

Valley Heartland Factsheet

Feb. 2009

Community Overview

- Valley Heartland encompasses the 9 communities of Lanark County, plus the 4 communities of North Leeds (part of Leeds-Grenville county):
 - Separated Town of Smiths Falls:
 - Population 9,977 (2001)¹
 - The largest local centre with a traditional manufacturing-based economy
 - Facing major economic changes due to the current closings of the Rideau Regional Centre (800+ jobs), the Hershey factory (500+ jobs), and the Stanley tools factory (175 jobs)²
 - Town of Perth:³
 - Population 6,232
 - Employs 2,735 people, unemployment rate of 5.8%
 - Features a campus of Algonquin College with a Heritage Trades program, and a hospital
 - Connected to Highways 7 & 43
 - Town of Carleton Place:
 - Located west of Ottawa on Highway 7⁴
 - Transport Thom is a public transport partner that connects Carleton Place to Ottawa's OC Transpo network⁵
 - Has created a strategic plan through 2017 that addresses issues including arts, youth, seniors, heritage, economic development, downtown revitalization, and tourism⁶
 - Township of Mississippi Mills:⁷
 - 500 sq. km west of Ottawa,
 - Hamlets and villages including Almonte, with population of 11,734
 - Tay Valley Township:⁸
 - Population 5,654; 11,500 in summer due to cottage tourism
 - Largely rural, yet home to OMYA's largest Canadian calcite processing plant

¹ "Smiths Falls, Ontario." Wikipedia. 2009. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smiths_Falls,_Ontario (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

² "Smiths Falls, Ontario"; "Smiths Falls Stanley Tools Facility Shutting Down." CTV Ottawa. 2008. http://ottawa.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20080701/OTT_smiths_falls_close_080701 (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

³ "Community Profile." Town of Perth. <http://www.town.perth.on.ca/siteengine/ActivePage.asp?PageID=75>; (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

⁴ "About Carleton Place." Carleton Place. http://www.carletonplace.ca/Visiting_Here/viewPage.aro?pageid=250 (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

⁵ "Rural Partner Service." Carleton Place. http://www.carletonplace.ca/Living_Here/viewPage.aro?pageid=348 (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

⁶ *The Town of Carleton Place Community Strategic Plan*. Ottawa: McSweeney & Associates Consulting Inc., 2007.

⁷ "About the Town of Mississippi Mills." Mississippi Mills. <http://www.mississippimills.ca/aboutmm/areadescription.cfm> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

⁸ Tay Valley Township. *Community Profile*. Perth: Tay Valley Township.

- Township of Beckwith:⁹
 - Adjacent to Ottawa, population 6,387
 - Population grew 20% between 1991-1996, according to strategic plan
 - By-laws encourage home-based business
- Township of Drummond/North Elmsley:¹⁰
 - Population 7,118, located between Perth & Smiths Falls
- Township of Montague:
 - A bedroom community between Ottawa & Smiths Falls¹¹
- Township of Lanark Highlands:¹²
 - Located north of Perth, population 4,795
 - Prime cottage country with rolling hills and many lakes
- Township of Rideau Lakes:
 - Population of 9,201 consisting of villages, hamlets, and farming and cottage regions between Kingston and Smiths Falls¹³
- Kitley
 - Part of the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley, population 9,700¹⁴
 - Rural area between Smiths Falls and Brockville, east of Hwy 15
- Village of Westport:¹⁵
 - Population of 700, one of Ontario's smallest municipalities
 - Acts as a rural hub and a summer tourist destination
- Village of Merrickville-Wolford:
 - Population of 2,867¹⁶
 - Historic community 45 min. south of Ottawa with a tourism focus¹⁷
- Lanark County's total population was 62,500 in 2001; 2nd-highest growth in Eastern Ontario¹⁸
- Highest household income in Eastern Ontario outside of Ottawa, although median family income of \$56,873 for Lanark is below the provincial average¹⁹
- 12.5% of families receive government transfer income (above national average)²⁰
- Slower than average population growth for preschool and 20-44 year olds²¹

⁹ "History."

¹⁰ "Home Page." The Township of Drummond/North Elmsley.

<http://www.drummondnorthelemsley.com/siteengine/activepage.asp> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

¹¹ "Welcome to Montague Township." Montague Township.

<http://www.township.montague.on.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=1> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

¹² "Location." Township of Lanark Highlands. <http://www.lanarkhighlands.ca/About/Location.htm> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009)

¹³ "About Us." Township of Rideau Lakes. <http://www.twprideaulakes.on.ca/aboutus.html> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009)

¹⁴ "Business and Community." Township of Elizabeth-Kitley. http://www.elizabethtown-kitley.on.ca/business_and_community.htm (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009)

¹⁵ "Home Page." Village of Westport. <http://www.village.westport.on.ca> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

¹⁶ "Population by Age & Family Income: Merrickville-Wolford, Village of." Ontario Investment and Trade Centre. http://www.2ontario.com/communities/labourforce.asp?mun_name=3507052&topic=1 (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009).

¹⁷ "Welcome to Merrickville." Merrickville & District Chamber of Commerce. <http://www.realmerrickville.ca/> (Accessed Jan. 19, 2009)

¹⁸ *Hotel Market Study, Perth, Ontario* Ottawa: DMRussell Consulting Inc., 2002.

¹⁹ *Hotel Market Study*; The Rethink Group and Andrea Bourrie. *Lanark Community Vision and County Strategic Plan*. Ennismore, ON: The Rethink Group, 2005.

²⁰ Ibid.

Economic Development

- Lanark county has a 20-year strategic plan established through 2025²²
- Lanark County exceeded provincial averages for high school, trades, and college completions, but not for university completions²³
- County of Lanark is currently studying community internet usage²⁴
- Lanark County's core strengths (where it exceeds the provincial benchmark):²⁵
 1. Public administration
 2. Educational services
 3. Agriculture/forestry
 4. Health care
- Lanark County's core strategies:²⁶
 1. Protect and enhance the natural environment
 2. Strengthen and diversify the economy
 3. Manage growth through good planning and effective government
 4. Invest in infrastructure to meet needs and keep pace with growth
 5. Protect, maintain and enhance the rural and small-town character
 6. Maintain a high quality of life

Tourism

- "The absence of a focused destination-marketing program directed to the Ottawa market by the County, a standard requirement for strengthening tourism visitation, has meant that tourism growth in Lanark has tended to follow the normal growth patterns already experienced in the County"²⁷
- The Rideau Canal became a UNESCO world heritage site in 2007²⁸
- The Rideau Cultural Heritage Corridor was formed in 2004 to capitalize on cultural tourism opportunities on the Rideau canal²⁹
- The Rideau Cultural Heritage Corridor includes an inventory of all tourism products from Ottawa through Kingston³⁰

Lanark County Values³¹

1. Natural heritage and environment
2. Rural living and lifestyle
3. Quality of life/quiet pace of life
4. Community pride and spirit

²¹ Lanark Community Vision and County Strategic Plan.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ "What's New in the IT Department." County of Lanark.

<http://www.lanarkcounty.ca/PageFactory.aspx?PageID=502> (Accessed Jan. 14, 2009)

²⁵ Advisory Services GPA. *Lanark County An Economic Development Assessment Study*. Smiths Falls: Valley Heartland CFDC, June 2004.

²⁶ Lanark Community Vision and County Strategic Plan.

²⁷ *Hotel Market Study*.

²⁸ Lanark County Tourism Association. *2007 Lanark County Guide*. Perth: Lanark County Tourism Association, 2007.

²⁹ Burnett Thorne. *Rideau Canal*. 2005.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Lanark Community Vision and County Strategic Plan.

5. Arts, heritage and culture
6. Proximity to Ottawa/urban areas
7. Quality of people who live in the country
8. Clean environment and lack of pollution
9. Quality and availability of local health care
10. Safe and secure community

Lanark Issues & Challenges³²

1. Controlling and planning for growth
2. Protecting the natural environment
3. Waste management & control
4. Sustainable funding of County services
5. Maintenance of aging infrastructure
6. Concerns about government structure, accountability and relevance
7. Need economic and commercial development
8. Inadequate co-ordination of community efforts
9. Maintaining local farms and protecting agricultural lands
10. Protecting health care/attracting health care professionals
11. Ability to maintain identity and sense of community
12. Maintaining a balance between values (urban/rural and new/established residents)
13. Lack of opportunities and activities for youth
14. Lack of high-speed internet and broadband communications
15. Lack of transportation and transportation alternatives
16. Being an attractive place for youth
17. Not enough job opportunities
18. Safety and security
19. Impact from Ottawa and worries about amalgamation
20. Safe and clean drinking water
21. Maintain affordable taxes
22. Providing service for all ages
23. Lower-than-average education levels/quality of education
24. Lack of communication
25. Protecting lakes and rivers

Responses to Smiths Falls Closings

- Rideau Regional Centre is an 800,000 sq. ft. institution on 354 acres; although there has been talk of turning it into a geriatric care centre, a consulting study recommended developing a training/conference centre on the site³³
- Considered alternatives for Hershey plant:³⁴
 1. Staff purchase plant and produce chocolate
 2. Fair trade chocolate production
 3. Specialized chocolates
 4. Edible holographic chocolate

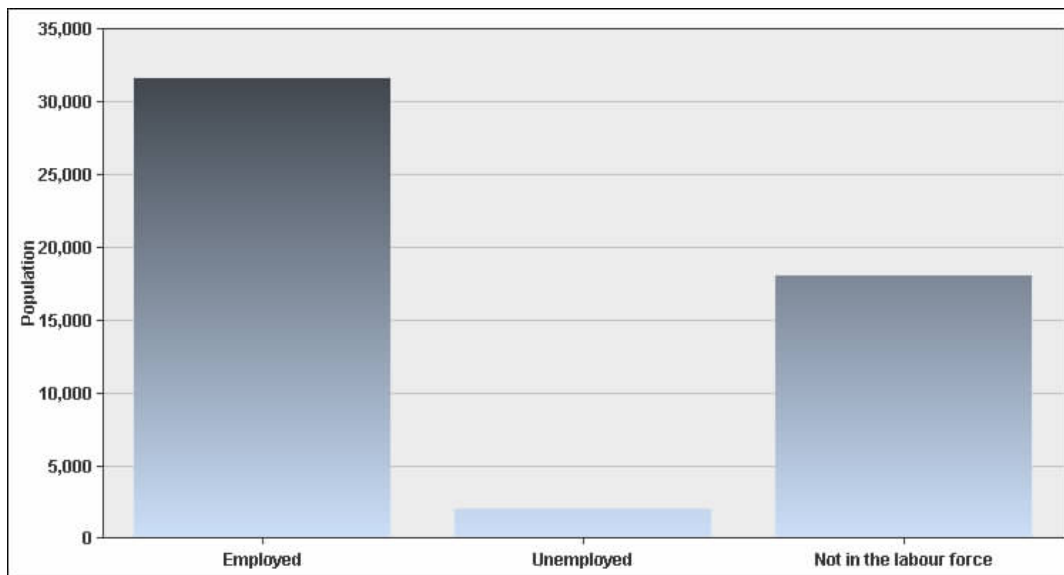
³² *Lanark Community Vision and County Strategic Plan.*

³³ IBI Group. *Rideau Regional Centre Alternative Use Study.* Smiths Falls: IBI Group, 2008.

³⁴ Millier, Dickinson, Blais, Inc. *Hershey Alternative Use Study & Action Plan.* Smiths Falls: Millier, Dickinson, Blais Inc., 2007.

5. Attract another chocolate producer
 6. Management buy-out
 7. Workers, town, or citizens buy plant and start chocolate company
 8. Nut-free ice cream
 9. Cheese factory
 10. Ethanol plant
- Many other opportunities have been considered including technology businesses, amusement parks, and medium-sized food production, however key recommendations focus on improving the investment readiness of Smiths Falls and then attracting outside investment³⁵
 - Smiths Falls competitive advantages:³⁶
 1. Proximity to Ottawa
 2. Excellent plant conducive to many uses
 3. Supply of available production workers, technicians, engineers and managers
 4. Transportation & utility infrastructure
 5. Complementary available facilities & skills due to RRC closure
 6. Significant recreation & amenities
 7. Proactive community
 - Smiths Falls competitive disadvantages:³⁷
 1. Macro-economic forces
 2. Historical organized labour movement
 3. Distance to major highways & airport
 4. Limited digital & telecom infrastructure

Lanark County Labour Force Activity – Population 15 Years and Over³⁸



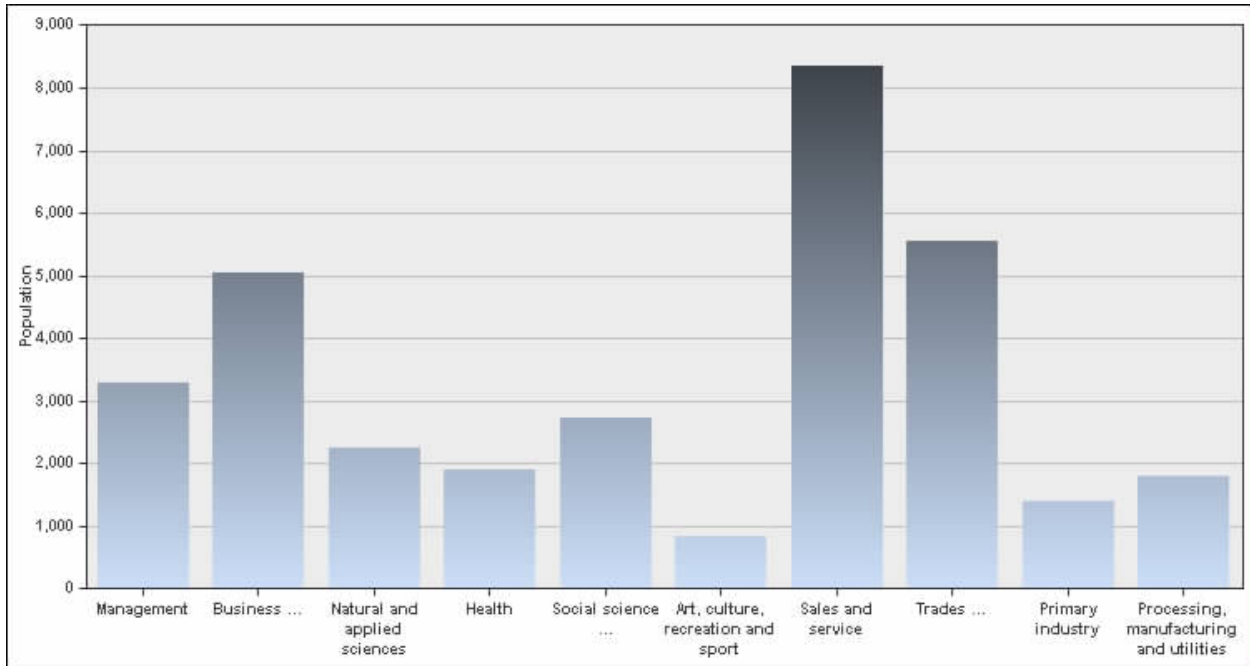
³⁵ Hershey.

³⁶ Ibid.

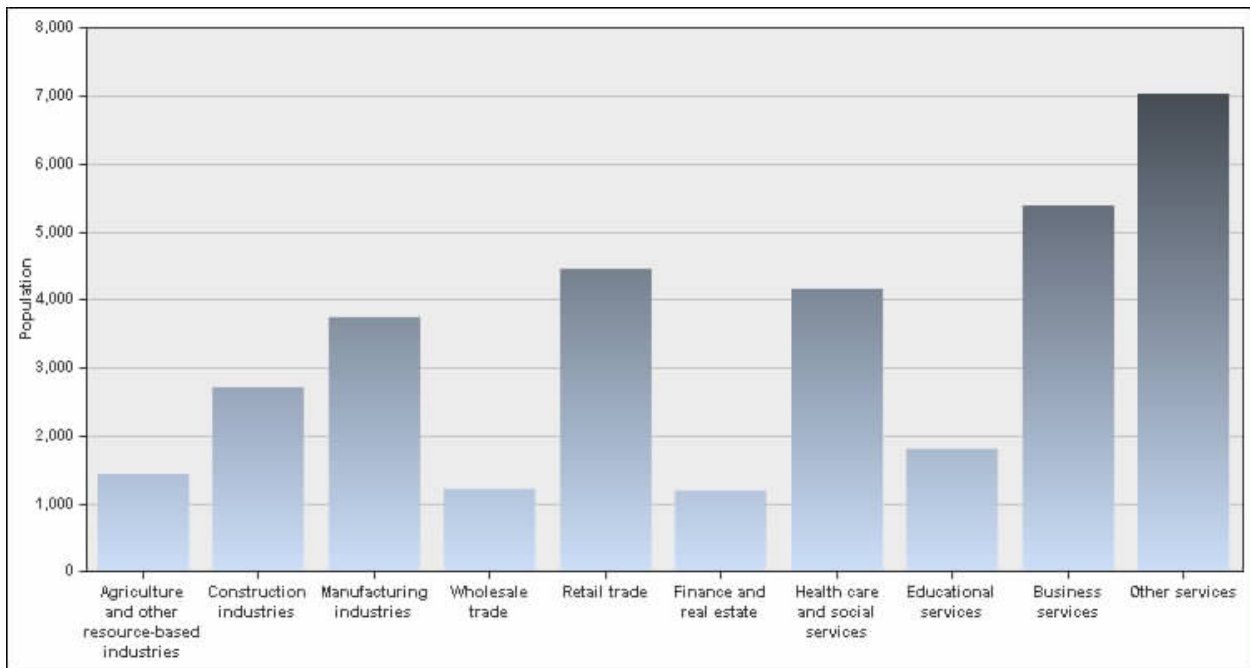
³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Statistics Canada. 2007. *Lanark County, Ontario (table). 2006 Community Profiles*. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007.

Lanark County Occupations – Experienced Labour Force 15 Years & Over³⁹



Lanark County Employment by Industry – Experienced Labour Force 15 Years & Over⁴⁰



³⁹ Lanark County, Ontario.

⁴⁰ Ibid.