards development and support the unique opportunities that exist within the area.
13. Positive hope for the future - with a concrete, well developed and promoted plan for Economic Development.
14. Individuals, have a greater understanding of how interdependent we all are and a sense of trust has been developed.
15. Solutions for the top 5 burning issues.
 - KIS is developing knowledge syntheses for the most top burning issues across Eastern Ontario.
16. Researchers that are knowledgeable to the area.
17. County of L&G Economic Development would be the repository of demographic and development data for the entire region. Web based user-friendly system that is maintained and updated on a continuous basis.
18. Query Orientated Knowledge Database of Statistics (provincial government).
19. Establish Research & Innovation Centre - Value Added Products from Wood.
 - KIS can highlight best practices.
20. The County of Leeds & Grenville will be know as a leader in the economic development field with a regional based approach to supporting individual communities and providing value-added services.

21. A strategy for new wood based industrial development incorporating new technologies and involving existing forest based businesses and structures. This should include funding and other support structures available from the provincial and federal government.
 - KIS can support through best practices and potential strategies reports.
22. Strategic Plan for Economic Development based on findings.
 - KIS can provide info/input.
23. Bring together the Eco Industrial Park in Edwardsburgh/Cardinal Township-Johnstown to add to anchor industry Greenfield Ethanol Johnstown Inc.

Appendix A – Rough Ideas for Question 1

What are the pressing issues, challenges and needs with respect to rural economic development and making the Grenville Region a vital community (economic, social, health)?

Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 6) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 19

Total number of voters (N): 11 teams at the computers

Votes	Rank	Issue	Findings
10	1	Fragmentation of efforts	The need for integration of economic development activities amongst Grenville communities that have traditionally been individual development silos. // Coming up with a focus and direction for economic development. // Funding support for strategic planning for economic development.
9	2	Small business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address needs of business start-ups, i.e. capital, labor. // Is there sufficient income to support growth of home-based small businesses? // Punitive property tax structure for small business and agriculture. • Lack of understanding as to how business needs and political realities can be successfully combined in the creation of new successful enterprises.
8	3	Exodus of knowledge workers	Strategies to reverse/address outmigration (& attraction). // Social and health infrastructure to retain/attract stable population. // Employment opportunities - higher salaried positions. // The ability to have people to work, play and live in the same community.
6	4	Need resources for skilled trades	Parents and High School Guidance Counselors need more information on the benefits of skilled trades.
6	4	Entrepreneurial black hole	Lack of leadership holding both money and ideas and the skills of entrepreneurship. // Lack of awareness of funding available to entrepreneurs and new business owners for business development.
4	6	Infrastructure and utilities	Infrastructure and utilities access e.g. connectivity.
4	6	Focus on the forest potential	Research of available access to cellulosic biomass for use in energy development projects. // Under-utilized forest resources and agricultural land that could be used to grow biomass for energy and used to replace overreliance on fossil-fuel based energy sources that result in dollars flowing out of the community.
3	8	Youth retention	Poor youth retention / engagement.
3	8	Resistance to change	Urban/rural divide - objectives and needs very different.
2	10	Chasing unrealistic dreams	Need for focus on achievable, doable stuff.
2	10	Reluctance of community to make financial commitment	Need to spend money to make changes.

2	10	Global economy impacts	E.g. plant closures to Mexico & elsewhere. // Need tariffs on goods entering Canada from China/Japan.
2	10	Aging workforce	Facing an Aging Workforce due to baby boomers reaching retirement age. // Full understanding of demographic profiles.
2	10	Development of Highway 401 and 416	Development of the Highway 401 and Highway 416 areas across the region for new energy and bio-products based industries (green development designation). // Research for development of the Hwy 416 corridor as a transportation logistics corridor.
1	15	Technological advances	Technological advances (knowledge and costs challenges). // Endorse & implement existing technology already operating successfully in the world.
0	16	Education	Higher cost in rural areas.
0	16	Employment opportunities	Higher salaried positions.
0	16	Insufficient presence as tourist destination	-

Appendix B – Rough Ideas for Question 2

Question 2: If you had access to our researchers for a year, what would you ask them to study? Given the immensity of the research “wish list” and scarcity of available resources, what are your research priorities?¹

Note: prior to voting, the group brainstormed questions. Below is the result of selecting top questions

Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 6) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 19

Total number of voters (N): 18

Votes	Rank	Findings
13	1	What are the unique economic opportunities in our region -- i.e. what makes us different and could give us a competitive advantage? // What are the five main strengths (resources, people, location, etc) of my region which we should be promoting to attract new private capital investment? // What industry should we be focusing on in our community?
12	2	Researcher to develop a central repository of development and demographic data for regional use. // Note: Community info database (Rural Secretariat). // Current database available to existing business. // Manufacturing firms & economic development agencies.
10	3	Create a priority list of successful businesses/industries that we might be able to migrate here from the city (characteristics and attributes of potential businesses).
8	4	Exploration of immigration/migration strategies to drive economic growth. // Out-migration of youth - why, what are they taking with them, what potential resource is our community losing in the process. // Aging population in workforce.
8	4	Best practices on development of bio-based and wood-based value-added products and Cleantech industries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging/different business models for forest-based businesses, linked to emerging energy technologies; • Technology roadmap for economic development on value added wood products; and • Commercializing research e.g. pilot projects in value added wood.
8	4	Identify what programs are available for new businesses/entrepreneurs and how do we successfully get the information to them. // A market study for knowledge of resources available and needs that need to be addressed for small business start up (e.g. are you aware of resources available etc. where do people go to get info? searching patterns).
7	7	Research to understand why fragmentation takes place and how to bring consensus to the development process (efforts among economic development (ED) groups and communities).
7	7	What are educational institutes doing to address the shortage of skilled workers? // To what extent do guidance counselors direct students to take post secondary education in areas where shortages exist?

¹ Items in **bold** represent questions chosen as best ideas to be referred to the entire group for prioritizing.

7	7	Integrated community sustainable planning (ICSP) - best practices in similar sized regions with multiple communities.
5	10	Tourism Development Study and analysis of Best Practices. // Identify possible areas for tourism and how to attract.
5	10	How to make this community a successful bedroom community (issues, opportunities, best practices, models for transition to a "hub community").
4	12	Get able-bodied people on social assistance to work. // Global examples/best practices on motivators, opportunities, barriers. // What has worked elsewhere in terms of training, education, literacy?
3	13	What programs/incentives are available in other municipalities that are designed to attract business?
3	13	Physical mobility and access to transportation - proximity to essential services (types of transportation infrastructure that attracts/retain people).
2	15	Why do businesses leave an area?
2	15	Development of model which would measure economic impact of investment between different sectors i.e. forestry, manufacturing, tourism, etc.
1	17	What are the succession patterns within Skilled Trades - i.e. Who is following in their parents footsteps?
1	17	Detailed authoritative assessment of sustainable wood supply of Eastern Ontario, Quebec and Adirondacks.

Appendix C – Session Overview

The **purpose** of the workshop was to engage community leaders and academics to collaborate in order to:

- Identify Eastern Ontario knowledge needs and resources
- Prioritize research needs and opportunities
- Share experience and knowledge
- Build lasting relationships and communication channels
- Serve Eastern Ontario

Discovery workshop groups **explore four topics**:

1. Burning issues. What are the challenges and needs with respect to rural economic development and making Grenville Region a vital community (economic, social, health)
2. Research wish list. If you had access to researchers for a year, what would you ask them to study? Given the immensity of the research “wish list” and scarcity of available resources, what are your research priorities?
3. Local capacity. What are the local resources (organizations, capabilities, past work etc.) that might contribute to addressing the issues identified above?
4. Defining success. If this project is to be successful, what are the things that you would see in place in the next two years? what must happen in order to ensure that the KIS project makes a positive impact on Grenville Region?

Appendix D – Methodology

Information Gathering and Community Consultation process:

The community consultation process included an information gathering component composed of a series of interactive workshops using facilitators from the Queen's Executive Decision Centre. The purpose of this component was to get input from a broad cross section of community stakeholders.

The consultation was conducted using a group decision support system also known as an electronic meeting system (EMS), an innovative facilitation process developed from research at the Queen's School of Business. The Queen's EMS, called "the Decision Centre", combines expert facilitation with a state-of-the-art group decision support system to enable groups to rapidly accelerate idea generation and consensus building. This facility consists of a network of laptops accessing software designed to support idea generation, idea consolidation, idea evaluation and planning. The tool supports, but does not replace, verbal interaction; typically 25% of interaction takes place on the computers. Feedback from groups who have used the Executive Decision Centre process includes: meeting times can be cut in half; participation goes way up; better idea generation and alternative evaluation; a more structured process; and automatic documentation of deliberations.

Over 500 organizations around North America use the Centre for meetings such as: strategic planning, visioning, annual planning, focus groups, team building, budgeting, program review, project planning, risk assessment, job profiling, 360 degree feedback, alternative evaluation, new product development and a variety of other meeting types.

In the consultations, participants were asked, for example, "What are your region's burning issues with respect to economic development". Participants typed in ideas on the laptops all of which appeared on a public screen at the front of the room. These ideas were then discussed and categorized into common themes. The group was then asked "if we could only address five of these in the next year, which ones are most critical?" Individuals selected his/her top 5 and the overall results were then displayed to the group and further discussed.