



# THE MONIESON CENTRE

TRANSFORMING BUSINESS IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

## Discovery Workshop Report Frontenac County *February 1, 2010*

### 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 Glenburnie, ON. Fifteen community leaders and business people from Frontenac County 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 Anne Marie Young, Manager of Economic Development, County of Frontenac. Dr. Yolande Chan, Director, The Monieson Centre, and Jeff Dixon, Project Coordinator, The Monieson Centre, introduced the KIS project and Erik Lockhart, Associate Director, Queen's Executive Decision Centre, facilitated the workshop. The KIS project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. For more information, visit [www.easternontarioknowledge.ca](http://www.easternontarioknowledge.ca).



## QUESTION 1

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

Top Issues:

1. **Green economy.** We need to pursue opportunities in renewable energy and the green economy.
2. **Improve tourism infrastructure.** There is a need to sustain tourism throughout the year. Currently there is a lack of amenities and attractions for the off season.
3. **Embrace change.** Successful community growth must incorporate community buy-in on new ideas such as land-use and non-traditional crops.
4. **Lack of local services.** There is a lack of local services such as recreation, social services, and medical care. Thus residents are forced to leave the area for these needs.
5. **Community collaboration.** There is disconnect between local organizations and municipal government. Increased cohesion can improve effectiveness.
6. **Strategic planning.** Municipal government needs to improve long-term planning and prioritization of issues.
7. **Small business support.** There is not enough support and resources for new businesses or development.
8. **Community assets.** An inventory and mapping of community assets is necessary to identify potential consolidation opportunities.
9. **Measure success.** We need to quantify and assess our accomplishments so we can celebrate, track lessons learned, and improve.
10. **Seasonal unemployment.** There is a lack of employment opportunities during the off season which is propagating social and health issues.

## 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. **Community collaboration.** How can our region work more effectively together to reach long-term goals? How can we engage our community on a regular basis on pertinent issues? What is the most effective way to develop a 5-year strategic plan?
2. **Asset use.** What are effective ways to bring awareness to County assets? How can we sustainably utilize these assets?
3. **Incubating ideas.** How do you nurture small business creation and development? What types of resources and support are required?
4. **Business attraction.** How do we attract businesses and entrepreneurs to the area? What types of businesses are succeeding in similar environments?
5. **Sustainable agriculture.** How do we develop a viable agricultural community? What are the barriers to development of a strong local food system in Frontenac? How can we grow our agriculture sector so they can sustain themselves within the county?
6. **Tourism development.** What can we do to increase tourism year round? What traits of Frontenac County should we be leveraging?
7. **Transportation.** How can Frontenac develop an effective transportation system?
8. **Talent attraction.** What are effective ways to draw needed skills and talent to the area? How can we establish a skills inventory of the population?
9. **Renewable sector development.** What are the characteristics of successful community projects to develop green energy?
10. **Balanced land use models.** How do we move to new proven land use models in a way that accounts for and respects the pioneers in the area?

## 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. **Community collaboration.** How can our region work more effectively together to reach long-term goals? How can we engage our community on a regular basis on pertinent issues? What is the most effective way to develop a 5-year strategic plan?
  - Doug Armstrong's report on County council composition 2009
  - Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus - Road to Prosperity
2. **Asset use.** What are effective ways to bring awareness to County assets? How can we sustainably utilize these assets?
  - Asset Inventory - Joe Gallivan, County of Frontenac
  - Natural Assets - Grey Miriam, Frontenac Stewardship Council
  - Biosphere - Don Ross, Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve
3. **Incubating ideas.** How do you nurture small business creation and development? What types of resources and support are required?
  - Frontenac County Community Development Corporation
4. **Business attraction.** How do we attract businesses and entrepreneurs to the area? What types of businesses are succeeding in similar environments?
  - Human Resources Development Canada
  - Community Futures Development Corporation
  - Community Futures Development Corporation- Anne Prichard
5. **Sustainable agriculture.** How do we develop a viable agricultural community? What are the barriers to development of a strong local food system in Frontenac? How can we grow our agriculture sector so they can sustain themselves within the county?
  - NFU Local 316, Dianne Dowling, Howe Island.
  - Hands on Harvest brochure- Carol Pepper 613-375-6699
  - Farmers Union David Hahn
  - Local Flavours, Don Ross - FABR
  - Frontenac CFDC, Anne Pritchard
6. **Tourism development.** What can we do to increase tourism year round? What traits of Frontenac County should we be leveraging?
  - Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve - Don Ross
  - Land O Lakes Tourism Association - Ken Hook
  - Frontenac County BRE survey - tourism not a sector... Liz and Anne Marie
  - Frontenac County Economic Development -Liz Savill - Green Hotel /Arts Research Project
  - Parks of St. Lawrence - Pat MacDonald
  - Frontenac Centre Anne Marie Young
  - Big Sandy Bay Wolfe Island Denis Doyle

- Frontenac Provincial Parks, Peter Dawson
  - Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) Tourism - Rob Carnegie
7. **Transportation.** How can Frontenac develop an effective transportation system?
- Prince Edward County example
  - Rural Transportation Symposium
  - Transit for Rural America -Scott Bogren 202-247-1921 bogrn@ctaa.org
  - King Transit Authority- Kings County - Ron Mullins 902-678-7310
  - Northern Frontenac Community Services
  - Southern Frontenac Community Services - David Townsend
  - Frontenac County Transportation Study 2008?
  - Ontario Trillium Foundation Research Department
8. **Talent attraction.** What are effective ways to draw needed skills and talent to the area? How can we establish a skills inventory of the population?
- Human Resources Professional Ontario Association
  - Lauren Millier (formerly Urbanmetrics) - skills inventory of the county 416 367-3535
9. **Renewable sector development.** How do we successfully develop the green energy industry in our community?
- OSEA, Ontario sustainable energy Association, Toronto.
  - SWITCH, Kingston.
  - David Hahn
  - Regional Renewable energy - Anne Marie Young, County
  - Switch Kingston Ted Tzu
  - Trans Alta Wolfe Island Mike Joblonicky
10. **Balanced land use models.** How do we move to new proven land use models in a way that accounts for and respects the pioneers in the area?
- Kurt Vanclief - Picton sod farm in Ameliasburg

## 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?*

Note: the group brainstormed and then categorized into the following buckets:

**The following suggestions fit within the scope of the KIS project and may be completed if identified as a priority across Eastern Ontario:**

1. Set up one metre initiative. *KIS can provide free consulting services.*
2. Increase collaborative efforts across the region (government, non profits, and agencies). *A Knowledge Synthesis on this topic is available at [www.easternontarioknowledge.ca](http://www.easternontarioknowledge.ca).*
3. Increase initiatives and collaboration to promote tourism. *See KIS April showcase on tourism.*
4. Seminars and roadmaps for local agriculture to exploit new opportunities. *The Monieson Centre's Creative Economy Seminar Series addresses local food issues.*
5. Expand resources of County.

**The following are beyond the scope of the KIS project, but may be completed if the KIS project is expanded through additional funding or if an external partner provides leadership; they may also find helpful strategies and ideas through the KIS project's information resources:**

1. Secure a Physician for local community. *A Knowledge Synthesis on this topic is available at [www.easternontarioknowledge.ca](http://www.easternontarioknowledge.ca). Faculty research is also available. Develop a complete and collaborative strategic plan.*
2. Develop a skills inventory for the County population. Utilize inventory to attract fitting businesses.
3. Forge new partnerships on broadband.
4. Attract and maintain students in the area *A Knowledge Synthesis on this topic is available at [www.easternontarioknowledge.ca](http://www.easternontarioknowledge.ca). Kingston Economic Development Corporation also has a study available through [www.kingstoncanada.com](http://www.kingstoncanada.com).*
5. Establish dialogue with post-secondary education to adapt curriculum to prepare for the facilitation of new industry.
6. Establish "new economy" businesses with net increase in skilled employment. *See Creative Economy Seminars on [www.easternontarioknowledge.ca](http://www.easternontarioknowledge.ca).*
7. A plan for County transportation
8. An abattoir, dairy and or cheese factory in the county *See Business Success Stories on [www.easternontarioknowledge.ca](http://www.easternontarioknowledge.ca)*
9. New enterprises based on processing local agricultural produce and /or meat.
10. Seniors' Housing built to allow families to stay in their home communities. *See KIS project in Prince Edward County.*
11. Revitalize the main streets in our villages. *See KIS project in Perth.*
12. Eliminate empty storefronts in our communities. *See resources on BRE.*
13. Greatly increase the number of CFDC applications for new and expanding businesses. *See resources on BRE and attraction.*

**The following are beyond the scope of the KIS project:**

1. Develop green building at Hwy 7 and 38.
2. Additional applications for rezoning / commercialization.
3. Increase number of small businesses in business for over 2 years in the County.
4. Proactive effort by the County around innovative land use planning.
5. Create a green community where all residence and businesses participate in conservation and renewable energy.
6. Successfully encouraged new green business to locate in the region
7. Take positive steps to stimulate pride on our small hamlets evidenced by streetscape improvements and increased vitality.
8. Form a community organization to develop a green energy project. A potential project is wind turbines on Howe Island.

## Appendix A – Rough Ideas for Question 1

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

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 7) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 23

Total number of voters (N): 15

Rank	Votes	Issue	Comments
1	11	<b>Green economy</b>	Building solid community basis for renewable community energy ...Employment and securing jobs in emerging renewable (i.e. green energy act, Samsung ) ...How can FC get jump on the emerging opportunities? Energy and Agriculture need to explore common market e.g. bio mass , forest products opportunities ... Developing opportunities in sustainable forestry
2	9	<b>Improve tourism infrastructure</b>	Need infrastructure (maps with trails, destination, routes, amenities etc.)...Area is very tourism based. Very difficult to come up with "off season" activities which support the local economy. Lack of accommodation, dining, etc.
2	9	<b>Embrace change</b>	Removing resistance to change for new ideas e.g. land use, business-industrial park, "not in my backyard", quality of life, farming non-traditional crops, land claims settlements
4	8	<b>Local services</b>	Transportation issues due to the large geographic footprint ... There is a distance to recreation, shopping, social services, medical care and services, etc. Residents need to leave the area for jobs, health care, education, etc...
4	8	<b>Community collaboration</b>	Lack of collaboration among government & other organizations ...local government needs to be more supportive of initiatives & work cohesively
6	6	<b>Strategic planning</b>	Need for priority setting at the municipal level governance, strategy planning and a capacity to plan beyond the term of council
6	6	<b>Small business support</b>	Lack of capacity to take advantage of opportunities ...community capacity to respond...Need for supporting resources and an environment supportive of opportunities (development/new businesses/new ideas)
6	6	<b>Community assets</b>	Consolidation of existing assets and resources - need to inventory our assets... community asset mapping
9	4	<b>Measure success</b>	Lack of ability to measure - we need to quantify and assess our QA accomplishments so we can celebrate, track

			lessons learned, improve
9	3	<b>Seasonal unemployment</b>	Winter unemployment creates isolation which leads to social, health, issues
9	3	<b>Youth retention</b>	Lack of job opportunities causes lack of medium and large industries and skills/youth retention
9	3	<b>Health services</b>	Lack of health care facilities /doctors ambulance/seniors homes
9	3	<b>Broadband</b>	Building connections through better communications ...lack of broadband services...cell coverage
9	3	<b>Community relations</b>	Relationship with Kingston...county and rural image needs enhanced
9	3	<b>Underutilization of resources</b>	Failure to recognize and exploit our natural resources
16	2	<b>Low population growth</b>	Low population growth causes limited exposure for businesses
16	2	<b>Literacy</b>	Lack of education/knowledge base ...literacy issues
16	2	<b>Funding</b>	Lack of funding at the municipal level - limited assessment base, access to other government levels
16	2	<b>Modern lodgings</b>	Lack of modern lodgings and rental accommodations both residential and commercial
20	1	<b>Hydro infrastructure</b>	Weak hydro infrastructure limited by facility construction & operations
20	1	<b>Volunteerism</b>	Nurturing community life through volunteerism
22	0	<b>Developing Markets</b>	Identification of viable developing markets

## 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?<sup>1</sup>*

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

### Voting Results

Multiple Selection (maximum choices = 5) (Allow bypass)

Number of ballot items: 15

Total number of voters (N): 14

Votes	Rank	Issue	Comments
1	12	<b>Community Collaboration</b>	Collaboration at all levels. How can our region work more effectively together to reach longer term goals? ...How can we get the government of Frontenac County to realize that success in one area can help all ...How best can partnerships be forged between individuals or groups where relationships have not previously existed? ...How can communities be engaged on a regular basis to break down barriers to change, develop community pride and work collaboratively on challenges such as transportation....What innovative methods exist to bring local government representatives together to develop a strategic plan with a 5-year timeframe?
2	8	<b>Asset Use</b>	What are effective ways to bring awareness to County assets? ...How can we better market the assets in Frontenac? ...how can we exploit our natural resources at low cost - high return-without harming them
3	7	<b>Incubating Ideas</b>	Incubating ideas... ...How can we support our local year round residents to succeed in a business suitable for our community and environment? Many people have great ideas but don't know or understand how to move them forward- how can we get the information & support to them. What resources are there to help people carry forward their ideas?
3	7	<b>Business Attraction</b>	What businesses succeed in a similar environment? ...What are effective ways to attract businesses/larger industries to the area? ...Can we identify "best practices" to attract entrepreneurs?
5	6	<b>Sustainable</b>	How can we encourage a viable agricultural community (i.e.

		<b>Agriculture</b>	local processing and marketing) ... What are the barriers to development of a strong local food system in Frontenac? What are we missing?
5	6	<b>Tourism Development</b>	What can we do to increase tourism opportunities which will enhance opportunities for full time, year round employment? ...What are the traits of successful tourist regions and which of them do we have in Frontenac?
7	5	<b>Transportation</b>	How can Frontenac develop an effective transportation system? ...how do we find create a model for sustainable public transportation?
8	4	<b>Talent Attraction</b>	What are effective ways to draw skill/talent to the area? What are effective tools to establish a skills inventory of the population?
8	4	<b>Renewable Sector Development</b>	What are the characteristics of successful community projects to develop green energy?
10	3	<b>Balanced Land Use Models</b>	How do we move to new proven land use models in a way that doesn't hurt and/or reward the pioneers?
11	2	<b>Forestry</b>	What opportunities are there in local sustainable forestry and what are the barriers?
11	2	<b>Health Care</b>	What role does local government, outside of the provincial government, play in ensuring that communities have adequate health care?
13	1	<b>Literacy</b>	How can we encourage the public school system to offer courses to adults in the rural areas to improve literacy
13	1	<b>Research Efficiency</b>	How do we target existing research and results in order to save time on further research?

## Appendix C – Session Overview

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

- Y Identify Eastern Ontario knowledge needs and resources
- Y Prioritize research needs and opportunities
- Y Share experience and knowledge
- Y Build lasting relationships and communication channels
- Y 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 Frontenac County 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 Frontenac County?

## 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, and 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.