Social Network Analysis of Economic Development Actors

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Understanding how economic development actors are connected is incredibly important for building sustainable and revitalized economies. This project provides the opportunity to explore the social network of economic development actors in Haldimand and Norfolk counties.

Mapping the existing social network can illustrate where bottlenecks occur, who the influential actors are and who is being left out (Gregson, Sowa, & Flynn, 2011). The mapping of the social network produces scientific knowledge, which can be leveraged by various individuals to make sound decisions. By conducting this research in Haldimand and Norfolks the information generated will be place specific. Local decision makers will be able to visualize how information flows within their jurisdiction and understand where the information originated and have it presented in a meaningful way.

Understanding the flow of information in a network can lead to efficiencies for those involved in the network. Economic development actors will be able to trace the dissemination of knowledge, understand where they are situated in the network, uncover new resources locally and allow for self-evaluation of networking efforts. Local businesses and associated organizations can make stronger connections to organizations and individuals in order to ensure they are accessing the full realm of available information.

Dr. Ryan Gibson is a principal investigator on this research initiative.

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