

PLACE, COLLABORATION, AND INNOVATION

CANADIAN PERSPECTIVES FOR
BUILDING VIBRANT LOCAL FUTURES

Ryan Gibson, PhD

School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
University of Guelph

17 May 2018

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

“Here was the least common denominator of nature, the skeleton requirements simply of land and sky”

Mitchell (1947)



About me

Originally from Holmfield, Manitoba



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development



@ryanfgibson

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development

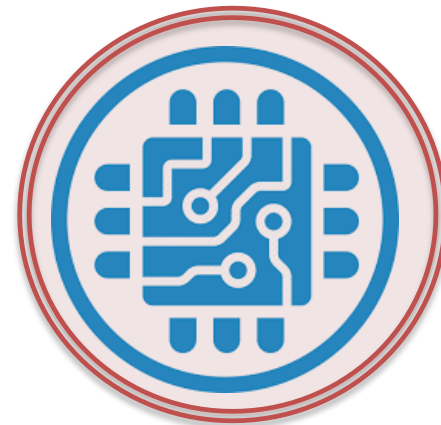
The future



Communities



big trends



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development

implications for planning

- » creative destruction
- » re-orientation of economic planning
- » rural-urban interdependencies
- » collaboration



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development

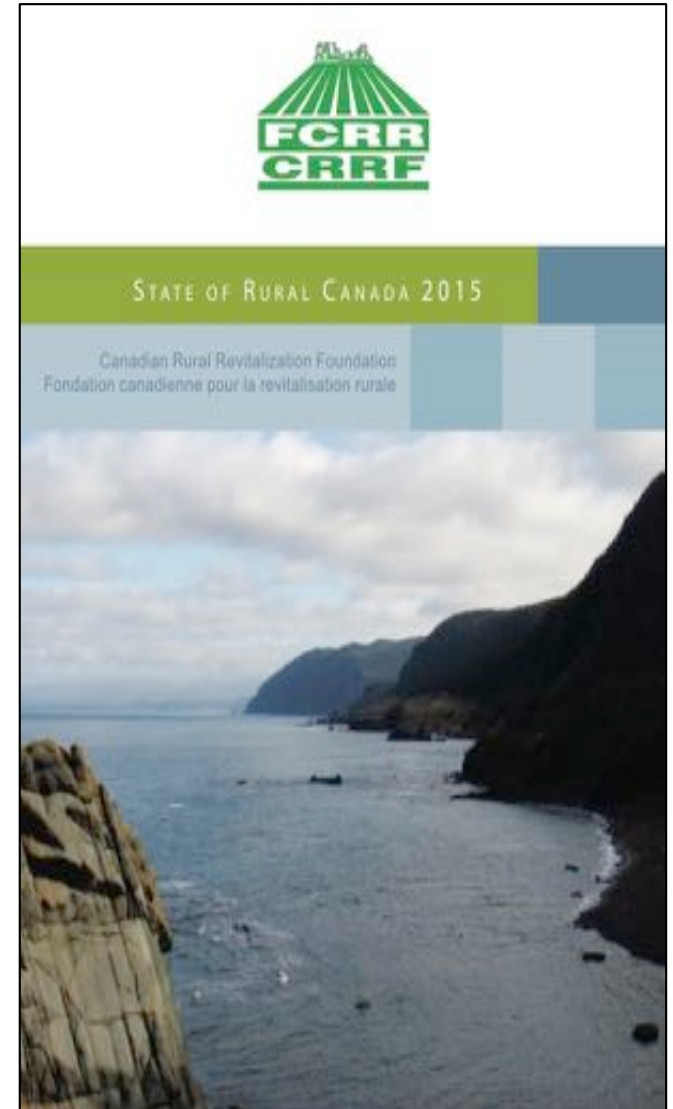
Rural Realities

» Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) released the State of Rural Canada in 2015

» 25,974 unique downloads of the report since September 2015

www.sorc.crrf.ca

 @ryanfgibson



Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

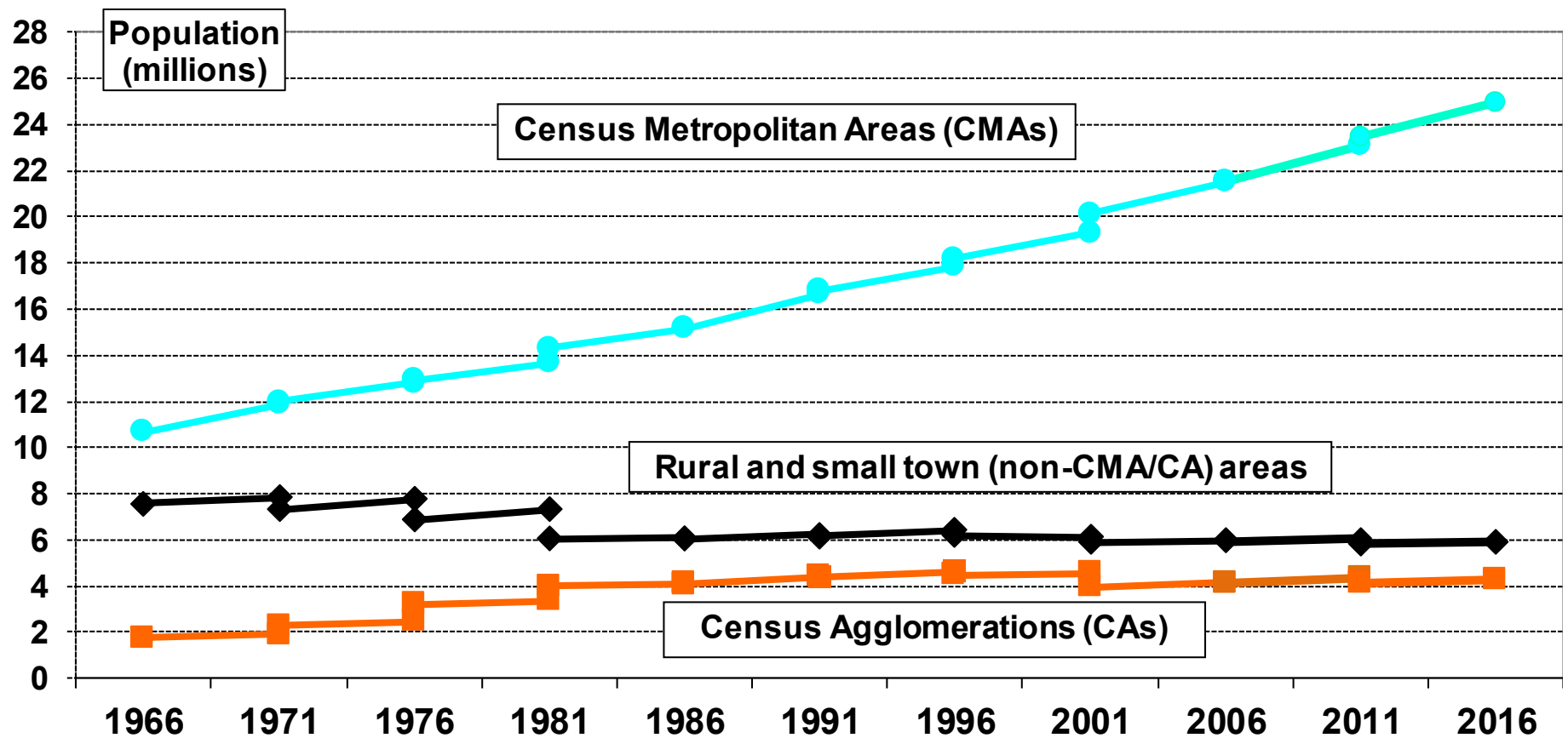
- a charitable institution committed to bettering the lives of rural Canadians through collaborative research and education
- enhances the understanding of rural issues and opportunities
- facilitates national and regional dialogues

www.crrf.ca



Rural Realities

In 2016, 6 million individuals were living in rural and small town areas, Canada



The Good News

growth in many small communities

17% of the national population

immigrant attraction

GDP contribution equals share of population



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development

Not So The Good News

good news is geographical uneven

urban population growth far exceeds rural growth

rural economy is more intensive, seasonal

creative destruction

labour force replacement



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development

Our New Realities

» economic restructuring, creative destruction, globalization

» increased migration

» retreat from rural and northern

» focus on natural resources



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development

Building Vibrant Local Futures



Place matters



Rural Walks

» South Kerry, Ireland

» 'stagnant economic region'

» confronted with how to build a vibrant future



Rural Walks



Rural Walks

- » 29 km of walking trails
- » 287 participating landowners
- » required new and updated infrastructure
- » new skill development, new jobs



Collaboration



@ryanfgibson



welcoming communities dialogue group

» brought together private sector, labour, municipal, health, education, and NGOs

» identified and implemented welcoming community strategies



Strait of Belle Isle

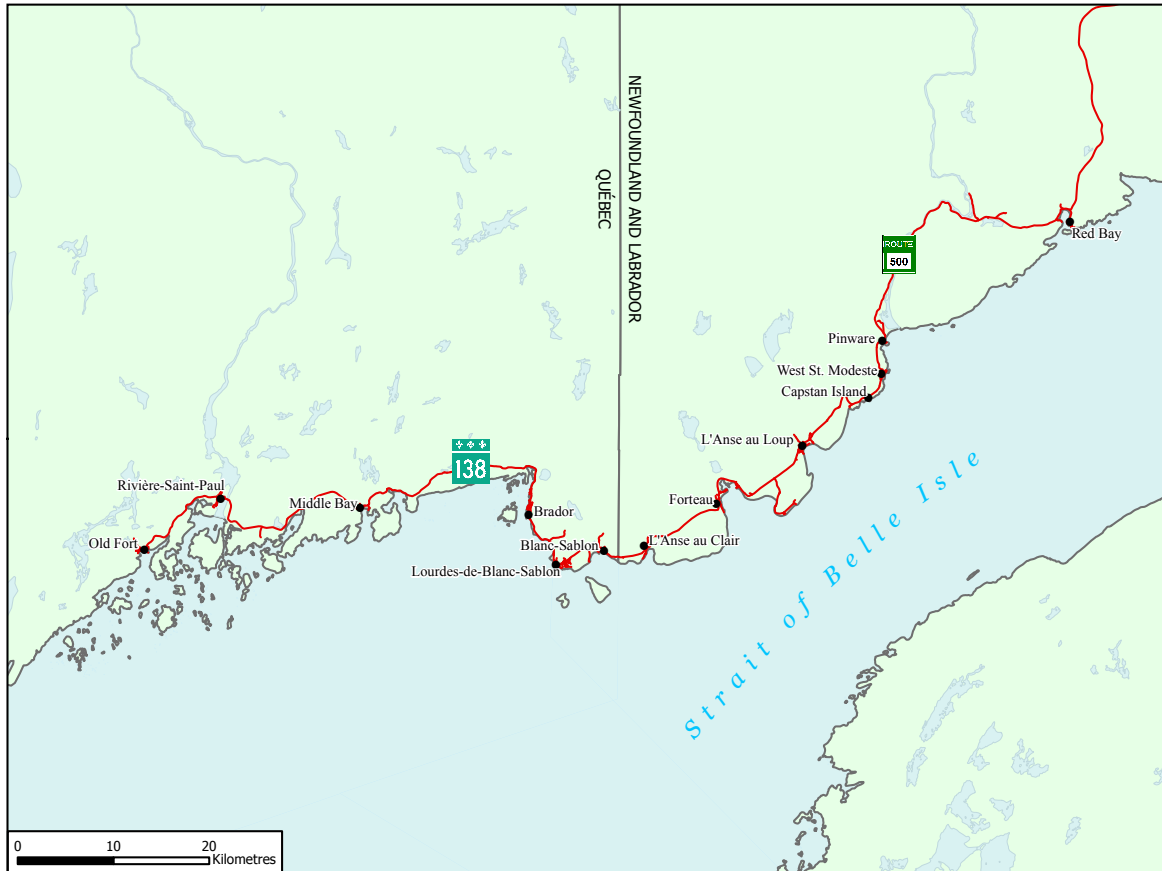
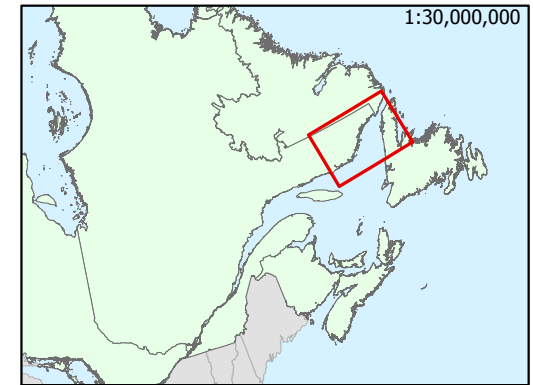


Figure 1: Québec Lower North Shore and Labrador Straits



- » 15 communities
- » 5,000 people

reality

» 90 minute 'vortex' between Blanc Sablon, QC and L'Anse au Clair (Lab)

» NL ferry connecting Labrador and island docks in Québec

» Two sustainability plans for the region

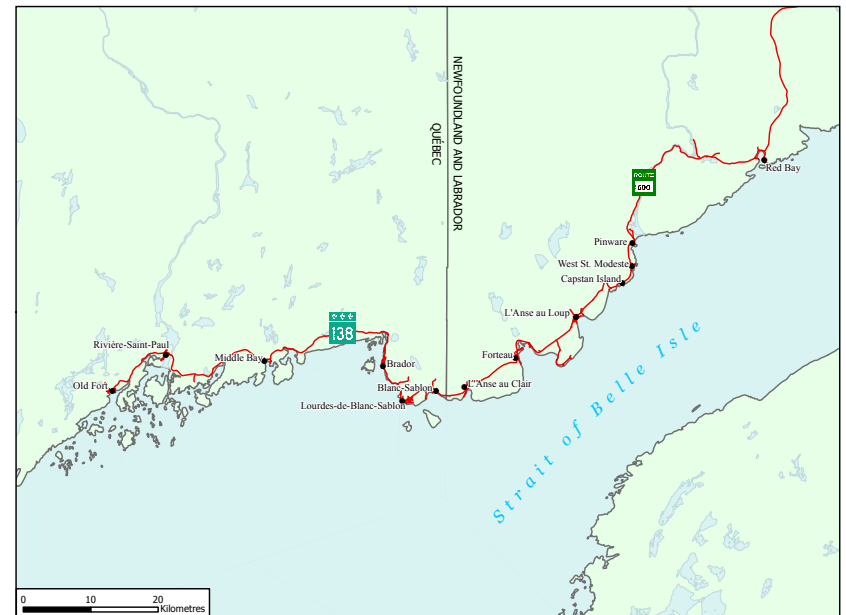
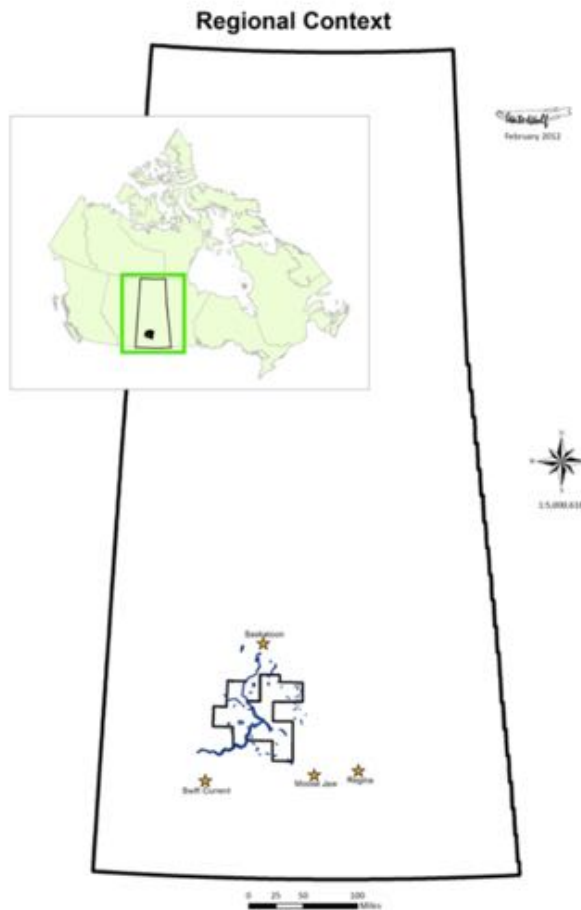


Figure 1: Québec Lower North Shore and Labrador Straits

waterwolf



» 36 rural communities and First Nations

» voluntary regional district planning body

» www.waterwolf.org

Communities did not realize the power they held collectively.

This level of cooperation and working together is quite extraordinary.

Innovation

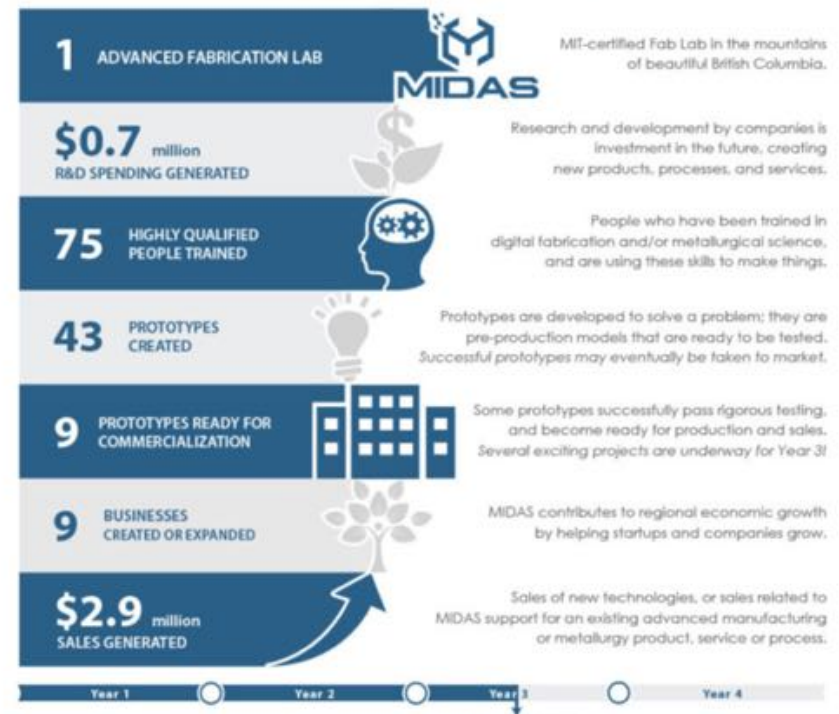


MIDAS



- Trail, British Columbia
- Place-based development strategy
- Training centre
- Fabrication facility
- Applied R&D

MIDAS REGIONAL IMPACT



@ryanfgibson



School of
Environmental Design
& Rural Development



**CHANGE
AHEAD**

#1

**You are not
alone!**

#2

**Convince
urban
residents that
rural and
small towns
matter**

#3
**Re-envision
local assets
for
opportunities**

**#4
New
mechanisms
to facilitate
collaboration**



**SUCCESSFUL
COLLABORATION**

It only works when everyone knows their talents.

#5

**Embrace the
uncertainty
and change**

**THE DIFFICULTY LIES
NOT SO MUCH IN
DEVELOPING NEW
IDEAS AS ESCAPING
FROM OLD ONES**

JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES

contact



gibsonr@uoguelph.ca



www.ruraldev.ca



[@ryanfgibson](https://twitter.com/ryanfgibson)



[ryanfgibson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ryanfgibson)