

North Glengarry

*Community Priority Setting Exercise
June 21st, 2005*

Report



Final Report Date: October 2005

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Facilitator:

Ms. Jacqueline Frioud Minister St. Lawrence Pastoral Charge

Participants:

Julie Akkermans	Shawn Lebrun
Mike Baxendale	David Munro
Phyliss Burton Shaw	Melanie Quesnel
Luc Cholette	Susan Stamm
Yves Gauthier	Jo-Ann Trottier
Nicole Geoffrion	Melita Kuburas
Maryanne Kampouris	Desneiges Valade
Suzanne Lavoie	

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Brief Review United Way of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry
3. **Part I: Issues** – Turbo Brainstorming
 - 3.1. What are your communities' most pressing issues?
 - 3.2. What are the most important factors creating these issues?
4. **Part II: Discussion**
 - 4.1. What's working well
 - 4.2. What needs improvement
5. Dotmacracy regarding issues
6. Discussion Local vs. Regional
7. Discussion regarding sharing of info
8. Closing Remarks

3. Part 1: Issues

- 3.1. What are your communities' most pressing issues?
- 3.2. What are the important factors creating these issues?

3.1. Communities most pressing issues identified

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 3.1.1. Economic development/Jobs | 3.1.6. Auditorium |
| 3.1.2. Transportation | 3.1.7. Access to Services |
| 3.1.3. Youth | 3.1.8. Seniors |
| 3.1.4. Early Years | 3.1.9. Basic Education |
| 3.1.5. Leadership | 3.1.10. Source of Water |

3.2. Important Factors Creating Issues

3.2.1. Economic Development/Jobs

- No encouraged entrepreneurship
- Centralized/consolidated services making it less attractive to live in a smaller community
- Lack of loyalty to own community
- Citizens working outside of the community
- Money not staying in community
- Local merchants cannot compete with larger companies
- Lack of "high-speed" Internet
- Competing against world economy for salaries
- No manufacturing jobs
- Companies leaving our community
- Community sees job loss as a crisis – lack of future planning
- No pay equity
- No jobs/opportunities
- Lack of industry
- Declining commerce
- Loss of local services & economic viability of the community
- No employment opportunities for youth
- Lack of skilled workers
- No employment opportunities for mentally challenged citizens

3.2.2. Transportation

- Train company has moved and there has been a cut back of services, less stops
- No mass transit
- No public handicapped services
- Vast geography
- No transportation between towns
- No efficient use of transport that the community does have

- Not all citizens have vehicles or know how to drive
- No transportation funding

3.2.3. Youth

- Parents working outside of community so no ability to chauffeur youth
- Many after school programs are too far away from the schools
- Some youth activities are too expensive
- Lack of diversity/originality
- Not enough youth programs to begin with
- Some youth do not want to participate in extra curricular activities
- No music or art programs – all sports oriented activities
- No volunteers to coordinate or lead activities
- No list of activities in the community
- Some youth falling between the cracks
- No local skate park
- No youth support programs
- No events or activities to keep youth off the streets

3.2.4. Early Years

- Not enough funding to initiate programs for the early years
- Not enough daycare programs
- Not enough before and after school programs
- Not enough learning readiness programs

3.2.5. Leadership

- Lack of focus

3.2.6. Auditorium

3.2.7. Access to Services

- Lack of Funding

3.2.8. Seniors

- Elderly population increasing

3.2.9. Basic Education

3.2.10. Source of Water

3.2.5.	Leadership	Local
3.2.6.	Auditorium	Local
3.2.7.	Access to Services	Local & Regional
3.2.8.	Seniors	Regional
3.2.9.	Basic Education	Local & Regional
3.2.10.	Source of Water	Local

The group agreed that most of the issues were local. The issues surrounding Economic Development & Jobs, Transportation, Access to Services, Seniors and Basic Education were considered to be a regional (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry) issue, but the rest of the issues raised would be indicative of North Glengarry.

7. Addendum

A draft report was sent to all participants for further commenting. No changes were made to the actual report.

Comments sent:

- I believe that the participants represented an important part of the community but did not necessarily constitute a wide representation of North Glengarry. Unfortunately, the majority appeared to be non-participatory in community affairs. Several years ago I chaired the North Glengarry Community Economic Development Group, a group that is now pretty much defunct though it does operate the Tourist Information Centre. We had several community priority setting exercises, all of which identified the same issues that your exercise has done. The two major issues seem to be lack of interest on the part of most citizens and lack of purpose on the part of local politicians. In the first case the lack of interest may be better described as lack of information and direction on the part of the politicians and local leaders. Too often it seems to me that while people want change everyone wants a different change. Local politics being what they are there are always community leaders who supported the loser and have no intention of working with the winner; it's a no-win situation.
- Good first effort but I find the report sterile. I learned far more about what actually took place from the short article written by the reporter from News. I do not see the document as useful without some skillful analysis and presentation of what transpired. There were several good ideas presented but the report ignores them. As it stands the report does not inspire action, is sterile and dehumanized. I know its easy to criticize but if the project is to reach a goal towards solutions--rather than be a justification for spending funding--then more effort will have to go into the report.

Based on the last comment, the article written up by the reporter Melita Kuburas is attached as an Appendix to the North Glengarry report.

8. Appendix 1

Lack of Services, economic growth a problem, reps tell UW meeting

By Melita Kuburas

Special to The News

North Glengarry's community representatives say lack of public transportation, youth activities and economic development are the most important issues residents in the area are currently facing. Individuals from different branches of the community spoke out during a United Way meeting in Alexandria last week, organized by Community Matters, a new initiative funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation that hopes to target the main problems facing rural communities. "We realized we didn't have a close connection with the rural community," said United Way Cornwall's community consultant Alyssa Blais in explaining the decision to hold the meeting. Ms. Blais will prepare a report based on the meeting as part of the first step in the three-year initiative, at the end of which some of the issues brought up last week will be addressed or resolved. One of the issues brainstormed by the 15 representatives was transportation, the lack of which some members felt compounded other problems, for example lack of youth activities. "All programs that have a social component need transportation, anytime you want to put a program together you need a way to get people there," said Jo-Ann Trottier, from Glengarry Interagency Group. Because of the size of the area, the concern is towards individuals who cannot drive getting to and from events in different communities. It was also mentioned that having fewer cars on the road and reducing pollution would also benefit the community. Concerned about lack of activities for youth, North Glengarry councillor Julie Akkermans said she wished there was more of a diversity in organized activities. She says her two daughters may not be interested in sports, but would enjoy and attend art classes and activities if they were organized for their age group. "It's hard for me to find an activity, that's not soccer or hockey, for them to do," she said. Discussion ranged from individual concerns for youth, to other problems such as loss of jobs and change in global manufacturing. "If Alexandria Moulding disappears tomorrow, the whole town is a ghost town," said Luc Cholette, emphasizing the importance of manufacturing plants and jobs that bring money to North Glengarry from other parts of the world. Ways to keep that money in the community to support local businesses were also discussed. Mike Baxendale, president of Maxville Chamber of Commerce, says developing the local economy is an immediate concern. "You can't have good, well-paying jobs unless you have economic development," he said. Maryanne Kampouris, from Friends of the Library, agreed. "Every time we buy at Wal-Mart instead of a local grocery store, we're putting out own retailers in a place where they can't buy cheaper product in bulk," she said. Many of these problems, the representatives agreed, could be solved by utilizing North Glengarry's generous volunteer resources, range of leadership skills and successful local businesses. But this community consultation meeting is only the first phase of the initiative, and Karen Turchetto, executive director United Way SD&G, says it is not imperative that all of those issues be solved at the meeting. Other residents will get a chance to speak out through an upcoming public survey. A similar meeting will be taking place in South Glengarry on June 30 at the Lancaster Fire Hall.