

Key Research Questions from Rural Eastern Ontario March 2009

As part of the Knowledge Impact in Society project, researchers from The Monieson Centre are meeting with leaders and policymakers in 15 rural communities across Eastern Ontario. The purpose of these workshops is to determine each area's economic development research needs. Already, the team has held workshops in eight communities: Bancroft, Pembroke, Peterborough, Kemptonville, Keswick, Smiths Falls, Minden, and Belleville, as well as a supplemental meeting with leaders in Perth. From these meetings the most pressing research questions have been:

1. How do we compare to other similar communities and what best practices can be learned from them?
2. What economic development models could be implemented by our community?
3. What tourism opportunities exist in our region? Can we attract tourists year-round?
4. How can we create value-added products from our local natural resources (agriculture, forestry)?
5. How can we effectively brand ourselves?
6. How can our community respond to and capitalize on the emerging creative economy?
7. What demographic information can guide our planning? How can we adapt to changing demographic trends?
8. What is our region's niche/competitive edge and how can we capitalize on it?
9. What emerging/green industries can we develop?
10. How do we develop a vibrant downtown?
11. How can we attract or create business financing opportunities?
12. What community attributes will attract business?
13. How can we implement previously identified development strategies?
14. What can we do to make an inventory of our region's assets?
15. How can we encourage small businesses?
16. How can we retain our youth?
17. How do we develop efficient government that builds cooperation between local, regional, provincial and federal levels?
18. How can we attract in-migration?
19. How can we provide skills training in our community?
20. What is the best way to foster entrepreneurship? Do business incubators work?
21. How can we attract foreign skills?
22. What are the keys to transportation improvement?
23. How can we develop agricultural/forestry sustainability?
24. What is the best strategy for development in relation to a greenbelt, particularly in light of Places to Grow legislation?
25. What is our best strategy for healthcare professional recruitment?
26. How can we develop adequate housing?
27. What is the best way to access infrastructure funding?
28. How can we increase youth involvement and engagement?
29. How can we retain valuable local knowledge?
30. How can we engage our community in economic development?



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TRANSFORMING BUSINESS IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY