

Working WITH  
Northern Policy Institute/  
Institut des politiques du Nord

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Presentation to  
Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association  
8 April 2014



# NPI Areas of Focus - broadly

Northern Growth (note NOT Northern Growth “PLAN”):

1. Aboriginal peoples
2. Communities
3. Demographics
4. Economy
5. Environment
6. Infrastructure



# Three Key Goals for NPI

- Enhance measurement and the availability of those measures to all stakeholders
- Building SUSTAINABLE community capacity: skills, knowledge, private capital
- Enhancing self-sufficiency
  - 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 vs other individual supports and interventions



# Projects Commissioned (continued)

- 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
- Demographic trends and 50 year projections– and potential policy responses
- A comparative analysis Northern Ontario versus other rural and remote regions – how do we stack up?



# RoF Projects Commissioned

- Potential for Port/Airport Authority model to fund, build and manage Ring of Fire infrastructure
- A “Road Map” for the Ring of Fire?; A History of the Oil Sands
- Quarterly progress reports on Ring of Fire developments – are we “getting there” fast enough?
- A history of the Ring of Fire – progress to date
- What do we know, what do we think, what are we saying? A one stop shop for public information



# 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” – getting ALL the current and previous great work somewhere where people can find it
- Lessons in local control and entrepreneurship
  - Membertou model
  - Westbank First Nation – Medical Tourism
  - Subsidiarity in the EU – lessons for NO



# RFPs in development (continued)

- Wealth transfer and “balance of payments” (update and analyze trends and any potential policy responses to “where the money goes”)
- Levels of service – NO v ON v other provinces
- Can you get there from here? Advantages and disadvantages of doing business in NO, and how to reduce/take advantage of them
- One size does NOT fit all - Unintended policy barriers of well intended policy meant for someone or somewhere else – but applied here “because that’s what the law says’



# 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 need a better name) – we can't (or won't be) 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)
- Rail – commuter, RoF, and otherwise. Looking/relooking at the numbers (eg: the “Northlander” is gone, but is there a case for the “night train”?)



# How do we choose projects?

Key questions:

Is it an important public policy issue?

- More on that in a minute

Can we make a difference?

- If everyone else is doing this work, we don't need to

Can we find the resources?

- Data, research capacity, funding

SECRET – fourth question



# Three ways YOUR issue gets on OUR to-do list

## 1. Research if necessary:

NPI standing consultation tools will be used to inform, test and reset our internal research agenda and priorities. If your issue is shared by your friends and neighbours, it will likely get onto our to-do list.

## 2. But not necessarily research:

YOU do the work, commission the study, and you send it to us for re-publication or dissemination. Big parts of our job involve avoiding wasteful duplication of effort and getting the word out about what has already been done.

## 3. Working WITH NPI:

NPI is NOT a consulting service, but will partner – in cash, or in kind - to expedite needed work.



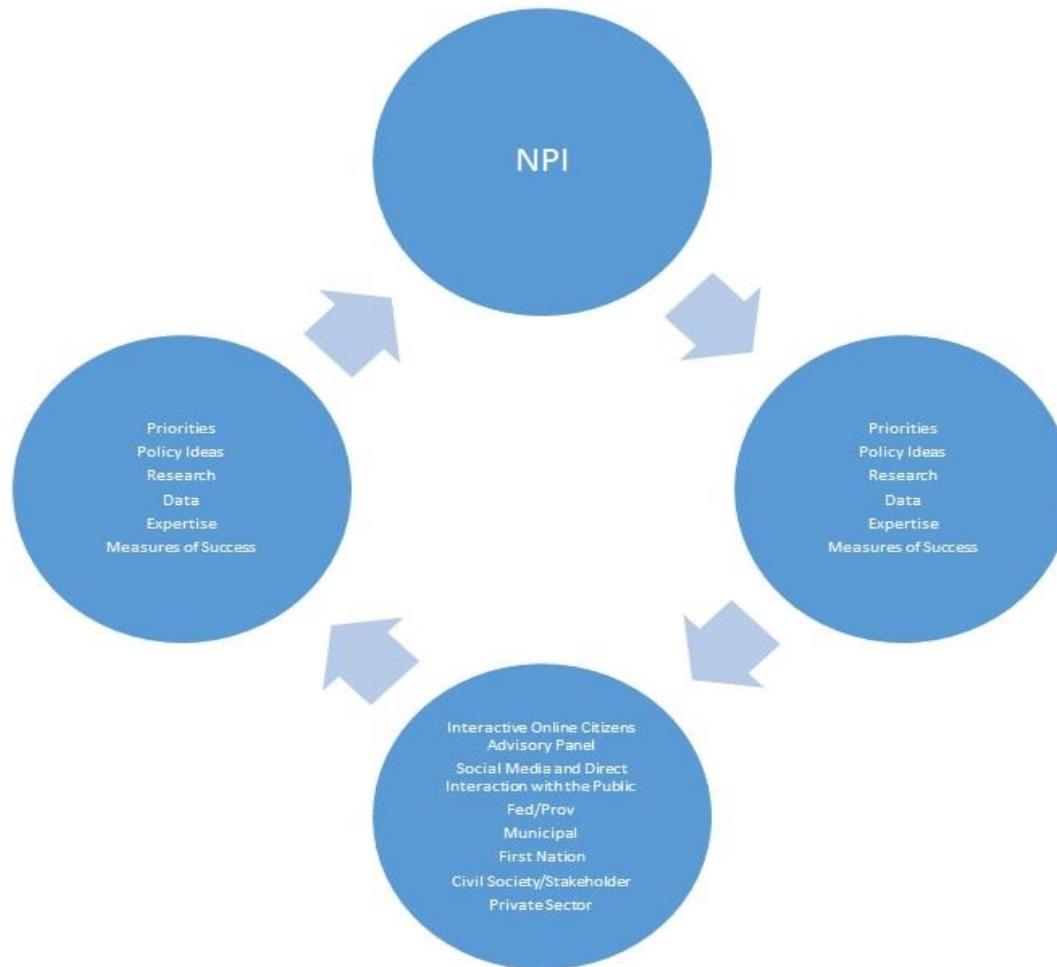
# Is it an important policy issue?

This is where you come in:

- Are people talking about it?
  - Headlines, letters to the editor, direct feedback via NPI on-line consultation tool
- Government Initiatives
  - Federal, provincial, municipal
- Stakeholder and interest groups
  - Industry and professional associations, unions, chambers, grassroots community organisations, opposition parties
- Experts DO know
  - “Ivory tower” academics, “bureaucrats”, “vote obsessed” politicians; all good and reliable leading indicators of future issues



# How NPI works WITH the Community





# BEFORE you call us

There is a BIG difference between:

- “working WITH a Policy Institute” and “HIRING a consultant”

Independent means just that - look at terms of reference:

- “impact assessment of provincial owned and operated road to Ring of Fire” = consultant, decision pre-determined, decision based evidence seeking
- “assess WHETHER the province should own and operate a road to the Ring of Fire” = independent policy work, evidence based advice for decision making



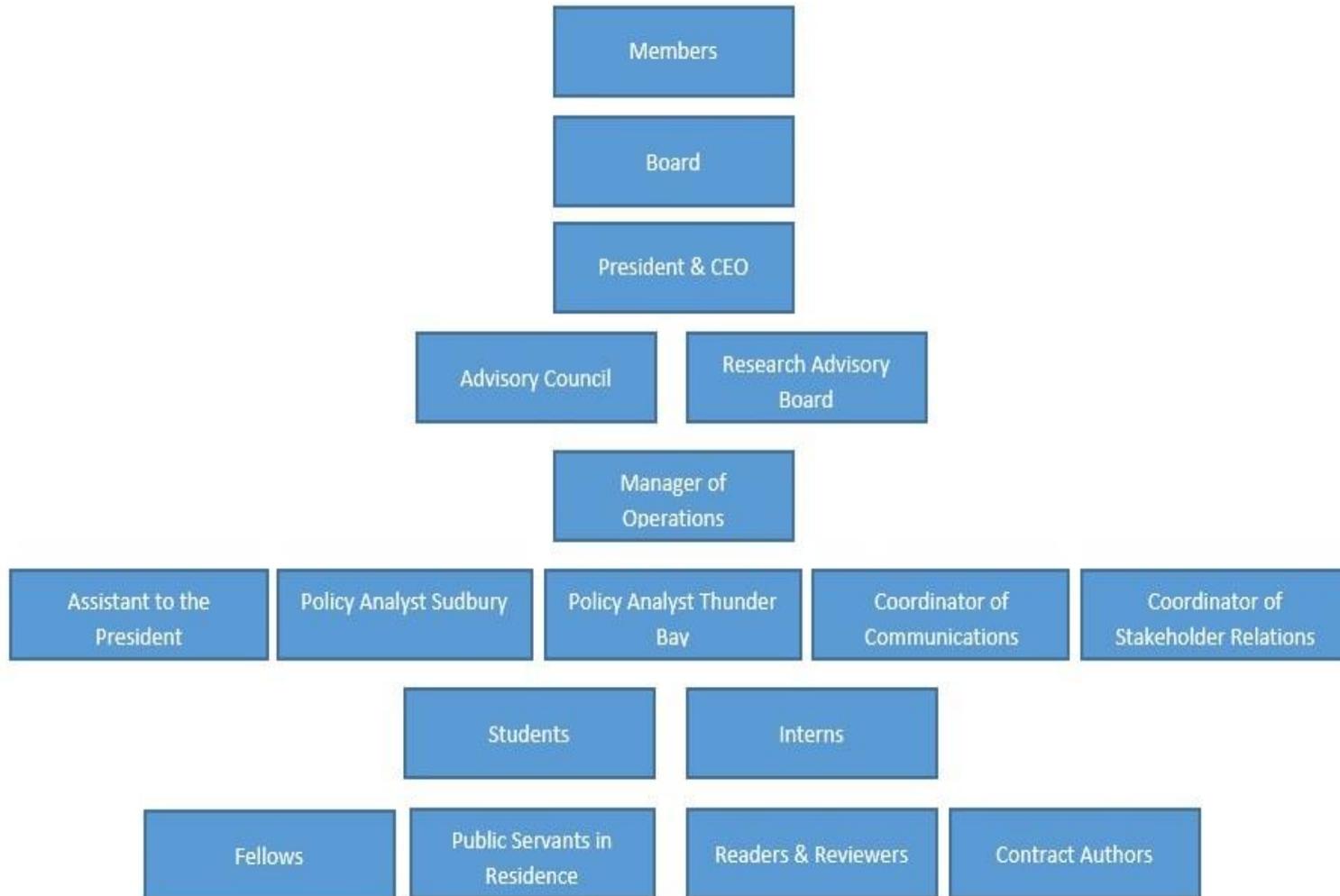
# Get Involved!

Many ways to contribute to the work of NPI:

- Stay informed: blog, twitter, website, e-newsletter
- Participate: standing consultation tools, on-line consultation, direct meetings, speaker invitations
- Volunteer: Board of Directors, Advisory Council, Research Advisory Board
- Paid: author, reader, researcher, senior fellow



# Key players INSIDE NPI



Evidence based solutions, for and from Northern Ontario



# We are “up and running”

Give me a call or send me an e-mail:

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ANY QUESTIONS?