



“New Regionalism” in Eastern Ontario

The Economic Development Implications and Opportunities

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Outline



- Project Overview
- “New Regionalism”
- Methodology
- General Findings – A First Look
- Eastern Ontario Findings – A First Look
- Discussion

Project Goals

1. Undertake a critical assessment of the application and relevance of “New Regionalism” in the Canadian context.
2. Seek Canadian innovations in Regional Development;
and
3. Understand how these are evolving and if and how they are being shared across space in a network of regional development policies and practice.

- Not an Evaluation or Assessment -

New Regionalism(s)

- A reaction to increasing complexity and significant social-ecological change
- A paradigm shift?

“a loose bundle of ideas, an accretion of notions gathered together because they seem to resonate and point to broadly similar policy implications”

(Lovering, 1999)

“a macro-structure that is constantly renewed and nesting a complex combination of normative and theoretical approaches”

(Ortiz-Guerrero, 2013)

New Regionalism(s)



- Regions as key territorial unit for socio-economic and political development and governance
- Regions multiple and nested
- Networked, dynamic and open
- Structure + process, formal + informal
- Multiple actors, top down + bottom up

New Regionalism



Governance



Integration



Placed-
Based



Innovation
and
Knowledge
Flows



Rural-Urban
Relationshi
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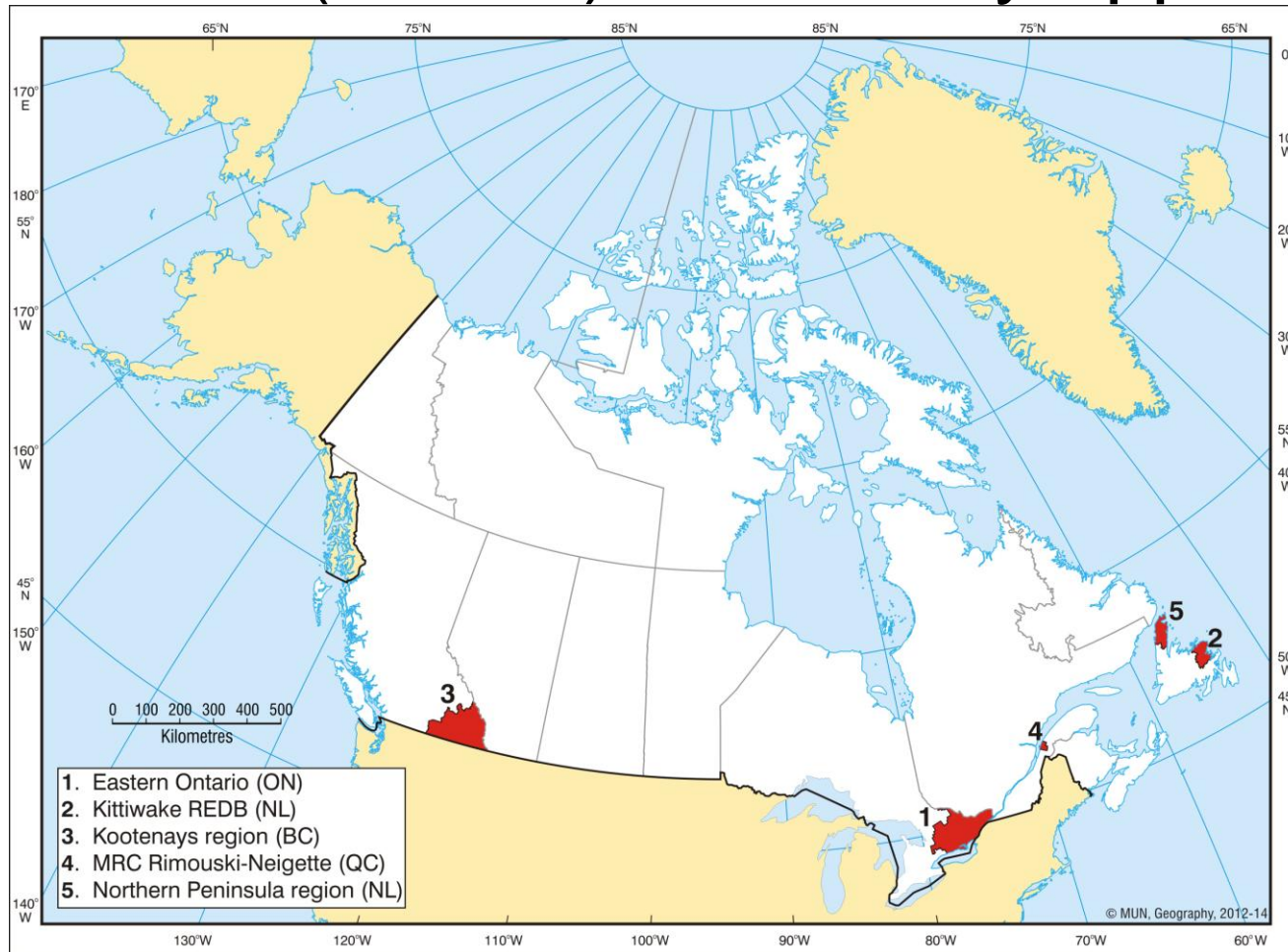
The Project's Core Questions



- Have Canadian development policies and practices adopted the characteristics of this “New Regionalism”?
- If so, which characteristics predominate, and which are less evident?
- What are the theoretical, policy, practice and other implications?

Methodology

- Multi-level (nested) case study approach

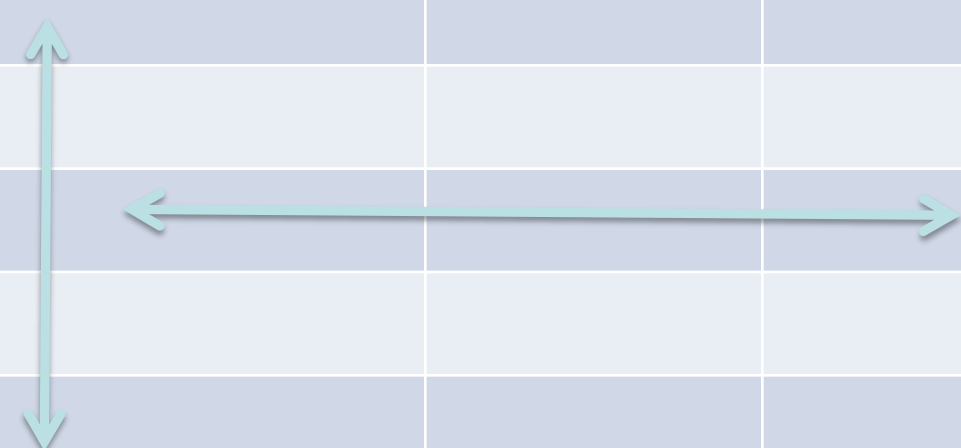


Methodology

- Mixed methods, interdisciplinary
 - Document/literature review
 - Semi-structured in person interviews
 - (Participant) observation
 - Pattern searching and theme indicators
 - Multiple analytical “passes” with team dialogue and theme vs. case study region team cross-checking

Themes and Development Arenas

Arenas of Regional Development	Economic Development	Recreation	Water (watershed) management
<i>Themes of New Regionalism</i>			
1. Governance			
2. Rural-Urban			
3. Place-based			
4. Integration			
5. Learning, Knowledge flows and Innovation			



Overall Messages

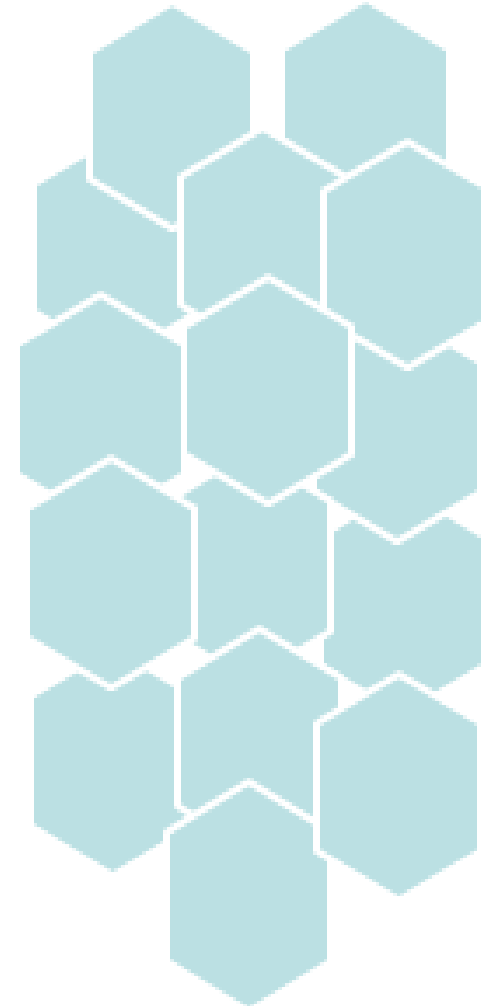
- NR unevenly resourced and narrowly interpreted
- Theory and rhetoric some distances from policy and practice
- Significant differences across Canadian regions
- Demonstrated potential of NR ideas
- Facilitating local development institutions often lack policy support to fulfill this potential
 - NR model with a weak role for the state?
 - Ways to share lessons and scale up successes?

Eastern Ontario Case Study

- 33 regional interviews (2011, 2012) - Counties, CFDCs, CoCs, CAs, RTOs, Twps., Towns, EOWC, OEEDC, others
- 4 Provincial Ministries interviewed (2011, 2013)
- 65 informants participated in the region
- The “Region” – Ottawa River from Prescott and Russell to Northumberland, to Peterborough and Haliburton, to Renfrew County – excludes Ottawa

Integrated - Are development approaches integrated - across scales, actors, issues?

- 15 overlapping dimensions
- Strongest association with complexity
- NL – multidisciplinary, comprehensive analysis in planning, politico-territorial perspective, efficiency and effectiveness
- BC – alternative economic perspectives, operational
- ON – politico-territorial, comprehensive analysis
- Overall limited association with most characteristics of an integrated approach



Integrated Approaches to Development

Some Initial Findings

- Dominant Dimensions of Policy and Practice
 - Politico-Territorial **82%**
 - Rational Comprehensive **79%**
 - Complexity **73%**

Integrated Approaches to Development

Some Initial Findings

- Mid-Level Dimensions of Policy and Practice
 - “Alternative Economics” **58%**
 - Multidisciplinary **55%**
 - Multi-Level **55%**
 - Operational **52%**

Integrated Approaches to Development

Some Initial Findings

- Lower Level Dimensions of Policy and Practice
 - Counter-Silo **33%**
 - Growth and Equity **33%**
 - Participatory **30%**
 - Community Development **21%**
 - Systems and Sub-Systems **21%**

Integrated Approaches to Development

Some Initial Findings

- Rare Dimensions of Policy and Practice
 - Holistic **12%**
 - Trans-border **3%**

Are policy makers and practitioners re-focusing on place?

Place-based development

- Holistic, targeted intervention(s)
- Seek to reveal, utilize and enhance unique endowments within a particular location
- Identity – assets - participation – strategic mobilization



Place-Based Approaches to Development



General Findings – First Cut

- New Regionalism not generally present
- Community identification – actively present
- Fuzzy boundaries and lack of regional affiliations
- Choices - Silo versus a territorial approach
- Jurisdictional tensions

Place-Based Approaches to Development

General Findings – First Cut

- Lack of capacity for co-construction
- Community versus Region
 - “Reluctant cohesion”
 - Zero-sum competitiveness
 - Historical patterns of (economic) isolation
 - Recognition of lack of collaboration is hurting
 - External motivators

Place-Based Approaches to Development



General Findings – First Cut

- Regionalism versus Rationalization
 - Infrastructure deficit
 - Services withdrawal
 - Legacies of amalgamation: irony of forced regionalism
 - Push regionalism

Place-Based Approaches to Development

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings

- Asset based development. Focus on: recreation, culture, heritage – place-based assets
- Numerous mentions of local festivals - social/economic (scale of place more community focused than regional)
- Sectoral as opposed to territorial focus
- Identity issues

Place-Based Approaches to Development

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings

- More sophisticated economic approaches to area development (Cause: Urban proximity? Larger pop?)
- Ontario further ahead relative to other case studies on infrastructure - roads, broadband, etc.
- Partnerships with universities / educational infrastructure
- Buy Local is highly localized and sporadic

What role do knowledge flows, learning and innovation play in the development process?

- Innovation: the creation and diffusion of new ways of doing things (Dicken, 2007)
- Learning and knowledge flows – adaptation and innovation
- “...the implementation of a new or significantly improved product, process, or organizational method” (OECD, 2005)



Innovation and Knowledge Flows

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings

- Substantial institutional support for innovation through the Federal and Provincial governments.
- Support and investment are dominated by the economic development (e.g. enterprise development, exports, commercialization) agenda.
- Universities and Colleges important partners here.

Innovation and Knowledge Flows

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings – Capacity Indicators

- Access to information technology is positive
- System of urban centres is a supportive feature
- Access to training is favourable
- Resident post-secondary education levels a negative
- Reported access to financial resources is mixed
- Networking potentials are favourable

Innovation and Knowledge Flows

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings – Comparative Indicators

- Average income comparatively low
- Ontario productivity index = Canadian
- Substantial applications traffic to Provincial agencies
- Technology use – high Internet, others mixed
- Patents – modest activity across most Counties

Innovation and Knowledge Flows

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings – Other

- Evidence of “new” products, services, processes, etc. – **51%**
- Overriding culture is conservative, prudent and somewhat risk averse
- Support for individual learning – **15%**
- Benefits of Universities/Colleges – **48%**
- Technological hubs cited – **6%**

Innovation and Knowledge Flows

Eastern Ontario Initial Findings – Other

- Intergovernmental knowledge partnerships cited – **30%**
- Knowledge partnerships crossing sectors – **70%**
- Reflection/evaluation – **30%**
- Sharing ideas, insights, intelligence – **45%**
- Lessons search – **36%**
- Barriers? – lack of trust (**30%**), demographics (**33%**), capital (**33%**)

How are rural-urban relationships perceived and managed?

- Interdependence or core-periphery?
- Local-local sharing of finances, ideas and information, goods and services common – also informal relationships
- Need for more collaboration but challenges due to downloading and added pressures
- Governance mechanisms slow to adapt to changing dynamics



Identity

Rural-Urban Interdependencies

Eastern Ontario - Some Initial Findings

- Some functional interdependencies are recognized
- Older culture of competition, conflict, polarization and zero-sum perspectives persists
- Small towns and villages are usually seen as “rural”, where positive working relationships are general

To what extent is power and decision-making shared?

- Regional governance and government, collaborative, multi-level
- New governance mechanisms present but many under threat (or lost)
- Partial and strategic/selective use of governance ideas



Multi-Level Governance



Initial Findings for Eastern Ontario - To Come

Implications for Development Policy and Practice? – First Thoughts

- A Regional Development Strategy? – Itself a strategic choice
- Much of the foundations for a Regional Development Strategy are in place
- Eastern Ontario a mixed development policy challenge – social and economic development, growth management, layered east-west, north-south and other spatial functional dimensions (identity and integration)
- Scaling up the nascent place-based development practice

Implications for Development Policy and Practice? – First Thoughts

- Capital access - a region-based solution?
- New enterprise potentials - why not?
- PBD lack is an issue
- The urban-rural climate - what to do?
- Community Development – the costs of rhetoric
- Participation – does it matter?
- The old “chestnut” - replacing costs with investments
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» **Discussion**



This multi-year research initiative is investigating how Canadian regional development has evolved in recent decades and the degree to which “New Regionalism” has been incorporated into policy and practice. Five key themes of New Regionalism are examined: (i) place-based development, (ii) governance, (iii) knowledge and innovation, (iv) rural-urban relationships, and (v) integrated development. The project is funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development.

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