



UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

Research Initiative Overview

Learn more at:
www.ruraldev.ca

BUILDING THE FUTURE: Rural Infrastructure & Regional Economic Development

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? Using surveys, workshops, content analysis, and case studies, this research initiative will examine the capacity of different communities in rural Ontario to respond to infrastructure pressures and how these response impact their short and long-term economic well-being, and will develop recommendations for addressing these issues through both immediate and long-term policy alternatives.

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. This research initiative will directly support rural Ontario's economic vitality by providing three key benefits: enhanced understanding of the diversity and varying levels of rural community capacities, improved and more nuanced public policy, and enhanced rural infrastructure development programming. This research initiative directly addresses priorities identified in the 2017-2018 OMAFRA Research Themes and Priorities under the theme of Infrastructure and Rural Economic Development.

2018-2021

Lead Investigator

Ryan Gibson

(University of Guelph)

Co-Investigators

Scott Butler (OGRA)

Sarah Breen

(Canadian Rural

Revitalization Foundation)

Sheri Longboat

(University of Guelph)

Koren Lam (University of Guelph)

Sean Markey

(Simon Fraser University)

Megan Reynolds (MOI)

Jillian Soule (OMAFRA)

Karla Uliana (OMAFRA)

Ashleigh Weeden (

University of Guelph)

Matthew Wilson (MOI)

Funding Agency

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture,
Food & Rural Affairs