



THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION



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DE L'ONTARIO

Small Towns, Big Impacts

Presentation to the OEMC Conference

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Objectives today

1. Connecting

- on the challenges facing small communities in Ontario today and the contribution the Ontario Trillium Foundation is making to their health and vibrancy.

Communicating

- Sharing what we learned from our recent investigation of the impact our grants are having on small towns in Ontario -- and learning from your reactions and questions.

Delivering

- Special congratulations to OEMC on its 15th anniversary, from us as we celebrate our 25th!





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Small Towns, Big Impacts

Overview

- Introduction
- Analysis of OTF Grants to Eastern Ontario, 2006-07
- *Small Towns, Big Impacts*: Background
- Key Learnings: OTF Impact in Small Towns





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Introduction





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Our vision

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is a catalyst that enables Ontarians to work together to enhance the quality of life in their communities. We believe that communities across Ontario are rich in talent, creativity and drive and our grants stimulate communities to build on these assets.

Our mission

Building healthy and vibrant communities throughout Ontario by strengthening the capacity of the voluntary sector, through investments in community-based initiatives.





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About OTF

- Agency of the Government of Ontario
- \$105M allocation (07-08), to grow to \$120M (09-10)
- Four broad funding priorities
- 1,500 grants per year to NFPs working in 4 sectors
- 80% of grant \$\$ flow through a Community-based Program/20% through a Province-wide program
- Largely responsive approach to grantmaking
- Over 300 volunteers involved through our Board and GRTs.





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We understand the challenges facing small towns

- Economic development.
 - Tourism as an economic driver.
 - Sustainable resource use.
 - Employment opportunities and leadership development for youth.
 - Water quality and waste management.
 - Alternative and renewable energy opportunities.
 - Repairs and improvements to the arts, culture, sports and recreation infrastructure.
 - Reducing tobacco use, preventing obesity and increasing physical activity.
 - Building the capacity of the voluntary sector.
- **Our granting priorities and strategies are designed to address these challenges.**





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Key capacity building challenges facing NFPs in rural Ontario

- Funding and sustainability
- Volunteer and Leader Burnout
- Transportation





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OTF's strategies are having a strong impact.

- 13 regional offices and a province-wide volunteer network.
 - A per-capita funding formula, with equity adjustments.
 - Granting priorities that are relevant to rural communities.
 - Eligibility of small municipalities and public libraries.
 - A simplified application process for small capital grants.
- **More than half of OTF's investments in communities benefit small towns across Ontario.**





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Analysis of OTF Grants to Eastern Ontario, 2006-07





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OTF grants to Eastern Ontario 2006-07

Catchment	# Grants	\$M
Champlain	152	6.9
QKR	111	6.1
DHKPR	97	3.5
PW	35	6.5
Total	395	23





OTF small capital grants to Eastern Ontario 2006-07

Catchment	# Grants	\$000
Champlain	10	135,2
QKR	7	66,5
DHKPR	5	85,7
Total	22	287,4





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OTF grants to small municipalities and libraries in Eastern Ontario 2006-07

Catchment	# Grants	\$000
Champlain	7	199,8
QKR	19	667,4
DHKPR	6	274,9
Total	32	1,141,1





Volunteerism impact of OTF grants in Eastern Ontario 2006-07

Catchment	# Volunteers	# Hours	\$M
Champlain	11,921	432,844	7.4
QKR	4,720	168,765	2.9
DHKPR	9,730	301,219	5.1
Total	26,371	902,828	15.4





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Small Towns, Big Impacts: Background





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Why this Study?

- Initiated as one of our 25th Anniversary initiatives
- Looking for “deeper” understanding of the impact of our grants – the “stories behind the numbers”.
- Blending qualitative field research with quantitative data gathered from grantees.
- Exploring the use of more interactive and richer media formats to document impact and demonstrate effectiveness.





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Why Small Towns?

- Small town = population under 20,000
 - Receive more than half of our annual granting budget.
 - Grants cut across all four priorities, all four sectors, and the three types of grants we provide – capital, operating, project.
 - We are often one of very few funders available to voluntary organizations in small communities.
- **A strong evidence base to assess the Foundation's impact.**





Small Towns, Big Impacts

Kenora pop: 15,838

- \$1.6 M for 36 grants
- No Province-Wide grants
- 1,800 volunteers (28,000 hours)
- Leveraged \$1.2 M (\$1.51 per \$1 granted)

Kapuskasing pop: 10,439

- \$1.5 M for 38 grants
- 3 Province-Wide grants
- 370 volunteers (13,390 hours)
- Leveraged \$726,00 (68¢ per \$1 granted)

Hawkesbury pop: 18,907

- \$2.5 M for 56 grants
- 3 Province-Wide grants
- 1,200 volunteers (65,000 hours)
- Leveraged \$1.6 M (\$1.42 per \$1 granted)

Haliburton pop: 20,397

- \$1.48 M for 48 grants
- 1 Province-Wide grant
- 1,800 volunteers (67,000 hours)
- Leveraged \$5.5 M (\$5.55 per \$1 granted)

Goderich pop: 7,604

- \$2 M for 38 grants
- No Province-Wide grants
- 1,500 volunteers (29,300 hours)
- Leveraged \$835,00 (59¢ per \$1 granted)

Port Colborne pop: 18,450

- \$1.2 M for 36 grants
- No Province-Wide grants
- 930 volunteers (88,500 hours)
- Leveraged \$2.3 M (\$3.11 per \$1 granted)





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Key Learnings: OTF impact in small towns





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1. OTF as a Catalyst

- Often the only source of funding in small towns (real or perceived).
- Flexibility of our programs.
- We help leverage other sources of funding and volunteer support – and therefore impact.
- We help foster local collaboration and networking – a key to local impact.
- We encourage and support innovation.
- We help build capacity for local NFPs.





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2. The Importance of Local Circumstances

- Leadership at the local level.
- Level of volunteer involvement in the community.
- Cohesiveness of local community networks
- OTF staff present and active in the community.





3. A little can go a long way

- What may appear to be simple grants can have sustained, community-wide impact with a high degree of leverage.
- For example, a small capital grant for equipment, or a key renovation, can have a significant and lasting impact.

“So, if you’re talking about groups like ski clubs and what not, they do everything possible to run their club, but when there’s a time that they need the extra push to buy new equipment or to renew their building, nothing else is out there but the Ontario Trillium Foundation. So the role of OTF is very important and vital, otherwise a lot of these groups wouldn’t bother existing, or couldn’t continue existing.” (interviewee)





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4. Serendipity

- There are often unintended benefits that result from the responsive nature of the Foundation's grantmaking.
- For some grantees, the simple fact of receiving a grant from OTF created new opportunities for local partnerships and innovations that had nothing to do with the grant itself.





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Ongoing challenges we face

- Continuing to streamline our application process.
- Finding ways to free up time for program staff to spend in the communities they serve.
- Reviewing the eligibility of small municipalities for capital grants.





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Four priorities for enhancing our impact

1. Make grants that encourage and develop local leadership.
2. Facilitate and support the convening of local organizations and the development of local networks.
3. Focus on volunteerism and civic engagement.
4. Have an active presence in the communities we are serving.





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Thank you for the opportunity.

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