

Agriculture in the Ontario Greenbelt

2008 – Current

Dr. Cummings is working with HCA staff and University of Guelph graduate students in analyzing and comparing agricultural census data from 2001 and 2006 for the Ontario Greenbelt. The analysis is examining trends and changes related to the different agricultural production activities in the Greenbelt in relation to wider provincial trends including changes in field crop production, livestock production, and the emerging speciality sectors (e.g. sheep, goats, horses, other exotic animals, and niche crops).

Blackwell Marsh Speciality Crop Area Assessment and Policy Development, City of Sarnia

Dec. 2009 - current

HCA is conducting an assessment of the agricultural production potential for the Blackwell Marsh Area in Lambton County and conducting broad community consultations to assist in the development of policy recommendations to define, protect and enhance the locally significant specialty crop area. The stakeholders to be consulted are City of Sarnia, County of Lambton, OMAFRA, local area residents and farm organizations, property owners and the County of Lambton Agricultural Advisory Committee among others. Ross Wilson of Acre Assessments Inc. is assisting the HCA team in providing specialized services in GIS surveying and soil testing, analysis and mapping.

Strategic Plan, Friends of Misery Bay (FOMB)

August 2009 – Current

HCA is working on the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Friends of Misery Bay, a voluntary organization that is one of 27 “Friends” of Provincial Parks in Ontario. Misery Bay Provincial Park, located on the southern shore of Manitoulin Island, is an important site of alvars, which are rare, globally significant expanses of exposed limestone bedrock. The strategic plan will help the FOMB realize its vision to develop Misery Bay into a world class Nature Reserve Park.

Northern Ontario Agricultural Economic Impact Study

Sept. 2008 – January 2010

HCA conducted an economic impact study of the agriculture sector in Northern Ontario. In Northwestern Ontario (Rainy River, Thunder Bay, Kenora, Cochrane) the study included a first of its kind survey of agri-related businesses in the region. In Northeastern Ontario the study focused on updating the previous impact studies that were completed by HCA between 2002 and 2004. The study reported on the direct, indirect and induced economic impact of the agricultural industry on the regional economy. In addition to analyzing population and agriculture census data for the region between 1996 and 2006, the study also involved a survey of agri-related businesses and focus groups with industry stakeholders in each of the Northern Ontario Districts. The study identified agricultural issues, challenges, and opportunities for future directions/development of the industry in Northern Ontario.

Strategic Plan for Economic Development, Corporation of the Township of Norwich

November 2008 – February 2009

Building on previous economic development research undertaken by Harry Cummings and team for the Township of Norwich, a strategic plan was developed to guide the economic development of this picturesque rural community over the next three years (2009-2011). Goals, objectives and a detailed implementation plan that identifies community “champions” for specific initiatives, resource requirements and evaluation measures of success were developed and approved by Council. A number of innovative strategies will be implemented to revitalize economic development in Norwich and help to ensure that it remains a vibrant community where people desire to live, work and spend their leisure and recreational time.

Economic Competitive Analysis Project (ECAP), South Central Community Development Corp.

July 2008 – October 2009

The purpose of the ECAP research assignment was to conduct a comprehensive economic competitive analysis across the SCCDC region to provide communities and stakeholders with relevant and timely information regarding their competitiveness in key industrial sectors and to enhance their capacity for investment attraction and business retention and expansion activities. A variety of data collection methods were used in the research process including a review of existing documents/data bases, roundtable meetings and key informant interviews with various community stakeholders/interest groups.

Baseline Survey for the Huron Perth in motion Program

April – September 2008

HCA conducted the baseline survey for the Huron Perth in motion program. The in motion program is being coordinated by the Huron and Perth County Public Health Units and is designed to promote an increased level of physical activity among residents across the region. HCA conducted a phone survey of over 780 households in the Huron Perth region to establish the baseline profile of physical activity for youth and adults. The results from the survey were used to help improve the delivery of physical activity programs.

Economic Development Studies and Research - Corporation of the Township of Norwich.

August 2007 – March 2008

HCA completed an Economic Baseline Analysis, SWOT Analysis, and Competitive Analysis for the Township of Norwich. The purpose of the research assignment is to provide basic economic data and analysis to be used for communication and strategic economic development planning. Three research elements consisted of the completion of an Economic Baseline Analysis, a SWOT Analysis and a Competitive Analysis which included a Land Use Analysis, Revenue Stream Analysis and an Infrastructure Assessment. The research and studies served to inform the Township’s Economic Development Strategic Planning process.

Transportation Survey Analysis, Selected Primary Schools, City of Guelph

December 2007 – February 2008

Parents at three different schools within the city of Guelph were offered a survey to complete regarding their travel patterns to and from school. Parents were also asked if they would be interested in their children participating or volunteering to support a “walking school bus” program. The City of Guelph distributed this survey to the schools and a total of 809 surveys were returned. HCA compiled the data from the surveys and completed the analysis of results. The results were presented to the City in a report.

City of Guelph Transit Survey

May 2007 – August 2007

Working in conjunction with the City of Guelph, HCA developed and implemented a web based transit survey of two major employers in the City: the University of Guelph and The Co-operators. The purpose of the survey was to generate baseline information on existing travel patterns and mode choice preferences of the employees. The survey instrument was developed with input from the City of Guelph and representatives from the University of Guelph and The Co-operators. The survey was directed at approximately 800 employees of The Co-operators and 2,500 faculty and staff at the University of Guelph. A total of 431 employees (54%) at The Co-operators and 1,535 faculty and staff (61%) at the University of Guelph completed the survey. The number of responses was sufficient to provide a 95%+ level of confidence in the results for both groups. The results of the survey were used by the City of Guelph to identify opportunities for implementing an employee transit pass system.

Land Use Planning, Mapping and Resident Survey for the Environmentally Sensitive Property Owners Association

2005 – 2007

HCA was retained by the ESPO to consult on the designation of the Laurel Creek Headwaters Environmentally Sensitive Landscape (ESL) in the Region of Waterloo. HCA developed land use maps of the proposed ESL and surveyed residents and landowners to gather opinions on the proposed designation. HCA prepared a report and assisted with an appeal process once the decision to designate the ESL was made by the Region.

Baseline Survey for the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph in motion Program

April – August 2007

HCA conducted the baseline survey for the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph in motion program. The in motion program is being coordinated by Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health and is designed to promote an increased level of physical activity among residents across the region. This project is based on the in motion model developed in Saskatoon and now in place in a number of cities across Canada. HCA carried out phone surveys of over 1,110 households in the Wellington, Dufferin and Guelph region to establish the baseline profile of physical activity for youth and adults. The results from the survey were used to help improve the delivery of physical activity programs.

Healthkick Huron – Huron Business Centre

January 2006 – December 2007

HCA assisted the Huron Business Centre in their endeavour to attract and retain health care providers to rural areas by providing evaluation support for the HealthKick Huron program. As part of this support, HCA conducted an evaluation workshop with project stakeholders and developed a comprehensive evaluation plan which included a project logic model and evaluation matrix. Survey questionnaires were also developed and ongoing technical assistance is being provided as the evaluation is implemented.

Economic Impact Study of the Ontario Aquaculture Industry – Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association

October 2006 – March 2007

HCA conducted an economic impact assessment of the Ontario Aquaculture industry. The study used industry production data and key informant interviews with producers, processors and supply businesses to determine the direct, indirect and induced impact of the industry on the economy of northern Ontario and Ontario.

Region of Waterloo Food Flow Analysis, Region of Waterloo, Health Determinates and Evaluation Branch, Waterloo, ON

2005

The Region initiated several studies to gain a better understanding of the local food system which included assessments of the agricultural economy, access to food, rural health, and consumer attitudes in relation to buying locally grown and processed food. With the completion of this foundation research, Public Health initiated the Farms that Sell Locally Viability Plan in the Fall of 2004, to identify supports and barriers for farmers selling food locally (Region of Waterloo), in order to develop a plan for increasing local food production, processing, and consumption. The plan consisted of five interrelated studies including: Food Flow Study; Optimal Nutrition Environment Scenario (ONE); Food Miles Study; The Marketing of Buy Local! Buy Fresh!; Redundant Trade Study (RT). HCA was contracted to complete the Food Flow study in which a variety of methodologies were used. An annotated bibliography was developed and the Waterloo Region “Food Basket” was created. HCA also identified the type and quantity of agricultural production and the type and quantity of locally produced agricultural products that were processed in the region. In addition, HCA identified the type of locally produced food items sold in Waterloo region. To aid in the identification process, significant survey work was carried out with telephone interviews of producers and processors along with in-store surveys.

Assessment of Effects of Bell and Nortel High Speed Internet Services on the Businesses of Chapleau, ON

2005 – 2006

Chapleau is an isolated northern Ontario community that has been greatly affected by dramatic job loss due to plant closures. The Chapleau Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) initiated the installation of high speed Internet services in order to assist in raising quality of life and promote the creation of jobs. Bell and Nortel provided free wireless high-speed access for the core town and wired access for the balance of

the town and three neighbouring First Nations Communities. Harry Cummings and his colleagues at the University of Guelph were asked to assess the impact of new high speed systems on businesses in Chapleau. They used focus groups, surveys and key informant interviews. Three study objectives were: 1) assessment of the presence of key material, mental, social and cultural resources for the adoption of broadband service; 2) determination of the level of ownership of the project and its related interventions by businesses; and finally 3) determination of the degree of change in businesses' daily operations since the implementation of the high-speed Internet service.

Assessment of Future Training Demands, Huron and Perth Community Mapping Report, Avon Maitland District School Board, Fanshawe College, the Bruce Grey Huron Perth Georgian Triangle Training Board and Office of Learning Technologies

2005 – 2006

The study area was in the counties of Huron and Perth, containing a mostly non-urban population of less than 150,000. The main goal of the project was to assess the labour market, map the community assets related to training and to assess the demand for distance education courses as a tool for labour market development. Two objectives were to assess the viability of an on-line learning network for employment training and to develop an outline of the overall employment skills present and needed in the area. The study unfolded in two phases. In the initial phase, a survey was administered in all grade 12 English classes in Huron and Perth. The survey assessed the work and computer skills of students. In addition a telephone survey was conducted of training organizations in order to gather information on all forms of training available. In the second phase of the project, a telephone survey was utilized to determine the skills of employees. Four focus groups were held with employers in which they were asked to indicate the types of skills they desired for their employees.

Evaluation of the In-Market Trade Development Consultants and In-Market Business Development Consultants Programs for the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade

2005

HCA measured the level of client satisfaction with the ITDC and IBDC programs, as well as the economic impact of the program over a three-year period by conducting telephone surveys with key informants and business clients. Recommendations were made regarding program changes to enhance delivery and expected outcomes, as well as appropriate performance metrics to gauge the effectiveness and success of the programs.

Evaluation of Newfoundland and Labrador Primary Health Care Network Initiative – Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

October 2003 – October 2006

This evaluation provided the baseline evaluation for this program, the development of Primary Health Care Teams and Networks in Newfoundland and Labrador communities. Logic models, evaluation plans and community consultations were completed in eight

pilot sites across the province as part of the evaluation. This assignment was completed jointly with Med Emerg International Inc. A team effectiveness questionnaire was developed and administered to 8 teams across the province. Client satisfaction surveys were administered. The surveys were completed at baseline, 1 year and 2 years after baseline.

Region of Waterloo Food Flow Analysis, Region of Waterloo, Health Determinates and Evaluation Branch, Waterloo, ON

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Socio-Economic Impact Study of Agriculture in Ontario – Sustainable Rural Communities Program - University of Guelph/Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Research Program/Agriculture and Agri-food Canada

2002 – 2005

HCA prepared a composite report that focused on the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture from the perspective of industry and community stakeholders. The report also coordinated and prioritized economic development activity. Between 1998-2000, numerous agri-economic studies were conducted throughout Ontario; these studies raised many issues (socio economic/human resource/environmental) that had not yet been formally assessed. This study used these findings as baseline data and coupled it with new findings from multi-stakeholder focus groups to provide a comprehensive report.

The Bruce-Grey Skills Inventory - Past and Future, Bruce-Grey-Huron-Perth-Georgian Triangle and Human Resources Skills Development, Bruce Grey Huron Perth Training Board

2004 – 2005

Harry Cummings as Principal Investigator of this project, administered through the University of Guelph, led his team of graduate students in gathering information that

contributed to an understanding of the present and future state of the labour market in Bruce and Grey Counties. With this information, an appreciation of the potential gaps between the needs of employers and the skill base of the labour pool in the region was identified and addressed. In order to gather this information, three surveys were conducted. One involved the population of Bruce and Grey Counties at large with the purpose being to identify the skills of the existing labour pool. The second called upon employers in the region to identify training and skills that would be necessary to capitalize on employment opportunities in the future. The final survey was administered to high school students in Bruce and Grey with the objective being to investigate the skills and aspirations of the region's potential labour pool.

Operational Review, Resource Jump Teams, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

2004

The Resource Jump Team initiative was launched as a provincial pilot project. Developed by the Rural Development Division of MMAH, Resource Jump Teams are designed with the broad provincial objectives of: resolving economic development challenges or barriers that the community has identified; promoting regional / sectoral growth; developing capacity and partnership; building awareness and support for economic development; and, sharing and communicating results. HCA was contracted to assess the effectiveness of the six Jump Team pilot projects; evaluate the complete program administrative process for effectiveness and efficiency; and to develop a performance measurement system for on-going monitoring.

“Growing Food and Economy”, Economic Impact Study of the Agriculture and Food Related Sectors in Waterloo Region –Region of Waterloo Public Health,,

2003

The purpose of this report was to take a fresh look at the role played by the agri-food industry in the economy of Waterloo Region. It was intended to inform program and policy development within the Region of Waterloo Public Health Department. The report was also intended to help the broader community better understand the nature and economic significance of the local agricultural economy and food system; it profiled agriculture and food related activities in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors and presented a model of the local food economy.

Economic Impact Study of the Agriculture Sectors in Temiskaming, Algoma, Manitoulin and Blue Sky Region

2002 – 2004

HCA conducted several Agricultural Economic Impact Studies that covered all of North Eastern Ontario. The studies reported on the direct, indirect and induced economic impact of the agricultural industry on the regional economy. Surveys were conducted with over 300 agri-related businesses and focus groups were conducted with 40+ industry stakeholders. The studies also identified agricultural issues, challenges opportunities, and possible future directions for the industry. Industry stakeholder involvement was incorporated throughout the research strategy to enhance local capacity for further research and development.

Other Agricultural Economic Impact Studies

- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of the New City of Ottawa (2001)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Lennox, Addington, Leeds and Grenville (2001)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford Counties (2000)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Perth County (2000)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Lambton County (1999)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Simcoe County (1999)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Huron County (1998)
- Impact of Agriculture on the Economy of Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas & Glengary Counties (1998)

Strategic Review- Agricultural Component for the Town of Markham , Policy and Research Division

2003

As part of the Eastern Markham Strategic Review, HCA conducted a study of the Agriculture sector in relation to environmental, land-use, heritage and transportation issues. The study provided the Strategic Review with a profile of existing agricultural land uses in Eastern Markham, an overview of land use issues and general constraints and implications for farm viability, and a potential agricultural land use strategy for Eastern Markham . Throughout the process HCA was involved in numerous committee meetings with Members of Council and Town of Markham staff. Results from the study were presented at a public meeting and were incorporated in the principles and actions related to land use in the Strategic Review Final Report.

Evaluation of Ontario's Living Legacy Program – Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

2003

The Ontario Living Legacy (OLL) Program evaluation, conducted by HCA, fulfilled the MNR obligation to ensure that its priorities and commitments were met and its business was being delivered within a framework based on fiscal responsibility, accountability, and value for money. HCA assessed all of the OLL initiatives using consultations and reviews of existing program reports. HCA also provided consultation services to MNR on evaluation methods and practices.

Evaluation for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources – Lands and Water Program

2003

HCA assisted the Lands and Water Program in their evaluation process helping them focus on various report requirements including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the program in accordance with the core business of the MNR and other factors that impact the program. Five separate evaluations were conducted to reflect sub-program components.

Agri-Food Strategy for Nova Scotia - Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

2002

HCA assisted the NSFA in developing an agri-food strategy for the province of Nova Scotia. This strategy included the preparation of a discussion document and a province wide consultation process (public forums) with industry stakeholders.

Land Use Planning – Town of Amherst and County of Cumberland, Nova Scotia

July – December 2002

HCA developed a policy for agriculture and rural land use planning on urban fringe areas. Best practice models were researched and used to develop the policy.

Economics of Clay Brick Production in the GTA, with a Focus on Brampton – City of Brampton, Planning and Development

2002

The objective of the study was to determine the best usage of the Shale Resource Area in light of demand for housing and industrial facilities. HCA provided an analysis of the locational economies of Brick manufacturing in Ontario and Brampton. The following factors were included in the analysis: economic impact of alternative brick production locations considering, supply of shale, demand for brick, location of demand, cost of transport (shale input, brick output), price of bricks, cost of production.

Representation at Planning and Ontario Municipal Board hearings on environmental designations, farm severances, farm planning and Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) matters, Private Sector Clients

2002 – Ongoing

HCA has participated in OMB hearings and pre hearings, completed MDS calculations, made presentations to municipal council, negotiated with planning departments, prepared witness statements, acted as a witness, reviewed plans, identified best-practices, reviewed provincial guidelines (PPS), carried out surveys, and other matters.

Land Use Planning on the Rural Urban Fringe, Private Sector Client

2001 – 2005

HCA was engaged by an independent farmer in the development of a strategy for the creation of an agricultural lot designed to facilitate estate planning. The proposed change allowed a full time dairy farmer in Halton Region to take over the family operation and continue to operate it as a commercial dairy farm in the region. The strategy reflected changes and trends in land ownership and farm size in the GTA in relation to urban land development pressures.

Transportation Study – City of Guelph / Linamar

2001

Based on the work of the Guelph Transportation Study, HCA was retained by Linamar Corporation to analyze a survey of their employees to ascertain how they traveled to work. With this data, the city of Guelph was able to determine how the transit system could best assist in the mobilization of Linamar's work force.

**City of Guelph Transportation Strategy Update Public Attitude Survey
2000**

HCA conducted the survey of public attitudes and opinions towards various transportation policies and measures. Focus group workshops involving a broad cross-section of community interests were held and telephone surveys were also conducted. Presentations were made to Council and committees.