



Presentation Session: Rural Revitalization (Reinvestment)

DATE:

Friday, November 18th, 2022

TIME:

9:00–10:30 AM

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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REVITALISATION RURALE
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Presentations:

Presentation 1

Time: 9:00–9:15 AM

Title: Adopting a Holistic Approach to Municipal Planning

Authors: Dee Ann Benard (CEO, Rural Development Network), Cheryl Fort (Mayor, Township of Hornepayne, ON), and Gail Jeremy (CAO, Township of Hornepayne, ON)

Abstract: Small communities in Canada spend much time planning, but if it doesn't quickly and effectively lead to positive, long-term change, it's time wasted. Municipal planning has many objectives. While it's simpler to approach goals in isolation, what's really needed is an overarching plan that considers all the community's needs, and lays out clear priorities, steps, timelines, resources and responsibilities. Communities don't need a set of recommendations; they need actionable plans that will deliver results. The Rural Development Network (RDN) is partnering with the Township of Hornepayne to make Hornepayne a model of rural community revitalization, through building and implementing a true, integrated municipal sustainability plan. The methodology and learnings from Hornepayne will be used towards a larger case study to demonstrate a holistic approach to community development. RDN will create an actionable, living step-by-step guide for use by other smaller communities. We are seeking additional communities to join this project. **Key deliverables:** Comprehensive suites of services for participating communities to research, develop and implement overarching, custom-built revitalization plans based on well-understood and documented community needs and capacities; A free, step-by-step Guide to developing and implementing a holistic community revitalization plan for communities to create and implement their own revitalization plans.

Presentation 2

Time: 9:15–9:30 AM

Title: Connexions Timiskaming Connections: Learning from COVID equity measures to increase community resilience

Authors: Amanda Mongeon (Timiskaming Health Unit) and Kerry Schubert-Mackey (Timiskaming Health Unit)

Abstract: During the COVID-19 pandemic, some populations were more likely to become ill and suffer worse outcomes than others and the measures put in place to prevent spread also had disproportionately negative impacts on some groups of people compared to others. In rural communities, the competencies of local public health are well suited to identifying and understanding issues of equity and catalyzing community-appropriate and collaborative responses. This presentation will describe multi-sectoral, collaborative initiatives implemented in the district of Timiskaming to address inequities tied to the pandemic and suggest opportunities for rural community leaders and other actors to integrate lessons learned into future emergency management efforts.



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Presentation 3

Time: 9:30–9:45 AM

Title: (Re)Framing Rural Innovation: Smart Specialization in NonMetro Canadian Regions

Authors: Michele Mastroeni (OCAD University), Sarah-Patricia Breen (Selkirk College), Nicole Norris (Georgian College), Alexis Tennent (Georgian College), Irena PozgajJones (Georgian College)

Abstract: When it comes to innovation, rural places can often feel left behind in regards to policies that leverage research and development or support innovation. Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialization is an approach that aims to foster development in a way that leverages and applies a region's strengths. While successful in its application within urban contexts, testing and understanding the applicability of Smart Specialization to rural regions in Canada was the purpose of this project. Using two rural case study regions - one in Ontario and one in British Columbia - the research team worked with community members, organizations, and businesses to pilot leading edge strategies using foresight and the Three Horizons method with the aim of identifying pathways to rejuvenate and diversify local economies. Building on the results of these case studies, the research team has drafted a rural-focused Smart Specialization framework and tools that aim to support innovation in rural communities and regions across Canada. This presentation will summarize the results of the case studies, lessons learned, and present the resulting draft framework.

Presentation 4

Time: 9:45–10:00 AM

Title: "Nothing about us, without us": Positioning rural (regional) sustainability transitions in a Canadian context

Authors: Brady Reid (PhD Candidate, Sustainability Management, University of Waterloo)

Abstract: Indigenous, rural, and island regions in Canada continue to endure challenges compounded by "wicked" problems such as accelerated climate change (Reyer et al., 2017), globalization, and rapid technological advancement (Minnes and Vodden, 2019). To mediate the stresses caused by these complex challenges, there is an increasing need for a coordinated and effective transition to a more 'sustainable' society (Kohler et al., 2019; Bush and Doyon, 2021). My paper, based on an extensive review of academic literature, responds directly to the recent call from sustainability transition scholars Bush and Doyon (2021) who urge researchers "to explore and develop new pathways and initiatives by adopting a transdisciplinary knowledge co-production approach with transformations scholars and Indigenous peoples" (p. 58). I argue that to position sustainability transitions in a rural Canadian context, one must consider the diversity of governance actors and structures at play including multi-level interactions at the federal, provincial/territorial, regional, and local scale including self-determined Indigenous governance organizations and communities (Minnes and Vodden, 2019; Zimmerman et al., 2022). In concrete terms, effective transitions to a more sustainable society in rural Canada must include meaningful engagement and relationships with Indigenous peoples on their terms (Kovach, 2021).



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