

Creativity, Tourism and Economic Development in a Rural Context: The Case of Prince Edward County

Opportunities for Smaller Communities
in Rural Ontario

Presented by: Kevin Stolarick, Ph.D.
Research Director
The Martin Prosperity Institute

The Current Economic Landscape of Rural Communities in North America

Rural communities across North America face declining economic activity and a number of challenges in promoting continued economic development

- Loss of Manufacturing
- Restructuring of the Agricultural Sector
- Loss of Young, Educated workers to large urban centers

Tourism as an Economic Development Strategy in Rural Communities

Rural communities have turned to Tourism as a way to promote job growth and counteract declining economic activity

- Factors used in the promotion of Rural Tourism
 - Superb Quality of Place
 - Outdoor Recreational Activities
 - Local Festivals and Traditions
 - Local Cultural and Historical Activities

Tourism: A Sustainable Approach for Rural Communities?

Tourism often does not provide a sustainable solution to preventing economic decline as it is often destructive of local communities and does not provided sustainable jobs

- Low-wage jobs
- Exploitation of the local community and local resources
- Negative impacts on local environment
- Highly unstable industry – subject to constant fluctuations

Creative Class Theory and Economic Development Strategies

Concentrations of the Creative Class help to attract industry investment and drive economic growth

- Creative Class professionals are one of four occupation based employment categories defined by Richard Florida (2002)
 - Creative Class, Service Class, Working Class and Fishing, Farming and Forestry
- Creative Class professionals are attracted to places that offer:
 - Superb Quality of Place
 - Outdoor Recreational Activities
 - Local Festivals and Traditions
 - Local Cultural, Entertainment and Historical Activities

Who Works in the Creative Class?

Creative Class: *TAPE*

T = Technology and R&D Innovation

A = Arts and Culture

P = Professional and Managerial

E = Educating and Training

Creative Class workers include people employed in management and business finance, science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment.

Cultivating the Creative Class in Rural Communities

Creative Based Economic Development Strategies

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Tourism Based Economic Development Strategies

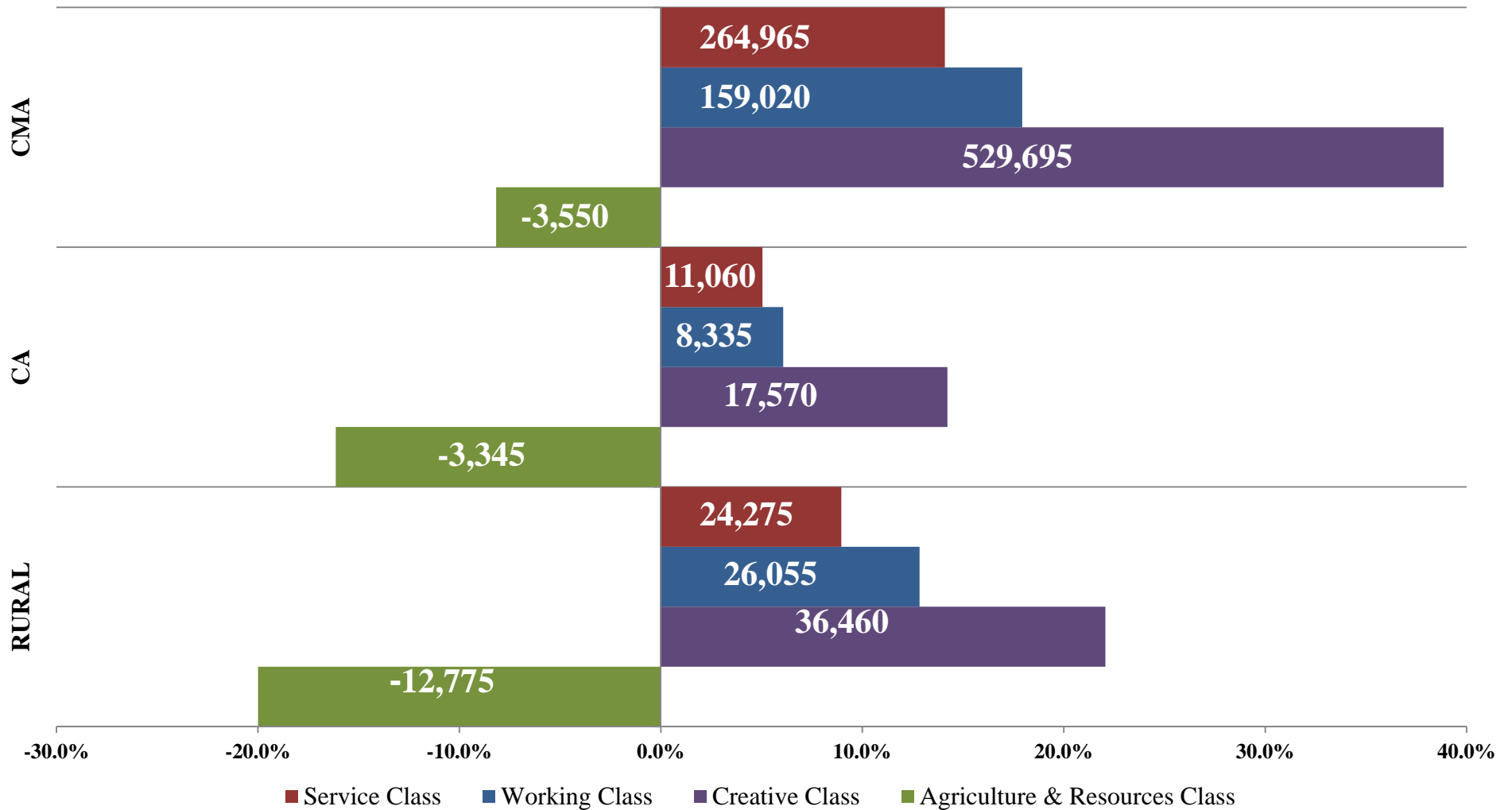
- Superb Quality of Place
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- Local Festivals and Traditions
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Cultivating the Creative Class in Rural Communities

While Creative Class economic development strategies are applicable within rural communities, there are several important caveats that differentiate such strategies from those applied in an urban centre

- Targeted populations are creative professionals over 30 that are starting young families or are mid-life career changers
- Schools, infrastructure and doctors offices are just as important as are local amenities that attract creative workers
- Creative Class may not impact local growth if it is employed in large public organizations – universities, medical complexes, or government research institutions

Job Growth in Ontario for selected Classes, 1996-2006



The Case of Prince Edward County: A Creative Rural Economy

Prince Edward County has established a creative based rural economy driven by a wine making industry, specialty agricultural products and its location in a very scenic part of Eastern Ontario

- Strengths

- Educated Workforce; Innovative Spirit; Superb Regional Amenities; Cultural and Environmental Sustainability; and an Economic Development Strategy that considers the creative economy

- Weaknesses

- Difficulty in recognizing assets and weaknesses; Limited Connectivity and Natural Resource Complacency

Strategies for Identifying Creative based Economic Development Opportunities

Rural communities need to be both responsive and adaptive to both planned and unplanned events in order to realize the potential of opportunities that emerge

- Blue Ocean Strategies / Undiscovered opportunities
- Integrative and Creative Based Thinking
- Community Capacity Building

Rural Economic Development Strategies

- Think Big
- Look Big
- Use a Shotgun, not a rifle
- Luck

Resources

- *Canada's Creative Corridor: Connecting Creative Urban & Rural Economies within Eastern Ontario and the Mega Region* by Millier Dickinson Blais, AuthentiCity, Dr. Greg Spencer, and the Martin Prosperity Institute (2009).
- *Creativity, Tourism and Economic Development in a Rural Context: the case of Prince Edward County* by Kevin Stolarick, Mark Denstedt, Betsy Donald and Greg Spencer.
- *Growing the Creative-Rural Economy in Prince Edward County* by the Queen's University Department of Geography (2008).
- *From Kraft to Craft: Innovation and Creativity in Ontario's Food Economy* by Betsy Donald (2009).
- *Innovation and Creativity on the Periphery: Challenges and Opportunities in Northern Ontario* by Heather Hall & Betsy Donald (2009).