

Northern Policy Institute

Institut des politiques du Nord

Presentation to Laurentian University
Board of Governors

13 December 2013

A QUICK (recent) History of NPI

- Common Voice Northwest submitted 148 recommendations for Northern Growth Plan, a key one being creation of NPI
- Oct 2009: Proposed Growth Plan for Northern Ontario includes establishment of a Northern Research & Policy Institute
- March 2011: Release of *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011* included NPI
- August 2012 MNDM Announcement of NPI

NPI Status

- NOHFC approved \$5 million funding – August 2012
- NPI Incorporated – December 2012
- Founding board chosen and appointed – February 2013
- CEO Search complete – appointed June 2013
- Contract with NOHFC signed – July 2013
- First funds received – August 2013
- Offices opened - September 2013
- First staffing and project commissioning – Sept/Oct 2013

NPI Members

Lakehead University

- **Dr. Brian Stevenson**, President
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay
- **Mr. Cameron Clark**, Chair
Lakehead University Board of
Governors

Laurentian University

- **Mr. Dominic Giroux**, President
Laurentian University, Sudbury
- **Mr. Michael Atkins**, Chair
Laurentian University Board of
Governors

NPI Board of Directors

- **Ms. Florence Bailey**, Consultant
Municipality of Sioux Lookout

- **Dr. Harley d'Entremont**
Nipissing University, North Bay

- **Mr. Hal J. McGonigal**
Retired, Sault Ste. Marie

- **Mr. Doug Murray**, CEDC
Thunder Bay, Ontario.

- **R. Martin Bayer**, Partner
Weaver Simmons LLP, Sudbury

- **Mr. Dominic Giroux**, President
Laurentian University, Sudbury

- **Dr. George Macey**, Dentist
Marathon

- **Ms. Madge Richardson**, ED
NSWPB, Thunder Bay

- **Dr. Brian Stevenson**, President
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay

- **Ms. Thérèse Bergeron-Hopson**
Timmins and District Hospital

NPI Letters Patent

- Proactive, evidence-based and purpose driven policy options that:
 - Deepen the understanding of the unique challenges facing Northern Ontario
 - Ensure the sustainable development and long term economic prosperity of Northern Ontario
- Research and analysis of
 - Existing and emerging policies relevant to northern Ontario
 - Economic, technological and social trends affecting northern Ontario
- Formulation and advocacy of policies that:
 - benefit northern Ontario and first nations communities
- Other complementary purposes not inconsistent with these objectives

What is a “think tank” anyway?

“It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so.”

- Mark Twain

“Politics is the art of the possible.”

- Winston Churchill

“If you want to change the world, forget politics, win the war of ideas.”

- Friedrich Hayek

How do think-tanks succeed?

Ultimate success for a policy think tank is marshalling the evidence, forming a recommendation from what the evidence tells you, and having that advice followed.

If you say a policy should be changed, killed or created, success is having that policy changed, killed or created.

MANY roads to that success

- Parade Marshal
 - Where is EVERYONE ELSE going
- Cheerleader
 - What do we BELIEVE
- Permission Giver
 - What does the EVIDENCE say

Permission giving = LONG game

- Short term:

- Are people listening?
- Are people debating your ideas?

- Medium Term:

- Are people sharing your ideas?
- Are people advocating for your ideas?
- Are people ASKING for your ideas?

- Long Term:

- Are people implementing your ideas?

Three Key Goals for NPI

1. Enhance Measurement, and the availability of those measures to all stakeholders
2. Building SUSTAINABLE community capacity: skills, knowledge, private capital.
3. Enhancing self-sufficiency
 1. Of individuals, communities, sub-regions and the region as a whole

NPI Projects Commissioned

- Review of federal aboriginal education act
- Northern data bank – NOHFC, MNDM, Fednor, NODN, Norcat have ALL agreed to work with NPI to release as much data as possible (now working with Statscan and other local data holders)
- Land use planning driven locally and oriented to growth vs driven centrally and oriented towards control
- Anti-poverty efforts – GAI vs the min wage
- A better way to “set” minimum wage – average industrial wage vs GDP
- Income splitting for parents with children under 18 – a(n) (Northern?) Ontario mirror to the federal 2015 plan
- Potential for Port/Airport Authority model to fund, build and manage Ring of Fire infrastructure

RFPs in development

- Online community consultation tool
- Shared Internships to build local policy capacity in small rural, remote and First Nations communities
- NPI website – “evidence portal”
- Demographic trends – and policy directions
- Lessons in local control and entrepreneurship
 - Membertou model
 - Westbank First Nation – Medical Tourism
 - Subsidiarity in the EU – lessons for NO
- Wealth transfer and “balance of payments” (update and analyze trends and any potential policy responses)

Projects under discussion

- Northern performance measures – community level
- Looking at the cost of smaller class sizes – sizes in line with the literature on 15 or fewer in early grades
- Looking at potential applicability and cost for Netherlands approach to community based elder care
- Potential framework for community development or benefits negotiations/agreements with proponents **IN** their community or **IMPACTING** their communities
- MANTARIO series – we can't be a province **BUT** can we be: free trade zone, special economic zone, special tax zone, signatory to New West Partnership

Projects under consideration

- Defining selection criteria for setting infrastructure priorities, then applying them to the ring of fire specifically, and the northern inter-modal plans more broadly
- Analyzing best practices for funding infrastructure and applying those to the ring of fire and the multi-modal plan
- Looking at the potential applicability and cost of having our children “sleep in boxes” like the Finns
- The recent PISA results and what that says for how our kids should learn math (and other previous lessons ignored from PISA)

Synergies with University Partners

- **Students:**

- Access to NPI – lectures, research, mentoring – Lakehead Economics
- Publication opportunities – Laurentian Health Policy students
- Co-ops and Internships – First applications for Jan 2014
- Employment – Comms Manager is a Laurentian Grad

- **Faculty:**

- Access to NPI – lectures, research, mentoring
- Research and publication opportunities

- **Programs:**

- Northern Development, Economics, Political Science, Health Policy, Administration, Management, etc.
- Build demand for training and expertise and provide supply of jobs and opportunities to use those skills



*Thank You, Merci,
Müigwetch,*