

Local/Regional Economic Development Strategies That 'Work': The Experience and Aspirations in Eastern Ontario

OGRA 2020 Conference
Royal York Hotel, Toronto Ontario Canada
February 24, 2020

Kathy Wood

Project Coordinator, Eastern Ontario Leadership Council

CEO, Pivotal Momentum Inc.



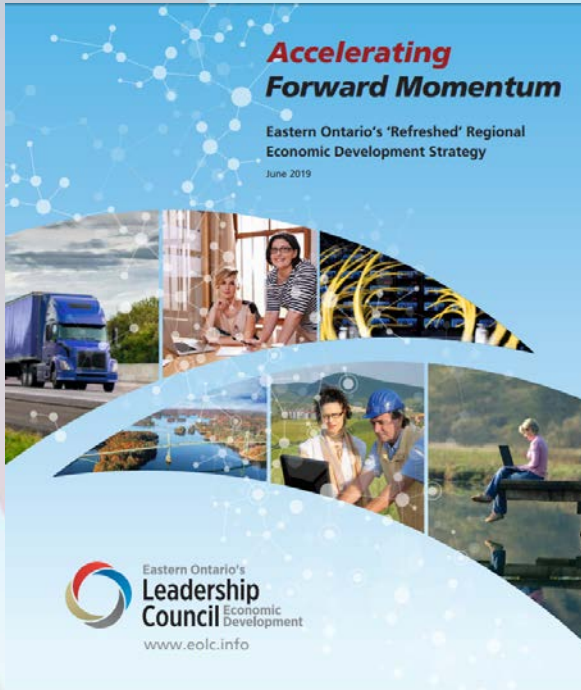
Eastern Ontario's
**Leadership
Council** Economic
Development

Presentation Overview

1. A Provincial 'first': Overview of Eastern Ontario's regional economic development strategy (www.eolc.info)
2. Emerging roles for transportation in local and regional economic development
3. A Strategic Asset: How Eastern Ontario views its transportation infrastructure



Overview of Eastern Ontario's Regional Economic Development Strategy



- “Eastern Ontario” is 13 counties (11 two-tier; 2 single tier) and 10 separated cities and towns
- First *regional* strategy approved in 2014; ‘refreshed’ in 2019
- Motivated by desire to advance the region’s economy; build on collaborations
- *Key Numbers:*
 - 1.18 million people
 - 570,000-strong workforce
 - ~\$4 billion/year in municipal capital and operating expenditures
 - \$14 billion in infrastructure assets (at cost); \$3 billion capital infrastructure deficit
 - 79,000 lane-kilometres of road (41,000 surface-treated or asphalt); 7,700 bridges and large culverts

2019 Strategy *Development* Took Place Under Auspices of The EOLC

- Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus (EOWC)*
- Eastern Ontario Mayors Caucus (EOMC)
- Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN)*
- CF Ontario East*
- Ontario East Economic Development Commission*

EOLC *operations* are largely funded by municipal governments, with special *project funding* sought from upper levels of government.

* Formal legal entities



EOLC won an EDCO regional collaboration award in 2017



Eastern Ontario's
**Leadership
Council** Economic
Development

2019 Strategy *Implementation* Now Being Led by the EOLC

- The EOLC works on pan-regional initiatives, especially ones where solutions are most likely to:
 - Cross municipal boundaries
 - Be more easily accomplished by aggregation of demand
 - Provide an opportunity to be a 'test region'.
- The regional strategy focuses on three themes:
 - Workforce Development and Deployment*
 - Technology Integration and Innovation*
 - Integrated, Intelligent Transportation Systems*... with Digital Infrastructure as the foundation for all three.
 - * *The EOLC has a 'working group' for each of three themes.*
- Multiple prov. ministries have observers on working groups.

Why Do We Describe these Strategies as Ones that “Work”?

- Aggregate demand; some advances more easily made by groups of organizations working together
- Leverage expertise distributed across municipalities and other stakeholder organizations
- Address challenges that businesses face in growing in our communities
- Easier to build significant partnerships with provincial and federal governments
- Brand-building is easier when there are ‘flagship’ projects
- Individual communities can engage where there is common interest



Emerging Roles for Transportation in Local/Regional Economic Development

Two Aspirational Outcomes:

- Eastern Ontario's transportation systems are moving goods and people *safely and efficiently*, within the region and beyond --- **part of logistics**
- The region's transportation systems are at the forefront of **understanding and incorporating *major technology and innovation developments*** and related opportunities into transportation modes and infrastructure --- **part of technology commercialization and the Internet of Things**

Words Becoming More Prominent in Our Conversations:

- On-demand
- Integrated
- Multi-modal
- Technology
- Intelligent
- Connectivity
- Policy
- Autonomous
- Energy
- Platforms
- Applications
- Cybersecurity
- Monetize
- Leverage
- Data
- Analytics
- Predictive



Emerging Roles for Transportation in Local/Regional Economic Development

1. As A Test Bed for Innovation



- 'Slow-walking' a unique approach to municipal innovation: certification
 - Goal is to help region's start-ups/early stage customers get 'first customers' AND help municipalities address their challenges... **some of these COULD be related to transportation**
 - Economic development connection? If successful, more of these companies will stay and grow in the region
 - Specific criteria for certification (modest three-year financial commitment, identification of challenges, resolution, incorporating innovation procurement in bylaws)
 - Legal opinion and sample bylaw wording to be compliant with Discriminatory Business Practices legislation



Emerging Roles for Transportation in Local/Regional Economic Development

2. As a Productivity Accelerator for Carriers and Municipalities

- Recently launched a multi-municipality pilot project, in conjunction with Transnomis, to develop and test a **'one window' online permitting system** for carriers moving over-size/over-limit loads across multiple municipalities
 - Route planning
 - Fees, terms and conditions
 - Application submission, approval and payment processes
- Funded by MMAH to examine business models, potential costs savings to municipalities and pricing for long-term financial sustainability



Emerging Roles for Transportation in Local/Regional Economic Development

3. As a Way to Connect People with Opportunity

- November 2019: Launched a 17-month region-wide “**Commuter Strategy**” project (MLTSD-funded)
 - Understand the significance of transportation challenges for workforce
 - Analyze demand and opportunities for financially-sustainable non-conventional ‘cross-boundary’ transportation options (might be private or NFP or multi-municipal-collaboration models; might be an “app”)
 - Call for/provide modest seed funding for up to six pilot projects across the region
 - Evaluate original analyses and provide results to the region



A Strategic Asset: How Eastern Ontario Views its Transportation Infrastructure

- **It's still the 'connective tissue'** for supply chains whether these are material or human (e.g. freight or people)
 - Services *using* these assets create economic (and social) value
 - Infrastructure itself provides *value add* to users
- **It's also a data source:** Infrastructure *communicates* proactively (ex. safety, security, maintenance, logistics, navigation)
- **With its own productive capacity:** Infrastructure could be deployed to produce *non-transportation products and services* (ex. energy generation, economic data)
- Will need fully **intelligent** and **integrated** transportation infrastructure... even if we don't own/manage it all.



For more information:

Kathryn Wood

Project Coordinator

Eastern Ontario Leadership Council

kwood4297@gmail.com

Landline: 613-376-6006

Mobile: 613-453-6006

Or subscribe for updates at www.eolc.info

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SESSION.



Eastern Ontario's
**Leadership
Council** Economic
Development