Building the Future:

Rural Infrastructure & Regional Economic Development

SNAPSHOT

Are rural Ontario communities capable of responding to infrastructure pressures and opportunities? How does that capacity – or lack thereof – affect a community's current and future long-term economic development? This research initiative will examine these questions and develop recommendations for addressing these issues through both immediate and long-term policy alternatives.

TIMELINE: 2018-2021

FUNDING AGENCY

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

RESEARCH TEAM

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**The opportunity to invest
in infrastructure
has never been greater.**

– Unleashing Productivity Through
Infrastructure, Government of Canada
Advisory Council on Growth, 2016

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Research Questions:

Are rural Ontario communities capable of responding to infrastructure pressures and opportunities?

How does that capacity – or lack thereof – affect a community's current and future long-term economic development?

Rationale for this research:

- Strong and sustainable research is recognized as the backbone of community vitality and economic development & growth.
- Communities of all sizes must balance fiscal realities, changing economies, aging infrastructure, changing demographics, and a challenging climate as they work to manage their core infrastructure assets and accommodate and/or address new infrastructure and service demands.
- Rural communities differ from urban communities – and each other, presenting varying capacities to respond to infrastructure pressures & opportunities
- Investment in productivity-enhancing infrastructure is perhaps the most powerful & critical mechanism for supporting immediate & longterm economic development, innovation, & community resilience
- Adaptive, nuanced rural infrastructure investment frameworks are critical for addressing realities of rural development across all jurisdictions

Objectives for this research:

- This research will provide evidence-based recommendations for constructing, implementing & evaluating successful rural infrastructure policies & programs
- This research contains three primary objectives:
 - Examine **how rural Ontario communities vary in their capacity to respond to infrastructure pressures**
 - Investigate **how those varying capacities affect short- & long-term economic development**
 - Provide OMAFRA recommendations on how to **develop rural infrastructure policy, programming & investments that will build rural community capacity & support economic development & growth**

Learn more:

Visit www.ruraldev.ca/infrastructure

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