



THE MONIESON CENTRE

TRANSFORMING BUSINESS IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Discovery Workshop Report Cornwall (Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Region)

April 29, 2009

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 Cornwall, ON. Thirty-three community leaders and business people from the Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry 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 Gay Hamilton, Executive Director, Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry 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 Terry Besner 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.



STORMONT, DUNDAS & GLENGARRY
Community Futures Development Corporation
Société d'aide au développement des collectivités



QUESTION 1

What are the pressing issues, challenges and needs with respect to rural economic development and making the Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry region a vital community (economic, social, health)?

Top Issues:

1. **Youth Retention.** There is a lack of youth employment opportunities and we need to harness youth creativity and allow them to create businesses.
2. **Training and Education.** We need to develop e-learning opportunities, support training, education, and literacy to develop a skilled workforce for a diversified economy.
3. **Business Retention.** We need to retain businesses and expand existing ones.
4. **Economic Diversification.** The economy needs to shift from an industrial, agricultural, and manufacturing base to a creative economy.
5. **Entrepreneurship.** Entrepreneurship needs to be encouraged and opportunities need to be developed to attract investments.
6. **Literacy.** We need to improve literacy/education levels and create more opportunities for employment.
7. **Transportation.** Access to the city perimeter is a challenge without transit.
8. **Promotion and Marketing.** We must have a coordinated promotion of local attractions with the aim of extending the stay of tourists.
9. **Shrinking Population.** The population is aging and shrinking.
10. **Green Development.** “Green” jobs need to be created.
11. **Niche.** We need to understand our niche and have a strategy to develop it

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. **Local vs. Generic Solutions.** Where should there be synergy and where should there be localization?
2. **Niche.** What is the local niche and how do we develop it?
3. **Youth Retention.** What initiatives or programs could be created in an effort to retain our youth?
4. **Brainpower.** What have similar communities done to raise the levels of education and skills in their populations?
5. **Immigration Strategies.** How can we attract more immigrants or grow our population otherwise?
6. **Business Attraction.** What can we do and what should we offer new businesses to have them develop in the area?
7. **Government Funding.** How can small communities influence government funding policies for rural environments?
8. **New Customer Attraction.** How do small businesses and municipalities go about attracting customers and tourists?
9. **Transportation.** How can we improve our transportation system in an affordable and effective way?
10. **The Internet.** How can we leverage the Internet and bring that knowledge to businesses?
11. **Sustainable Energy.** What alternative sustainable energy solutions would best suit our rural climate?

QUESTION 3

What local resources (organizations, reports, past work etc.) might contribute to addressing the issues identified above? What in-kind support can you contribute (office space, personnel, etc.) for research?

1. **Local vs. Generic Solutions.** Where should there be synergy and where should there be localization?
 - The Economic Working Group (representatives from the 6 counties); contact Terry Hart
2. **Niche.** What is the local niche and how do we develop it?
 - See Jon Sookocheff (SD&G CFDC) and Jim McLennan
 - Glengarry Tourism Study: Joanne Haley, 613-347-1166
 - Illimar Marshalling, Iroquois: Brian Cox
 - OMAFRA: Lynn Groulx
 - Cornwall And Seaway Valley Tourism: Mike Lalonde
 - St. Lawrence River Institute: Jeff Ridell and Brian Hickey
3. **Youth Retention.** What initiatives or programs could be created in an effort to retain our youth?
 - Cornwall business enterprise Centre (A summer company program to start new businesses): Alyssa Blais
 - Co-operative Education Teacher, North Dundas District High School :Mike Deighton
 - RDEE Ontario et la CFEO: Programme Place aux Jeunes (Make Way For Youth): Marie-Eve LaRocque
 - Carleton Centre for Community Innovation pilot project for promoting entrepreneurial culture amongst youth:Peter MacGibbon, Carleton University
 - EODP funding available soon: Terry Besner, SD&G CFDC
 - See Mark Schaefer & Pat Finucan
 - Youth entrepreneurship camps - these camps [usually 1-2 week periods] inspire youth to become entrepreneurs. They began in CFDCs in Alberta 15 yrs ago and now exist in most provinces. The northern part of ON has several [because they are funded]. See excellent model in QC (Camp Je)
 - Townships of South Dundas and South Stormont developed a new branding for their townships.
 - "Upper Canada Region": Betty DeHaan, CAO, South Stormont
 - St. Lawrence College can provide "in kind" summer support by providing free residence accommodations for researchers from May 1 - August 31. Office space might also be available.
 - Boys and Girls Club: Diane Kuipers
 - See Police Chief Dan Parkinson
4. **Brainpower.** What have similar communities done to raise the levels of education and skills in their populations?
 - Employability, essential skills pilot project, Social Development Council, Employability network: Dina McGowan

- Eastern Ontario Training Board: Denis Thibault
 - St Lawrence College: Don Fairweather
 - See Pat Finucan
 - Tri-County Literacy: Dina McGowan
 - Job Zone d'Emploi: Wendy Woods Fontaine
 - Essential skills development program
 - La Cite Collegiale (Essential Skills): Marie-Christine Gill
 - Upper Canada District School Board: Greg Pietersma - Dundas County Trustee
 - Employability Network: Dinah McGowan
 - E-Learn: Vanessa Regnier
 - Glengarry Liaison: Sharon McRae
5. **Immigration Strategies.** How can we attract more immigrants or grow our population otherwise?
- CDISA: Sophia Reyes
 - TR Leger: Diane Coombs
 - Cornwall Immigrant Services: Sylvia Reyes, Executive Director
 - Cornwall and District Immigrant Services: Sophia Reyes-Leger
 - Social Planning Council: Dinah McGowan, Employability Network
 - TR LEGER School - Immigrant Services: Shannon Cameron
 - Reseau de soutien a l'immigration francophone (PR et SDG): Marie-Elise Lebon
 - SDC: Michael Galvin at Computer Sense
6. **Business Attraction.** What can we do and what should offer new businesses to have them develop in the area?
- EOTB: Denis Thibault (TOP Report - yearly)
 - Employability Network –see Dinah McGowan
 - Glengarry Liaison: Sharon McRae
 - Economic Development at City of Cornwall: Mark Boileau
 - Chambers of Commerce to input to process (7 or 8 of them, +Cornwall)
 - SDG CFDC: Gay Hamilton
 - See Neil Shaver (contact Joanne Haley @ 613-347-1166)
 - Make use of the broad scope of material available via the human resource sector council
 - St. Lawrence College Brockville campus has EASTCAT support to help "incubate" new businesses
7. **Government Funding.** How can small communities influence government funding policies for rural environments?
- The Federal Government had a rural lens for all programs and policies: Canada Rural Secretariat: Guy Lauzon MP and Serge Buy, Consultant
8. **New Customer Attraction.** How do small businesses and municipalities go about attracting customers and tourists?
- Glengarry Tourism Study (2005): Joanne Haley – 613-347-1166
 - Cornwall and Seaway Valley Tourism

- Cornwall Lift-Off - Chris Savard, Chairman
 - Team Cornwall - Gilles Latour
 - Seaway Tourism - Mike Lalonde
 - Individual and Cooperative initiatives
 - WE (Women's Entrepreneurs) - Cornwall SDG - Linda Arsenault-Graham
9. **Transportation.** How can we improve our transportation system in an affordable and effective way?
- See Terry Besner and Terry Hart
 - City of Cornwall 2008 Transportation Study
 - Transit Board: Terry Besner, Terry Hart, and Mary Mcaig
 - Winchester District Memorial Hospital: Trudy Reid, CEO
 - See Phil Marleau, VP, WDMH
 - Legal Clinic: Etienne St Aubin, Chairperson of the Transit committee in City of Cornwall
10. **The Internet.** How can we leverage the internet and bring that knowledge to businesses?
- See Brenda Wilson
 - See Vanessa Reignier (formerly at SDC)
 - CEONet
 - Office space @ South Glengarry, 613-347-1166
11. **Sustainable Energy.** What alternative sustainable energy solutions would best suit our rural climate?
- See Pat Finucan, 613-932-7781
 - Union des cultivateurs franco-ontariens; Simon Durand
 - Cornwall Electric: Mike Pescod
 - OPG: Linda Halliday
 - See Tom Manley

QUESTION 4

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 your community?

Items that KIS can deliver

- Using knowledge and information to help create a successful tourism business
- Identifying a specific area of activity that can make a positive difference in the quality of life for residents and businesses
- Creating a framework of available e-learning opportunities for rural residents
- Giving information to communities that they don't already know

Items that KIS can support through highlighting best practices and providing knowledge resources

- Having researchers share “user friendly” results at a forum/conference
- Creating an agreement/plan on how to improve literacy skills training in a more wide-spread way
- Enhancing regular communication amongst a broad range of stakeholders
- Creating a strategy to retain youth
 - *KIS can provide knowledge through the Knowledge Synthesis on Youth Retention on the KIS website*
- Creating a brand for the counties for tourism marketing
 - *KIS can provide knowledge through the Knowledge Synthesis on Community Branding on the KIS website*
- Promoting local tourism
- Discovering a new niche
- A plan in place that will improve community spirit
 - *KIS can provide information on the topic*
- Giving the public an easily accessible way to access local business information
- Improved decision-making at the political level
- Increased collaboration across the United Counties
- Helping the economic development departments work together
 - *KIS can highlight examples and best practices of collaboration elsewhere*
- Increase the number of trails on waterfront and throughout the area
 - *KIS can provide knowledge through the Knowledge Syntheses on the KIS website*
- Creating a broadband network to support e-learning & skills training
 - *KIS can provide resources and ideas*
- Providing opportunities for leadership development and capacity building
 - *KIS can provide information on the topic*
- Providing mentoring for new entrepreneurs
 - *KIS can provide knowledge through the Knowledge Syntheses on the KIS website*
- Increasing tourism based tours
 - *KIS can provide information on the topic*
- Occupying empty stores
 - *KIS can provide knowledge through the Knowledge Synthesis on Downtown Revitalization on the KIS website*

- Attracting more immigrants
 - *KIS can provide information on the topic*
- Increasing the number of entrepreneurs / Increasing the number of start-ups
 - *KIS can provide information about how to make a community a more attractive place to start a business*

Items beyond the scope of KIS

- Creating a regional transportation system
- Affordable city transit for low income
- The creation of a major alternate energy project

Appendix A – Rough Ideas for Question 1

What are the pressing issues, challenges and needs with respect to rural economic development and making the Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry region a vital community (economic, social, health)?

Voting Results

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

Number of ballot items: 18

Total number of voters (N): 30

Votes	Rank	Issue	Comments
17	1	Youth Retention	Lack of youth employment opportunities - Using youth creativity and allowing them to create businesses
17	1	Training and Education	There is a lack of e-learning opportunities, broadband services, training / education / literacy to develop a skilled workforce appropriate for diversified economy
17	1	Business Retention	Retention and expansion of existing businesses
15	4	Economic Diversification	Moving from agriculture and manufacturing to more skilled / service economy / businesses
13	5	Entrepreneurship	Developing opportunities that can help attract investments, encourage entrepreneurship
13	5	Literacy	Improving literacy/education levels to create more opportunities for employment
12	7	Transportation	Improving public transit for seniors and improving access to the city perimeter
12	7	Promotion and Marketing	Improving promotion and marketing of the area and coordinating the promotion of tourism assets
11	9	Shrinking Population	The population is aging
10	10	Green Development	Using "green" development to create jobs
10	10	Local Solutions	Developing local capacity at a sub-area – a local solution
8	12	Lack of Passion	There is a sense of being left out of the greater economy
5	13	Communication	Team (EDO meetings) meet and discuss but there is NO action and reporting
5	13	Wage	Most jobs in region do not pay a livable wage
3	15	Skilled Labour	There is a lack of skilled labour
3	15	Immigration	There needs to be a more welcoming community for immigrants
2	17	Waterfront	Waterfront land use restrictions
1	18	School Closures	School closures reduce residential growth and there is no economic spin-off

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: 23

Total number of voters (N): 30

Votes	Rank	Question
19	1	Where should there be synergy and where should there be localization? Which problems are common vs. unique? Where do we collaborate? Would it be beneficial if the City of Cornwall and the United Counties were to brand together? Would this offer cost efficiencies / create greater appeal to attract more business / tourism / less competition amongst ourselves?
17	2	What is the local niche and how do we develop it? Are there niche manufacturing opportunities where we can compete with Asia? What service or product does this area not have? What is the next Microsoft? What are the local opportunities? How do we replace high-paying mfg jobs?
17	2	What initiatives or programs could be created in an effort to retain our youth? What conditions are important in order to attract young people to return to their roots in eastern Ontario after they have completed their schooling and are ready to "settle down"?
13	4	What have similar communities done to raise the levels of education and skills in their populations? What are the best practices/innovative programs to connect individuals with the education/skills/training required in today's economy?
11	5	How can we attract more immigrants or grow our population otherwise? What are the best practices for attracting immigrants to rural communities?
11	5	What can we do and what should we offer new businesses to have them develop in the area? How do we get them to utilize the existing HR tools & resources to maximize recruitment, retention and development of employees?
11	5	How can small communities influence government funding policies for rural environments?
10	8	How do small businesses and municipalities go about attracting customers and tourists?
9	9	How can we improve our transportation system in an affordable and effective way?
8	10	How can we leverage the internet and bring that knowledge to businesses?
7	11	How important is it to tie ourselves to large urban centres?
7	11	What alternative sustainable energy solutions would best suit our rural climate?
6	13	What are the best practices around local food and value added agriculture? What is

		the next hot crop?
5	14	What are the best practices to increase literacy levels?
5	14	How could we develop a small local university?
5	14	How can we design/develop our communities to meet all our burning needs? Are researchers looking at future conditions in communities?
5	14	How can the economic benefits of the Seaway be measured?
4	18	How can we secure the kind of infrastructure that will allow a small town to become prosperous?
4	18	What unique features can we add to our communities (landmarks)?
3	20	Would it be beneficial if the City of Cornwall and the United Counties were to amalgamate? Would this offer cost efficiencies / create greater appeal?
2	21	How do you measure the creative economy in the rural environment? How do you use Florida's work in urban settings and transfer to rural settings?
1	22	Are researchers acquiring the right information? Is it useful and is it being relayed to the public?

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 Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry 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 Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry 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.