



Presentation Session: Rural Revitalization (Reinvestment)

DATE:

Wednesday, November 16th, 2022

TIME:

3:00-4:30 PM

FORMAT:

Four 15-minute oral presentations followed by a 30-minute discussion

SESSION DESCRIPTION:

This session presents different research, case studies, and stories on rural revitalization (reinvestment) in Northern Ontario or other rural, remote, northern, and island communities. It touches on themes such as challenges, the importance and potential of communities, innovation, investments in infrastructure, cases of vibrant communities, and others. It also provides participants with the opportunity to join the discussion, give their input, and share their knowledge, best practices, or stories with the other participants.



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Presentations:

Presentation 1

Time: 3:00–3:15 PM

Title: Contextualizing entrepreneurial ecosystems and digital transformations in less-favoured rural regions: A life cycle model with lessons from Western Newfoundland

Authors: Dr. Ken Carter (Director of Research and Engagement, Grenfell Campus of Memorial University) and Brennan Lowery (Postdoctoral Researcher, Grenfell Campus of Memorial University)

Abstract: This presentation examines the growing body of work on territorial innovation models (TIMs) through the lens of less-favoured rural regions, proposing an alternative model for regional innovation and reinvestment. Considering that TIMs tend to valorize urban centres and high-growth firms –overlooking the experiences of many rural regions - the proposed oral presentation shares findings from the lead presenter's PhD research, which adds to regional innovation literature by providing more contextually appropriate findings from less-favoured rural regions while considering economic shifts towards greater digitization. We propose a 'fit for purpose' model for supporting innovation in less-favoured regions, informed by entrepreneurial ecosystems and an illustrative example from western Newfoundland, Canada, where the presenters have worked extensively as researchers and regional economic development practitioners. We elaborate seven key factors which inform the proposed life cycle model, identifying a pre-ecosystem stage that acknowledges the realities in many less-favoured regions. These findings, interpreted through the real-world insights gained by the presenters' research and practical experience in western Newfoundland, provide a novel regional innovation model with potential to be more appropriate for supporting reinvestment and revenue generation in rural regions. We include recommendations for entrepreneurs, policy-makers, and support actors for advancing entrepreneurial ecosystems in their regions.



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Presentation 2

Time: 3:15–3:30 PM

Title: Municipal Capacity Related to Rural and Agri-Food Opportunities - A Northern Ontario Focus

Authors: Dr. Wayne Caldwell, PhD, RPP, FCIP (University of Guelph), Natasha Gaudio Harrison, Ec.D. (MSc Candidate, University of Guelph), Shanley Weston (MSc Candidate, University of Guelph), Regan Zink (PhD Student, RPP Candidate, University of Guelph)

Abstract: Municipalities play an important role in supporting Ontario's agri-food sector as a critical economic driver and catalyst for rural revitalization. Municipal planning and economic development services are uniquely positioned to support agri-food systems and the agricultural sector through the creation and execution of agricultural-related initiatives and implementation of provincial policies and programs. However, Ontario's 444 municipalities are spread across a vast and diverse geography, and their organizational capacity, budgets, and priorities vary. Research conducted in 2020-2021, which assessed planning department structure, budget, and human resources, found that municipalities in Ontario's Greenbelt region have varied abilities to support the agri-food sector. This project extends that research to the rest of the province, assessing capacity in single- and upper-tier municipalities throughout Northern and Southern Ontario. Understanding municipal capacity to support the agri-food sector will assist with targeting provincial support for the agri-food sector, and facilitate knowledge sharing among municipalities. This session will:

- Present an overview of the project,
- Review the role of municipalities in relation to agri-food systems, and
- Provide preliminary findings with an emphasis on Northern Ontario.



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Presentation 3

Time: 3:30–3:45 PM

Title: Forward Together: Municipal - Indigenous Economic Partnerships Part 1

Authors: Dan Penner (Community Consultant and Planner, Partner at Urban Systems Ltd.)

Abstract: The current era of reconciliation and rapidly changing legal, political, and economic dynamics in Canada are creating opportunities for rural and urban municipalities to develop and strengthen economic partnerships with First Nations. First Nations are asserting more authority and control over their governance/decision-making processes and expanding their involvement in resource development, major industrial projects, land development, tourism, and other economic areas. Municipalities can play an important role in supporting First Nation economic outcomes and stand the benefit from those successes. Part 1 of this presentation will provide a broader introduction to the changing landscape of First Nation economic development through a regional case study that considers the following themes: Traditional barriers to indigenous economic participation; Reconciliation, legal precedents, and changing environments in Canada; Emerging trends in indigenous economic development; Benefits of partnership and collaboration.

Presentation 4

Time: 3:45–4:00 PM

Title: Forward Together: Municipal - Indigenous Economic Partnerships Part 2

Authors: Dan Penner (Community Consultant and Planner, Partner at Urban Systems Ltd.)

Abstract: Part 2 of this presentation will shift focus to the topic of First Nation Urban Reserves and their importance and impact in economic development. Urban Reserves are becoming more present in municipalities of all sizes across Canada as First Nations shift focus to investing and creating economic opportunities in urban centres. The establishment, development, and success of Urban Reserve development is often predicated on a strong working relationship between the First Nation and municipality. Having a base understanding of urban reserves and related processes can support municipalities in initiating and establishing stronger connections with First Nations looking to invest in your community. Part 2 will explore key Urban Reserve themes including: First Nations and their place as a "Unique Developer"; Overview and legal context of Urban Reserves; Urban Reserve "MythBusters"; Urban Reserved development processes and municipal involvement; Common challenges and best practices for municipalities.



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