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# From ACTION to CHANGE

Prescott and Russell Economic Development Strategy



December 2018





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1

Introduction



## Introduction

The United Counties of Prescott and Russell are comprised of eight local municipalities:

- Township of Russell
- City of Clarence-Rockland
- Municipality of The Nation
- Village of Casselman
- Township of Alfred-Plantagenet
- Township of Champlain
- Town of Hawkesbury
- Township of East Hawkesbury

The communities have a strong desire to work together in support of economic growth, facilitated by the Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation and the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, and by various local and regional partners.

The previous Prescott and Russell Economic Development Strategy was released in 2014 and nears maturity. Along with this progress, there have been numerous accomplishments and milestones. These include acting on or completing 48 out of 50 recommended actions, the implementation of a joint business retention and expansion engagement and information sharing program called *Opportunités Prescott and/et Russell Opportunities (OPRO)*, continually growing festivals and events that draw larger visitor crowds each year, and numerous nationally and internationally recognized industry leaders driving growth and innovation. One of the most notable growth trends is in the agri-food category with a strong interconnection of agricultural producers, food and beverage manufacturers, and a growing agri-tourism offering; all of which have helped to keep Prescott and Russell on the map.

Overall, the counties have seen considerable population and economic growth due to the benefits of being located beside Ottawa, but progress in growing a foothold into the Quebec market has not been as fruitful. This despite increasing growth and considerably higher business costs in greater-Montreal's west-island region. The differences between east and west are palpable, including higher income levels in the west and greater rates of employment and labour force participation, but also present new opportunities for the east, which underscores the necessity for a new economic development strategy.





Working together with regional partners, this Economic Development Strategy continues a community-driven preference for having a tactical document, with clear and detailed frameworks for advancing economic development progress across the counties. The Strategy is designed to be compact and concise to maximize engagement from readers and planners.

## Approach and Methodology

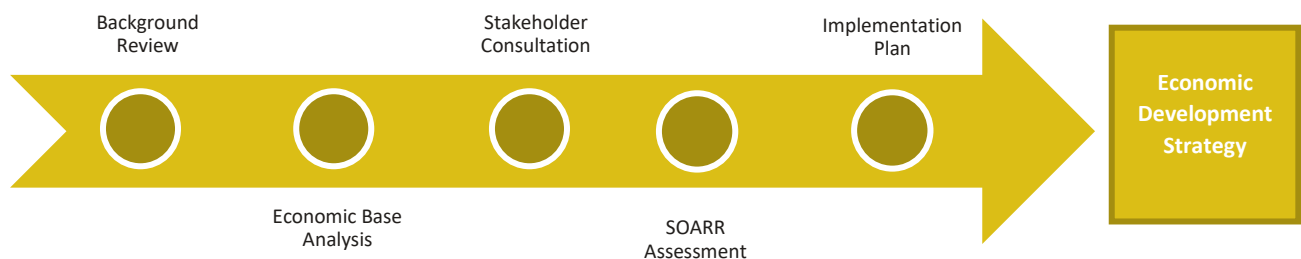
This Economic Development Strategy is the result of a comprehensive process that has balanced hard data with the nuances of stakeholder engagement, existing policy and secondary research, and critical evaluation.

The process for undertaking the Economic Development Strategy has been as follows:

- **Background Review:** A review was conducted of existing municipal policy documents and research projects undertaken by the United Counties of Prescott and Russell and other organizations.
- **Economic Base Analysis:** An overview of population, demographic, education, workforce, industry, and business trends and their implications for the existing and near-term economic landscape.
- **Stakeholder Consultations:** A series of workshops with County Council, industry members, tourism stakeholders, municipal staff undertaking economic development activities, innovators and business leaders, and other community or organization leaders, supplemented by additional interviews or email questionnaires conducted with stakeholders that were not able to attend engagement sessions but who expressed interest in being contacted.
- **SOARR Assessment:** A strengths, opportunities, aspirations, risks and results (SOARR) assessment designed to allocate findings from previous phases into an analytical framework to help inform strategic planning.
- **Implementation Plan:** The identification of strategic objectives and accompanying goals, actions, partnerships, timing, and performance measures to guide the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.

These components are also demonstrated in the visual graphic below.

**Figure 1: Key Methodological Components of the Economic Development Strategy**



Source: MDB Insight, 2018.



# 2

## Strategic Plan Process



# Strategic Plan Process

## Economic Base Analysis

An economic base analysis is a critical review of population, demographic, education, workforce, industry, and business factors in a way that allows for the identification of strategic advantages and disadvantages. A selection of key findings is presented below, with a detailed overview in a supporting Technical Appendix.

The base analysis uses data from Statistics Canada's Census Profile 2016, Census Profile 2011, National Household Survey 2011, and Canadian Business Counts. There are many ways to conceptualize the region represented in this Strategy, including at the local municipal and county levels, as well as by eastern and western portions of the region. For the purposes of this strategy analysis has been conducted based on the aggregate county level and also subdivided into eastern and western Prescott and Russell. Notably, over time different definitions of east and west have been used to differentiate across the region. This Strategy defines eastern and western Prescott and Russell as:

- Eastern: Champlain, Hawkesbury, East Hawkesbury, and Alfred and Plantagenet
- Western: Casselman, The Nation, Clarence-Rockland, and Russell Township

### Key Economic Base Analysis Findings

- While overall population change is positive for the Prescott and Russell -region (about 11% between 2006 and 2016), the growth is concentrated in the western portion of the counties (15%), whereas in the east there has been a decline of approximately 1%. Similarly, age distributions indicate the eastern portion of the counties is comparatively older than the west.
- Dwellings in Prescott and Russell are more affordable than neighbouring Ottawa, at nearly half; due, significantly, to the low cost of home ownership in the east. The low cost of living in the east is not all positive, given that more than twice the proportion of households in the west earn more than \$100,000 per year, at 40% to 20%. These findings in particular indicate that low purchasing power combined with moderate population declines is likely to impact the viability of existing businesses as well as the ability to attract population-oriented ones. Since the challenge is across the three eastern municipalities, there may be a role to be played by the Counties in population stabilization and attraction.
- 52% of the working population of the eastern portion of Prescott and Russell are skilled labour, while 62% of westerners are skilled (skilled is defined as having post-secondary or apprenticeship education), and both lag behind the provincial distribution of 65%. Meanwhile, only 17% of Prescott and Russell's 25 to 64-year-old workforce has a university degree, compared to 32% for the province, while 29% of Prescott and Russell's workforce has a college or CEGEP degree or diploma, compared to 25% for the province. 15% in the east have not completed high school compared to 10% in the west, which is on par with the province's 10%. Prescott and Russell tend to have more people with architecture, engineering, or related technologies fields of study than Ottawa or the province, and fewer people with social and behavioral sciences and law backgrounds.





- The participation and employment rates in the west are 10% and 11% higher than the east for 2016, with the west having an employment rate of 68% and participation rate of 70%. The eastern unemployment rate is the same as the province at 7.4%, while for western residents it is about half (4%).
- Agriculture, construction, and public administrations are the sectors that have the highest economic impact in terms of employment, but moderate to high growth is evident in wholesale trade, administrative and support services and waste management, and accommodation and food services; however, key sectors once identified as strategic priorities in the 2010 economic development strategy have plateaued, such as manufacturing and transportation and warehousing, and declines in construction and arts, entertainment and recreation. For retail and other services (except public administration) Prescott and Russell is on par with the province, which is understandable given the geographic size of the area and overall density compared to larger urban centres.
- Overall, Prescott and Russell experienced a net growth in employment of 129 jobs between 2011 and 2016, across all sectors. Where declines occur, they are largely the result of local factors, as opposed to industry changes or the broader Ontario economy. The result suggests that where sectors are experiencing decline, the solutions are most likely to be via business retention and expansion support targeting the businesses themselves.
- 10 enterprises/organizations in Prescott and Russell employ more than 200 people, with three in manufacturing two in educational services, two in public administration, and the rest in arts, entertainment and recreation, health care and social services, and retail trade. Examples of some of the largest employers include Sectors that are more competitive in the western portion of the counties include agriculture, mining (quarrying), and arts, entertainment and recreation, while in the east more competitive sectors are in utilities and construction.

## Stakeholder Consultations

Notes taken during the following workshops have been condensed into a single set of responses. Some similar ideas have been intentionally grouped together. The sources of consultation data include:

- Workshop – United Counties of Prescott and Russell County Council
- Workshop – Entrepreneurs and social enterprises
- Workshop – Arts, culture and tourism businesses and organizations
- Workshop – Local economic development and leadership staff
- Workshop – Manufacturing, transportation and logistics businesses
- Workshop – Agriculture and agri-food businesses and organizations
- Interviews or Questionnaire Feedback – Other business community members, local municipal staff, and stakeholders (three entrants)

There are numerous key findings that emerge from the process. They are addressed below. The results reflect the perceptions of participants, not necessarily the reality.



## Leveraging Strengths and Assets

Participants emphasized the sense of belonging and community spirit, as well as the “small-town-feel” that can be viewed as important quality of place characteristics. Affordable housing was also noted. The large bilingual population is viewed as a strength and potential tool for attracting business, and the region is backed by a proud Franco-Ontarian heritage.

A variety of natural assets were highlighted by participants including the Ottawa River, Nation River and pastoral landscapes. Relatedly, the large farming tradition and picturesque villages add value to the region. Complementing the natural assets and agricultural presence are a large number of local festivals such as Festival de la Bine (Bean Festival), Beer Fest, Oktoberfest, Festival de la Curd, the Russell and Vankleek Hill fairs, and many others. The region also has some small but highly frequented museums such as the Prison Museum (L’Original) and Rockland Museum. Also noted were the Pop-Silos across the region, community theatre, the Conseil des arts Prescott Russell Arts Council, and strong social organizations such as Groupe Convex and many others.

Other assets noted by participants were related to the Collège La Cité’s Alfred Campus, a range of schools supported by two school boards, and the Centre Entrepreneurship Centre Prescott-Russell. There was also discussion of geography-related assets including the distance to large urban centres in Ottawa and Montreal, as well as infrastructure such as the Hospital in Hawkesbury, new business parks or park expansions in Russell Township and Champlain Township, and access to Highways 417 and 17. The region is also close to the United States border.

## Challenges or Threats

Numerous challenges or threats emerged during discussions, often pointing to opportunities for improvement or mitigation.

The two dominant challenges that echoed across workshop groups were related to a lack of available skilled labour and poor access to high-speed internet. Both are seen as critical constraints to growing competitive businesses. Skilled labour shortages are viewed as the result of three concurrent problems; youth outmigration, commuter populations working in larger cities but living in Prescott and Russell, and large portions of unskilled labour remaining. Also, transportation for some people is a challenge for accessing employment lands or moving between communities.

Another challenge is that many communities have servicing that is nearing capacity, or portions of industrial land that would require the services of a neighbouring municipality. There was an expression for more shared services to potentially alleviate some of the shortcomings.

Knowledge gaps concerning new technologies are also challenges, particularly in manufacturing, agri-food and agricultural production. Knowing about emerging automation technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) applications may help to alleviate some traditional skilled or unskilled labour challenges, yet a related challenge for agriculture is accessing dependable high-speed internet to allow the technology to function. Another challenge faced by the agricultural community is the increasing size of farms and cost of agricultural land, which is seen as a barrier to succession planning.

Challenges were also identified associated with the tourism sector in that a large pool of potential visitors



is lost to Saint-Anne-de-Bellevue and Montebello as people pass through the counties as a short-cut and new developments/tourist events have emerged on the Quebec side of the river to attract visitors. Likewise, there is much traffic on Highway 417 that does not stop in the communities. Also threatening the popularity of the Calypso waterpark are proposed new developments in western Ottawa and near Prescott along Highway 401.

### Fleshing-Out Opportunities

Labour force development was a popular topic, indicating businesses and other stakeholders are concerned about having a reliable talent pipeline. When it came to articulating specific opportunities to improve labour force availability, particularly for skilled labour, suggestions included identifying financial incentives to attract skilled labour, developing a resource so employers can notify others when a peak season is ending and additional labour may become available, and shifting solutions toward AI and automation.

One solution to the skilled labour gap relates to ensuring the youth that leave have a reason to return. This involves ensuring the kinds of amenities and entertainment options they like are available and that opportunities also exist for spouses to find meaningful work as well. Quality of place enhancements also include ensuring the existing education and health care infrastructure is preserved and grown. Another solution is attracting people to the area from Quebec and Ottawa via strategic marketing of opportunities. Social media marketing has advanced sufficiently that key demographics can be targeted. Also, there was the suggestion to have information available for people attending festivals that may want to choose the counties as their future home. The idea is that many people fall in love with the communities they visit and may later consider it an ideal place to live.

Another answer for skilled labour challenges was to ensure Collège La Cité offer more programming and/or find ways to introduce skills training in via local school boards to introduce students to skilled trades as career options. The launch of the Agri-food Innovation Centre (a previously proposed incubator/shared-use space for Alfred Complex) was proposed as a way to introduce people to entrepreneurship opportunities or attract new residents. While this solution does not specifically fit with labour force, it does leverage a parallel need for retaining and growing businesses in the agri-food sector.

Infrastructure opportunities include formalizing agreements for shared servicing to ease in investment attraction. There was also a suggestion that the counties take a larger role in ensuring servicing and capacity are improved across the area, as was done for emergency services. The other key challenge requiring a solution is the high-speed internet conundrum, but despite much conversation about the nature of the problem, no concrete suggestion was given. Instead the emphasis was on the need to identify a solution.

As noted above, the lack of internet infrastructure also impacts the ability of businesses to maximize the use of new technologies, but the introduction to new technology can also be a barrier, demonstrating an opportunity to grow the knowledge base and capacity surrounding new technologies. Participants indicated that information sharing forums or events could help. Going farther, some industry sectors, e.g. agriculture, manufacturing, and arts and culture, indicated that having some means of sharing knowledge would be beneficial. For example, sector specific exchanges about agricultural science research findings or new techniques would be a welcome resource. To some extent this could be aided by getting chambers of commerce to collaborate or provide venues for these kinds of industry-specific discussion areas.



Growing the tourism sector is also a notable opportunity, consisting of numerous suggestions. Making a solid case for waterfront development, which takes into context the current regulatory environment was one main suggestion. Water-front development is viewed as an opportunity to attract both land and boat traffic to different nodes along the river. It was also suggested in terms of building residential options to attract semi-retired or retired people.

Relating to cycling there was the suggestion to continue paving road shoulders so that organized cycling tours and marketing to cyclists can be enhanced. It has been learned that all road shoulders have been expended except Highway 17 and Highway 34, which have high traffic volumes. Also suggested was increasing the number of events in the area and ensuring that additional accommodations are developed, including promoting non-traditional accommodations such as Airbnb. There was also discussion of increasing awareness of local experiences, such as brewery or other agri-food tourism routes, arts activities, experiential activities and more. There was an identified opportunity for more accommodations that could both assist with overnight stays during festival periods, as well as attracting conventions or corporate events. Other tourism-related asset development suggested by participants include building an arts centre, promoting bike trails, and developing virtual reality tourism products.

What many of the ideas discussed come down to is the notion of building the appropriate messaging to be able to attract talent, retain visitors for longer stays, and attract new residents to local communities. Notably, investment attraction was not a dominant theme, but it does emerge in discussions related to infrastructure capacity issues. Moreover, addressing infrastructure challenges would likely assist both local business development and investment attraction. That is why underpinning much of these ideas is the notion of increasing investment readiness, which would allow for an easier time in attracting the talent and investment the region needs. For this reason, in one session it was suggested that focusing on improvements within before marketing makes better strategic sense.

One final theme that warrants attention was related to collaboration and networks. Above it was noted that stakeholder see a role to be played by the numerous organizations in the area, including school boards, chambers of commerce, social enterprises, and post-secondary institutions. These all point to the need of stronger inter-organizational collaborations. In one session, it was expressed that “silos” are a key problem and that there is an opportunity to better work across organizations, but such orchestrations do not happen without a facilitation. In short, there is an opportunity to increase network productivity by ensuring that someone is charged with coordinating these otherwise independent silos.

### Building a Collective Future

This final section relates to discussions surrounding stakeholders’ desires for Prescott and Russell in the future. Many of the individual ideas discussed in the above sections point to these broader long-term visions. These include:

- Building a region that attracts and retains talent so that they can contribute to labour force solutions or become entrepreneurs



- Ensuring that businesses are able to make use of the technology and increase knowledge capital so they can thrive and be innovators and recognized industry leaders, via new automation, artificial intelligence, and other new technologies
- Providing the infrastructure solutions that will enable existing businesses to thrive and expand and facilitate the attraction of new businesses to the community
- Growing the value proposition as a tourism destination through the development of assets and amenities, both traditional and newly emerging, so that Prescott and Russell can enjoy their economic, cultural, and recreational benefits
- Building a spirit of collaboration and a willingness to work together to resolve collective problems that constitute barriers to economic growth while building on the strengths that make Prescott and Russell a valued place for visitors, residents, and businesses to enjoy

## Building on the 2014 Economic Development Strategy Update

In 2014, the UCPR and the PRCDC implemented its Economic Development Strategic Plan Update, which built on the positive momentum of its initial Economic Development Strategy from 2010. The Update built constructively on positive ground gained over an even earlier Strategy, which demonstrates the willingness of partners to make a difference.

The 2014 Strategy specified three broad goals and accompanying strategic objectives:

- **Goal One:** Develop a Coordinated Regional Economic Development Network
  - **Strategic Objective:** Organize and promote regional economic development activities to best pursue key cross-jurisdictional and high impact economic development outcomes
- **Goal Two:** Improve the investment readiness of the region for a broad range of economic development sectors
  - **Strategic Objective:** Identify, undertake, and advocate for physical and policy improvements that enable investment
  - **Strategic Objective:** Support workforce development projects focused on building and attracting a skilled Prescott-Russell labour force
  - **Strategic Objective:** Identify and facilitate the development of key value chain elements in the target sectors
- **Goal Three:** Build a regional, innovation, entrepreneurial, and business support ecosystem
  - **Strategic Objective:** Support the development of existing and emerging assets in entrepreneurship, small business development, and innovation in key sectors of the economy
  - **Strategic Objective:** Source and attract programs and services that fill research, innovation, and commercialization gaps in the region



These goals and strategic objectives were supported by a series of action items that assigned appropriate partnerships, priority levels and performance measure considerations. Out of the 50 actions specified, UCPR, PRDCDC and/or its partners have addressed or completed 48.

### Successes and Challenges from the 2014 Strategy

There have been a number of key accomplishments that have emerged as a result of the last strategy, as well as some new challenges or unanticipated results.

#### Key Successes

- A la Carte – A promising new Geographic Information System (GIS) has been launched to facilitate site selection. The tool allows for property searches and allows for customization. The GIS system also allows for the internal tracking of key infrastructure components, which could also be a benefit to site selectors if the municipality were to make those tools accessible.
- Centre Entrepreneurship Centre Prescott-Russell – The Centre Entrepreneurship Centre Prescott-Russell has emerged to become an active community member providing vital support to businesses. Its offices are located in the UCPR’s Economic Development and Tourism Department.
- Opportunités Prescott and/et Russell Opportunities (OPRO) – OPRO was a partnership between UCPR, regional, and local organizations and all eight local municipalities to conduct business surveys to determine satisfaction of business owners, identify key challenges or opportunities, and serve as a general pulse-check on the health of the overall business community. The survey targeted 529 randomly sampled commercial, industrial, and tourism-related businesses, giving valuable insights into the needs and plans of the regional economy. Each local municipality received a customized report that compared local results to the region. An overview of results at the regional level is presented later in this section.
- Immigration Planning – A workplan that has been developed to address problems of housing, transportation, available resources, and activities for immigrants and their families.
- Intermunicipal Public Transit Pilot Project – The Economic Development and Tourism Department of the UCPR was awarded a 2 million in grant to implement an inter-municipal public transportation pilot study, as well as the cost of a new van for the CAREFOR organisation which provides transport for medical appointments.
- Food Hub – Since 2007 the Economic Development and Tourism Department of the UCPR has worked towards structuring the agri-food (small producers) sector to help small producers with the commercialization of their products, and to help the producers to upscale and reach new markets. A few programs have developed towards this goal: nutritional analysis, labels, stickers, multitude of local food events and initiatives such as gourmet festivals, la Foire Gourmande, Local food counters, a first local food contract with a national grocery store. All of these initiatives were conducted by the UCPR with the support of the Eastern Ontario Agri-Food Network. The structure of this sector has led to a business planning process for a Food Hub which is still in progress and should be ready for release in early 2019.



- Local Products in Grocery Stores – A contract with Metro Ontario was awarded in 2015 and the UCPR saw its first local food counter in Metro Casselman. Since then, four additional local food counters have been added, and with the help of OMAFRA, Metro launched a local Purchasing Program pilot study for agri-food products, which is intended to optimize the accessibility and promotion of local products. Metro now has 91 new products from 19 different suppliers from the Ottawa region (which includes Prescott and Russell), as a result of the pilot project. The products are from deli, dairy, grocery, meat, frozen food, baked goods, and fresh produce categories.

Already 25 stores in the Ottawa area will be able to purchase unique products either made or developed in the region, which includes Prescott and Russell.

- The Eastern Ontario Development Program (EODP) – This federal program was renewed in 2014 through FedDev Ontario and was delivered by the local CFDC. Over the past 5 years, the EODP contributed to the creation of over 500 new jobs and invested 2.5 Million in local businesses which in return leveraged over 7 Million dollars.

Some of the projects above have resulted in tangible programs or projects that have brought value, such as A La Carte, OPRO, and the growing role of the Entrepreneurship Centre, while others represent projects in development or currently being researched for feasibility. In any case, they represent momentum.

### Key Challenges

- BioPole –BioPole was intended to be a centre of excellence for biotechnology research and innovation. At one time, it was viewed as a potential industry leader in eastern Ontario, but despite initial excitement and interest from local and regional stakeholders and partner organizations the organization appears to have faded.
- ecoLarose – The ecoLarose Centre was meant to serve as a conference and environmental interpretation centre; bridging an innovative niche between business/professional tourism and sustainable development. After several years of planning the project was voted down by the UCPR's Council.
- Alfred Complex Agri-food Innovation Centre – At the time of the 2014 update the University of Guelph was in the process of divesting from its Alfred Campus, which translated to challenges and opportunities for the region. One opportunity was the proposal for an incubator, test kitchen and research centre centred around agri-food innovation. While initial interest was positive, municipal buy-in did not last long enough to see the project implemented; despite having undergone an economic impact assessment and business feasibility study. In 2017, an additional feasibility study was issued that advocated for a Centre for Innovation and Technology in Agriculture (CITA), which would occupy the entire campus footprint and make arrangements to ensure College La Cité remained a part of the hub. The study found support in principle from Council, but has not moved forward. The project is still under review by the Province of Ontario and its various ministries as well as with the federal government through Innovation Science and Economic Development Canada.

These various challenges point to some common themes worth observing. First, they are all projects or programs that were designed to grow local businesses and entrepreneurship. While investment attraction often results in a new building that everyone can see, 80% of new investment in a community usually comes from people and businesses already in the community. The loss of one or more of these various programs has two consequences; local businesses are not encouraged to grow and innovate, and combined their outcomes can potentially reflect poorly on the UCPR and PRDC's credibility to champion



future projects. The second theme is that it was a lack of several mayor's lack of knowledge and confidence that resulted in the final blows to project advancement. A critical piece that may have been missing is that justifying the value of potential projects needs to go beyond mere budgets and demonstrate a sincere push from the existing entrepreneurship base, which could have swayed municipal leaderships' opinions.

### Opportunités Prescott and Russell Opportunities

In 2017, an extensive business survey was undertaken with businesses from across the region. The initiative was led by the UCPR with support from the Government of Ontario and numerous regional and local organizations. In total, 563 businesses participated and customized reports were generated for each municipality. Some key findings applicable to the broader Prescott and Russell region include the following:

- The majority of businesses in Prescott and Russell operate regionally (59%) or locally (29%).
- About half of businesses (52%) have business plans, while 73% projecting to sell have no succession plan and most are not interested in having any assistance in developing one.
- 64% of businesses have fewer than 10 employees; meanwhile, 6% have more than 100 employees.
- Business owners rate their ability to retain labour at 47% good or excellent, and the ability to retain new employees at 51%. 45% of business owners are experiencing difficulties with recruitment. Most businesses attribute recruitment difficulties to their industry as opposed to the community. The main recruitment methods used are based on recommendations, personal networks, or employment centres/job websites.
- Only, 17% of businesses express difficulties retaining employees, with the main reasons for departure being salaries and retirement without succession planning.
- 63% of businesses are not involved in co-op, internship or apprenticeship programming, of which a further 69% are not interested in learning about such programming. Most business owners do not believe there are barriers preventing owners or employees from accessing training (78%).
- 77% of businesses believe the UCPR is a good or excellent business centre. Meanwhile, 27% of businesses indicate increases in satisfaction, while 19% indicate declines; representing a net happiness index value of +8%. Furthermore, most businesses view their industry as stable (35%) or growing (50%), while most expect their sales to increase (45%) or remain the same (42%).
- The average company has a moderate (34%) to high (31%) use of technology, with the largest barriers being related to internet speed and internet access.
- 32% of businesses plan to expand while 3% plan to downsize, 4% to relocate, 4% to sell, and 3% to close. Overall, most businesses expect to remain the same with the main reasons being skilled labour availability, difficult access to utility services (Internet, electricity, natural gas, water and sewer), lack of succession planning and cost of business profitability.





# 3

## Priorities and Strategic Plan



# Priorities and Strategic Plan

This section takes the results of the previous sections, critically analyzes them, and converts them into a strategic framework and action plan for economic development in Prescott and Russell.

## SOARR Assessment

A SOARR Assessment is a model for reflecting on a base line for strategic planning by studying identified Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Risks and Results (SOARR). It is a forward-looking model, taking elements of what would traditionally be affiliated with a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis and using insights gained through stakeholder consultations to inform what is desired for the future and how to know when our aspirations have been met. The key concepts underpinning the SOARR model are outlined in the figure below.

**Figure 2: SOARR Assessment Framework**

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| <b>S</b> | <b>Strengths</b><br>What can we build on?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are we doing well?</li> <li>• What key achievements are we most proud of?</li> <li>• What positive aspects have individuals and enterprises commented on?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>O</b> | <b>Opportunities</b><br>What are our best possible future opportunities?                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What changes in demand do we expect to see in the future?</li> <li>• What external forces or trends may positively affect development?</li> <li>• What are the key areas of untapped potential?</li> <li>• What weaknesses or threats can be converted into SMART improvements?</li> </ul>     |
| <b>A</b> | <b>Aspirations</b><br>What do we care deeply about achieving?                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are we deeply passionate about?</li> <li>• As a region, what difference do we hope to make (e.g. to residents, for institutions, to businesses)?</li> <li>• What does our preferred future look like?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>R</b> | <b>Risks</b><br>What do we need to be aware of that may negatively impact our goals or progress? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What challenges have we identified that we need to seek solutions to?</li> <li>• Where can we anticipate negative trends and initiate preventative action?</li> <li>• What obstacles prevent us from reaching our goals?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>R</b> | <b>Results</b><br>How will we know we are succeeding?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key goals we would like to accomplish in order to achieve these results?</li> <li>• What meaningful measures will indicate that we are on track toward achieving our goals?</li> <li>• What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects and initiatives?</li> </ul> |



### Strengths

- Franco-Ontarian heritage and large bilingual population
- Community spirit, small-town-feel, affordable housing
- Tourism assets: many festivals, small but popular museums, Ottawa River and other local rivers, Larose Forest, Arts Council, Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism
- Location between Ottawa and Montreal, proximity to United States border, proximity to MacDonal-Cartier International Airport
- Strong industry sectors (by employment): agriculture and agri-food, construction, and public administration; strong agri-food network
- Strong industry sectors (by business density): agriculture, utilities, construction, arts/entertainment/recreation, and other services (except public administration)

### Opportunities

- Grow the population in the east by attracting semi-retired professionals, skilled-talent, and young adults with specific tastes in the region's assets
- Formalize a plan for waterfront development
- Convert visitors to residents
- Adopt a broadband strategy and implementation plan
- Concretely address shared service needs and extend servicing to key industrial lands
- Develop more assets to encourage overnight stays in communities
- Revisit opportunities for an agri-food innovation centre
- Implementation of an Eastern Ontario Food Hub
- Increase value-added agriculture
- Promote and facilitate return on investment ideation related to automation and artificial intelligence

### Aspirations

- Building a region that **attracts and retains talent** so that they can contribute to labour force solutions or become entrepreneurs
- Ensuring that businesses are able to make **use of the technology and increase knowledge capital** so they can thrive and be innovators and recognized industry leaders

### (Aspirations, cont'd)

- Providing the **infrastructure solutions** that will enable existing businesses to thrive and expand and facilitate the attraction of new businesses to the community
- Growing the value proposition for **tourism destination development** through the development of assets and amenities, both traditional and newly emerging, so that Prescott and Russell can enjoy their economic, cultural and recreational benefits
- Building a **spirit of collaboration and a willingness to work together** to resolve collective problems that constitute barriers to economic growth while building on the strengths that make Prescott and Russell a valued place for visitors, residents and businesses to enjoy

### Risks

- Large disparities in income, education, and employment in eastern portions of the counties compared to west as well as population decline
- Outmigration of youth across the region and constrained skilled labour force
- Reluctance to invest in long-term infrastructure improvements and challenges in coordinating inter-municipal solutions
- Competition for investment attraction from Lachute (QC), South Western Quebec, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Cornwall, and Eastern Ottawa

### Results

- Median age reduced, and population and workforce grow in east
- Asset management plans identify path for water/waste water servicing expansion
- Intermunicipal agreements implemented
- High-speed internet solutions implemented
- Business satisfaction improvements
- Technology awareness working group initiated and partnerships formed
- Development permit increases for expansions
- Leads converted to investments



## Strategic Objectives

This section analyzes the various aspirations to determine shared themes of overlap. These themes come together to form the Strategic Objectives that will formulate the rest of the strategy.

### Strategic Objectives

- **Strategic Objective 1: To nurture a business climate that retains businesses and is encouraging of their growth and expansion**
  - Why? The needs of existing businesses to attract and retain skilled labour are essential to maintaining and growing the economy, while the use of technology and new knowledge could reduce strain on businesses facing labour challenges. Furthermore, infrastructure solutions will enable them to expand more readily. Finally, the effort will require coordination between the Counties, PRCDC, local municipalities, and other actors such as chambers of commerce.
- **Strategic Objective 2: To advance a progressive agenda for investment readiness and attraction**
  - Why? Attracting and retaining talent will be essential to making Prescott and Russell more attractive to prospective investors, while the use of advanced technology could facilitate site selectors in their information gathering. Infrastructure such as water/sewer servicing and high-speed internet are key considerations to many large-scale industrial operations. Finally, landing and converting leads will take careful coordination with local municipalities, requiring a formalized process.
- **Strategic Objective 3: To continue to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is supportive of new business growth and innovation**
  - Why? Supporting new and emerging entrepreneurs in ways that allow for the integration or development of new technology has been a long-standing objective in Prescott and Russell, and the institutional infrastructure required to facilitate these advancements depends on the coordination of resources and services of different support organizations across the community. Moreover, modern entrepreneurs often have infrastructure requirements that need to be accessible, even if the business is located in a rural area.
- **Strategic Objective 4: To build a talent pipeline and aggressively attract a workforce that is suited to existing and future business needs**
  - Why? Cross-cutting business support and investment readiness needs, the identification of workforce solution relies on the ability to maximize and build capacity in using advanced technology, such as online services and talent acquisition tools, as well as careful coordination with other regional labour force organizations, chambers of commerce, and local municipalities to build a strong talent pipeline and attract the skilled labour existing businesses require.
- **Strategic Objective 5: To support the development of tourism assets and infrastructure to add to the tourism value proposition in Prescott and Russell**
  - Why? Tourism development for Prescott and Russell is associated with creating the opportunity structures for the creation of strong tourism assets, through policies and incentives. Such measures will improve quality of place which means positive impacts on the other Strategic Objectives. Continued delineation of responsibilities between the UCPR and other groups is key.



As shown, the strategic objectives share overlap with different aspirations identified in the SOARR assessment. These points of convergence are demonstrated in the matrix below.

**Figure 3: Strategic Objectives and Aspirations Matrix**

| Strategic Objectives                             | Aspirations                 |  |                          |                     |                         |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
|  | Attracts and retains talent | Use of advanced technology and knowledge | Infrastructure solutions | Tourism development | Spirit of collaboration |
| Objective 1: Retention and Expansion             |                             |  |                          |                     |                         |
| Objective 2: Investment Readiness and Attraction |                             |  |                          |                     |                         |
| Objective 3: Entrepreneurial Support             |                             |  |                          |                     |                         |
| Objective 4: Talent Pipeline and Labour Force    |                             |  |                          |                     |                         |
| Objective 5: Tourism Assets and Infrastructure   |                             |  |                          |                     |                         |



## Strategic Framework

The framework plays an important role in articulating how strategic objectives are converted into tangible goals that are supported by actions. Each strategic objective has a short overview of the opportunity area pertaining to it. This is followed by a figure for each objective that identifies the relevant goals. Each goal is supported by one or more action points. Also identified is the role for the, potential partners, timing, and performance measures for each action.

The timing is indicated by short (within year 1), medium (year 2 to 3), and long-term (year 4 to 5) categories.

Under the strategic frameworks several acronyms are used in an effort to conserve space. These include the following:

- UCPR = United Counties of Prescott and Russell
- PRCDC = Prescott Russell Community Development Corporation
- UCFO = l'Union des cultivateurs franco-ontariens
- PREC = Prescott Russell Entrepreneurships Centre
- EOTB = Eastern Ontario Training Board
- PRESC = Prescott-Russell Employment Service Centre

### Strategic Objective 1: To nurture a business climate that retains businesses and is encouraging of their growth and expansion

Business retention and expansion is one of the foremost important initiatives economic development practitioners undertake. Strong business retention and expansion accomplishes numerous goals that are vital for monitoring and intervening in matters pertinent to individual business health and the health of the broader business climate.

For its part, the UCPR and its partners have already taken great strides in business retention and expansion via the recent Opportunités Prescott and/et Russell Opportunités (OPRO) project. Those results highlighted numerous areas that individual municipalities could look to work on in support of local businesses, but also illustrated some key opportunities to be addressed by UCPR and other organizations that work regionally. These include such things as informing the broader population about key findings and how residents and businesses can get involved in implementing solutions. Availability of skilled labour was one of the key findings, with a third of businesses expressing poor access to skilled labour. This matter will be taken up directly in another strategic goal, but bears noting here due to the context of the survey.

Business planning and succession planning were also noted as themes, as about half of businesses do not have a business plan, and nearly two thirds do not have a succession plan. Awareness building that sensitizes businesses therefore becomes a priority that should be addressed regionally.

Also, one-third of businesses plan on expanding in the foreseeable future, therefore having a simple information package available and shared via local and regional partners can assist them in getting some basic information that may convert businesses that are uncertain to being more decisive.



Other consultation results illustrated opportunities to assist in information sharing and growing knowledge capacity around emerging technologies, artificial intelligence and automation. A platform is needed to coordinate and deliver topically relevant information to businesses so they can continue to thrive and innovate. With a large network of chambers of commerce and interest groups, there is a potential vehicle for coordinating workshops that introduce interested parties to industry-specific or broader learning opportunities in areas such as new research findings, emerging technologies, capital-assistance solutions to obtaining new technology, and demonstrations of products. The program can be assembled in various ways but common applications include panel discussions, guest speakers or presenters, live demonstrations, or site visits. Working with industry associations may help locals get exposed to appropriate topics of interest. These workshops need not be complicated. In Kingston, for example, computer programmers have started a weekly meet-up called Kingston Developers Group where a guest introduces attendees to a specific code language, innovation, or best practice. In addition, there is a monthly social meet-up designed to facilitate general networking and knowledge sharing. There is also growing momentum in online “tech-talks”, which function as webinars.

One solution that has emerged in recent years that helps to circumvent labour force challenges is increased automation. The technology has advanced to the point where “dark factories” are a viable option that, over time, save on person-hours and reduce the frustrations associated with human resource processes. These facilities function on a smaller workforce that is primarily technical and are particularly suited to the food processing sector. For this reason, above and beyond knowledge generation about automation, the UCPR and PRCDC have a role to play in linking businesses with opportunities to acquire such technology. This involves undertaking research to identify the predominant firms specializing in automated technology for key sectors such as food processing and putting local businesses in touch with them. Similar referral programs could be developed for other sectors such as information technology firms looking to bring their technologies to the next level through applications such as artificial intelligence.

Adopting new technology often depends on access to reliable high-speed internet infrastructure. This is a challenge that emerged both in stakeholder consultations and in OPRO results. This infrastructure is addressed specifically in the investment readiness strategic objective in the next section.

The above considerations point to two specific goals as shown in the following chart.



**Figure 4: Strategic Objective 1: To nurture a business climate that retains businesses and is encouraging of their growth and expansion**

| Required Action  | Lead  | Potential Partners  | Timing | Performance Measures   |
|--|-------|---|--------|--|
| <b>Goal #1: Spread the word about business retention and expansion survey results and solutions, and continue to monitor business climate health</b>   |       |   |        |  |
| <p>1. Share general findings from OPRO survey via approachable media such as infographics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify a list of key findings and develop infographics to convey results</li> <li>▪ Convey the good news and not-so-good news honestly</li> <li>▪ Identify clearly where specific action is being taken to address findings</li> <li>▪ Promote via social media</li> <li>▪ Continue to conduct the OPRO survey and evaluate priorities</li> </ul>           | UCPR  | Local municipalities<br>PRCDC   | Short  | <p>Infographics developed</p> <p>Social media monitoring (shares, likes, comments)</p> <p>Satisfaction trend over time</p>         |
| <p>2. Develop a succession planning sensitization package that demonstrates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The importance of good succession planning and its relevance</li> <li>▪ The impacts of poor succession planning on local communities</li> <li>▪ The solutions PRCDC can provide to assist with succession planning</li> <li>▪ Arrange regularly scheduled information sessions about succession planning in conjunction with chambers of commerce</li> </ul> | PRCDC | <p>Chambers of commerce</p> <p>Local municipalities</p> <p>Prescott-Russell Entrepreneurship Centre</p> <p>UCPR</p> | Short  | <p>Succession planning consultations logged</p> <p>Social media response</p> <p>Information sessions hosted and # of attendees</p> |





| Required Action  | Lead                                     | Potential Partners  | Timing | Performance Measures  |
|--|--|---|--------|---|
| <b>Goal #2: Grow an informed and innovation-oriented industry base</b>   |  |   |        |   |
| <p>3. Implement a technology and research-findings workshop series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a schedule for industry-specific and broad information workshops</li> <li>▪ Work with industry associations to determine emerging trends and technologies of significance and identify potential experts</li> <li>▪ Identify appropriate guest speakers, presenters, or panel members</li> <li>▪ Work collectively to promote sessions</li> <li>▪ Connect local manufacturers with information about Excellence in Manufacturers Consortium</li> </ul> | Prescott-Russell Entrepreneurship Centre | PRCDC<br>l'Union des cultivateurs franco-ontariens, chambers of commerce, provincial and national industry associations | Short  | Partners identified and schedule developed<br><br>Sessions held<br># of attendees<br># of new EMC members |
| <p>4. Develop referral programming to technology producers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a list of key sectors of interest, such as agricultural production, food processing, information technologies, and transportation</li> <li>▪ Develop a list of key technology producers or manufacturers for select sectors and sales representatives at each company</li> <li>▪ Make information available for local businesses and promote availability at business-related events</li> <li>▪ Review and update content regularly</li> </ul>                  | UCPR                                     | UCFO<br>Eastern Ontario Agrifood Network<br>PRCDC   | Short  | Master directory created<br><br>Number of referrals<br><br>Number of upgrades                             |



## Strategic Objective 2: To advance a progressive agenda for investment readiness and attraction

The investment attraction process is often viewed as one of the most quintessential components of economic development. Having an aggressive investment attraction program is seen as a tangible objective because the result is often something new and visible.

It was said during one consultation session that it is important to take care of the inside before looking outside, and this logic applies to investment attraction. Getting the house in order and ready for investment opportunities is most likely to facilitate investment attraction. Many businesses and most site selectors are using sophisticated technologies to scrub the internet and find locations that meet their search criteria.<sup>1</sup> They are doing so without the knowledge of communities; therefore, having a strong and expansive suite of easy-to-reference data becomes important for Prescott and Russell, because in most cases the counties will not even know if they are being considered for investment.

Site selectors will evaluate all kinds of criteria, but those most commonly sought relate to land availability, infrastructure capacity, workforce, and quality of place. Indeed, at one point, quality of place was assumed to be a “tie-breaker” factor, but recent research has found that it is among the most important considerations because it is tied so closely with attracting and retaining labour.<sup>2</sup> Quality of place enhancements can come through land redevelopment as well as through general improvements to the overall aesthetic and design of properties via community improvement plans (CIPs). Indeed, half of the municipalities in Prescott and Russell have CIPs. Supporting those that have them while encouraging those that do not have them will increase the attractiveness of the overall region to investors, while also attracting new residents. If the Counties were to administer a UCPR CIP, the burden may be off-loaded somewhat from municipalities currently implementing programming, while ensuring that those that do not have them in place have access to such resources. The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) recently enacted a county-wide CIP, with the allocation of a \$100,000 fund<sup>3</sup>. The initiative has garnered positive attention. The SDG initiative embarked on a round of consultations with local municipalities, businesses and business organizations during the plan’s development, which secured buy-in from area stakeholders.

The strategy for investment attraction in Prescott and Russell should be one of investment readiness preparation, data transparency, and strong concierge practices. These alone will open up opportunities for new investment without much of a need for traditional approaches such as trade missions, lead generation, and costly outbound marketing campaigns. Attraction efforts are better to be placed on attracting and retaining a qualified labour force to add to the appeal of the region.

There were specific challenges identified by stakeholders associated with availability of servicing and the extension of infrastructure into neighbouring municipalities.

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<sup>1</sup> Cutts, Matthew (2017) “Artificial Intelligence in real estate finance and development,” Arcadis, March 17: <https://www.arcadis.com/en/global/arcadis-blog/matthew-cutts/artificial-intelligence-has-arrived-in-real-estate/>

<sup>2</sup> Fair, Chris (n/d) “Five cities with the best shot at Amazon HQ2,” Resonance: <http://resonanceco.com/insights/the-five-cities-with-the-best-shot-at-amazon-hq2/>

<sup>3</sup> Morrisburg Reader (2018) “SDG getting ready to roll out community improvement fund,” March 8<sup>th</sup>: <http://www.morrisburgleader.ca/2018/03/08/sdg-getting-ready-to-roll-out-new-community-improvement-plan-fund/>



There are many examples of positive shared-servicing agreements from across Ontario, such as the City of Pembroke to Township of Laurentian Hills' commercial districts or the Town of Prescott and Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal's Johnstown Industrial Park. Provided there is sufficient capacity, shared servicing increases the value proposition of the broader region by making more land investment ready. Employment would benefit multiple communities. If infrastructure upgrades are needed, provisions can be made for some cost sharing based on proportion and projected future use. Other communities proximate to the Quebec border are also facing challenges with servicing and it would be a competitive advantage for the UCPR in the current environment. While water and waste water servicing and treatment are ultimately the role of local municipalities, it must be underscored that planning for long-term business growth should parallel long-term infrastructure planning and that better planning and service extensions increase economies of scale and, therefore, competitiveness.

There are also challenges associated with high-speed internet infrastructure. Some rural centres such as Hawkesbury and Embrun already have fibre optic infrastructure, but most do not. Because the future of agriculture is likely to be increasingly reliant on high-speed internet for the exchange of big-data, and many factories will become increasingly reliant on it for their automated technologies, a lack of accessible high-speed internet is a considerable barrier to supporting existing businesses and facilitating new business attraction. Some communities in Alberta have become pragmatic regarding internet servicing through models such as community-owned internet services. One example is the Town of Olds' O-Net, which has been providing fibre internet to users since 2013.<sup>4</sup> The organization provides internet services to local residents and businesses, as well as exports servicing to other neighbouring communities. In an area where large internet providers are not interested in developing, community-owned solutions such as O-Net fill a market gap, while also providing more affordable services than private firms would if they were to initiate servicing. Similar programs have been adopted by communities in Ontario, such as in Stratford.

Broadband internet servicing has been on the agenda of organizations such as Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus since 2007, and the initiation of the Eastern Ontario Regional Network was expected to deliver highspeed internet to 95% of rural households and businesses, but recent concerns that the Federal Government may auction-off broadband spectrums currently reserved for Eastern Ontario to 5G wireless providers which would largely benefit large urban areas to the detriment of rural Ontario.<sup>5</sup>

The result points to two opportunities for leaders in Prescott and Russell. First, the UCPR can work with other communities across Eastern Ontario to ensure that broadband spectrums reserved for rural Ontario remain designated as such. Second, it can look at options to develop a community-owned internet service provider, as locations such as Olds and Stratford have done. Working to resolve internet challenges will also facilitate the attraction of residents that have come to expect it and who may avoid relocating if it is absent.

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<sup>4</sup> Christopher, David (2017) "How community broadband can deliver faster, cheaper internet for all Canadians," February 1: <http://rabble.ca/columnists/2017/02/how-community-broadband-can-deliver-faster-cheaper-internet-all-canadians>

<sup>5</sup> Lowry, Wayne (2018) "5G Wireless Proposal Puts Rural Internet at Risk," Ottawa Citizen, September 17: <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/5g-wireless-proposal-puts-rural-internet-at-risk>



Communities are often concerned about the risk of sharing “too much” data because it may expose their resources and weaknesses to competitors; however, the larger risk is to miss out on potential investors in the first place. Making site selection data available on demand to site selectors avoids the risk of being missed, while increasing the probability of being found. The site selection tools and availability of data via the UCPR's A La Carte tool is extremely advanced. This gives the UCPR a competitive edge in terms of getting the right information into the hands of investors. Continuing to ensure A La Carte is populated with accurate and up-to-date data will need to be a priority in remaining competitive.

Also applicable to investment readiness and data are cost-calculators that can help businesses and site selectors understand the total development cost of a prospective property. Such calculators can be purchased or custom designed and typically include cost factors associated with development charges, taxes, labour costs (based on skill level), servicing (pipe-size, hydro needs, internet mbps needs, etc.), square footage costs for lease, purchase or build, and more. Making such calculators interactive and online is an easy way to engage prospects, monitor interest, and keep them on the page longer.

There is one opportunity for direct and targeted investment attraction that does make sense for Prescott and Russell, and this is in the realm of automated food processing. The “dark factories” referred to in the previous section represent an opportunity for approaching key manufacturers. New trade deals with the European Union and Trans-Pacific nations and the recently approved United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement have made of new opportunities to look for large industry players in search of locations fitting the profile of Prescott and Russell. A plan for strategic targeting for automated facilities needs to be made, which would put Prescott and Russell in the driver’s seat for the new direction manufacturing is heading in Canada.

As noted, strong investment attraction also comes from a satisfied business base that is already in the community. First, site selectors are interested to see how happy existing businesses are and what the key grievances are. Since the largest concerns raised by businesses are related to workforce and internet service, addressing these challenges in a way that demonstrates improvements are being made, are most likely to improve business satisfaction. Second, existing businesses are the most likely candidates for generating investment leads via their own networks. If business owners are content and the municipality has a close and positive relationship with them, they will boast about the community to their peers. Every business-oriented event, be it an appreciation luncheon, workshop, or scheduled visitation is an opportunity to gain intelligence about potential new investment. At a deeper level, PRCDC also should track which businesses indicate similar supply chain sources or supply chain gaps, which may also point to investment leads.

Finally, ensuring that investment leads can be converted into investment wins means having a formalized process in place for working with prospects, dealing with “walk-ins”, and coordinating activities with local municipalities. A lead handling protocol is a tool to help determine how to handle potential investment, but what is also needed is a strong concierge service to work with leads and ensure all of their needs are met. As more businesses look to locate in the Ottawa area, Prescott and Russell is already a consideration, so it is important in these instances that the UCPR, PRCDC and local municipalities are ready to assist.

The above considerations are captured in the goals of the following table.



**Figure 5: Strategic Objective 2: To advance a progressive agenda for investment readiness and attraction**

| Required Action   | Lead | Potential Partners  | Timing    | Performance Measures  |
|---|------|---|-----------|---|
| <b>Goal #3: Work to produce tangible solutions to infrastructure challenges relating to water and wastewater servicing and internet access</b>  |      |   |           |   |
| <p>5. Undertake a feasibility study jointly among two agreeing local municipalities</p> <p>Work with land use planning experts to develop a framework for a shared services memorandum of understanding between municipalities that have capacity to share water and waste-water infrastructure with bordering communities that have adjacent employment lands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tip: Identify a mentor community that can serve as a source of advice.</li> </ul>  | UCPR | Local municipalities  | Short     | <p>Feasibility study complete</p> <p>Memorandum of understanding signed</p>   |
| <p>6. Advocate for continued availability of designated broadband spectrum allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobilize stakeholders via social media and formal local networks</li> <li>Work with regional Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament to advocate on behalf of their constituents</li> <li>Lobby for a Government-Funded Program</li> </ul>   | UCPR | <p>Eastern Ontario Leadership Council</p> <p>MPs, MPPs</p> <p>PRCDC</p> | Immediate | <p>Collective action taken; result generated</p> <p>Social media response</p> <p>Obtain Government-Funded Program funding</p> |
| <p>7. Conduct a feasibility study for a regional community-owned internet service provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be realistic about tracking the return on investment over an extended period of time</li> <li>Promote and develop self-sustaining and locally owned internet services</li> <li>Leverage communities that already have high-speed internet in promotional materials targeting prospective new residents or talent</li> <li>Prioritize new high-speed internet servicing to centres facing sharp population declines</li> </ul> | UCPR | PRCDC   | Short     | <p>Feasibility study completed</p> <p>Incorporation obtained</p> <p>Promotional materials updated</p>                         |



| Required Action  | Lead | Potential Partners  | Timing    | Performance Measures  |
|--|------|---|-----------|---|
| <b>Goal #4: Target high autonomy food processing manufacturers for investment attraction</b>   |      |   |           |   |
| 8. Develop an investment attraction and lead generation plan by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing a community profile specifically relevant to food processing industry</li> <li>▪ Selecting specific geographic markets including Canadian ones (may be ready for expansion)</li> <li>▪ Preparing a marketing message tailored to the audience that promote hard and soft factors</li> <li>▪ Researching and selecting the most effective marketing techniques to deliver the message (personal networks work best)</li> <li>▪ Execute the plan and monitor results</li> <li>▪ Work with Federal and Provincial governments to fund lead generation</li> </ul> | UCPR | PRCDC<br>Private investors<br>Venture Capitalists<br>Invest Ontario and Invest Canada - Community Initiatives | Long-term | Sector specific profile complete<br>Target markets identified<br>Messaging complete and methods identified<br>Leads generated; leads converted; \$ investment; # of employees |
| <b>Goal #5: Increase the availability of site-selection data to ensure site selectors in search of key information can find it with ease</b>   |      |   |           |   |
| 9. Ensure A La Carte data content remains up to date and that the tool is assessed regularly to see if new best practices in site-selection data can be integrated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct reviews of A La Carte’s content bank at regular intervals to ensure content is up-to-date</li> <li>▪ Study best practices used in other municipal site selection tools to see if new methods or content should be provided in A La Carte</li> </ul>  | UCPR | Local municipalities<br>PRCDC   | Medium    | Platform upgraded<br>User diagnostics   |
| 10. Ensure demographic and labour force data are readily available and up-to-date on UCPR’s website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data should include local and regional levels</li> </ul>  | UCPR | Local municipalities<br>EOTB  | Medium    | Data obtained and updated<br>User diagnostics   |



| Required Action  | Lead          | Potential Partners  | Timing                                      | Performance Measures  |
|--|---------------|---|---|---|
| <p>11. Develop a site-selection costing calculator to be available for site selectors and local businesses looking to expand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify all base rates and populate the calculator ensuring rates are accurate and updated regularly</li> <li>▪ Ensure local municipality and county-wide factors and rates are included and allow for the selection of individual communities</li> <li>▪ Post the calculator on UCPR’s website as an interactive tool, potentially integrated with UCPR’s A La Carte GIS platform</li> <li>▪ Monitor calculator usage and track data trends</li> </ul> <p>Enable “bot” technology to probe calculator users after a specific period of dedicated time using the tool, such as five minutes (bot technology is the use of artificial intelligence to interact with the user as though it were a person in order to generate potential leads)</p> | UCPR          | Local municipalities<br>PRCDC                                   | Medium, but potentially developed in phases | <p>Calculator built</p> <p>Online interface enabled</p> <p>User diagnostics</p> <p>Leads generated/converted, \$ investment, # jobs</p> |
| <b>Goal #6: Initiate formalized lead handling processes facilitated by a concierge service</b>   |               |   |   |   |
| <p>12. Develop a formal lead handling protocol to ensure smooth coordination with local municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Celebrate successes online and give credit to partnerships wherever possible</li> </ul>  | UCPR<br>PRCDC | Local municipalities  | Short                                       | <p>Protocol enacted</p> <p>Leads handled/converted, \$ investment, # jobs</p> <p>Social media reaction</p>                              |
| <p>13. Implement a concierge service that facilitates the development process for new investors or businesses looking to expand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with local municipalities to map the process for development appropriate for each local municipality, including specific requirements, as well as processes specific to the UCPR</li> <li>▪ Develop information materials that include key phases, key deliverables, targeted turn-around times</li> <li>▪ Identify a point-person at each municipality to serve as a local concierge and one at PRCDC to coordinate with</li> </ul>   | PRCDC         | UCPR<br>Local economic development or dedicated municipal staff | Medium                                      | <p>Concierge service implemented</p> <p>Clients served</p>  |



| Required Action  | Lead | Potential Partners  | Timing | Performance Measures                                |
|--|------|---|--------|---|
| <b>Goal #7: Enhance and promote quality of place</b>   |      |   |        |   |
| 14. Initiate a “Win this Space” contest to stimulate interest in innovative commercial ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strike a selection committee and develop a budget limit</li> <li>▪ Initiate a competition to Win this Space</li> <li>▪ Promote annual winners and celebrate winners via media outreach</li> </ul>  | UCPR | Local Municipalities<br>PRCDC                                     | Medium | # applicants, media coverage, social media reaction |
| 15. Work with local municipalities to prioritize key improvement sites that are under-developed for market redevelopment (can be publicly-owned or privately-owned with permission) market areas for redevelopment <sup>6</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify a long-list of key locations that are underdeveloped and narrow it to a set of no more than 10 locations</li> <li>▪ Develop a series of redevelopment scenarios and investment prospectuses, with a focus on either mixed use or brownfield industrial redevelopment</li> <li>▪ Identify the potential return on investment based on different development scenarios.</li> </ul> | UCPR | Local municipalities<br>Local property owners<br>PRCDC            | Medium | \$ investment, # jobs                               |
| 16. Investigate the prospect of implementing a UCPR-wide community improvement plan model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engage with local municipalities, businesses and business organizations</li> <li>▪ Determine a model based on feasibility and input</li> </ul>  | UCPR | Local municipalities, businesses, business organizations<br>PRCDC | Medium | \$ investment                                       |

<sup>6</sup> There can be two potential benefits from developing such marketing products; one being that the existing property owner re-invests in the opportunity and the other being that a new developer makes the investment. A good example of this exercise can be obtained by contacting the Town of Greater Napanee’s economic development department.





### Strategic Objective 3: To continue to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is supportive of new business growth and innovation

There are numerous concerns that threaten the ability to grow the entrepreneurial ecosystem, such as future plans of College La Cité, the fate of the Alfred Complex, and the stagnation of key organizations such as the Prescott and Russell Entrepreneurial Academy. Some of these that have floundered despite having tremendous potential. However, before looking to grow the institutional base there has to be a strong push from entrepreneurs themselves, of which there are many in Prescott and Russell.

Tools are needed to mobilize existing entrepreneurs as the base upon which new development can be promoted and encouraged more organically. Organizations such as Futurpreneur, Startup Canada<sup>7</sup> have national experience in working with communities from a business level rather than from a government level. The organization is run by entrepreneurs and their mantra is “We are entrepreneurs on a mission to build an environment for entrepreneurial momentum and success in Canada.” Working in partnership with Futurpreneur and Startup Canada, the PRCDC, PREC, the UCPR and local partners can build a stronger foundation for ecosystem health. Before advancing anymore projects designed to “stimulate” the ecosystem, it should be a priority to get working with the existing entrepreneurial ecosystem, who if leveraged appropriately, will drive growth and validate the need for additional institutional structures.

In addition, the PRCDC and the PREC can also look to grow the footprint of entrepreneurs by attracting entrepreneurial residents to the area. While a section below addresses resident attraction more specifically, a certain kind of resident bears noting here in regard to entrepreneurs; namely, the home-based solo-entrepreneur. Sometimes referred to as “lone eagles” or “solopreneurs” these people choose places to live based on their own personal preferences rather than specific job opportunities. In short, there are certain people that would choose Prescott and Russell because of its quality of place attributes that align with their own personal tastes. They already own home-based or small commercial businesses that do not rely on local population for sales.

There are certain factors that are also vital to the ability to attract these solopreneurs, including proximity to international air travel, high-speed internet, and easy-to-access road infrastructure. Urban areas such as Montreal and Ottawa provide a huge target audience to attract solopreneurs from. With Prescott and Russell equidistant to these travel hubs, it is an ideal location for the type of entrepreneur that only needs to go into the bigger cities every once in a while.

Thus, building the entrepreneurial ecosystem represents a two-pronged approach; bringing in experts that work with and mobilize existing entrepreneurs and attracting new residents that are also entrepreneurs to grow the existing base. From here it becomes easier to advocate for the institutional structures that would later serve them and future entrepreneurs, based on their identified and articulated needs. Understanding who the entrepreneurs are in the community and the innovations they are working on is also important. Building a culture that inspires entrepreneurship is also important to empower the “next generation” of entrepreneurs. Cultivating an interest among young women and girls toward Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) will help inspire the creative entrepreneurs of the future. Similarly, giving new Canadians the tools to become entrepreneurs in Prescott and Russell can lead to population growth and an injection of higher-earning incomes into the area.

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<sup>7</sup> Startup Canada: <https://www.startupcan.ca/>



**Figure 6: Strategic Objective 3: To continue to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is supportive of new business growth and innovation**

| Required Action  | Lead  | Potential Partners               | Timing  | Performance Measures  |
|--|---|----------------------------------|---------|---|
| <b>Goal #8: Provide entrepreneur support from the ground up</b>  |   |                                  |         |   |
| 17. Initiate a dialogue with Futurpreneur and Startup Canada to work with local entrepreneurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with organizations such as Futurpreneur and Startup Canada to mobilize a spirit of entrepreneurship in the community and empower existing entrepreneurs</li> <li>▪ Evaluate and implement policy suggestions driven by the entrepreneur base</li> </ul>  | PRCDC<br><br>Prescott-Russell Entrepreneurship Centre | UCPR                             | Short   | Partnership initiated<br><br>Goals identified<br><br>Goals achieved       |
| 18. Continue to engage entrepreneurs through business retention and expansion outreach/visitations and local partners  | PRCDC   | UCPR<br><br>Local municipalities | Ongoing | # of visits<br><br># workshops,<br># attendees                            |
| <b>Goal #9: Grow the density of entrepreneurs by attracting more entrepreneurial home-based businesses</b>   |   |                                  |         |   |
| 19. Implement a solo-entrepreneur attraction plan consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A campaign directly illustrating key infrastructure and quality of life assets and a call to action</li> <li>▪ Clearly indicate that opportunities for spousal job-matching support exist (see workforce development section below)</li> <li>▪ Target specific demographics that already have home-based or small businesses as well as people that fit the online profile of an entrepreneurial candidate (focus on Montreal and Ottawa)</li> <li>▪ Celebrate new arrivals</li> </ul> | UCPR<br><br>PRCDC                                     | Local Municipalities             | Medium  | Marketing materials generated<br><br>Leads generated, # new entrepreneurs |



| Required Action  | Lead   | Potential Partners       | Timing        | Performance Measures   |
|--|--|--------------------------|---------------|--|
| <p>20. Grow innovative clusters among the “next generation” of entrepreneurs in under-represented demographics to inspire diversity in entrepreneurship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initiate an immigrant entrepreneur network to identify, empower and promote growth and support among immigrant entrepreneurs in Prescott and Russell.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist with the identification of special grants and tax breaks geared toward immigrants<sup>8</sup></li> <li>▪ Work with existing new Canadian entrepreneurs to make connections with other potential family and friends in larger urban areas and promote entrepreneurship opportunities in Prescott and Russell.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Initiate a specific woman in entrepreneurship working-group (including social entrepreneurs) to develop programming to empower and grow the next generation of women entrepreneurs in the counties               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a local STEM Camp location within the counties<sup>9</sup></li> <li>▪ Initiate a local chapter of Canada Learning Code and related programs including girls learning code, women learning code, and kids learning code<sup>10</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>Prescott-Russell Entrepreneurship Centre</p> <p>PRCDC</p> <p>UCPR</p> | <p>EOTB</p> <p>PRESC</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Immigrant working group established</p> <p>Immigrant entrepreneurs identified</p> <p># of new Canadian Businesses; growth over time</p> <p>Women entrepreneurs identified</p> <p>Summer camp established; # of participants</p> <p>Canada Learning Code chapter established; # of events; # of participants</p> |

<sup>8</sup> See for example Business Development Bank of Canada’s New Canadian Entrepreneurs loan program: [https://www.ic.gc.ca/app/scr/innovation/group-groupe/45d38a4a4cd545d1#LOANS\\_AND\\_CAPITAL\\_INVESTMENT-drop-2467](https://www.ic.gc.ca/app/scr/innovation/group-groupe/45d38a4a4cd545d1#LOANS_AND_CAPITAL_INVESTMENT-drop-2467)

<sup>9</sup> STEM Camp is a specific summer day-camp program designed for girls interested in science and technology. A review of the organization’s website found no STEM Camp locations anywhere in Prescott and Russell. See STEM Camp’s website for a list of existing locations: <https://stemcamp.ca/locations/>

<sup>10</sup> Seek as an example the Kingston Chapter of Canada Learning Code as something potentially suited to Prescott and Russell: <https://www.canadalearningcode.ca/chapters/kingston/>



## Strategic Objective 4: To build a talent pipeline and aggressively attract a workforce that is suited to existing and future business needs

The OPRO survey indicated that one-third of businesses have trouble accessing skilled talent and other consultations highlighted this frustration. Having a strong labour force is important for business retention and expansion and also investment readiness. Furthermore, some communities have seen population declines, which could be augmented by increases in skilled talent attraction. Added to this are concerns raised by stakeholders about the outmigration of youth. These concerns underpin the logic of the strategic objective above, but also point toward opportunities for resolving or mitigating such challenges.

The OPRO survey also found that employers are generally not interested in hiring co-op, internship or apprentice students. Also, most are not interested finding out about programming, despite the fact that many businesses indicate labour force challenges. Yet, working with those that are learning can result in benefits over the long-term for businesses. The challenge is the perception that a lot of work goes into the training and oversight of new employees, which results in a negative attitude toward supporting such programming. In reality this is the very purpose of such programs; to prepare talent for the real world. Having access to co-op, internship, or apprentice students builds a pipeline of future talent for the region.

One of the largest challenges is residents who graduate post-secondary school and do not return. Many rural communities face this same challenge, but some areas have adopted systems designed to encourage students to return. One of the most famous models is the Kalamazoo Promise.<sup>11</sup> The Kalamazoo Promise promotes skills development via an incentive that offers a post-secondary scholarship, which is proportionate to the amount of schooling the student has done in the area. Studies show that once students have finished their studies, they are more apt to come back. The resources have also helped families to decide to locate in areas where such opportunities exist, thereby helping to attract new people. In its first year in 2010, the Promise paid for \$18 million in tuition for 2,000 students. The Promise is funded by all levels of government, post-secondary institutions within the state, corporate partners and donors, and individual donors. The Kalamazoo Promise Model has been duplicated and adapted in many urban and rural communities across the United States.

The opportunity for Prescott and Russell does not have to go as far as paying for complete tuition costs; nor does it have to be applicable to people that have gone through local schooling and completed a post-secondary degree but do not return to the community. Instead it can be a program that provides different levels of bursary depending on the length of time the student has spent in local schools before going to post-secondary education. That way, the cost is more manageable for partner-funders while still providing incentive for students to return to the area. As an example, consider an investment of \$5,000 to 100 applicants that return to the area. The total investment would be \$500,000, but the net impact on the local economy based on a \$45,000 annual income would be \$4,500,000. That would be a return on investment of more than 8 to 1. The important thing to consider is that the program would reward people that return but also put more money back into the local economy.

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<sup>11</sup> The Kalamazoo Promise: <https://www.kalamazoopromise.com/10things/10ThingsYouNeedtoKnow>



One additional tool that can potentially assist in attracting people back to the community is to actively engage young people to monitor what kinds of amenities, programs and services they would want to make them happy. For example, an annual survey targeting high school graduates can probe opportunities for quality of life improvements that would either entice them to stay in the region after completing high school or make the area more inviting for them to return after post-secondary schooling. One obvious improvement that most young people want is access to fast internet, and this should be a priority, especially for areas that are experiencing population decline, but there may be other things that are also important to young adults that are simply not well known.

Another challenge in attracting talent to the area is associated with ensuring opportunities exist for the spouses of people that see job opportunities for themselves in Prescott and Russell. This emerged in one consultation session. A potential solution is to develop and actively promote a “spousal job match” program that attempts to link spouses with job opportunities in the region based on their backgrounds.

Landed-immigrants also represent a potential target population for attracting labour force components. Most immigrants that come to Canada tend to make large urban centres their first home. The social networks tend to already be established, jobs are easier to find, and public transit infrastructure is well-established. That said, urban living can be cost prohibitive for many new arrivals. Prescott and Russell represent a low-cost option to forge a better Canadian living. Social media channels are a way to market to immigrants because advertising can be developed specifically for languages other than English or French, and directed specifically at urban centres with large immigrant populations that fit similar language profiles. Also important is sensitizing the local population about the benefits of attracting immigrants to the community. Working with community organizations to develop appropriate awareness-building materials will help ensure existing residents are hospitable.



**Figure 7: Strategic Objective 4: To build a talent pipeline and aggressively attract a workforce that is suited to existing and future business needs**

| Required Action   | Lead                                       | Potential Partners   | Timing | Performance Measures   |
|---|--|--|--------|--|
| <b>Goal #10: Educate, recruit and promote co-op, internship, and apprenticeship champions and supportive businesses</b>   |  |  |        |  |
| 21. Undertake a feasibility study to determine if a trades school can be located in Prescott-Russell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with area stakeholders to undertake the analysis and identify trades and potential partners</li> <li>Conduct the feasibility study</li> <li>If prognosis is positive, initiate an action plan to establish the trade school</li> </ul> | PRCDC                                      | UCPR<br>PRESC<br>Local school boards<br>Local municipalities     | Short  | Feasibility study complete<br>Action plan underway   |
| 22. Develop an awareness building campaign that markets the incentives and benefits of having co-op, internship, and apprenticeship champions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with chambers to distribute messaging and to monitor responses</li> </ul>   | Prescott-Russell Enterprise Service Centre | Eastern Ontario Training Board,<br>Chambers of commerce<br>PRESC | Short  | # of matches facilitated<br>Increased co-op, internship, apprenticeship rates in OPRO survey                   |
| 23. Implement a student ambassador program that engages high school students via co-op, internship, and apprentice students currently embedded in a local business or organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange school speaker series</li> </ul>  | UCPR<br>PRCDC                              | Local school boards  | Short  | # of ambassadors<br># of presentations/ speaking sessions<br>Increased co-op, internship, apprenticeship rates |



| Required Action   | Lead | Potential Partners            | Timing    | Performance Measures  |
|---|------|-------------------------------|-----------|---|
| <b>Goal #11: Aggressively grow new resident attraction through targeted campaigns</b>   |      |                               |           |   |
| <p>24. Develop promotional packages targeting resident attraction in print and digital versions and distribute at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local events and festivals where there are large numbers of visitors</li> <li>▪ Job fairs in cities like Ottawa and Montreal</li> <li>▪ Online via social media channels that are targeted to specific age groups/interests</li> </ul>  | UCPR | Local municipalities<br>PRCDC | Medium    | Packages developed<br># of events attended<br>Online diagnostics  |
| <p>25. Build a welcoming and inclusive environment for minorities and newcomers as parts of the future talent pipeline and workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop promotional materials in languages other than English and French to reach specific immigrant audiences in large urban areas and distribute via social media channels</li> <li>▪ Identify local Multicultural Ambassadors that can serve as liaisons to diverse groups in larger urban areas, including newcomers and visible minorities (these people can help influence potential new residents and skilled labour)</li> <li>▪ Develop a multicultural centre in Prescott and Russell</li> </ul> | UCPR | PRCDC                         | Long-term | Materials developed<br>Online diagnostics<br>+ in # of immigrants<br>Multicultural centre established<br>Local multicultural chapters established |



| Required Action  | Lead   | Potential Partners   | Timing           | Performance Measures  |
|--|--|--|------------------|---|
| <p>26. Implement and market a “spousal job match” program to encourage people with families to relocate to the area when one partner has found a potential job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make use of Chamber of Commerce connections to identify potential job match leads</li> </ul>  | <p>Prescott-Russell Employment Services Centre</p> | <p>Chambers of commerce<br/>PREDT<br/>PRCDC</p>  | <p>Medium</p>    | <p>Matches facilitated</p>  |
| <b>Goal #12: Encourage the return of youth that have left the area for post-secondary education</b>  |  |  |                  |   |
| <p>27. Implement a “Welcome back to Prescott and Russell” rewards bursary applicable to students that returns to the area after completing post-secondary education based on length of time spent in the local school system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct a series of case studies to understand how such a rewards program can be implemented</li> <li>▪ Decide on a delivery model and annual fixed budget</li> <li>▪ Eligibility criteria should be specific including the terms of payment (e.g. proof of local employment, minimum stay period, cut-off and disqualification criteria, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Promote the program aggressively via social media and at area high schools</li> </ul> | <p>UCPR</p>  | <p>PRCDC<br/>Prescott-Russell Employment Service Centre<br/>School Boards<br/>EOTB</p> | <p>Long-term</p> | <p>Model identified and initiated<br/># Applicants and approvals<br/>\$ Invested<br/>Return on investment based on recipient salary (aggregate)</p> |





| Required Action   | Lead | Potential Partners                            | Timing | Performance Measures                              |
|---|------|---|--------|---|
| <b>Goal #13: Identify and address quality of life and quality of place improvements that would encourage new talent to move to Prescott and Russell and entice graduates to return</b>  |      |   |        |   |
| <p>28. Conduct two forms of targeted quality of life intelligence data gathering to inform potential improvements in the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct an annual survey of high school graduates to identify improvements that would be attractive to young adults</li> <li>▪ Conduct a survey among newcomers to understand missing programs and services and opportunities to better promote existing ones as incentives for future residents</li> <li>▪ Tip: Having such a survey available at key public locations where newcomers frequent will be helpful, such as municipal offices, recycling bin pick-up locations, or submitted with correspondence from the municipality</li> <li>▪ Use survey results from both survey categories to inform future improvements to quality of life or place</li> </ul> | UCPR | Local municipalities<br>EOTB<br>School Boards | Medium | # surveys completed<br><br># of actions initiated |



## Strategic Objective 5: To support the development of tourism assets and infrastructure to add to the tourism value proposition of Prescott and Russell

The 2014 Economic Strategy Update suggested there be a clear delineation of responsibility over different aspects of the tourism sector. Typically, tourism can be understood to include three dimensions:

- Destination development – investment in enabling infrastructure and collaboration and consultation with partners to assess tourism potential and feasibility
- Destination marketing – communications, promotions, and customer research and segmentation
- Destination management – protection (and potential organization) of assets and development of tourism experiences

For the above, the UCPR was to undertake the destination development component, while Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism (TPRT) was to undertake the other two components. This framework has been applied respectively, and TPRT has received notable praise for its role in marketing and managing tourism in Prescott and Russell. Also, the UCPR or its economic development team have been highly involved in nurturing regional relationships beyond Prescott and Russell, developing cycling programming and assistance in mapping, attracting external cycling organizations such as Vélo Québec, collaborating in the Eastern Ontario Agrifood Network, coordinating the Ottawa River Festival, and other undertakings. The Pop-Silo program has also drawn much attention to the region.

Yet, there were also numerous ideas to further tourism development in Prescott and Russell that emerged during consultations. A primary one is to make better use of the Ottawa River as a tourism asset. While a large-scale project is not advocated, finding ways to enhance access to key waterfront areas and encouraging development around those areas is likely manageable. Encouraging beautification in surrounding areas, enhancing water visibility and access, repurposing of underdeveloped properties, and the introduction of more green space are all viable options for enhancing the tourism value proposition of key nodes along the waterfront. Redevelopment components could also be integrated with actions advocated under investment readiness improvements related to Goal #6 (redevelopment scenarios and investment prospectuses for underdeveloped properties).

Also related to the waterfront and countryside is the potential for developing a scenic route that is branded and marketed. Highway 17 passes through several charming villages, larger urban areas, and picturesque countryside. Branding that unique experience can go a long way to increasing visibility and visitation. For example, brands such as Loyalist Parkway and Thousand Islands Parkway attract many travellers that are not interested in the monotony of Highway 401. Meanwhile, with Highway 17, Prescott and Russell have an equally appealing opportunity to entice similar travellers that are less interested in the 417.



Another aspect of tourism development relates to accommodations. There is considerable interest in driving more overnight stays in the counties because overnight stays are the single most significant way of increasing the dollar return of tourism. This is especially the case during times of festivals and other large events. The challenge is that there are limited options for accommodation. While recent additions such as Microtel in Casselman have added capacity, other areas do not have such infrastructure.

Also associated with accommodation is the growing interest in event spaces for conferences. Many firms have taken interest in escaping larger cities for their events so that attendees are less distracted by other components of the area. Most conferences tend to involve some element of site-seeing or exploration, which can be well-accommodated by many of the charming attractions in Prescott and Russell. At the same time, developing such facilities would also grow local employment and would allow for complimentary business services such as overnight stays. There are also the many other kinds of activities that can help such a venture throughout the year, such as the hosting of weddings, high school graduations, or other events. It should be an objective of local partners to lure a resort style conference centre to the region to fill this market gap and tap into the Ottawa and Montreal business sector. Integrating aspects of a health and wellness spa can also potentially tap into nearby urban markets.

Finally, a growing demographic of tourists are recreational vehicle (RV) travellers. These are the people that travel in large mobile vehicles, often in convoys or clubs. They plan long trips across specific areas or identify specific locations for rallies or meet-ups. The demographic tends to be retired or semi-retired and enjoy travelling and trying new things. With the great variety of tourism assets, especially in regard to agritourism and festivals, Prescott and Russell should be a destination of choice for RVers from all across Canada and the United States. A dedicated need for RV sites is therefore observed, as well as the need for targeted promotion toward the RV market.



**Figure 8: Strategic Objective 5: To support the development of tourism assets and infrastructure to add to the tourism value proposition in Prescott and Russell**

| Required Action  | Lead | Potential Partners   | Timing | Performance Measures   |
|--|------|--|--------|--|
| <b>Goal #15: Build tourism assets and infrastructure that increase the value proposition of the Ottawa River and Highway 17 scenic route</b>   |      |  |        |  |
| <p>29. Prioritize key nodes along the Ottawa River for cluster development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an inventory of existing waterfront access points and potential new access points, and evaluate the quality of the space based on factors such as ease of access, amount of open or free space, opportunities for enhancement, repair or upgrading, etc.</li> <li>Create a prioritized list of a select series of sites to focus targeted beautification, redevelopment, and business attraction</li> <li>Develop a master plan for upgrading specific locations and make “noise” about key milestones</li> <li>Work with area businesses in proximity to key zones to promote beautification, potentially with incentive programming associated with a community improvement plan or redevelopment prospectus</li> </ul> | UCPR | <p>Hawkesbury East, Hawkesbury, Alfred Plantagenet, Clarence-Rockland</p> <p>Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism</p> | Medium | <p>Sites identified</p> <p>\$ invested by partners, UCPR</p> <p>\$ invested by developers, local businesses</p> <p># of visitors</p> <p># traffic count data</p> |
| <p>30. Undertake a branding feasibility exercise to determine the ability and possible branding options for Highway 17.</p>  | UCPR | Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism  | Medium | Study completed  |
| <p>31. Re-evaluate leProjet des Colosses (colossal project)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit the Projet des Colosses feasibility study and evaluate local and external interest (external interest is important to see if people would be interested in exploring such a concept)</li> <li>Render a decision and revise the action plan appropriately</li> </ul>   | UCPR | Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism  | Medium | <p>Reassessment complete</p> <p>Decision rendered (action plan implemented if prognosis is positive)</p> <p>\$ funding obtained</p> <p>Investment</p>            |



| Required Action   | Lead  | Potential Partners | Timing        | Performance Measures  |
|---|---|--------------------|---------------|---|
| <b>Goal #16: Enhance the use of technology and tourism assets associated with new technology to increase overnight visits and local spending</b>  |   |                    |               |   |
| <p>32. Create an Experience Prescott and Russell tool to function as a platform for identifying events, accommodations, restaurants, activities and other tourism related. The focus of the tool will be to connect multiple assets together via coordinated mechanisms such as tours, group-activities (e.g. mushroom foraging), and unique activities (e.g. sugar shacks, annual festival packages).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and launch the tool</li> <li>▪ Provide workshops on how to create custom experience tours and encourage locals to start new initiatives and promote them on the platform</li> </ul> | <p>Created by UCPR; Promoted by Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism</p> | <p>PRCDC</p>       | <p>Short</p>  | <p>Packages created, distributed, clicked (online)<br/># consultations<br/># new Airbnb</p> |
| <p>33. Encourage Virtual Reality (VR) promotions among tourism operators to maximize visitor potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify local and regional VR specialists and encourage them to promote VR servicing among tourism operators</li> <li>▪ Consider earmarking a portion of funding as a rebate incentive to offset costs of VR production for local operators</li> <li>▪ Monitor and report on VR, impact, successes and best practices</li> </ul>  | <p>Tourisme Prescott-Russell Tourism</p>                              | <p>UCPR</p>        | <p>Medium</p> | <p># of VR videos<br/># of new visitors, annual</p>   |



| Required Action   | Lead  | Potential Partners                                    | Timing                  | Performance Measures   |
|---|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Goal #17: Increase opportunities for more overnight stays in Prescott and Russell</b>  |   |   |                         |  |
| <p>34. Attract investment in a conference centre and resort to be located in Prescott and Russell.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify a short-list of key locations that could be suitable for a conference centre and resort</li> <li>▪ Develop marketing materials specifically illustrating why these locations are ideal for conference centre and resort development</li> <li>▪ Develop a list potential developers and initiate outreach and marketing</li> </ul>  | <p>PRCDC<br/>UCPR</p>                                 | <p>Tourisme<br/>Prescott-<br/>Russell<br/>Tourism</p> | <p>Medium-<br/>long</p> | <p>Promotional material developed<br/># of qualified leads<br/>Investor(s) identified<br/>\$ of new investment<br/># of jobs</p>                 |
| <p>35. Tap into the Recreational Vehicle (RV) Rally market to attract RVs to the region during festival periods as well as other key parts of the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with area land owners to identify potential locations convert portions of properties into RV parks</li> <li>▪ Identify key age demographics and outlets of RV information online for potential advertisements</li> <li>▪ Conduct targeted advertising of RV owners via social media, promoting the variety of annual festivals available locally</li> </ul> | <p>Tourisme<br/>Prescott-<br/>Russell<br/>Tourism</p> | <p>UCPR</p>   | <p>Long</p>             | <p>Local RV parks created<br/>Social media responses (links followed; shares, likes, etc.))<br/># of RVs attracted to area (monthly, annual)</p> |



## A Note on Strategic Sectors

In the above strategic objectives and their respective frameworks much thought was given to economic activities from a “traditional” perspective and this has been intentional. The motivation was to focus on self-growth and self-improvement from which new investment, economic growth, employment stability, labour force mobility, and more can be grown or enhanced. Less attention has been given to specific industries. This is intentional for two reasons; to keep the focus on the tools presented and their applications, and because the UCPR and the PRDC already know what the primary industries and subsectors are across the region. These include agriculture, food processing and other manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, and tourism. The message in this strategy was enthusiastically put behind innovation and entrepreneurship, which should be pursued in all sectors of economic strength.

When considered in light of the above strategic recommendations it is possible to see how the recommendations intersect with these strategic sectors, but going beyond that, the framework also encourages other economic development stabilization measures that can be applied to other sectors such as professional services and information technologies. These sectors are considered generally “on par” with the province, which means there is room to grow them through the tools outlined in the strategy above, just as support and attention can be put toward the traditional sectors that have been of strategic relevance in the past.



Appendices





## Economic Base Analysis

This economic base analysis presents an overview of the socio-economic, labour force and industry composition in the United Counties of Prescott and Russell (referred to below as Prescott and Russell). Results are derived from the following sources:

- Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016
- Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2011
- Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2018
- Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, December 2018

There are many ways to conceptualize the region represented in this Strategy, including at the local municipal and county levels, as well as by eastern and western portions of the region. For the purposes of this strategy analysis has been conducted based on the aggregate county level and also subdivided into eastern and western Prescott and Russell. Notably, over time different definitions of east and west have been used to differentiate across the region. This Strategy defines eastern and western Prescott and Russell as:

- Eastern: Champlain, Hawkesbury, East Hawkesbury, and Alfred and Plantagenet
- Western: Casselman, The Nation, Clarence-Rockland, and Russell Township

## Population

Since 2006, the Prescott and Russell population has climbed from 80,184 to 89,333 in 2016. Since 2011, Prescott and Russell has grown by 4.6% compared, which is the same rate as the province, but approximately 1.2% less than Ottawa. The figure below indicates that growth is predominantly in the west, while the east has suffered some decline.

**Figure 9: Total Population Change in Prescott and Russell, Ottawa and Ontario, 2006-2016.**

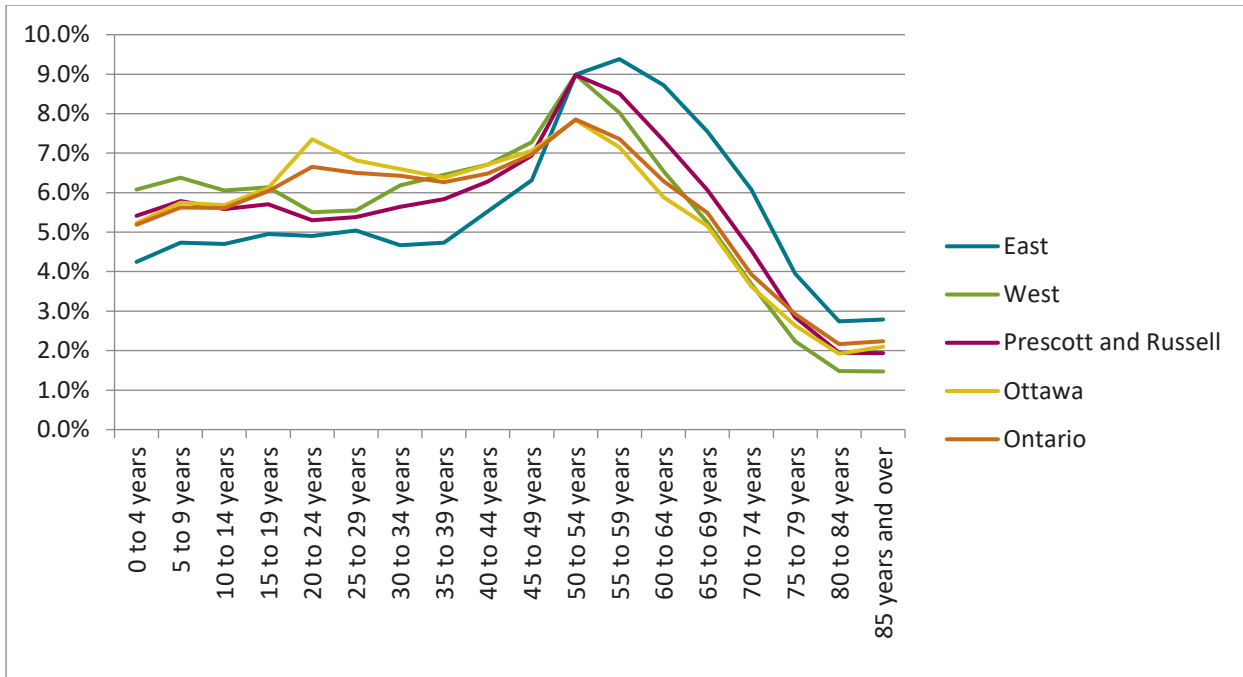
| Year          | East   | West   | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa  | Ontario    |
|---------------|--------|--------|----------------------|---------|------------|
| 2006          | 31,574 | 48,610 | 80,184               | 812,129 | 12,160,282 |
| 2011          | 31,655 | 53,726 | 85,381               | 883,391 | 12,851,821 |
| 2016          | 31,945 | 57,388 | 89,333               | 934,243 | 13,448,494 |
| 2006-2011 (%) | 0.3%   | 10.5%  | 6.5%                 | 8.8%    | 5.7%       |
| 2011-2016 (%) | 2.1%   | 6.8%   | 4.9%                 | 4.9%    | 6.6%       |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2011 Census Profile, 2016 Census Profile



Figure 10 shows the distribution of age-groups. It can be seen that the population percentage is denser among the age intervals representing 45-65 years. However, this is a global trend which can be observed in Prescott and Russell (East and West) as well as the province. Figure 12 depicts that Prescott and Russell’s population median age (44) is older than both the provincial median (41 years) and Ottawa (39 years).

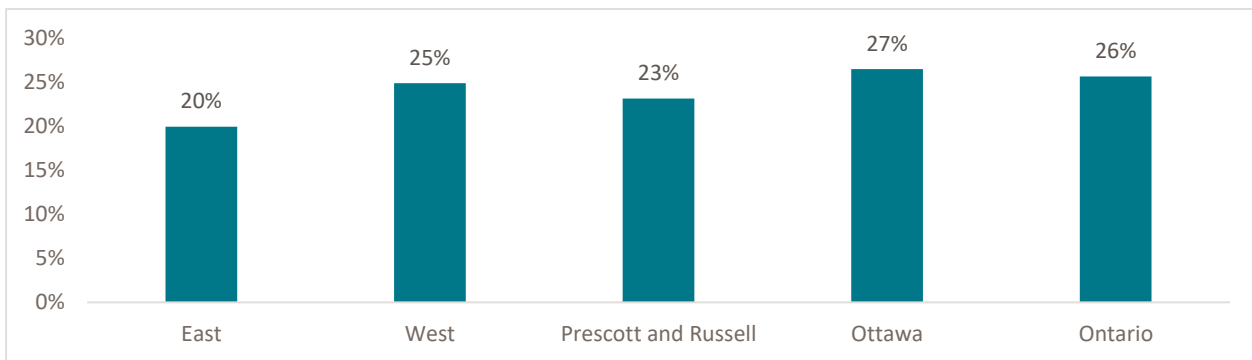
**Figure 10: Distribution of Age for Prescott and Russell (East and West) and Ontario**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile

On the other hand, by the percentage distribution, Prescott and Russell has a slight underrepresentation of age group between 25-44, which is notable in Figure 11, where the percentage of people in between 25-44 years is notably lower than any other comparators.

**Figure 11: Percentage of 25-44 year age groups**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile



The population in the eastern portion of the counties is predominantly older than in the west by about 8 years. Overall, the county has an older population than Ottawa or the province.

**Figure 12: Median Age of Population for Prescott Russell, Ottawa and Ontario**

|   | East | West | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa | Ontario |
|---|------|------|----------------------|--------|---------|
| The median age of the population (2011) | 44.1 | 38.3 | 40.5                 | 38.4   | 39      |
| The median age of the population (2016) | 49.9 | 41.5 | 44.3                 | 40.1   | 41.3    |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2011 Census Profile, 2016 Census Profile.

### 1.1.2 Dwelling Characteristics

The vast majority of housing in Prescott and Russell are single detached (74%), followed by apartments with fewer than five storeys (11.3%), semi-detached (6.1%) or row house (3%), totalling 94%. A difference is noted between Prescott and Russell and Ottawa when it comes to row houses: 21% of people live in such houses in Ottawa versus only 3% in Prescott and Russell. Also note that the provincial average occupancy rate of row-houses is 8.9%. In addition, 74% of the population in Prescott and Russell lives in single-detached houses which is highest compared to Ottawa (42.4%) and the province of Ontario (54.5%).

**Figure 13: Prescott and Russell Occupied Dwellings by Type, Percentage of Overall Population**

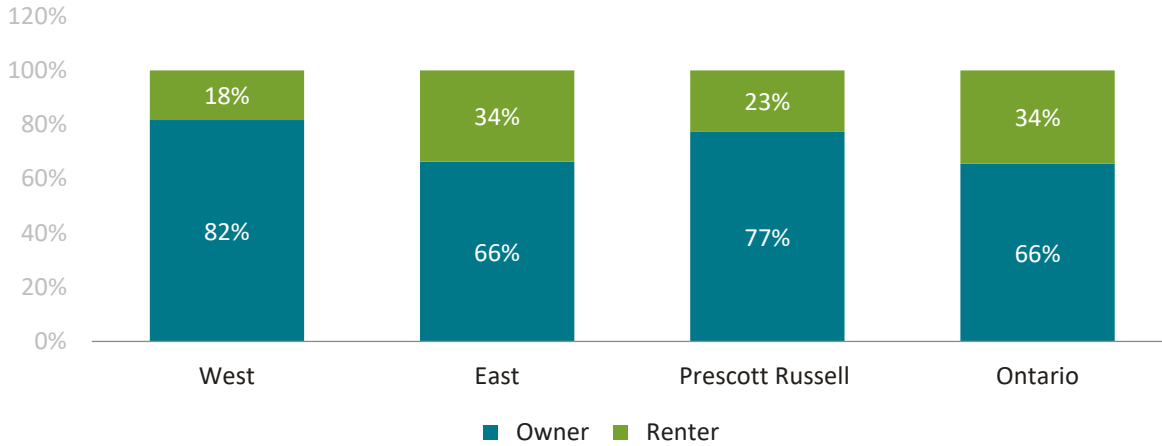
|   | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa | Ontario |
|---|----------------------|--------|---------|
| Single-detached house                   | 74.0%                | 42.4%  | 54.5%   |
| Apartment in a building with 5+ storeys | 0.2%                 | 18.4%  | 17.2%   |
| Semi-detached house                     | 6.1%                 | 5.4%   | 5.6%    |
| Row house                               | 3.0%                 | 21.3%  | 8.9%    |
| Apartment or flat in a duplex           | 5.0%                 | 1.9%   | 3.4%    |
| Apartment in a building with <5 storeys | 11.3%                | 10.5%  | 10.1%   |
| Other single-attached house             | 0.3%                 | 0.1%   | 0.2%    |

Figure 14 suggests that In Prescott and Russell, 23% of dwellings are occupied by renters against a 34% provincial average. The majority of these renters reside in apartments fewer than five storeys high, reflecting back on figure 5 (11.3% population live in apartments with fewer than five stories).

While looking at rent-own percentages (figure 6) a difference is noted in individual sections of Prescott and Russell Counties. The east side is closely following the provincial average with 34% of its eligible population renting housing. However, the west side has a higher representation of homeowners (82%) compared to provincial average (66%).



**Figure 14: Occupied Dwellings by Type, Percentage of Overall Population**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile.

The median value of dwellings in Prescott and Russell as a whole has grown by about 11% between 2011 and 2016, compared to 15% for Ottawa and 33% for Ontario. Median values suggest that Prescott and Russell houses are less expensive compared to Ottawa, with the gap increasing by \$ 22,320 in 2016 from 2011.

Based on the latest census (2016), the median dwelling price in Prescott and Russell was \$278,720 which is approximately \$121,776 less compared to the provincial median. It is noted that the rent prices in the community closely followed the provincial trend (17% rise) along with the City of Ottawa. However, median house rents in Prescott and Russell were approximately \$239 and \$ 172 cheaper than that of Ottawa and Ontario median rent values respectively.

**Figure 15: Average Dwelling and Shelter Costs for Rented Dwellings**

|  | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa    | Ontario   |
|--|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Median value of dwellings (\$) - 2011                        | \$250,043            | \$349,151 | \$300,862 |
| Median value of dwellings (\$) - 2016                        | \$278,720            | \$400,148 | \$400,496 |
| Change in House price  | 11%                  | 15%       | 33%       |
| Median monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$) -2011 | \$749                | \$953     | \$892     |
| Median monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (\$) -2016 | \$873                | \$1,112   | \$1,045   |
| % change in Rent   | 17%                  | 17%       | 17%       |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2011 National Household Survey Profile, 2016 Census Profile.  
 Rent difference 2016 = Prescott and Russell (873) – Ontario (1112) = 239 Cad



### 1.1.3 Income

Median income of Prescott and Russell residents consistently remained higher than the provincial median income both in 2011 and 2016. The income growth is noted to be 12% since 2011. This growth is higher than Ottawa (6%) and Ontario (10%). Based on the current census (2016) Prescott and Russell’s median annual income was on average \$5,275 higher than the provincial median but less than Ottawa (by \$3,043). Also notable is a difference in characteristic of individual geographic regions in Prescott and Russell, where eastern residents’ median wage has remained lower than in western communities and the provincial median. The results highlight the positive impact that Ottawa likely has on median individual incomes.

**Figure 16: Median Total Individual Income**

|                          | East     | West     | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa   | Ontario  |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Median total income 2010 | \$27,884 | \$37,924 | \$34,568             | \$39,530 | \$30,526 |
| Median total income 2015 | \$30,831 | \$42,096 | \$38,814             | \$41,857 | \$33,539 |
| % Change                 | 11%      | 11%      | 12%                  | 6%       | 10%      |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2011 National Household Survey Profile, 2016 Census Profile.

Shifting to the subject of median household income, once again Prescott and Russell’s median household income remains stronger than that of the provincial median by \$4,461 in 2016.

**Figure 17: Median Household Income**

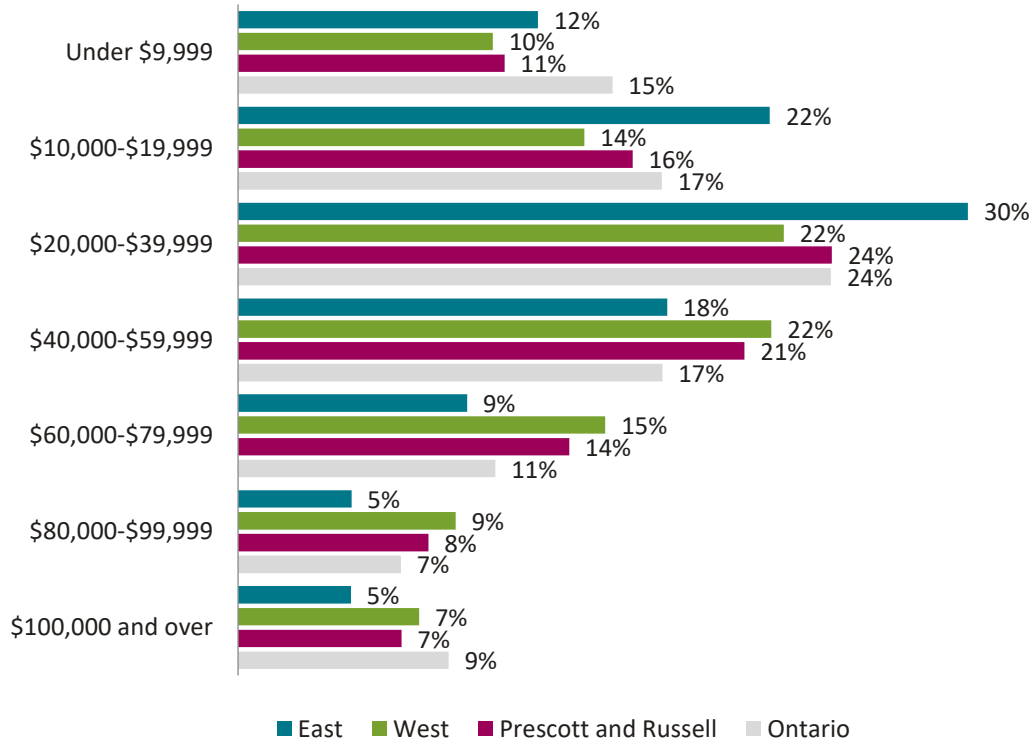
|  | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa   | Ontario  |
|--|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Median household total income (\$) in 2010     | \$71,820             | \$79,634 | \$66,358 |
| Median total income (\$) of households in 2015 | \$78,748             | \$85,981 | \$74,287 |
| % Change                                       | 10%                  | 8%       | 12%      |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2011 National Household Survey Profile, 2016 Census Profile.

In terms of distribution of individual income, Figure 18 depicts that Prescott and Russell follow the broader provincial trend for most income brackets with difference within +/- 5% in any particular group. Figure 19 highlights the household income distribution for regions of Prescott and Russell (East and West sides), Ottawa and Ontario. It is noted that the residents of the east side have a lower proportion of households earning \$80,000 and above. The difference is most evident in the range of \$100,000 and over intervals where the west side is almost double in all categories compared to the east. Understanding the difference in purchasing power of these geographic regions may prove beneficial in designing any prospective business viability study.

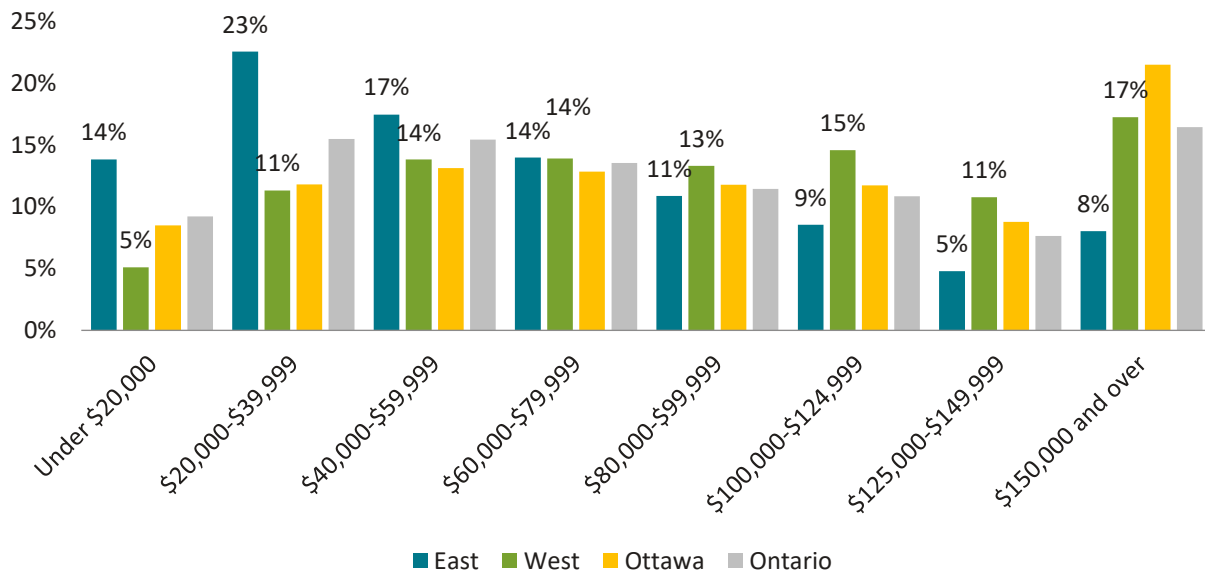


**Figure 18: Individual Income Distribution, Percentage of Overall Population**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016, Census Profile.

**Figure 19: Distribution of Household income for East, West Prescott and Russell and Ontario**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile.



### 1.1.4 Education

Education attainment can be looked at as an important descriptor of labour force capacity. The figure below summarizes skilled labour proportions for comparator areas, which is composed of those people that have completed an apprenticeship, trade certificate, or college or university degree, diploma or certificate. The age group is 25 to 64, to reflect the most likely active component of the workforce. Overall, Prescott and Russell have trailed the provincial distribution, but the gap has been narrowing between 2011 and 2016, with overall growth in skilled labour from 56% to 58%. On the other hand, there is also a notable difference between skilled labour proportions among eastern and western parts of the counties, with the east remaining fixed at 50%, and western communities growing from 58% to 60%. The disparity in education levels is most likely explained by a consistent proportion of future skilled labour leaving the eastern part of the counties. In other words, the eastern portion of the counties is suffering from a brain-drain effect, while the western portion continues a slow growth in skilled labour.

**Figure 20: Proportion of Population (ages 25 to 64 years) with Post-Secondary or Apprenticeship Education (Skilled Labour)**

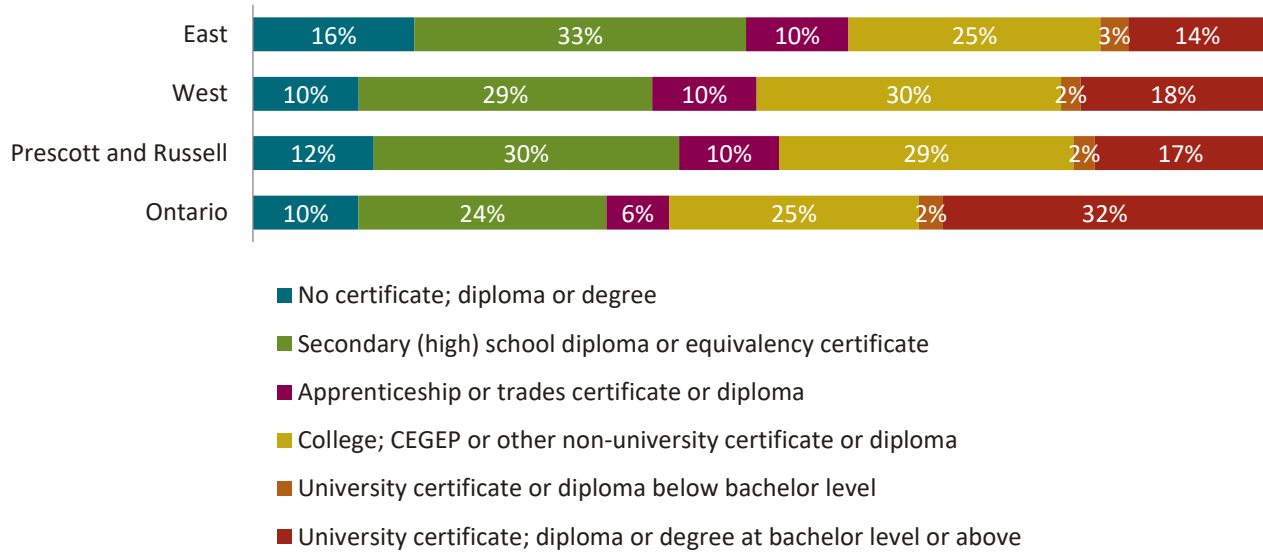
| Year                | East | West | Prescott and Russell | Ontario |
|---------------------|------|------|----------------------|---------|
| Skilled Labour 2011 | 50%  | 58%  | 56%                  | 65%     |
| Skilled Labour 2016 | 50%  | 60%  | 58%                  | 65%     |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile.

As shown below, looking at Prescott and Russell's percentage of the labour force with a university certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above is 15% less than the provincial average of 32%. Prescott and Russell has 17% of its population holding a university degree or equivalent. Among the individual regions of Prescott and Russell, the east side has 16% people with no certificate, diploma or degree which is 6% higher than both the west side and the provincial average. A similar trend is noted in the education level of college or non-university certificate diploma. Overall the most popular education type in Prescott and Russell counties is found to be secondary school and college education with 30% and 29% workforce ratio holding these education credentials respectively (together representing 59% of the labour force).



**Figure 21: Highest Level of Education Attainment (Ages 25 to 64 years), % of the Population – Detailed Categories**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile.

As shown below, people’s major field of study in Prescott and Russell is architecture; engineering; and related technologies (22%), followed by business; management and public administration (19%). Other strong fields of education are health and related fields (14%) and social and behavioural sciences and law (11%).





The last column in Figure 22 compares the percentage distribution of Prescott and Russell with the neighbouring City of Ottawa and highlights the areas of under and over-representation. Notably, the counties have larger proportions of people that have studied architecture, engineering and related technologies and personal, protective and transportation services.

**Figure 22: Major Field of Study (Ages 25 to 64), Percentage of the Skilled Labour Work Force 2016**

| Major Field of Study  | Prescott and Russell | Ottawa | Ontario | The difference compared to Ottawa |
|---|----------------------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Education   | 8%                   | 5%     | 5%      | 3%                                |
| Visual and performing arts; and communications technologies | 3%                   | 4%     | 4%      | -1%                               |
| Humanities  | 4%                   | 6%     | 6%      | -3%                               |
| Social and behavioural sciences and law                     | 11%                  | 19%    | 14%     | -7%                               |
| Business; management and public administration              | 19%                  | 20%    | 22%     | -1%                               |
| Physical and life sciences and technologies                 | 2%                   | 5%     | 4%      | -3%                               |
| Mathematics; computer and information sciences              | 5%                   | 8%     | 5%      | -3%                               |
| Architecture; engineering; and related technologies         | 22%                  | 16%    | 19%     | 6%                                |
| Agriculture; natural resources and conservation             | 3%                   | 1%     | 2%      | 2%                                |
| Health and related fields                                   | 14%                  | 12%    | 14%     | 2%                                |
| Personal; protective and transportation services            | 10%                  | 4%     | 6%      | 5%                                |
| Other   | 0%                   | 0%     | 0%      | 0%                                |

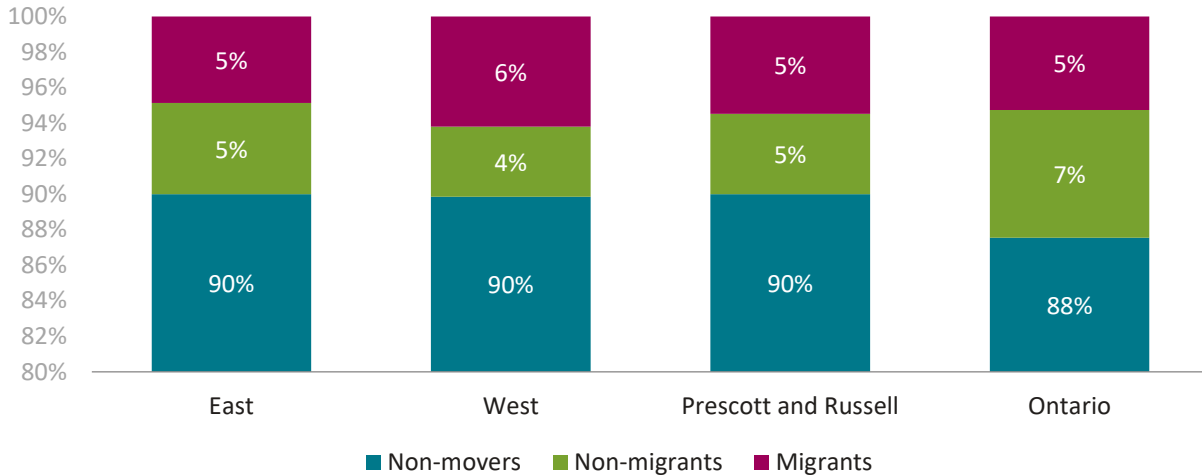
Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile

### 1.1.5 Mobility

The movement of people within a community or to the community from somewhere else constitutes mobility. Statistics Canada tracks this in two ways, by asking if a household has moved within the past year and asking if a household has moved within the past five years. As of 2016, the majority of people in Prescott and Russell (90 %) had either stayed where they were five years earlier or moved somewhere in the same community hence marked as ‘non-movers’. On the flip side, 10% households have moved into Prescott and Russell within the past 5 years with the equal ratio (5%) of non-migrants (moved within same census sub-division) and migrants (moved from outside the census subdivision or country). The observations are more or less in line with the provincial trend (+2%).



**Figure 23: Mobility Characteristics 5 years ago, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile

### 1.1.6 Labour Force

According to the standard definition set by Statistics Canada, the employed are persons having a job or business, whereas the unemployed are without work, are available for work, and are actively seeking work. Together the unemployed and the employed constitute the labour force<sup>12</sup>.

Between 2011 and 2016, Prescott and Russell’s labour force increased by 3195 people, from 69,075 to 72,270, which translates to about 5% increment; this is in-line with the provincial increase (5%) however it is noted that this increment is primarily due to increased labour force in the west region of Prescott and Russell counties (West side labour force increased to 53,540 in 2016).

**Figure 24: Labour Force Size**

|                         | East   | West   | Prescott and Russell | Ontario    |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|----------------------|------------|
| Total Labour Force 2011 | 18,730 | 50,350 | 69,075               | 10,473,670 |
| Total Labour Force 2016 | 18,735 | 53,540 | 72,270               | 11,038,440 |
| Net (+/-)               | 5      | 3,190  | 3,195                | 564,770    |
| % Change                | 0%     | 6%     | 5%                   | 5%         |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile.

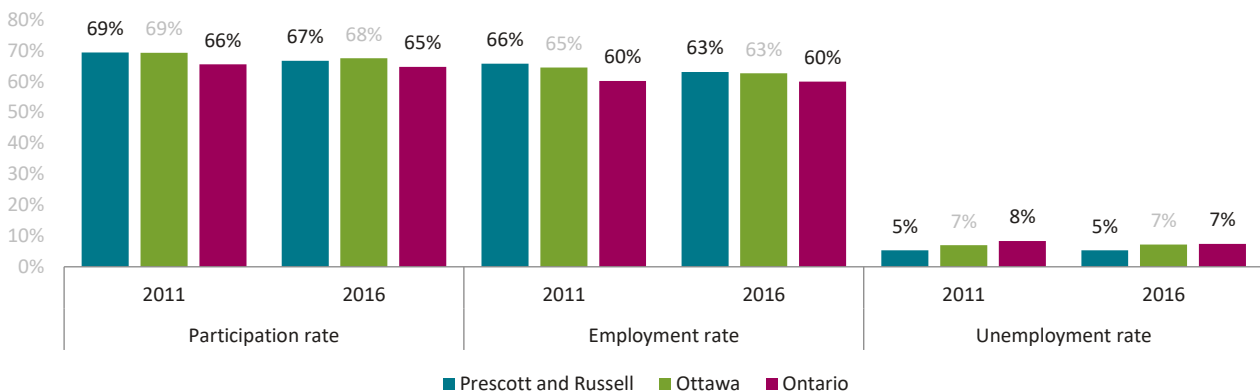


The employment rate is the proportion of the population that is employed, while the unemployment rate is the proportion of the population that is able to work or are actively seeking work but currently are not working. By combining the proportion of employed and unemployed, the participation rate is obtained, which represents the combined available and employed workforce relative to the overall working-age population. The Prescott and Russell employment rate dropped by 3% from 2011 to settle at 63% in 2016. The employment rates in Prescott and Russell, and Ottawa remained higher than that of the province by +3% in 2016. Currently (2016), the employment rate in Prescott and Russell is at par with that of Ottawa (63%).

Also notable from figure 17 is that the participation rate declined in Prescott and Russell by 2% (dropped from 69% in 2011 to 67% in 2016). However, a similar decline of 1% is also noted for the province of Ontario. The participation rate is pivotal because out of the total people qualified to enter the labour market (aged 15 and over) it says what proportion is actually either employed or actively looking for employment. Therefore, the results suggest that in Prescott and Russell there were 2% fewer people that were looking for work in 2016 compared to 2011 (note that people looking for work can also include those receiving employment insurance).

Figure 26 plots the key labour force parameters for the east and west. It is noted that in all three measures, West Prescott and Russell has remained stronger in performance compared to the East side. Especially noted are the participation and employment rates where the west side is 10% and 11% higher than the east, respectively (2016). These disproportionate characteristics of labour market may contribute to differences in socio-economic profile of the two regions of Prescott-Russell.

**Figure 25: Labour Force Status, Percentage of Population**



Source: Statistics Canada; National Household Survey, 2011; Census Profile, 2016.



**Figure 26: Labour Force Status, Percentage by Population, East and West Prescott and Russell**



Source: Statistics Canada; National Household Survey, 2011; Census Profile, 2016.

Turning to the class of worker, 88% of the labour force in Prescott and Russell are employees, whereas 12% are self-employed. This composition is exactly in line with that of the province; however, slightly different compared with Ottawa (2% points). The East and West side of Prescott and Russell constitute the same class of worker structure with a difference of +-1%.

**Figure 27: Class of Worker Ratio**

| Class of Worker | East (%) | West (%) | Ontario (%) | Other (%) | Province (%) |
|-----------------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Employee        | 87%      | 88%      | 88%         | 90%       | 88%          |
| Self-employed   | 13%      | 12%      | 12%         | 10%       | 12%          |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile

### 1.1.7 Employment by Industry

The figure below shows the number of people working in each North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) sector for 2011 and 2016. The following table has been put together to understand the loss and gain of the labour force in each industry sector between the most recent census years.

Most notably, declines are evident in Public administration, at -725 people, followed by Manufacturing (-255), Real state rental and leasing (-180), Information and cultural industries (-110), and Arts; entertainment and recreation (-110).

Sectors that saw notable growth over this period include Accommodation and food services (660) closely followed by Administrative and support services (535); and Other services except public administration (305).



**Figure 28: Employed Labour Force by Industry (Number of People)**

| North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2012               | Prescott and Russell 2011 | Prescott and Russell 2016 | Net (+/-) |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| 11 Agriculture; forestry; fishing and hunting                            | 1,800                     | 1,740                     | -60       |
| 21 Mining; quarrying; and oil and gas extraction                         | 100                       | 95                        | -5        |
| 22 Utilities   | 195                       | 150                       | -45       |
| 23 Construction  | 5,100                     | 5,230                     | 130       |
| 31-33 Manufacturing  | 3,415                     | 3,160                     | -255      |
| 41 Wholesale trade   | 1,530                     | 1,430                     | -100      |
| 44-45 Retail trade   | 5,345                     | 5,270                     | -75       |
| 48-49 Transportation and warehousing                                     | 2,140                     | 2,265                     | 125       |
| 51 Information and cultural industries                                   | 700                       | 590                       | -110      |
| 52 Finance and insurance   | 1,355                     | 1,355                     | 0         |
| 53 Real estate and rental and leasing                                    | 695                       | 515                       | -180      |
| 54 Professional; scientific and technical services                       | 2,105                     | 2,095                     | -10       |
| 55 Management of companies and enterprises                               | 0                         | 30                        | 30        |
| 56 Administrative and support; waste management and remediation services | 1,510                     | 2,045                     | 535       |
| 61 Educational services  | 3,950                     | 3,900                     | -50       |
| 62 Health care and social assistance                                     | 5,270                     | 5,345                     | 75        |
| 71 Arts; entertainment and recreation                                    | 885                       | 775                       | -110      |
| 72 Accommodation and food services                                       | 1,780                     | 2,440                     | 660       |
| 81 Other services (except public administration)                         | 1,895                     | 2,200                     | 305       |
| 91 Public administration   | 7,625                     | 6,900                     | -725      |

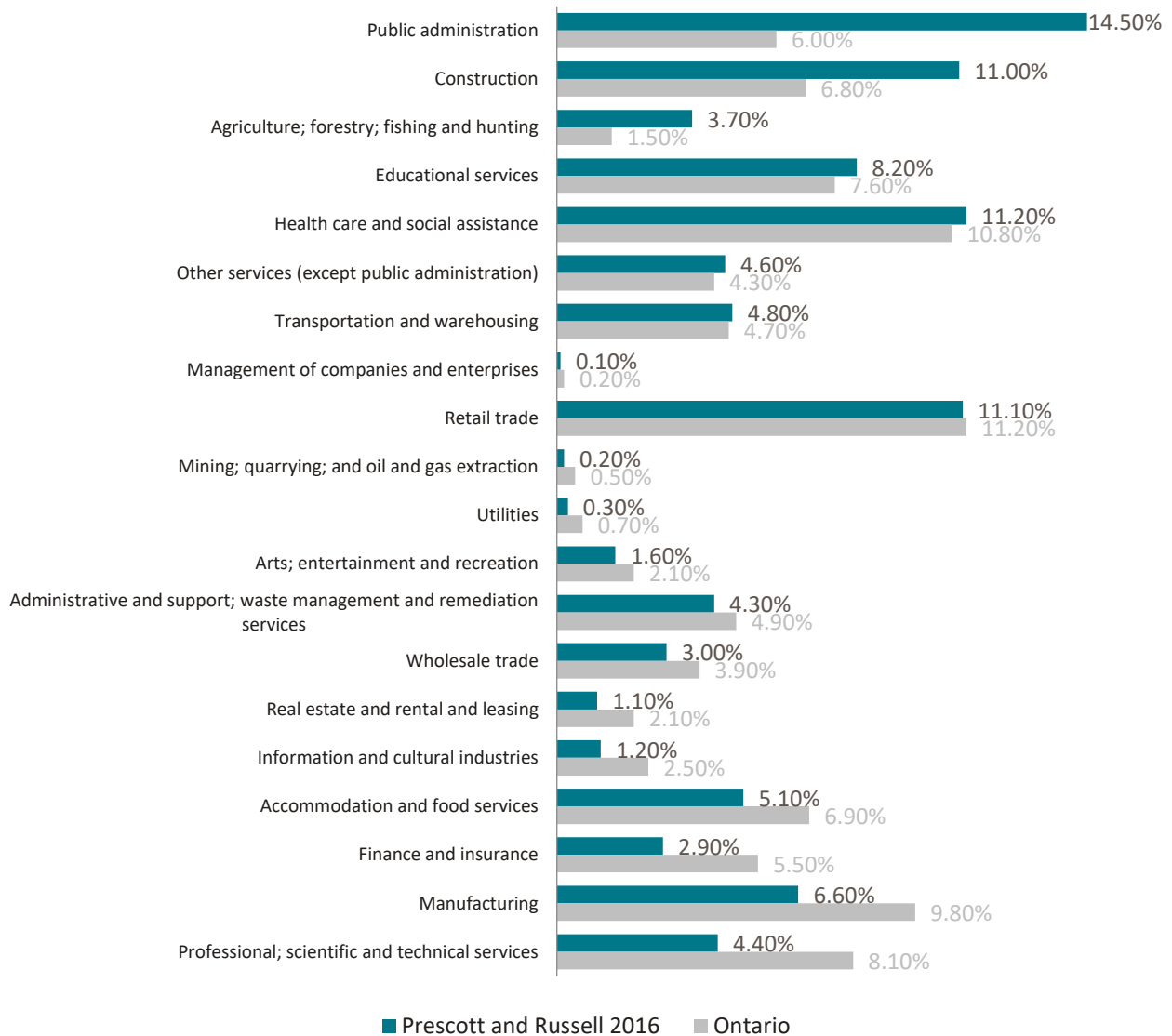
Source: Statistics Canada; National Household Survey, 2011; Census Profile, 2016

Of the figure below (Figure 29), Prescott and Russell has larger proportions of its labour force than the Province concentrated in public administration (8.6% more than the provincial ratio), construction (4.2% more) and agriculture forestry and related disciplines (2.2% more).

On the contrary, Prescott and Russell has a lower percentage of it's the population in the industry sector of Professional, scientific and technical services (-3.7% less than the provincial ratio) and manufacturing (-3.2%). This disparity in numbers can be either hint towards lack of related businesses in the community or scarcity of workers needed to work in relevant industries. In either case, further study is suggested looking into the imbalance.



**Figure 29: Percentage distribution of Prescott and Russell and Ontario Labour Force by Industry (arranged in the order of highest to lowest difference)**



Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile.

Despite the insight gleaned from the above, further analytical tools allow for an assessment of industry competitiveness relative to the overall province, and these can prove insightful for understanding what industries make sense to promote for further growth or monitoring for potential declines.

A location quotient analysis explains which industries employ a competitively higher proportion of people than the province. A score of 1.25 or greater represents a sector of relative strength, a score between 0.75 and 1.25 represents a sector that is on par with the province (1.0 represents perfect parity), and a score below 0.75 represents a sector of comparative weakness. Also pertinent are the trends over time



and their direction, which indicate that potential opportunities or threats need to be addressed. The figure below is discussed on the following page.

**Figure 30: Employment Location Quotient (LQ) Analysis – Concentration of Employed Labour Force by Industry**

| Industry Type (Prescott and Russell)                                  | LQ          |             | LQ          |             | Change | Trend          |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------|----------------|
|   | LQ 2011     | Strength    | 2016        | Strength    |        |                |
| Agriculture; forestry; fishing and hunting                            | <b>2.51</b> | <b>High</b> | <b>2.50</b> | <b>High</b> | 0.00   | Stable         |
| Mining; quarrying; and oil and gas extraction                         | 0.47        | Low         | 0.43        | Low         | -0.04  | Stable         |
| Utilities   | 0.48        | Low         | 0.43        | Low         | -0.05  | Declining      |
| Construction  | <b>1.72</b> | <b>High</b> | <b>1.61</b> | <b>High</b> | -0.11  | Declining      |
| Manufacturing   | 0.69        | Low         | 0.68        | Low         | -0.01  | Stable         |
| Wholesale trade   | 0.71        | Moderate    | 0.77        | Moderate    | 0.07   | <b>Growing</b> |
| Retail trade  | 1.00        | Moderate    | 0.99        | Moderate    | -0.02  | Stable         |
| Transportation and warehousing  | 0.98        | Moderate    | 1.01        | Moderate    | 0.03   | Stable         |
| Information and cultural industries                                   | 0.55        | Low         | 0.49        | Low         | -0.06  | Declining      |
| Finance and insurance   | 0.52        | Low         | 0.52        | Low         | 0.00   | Stable         |
| Real estate and rental and leasing                                    | 0.73        | Moderate    | 0.52        | Low         | -0.21  | Declining      |
| Professional; scientific and technical services                       | 0.58        | Low         | 0.54        | Low         | -0.04  | Stable         |
| Management of companies and enterprises                               | 0.00        | Low         | 0.36        | Low         | 0.36   | Growing        |
| Administrative and support; waste management and remediation services | 0.69        | Low         | 0.89        | Moderate    | 0.20   | <b>Growing</b> |
| Educational services  | 1.11        | Moderate    | 1.08        | Moderate    | -0.03  | Stable         |
| Health care and social assistance                                     | 1.07        | Moderate    | 1.04        | Moderate    | -0.03  | Stable         |
| Arts; entertainment and recreation                                    | 0.87        | Moderate    | 0.77        | Moderate    | -0.09  | Declining      |
| Accommodation and food services                                       | 0.60        | Low         | 0.75        | Moderate    | 0.15   | <b>Growing</b> |
| Other services (except public administration)                         | 0.90        | Moderate    | 1.09        | Moderate    | 0.19   | <b>Growing</b> |
| Public administration   | <b>2.34</b> | <b>High</b> | <b>2.43</b> | <b>High</b> | 0.09   | <b>Growing</b> |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile. Adapted by MDB Insight.

Based on the above considerations, the following observations emerge from the data in the figure below:

- Competitive sectors include agriculture; forestry; fishing and hunting, construction, and public administration.
- Moderate or high competing sectors experiencing growth include wholesale trade, Administrative and support services, Accommodation and food services and public administration.
- Key sectors once identified as strategic priorities such as manufacturing and transportation and warehousing have remained relatively stable, with manufacturing performing slightly below the provincial level and transportation and warehousing performing almost exactly on par with the province. Securing both of these sectors from slippage should be a business retention priority.



- Notable declines are in industries such as Real state and lending, Construction and Arts, entertainment and recreation.

The figure below presents the results of another analytical tool called a **shift-share analysis**. The shift-share articulates the factors which drive changes in employment through three primary considerations:

- Reference Area Growth Effect: The impact that changes in the overall broader economy at the provincial level have had on local employment in a given sector, leading to an increase or decrease in local employment.
- Industrial Mix Effect: The impact that changes among different industries of the economy have had on local employment in a given sector, leading to an increase or decrease in local employment).
- Differential Shift: The impact that local factors have had on increases or decreases in local employment (i.e. changes that cannot be explained by those in the reference area growth effect or industrial mix effect).

The data below indicates the following:

- Overall, changes in the labour force were driven by increases in reference area growth effect (i.e. growth of Ontario's economy), while declines were driven moderately by changes in the industrial mix (-448) and to a larger extent by local factors under the differential shift (-1,483). In total, the gains and declines resulted in a net increase of 129 new jobs for Prescott and Russell residents.
- Increases were most evident in accommodation and food services (mainly due to provincial and industry factors), administrative support and waste management (due to a mix of all three drivers), and professional, scientific and technical services (due to provincial and local factors). A key sector to watch for the knowledge economy is the professional, scientific and technical sector; therefore, the trend is encouraging.
- Declines are most evident in public administration (due to industry changes and local factors), manufacturing (due to industry changes), and real estate and rental and leasing (due to industry and local factors).





Figure 31: Prescott and Russell / Ontario Shift-Share Analysis

| North American Industry Classification System (2012) – Prescott and Russell | Area Growth Effect | Industrial Mix Effect | Differential Shift | Total      |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                                  | 78                 | -64                   | -74                | -60        |
| Mining and oil and gas extraction   | 4                  | 4                     | -13                | -5         |
| Utilities   | 8                  | -30                   | None               | -21        |
| Construction  | 222                | 498                   | -589               | 130        |
| Manufacturing   | 148                | -218                  | -185               | -255       |
| Wholesale trade   | 67                 | -238                  | 72                 | -100       |
| Retail trade  | 232                | -2                    | -305               | -75        |
| Transportation and warehousing  | 93                 | 59                    | -27                | 125        |
| Information and cultural industries   | 30                 | -38                   | -102               | -110       |
| Finance and insurance   | 59                 | 2                     | -61                | 0          |
| Real estate and rental and leasing  | 30                 | 23                    | -233               | -180       |
| Professional, scientific and technical services                             | 91                 | 142                   | -244               | -10        |
| Management of companies and enterprises                                     | 0                  | 0                     | 0                  | 0          |
| Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services       | 66                 | 76                    | 394                | 535        |
| Educational services  | 172                | 56                    | -278               | -50        |
| Health care and social assistance   | 229                | 246                   | -400               | 75         |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation  | 38                 | -18                   | -131               | -110       |
| Accommodation and food services   | 77                 | 180                   | 403                | 660        |
| Other services (except public administration)                               | 82                 | -78                   | 301                | 305        |
| Public administration   | 331                | -1047                 | -10                | -725       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>2060</b>        | <b>-448</b>           | <b>-1483</b>       | <b>129</b> |

Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Profile. Adapted by MDB Insight



### 1.1.8 Business Counts

Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Counts provides a record of business establishments by industry sector and size. This data is collected from the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA). The Canadian Business Counts data records business counts as either "Without Employees" or "With Employees." The establishments in the "Without Employees" category include the self-employed (i.e. those who do not maintain an employee payroll but may have a workforce consisting of contracted workers, family members or business owners). It should be noted that the Canadian Business Counts data use the Canada Revenue Agency as a primary resource in establishment counts; therefore, businesses without a business number or indicating annual sales less than \$30,000 are not included. The data are classified according to the North American Industry Classification system (NAICS), under the 2012 framework.

Those businesses with employees are further divided into group sizes. The largest group is 200 employees or more.

Focussing primarily at the "Sub-Total, classified" numbers and industry breakdowns, the analysis has found that:

- Over half of all businesses have no employees (69.10%), with ten (10) businesses employing more than 200 people
- Sectors with largest sized businesses include Construction (556 firms with employees), Retail trade (291 firms with employees), Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (215 firms with employees) and Professional, scientific-technical services (214 firms with employees)



**Figure 32: Business Counts in Ontario by Industry and Number of Employees**

| North American Industry Classification System (Prescott)              | Total | Without Employees | With Employees | 1-4  | 5-9 | 10-19 | 20-49 | 50-99 | 100-199 | 200+ |
|---|-------|-------------------|----------------|------|-----|-------|-------|-------|---------|------|
| Sub-total, classified   | 7787  | 5381              | 2406           | 1285 | 513 | 314   | 209   | 52    | 23      | 10   |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                            | 944   | 729               | 215            | 152  | 43  | 14    | 6     | 0     | 0       | 0    |
| Mining and oil and gas extraction                                     | 11    | 6                 | 5              | 2    | 0   | 2     | 1     | 0     | 0       | 0    |
| Utilities   | 38    | 31                | 7              | 5    | 2   | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0    |
| Construction  | 1315  | 759               | 556            | 345  | 120 | 48    | 36    | 6     | 1       | 0    |
| Manufacturing   | 159   | 74                | 85             | 27   | 19  | 14    | 12    | 6     | 4       | 3    |
| Wholesale trade   | 184   | 105               | 79             | 33   | 22  | 15    | 8     | 1     | 0       | 0    |
| Retail trade  | 529   | 238               | 291            | 105  | 71  | 55    | 44    | 10    | 6       | 0    |
| Transportation and warehousing  | 244   | 152               | 92             | 51   | 16  | 14    | 5     | 2     | 3       | 1    |
| Information and cultural industries                                   | 58    | 41                | 17             | 6    | 7   | 2     | 2     | 0     | 0       | 0    |
| Finance and insurance   | 388   | 319               | 69             | 32   | 17  | 15    | 4     | 1     | 0       | 0    |
| Real estate and rental and leasing                                    | 1414  | 1330              | 84             | 51   | 20  | 5     | 5     | 3     | 0       | 0    |
| Professional, scientific and technical services                       | 703   | 489               | 214            | 167  | 29  | 12    | 5     | 1     | 0       | 0    |
| Management of companies and enterprises                               | 48    | 40                | 8              | 1    | 4   | 0     | 2     | 0     | 1       | 0    |
| Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | 281   | 181               | 100            | 52   | 27  | 11    | 9     | 1     | 0       | 0    |
| Educational services  | 64    | 48                | 16             | 5    | 2   | 3     | 3     | 1     | 0       | 2    |
| Health care and social assistance                                     | 478   | 304               | 174            | 61   | 39  | 41    | 15    | 12    | 5       | 1    |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation                                    | 110   | 73                | 37             | 19   | 4   | 4     | 7     | 1     | 1       | 1    |
| Accommodation and food services                                       | 195   | 59                | 136            | 29   | 32  | 33    | 35    | 6     | 1       | 0    |
| Other services (except public administration)                         | 609   | 402               | 207            | 141  | 38  | 23    | 5     | 0     | 0       | 0    |
| Public administration   | 14    | 1                 | 13             | 0    | 1   | 3     | 5     | 1     | 1       | 2    |

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, December 2017



The figure below presents the distribution of businesses with employees in Prescott and Russell, where construction firms hold the highest proportion of businesses operating in Prescott and Russell at 23%, followed by retail trade (12%), agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (9%) and other services (except public administration) (9%).

**Figure 33: Businesses by Industry, Percentage of Total Businesses with Employees**

| North American Industry Classification System (2012)                  | Prescott and Russell |
|---|----------------------|
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                            | 9%                   |
| Mining and oil and gas extraction                                     | 0.29%                |
| Utilities   | 0.21%                |
| Construction  | 23%                  |
| Manufacturing   | 4%                   |
| Wholesale trade   | 3%                   |
| Retail trade  | 12%                  |
| Transportation and warehousing  | 4%                   |
| Information and cultural industries                                   | 1%                   |
| Finance and insurance   | 3%                   |
| Real estate and rental and leasing                                    | 3%                   |
| Professional, scientific and technical services                       | 9%                   |
| Management of companies and enterprises                               | 0.33%                |
| Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | 4%                   |
| Educational services  | 1%                   |
| Health care and social assistance                                     | 7%                   |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation                                    | 2%                   |
| Accommodation and food services                                       | 6%                   |
| Other services (except public administration)                         | 9%                   |
| Public administration   | 1%                   |

Source: Statistics Canada; Canadian Business Counts  
December 2017



The figure below showcases the relative concentration of businesses in both regions of Prescott and Russell. The table suggests that the west side has a number of businesses concentrated towards construction sector (~29% of total registered business with employees) whereas, for the east side construction business as well as business related to agriculture, forestry or fishing together represents 29% of the registered businesses (with employees).

**Figure 34: Business Distributions for Western and Eastern Portions of Prescott and Russell (businesses with employees)**

| North American Industry Classification System (2012)                       | West  | East  |
|--|-------|-------|
| 11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                            | 9.5%  | 14.7% |
| 21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction                                     | 0.1%  | 0.2%  |
| 22 - Utilities   | 0.3%  | 0.2%  |
| 23 - Construction  | 28.8% | 14.2% |
| 31-33 - Manufacturing  | 2.3%  | 3.7%  |
| 41 - Wholesale trade   | 3.2%  | 3.0%  |
| 44-45 - Retail trade   | 9.4%  | 13.3% |
| 48-49 - Transportation and warehousing                                     | 4.1%  | 4.2%  |
| 51 - Information and cultural industries                                   | 0.5%  | 0.2%  |
| 52 - Finance and insurance   | 2.5%  | 2.8%  |
| 53 - Real estate and rental and leasing                                    | 3.0%  | 5.1%  |
| 54 - Professional, scientific and technical services                       | 9.6%  | 10.5% |
| 55 - Management of companies and enterprises                               | 0.3%  | 0.0%  |
| 56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | 4.3%  | 3.5%  |
| 61 - Educational services  | 0.6%  | 0.7%  |
| 62 - Health care and social assistance                                     | 6.0%  | 6.5%  |
| 71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation                                    | 1.4%  | 2.1%  |
| 72 - Accommodation and food services                                       | 5.1%  | 3.5%  |
| 81 - Other services (except public administration)                         | 8.7%  | 11.2% |
| 91 - Public administration   | 0.3%  | 0.2%  |

Source: Statistics Canada; Canadian Business Counts  
December 2017

Again, using the location quotient analysis, where 1.25 or greater represents strength, 0.75 to 1.25 represents proximity to the Provincial distribution, and below 0.75 represents low competitiveness, the sectors with the higher concentration of businesses than the province for both east and west side include agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and construction. Areas with the potential to be grown for both east and west side include Information and cultural industries, healthcare and social assistance, accommodation and food services professional and educational services.

Comparing east and west, the west is more competitive in mining, manufacturing, rental/leasing and arts, entertainment and recreation, while the east side has a stronger presence of businesses working in utilities, and construction. The above sectors need to be watched to ensure they maintain



competitiveness. Meanwhile, for sectors with moderate LQ values, the objective should be to seek ways to grow the sectors.

**Figure 35: Business Count Location Quotients – Concentration of Businesses with Employees by Industry Prescott Russell (East and West)**

| North American Industry Classification System (2012)                       | LQ East     | Competitiveness | LQ West     | Competitiveness |
|--|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                            | <b>7.23</b> | <b>High</b>     | <b>4.67</b> | <b>High</b>     |
| 21 - Mining and oil and gas extraction                                     | <b>1.29</b> | <b>High</b>     | 0.38        | Low             |
| 22 - Utilities   | <b>1.98</b> | <b>High</b>     | <b>2.34</b> | <b>High</b>     |
| 23 - Construction  | <b>1.28</b> | <b>High</b>     | <b>2.59</b> | <b>High</b>     |
| 31-33 - Manufacturing  | 0.79        | Moderate        | 0.50        | Low             |
| 41 - Wholesale trade   | 0.59        | Moderate        | 0.61        | Low             |
| 44-45 - Retail trade   | 1.12        | Moderate        | 0.79        | Moderate        |
| 48-49 - Transportation and warehousing                                     | 0.63        | Low             | 0.61        | Low             |
| 51 - Information and cultural industries                                   | 0.15        | Low             | 0.30        | Low             |
| 52 - Finance and insurance   | 0.72        | Low             | 0.63        | Low             |
| 53 - Real estate and rental and leasing                                    | 1.17        | Moderate        | 0.69        | Low             |
| 54 - Professional, scientific and technical services                       | 0.74        | Moderate        | 0.68        | Low             |
| 55 - Management of companies and enterprises                               | 0.00        | Low             | 0.46        | Low             |
| 56 - Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | 0.76        | Moderate        | 0.94        | Moderate        |
| 61 - Educational services  | 0.55        | Low             | 0.43        | Low             |
| 62 - Health care and social assistance                                     | 0.65        | Low             | 0.60        | Low             |
| 71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation                                    | <b>1.48</b> | <b>High</b>     | 1.02        | Moderate        |
| 72 - Accommodation and food services                                       | 0.50        | Low             | 0.73        | Low             |
| 81 - Other services (except public administration)                         | <b>1.25</b> | <b>High</b>     | 0.97        | Moderate        |
| 91 - Public administration   | 0.80        | Moderate        | 0.94        | Moderate        |

Source: Statistics Canada; Canadian Business Counts December 2017. Adapted by MDB Insight.



## Stakeholder Engagement Analysis

Notes taken during the following workshops have been condensed into a single set of responses. Some similar ideas have been intentionally grouped together. The sources of consultation data include:

- Workshop – United Counties of Prescott and Russell County Council
- Workshop – Entrepreneurs and social enterprises
- Workshop – Arts, Culture and Tourism
- Workshop – Local economic development and leadership staff
- Workshop – Manufacturing, Transportation and Logistics
- Workshop – Agriculture and Agri-food
- Interviews or Questionnaire Feedback – Other business community members, local municipal staff, and stakeholders as identified (three entrants)

The results of the various discussions have been arranged according to a series of key sub-headers representing broad discussion topics. Results do not necessarily reflect accuracies, but instead are based on perceptions of participants expressed during events.

### Strengths and Assets

- Sense of community and belonging
- Small town “feel” is charming to certain people
- The location between Montreal and Ottawa can be a good benefit
- Large bilingual population
- Affordable housing
- A growing proportion of young entrepreneurs, and growing proportion of female entrepreneurs
- Natural Assets: Ottawa river, Nation River, large agricultural lands, Iarose Forest
- A variety of festivals: Festival de la Bine, Beer Festival, Octoberfest, élégance automnale, Russell Fair, Vankleek Hill Fair, and Foir Gourmande
- A variety of museums and cultural assets: Prison Museum (L’Original), Pop-Silos, community theatre, and Rockland Museum, and Conseil des arts Prescott Russell Arts Council, strong social organizations such as Groupe Convexe, and many others.
- Institutional assets: Collège La Cité (Alfred Campus), two strong school boards, school visits by social enterprises, school volunteer programs and initiatives, school conferences related to economic/community development themes, and Centre Entrepreneurship Centre Prescott-Russell
- Infrastructure: Popularity and growing demand in local industrial parks, Hospital in Hawkesbury, Sports Dome (Russell), mountain biking trail system, 417 highway and 17 highway, 40 minutes to 100 minutes to the US border



## Areas of Untapped Potential

- Emergence of artificial intelligence and robotics in many applications for manufacturing and agriculture; marketing needs to be geared towards AI (could be taken two ways, as though AI will detect UCPR's marketing if done properly or as though attracting more AI-related businesses to the area because they will not need to rely on labour as much but costs will be lower and access to supply-chain simplified)
- Agricultural producers need help with becoming innovators or adopting new innovation
- Need to find a way to get more farmers to share information, maybe a semi-regular speaker series that invites locals and external experts to talk about innovation and new research findings; including more research on organic produce, AI, pest control, etc.
- Need to keep promoting value-added agriculture to maximize local value retention (could be facilitated by automation/AI)
- Increase the availability of skilled labour, and understand what skills are most needed
- Growing the role of Collège La Cité, in collaboration with local businesses, training, expanded curriculum and programming, address the lack of post-secondary programming available locally; work with school boards to find ways to introduce students to skilled trades as career options
- Launch the agri-food innovation centre
- Infrastructure: high-speed internet, transportation infrastructure improvements including public transportation, more shared-servicing between municipalities and capacity upgrades; counties should take a role in serving management at a broader level, as was done for emergency services.
- Underutilized industrial parks, such as Hawkesbury, could be opened for redevelopment or new development
- Attract/arrange more festivals
- Recreational trails development; Become part of a larger cycling culture; Ironman and ironwoman championship competitions
- Identify the unique value proposition for each community, e.g. "Welcome to Vankleek Hill, home of Beau's Brewery"
- ÉcoLarose should be considered for development
- The Ottawa river is lacking any development that would be attractive to tourists, such as cafes, restaurants, accommodations, marinas etc. There are no assets to capitalize on boat traffic.
- Expand spin-off developments around Calypso, but infrastructure upgrades are missing; develop more tourism experiences and an emphasis on experience (Airbnb Experiences as an example); Need to develop more overnight tourist accommodations
- Take advantage of and promote our bilingualism or use bilingualism in promotion
- Need to understand the impact of climate change on the region and how to adapt





## Attracting and Retaining Businesses

- Skilled labour solutions include identifying financial incentives to attract skilled labour; develop a resource for employers to post seasonal availability or needs related to skilled labour (example, a large employer for summer labour may be able to supply labour in the winter for another sector); marketing should be geared toward AI;
- Challenges with high-speed internet infrastructure need to be overcome; some businesses have had to install fibre themselves;
- More tax shelters from the municipalities to keep money in the community (research has shown the savings do not get invested in the community either way; a more effective program rewards investment through rewards-based incentives)
- Need a university; need university or college arts programming;
- People need a reason to stay in the region or at least come back
- Less emphasis on just agriculture, need to diversify properly; develop vacant lots along the 417
- Public transportation is needed between the communities in the county (there was a recent approval to initiate a public transportation project, which could be made more broadly known)
- Develop an arts centre
- Information package for new arrivals (families, etc.); make access to information easy
- Not just marketing online; there should still be paper-based marketing
- Organizations need to work together, especially ones that benefit from public funding
- Work on projects that are common (across the region); shared services (already good examples, with emergency responders); infrastructure that benefits multiple communities; capital investment in water services; Focus on infrastructure before focussing on marketing; sewer and water capacity is an issue; farms want to modernize with AI but cannot because of a lack of high-speed internet; road infrastructure off of the 417 needs improvement so that trucks don't have to travel at half capacity in the winter months
- Work together on strategic advantages
- Improve awareness of grants and awards; grant writing support; grants and awards are spread across a large area (from Quebec border to Peterborough)
- Develop VR experiences for tourism
- Continue to reinforce the Prescott and Russell brand
- More health services are needed, not just in Hawkesbury
- Industry opportunities: hemp; teleservices and back-office support; mobile apps and AI solutions; aerospace
- The Eastern region needs to be defined; need more people and more talent; the Hospital in Hawkesbury relies on 30% of its labour force from outside of the area
- The region needs to be more attractive to millennials; Generation Y is much more efficient



- Municipalities have a role to play in supporting events through grants, facilities, etc.
- Attracting landed immigrants from larger urban areas such as Ottawa and Toronto
- The rules are too cumbersome, with restrictions that limit the kinds of structures or signage that can be used
- There is a lack of food awareness about where food comes from and how it is made
- Schools currently encourage students to leave the region because there are no (limited) local options, and occupations in industries such as agriculture (or skilled trades) are not promoted

### Big Sky Ideas... Nothing is impossible

- Develop unique tourism experiences via Airbnb
- Develop the Larose Forest as a tourist destination
- That there is a good quality of life for people: That the quality of life of Prescott and Russell residents is comparable to that of the city without having to work in the city; that there are recreation activities for all ages to enjoy (e.g. movie theatres, etc.)
- That 90%+ of our youth stay in the region
- That people can get from one village to another via public transportation
- That all grocers and corner stores have a locally-made counter
- That provincial/federal policies put less stress on favouring urban development to the detriment of rural communities
- That governments provide more money to help develop/grow businesses
- Attract/retain specialized trades that are in need, rather than losing them to other markets; creating a specialized workforce from school boards and for large institutions
- That UCPR becomes the Napa Valley of agriculture and is automated in production
- Assist with farm succession
- Agri-food needs to be developed into a stronger advantage through ideas such as vineyards, 50% of the economy is based on processing; assist with accessing modern equipment
- Import substitution of some key agricultural products such as lamb
- Growing the VR tourism experience for Prescott and Russell to give people the experience of agricultural production
- A cohesive and coherent community and culture that stops working in silos
- Having a consortium of organizations where people communicate and collaborate toward the same goals
- Chambers of commerce that work together
- Collaboration on human resources needs



- Course and tours for agri-food
- Counsellors do not understand biking because they do not do it; need paved shoulders
- Beaches
- Sensitize people to the assets of the region
- Get young people involved in social organizations
- Make sure that people want to stop by; give people a reason to visit and stay; ensure that all those people that go around Vankleek Hill want to stay
- Make our strengths evident and make sure we put an emphasis on their unique value
- Need a perpetual learning centre
- Keep libraries up to date
- Ensure there are more places to do things after 9pm
- Bet on retired people; create complexes for autonomous 55+
- Campground and other complimentary assets around the Calypso
- Develop the cost line
- Develop a heritage village based on the history of Franco-Ontarians
- Draw people from Ottawa and Montreal into the country side
- Create visitor packages
- Make the inside of the counties strong before going outside
- To have a multi-seasonal, indoor complex, accessible all year-round
- That the regional municipality has a cultural policy that includes sporting, agricultural and heritage activities
- That in five or 10 years we are not still talking about the same problems, and instead see progress
- That innovative ways of heating buildings are found (e.g. ethanol, heat pumping)
- Allow for energy security at the individual level
- To ensure that agriculture is valued by people
- People do not want to work hard for crumbs
- Have a web portal with all the different grants that are accessible

### Key Challenges or Risks

- Low skilled labour availability and difficulty convincing talent to move to the area if they have family
- Key competitors for industrial land development: Lachute, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Cornwall, and Eastern-Ottawa, are all aggressively attracting investment



- Sewage and water capacity challenges are an issue in most communities, especially impacting potential for agri-food attraction or expansion; including untapped potential in Hawkesbury
- Losing potential visitors to Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue and Montebello; large volumes of travellers go by on the 417 but do not stop in any of the communities; there are constraints to building or development along water front properties that were not a strict in the past, which may limit development potential
- Building construction obligations based on different layers of government frustrate developers
- A waterpark is in development for Western-Ottawa, which could detract from Calypso (another four-season waterpark is rumoured for around Prescott, Ontario)
- The cost of agricultural land has increased, as well as the average size of farms, and the next generation of local farmers may not be able to afford to take over an operation