Growing Agri-Food KTT in Ontario: Healthy Rural and Small Town Communities

Wayne Caldwell, RPP
School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
An initial story...
From an Environmental and Social Context - What helped this Community Recover?
From an Economic & Social Context what helped this community move towards Resilience?

The Village of Blyth
Evolution of a Project

Initial Project
(Public Health Ontario)

Websites, Workshops and Videos (KTT Funding)

Graduate Course
(SEDRD)
Healthy Rural Communities:
We started by bringing a rural lens to the relationship between the built environment & health

- Obesity + Physical Inactivity
- Chronic Diseases
- Climate Change
- Air Pollution
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Other Impacts
18

**Evolving Rural Issues**

- Decline in traditional manufacturing and the value of Canadian dollars due to foreign competition
- Labour (availability & skills)
- Travel distance / lack of public transit
- Medical – physicians & health care
- Accessing health and education
- Threats to tourism
- Infrastructure
- Leadership
- Energy Prices
- Global issues: climate change, peak oil, etc.
- Demographic shifts
- Relatively low incomes
- Agriculture: farmland loss, fragmentation, conflict
- Impacts of evolving agriculture
- New opportunities (local food, alternative energy, etc.)
- Healthy Populations
- Education
- Healthy Rural Communities

While there is a relationship between the built environment and poverty to depopulation (The Social Determinants of Health), there are many other issues to be tackled. Healthy Populations and Education are crucial factors in addressing evolving rural issues.
The Audience

- The Public
- Public Health
- Planning
- Municipalities
  - Decision Makers
- Students
KTT Lessons and Insight:

• A project doesn’t (or shouldn’t stop) with a report
• Non-Academic Audiences
• Bringing together Planning and Public Health
• Multiple ways of delivering messages

(continued)
KTT Lessons and Insight:

- Champions
- An Economic Lens
- Gaining Political Support
- The Importance of Stories and Providing Opportunities for Story Telling
A Final Reflection

Chart 9
Population growth/decline by census division over 2013 to 2041

Northern Ontario

- Decline
- 0 to 15 Per Cent Growth
- 15 to 40 Per Cent Growth
- Over 40 Per Cent Growth

Southern Ontario

Source: Ontario Ministry of Finance projections.
Growing Agri-Food KTT in Ontario: Healthy Rural and Small Town Communities

Thanks, and with Thanks:
Funded by Public Health Ontario as part of the Locally Driven Collaborative Projects program
Funded by OMAFRA/U of G Partnership
Healthy Rural Communities Project Team Members (Health Units)
School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
Ontario Professional Planners Institute