Understanding the Role of Lived Experience in Community Leaders’ Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability in Rurally Situated Small Cities: An Exploratory Case Study of Peterborough, Ontario

A Thesis Submitted to the Committee on Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the Faculty of Arts and Science

TRENT UNIVERSITY
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada
(c) Copyright by Elizabeth Teleki 2016
Sustainability Studies M.A. Graduate Program
September 2016
ABSTRACT

Understanding the Role of Lived Experience in Community Leaders’ Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability in Rurally Situated Small Cities: An Exploratory Case Study of Peterborough, Ontario

Elizabeth Teleki

Sustainable development is normative - making decisions in the present that construct the experience of place for the future. It is primarily driven by global measures developed to meet the needs of the present while ensuring future generations can meet their own needs. These measures attempt to balance economic prosperity, social justice, and environmental stewardship in many nations. This attempt to balance a plurality of outcomes creates socio-political tensions in choosing between alternatives. These barriers and tensions are characterized through the neoclassical vision of: economics as a science, utility maximization, and alienation of people. This thesis explores the lived experience of community leaders in Peterborough, Ontario as they navigate a contentious and current debate of where to relocate a casino in the region. The results focus on the tension experienced by community leaders as they seek to balance elements of care, while preserving neoclassical values of growth, individualism, freedom of choice, and interconnectedness. The thesis concludes with a model that works towards an understanding of the role of lived experience in economic development decision-making in rurally situated small cities, and recommendations for further research and policy recommendations.

Keywords: economic development, sustainability, community development, vision, governance, lived experience, rurally situated small city, social actors, socio-political
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Mark Skinner for his organized insights into my approach on this dissertation. It is a rarity to find a professor like Dr. Skinner who is committed to applying multiple lenses across academic traditions in such a clear, practical, and effective way. I would also like to thank committee member Dr. Tom Phillips who brought a wealth of expertise from the New School for Social Research’s economic tradition and guided me towards the discussion of sustainability as basic reproducibility. Finally, Dr. David Holdsworth has continued to challenge me in my application of continental philosophy to problematic discourse and world issues, originally inspired by Dr. Boulou Ebanda de B’béri at the University of Ottawa.

I would like to thank our program chair Dr. Asaf Zohar for giving us a point of departure for discussing Sustainability Studies through a transdisciplinary lens and organizational studies. I would also like to acknowledge the many inspiring discussions held with my peers on these topics including my husband Paul Teleki who brought to my attention the work of Alan Gewirth (1996) and its impact on accountability and ethics.

Finally, this thesis would not be possible if it were not for the trust and positive discussions I was so privileged to have with the interview participants who were inspiring in their leadership and efforts to build a great community.

It is with sincere gratitude that I thank the following funders of this research:

- Tri-Council Joseph Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship
- Trent University
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father Steven Kowacz who demonstrated the power of approaching life with grace, love, persistence, hard work, and recognizing our strengths and those of others to achieve a more inclusive and better future.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .................................................................................................................................ii

Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................iii

Dedication ..............................................................................................................................iv

Table of Contents ..................................................................................................................v

List of Tables and Figures .....................................................................................................x

List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................................xi

Chapter One - Introduction ..................................................................................................1

   Background ........................................................................................................................1

      The Research Problem .................................................................................................2

      Research Goal, Objectives and Research Questions ......................................................3

      Approach and Methods Towards the Research Goal .....................................................4

      The Wicked Problem of Sustainability ..........................................................................6

      The Research Opportunity ..............................................................................................15

      The Research Framework ..............................................................................................18

Chapter Two - Conceptualizing Vision for Economic Development ...............................20

   Our Common Vision: Capitalism in Neoclassical Economic Development ......................21

   Neoclassical Economics ....................................................................................................22

   Governing Vision for Economic Development, and Sustainability ..................................26

      Governing a Vision of Economic Development Towards Sustainability .....................29
**Chapter Three - Conceptualizing Economic Development for Rurally situated Small Cities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making Cents: Defining Place and Negotiating a Common Vision</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating a Local Common Vision</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory and Practice in Local Economic Development</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Practices of Economic Development</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transforming the Traditional Practice of Economic Development for the Creative Economy</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Creative Class</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Geography of the Creative Class and the 3T's</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development Practices in the Creative Economy</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating Sustainability into Economic Development Practice</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape of Emerging Economic Development Strategies and Tactics</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter Four - Positive Processes: Research Design and Method**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approaching with Care</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies, Tactics, and Trajectories</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodological Framework</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the Case Study Region: A Rurally Situated Small City</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection and Ethics Review</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived Experience Interviews</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter Five – Case Study Results from Peterborough, Ontario**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context of Development</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Place Identity in Local Economic Development.................................84
Perspectives on the Casino Development.................................84
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.........................86
Framing Visions of Development in Rurally Situated Small Cities..........88
Vision 1: Generational View.................................................................88
    Older People and Retirees.........................................................89
    Younger People and Young Families........................................91
Vision 2: Focus on Fairness in Resource Allocation......................93
    An Even Playing Field...............................................................94
    Duty and Care..............................................................................96
    Outcomes of Development........................................................98
Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and
    Interconnectedness......................................................................100
Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth......................................102
    Local Impact..............................................................................102
    Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Sales Revenue Growth...106
    Job Growth..............................................................................107
Community Leaders’ Visions of Development..................................109
Interpreting the Lived Experience of Economic Development...........109
Rooting Identity in Place.................................................................110
    Vision 1: Generational Focus.....................................................110
    Vision 2: Fairness in Resource Allocation..............................112
Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of choice, and Interconnectedness

Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth

Setting the Scene for Action

Vision 1: Generational Focus

Vision 2: Fairness in Resource Allocation

Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and Interconnectedness

Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth

Balance as Outcome

Vision 1: Generational Focus

Vision 2: Fairness in Resource Allocation

Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and Interconnectedness

Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth

Chapter Six – Conclusion: On the Wicked Problem of Sustainability

Summary

Discussion

A Fair Playing Field

Balance as the Outcome

The Role of Lived Experience in Reproducing Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability
Reproducing Socio-Political Relations of Production Through Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability

Further Research

Policy Recommendations

Concluding Comments

References

Appendices

Appendix A - Overview of Strategic Plans in Rurally Situated Small Cities in Ontario

Appendix B - Ethics Approval Letters

Appendix C - Participant Letter of Information

Appendix D - Participant Consent Form

Appendix E - Semi-Structured Interview Guide
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables:

Table 3.1 Emerging Economic Practices and Theories in the Global North........52
Table 4.1 Methodological Framework..............................................................67

Figures:

Figure 2.1 Continuum of Vision and Governance for Economic

Development and Sustainability.................................................................28

Figure 3.1 Mapping Emerging Practices on the Continuum of Vision and

Governance for Economic Development and Sustainability..................57

Figure 4.1 Map of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.......................................73

Figure 6.1: Exploratory Model of the Role of Lived Experience in Reproducing

Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability........144
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GDP - Gross Domestic Product
GPAEDC - Greater Peterborough Area Economic Development Corporation

(now operating as Peterborough Economic Development)

KEDCO - Kingston Economic Development Corporation
OECD - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLG – Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation
ROEE – Return on Energy Employed
ROI – Return on Investment
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

“Sustainability is sustain-a-babble to me. I’m not saying there aren’t good parts about it, but the problem is, it’s taken over by corporate America and we’ve got to get focused on the right things.”

(Interviewee)

Background

With climate change, extinction of species, increasing wealth distribution, and weather related community devastation around the world, we have the knowledge to understand that our economic footprint as humans is deeply impacting our survival. Yet, actual human behavior change and the policies set by our social institutions are slow to implement and take action on these issues. While sustainable development measures are being committed to and monitored around the world (United Nations, 2015), little has been discussed around how these measures affect the socio-political relations of production. Impacting socio-political relations of production creates tensions on the vision and governance of economic development decision-making. Socio-political tensions arise and are experienced by community leaders attempting to balance sustainable development practices within a neoclassical economic framework. This thesis posits that by studying the lived experience of community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability, we can better understand the ways in which sustainable measures rhetorically reinforce the existing socio-political relations of production and governance structures. This thesis concludes with policy recommendations that
consider innovation to our social institutions to better govern the socio-political relations of production towards a more sustainable future.

The Research Problem

Sustainable development is normative; making decisions in the present that construct the experience of place for the future. It is primarily driven by global measures developed to meet the needs of the present while ensuring future generations can meet their own needs (United Nations, 1987). These measures attempt to balance economic prosperity, social justice, and environmental stewardship in many nations (United Nations, 2015). This attempt to balance a plurality of outcomes creates socio-political tensions in choosing between alternatives. These barriers and tensions are characterized through the neoclassical vision of economics as a science, utility maximization, and alienation of people (Heilbroner, 2004; Nelson, 2000; Winnubst, 2012; Rubinoff, 2000). This thesis explores the lived experience of community leaders in a rurally situated Canadian small city (Peterborough, Ontario) as they navigate a contentious and current debate of where to relocate a casino in the region. The results focus on the tension experienced by community leaders as they seek to balance elements of care in sustainable development, while preserving neoclassical visions of growth, individualism, freedom of choice, and interconnectedness. The research seeks to explore the lived experience of these tensions in economic development decision-making.
Research Goal, Objectives and Research Questions

In exploring this research problem, the goal of this thesis is to understand: **What is the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities?**

In working towards this research goal, the thesis has three main objectives that will be fulfilled via six specific research questions:

1. **Objective One** examines the concepts and contexts of vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities. Specific research questions that will be explored within this objective include:
   - R1 What is our vision and governance of economics in the global north?
   - R2 What is a rurally situated small city and what does that mean for our vision of development?
   - R3 What current and emerging economic development and sustainability approaches exist in rurally situated small cities?

2. **Objective Two** explores the vision and governance of community leaders in a case study of lived experience in Peterborough, Ontario. Specific research questions that will be explored within this objective include:
   - R4 What is the vision of economic development and sustainability of community leaders in Peterborough?
   - R5 What motivators, tensions, opportunities and challenges do they encounter as community leaders governing economic development and sustainability in Peterborough?
• R6 How does the lived experience of community members with varying degrees of influence manifest economic and community development outcomes?

3. Objective Three discusses the emergent findings from the research to inform an exploratory model of the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities.

**Approach and Methods Towards the Research Goal**

The following approaches and methods are used to work towards these goals and objectives, and to explore the research questions of economic and sustainable development in rurally situated small cities. To address Objective One, the thesis frames concepts and context through an exploration of peer-reviewed and professional literature to set the scene for discussing the role of lived experience in community leader's vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities. Specifically, Chapter Two discusses Research Question One (R1) to explore the vision and governance of economics in the global north. This chapter sets the scene for understanding the socio-political relations of production within economic and sustainable development decision-making in rurally situated small cities in the global north. It concludes with Figure 2.1, which uses a continuum to visualize economic vision and governance. Chapter Two discusses Research Question Two and Three. Question Two (R2) explores what defines a rurally situated small city and what that means for our vision of development. This section defines key terms such as rurally situated small city and
explores how we develop our vision of place and our locally defined common vision of development. Question Three (R3) explores what current and emerging economic development and sustainability approaches exist in rurally situated small cities. This section applies the vision and governance continuum to explore current and emerging approaches to economic development and sustainability practices.

Objective One and its associated Research Questions One through Three are explored through literature including economic development websites, case study region reports, peer-reviewed literature, and government statistics. The literature review explores the topic of development across multiple academic traditions in order to broaden our understanding of the lived experience of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities.

To address Objective Two, this thesis explores the lived experience of operationalizing sustainability within a neoclassical vision of economic development through nineteen semi-structured interviews. In exploring lived experience, Chapter Five and Six presents findings and discussion of the vision and governance of economic development of community leaders in Peterborough. Question Four (R4) explores the current vision and knowledge of economic development and sustainability in Peterborough. Question Five (R5) considers what motivators, tensions, opportunities, and challenges they encounter as community leaders governing economic development and sustainability in Peterborough. Finally, Question Six (R6) explores how lived experience of community members with varying degrees of influence manifest economic and community development outcomes?
To address Objective Three, the findings from Research Questions Four through Six are discussed in Chapter Six. Within a hermeneutic phenomenological framework, the discussion of the findings inform an exploratory model of the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities. The model works towards a greater understanding of how community leaders experience economic development decision-making in rurally situated small cities. This experience-based model represents the tactics and strategies utilized by community leaders to work towards their common vision of development and to make it “stick”. Within the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, this thesis acknowledges that this model is tentative and never complete as it is positioned within our a posteriori knowledge of our lived experience, and therefore already situated within normativity. This approach is useful in diversifying the critical lenses from which to address the goal of this thesis in understanding the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities.

The Wicked Problem of Sustainability

Sustainability as a wicked problem stems from the challenges of defining for what purpose and for whom are we sustaining? It is used in many contexts which can result in a lack of clarity in what it seeks to achieve and who benefits. This presents a need to further analyze the way in which sustainability studies enhances or innovates the unequal social relations of production in a neoclassical economic
vision of development. As such this introduction draws on a broad range of criticisms of neoclassical economic theory including: heterodox economics, ethics, and pluralistic political theory. While these theoretical positions do not reconcile their philosophies, approaching this topic from a “transdisciplinary perspective that values all academic disciplines” (Brown et al., 2010, 4) provides a more diverse understanding of for what purpose and for whom are we sustaining?

Sustainability has been a “site of passion” (Baudrillard, 2001, 152) for the last few decades. Its meaning and discourse have been negotiated over the past 50 years. In the 1980’s, the United Nation’s Brundtland Report (United Nations, 1987) declared an international definition for this “site of passion,” creating meaning for its discourse. This definition is broad in scope encouraging the reproduction of meaning. This production of meaning has inspired many interests to contribute to the discussion and “seduce others of their truth” in order for the concept to survive within the existing socio-political context (Baudrillard, 2001, 152). Through the development of “manifest discourse - that which is obvious” and “latent discourse - that which is not evident such as gestures and non-verbal cues” (Baudrillard, 2001, 152), various actors attempt to seduce the discourse of sustainability in order to influence the measures and outcomes of its development. Concepts such as corporate sustainability, the 99%, and the broad reaching measures developed through the United Nations are some examples of the site of seduction in action, defining and negotiating the meaning of what sustainability is, who benefits, who assumes the risk, and how we can achieve it.
Sustainability as a broad concept represents a higher standard of environmental, economic, and social awareness and care. Its diverse meanings make it a conspirator of many visions, reproducing meaning through a number of applications and uses across the socio-political spectrum. Sustainability as a concept is defined strategically within the value systems of particular visions of development. It is vague in nature, evoking a series of inquiries into environmental, social, and economic variables in communities. Although there are efforts by academia and international leaders to streamline and create clearer visions of sustainability (United Nations, 2015), there are still vast differences in scope and complexity in the way that sustainability is applied, sometimes leading to contradicting trajectories. Sustainability for this thesis is considered in the context of economic development in the global north. The dominant vision of development in the global north is neoclassical economics (Heilbroner and Milberg, 1995), which prioritizes the value of profit maximization, and thus creates challenges in applying a pluralistic value proposition. Exploring from a neoclassical starting point is justified due to its pervasive and successful reach throughout the globe (Harris, 2003; Heilbroner and Milberg, 1995).

Furthermore, the contextual narrative is situated within an orthodox Anglo-American neoclassical vision of economics because I am interested in reflecting on my own lived experience as a researcher to find “resolutions to our shared difficulties” (Heilbroner and Milberg, 1995, 8). The orthodox Anglo-American “history of economic thought radiates a world-wide influence” and therefore it is possible that “the construction of a new “Anglo-American” classical situation may
have constructive repercussions elsewhere.” In addressing Objectives One and Two, this paper presents neoclassical economics from the perspective of a heterodox criticism of this vision of development to expose the socio-political tensions between profit and wealth accumulation and our relational aspects of care.

The challenge of operationalizing the pluralistic value system of sustainability within the singular value system of neoclassical economic development is the motivating strategy of this thesis. From the perspective of the researcher, this strategy will be considered in a spirit of positivity and with careful approaches to my methods of inquiry in understanding the lived experience of interviewees in this research project. Although case study bound, this thesis represents an operational and methodological approach to understanding this scope of inquiry. The goal is to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the socio-political tensions that arise in operationalizing sustainability outcomes.

Development trajectories in small ruraly situated cities have a profound effect on our experience of people and place. In some places, basic needs are compromised through individualized profit maximization such as the poisoning of water, economic disparity, deforestation and other challenges that remain unaddressed in a singular system of economic development focused on profit maximization and wealth accumulation. The existing sustainable development platforms (e.g., United Nations 2015) have had a growing influence on multiple levels of government across the global north. However, a stronger understanding of “lived experience” as it relates to economic development and sustainability is crucial to enacting a more pluralistic prioritization of values into our development
practices. Lived experience presents an opportunity to pluralize value by considering broader categories of what constitutes our community experience. These categories include more well-rounded considerations such as mind and body (physical), work (economic), and people (social) (Espinoza et al., 2012, 10). Lived experience provides an opportunity to understand how people are contextually situated in place and the socio-political tensions we experience in achieving our economic, social, and environmental goals as an individual and as a community. It further highlights the relational aspects of care that are externalized in neoclassical economics, but often deeply impact our lived experience.

Lived experience inspires our vision of how we predict the needs of future generations within our present context. This act of sustaining positions future generations within the negative feedback loop of systems theory, which always returns to the stable, ordered system (Stacey, 1995). Development itself is a concept from which growth is necessary and this often is formed through plans designed to achieve particular economic measures and outcomes, based primarily on mechanistic tools for predicting economic behavior of people (Heilbroner, 2004). Returning to the stable and ordered system of steady growth, the dominant economic system has refused to "generate forces that bring about innovations - innovations [that] in turn, change the way markets work - [and] how they adjust - creating new problems, and thus new kinds of pressures to innovate" (Nell, 1998, 7). The confines of neoclassical resourcing of economic development and sustainability have confined it within the principles of economics as science, utility maximization, and alienation of people. This externalizes aspects of care and the unintended ways
in which people interact in the market. This focus on accumulation trumps equilibrium as a desired outcome (Walsh and Gram, 1980), leading to the narrow pursuit of accumulation unchallenged. This maintains the ordered system of steady growth and the existing socio-political relations of production.

The ordered system of growth and the socio-political relations of production have vast effects on the lived experience of people in a place. This effect on lived experience requires more than neoclassical theory to explore the effects and implications of development. As such, this inquiry takes a case study approach applying a methodology to explore the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in a rurally situated small city. The case study in Peterborough interviews community leaders to determine their vision and governance of economic development in their community. It then asks community leaders to discuss the actions and strategies they take in navigating a contentious and current debate about the re-location of a casino. Exploring the navigation of the casino debate provides more concrete evidence of the community leaders vision and governance strategies for economic development. Their capacity to navigate the debate expresses the socio-political tensions experienced by community leaders with varying degrees of influence. It attempts to re-define discussions of economic development from the traditional lens of scientific market mechanisms and consider the lived experience of people with social and political opportunities and limitations.

My perspective is that Sustainability Studies offers a powerful opportunity to globally question the singular value proposition of profit maximization within a
neoclassical economic vision of development. Recognizing that sustainability is an elusive term used for many ends, it does provide a lens capable of reassessing the socio-political relations of production through a stronger understanding of the lived experience of these concepts. The rhetorical application of sustainability leads it towards conflicting ends, such as in corporate capitalism where there is a binding fiduciary responsibility to focus on profit maximization for the shareholders. By considering the role of lived experience in the vision and governance of economic development and sustainability, it provides a stronger understanding of the contextual and conceptual drive towards a particular development outcome. Further, sustainability offers a paradigmatic opportunity to respond to the growing body of heterodox economics literature that is calling for a return to economics as a philosophy (Heilbroner, 1981) or a moral science (Shiller and Shiller, 2011) and not simply the mechanistic exercise of economics as a science.

The current neoclassical economic vision is deficient in its ability to incorporate and prioritize a pluralistic value system because its markets are operationalized through optimizing economic science. To optimize complex subjects through science, complexity must be externalized so that the subject is simplified and a theory can be deduced. The theory then attempts to de-simplify them by introducing variables back into the theory (Grattan-Guinness, 2004). Economics as a science has created great efficiencies and scale of economic vision through simplifying its focus towards profit maximization and wealth accumulation. This simplification relegates more complex variables such as the environment, our relationships, care, and irrational moments to the realm of externality. This
disassociates the actual lived experience of people from the way that markets work, resulting in our most productive moments as people, requiring us to emulate machines, externalizing our interdependencies and relationships.

Prioritizing values and externalizing our interdependencies and relationships points to the need for economics to consider a philosophical or moral scientific inquiry. This thesis concludes with a recommendation that there be further research into the role that care ethics (Hankivsky, 2004), development as freedom (Sen, 1999) and the Community of Rights (Gewirth, 1996) can provide in innovating the socio-political relations of production. With the very real implications of economic development and sustainability on the lived experience of people, we must move towards a vision and governance of economics that incorporates the actual experiences of people in real markets.

Neoclassically grounded economic development practices, measures, and outcomes diverge from actual experience of real markets (Heilbroner, 2004). This thesis seeks to study the lived experience (Espinoza et al., 2012) of the individuals in the market in rurally situated small cities through ethnography (Willis and Trondman, 2000) to reframe traditional economic development strategies and measures to incorporate the tensions in the actual lived experience of market mechanisms. Applying these ways of knowing can provide researchers and decision-makers with a better understanding of what indicators are relevant to those acting in the world. Through applying understandings of lived experience, new ways of transforming contextual narratives about economic, social, and environmental sustainability can be identified.
In a study of what constitutes lived experience, Espinoza, Hracs and Massam (2012, 10) found there are "four basic clusters of activities including: mind (intellectual/thinking, and reflection), body (state of being, health), work (activities that require effort and some degree of commitment to be busy), and people (interactions with others). This presents a more holistic approach to understanding one's experience of the world as opposed to considering one aspect of a person's experience such as employment status as an indicator of quality of life. Connecting employment status to quality of life is a common correlation, yet, Besser, Recker, and Parker (2009) demonstrated that just because jobs were created in a community it did not necessarily lead to the perception that quality of life had increased. Similarly, more just and sustainable development practices can promote strategies, measures, and outcomes that go beyond the isolated neoclassical economic measures to encompass "quality of life, present and future generations, justice and equity, and living within eco-system limits" (Roseland, 2012, 8). These practices must incorporate the unintended and emergent (re)actions that characterize real markets as opposed to the neoclassical model of “Perfect Markets” comprised of utility-maximizing, rational people (Heilbroner, 2004, 624).

Sustainable development practices have the paradigmatic potential to remediate lived experience through relationships to others, to self, to the environment, between nation states, between the feminine and the masculine and between urban and rural communities. Lived experience offers an opportunity to explore these complex relationships. Whereas neoclassical economics alienates individuals by mediating their sense of value through the centralized system of
economics (Heron, 2008; Nelson, 2000; Rubinoff, 2000), more sustainable
development strategies can transform by taking on a "paradigmatic shift which
redistributes" (Roseland, 2012, 8) for a higher quality lived experience. This
transformation is pivotal to avoiding neoclassical economics’ social inclusions and
exclusions of the individual to participate in the market based on their ability to
contribute to the market. This “devalues human life” (Winnubst, 2012, 80) as
perception of self, others, and the environment is characterized by the economic
assessment of worth, not of intrinsic value. Participation in society is determined by
the marketability of labour and contributions to society. Therefore, individuals
become agents acting in the service of the economy where any contribution to
society or perception of self is valued in financial terms. This fundamentally
contradicts our lived experience of self in non-financial terms, such as caring for self
and others, and recognizing our deep-rooted interdependencies on the environment
and others.

The Research Opportunity

Much work has been done to explore the sustainability of rural communities and
even more has been done to explore sustainability in larger urban centres and
metropolises around the world (Ryser and Halseth, 2010). Very little has explored
the tensions of rurally situated small cities within the context of economic
development strategies. This gap (Sorensen et al., 2010; Mayer and Knox, 2010)
provides a unique opportunity to explore the urban-rural experience of
development and the unique tensions this context presents (Dushenko, 2012).
Furthermore, sustainability measures, and outcomes have been discussed as a way for smaller cities and more rural places to promote quality of life to attract investment and job creation (Lewis and Donald, 2010).

In response to neoclassical economic-centric measures of development, there have been efforts to develop alternative measures that do not focus solely on quantitative growth, but also include qualitative development (Heron, 2008; Roseland, 2012). For example, the United Nations has developed a human development index that measures the socio-economic, environmental, political, and economic well-being of people in their communities around the world. The measures monitored can provide information in guiding decision-making towards more sustainable and just options, however there is still little direction on how to improve these metrics. This approach attempts to guide towards a human agency framework for development. Such a framework decentralizes power by encouraging the agential capacity and capabilities of people, thereby applying a responsibility to make decisions that are relational, interconnected, more just, and more sustainable (Sen, 1999). Improving agential capacity and capabilities of people can provide new opportunities for tactics and strategies that reframe from neoclassical development measures and strategies to more just and sustainable ones.

The analysis of lived experience in this thesis will focus on community leaders’ navigation of economic development decision-making through their strategies and tactics (deCerteau, 1984). Understanding navigation strategies and tactics through ethnography provides valuable insight into theory and systems for more reflective and relevant outcomes of lived experience (Willis and Trondman,
The ethnographic approach allows for a bottom-up, community-engaged project that focuses on engaging the researcher and participants in understanding the individual specialty within and apart of the greater context of society (Brown et al., 2010). This ethnographic approach has potential to provide a more inclusive dialectic that incorporates the preferences of those affected by policies and actions towards stronger leadership accountability in economic development decision-making (Teleki, 2009).

Providing an inclusive dialectic to determine the outcomes for a policy, action or process is key to ensuring that the action is leading towards how people in the community want to live. For example, job creation as measured by unemployment is a key indicator of economic development success, and yet, research has shown that when new jobs come to a community, people do not necessarily perceive their quality of life as improving (Besser et al., 2009). The economic development strategies of attracting new jobs, does not necessarily correlate with the preferred outcomes of the community. In many community engagement processes in Ontario, for instance, people are invited to contribute to a vision or direction. Although this provides a starting point for community-based decision-making, individuals must have the opportunity to develop capabilities and knowledge for inclusive debate to occur. It is imperative to include the community in knowledge building and determining the actual measures of strategies, policies, and actions in order to ensure the outcomes align with the community’s preferences.

This will work to decentralize the engagement processes of our social institutions from a top down “expert” or “government” approach to empowering
communities to take control of facilitating open engagement, policies, and actions. This can work towards a more open dialogue for solving problems (Paquet, 2004). Decentralization reframes the discussion in a multi-faceted way that allows for multiple discourses to emerge that are both meaningful and aligned to a greater number of people. Ethnography and studying lived experience can provide insights that consider the socio-political tensions of choosing between desired outcomes and visions within a community. The literature points to a dis-connect between the theory and practice of economic development (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2012) Lived experience as studied through ethnography could contribute to bridge this gap.

**The Research Framework**

To maintain an exploratory design, this research takes an inductive approach to achieving the research objectives to incorporate the literature review and participant feedback into the design. As such, this thesis explores the three research objectives from multiple academic traditions to achieve a greater understanding of the many ways development is discussed. The aim of the literature review in Chapters Two and Three is to create a continuum of vision and governance of economics and explore how current and emerging development practices align with this dominant view in the global north. In positioning the need for economics to move towards a philosophy and a moral science, a philosophically informed framework was the priority for the literature review not economic theory. This framework seeks to explore how our knowledge of lived experience can better
inform a paradigmatic shift towards a pluralistic value system with sustainable outcomes.

Chapter Four and Five describe the methodological approach and results of exploring a case study in Peterborough, Ontario. Chapter Four describes the careful approach to ensuring positive processes in the ethnographic research in a way that contributes meaningfully to the Peterborough case study. It also promotes the importance of considering the lived experience of place and people in re-counting stories of economic development practices, visions, and governance. Chapter Five illustrates themes of framing vision for development in the case study region including: crafting the next generation's experience, fairness in resource allocation, individualism and freedom of choice, and creating value through return on investment as depicted through measures and outcomes of development. These four visions of development are described through the lens of lived experience where interviewees described their challenges and opportunities for influence and action on development in the case study region. This lens provides us with three key themes of lived experience, including rooting identity in place, setting the scene for action, and balance as outcome. In conclusion, Chapter Six reviews the themes of lived experience and contextualizes them within an exploratory model that describes the role of lived experience of community leaders’ vision and governance in economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities in the global north.
Brute struggle and scarcity characterized Hobbes’ economic environment of the 18th century. The struggle for scarce resources pitted humans against each other in an effort to obtain the necessities of life and to accumulate resources. For those who had little access to scarce resources, survival was the everyday way of life with little consideration of anything else, including governance of society. For those who had access to resources, they had the ability to escape the brute struggle of that century and focus on education and governance through social institutions (Orr and Hill, 1978).

Now, in the 21st century, quality of life has improved materially around the world, particularly in Western nations. There is an increased focus on development (economy, humans, infrastructure) and a greater sense of morality that considers how wealth is distributed so that the general population lives with more dignity. With dignity comes access to the basic necessities of life; water, food, lodging, clothes, etc. However, with employment wages around the world benchmarked at or below the lowest standard of living (Heilbroner, 1967), the basic necessities are still not a guarantee. Furthermore, there continues to be a struggle in overcoming a new order of scarcity - that of the opportunity for freedom of productive agency (Gewirth, 1996). With an increased standard of living around the world, the heroic pursuit to become “self-made” or to develop “self-identity” drives consumerism, innovation, and creativity to solve problems. To become “self-made,” an individual
must have the freedom to focus on capitalizing on their talent and assets towards unlimited accumulation. These pursuits characterize Western visions of capitalism, which prioritize the economic life of the individual pursuing unlimited accumulation (market mechanism), the right to liberty and fairness in those pursuits (hand of government), and the protection of the gains of those pursuits (private property rights).

This chapter responds to Research Question One (R1) to understand what is our vision and governance of economics in the global north. This question contributes to achieving Objective One in examining the concepts and contexts of vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities. It concludes by visualizing the socio-political continuum of vision and governance of economic development and sustainability.

**Our Common Vision: Capitalism in Neoclassical Economic Development**

Harris (2003) describes that following World War II the theory and strategy of economic development started to emerge principally through John Maynard Keynes theory of economic development. This first theory of economic development focused on the role of our social institutions in resourcing stimulus investment and policy creation to guide the development of the economy towards growth. At that time, there were three strong models of economic development in practice: socialism, communism, and capitalism (Harris, 2003). These fundamentally different visions of economic development were debated until finally most communist systems collapsed leaving only a few centrally planned economies and mixed
economies. The Western capitalist system had prevailed focusing on private property and global marketplaces (Harris, 2003).

This thesis research considers the global north, characterized by harsher climates, limited food growing seasons and greater reliance on energy to meet basic needs. This context creates a similar set of economic inter-dependencies and challenges that must be considered by those across the global north. The global north is typified by Western values of capitalism; however, other economic visions exist and are explored in Figure 2.1: The Continuum of Vision and Governance for Economic Development and Sustainability. This thesis focuses on Western vision and values of economic development, as they tend to permeate much of the world, and therefore have the potential to influence on a greater scale (Heilbroner and Milberg, 1995). The western vision of economic development follows the Anglo-saxon history of development focused on a neoclassical economic view mechanized in a global world (Heilbroner, 1981).

**Neoclassical Economics**

Much of neoclassical economics is modeled on mechanical theory derived from mathematics and physics, which is applied predominately to machines. This originating basis for theory demonstrates the challenge of applying theory based on predictable machines to the unpredictable actions of people (Grattan-Guinness, 2010). The underlying fundamental assumption has led to a number of challenges in neoclassical economics, which externalizes the socio-political tensions of competing for resources in developing the freedom to pursue productive agency towards unlimited accumulation. This challenge points to the need for economics to develop
its own method of modeling that incorporates the actual lived experience and relational experiences of care within the scope of economic development policy and practice. There are three key barriers found in the paradigm of neoclassical economics that prevent incorporating the lived experience of people into the equation (Heilbroner, 2004; Nelson, 2000; Winnubst, 2012; Rubinoff, 2000):

1) Economics as a Science
2) Utility maximization at all costs
3) Alienation and commodification of difference

Heilbroner (2004) states that economics perpetuates itself as a science because it has identified consistent social patterns in the way people take action in the market. This naturalizes market processes into a science of “parts” interacting in a somewhat predictive way as the “whole” (Heilbroner, 2004, 624). These consistent patterns result in a rigid science that develops systems and models to explain and predict economic outcomes (Heilbroner, 2004). It further demonstrates Keynes’ fallacy of composition - extrapolating a science of parts to the whole. In addition, neoclassical economics externalizes any social or political behaviour in its theorizing, as it cannot be compensated for within scientific inquiry. This results in human experience being externalized, “leaving behind a highly purified residue of ‘utility maximization’ as the fundamental and irreducible stuff of human motivation” (Heilbroner, 2004, 624).

“Utility maximization” positions economics as central to the notion of self. It is how we measure self-worth and how the market determines the value of contributions to society. It is driven by the notion of a rational science, measured
and mathematically predicted in a “value-free” and “impartial” view of the economic system (Nelson, 2000, 105, 118). These “value-free” and “impartial” economic systems devalue other components of human identity by externalizing core components of human behaviour like emotion, interdependence, and care (Nelson, 2000). Core to this critique of economics as scientific vision and analytic, is that “scientific progress without attention to human values can serve inhuman ends” (Nelson, 2000, 114, 127). Accordingly, neoclassical economics is characterized by the “interest-maximizing barometer” prioritizing market rationalized behavior at all costs (Winnubst, 2012, 80). The maximization of one’s utility through self-making and productivity centripetally through economic forces alienate away from any interests steeped in non-economic terms. This alienates through inclusions and exclusions in the globalized system of production and exchange, leading to efforts by government to re-distribute resources to work towards providing a dignified lifestyle for all through taxation, policy, regulation, and investment.

Alienation occurs because individuals mediate their relationships and sense of value through the centralized system of economics (Heron, 2008; Nelson, 2000; Rubinoff, 2000). It defines our relationships to others, to self, to the environment, between nation states, between the feminine and the masculine, and between urban and rural communities. Heilbroner (2004, 626) argues that, “Capitalism has enough centripetal force and self-correcting feedback mechanisms to give to the system the capacity to continue through history.” Through these “centripetal forces” and “self-correcting” mechanisms, individuals no longer recognize their interconnectedness to others, situating themselves as autonomous and self-maximizing agents working
within a capitalist system (Winnubst, 2012, 82). Alienation in a capitalist system positions all living things in the service of the economy, situating their value in the market. In addition, the value and analytic of economic science reinforces these values through “our hypothetical notion of a paradigmatic Market of autonomous, self-interested agents [which] gets in the way of our understanding of real markets made by socially embedded and physically embodied human beings” (Nelson, 2000, 117, 130) which characterizes our lived experience.

The alienation of theories of Perfect Markets from real markets, composed of complex social, environmental, and political realities, underscores the many inequities and tragedies of neoliberalism today (Heilbroner, 2004). In externalizing these realities, the models become simplistic and unreliable in predicting the emergent reactions of people (Heilbroner, 2004). The externalities of neoclassical economics, creates social inclusions and exclusions based on the position of the individual to participate in the market.

Furthermore, these centripetal forces of neoclassical economics result in a disengagement from the natural environment that sustains us as humans. Rubinoff (2000) argues that by valuing the environment based on its economic worth, people consent to pollution of their food and water sources through believing that artificial solutions of technology can replace the natural cycles of the earth. Economic science applies calculations such as cost-benefit analysis that can determine the value of keeping the natural environment versus applying an artificial technical solution to the pollution. These calculations externalize any social, political or environmental aspect of human life and therefore decisions are made based on cost. This reinforces
neoclassical economics devaluing of human life, the environment and our relationship to it, recognizing little intrinsic value other than its service to the market.

Furthermore, neoclassical economics centripetal force can transform subversive or alternative behaviour into the service of the economy, translating them into “tragic parodies” through image commodification. The subversive or alternative becomes a conjecture of itself through a commodified image or in a Foucaudian sense of a “politic of cool” (Winnubst, 2012, 88). The image becomes the commodified symbol and signifier of the subversion or alternative and requires the requisite uniform or material identifiers to be accepted into resistance (Hall, 1997).

Capitalism’s ability to reinvent itself through commodification makes it challenging to find any authentic alternative to capitalism in the developed world (Winnubst, 2012). As such, new ideas must consider governance in the context of the centripetal force of capitalism. Governing alternatives must consider what neoclassical economics has failed to incorporate; that it externalizes what it cannot factor into a scientific equation (Heilbroner, 2004).

**Governing Vision for Economic Development and Sustainability**

Economic visions rest on a socio-politically negotiated continuum (Harris, 2003) of how capital, its risks and its rewards are distributed. This vision largely sets the parameters of governance (hand of government) in the market mechanism. The socio-political negotiation of who bears the risks of economic activity and who gains
the rewards are driven by the vision for development. Government sets policies and invests into specific indicator outcomes towards achieving the vision.

Key indicators then, can take a powerful role in incrementally pivoting and transforming economies towards more equal social relations by inspiring a more pluralistic value system to support more just and sustainable indicators. Due to the breadth of topic, this thesis will focus on the economic vision of private ownership and state-regulated economies in the global north as seen in neoclassical economics. Figure 2.1 below provides a continuum demonstrating how governance and vision will be explored to map out approaches to development in the next chapter.
Figure 2.1: Continuum of Vision and Governance for Economic Development and Sustainability

*Please note this seeks to describe examples of these economic visions in practice not in their idealistic form.
On this continuum, vision is determined by the spectrum of economic paradigms including communism, capitalism, and mixed economies. Crossing through vision is the hand of government, which creates the conditions for social actors to negotiate their productivity. These conditions consider the social actor as a productive agent first, towards unlimited accumulation in service of the commons under a communist vision or in service of the individual under a capitalist vision. Where there is no defined vision and governance, classical liberalism exists with its ideals of free Markets of people pursuing productivity without government interference.

**Governing a Vision of Economic Development Towards Sustainability**

This diversion between the theory of Perfect Markets and the actuality of real markets is very similar to the discussion of justice and sustainability in this context. Much theorizing about justice and sustainability by academic and non-academic writers has searched for a Perfect Justice or Perfect Sustainability. Like Perfect Markets, it is unlikely that Perfect Justice or Sustainability can be attained and therefore alternatives must be discussed. Sen’s (2009, ix) Idea of Justice presents “a theory of justice in a very broad sense. Its aim is to clarify how we can proceed to address questions of enhancing justice and removing injustice, rather than to offer resolutions of questions about the nature of Perfect Justice.” A discussion of justice is important to the governance of economy as it sets the ethical framework through which people pursue their productive agency. It sets the stage for how we relate to each other. Sen (2009) presents social choice theory, which aims to describe a more practical kind of justice that incorporates the complex social and political contexts
rather than seeking Perfect Justice. Frameworks such as social choice theory (Sen, 2009), care ethics (Hankivsky, 2004), and the community of rights (Gewirth, 1996) recognize our interdependencies and relational experiences and provide more realistic theories that can be applied to everyday practices, rather than seeking out Perfect Markets.

Social choice theory is “deeply concerned with the rational basis of social judgments and public decisions in choosing between social alternatives” (Sen, 2009, 95). These theories depart from the more traditional concept of finding Perfect Justice or Perfect Markets to search for the best option. The theory of social choice provides a more context-specific practice of justice, which requires individual responsibility in a more decentralized system of decision-making and governance. Decentralization in decision-making and processes, such as the social choice theory, can provide an opportunity to move towards a more practical approach that is driven by the contextual practices of those impacted by decisions. Orr and Hill (1978) also discuss the importance of decentralized smaller scale activities towards justice and sustainability as a way to correct the ecological damage of the industrial era. They argue that centralized highly regulated economies that rely on government centralize too much power and can result in problems of a “leviathanic” nature (Orr and Hill, 1978, 460).

Like justice, sustainability is an elusive term with multiple meanings in multiple disciplines. It is also difficult to define as an end. The traditional and most applied definition of sustainability comes from the United Nation’s report, Our Common Future, which states that it is, “development which meets the needs of the
present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, 1987). Sen, as quoted in Paquet (2004) challenges this definition by questioning first what should we sustain for future generations, and second, how far are we from sustaining it? These questions challenge a view that, somehow, current generations can determine what the preferred future is for the next generation. As such, Paquet (2004) recognizes the diversity and complexity of sustainability by describing it as “ecology of governance” for sustainability that recognizes the importance of “requisite variety” in solving complex and practical problems. Paquet (2004) suggests that because complex systems cannot be governed from a single point, a multiplicity of people must be part of the process. The proposed ecology of governance would not consider sustainability as an end but as a governing principle harnessed by a variety of approaches, not controlling them. Governments become “animateurs” and “catalysts” facilitating multiple partnerships, collective intelligence, and social learning that can bring about a decentralized contextual approach to becoming more sustainable (Paquet, 2004, 7).

To actualize a pluralistic system of values and approaches, it is important to understand the relational rights of individuals to pursue their productivity. As such, Gewirth’s (1996) “Community of Rights” provides a lens that situates our interactions between positive and negative rights. These positive and negative rights, can also correspond to Sen's (1999) freedoms and unfreedoms. Positive rights (Gewirth, 1996) give us the freedoms to pursue our productivity and lives in the world. Similarly, negative rights protect us from the unfreedoms where others may create barriers or difficulties in pursuing our productive agency. As an example,
if there is an oil spill, the corporation responsible has violated the negative rights of the fisherman in the region by creating the unfreedom for them to fish. Similarly, a government can regulate the movement of oil to protect the positive rights of the fishermen and maintain their freedom to fish. While positive and negative rights and freedoms and unfreedoms create challenges in decision-making around rights claims, overlaying a care ethic approach (Hankivsky, 2004), can provide a vision for prioritizing values.

Both Sen (2009) and Paquet (2004) see justice and sustainability as more human-centred processes of decentralized governance rather than “ends” which are attainable through central institutions or predictable patterns of behaviour. Through social choice theory, and similarly an ecology of governance, a multiplicity of involved people, promote a requisite variety in the ways in which we tackle complex problems like justice or sustainability (Paquet, 2004; Sen, 2009). It provides a process through which communities can make decisions that are characterized by non-economic variables such as justice or sustainability. These decision-making processes would value the complex social and political motivations of humans by offering a variety of ways to achieve justice and sustainability that are both relational and contextual.
CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUALIZING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR RURALLY SITUATED SMALL CITIES

“Economic Development is a theoretical exploration with very real implications for place” (Stolarick and Currid-Halkett, 2010).

Research on economic development in a globalized world has focused on large metropolitan cities in the West and mega-cities in the “developing world” (Lofgren, 2000). However, with the transformation of the rural economy over the last few decades, there has been an increase in scholarship in regional development studies (Ryser and Halseth, 2010). Further, the effect of globalization, hyper-connectedness and accessible transportation means that labour, capital, processes, and resources flow within and between the urban and rural causing more complex relationships and de-centralized notions of space (Andersen et al., 2011; Ryser and Halseth, 2010). These de-centralized notions of space allow capital to be maximized based on affordable investment options and cross-pollination of lifestyle such as the globally connected urban entrepreneur living and working from the rural hinterland (Andersen et al., 2011). This de-centralization in the latter half of the twentieth century, has allowed rural regions to develop more prosperously. Through these developments, rural regions experienced the rise of the middle class from industrial development and the migration of the urban commuter living in rural places for wealth enhancement or quality of life preferences (Andersen et al., 2010).
However, as resource-based industrial economies shift to knowledge-based economies, New Economic Geography points to a return of urban agglomeration of capital and labour (Thissen and Oort, 2010). While capital and labour are still mobile, rural and smaller regional centres are less comparable to the economies of scale and access to talent in their metropolitan and large urban counterparts (Markey et al., 2012). This leads rural and small urban centres to find new ways of competing for economic development opportunities. These new ways of competing focus on the “local” and “place-based assets” in an economy (Markey et al., 2012, 13). Place-based economies focus on the key assets of a region or place to develop a competitive advantage for attracting capital and labour. From comparative to competitive, regions create economic development strategies to compete for investment opportunities.

Objective One explores the vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities. This objective is considered through the literature to explore Research Questions Two (R2) and Three (R3)

- R2 What is a rurally situated small city and what does that mean for our vision of development?
- R3 What current and emerging economic development and sustainability approaches exist in rurally situated small cities?

**Making Cents: Defining Place and Negotiating a Common Vision**

This section defines the characteristics of a rurally situated small city and discusses the common vision and strategy of economic development in these places. First,
defining place characteristics such as what is urban and what is rural can be complicated. As such, regional typology is used as a standard way of defining places as urban or rural.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) comprised of 34 member countries mostly in the global north use a methodology that defines predominately urban, intermediate urban, and predominately rural geographies. Defining regions allows comparisons to be made between regions to identify differences and similarities across socio-economic indicators that identify successful or unsuccessful development strategies. The OECD (2012) defines what makes a place rural or urban based on typology. This popular statistical method delineates a clear distinction and makes cross-country comparisons and statistics standardized. This distinction has its benefits, however, an individual's place identity can be less clear especially in urban areas that are rurally situated – where the rural and urban converge in daily life. This project uses the term rurally situated small city to identify these regional centers, which often contain hospitals, schools and other amenities that support a dual urban and rural lifestyle.

Despite commonly accepted definitions of rural and urban places, there is no single accepted definition of place. As these more contextual and interpretive definitions are applied, it can create opportunities or threats to economic development as communities start to negotiate common visions of development and identity, which can be complementary and/or contrary to each other. Lived experience can help provide insight into how people define their identity of place and can lead to stronger vision and governance relative to how the risks and
rewards are distributed from development. Governing the distribution of risks and rewards of development requires a local common vision of development.

**Negotiating a Local Common Vision**

A common vision provides the rationale for decision-making on questions of development. The outcomes of local economic development are often measured to project and reinforce the local "common vision" (i.e., quality of life indicators, GDP, investment, jobs created, etc.). “Local” is often contextually defined by government borders (i.e., neighbourhood, municipal, regional, provincial, and national). The conceptual understanding of “local” is widely discussed in political geography beyond government borders. In a global economy with mobile capital and labour, looking at the spatial experience of “local” is important for understanding the social relations of place. Political geography perspectives define localities as being “the scale of experience, constructed through unequal power relations and conflicts between those social actors and structures that are functionally immobile as they try to create a “common sense” and define their position in their relations with the supra-local world” (DeFilippis, 1999, 976).

To apply this concept to local development strategies, it is essential to understand the individual lived experience of place. This lived experience is formed by actions within an “unequal organization of social relations” negotiating a “common sense” and global position. The traditional government boundaries are blurred as each individual has varying structural access to space (from regional to international). The individual experience of space is characterized by capacity and action that work towards building the “common vision” of place.
The negotiated process of crafting a “common vision” both creates and reinforces the socio-political spectrum of human agency and capacity. The economic development vision of a rurally situated small city is developed through this negotiated process. Understanding the lived experience of these development processes and outcomes becomes vital to a better understanding of how the “unequal organization of social relations” affects human agency and capacity. In addition, understanding lived experience of economic development can work towards incorporating the unintended and emergent reactions that characterize real markets. This provides a new point of departure from the neoclassical economics assumption that all markets are Perfect Markets comprised of utility maximizing and rational people (Heilbroner, 2004).

This chapter introduces and discusses traditional economic development strategies as well as the potential for rurally situated small cities to adapt a competitive advantage through implementing sustainable development principles (Lewis and Donald, 2010). In demonstrating the importance of lived experience as a tool to better understand how real markets interact, this project provides examples of emerging visions of development and current practices on the continuum of vision and governance for economic development in Figure 2.1 (see Chapter Two).

**Theory and Practice in Local Economic Development**

Current research has clearly identified that economic development strategies in small cities are too focused on adapting solutions used in metropolitan areas. These are often ineffective due to differences in economies of scale, geography, and
community experience (Mayer and Knox, 2010; Sorensen, et al., 2010). In fact, there is a significant gap in research on small rurally situated cities (Mayer and Knox, 2010; Sorensen, et al., 2010).

This gap requires innovative and creative approaches to adapting and reconceptualizing economic development practices to work in different contexts. It is increasingly urgent as rural areas continue to invest in economic growth initiatives while still experiencing youth migration, an aging demographic, and continued loss of traditional manufacturing and industrial jobs (Besser et al., 2009; Markey et al., 2010). In response, some rurally situated Canadian cities have focused on implementing strategies successful in metropolitan places such as Richard Florida’s (2002) creative economy principles. What remains unclear is its effect on non-North American or non-metropolitan places. Despite this, an unconditional approach has been used without accounting for difference in place and context (Andersen et al., 2010; Gibson, 2010; Gülümser et al., 2010; Lewis and Donald, 2010; Markey et al., 2010; Mayer and Knox, 2010; Sørensen et al., 2010).

In studies that have started contextualizing economic development for small rurally situated cities, it has been shown that more sustainable economic development practices can provide more relevant strategies for long-term community development (Grodach, 2011; Lewis and Donald, 2010). These strategies work to preserve the quality of life and natural amenities of those regions; assets characteristic of smaller cities and rural areas (Lewis and Donald, 2010).

As a practice, economic development is a perceived driver for vitality and success of cities and regions (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011). Therefore, the
practices, measures, outcomes, and visions for economic development have a profound impact on the lives of people who experience those places every day. The consequences, either positive or negative from economic development decisions, influence a person’s agential capacity. The impact is characterized by the governance structures and actions in the economy that craft human experience and capacity, negotiating deep-rooted dependencies. To understand the current governance structures and implementation of economic development strategies in practice, the following section will look at traditional practices of economic development as well as the potential for rurally situated small cities to find competitive advantage through incorporating sustainable development principles into their development practices.

**Traditional Practices of Economic Development**

Traditional approaches of economic development in an industrial economy have included activities such as smoke stack chasing, incentive programs, enterprise zones and downtown business improvement areas. Although scholars point to the ineffectiveness of smoke stack chasing, it was cited as an economic development strategy used by over 50% of the studied cities in the United States (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011). Smoke stack chasing practices include attracting a few major employers to the region. This includes promoting a location, cheap land, labour and/or other financial incentives to companies. Tax incentives are also a common practice used to lure companies to a city; however, many scholars say that this type of practice results in a zero-sum benefit to the region because the cost of the incentives start to outweigh the impact of the business development benefits like
jobs (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011). In addition, newer focuses on private-public partnerships, incubator development, and other business support services are starting to be the most cited practice used by economic developers, yet is rarely seen or reviewed in scholarship (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011).

Development scholars on the other hand, commonly cite industrial clustering and human capital development programs as successful approaches to economic development, yet very few cities in the study actually demonstrated use of these strategies (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011). What is more common is the ongoing use of translating existing traditional practices of economic development to cities based on the success of the strategy in other places. These trends include attempts to reconstruct “Silicon Valley” and Richard Florida’s (2002) creative economy principles to enhance the revitalization of arts and culture infrastructure and developing quality of life initiatives to attract new business to the area. The mixed success of applying these trends to traditional forms of economic development through mimicry, have clearly shown that a one-size fits all approach does not work for all communities (Andersen et al., 2010; Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011; Gibson, 2010; Lewis and Donald, 2010; Sørensen et al., 2010).

Business support services were the highest employed economic development strategy used in economic development practice (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011). These strategies focus on providing entrepreneurship support services and the development of a business incubator to start new businesses. However, there is little scholarship focused on understanding the effectiveness of these services. This evident divergence between theory and practice is creating economic development
strategies that are not measured against theoretical foundations, and a theory that has very little practice to demonstrate its efficacy. In addition, there is very little research regarding sustainable economic development practices that may be more relevant for rural and small cities who want to preserve the quality of life and natural amenities in their regions (Grodach, 2011; Lewis and Donald, 2010).

Transforming the Traditional Practice of Economic Development for the Creative Economy

Creative economy development practices are diverting large efforts to repackage, market and develop creative cities around the world. It is clear that Florida's (2002) research to develop the creative economy vision of development has been effective in urban and metropolitan places. Its efficacy in rural and small cities is less clear in scholarship, however, it is still implemented in practice (Andersen et al., 2010; Lewis and Donald, 2010; Sørensen et al., 2010). In addition, the creative economy has the potential to contribute towards more sustainable practice as it focuses on human innovation which is renewable and can employ this innovation towards more responsible use of non-renewable natural resources, while encouraging human and social development across varying populations and demographics (Florida, 2002; United Nations, 2010).

The creative economy vision is having global influence in shaping the ways in which communities grow their local economies and how they invest capital (United Nations, 2010). There is also no clear definition of what the creative economy is, or one way of understanding its dynamics, application and measures. Although the creative economy was popularized by Richard Florida (2002) and John Howkins
(2001) was the first to express a global link between creativity and the economy, demonstrating the vast amounts of wealth and value it could achieve as well as its growth potential (United Nations, 2010). Howkins’ (2001) creative economy featured two types of creativity: individual fulfillment that is central to being human, and the creation of a product that is central to the need of industrialized nations to have unique products and services. In contrast to Howkins’ (2001) view of the creative economy that positions it within industries, Florida (2002) views it in terms of occupations held by a creative and mobile class of people. It is focused on people not industry. Florida (2002) identifies three institutions of the creative economy that he terms the “social structure” required for a vibrant economy. These include new forms of capital investment, new modes of production, and support for vibrant and diverse arts and cultural communities.

New forms of capital investment include significantly enhanced support of technology creation through private and public sector Research and Development investment as well as an explosion in venture capitalism since the 1990’s. Florida (2002) describes venture capitalism as a response to the limits of institutions in responding to this new creative era. New modes of production include the increase in outsourcing. Florida’s (2002) argument is that outsourcing manufacturing allows businesses to focus on aspects of creation while allowing manufacturers to specialize in a specific industry and benefit from economies of scale through producing products for multiple businesses. Finally, support for a vibrant and diverse arts and cultural scene can attract new and different people, as well as increase the transmission of knowledge. These three social structures provide a map
for attracting a creative class of people by having in place institutions that promote these three elements.

**The Creative Class**

The creative class is defined by Florida (2002, 8) as “those in science and engineering, architecture, and design, education, arts, music and entertainment - those whose economic function it is to create new ideas, solve complex problems, technology, functions, and forms.” There are two groups, including the creative core (those who are continually engaged in creating new forms) and creative professionals (those who engage in thinking creatively about their work).

Businesses value the skills of the creative class because of the results their ideas can achieve such as new modes of production, products or services. The benefits of the creative class are also experienced on an individual level where people value it for job satisfaction and the opportunity for self-expression. As businesses continue to see the value in creativity, the creative class will continue to grow. As the creative class grows, so do the sectors that support them.

The “service class” fills the demands of the creative class for lifestyle and support. These services include labour (such as cleaning, landscaping, caregiving, etc.) as well as hair stylists, entertainment and food industries. These service occupations traditionally provide employment to a sector of people who have less education and access to the same socio-economic opportunities as the creative class.

This breakdown of class has inspired serious criticisms of the creative economy paradigm, which is perceived to be elitist (Lewis and Donald, 2010). These perceptions stem from the evidence of increasing inequality in creative class
economies and the narrow investment focus specific to a certain type of person and their market preferences (Lewis and Donald, 2010). In fact, Florida (2002) demonstrates that regions with high numbers of creative class workers actually have the greatest inequality in wealth distribution. Although this is a challenge, Florida (2002) says there is an opportunity for regions to provide human skills development training so that service sector workers can continue to increase their skills to create more value in the work that they do, therefore increasing the value of the service. This can result in higher wages for the service sector in support of the demand for unique experiences and authentic products by the creative class. Although human skills development training does not respond to the challenge of elitism, it does work towards a focus on education to provide more opportunities to benefit from the growing affluent creative class. Based on the creative class’ financial affluence and high levels of production and innovation, they are sought after by regions of all sizes and around the world through economic development strategies. This has made the creative economy vision a powerful force in shaping the way communities market, promote, and invest in regional initiatives regardless of context, geography, demographics or other community factors (United Nations, 2010).

Geography of the Creative Class and the Three T’s

Regional economic growth, focused on sustainable outcomes, can be supported by the creative class (Florida, 2002; Howkins, 2001; United Nations, 2010). Therefore, the ability for a region to attract this kind of individual is important. A key characteristic of the creative class is that they are mobile, and that they choose
places to live based on characteristics, lifestyle, and quality of life more than they do based on where employment can be found. This very mobile group of creative workers has spawned numerous attempts at understanding how economic development practitioners can attract this kind of person. Florida (2002) has determined three key indicators of a region that is poised to attract the creative class. These indicators include talent, technology, and tolerance.

Florida’s (2002) talent and technology indices measure the population with a bachelor’s degree or above (human capital measure), its innovation index (patents granted per capita), and the high-tech index (the size and concentration of a region’s economy in growth sectors such as software, electronics, biomedical products, and engineering services). Florida’s study (2002) indicated that where there was a large population of creative class workers, the innovation index, and the high-tech index were also rated highly. In addition, talent (as measured by human capital) also showed a strong correlation to creative class workers. Working class regions tend to have the lowest levels of human capital, demonstrating that attracting talent can increase creative industries and economic growth. The tolerance indices include the Melting Pot Index (percent of immigrants or foreign-born nationals), the Gay Index (the concentration of gay individuals in a region), and the Bohemian Index (the number of writers, designers, musicians, actors and directors, painters and sculptors, photographers, and dancers in a region). Florida (2002) combined all of these indicators into a composite diversity index (CDI), which measures diversity in regions and then ranks them.
The correlations between diversity in regions and the concentration of creative class members are salient in urban contexts. In terms of small and medium-sized regions, the melting pot index is the only consistent predictor of population growth (Florida, 2002). This could point towards a need for smaller and rural regions to focus on becoming more open and attractive to new immigrants. Although Florida’s (2002) measures are salient in an urban context, it has been shown that they may not be relevant for rural regions or small cities (Andersen et al., 2010; Gibson, 2010; Lewis and Donald, 2010; Sørensen et al., 2010). As such, new measures specific to a rural context should be investigated in scholarship for stronger predictors of successful economic development strategies suited to attracting the creative class or other indices relevant to successful economic and community development.

*Economic Development Practices in the Creative Economy*

With increasing mobility and quality of life/experiential living demands of the creative class, regions must consider new kinds of incentives for economic development. Seducing creative class workers to a region is key to attracting creative industries and more economic sustainable growth for a region (Florida, 2002; Howkins, 2001; United Nations, 2010). Based on Florida’s (2002) creative economy paradigm, an increased focus on a region’s composite diversity index, human capital and investment in intellectual property activities (new technologies) changes the role of the economic development professional to focus more on community integration, promotion of arts and cultures, increasing amenities, and promoting tolerance and openness of difference. For these reasons, there is an
opportunity for the creative economy paradigm to work towards a more sustainable and equitable organization of social relations if the right social institutions are in place to be responsible for these outcomes (Florida, 2002). These indicators are changing the way government directs tax dollars through investments and infrastructure development to support aggressive and strong economic development strategies (Currid-Halkett and Stolarick, 2011). However, with much of the literature questioning this vision for rural regions and small cities, it is important for economic development practitioners to consider the assumptions, barriers, and opportunities realized through many case studies around the world before applying this approach uniformly across contexts. Moreover, it offers an opportunity to re-frame the conversation about development towards a more human-centric approach, which may contribute to more sustainable and equitable development outcomes.

**Integrating Sustainability into Economic Development Practice**

There is very little research regarding sustainable economic development practice (Grodach, 2011). A common problem is that case studies are not transferable due to regional differences and therefore it becomes difficult to implement sustainable economic development policies based on good scholarly research. While conventional forms of economic development focus on tax incentives, marketing, and providing business support services; sustainable economic development “aims to more comprehensively and regionally build a diverse economic base while focusing on skill development for career ladder and living wage jobs and providing access to credit and capital for entrepreneurs and community enterprises”
(Grodach, 2011, 303). In addition, it places priority on the environmental implications of development to encourage sustainable resource use and promote green industry. This lack of a common vision across research, policy, and outcomes for economic development organizations, has not inspired action around sustainable economic development practices, regardless of perceptions that it may be good for regions (Grodach, 2011). Grodach’s (2011) study attempted to understand why economic developers did not pursue sustainable development even though there are indicators demonstrating the success of this strategy. In this study, economic development practitioners were asked various questions regarding their perceptions of their role in the community and what they felt was in their control to implement (Grodach, 2011). The results indicated that practitioners in the test group defined their purpose as attracting and retaining businesses and investment to the region in an effort to increase the tax base and create jobs. Most practitioners do not consider social equity or environmental protection as part of economic development (Grodach, 2011).

Although this test study was in the United States, a brief review of economic development websites in Eastern Ontario demonstrates clear measures that are exclusively economically driven such as investment dollars, jobs created, businesses started or expanded (see Appendix A - Kingston Economic Development Corporation, 2012; City of Kawartha Lakes, 2012; Greater Peterborough Area Economic Development Corporation, 2012). Despite efforts to incorporate vision and mission statements that improve quality of life and respect the environment, it is clear from the measures that job creation and investment are a preferred
outcome. Beyond attitudes, economic development practitioners often perceive environmental protection and social equity as being outside of their scope or ability to change through economic development practice (Grodach, 2011). There was also a generally accepted norm of cities “canabilizing” each other through incentive based economic development practices that continue to increase the competition for and expectations of what regions offer to entice businesses to move or start in their areas (Grodach, 2011).

These attitudes (a positive or negative view of a particular action), social norms (people’s perception of the social pressures they feel to perform or not to perform an action), and perceived behavioural control (how an individual perceives their abilities to perform an action and what is out of their control) of economic development practitioners contribute an important understanding of the willingness to incorporate sustainable and equitable outcomes in their strategies (Ajzen, 1988). These variables are determinants of an individual’s action (Ajzen, 1988). Until economic development practitioners are inspired to integrate sustainable practices through equitable policy, empowerment, and alternative measures of success, it will remain a challenge to inspire sustainable economic development. In addition, these traditional attitudes, social norms, and perceptions contribute to the ongoing challenge for rural economies to compete with metropolitan and urban regions based on unequal resources. This presents an endemic issue within the paradigm and culture of economic development practices.

There is one resource that rural regions and small cities have in abundance – that of their natural environment and amenities. Lewis and Donald (2010) have
cited this as a unique opportunity for rural areas to compete for economic development opportunities with urban and metropolitan areas that focus on sustainability. This provides an alternative way for rural areas to prosper focusing on attracting business and people to their regions because of sustainability and quality of life. These alternative measures of success unique to rurally situated small cities can provide an alternative way to compete with urban and metropolitan areas (Isserman et al., 2009). Place-based and local approaches provide an opportunity for lived experience to inform the practice and theory of development towards more sustainable and equitable strategies of economic development.

**Landscape of Emerging Economic Development Strategies and Tactics**

Emerging development strategies and tactics are implemented by governments and individuals around the world. These strategies and tactics focus on implementing new ideas, new measures, and new priorities for developing our communities. During a time where populations are concerned about climate change, privatization of life (DNA, seeds, water) and disparities in income around the world, alternative leadership in how we develop our communities and our actions has taken force. This section of the thesis seeks to explore the current and emerging development strategies and tactics to identify how they are situated on the continuum of vision and governance of economic development. Due to the breadth and depth of many of these emerging strategies and tactics, this thesis does not seek to provide commentary on their effectiveness, but to discuss similarities across outcomes and intention through vision and governance. These intentions merge or come into
conflict with existing development strategies seeking to propose more just or sustainable outcomes. The current application of sustainability as applied by the United Nations (2015) tends to merge this new perspective with existing forms of vision and governance, leveraging many smaller initiatives to achieve the best chance for sustainable development.

In the context of economic development practices, there are numerous alternatives being explored that recognize the socio-political tensions externalized by a neoclassical lens of development. These include both conceptual and practical measures of what economic development practices could achieve. Some examples include sustainable development (United Nations, 2015), human agency framework for development (Heron, 2008), ecological economics (Gowdy and Erikson, 2005) and, human development (Sen, 2009). These kinds of alternatives re-position economics to varying degrees from being the centripetal force of development in a neoclassical paradigm, to incorporating more of a human strategy or tactic to achieving a plurality of outcomes focused on the environment, well-being, and community. Due to the breadth of discussion available on each topic, this thesis will provide a brief overview in a chart to list the vision and governance described for each alternative. Furthermore, this is not attempting to be an exhaustive list but to highlight emerging economic practices.

Following Table 3.1, Figure 3.1 will plot the current and emerging strategies on Figure 2.1 The Continuum of Vision and Governance introduced in Chapter Two. Each emerging theory, strategy or tactic will be represented on the continuum to explore the vision and governance strategy.
Table 3.1: Emerging Economic Practices and Theories in the Global North

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory, Strategy or Tactic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dominant Vision</th>
<th>Governance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Economic Localization     | • Non-profit, grassroots global Transition Town movement  
                           | • Localizing economic activity in an ever expanding globalized world (considering economics and energy as a driving force for localization and resiliency)  
                           | • Local currency (Building local supply chains through currency distributed through community credit union and benchmarked to the Canadian Dollar)  
                           | Capitalism | Local control, more distributed governance |
| (Anonymous, 2013)           |             |                |            |
| Reconomy (Hopkins, 2016)   |             |                |            |
| Ecological Economics       | • Considers value pluralism through incorporating multiple methods and criteria into economic systems  
                           | • Recognizes people are part of a complex ecological system comprised of many methodological frameworks including: environmental, social, and economic variables  
                           | Capitalism | High level of government regulation, especially in determining and understanding value |
| (Gowdy and Erikson, 2005)  |             |                |            |
| Social Innovation (Phillips et al., 2015; Wheeler, et al., 2005; Centre for Social Innovation, nd; Sweden, nd) | Theory focuses on the social mission and opportunity recognition (entrepreneur), networks and systems, cross-sectoral partnerships and institutions  
- Examples include co-op housing, co-working spaces, autoshares, human centred design, co-operative business models to solve social problems  
- Economy supports people  
- Democratize economies of scale across individual actions  
- Profit is not a motive but a vehicle towards social change | Capitalism | Operates within existing government regulation (creates liability issues, lack of clear business structures since social innovation seeks change to make people's lives better) |
| Knowledge and/or Creative Economy (Florida, 2002; Howkins, 2001; United Nations, 2010) | Focuses community development on talent attraction and skills development, tolerance, and technology  
- Skills and education important for people  
- Maintains inequities in the value chain | Capitalism | Government guides and regulates towards key knowledge economy success factors |
| EU Leader Approach (European Union, 2006) | Focuses on locally-focused community driven projects reflecting on being inclusive across the socio-economic landscape  
- Distributed and incremental strategies determined by each | Capitalism | Government funds community priorities determined at a local level fitting within broader goals |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Human Development</strong> (Sen, A., 1999)</th>
<th><strong>Welfare</strong></th>
<th><strong>Economic prosperity comes from a policy and community investment process into the development of people (e.g. education)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entrepreneurship Development</strong> (ONE Network, nd; Startup Canada, nd)</td>
<td><strong>Capitalism</strong></td>
<td>Government intervention into the market through policy and programs to attract investment to regions and democratize access to business startup through assistance programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Communities Approach (Markey, S., et al., 2012)</td>
<td><strong>Capitalism</strong></td>
<td>Municipal government-led strategies to asset map and consult with community on development vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Well-being and Happiness Measures and outcomes (Canadian Index of Well-being, 2014) | • Measuring Well-Being, not just GDP  
• Redefining outcomes beyond solely economic outcomes | Capitalism | Government review of outcomes and incorporation into policy making |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sustainable Development (United Nations, 1987; 2015) | • Community Sustainability Plans  
(Municipally mandated in the province of Ontario)  
• United Nations lead Sustainability measures and plans - voluntary  
• Focus on finding a balance between economic, social, and environmental values | Capitalism and Communism | United Nations driven - no legal obligation for countries to comply to standards. |
| Community based economic development (Occupy Together, nd) | • Economy is in the service of people and communities.  
• Re-distribution of wealth and accountability to ensure basic needs and opportunities for all.  
• Occupy movement to show that 99% of the people were no longer willing to accept growing economic disparity where 1% of the world’s population “own everything” | Various views as it is a decentralized movement | Community takes care and provides opportunities for all. Redistribution of wealth to ensure basic needs and opportunities for all |
Table 3.1 demonstrates that, at their core, many emerging theories, strategies and tactics still work within the dominant Capitalist structure. They also show a strong reliance or focus on government intervention to practice the emerging strategy. This consistency in vision and governance creates an interesting point of departure for discussing the efficacy of emerging strategies at implementing change in economic development systems and practices and making this change stick in the long term. This further demonstrates how strong capitalism is at re-appropriating difference towards its own purpose ensuring its reproduction over time (Winnubst, 2012). Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1 also suggest that emerging strategies often have more of an incremental effect on influencing economic development systems and practices in the community as they still frame it within the dominant capitalist vision, government regulated system of governance.
Figure 3.1: Mapping Emerging Practices on the Continuum of Vision and Governance for Economic Development and Sustainability
Figure 3.1 focuses on the capitalistic side of the butterfly diagram as most initiatives are focused within the vision of capitalism. The rendering illustrates my interpretation of where each alternative may sit on the axis of governance and vision. There is an interpretive component to this exercise as it is based on my understanding of the consensus of the various approaches. In taking this approach, it shows that many emerging practices still focus on the importance of our social institutions to regulate the economy with 7 out of 11 focusing on strong government intervention into the economy. Only 4 out of 11 still focus on less government intervention towards a capitalistic vision of exchange with one leading towards community welfare outcomes, one leading the market towards resiliency and localization and one leading to self-sufficiency and independence through entrepreneurialism and creating a job for oneself. Overall, many of the emerging approaches to economic development focus on increased governance through regulation and intervention in the market towards a vision of more just and sustainable outcomes.
CHAPTER 4

POSITIVE PROCESSES: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter discusses the research design and methods used to explore the role of lived experience of community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in a rurally situated small city in the global north. My research design and method are exploratory, intended to contribute to a fuller understanding of their effectiveness at recognizing the role of lived experience of people navigating the socio-political tensions found in economic development decisions and practices. The research design and approach is inspired by earlier chapters, which contextualize and conceptualize economic development vision and governance in the global north. These chapters point to the importance of recognizing the socio-political tensions that frame our experiences of care, relationships, and our interdependencies within a mechanistic system of economics (Heilbroner and Milberg, 1995; Nelson, 2000; Rubinoff, 2000). Furthermore, contextual practices that respect the unique characteristics and identity of people and place are also important (Markey et al., 2010).

This chapter describes the methodological approach to answering the research questions that underpin the goal to understand what is the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities? The full methodological framework is illustrated in Table 4.1 (below), with reference to the three research objectives and six specific research questions.
Based on the crisis of vision in economic thought as lacking philosophical rigour (Heilbroner and Milberg, 1995), section one of this chapter discusses the approach to the research design and method to incorporate an ethics of care. The second section describes the qualitative case study design and data collection practices through nineteen in-depth interviews. The third section will describe the strategies used by the researcher in analyzing the data. The data analysis seeks to understand critically the role of lived experience in economic development practices in rurally situated small cities. This understanding has the potential to lead to a more authentic understanding of the socio-political complexities experienced by people with varying degrees of influence in economic development decision-making. The findings of this research design and method are used to develop a model to explore the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities. Throughout this chapter, I will provide reflexive comments on my role in implementing the study.

**Approaching with Care**

Embedded in the network and topic of economic development in the case study region, I applied a care ethics lens to this research. Through informed consent from all of the participants and a willingness to connect with and understand their concerns in being identified in a place where “everyone knows everyone” (interviewee), anonymity of participants was a core theme in data collection. I also applied awareness as the researcher to the ways in which I transform the narrative
of the participant – through questions, the power dynamic of the interviewer – interviewee relationship and creating emotional trust to protect identities.

Furthermore, a care ethics lens re-focuses on the centrality of being human - our interdependence through caring and being cared for and how this relates to our emotional health and our actions (Herron and Skinner, 2013). Applying a care ethics lens to our common vision of economic development in the global north will require an understanding first of what the human experience is of that system. In particular the tactics and strategies used by people to influence economic decisions that reinforce a particular economic vision. Therefore, the approach to this thesis and its analysis considers that those who make economic decisions in communities are often bound by this economic vision, but still care and experience care. If we are to move towards more just and sustainable outcomes in economic development, we must have a stronger understanding of our interdependencies and make an ethic of care central to our economic vision (Hankivsky, 2004).

Hankivsky (2004) shows that an ethic of care contextualizes difference in the human condition and therefore “rejects indifference to social consequences of actions and decisions” (Hankivsky, 2004, 2). As decisions are about choosing between options, values are pivotal to enacting outcomes and rationalizing them (Hankivsky, 2004). Employing values within a vision of care ethics can illuminate complexity and contextualize it within people and place. It is within a person’s vision that they develop their value system and rationalize decisions. With our common vision of neoclassical economics in the global north, people set their value systems to rationalize decisions in leadership through primarily an economic lens,
externalizing aspects of care. Considering care ethics in contextualizing myself as the researcher and in understanding the interviewees is very important in bringing a unique perspective and vision to the discussion of economic development practices.

The research questions selected for this study explore the lived experience of those who are involved in economic development with varying levels of influence. It approaches each interviewee to understand the tactics and strategies they use when faced with a development opportunity. It also inquires into the motivators, tensions, opportunities and challenges the interviewee encountered with a development opportunity. Starting from a place of vision was important for me in understanding the place from which interviewees were making sense of the world. Furthermore, reflexively considering my vision and motivations in the research study was also ongoing. This reflexivity happened regularly throughout each interview. As I have a background in economic development and previous experience working in the field, there was a salient language between myself and those being interviewed which meant that interviewees did not feel the need to define and describe every process, often referring to my knowledge of the field. In this way, it was important to reflexively consider my role and contribution in the meaning-making of each interview.

Furthermore, I integrated a surface understanding of care ethics into the research design, collection, and analysis to focus on a strengths-based and human-centric approach to understanding the data. A strengths-based approach for my inquiry, takes a critical view of focusing on promising aspects of the data towards more just and sustainable outcomes. It also contextualizes interviewees as
individuals who care and are cared for, acting in relation to others. Taking a care ethics approach is also important in maintaining my local network of trust in moving from the public research question to the thesis research question. Furthermore, a care ethics approach is representative of the way of looking to which I want to contribute academically and professionally.

**Strategies, Tactics, and Trajectories**

Strategies, tactics, and trajectories were used to understand the role of lived experience in this case study as it is an effective analytical tool for ethnographic research that is completed in a short time frame (Perramond, 2007). Strategies, tactics, and trajectories illuminate how we use our common economic vision to set the priorities through which economic development decisions are made in a community. The common vision used to define particular outcomes become “trajectories” with pre-defined values and personal discourse that create shared meaning in the world. These trajectories express movement through strategies and tactics to navigate place (deCerteau, 1984). Strategies and tactics are the ways in which one seizes opportunity and describe the ways in which interviewees achieve desired outcomes in their communities (deCerteau, 1984, xx).

A strategy assumes the place of that which is ‘proper’. “The proper is the victory of space over time” (deCerteau, 1984, xix). It is a planned or acceptable event. Strategy uses a place that has a designated purpose, and appropriates it for a similar use. Those that use strategy find themselves homogenously moving within the confines of pre-defined access points in society. They act within the dominant
vision and socio-political system to fulfill their intentions. Advocating and lobbying political decision-makers is a common way that individuals and groups can act within the dominant system to advocate for their preferred outcomes.

A tactic cannot count on having a 'proper' place and therefore must rely on time to offer an opportunity to be seized ad hoc (deCerteau, 1984). “Whatever it wins it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into opportunities” (deCerteau, 1984, xix). The Occupy Wall Street social movement is an example of using tactics to appropriate space. By accessing private and public spaces such as banks, corporations, universities, public parks, etc. intended for building wealth, they built an international social movement bringing awareness to economic inequity around the world.

Though we are far from Hobbes brute economic order, DeCerteau (1984) describes the ways in which people navigate a generally hostile environment through strategies and tactics. Access to participate, democracy in practice, and economic equality are all challenges to access and gain privilege in navigating the environment. These socio-political tensions define one’s access to influence the environment and seize an opportunity to create contexts and meaning that defines spaces (Hall, 1997). In any space, its participants identify places, which are surrounded by particular rules (deCerteau, 1984). Rules define the opportunities and restrictions that occur within a space. These rules are defined contextually by those who create and (re)appropriate the space over time (Bourdieu, 1998; Foucault, 1990; Hall, 1997).
An open space is not possible in practice (Bourdieu, 1998; Foucault, 1990) because our interdependencies are governed through rules that define the social, political and economic exchange between people. In a space, there is a “spatial order” that identifies the opportunities and closures within it (deCerteau, 1984, 98). Applying a lens of strategies and tactics to a complex problem “provides a way of conceiving and constructing space on the basis of a finite number of stable, isolatable, and interconnected properties” (deCerteau, 1984, 94). Our common vision of economic development predetermines the ways in which the possible uses of space are preconceived through its values that provide a framework for practice and decision-making. These preconceptions define the rules by which opportunities are opened or closed to those who want to participate. This openness or closure often determines whether people can employ strategies or tactics to achieve their goals. As people use space, they appropriate it for their own purposes and then take away from it something that they have transformed it to be (deCerteau, 1984, 98). New meaning is created within the appropriated space for the person. “Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects etc., the trajectories it speaks” (deCerteau, 1984, 99). Through each person’s tactics and strategies, new meanings evolve over time. Applying a qualitative lens of tactics, strategies, and trajectories to this research offers an opportunity to illuminate further socio-political dimensions in economic development practice.
Methodological Framework

By design, the research takes an inductive approach to framing and developing the research project in order to incorporate the researcher and interviewee experience into the development of the study. This thesis takes a transdisciplinary approach to achieve a greater understanding of the many ways development is discussed. Table 4.1 presents the methodological strategies used to explore six research questions in this study. The literature review seeks to define what characterizes a rurally situated small city; articulate a continuum of vision and governance for economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities; and map out current and emerging approaches on the continuum. This frames the contextual and conceptual framework for exploring lived experience in the case study region of Peterborough, Ontario. Lived experience is explored through nineteen semi-structured interviews that seek to discover the vision of community leaders for economic development and sustainability; what motivates that vision and how their influence manifests economic development outcomes. Addressing these research questions will contribute an understanding about the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities.
Table 4.1 Methodological Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</th>
<th>METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH</th>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTION</th>
<th>METHOD</th>
<th>ANALYSIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective One – Examine the concepts and contexts of vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities</td>
<td>Articulate a continuum of vision and governance for economic development</td>
<td>R1 - What is our vision and governance of economics in the global north?</td>
<td>Peer-reviewed Literature Exploration</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis of orthodox economic vision and governance and heterodox perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective One – Examine the concepts and contexts of vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities</td>
<td>Define rurally situated small city by reviewing literature on rural-urban identity and its impact on our vision of development</td>
<td>R2 - What is a rurally situated small city and what does that mean for our vision of development?</td>
<td>Peer-reviewed Literature Exploration</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis to identify gaps and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective One – Examine the concepts and contexts of vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities</td>
<td>- Identify current and emerging economic development and sustainability approaches in rurally situated small cities in the global north and plot approaches on the continuum of vision and governance for economic development</td>
<td>R3 - What current and emerging economic development and sustainability approaches exist in rurally situated small cities?</td>
<td>Peer-reviewed Literature Exploration</td>
<td>Discussion and thematic analysis of the vision and governance approaches of current and emerging economic development and sustainability strategies in rurally situated small cities in the global north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH</td>
<td>RESEARCH QUESTION</td>
<td>METHOD</td>
<td>ANALYSIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Two - explores the vision and governance of community leaders in a case study of lived experience in Peterborough, Ontario</td>
<td>Understand the dominant vision for economic development and sustainability in Peterborough, ON and explore within the framework of the continuum of vision and governance</td>
<td>R4 What is the vision of economic development and sustainability of community leaders in Peterborough?</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Thematic analysis (Nvivo and researcher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Two - explores the vision and governance of community leaders in a case study of lived experience in Peterborough, Ontario</td>
<td>Understand the strategies, challenges and opportunities of community leaders in achieving their vision of development for Peterborough, ON</td>
<td>R5 What motivators, tensions, opportunities and challenges do they encounter as community leaders governing economic development and sustainability in Peterborough?</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Thematic analysis (Nvivo and researcher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Two - explores the vision and governance of community leaders in a case study of lived experience in Peterborough, Ontario</td>
<td>Understand capacity for impact based on a community member’s degree of influence on community decision-making</td>
<td>R6 How does the lived experience of community members with varying degrees of influence manifest economic and community development outcomes?</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Thematic analysis using a discourse analysis lens (Nvivo and researcher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH</td>
<td>RESEARCH QUESTION</td>
<td>METHOD</td>
<td>ANALYSIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Three - inform an exploratory model of the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities in the global north</td>
<td>Work towards an understanding of the role of lived experience in economic development decision-making.</td>
<td>Model of the role of lived experience</td>
<td>Hermeneutic phenomenological approach to translating the data into a model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of the Case Study Region: A Rurally Situated Small City

Canada’s demography is spread across a vast country with the majority of the population living in urban places, surrounded by a vast rural landscape. However, defining rural and urban places conjures a host of discussions on what it means to be rural or urban. There can also be socio-political tensions between rural and urban as place “might be best defined as elements of physicality, activity, and meaning, which add up to a feeling that a community is a special place with a unique history and cultural identity that are distinct from anywhere else, and meriting preservation” (Dushenko, 2012, 211). This continuity of place is central to notions of community sustainability and urban amalgamation (Dushenko, 2012, 212), decreasing agricultural lands and urban wealth development. Furthermore, gentrifying rural places can create vast inequities and create perceived and real threats to the unique history and identity of place. The Ontario Minister of Rural Affairs (2014), for instance, succinctly addressed defining rural in a keynote speech:

As many of you know, when it comes to funding programs and providing services, the approach has been to define "rural" as a population of 100,000 and less. But, quite frankly, it's not that simple. Rural Ontario is varied and diverse. No single definition exists, particularly in relation to people's perception of what it means to be "rural." Many of the folks living in the countryside, in villages and hamlets, rely on the services that towns like Cobourg, Port Hope and my hometown of Peterborough provide. This includes basic services like grocery stores and pharmacies, but also essential social service such as hospitals, doctors' offices and employment assistance. But the biggest reason "rural" remains so hard to define, is because its most significant quality, a sense of community, is difficult to measure. A sense of community often embodies the resources, beliefs and common values we collectively share. And our rural communities are made up of close knit, collaborative partnerships.

The case study region was selected because it is a rurally situated small city with a two-tier municipal system in Ontario, Canada. With both a strong urban and
rural influence on governance through the two-tier municipal system and through jointly held services amongst the region's municipalities, Peterborough, Ontario has been categorized as a rurally situated small city for the purposes of this thesis. While in Canada, Peterborough is considered mid-size, for the purposes of this thesis, it shares many of the attributes of a small city when considered in the context of the global north. From an international perspective, the OECD would categorize Peterborough as a small urban area. Furthermore, during the process of recruiting participants in the study, it was clear that people were concerned about being identified as everyone knows everyone here. This idea that everyone in the community knows everyone and that individual sanction happens because of this, demonstrates a characteristic typical of smaller places. For the purposes of this study, it is important to consider size socio-politically as well as demographically.

Peterborough is situated in the global north and has four seasons with an approximate four-month growing season. The seasonal changes, and living in a northern climate create greater interdependence on global markets for food and increased energy needs for survival in cold seasons. In Marshall’s (1890) *Principles of Economics*, he discusses within an entirely different historical context, the greater economic imperative that drives the highly productive and organized way in which northern inhabitants work to survive. Although he wrote about a different time, there is value in considering the concept that economic development practices that work in some places may not be effective, especially where climates differ. For this primary reason, this thesis is focused specifically on the global north to also account for changes in climate. Other recent research in health geography has demonstrated
strong weather related impacts to human productivity and behaviour (Joseph et al., 2012). The impact of weather and climate on the lived experience and productivity motivation is an important variable in discussing the lived experience of development strategies in communities.

The two-tier municipal system brings the urban-rural tension to the forefront in regular governance decisions for the region but it also gives economy of scale to be more competitive and rally resources towards common goals. The population of the City is increasing with a change of 4.4% since 2006, which is below the national average of 5.9%. The City is surrounded by the County, comprised of eight rural municipalities. These municipalities have had a declining population since 2006. The City alone has 1,233.6 people per square kilometer, but the City and County combined have under 85.4 people per square kilometer (Statistics Canada, 2011).
Figure 4.1: Map of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada (City of Peterborough, 2016)
Peterborough, Ontario has been selected as a case study because it is a rurally situated small city that is somewhat distanced from metropolitan areas. According to Nader (2009), Peterborough’s economy has transformed over the past century from administrative to resource-based (lumber) to industrial and now relies heavily on providing regional services such as education and health care. Canada’s metropolitan-centred growth has resulted in negative growth for the Peterborough region, however, "the city has made a successful transition from an industrially based economy to a modern service economy, providing a broad range of services to an extensive region" (Nader, 2009, 175). Nader (2009) also states that city planning is "well supported by citizens" and has "enhanced quality of life" (175).

The City of Peterborough also exhibits many of the characteristics that rural places are experiencing - aging population, gap in wealth distribution between rich and poor and the urban and rural areas, and an urgent need to address economic development of its downtown core (Nicol, et al., 2009). In addition, the Province of Ontario has downloaded a significantly increased responsibility of regional planning to the municipalities (Nicol, et al., 2009). This offers an opportunity for the City and County of Peterborough to develop more place-based or place-specific strategies of development that can benefit from lived experience. Furthermore, Peterborough has a "rural-urban duality that characterizes the community and its sense of place as both city and countryside" (Nicol, et al., 2009, 177).

This case study of a rurally situated small city presents the challenge that case studies are not very transferable due to regional differences (Grodach, 2011). This research project seeks to trial a process of better understanding and
incorporating lived experience into our vision and practice of economic development. Process can be augmented to suit contexts and place, and while this thesis does not attempt to transfer results to other regions, it can provide a starting point or inspiration for other communities to adapt in understanding and effectuating development practices that fit with their lived experience. The following research methods have been used to consider lived experience in the case study region.

Data Collection and Ethics Review

To ensure the strictest compliance with ethical best practices and confidentiality for participants, I acquired ethics approval in advance of using human subjects in my research. After the consent forms, the interview questions, and letter of information were developed, I submitted the application to the Trent Ethics Review Committee. I received approvals on my initial application and subsequent follow up renewals.

Lived Experience Interviews

With ethics approval from the Trent University Research Ethics Board, nineteen informational interviews were completed with local community leaders with varying degrees of influence on economic development outcomes. Invitations to participate were sent out to all elected public officials in the case study region and were completed over a two-week period in the month of July, 2013. Sending requests for interviews in the summer did not have a material effect on the availability of participants. Those who chose to participate were scheduled at a time
and location convenient to them. Public sector leaders, non-profit leaders, private sector leaders and some individuals rated by local media as being the top twenty influencers in the community also were asked to participate. There was an effort to incorporate diversity in participants (age and gender); however, representation of youth and women in elected and paid leadership positions at the time of the interviews was low. Interviewed community leaders included: business owners, elected officials, municipal staff, executives, not-for-profit staff, community influencers and alternative economic advocate leaders in the community. Many interviewees had direct influence on economic development knowledge and decision-making in Peterborough. Participants described their influence and these were categorized into three kinds of influence for the purposes of this study.

- **Formal influence** is defined as: Legitimized influence through an elected position with voting power to make decisions (n=6) or to provide reports, recommendations, information or perspective to influence the decision-makers by virtue of employed position (n=8).

- **Informal influence** is defined as: Those who have strong reputations and networks in the community that can mobilize social capital to influence decision-makers toward a preferred outcome (n=3).

- **Little to no influence** is defined as: Those who have an interest in development but do not have the social capital to mobilize decision-makers towards a preferred outcome (n=2). Lack of influence can also be a result of language, which is very explicit in its rules of acting and very distinctive in
how it creates different levels of access to opportunities for people
(deCerteau, 1984).

This study collected ethnographic information about economic development
strategies following Willis and Trondman (2000). Lived experience was informed by
Hay (2005) and Espinoza, et al. (2012). The ethnographic study focuses on
interview participants’ vision and governance of economic development and
sustainability in Peterborough, Ontario. It considers more broadly their vision and
governance preferences and motivators and analyzes them in action through a
series of questions on the contentious and current debate about where to re-locate a
casino. In undertaking this research, I applied a Hermeneutic Phenomenological
methodology to participating in and analyzing the data for this ethnographic study.
The Hermeneutic Phenomenological methodology was selected based on its
grounding in continental philosophy that supports the conceptual approach of
discussing the strategies and tactics of social actors within an economic system (van
Manen, 2014). Furthermore, this “methodology is well suited to serve practitioners
who in their day-to-day practice may be unaware of or insensitive to the depths and
subtleties of other people’s experiences” (van Manen, 2014, 280). It is comfortable
with incompleteness and accepts that the full scope of any experience is incapable of
being explained in one research project due to the depth of complexity (van Manen,
2014). It also provides a reflective opportunity for me, as the researcher to consider
and accept my role in constructing meaning and value out of the engagements with
the interviewees. The phenomenon of community leaders’ lived experience of
economic development decision-making was explored through informational interviews from thirty to ninety minutes long. The interviews sought to understand:

- dominant vision for economic development and sustainability in Peterborough, ON and explore within the framework of the continuum of vision and governance
- strategies, challenges and opportunities of community leaders in achieving their vision of development for Peterborough, Ontario
- capacity for impact based on a community member's degree of influence on community decision-making

The focus of the thesis is not to analyze the question of the casino but to have a two-step verification to understand if the philosophy and motivation for development aligns with the vision and governance of development.

**Data Analysis**

The literature review presented in Chapter Two and Three uses a thematic analysis of the contextual and conceptual landscape of economic development in the global north. While incomplete due to the vastness of the project, it seeks to provide insight into key theories, strategies and tactics that inform the governance of economic development and sustainability. The lived experience interviews support the literature reviews discussion to identify a “common vision” or “strategic plan” (interviewees) for governing development. Through the inductive approach to this thesis, the research moved from a study of sustainability metrics towards a deeper
discussion of vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in small cities in the global north.

Applying a Hermeneutic Phenomenological approach to the exploration of lived experience was appropriate, as my experience prior to and during the research is also part of constructing the method and narrative of this thesis. The thematic and discursive approach to interview data created an opportunity to reflect on the socio-political tensions in choosing between alternatives. NVivo provided the first thematic analysis of the data and the researcher confirmed and pulled the themes of experience out of the NVivo analysis. Interviews were also analyzed using discourse analysis to ensure sensitivity to how some discourses are privileged and others are silenced. This form of analysis is particularly good for addressing social and environmental injustices (Hay, 2010). Secondly, the results are used to contribute to the discussion of the role of lived experience in community leaders' vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in Peterborough, Ontario. Finally, the results are used to develop a model exploring the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities in the global north.

Finally, applying a care ethic approach to the collection of data recognizes the importance of relationships at the core of my analysis. Ensuring positive processes to identify leader’s strategies and tactics, probing influence, and outcomes on development issues was central to gaining access to interview opportunities and maintaining trust in my home town of Peterborough. While the data collected is rich in content for a number of different research trajectories, I selected this approach to
stay focused on the key purpose of understanding the role of lived experience in vision and governance of economic development and sustainability. Furthermore, this purpose is discursively explored to understand how leaders make their visions for development ‘stick’ over time which contribute to the question of *for what purpose and for whom are we sustaining?*
CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY RESULTS FROM PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

The results in this chapter have been thematically analyzed into contextual and conceptual themes to respond to Objective Two, which explores the vision and governance of community leaders in a case study of lived experience in Peterborough, Ontario. These case study findings seek to understand the following research questions:

• R4 What is the vision of economic development and sustainability of community leaders in Peterborough?

• R5 What motivators, tensions, opportunities and challenges do they encounter as community leaders governing economic development and sustainability in Peterborough?

• R6 How does the lived experience of community members with varying degrees of influence manifest economic and community development outcomes?

In responding to these questions, the findings will first explore the interviewees’ contextual understanding of place to inform on the participants’ views of urban-rural identity, community and economic development practices, and knowledge of the casino debate. There is a discussion of their perception of Peterborough’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the region. The contextual narrative further describes interviewees’ place identity and definition of what is local. Next, the findings are conceptually framed in two parts: framing vision and
interpreting lived experience. In framing vision, interviewees discussed four themes related to economic and community development including: a generational view, a focus on fairness in resource allocation, individualism, freedom of choice and interconnectedness, and value in the pursuit of growth. These four themes situate participant perspectives within a neoclassical vision of governance and focus on the capitalist vision governed by private property rights on the continuum in Figure 2.1 (Chapter Two) and Figure 3.1 (Chapter Three). Understanding the vision for development is key to interpreting the lived experience of community leaders in the case study region. In interpreting the lived experience of community leaders, these four visions are applied to three strategies of actualizing the vision. These three strategies thematically emerged from the data including: rooting identity in place, setting the scene for action and seeking balance as the outcome.

Community leaders root their identity in people and place, set the scene for action to achieve development goals and seek balance as an outcome (i.e., quality of life, different viewpoints, etc.). Considering the four visions of development through the lens of interpreting the lived experience of achieving vision provides an understanding of how development happens and what influences community leaders to make decisions. Framing vision and lived experience demonstrates an ongoing tension in community leaders who are seeking balanced development outcomes. This chapter will demonstrate that sustainability is enacted primarily as a vision of reproducing lived experience of place. Quotes are shared in their complete form to preserve the authenticity of the statements made by participants.
Context of Development

This section will outline the context of how interviewees define economic development and community development, perspectives on the casino debate, as well as their perception of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the region.

Economic Development and Community Development were discussed as very interconnected by most interviewees. There were two primary relationships discussed:

- Where economic development is a sub-set of community development
- Where economic development funds community development

Most interviewees described economic development in the service of community development, primarily by funding it. In general, economic development was described using analogies to sport including colloquial sayings such as “playing the game,” “understanding where the economic puck is going to be,” and the concept of “competition” both locally and globally. In general, economic development was described as pre-cursor to community development. Community development was defined in terms of infrastructure investments or quality of life. Economic development funds the quality of life that a community is seeking. In many scenarios, economic development and community development are described in municipal siloes, whereas the results suggest that they are interdependent. This interdependence is not recognized formally by the municipal structure.
**Place Identity in Local Economic Development**

Many interviewees described the region as something other than rural or urban, except for municipal representatives who had a clear statistical principle for understanding the case study region as urban according to the Municipal Act. Interviewees shared experiential themes in describing their perception of whether the case study area was more urban, more rural, or something else. Interviewees characterized the urban qualities of the community by focusing on the arts, culture, restaurant diversity, and entertainment opportunities. They further described the rural qualities of the community by focusing on natural areas such as lakes, parklands, outdoor activities, agriculture, and food. Demographic size and information played very little role in defining the case study region for most interviewees. It was their experience of place that defined their urbanity or rurality.

**Perspectives on the Casino Development**

Participants were asked to speak about their experience of place and describe the casino debate in the region. The purpose of this research was not to focus in on the casino debate, but to see participants’ vision, strategies, and tactics in action. Participants described their understanding of the casino in the case study region. Currently in the case study region, there is a casino, which is located just outside of the urban area in the Municipality of Cavan Monaghan. Cavan Monaghan receives millions of dollars in proceeds from the casino each year. This scenario has created urban-rural tensions as the urban area provides social services to the entire region and bears the cost without seeing any revenues to support this expense. There was also a strong anti-casino group comprised of community members that
actively advocate against any casino because their perspective is that the socio-economic costs outweigh the financial gain. Therefore, the casino debate was largely based on two questions:

- Should the region host a casino?
- Should it stay in its current rural location or re-locate to the urban centre?

Since the Province of Ontario determined there would be a casino in the region, the question before the municipal council was regarding location. However, the community advocacy group took the tactical opportunity to reframe the question and try to reinvigorate the discussion of whether the region should have a casino at all. One interviewee suggested that the casino would make the community “a second-tier region” suggesting that it had little else to offer to compete with the casino revenues. Other interviewees pointed to the success of how casino revenues reinvigorated another small urban-rural region in Ontario, resulting in attracting a University campus and other downtown investments.

All of the participants had knowledge of the casino debate. Some were integrally involved and others were more observers or informal influencers in the case study region. The concept of morals versus individual choice and freedom was a common response to the question of whether a casino should be in the region. There was a common understanding across interviewees that government should not interfere in the individual choice and freedoms of citizens in regards to the casino debate. However, others cited the health and socio-economic implications of the existing casino explaining that the city currently bears the social cost without
any revenues from the host township. Therefore, the question of location is pivotal to where casino revenues are distributed (several million each year). Many interviewees described the need for the region to act like a region and share revenues between the rural area and the urban area – re-distributing the risk and reward of a casino in the region.

**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats**

Interviewees were asked to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to their community as it relates to community and economic development. Many interviewees pointed to the strengths of quality of life including the amount of space and natural surroundings. The geographic location was described as both strength and weakness in that it is close to major markets but is not directly on major highway routes, which puts it at a competitive disadvantage to attract investment to the region. Peterborough’s geographic opportunity is that it combines positive experiences of rural and urban living in one place. Furthermore, access to funding opportunities to support economic and community development activities is broadened by this duality – making the community eligible for rural and urban based provincial and federal funding opportunities. While interviewees discussed the benefits of being a small urban city surrounded by a rural area, they did discuss some tensions in these relationships – including where to locate new developments and how to allocate the benefits and risks associated with them. One of the threats mentioned by a community leader is that “the unemployment rate for the skilled people in the community is incredibly low. Which means it’s incredibly high in the
unskilled end of things.” Opportunities focused predominately on quality of life with one interviewee sharing this strength in the region:

“I think, one of the magnets to bring bigger business to Peterborough would be the lifestyle and the geography of the area with the river going through the heart of downtown and there are trees.”

Focus on quality of life as an incentive for investing in the community is both an opportunity and a challenge. It presents a conundrum - where quality of life is funded by the very investment and development that it seeks to attract. This poses challenges in navigating place for leaders. For example, one interviewee said that one decision can impact a voters’ support in the next election and this is “bound to happen because you can’t always please everyone.” Further challenges to attracting economic development to fund quality of life include battling with negativity and its effect on prioritizing positive story telling in the community. The other challenge leaders encounter, is communicating the “stiff competition” and long-term relationship building that goes into attracting investment. An interviewee stated “it could take years” to develop some projects. One interviewee said, “the funnel for economic development is you have a thousand prospects, a hundred qualified leads, ten real opportunities and you get one.”

Finally, one interviewee described the lack of a long-term strategic plan for the community citing the “challenge is that finance and politicians don’t like that because they typically think what you’re doing is raising expectations and often those expectations are unrealistic.” However, this interviewee saw the benefit in gaining an understanding of the community needs at a specific point in time for long-term planning.
Framing Visions of Development in Rurally Situated Small Cities

Vision provides the paradigmatic approach of community leaders to make decisions. As such, understanding key themes of vision of decision-makers is vital to understanding what motivates strategy towards particular outcomes. The following section frames the visions of development for the case study in Peterborough, Ontario. The four visionary focuses include: generational view, a focus on fairness in resource allocation, individualism and interconnectedness, and the pursuit of growth. These four visions herald a neoclassical paradigm for economic development, which is the dominant Anglo-American vision of economics in the global north.

**Vision 1: Generational View**

Interviewees often discussed their vision of economic development as being influenced deeply by decisions considered from a generational perspective. Older people and retirees, younger people, and young families are four demographic groups that were embedded deeply into decision-making around investment of public assets and development decisions.

There was a strong focus on planning for the future - cultivating leadership in the present to make decisions that will impact the next generation’s experience of place. This consideration of legacy is core to interviewees’ expression of their generational view of their decision-making. An interviewee focused on how the community needs to “cultivate” and “mentor” the next generation of leadership stating:

Not that those people aren’t already leaders, but we have to name it. This is leadership. We’ve got to name it in this community and
cultivate it. And I think part of it comes with, whether it’s me or not, being honest about what leadership is and how it is an expression of just doing the best you can and being willing to do it.

Mentoring and cultivating the experience of the next generation is core to decision-making in the present.

Interviewees discussed the importance of having “the vision to allocate money to plant the tree in the first place.....” to work towards a preferred future.

There was also a reflection on past generations: “never do anything you’d be ashamed to tell your mother about.” In considering both past and present experience of place, it was stated:

You have to have the right development that really recognizes the environmental framework in which it’s being placed. And, we’ve come to understand that we’re on this Earth for a relatively short period of time compared to human history. And I think environmental preservation for future generations is something that we have to be very concerned about because in fact we’re making decisions today that are going to impact tomorrow. So there’s always the challenge of bringing the future into the present.

This vision of legacy to the next generation, respect of the past, and reproduction of identity and experience over time, is key to understanding how vision creates the context for interpreting lived experience and the challenges leaders face in making decisions in the present while anticipating the outcomes that will affect the future.

**Older People and Retirees**

Older people and retirees are often described in relation to others in terms of population balance and economics. They are referenced regarding their challenges as tax payers with fixed incomes or an opportunity for the next generation to capitalize on their market wealth. In many cases, they are perceived as the passive recipients of decision-making rather than strong social actors.
Older people and retirees are of concern due to the perception of their fixed incomes. For example, one interviewee said, “if you're heavily into retired people your income’s going to be lower because they're living on pensions.” Another interviewee always considers older people and retirees on fixed income when making decisions on development. S/he has a quintessential fictitious person who has worked hard all of her life and should be able to afford to stay in her home and enjoy a quality of life. Every decision this interviewee makes goes through this lens to ensure fiscal responsibility. It is a difficult balance between keeping taxes low and making investments into the future:

I remember one of the councilors at the time, standing up and saying, what about the poor grandmother who's on a fixed income and is just trying to pay her tax bill. And our response to that was, we’re trying to employ her grandchild.

The tension between past and present creates challenges around decision-making in the present, to prepare for the future.

Finally, community planning efforts seek to find a balance in attracting a good distribution of age demographics:

If you’re greying out - maybe you have a problem because there is nothing to keep the young people here. If you are seeing the opposite - then ask what are we doing that young people want to live in the community? Have we created a vibrancy - arts, entertainment, festivals, good education and employment opportunities that have said to young people - hey its worth coming here and putting down roots and staying?

This quote puts the emphasis on building communities to attract youth and young families. One interviewee also discussed:

The inordinate resources that are devoted to wealthier older people and neglecting the younger people by giving the young people opportunities is not a good sign for the future of the community. As
crass as it is - there isn’t a lot of economic future in 85+....there’s a lot of economic future in 25 year olds.

Older people and retirees are often discussed as passive recipients of decision-making and in relation to others. Furthermore, the perception of their identity as tax payers with static income limits their economic potential.

**Younger People and Young Families**

Many interviewees spoke about young people, young families, and shared their personal experiences related to this generational perspective. The concept of youth was a common theme in motivating decision-making in the case study region. In particular, interviewees focused on the challenges that youth face economically, highlighting perceptions such as inequity in distribution of resources, lack of community planning to support quality of life, opportunities for youth, and the exodus of young people in the case study region. Interviewees often discussed their role as community leaders setting the conditions to attract youth to sustain the community, which is a typical challenge of rural places (Nicol et al., 2009).

This section attempts to represent the narratives of community leaders in discussing their vision for development as it relates to the vision of a generational focus on youth. Youth in this context are represented as the recipients of concern, individuals in crisis who need to be helped, but also as the powerful player in the act of sustaining. They are simultaneously the recipients of leadership in the present, translating and weaving knowledge, tradition, and action into the future.

Retaining youth in the community is an important vision for all interviewees. Suggestions made to retain youth include: “less youth migration out of Peterborough” and “partnerships to make it more possible for people who graduate
from the university to be able to stay in the region so that we can keep the talent here.” It was further stated that “from a societal point of view - the future of anything is dependent on young people carrying on.”

For “young people to carry on,” interviewees felt that access to good paying jobs was the number one barrier to attracting and retaining youth in the community. “We need to help people with challenges to employment - and right now, that is youth in this region.” There is also a perception that youth would prefer to stay near home and live in smaller cities for quality of life. It was stated that, “we've got to be able to give [youth] the options of - at least the hope of being able to stay here.”

Creating job opportunities for youth is described as challenging because it takes time for “good decisions” to invest into infrastructure to “come to fruition.” Making decisions in the present to attract young people sometimes feels like a crisis:

And I mean, I'm not in a crisis - just grab anything that comes by, but it is kind of a crisis for these young people to get a job. That’s the way I look at it anyways, so I’m trying to do that - that’s why I run for council. I’m disappointed, myself that I haven’t, if that was the thing I hung my hat on, about bringing jobs - and say - oh well yeah you’re going to pick this here cause it is the best thing that’s come along.

There is also a level of dissatisfaction with the creation of a few jobs or with entrepreneurial pursuits - with a preference for larger employment opportunities for this interviewee.

Yeah but [beyond 6 jobs] let’s say the business blossomed into something that was big. But I mean it’s not going to happen overnight and we need jobs now. And you'd say well "Business Associates" or whatever, they're hiring 100 people - that's great - but it took this span of time to get there. And they're looking for a very select bunch of people to fill those job markets, so we're running out of time.
Retaining youth talent in the community to fill skilled higher paying positions is also a challenge.

Finally, interviewees defined good jobs as being more than minimum wage jobs, which “are just like a drop in the bucket for any permanent prosperity - especially for the young people.” There is a sense that community leaders could work with the business community to convince people it’s a good thing to pay people more....don’t you want your son to have benefits? Don’t you want your family to stay in the region? Don’t you wish that if they could get a job that it was full-time and paid them enough to buy their own house?

There is definitely a strong will amongst interviewees. As one intimated,

“for those of us that have the opportunity to serve in public life, whether you’re a municipal person or the MP or the MPP, I think we’re always striving to see what we can do, to bring in, to provide a framework so the next generation has an opportunity ready in the region. So I think that’s very important.”

Framing leadership in the present to support opportunities in the future is a core component of decision-making for interviewees.

Vision 2: A Focus on Fairness in Resource Allocation

Interviewees in leadership positions had a sense of duty and responsibility to advocate, both formally and informally on people’s behalf, whether it is the business community, tax payers, or community members in general. In many cases, the underlying theme was to advocate for a sense of justness and fairness in decision-making affecting constituents. Much of the dialogue has a value tension between protecting our independent market choices and the need to find balance to solve injustice and create fairness. The first section will focus on place and fairness, in particular a discussion of how place impacts the “playing field.” The second section
focuses on how community members integrate their sense of duty and care in relation to justness and fairness into their decisions regarding community and economic development. The third section focuses on the kinds of outcomes that community members work towards, for more just and fair community outcomes.

An Even Playing Field

From a business community perspective, community leaders focused on issues of fairness in legislation and the application of that legislation, whether at a local, regional or national level. The focus is creating opportunities in the global economy, not legislating barriers and “red tape.” There is also a wish for more equality based on business location, where place determines the tax burden. This tax burden may make business more prohibitive in some areas of the case study region rather than others, promoting unequal development. For example, “if one is competing in the same business, your costs are higher if you’re downtown.”

The overarching theme was a focus on creating a fair playing field from which businesses can compete. One challenge discussed, was that if the casino was located downtown, “you could devastate your downtown. Casinos are designed to keep you in it. They don’t go out to shop. They don’t go out to restaurants. They’re designed so you don’t even know what time of day it is.” There was a feeling that the casino may create a central vacuum pulling business away from owners.

Furthermore, there was a feeling generally that if the City of Peterborough is bearing the costs of delivering social services to the region in relation to the casino then they should also receive revenues from the casino. Strategizing towards this goal, one interviewee stated that:
“We need a position of strength to negotiate. So, I do think that in the end there will be some kind of partnership. But I want that money. I want that four million dollars a year for my city taxpayers. We need that money. We already have the bad side, we need some of the good side.”

Partnering by re-distributing the risks and rewards of the casino is important to the City of Peterborough in the casino debate. In fact, a number of interviewees felt that the existing casino could stay where it is if a revenue sharing model was established within the region so that all taxpayers benefit and not just one township in the region.

There is also a strong desire to create an even playing field for individuals by focusing development decisions towards creating jobs. This focuses development outcomes “to a great extent [on whether] every person who wants a job has one that they can feel good about and earn a living wage - and if not what can you do about it?” Tax payers should be able to earn a living and then be able to protect those earnings through the fiscal responsibility of community leaders: “Every penny we spend is coming out of the taxpayers purse. That’s my overall philosophy.”

Furthermore, one interviewee discussed the importance of creating a fair playing field for citizens by respecting the electoral process. The work of “duly elected people with the ability to make the decision” should be “fundamentally respect[ed].” This sentiment demonstrates the importance of citizens participating and voting in the democratic process to be heard on issues of economic and community development decision-making.

*Duty and Care*

Community members had many identities: constituents, tax payers, or marginalized groups in need of “a hand up.” In many cases, there was a strong sense of duty by
leaders to ensure individuals have the opportunity to maintain healthy lives and can accumulate wealth and private property in their lifetime. For example, lessening property tax burdens on individuals with fixed incomes and creating more opportunities for individuals to become active in contributing to the economy through “meaningful work” and a “living wage.” There also seems to be a sense of duty to care for those groups who may experience negative outcomes from a development decision and to balance it with the potential for positive community outcomes and the right to make individual choices. Duty is described by interviewees to include: personal conduct as a leader, one’s integrity, and a full sense of needing to provide for people (similar to a familial duty to provide).

In exercising this duty to care, interviewees pointed towards the challenges of choosing between alternatives (i.e., jobs versus perceived quality of work). This was evident when an interviewee stated:

“So when somebody says that how can you turn your back on 600 jobs? Are they the jobs I want my kids to work in? Absolutely not. Are they the jobs they might be working in? Absolutely. But I have to give all of these people a leg up to try to make a living.”

This statement demonstrates that the sense of duty in development decision-making is less of a moral issue (socio-political relations of production) and more about not restricting an individual’s ability to earn an income (economic). Another interviewee discussed the need to consider the community as a system that requires care across all kinds of injustices.

[I have] always been motivated to act if I see an injustice of some sort, and not always to do with business, it could be entirely social issues. I think it’s important to recognize that no one is isolated and everybody needs the community.
One interviewee expressed duty as the importance of:

Dealing with every situation with absolute integrity. That’s extremely important to me. Whether its personal or [our business] has a code of conduct that talks about business ethics...and I think in the end honesty and integrity are crucial and that includes being upfront about having a bias. [...] We’re not an elected body that has to balance all interests...Some people may not consider that, but I absolutely consider that complete integrity is to be up front about who you are and who you represent. So honesty and integrity would be important.

Another interviewee pointed towards the idea of ethics in decision-making in relation to the casino debate. S/he discussed the popular incentive of bringing approximately four million dollars of revenue into the municipality from the casino, but indicated that s/he felt

The whole ethics of a casino and having a casino within your community, is just kind of brushed aside, right? Because I think at a base ethics level, just at a very simple level, you’re doing harm to our community – you’re calling your community a second-class community by inviting a casino in, right? I have a lot of respect for Toronto for being – they’re a first class city, right?

Further consideration of duty to care for others included reference to presentations made by the local health unit on how "proximity to casinos hurts people....although it already exists.” Furthermore, there is concern about the existing casino and it’s employees.

My worry is that an American company is going to come in and I don’t know if its unionized or not, the slots, but they’re going to come in and they’re going to cut these jobs. They’re going to cut the wages in half. So absolutely maintain, if not enhance the current pay of folks that are there. Demonstrate that it is going to employ more people. And get commitments from both levels of government about what they’re going to do with the revenue after its generated so that it actually really does add to quality of life in the region.
Another concern about employee displacement at the current casino location is that those jobs exist in the rural areas of the region and “we can barely meet the needs in the county as it is.” There is a feeling that although you may create jobs in the city, you may put 300 people out of work in the rural areas so it creates a zero-sum outcome for employment in the region. An interviewee felt strongly that the region should consider models like Toronto and Cleveland where the community “talks about the conditions under which a provider would come to town and to define those conditions.” There was a clear call for council to demonstrate care to ensure new jobs with the casino are “unionized” and “well-paying.”

**Outcomes of Development**

The primary perceived outcomes of development decisions are about the distribution of risks and rewards of development. One interviewee discussed the outcomes of development and employment as:

If people have good jobs then they can pay the taxes that provide the parks and the community centers and the recreation opportunities and the festivals, you can repave your streets and you can fix your infrastructure. And that makes people want to be here. They’re happier so your crime rates go down. Because, they’re not out looking for something they can’t have. Or, they’re not out desperate because their family is starving. You can do so many things if your economy is booming.

Conversely, interviewees were concerned about the risks of a casino development, in particular the social costs:

We know you do get increased problems with crime. Now we get a small amount of that anyway because it’s five miles out of town. We know there’ll be an increase in gambling addiction, which generally speaking, leads to bankruptcies and spousal abuse and other domestic issues. We know that will happen. We know that depending on where it is there will be demands for social services [paid for by the City].
This juxtaposes the social and economic risks and rewards of development in a community. It reflects the perceptions and challenges faced by community leaders in balancing an increase to the tax base while being concerned about social costs.

Community leaders also acknowledge the power of being in positions of decision-making and the importance of using that towards a better community purpose. One interviewee intimated:

I had a private practice where I was doing therapy with people. And I loved that work. It was intimate, it was deep, it was powerful but I got to a point where I thought, it’s not quick enough. I realized you could change people’s lives over night by the stroke of a pen. You change one policy, you can change people’s lives forever [...] I make a lot of money, you take 20% of that away, I’m going to feel that. Now take someone making $600/month. So overnight you can change people’s lives with the stroke of a pen and that’s where the power is, it’s at the level of policy. And we have a political system that I think to a certain extent plays lip service to democracy. But [predominately,] the same kind of people have the most influence. So for me [...] I wanted to have influence to be a decision-maker or have an influence on decision-makers.

Another interviewee discussed the need to understand all perspectives on a decision including researching the topic and getting a good foundation beyond staff reports to council. This demonstrates a desire to gain community perspectives in balancing views in decision-making. The interviewee said that s/he works hard to “get all sides of it before I make a decision. So, I do my homework.”

One interviewee with an “MBA from Western [University]” brought a unique perspective focusing on energy use as being the most important concept to get right in economic development.

I think it was really the abundant waste around the world, especially in North America of all forms of energy that motivates me and still does. And energy and water, I mean, coming from a physics background with my most cherished equation being E=mc^2 – you know, the use of energy to me is everything. [...] Because until we get
the economics straight, we can’t make a lot of progress on the environmental front or resource depletion.

Finally, employment opportunities and well-paying jobs are core to what interviewees perceive as creating more just and fair outcomes for members of the community.

You can spend a lot of time interpreting statistics but I think the real issue is for anybody that wants a job, we should be out doing what we can to make sure that happens. And not get caught up in the ups and downs and ins and outs.

**Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and Interconnectedness**

Underpinning much of the discussion with interviewees on economic and community development is property rights as defined by a capitalist system. These property rights mark our ability to be individualistic and free to accumulate wealth and distribute it through market-oriented choices. What is clear in the interviews is the perspective that the morals we keep as individuals should not be determined by government policy and that freedom of choice is a strong value of community leaders.

However, interviewees also reflected on our interconnectedness as individuals. In many cases, concepts of interconnectedness came up in relation to working together for competitive advantage. In particular, interconnectedness was within the context of the reciprocal relationship of producer and consumer. That producer-consumer relationship often created the platform through which working with others or creating connections to others was the strategy. These concepts linked closely to the concept that economic outcomes are highly linked to community outcomes. Further, discussion of the casino debate and opposition in the
community was described as being of a moral nature. In fact, many interviewees
disliked gambling or did not participate in it. However, there was a clear message
that they valued the freedom of choice that people have to spend their resources in
the way that they choose. One interviewee made a comparison to alcohol in terms of
challenging community members on his perception of their moral stance:

> Also at the same time why aren’t you outside the beer and liquor store? More people are maimed and killed and families destroyed by alcohol than ever gambling will in its lifetime. Why aren’t you going back to prohibition then? And you’re going to say to me “Well, I like to have a drink” – I can handle it, but a lot of people can’t. So I’m not telling people how to live their lives. All I can do is give them a hand out, to give them a hand up when they need it.......I’ve tried to do a lot of research and I’ve tried to listen to these people. And that’s what I’ve come down with. It’s a moral issue. I’m sorry, I’m not going to talk morals with you. I can’t. I’m not going to change your mind, you’re not going to change mine. And I wouldn’t even try to. But they’re trying to do it, they’re trying to make – that’s what it is, it’s a moral issue.

Another interviewee also described the ethics and morality of gambling as
extraneous to the debate and mentioned: “of course the major motivation is how
much money the community gets back from OLG – and doesn’t OLG also fund
Trillium?” This comment is important as many non-profits and charities receive
funding from Trillium, which is only possible through gambling revenues. This again,
points to the challenges faced by leaders in balancing the risks and rewards of
development opportunities.

As individuals are fundamentally free to make choices on how they spend
their resources, interviewees pointed to the importance of maintaining local dollars
within the community and trying to attract investment from outside of the
community. For example, “if there isn’t a casino in the region, then they will go to
another community drawing money away.” Another interviewee discussed the concept of defining a living wage through individual expectation of wealth accumulation, rather than a government set target.

“To me the living wage is - does it afford the lifestyle you wish to have? You know, and that’s very different for somebody with a yacht worth 270 million dollars. Now somebody that wanted to live on that would consider their living wage a whole lot more than me who used to have a 16ft canoe.”

This quote points to a strong value of the individual pursuit of unlimited accumulation and self-determination to define one’s own values and life.

**Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth**

Simply, one interviewee described the outcome of economic development as “Growth.” Although described in different ways, growth was a key value explored by interviewees in their responses. Three key themes of growth focused on local impact, gross domestic product (GDP) and sales revenue, and job growth.

**Local Impact**

Some interviewees focused on the economic impact of development and what the true cost and benefit is to the local community. One interviewee referenced Jeff Rubin’s *End of Growth* (2012) regarding peak oil and how it is becoming more and more expensive to bring products from further away.

So, it would make sense for products to be built, not just farming, but actually manufactured within one’s own geographic area. If you invest in that in the long run it pays off because you aren’t paying the transportation costs. And I think he mentioned a very strong point there. The various things we look at, I don’t know where this pen is made, or that tape. Probably somewhere in Asia or India or China and why can't we create those factories right here? So my vision would be making the business community, the development community, develop into businesses that everyone uses. Very saleable and a market where you have ready-made employees.
This quote points to a desire to create a stronger local economic impact by keeping money in the community through a more closed-loop of production and consumption. Other interviewees discussed the importance of focusing on City of Peterborough growth in the service and manufacturing sectors as well.

One interviewee discussed the importance of understanding the regions business case for developing a casino. Part of the business case includes:

* more jobs than what currently exist [at the casino] in the county - so we’d have to see that in a meaningful way. We’d also have to see other related investment come to the city, so whether that is new hotel infrastructure, new restaurants, a new entertainment facility, if we see those things taking shape around it then it will actually be giving back to the city.

This interviewee also mentioned an “extreme example” of how the City of Detroit “built a massive new casino - Motor City casino in addition to the casino in Greek town. The city declined in population by 400,000 people after they started construction on them. They didn’t give anything back. There was no related investment as a result of it and the city is now bankrupt.”

They also referenced the business case for sports facilities which communities such as Detroit “bankrupted itself building all of these new facilities. And in Cleveland where their tax money is going to that instead of building highways and roads and bridges and rails and all sorts of things that haven’t kicked back anything.” There is a strong focus on municipal accountability to consider how tax dollars are being spent to ensure that development is focused on creating wealth in the community rather than just “being a tax on the people that live here.” There is a focus on creating a business case to demonstrate that development will draw investment from “outside of the community, because if you don’t, then all you are doing is taking money away from it.” They further discussed the distribution of financial rewards of the casino:
Whoever invests in the casino - they’re not going to be from Peterborough – so their profits and indeed the share that goes to the provincial government – that’s gone. It comes from here and it goes somewhere else. So if the operator is based somewhere in Las Vegas or the UK or Chicago or wherever they might be based out of any of the profits they take go there….. then all you’ve done is take money from one area of the economy and put it somewhere else. So you’ll say hey, we created 500 jobs at the casino – what if we lost 1000 jobs everywhere else? And that’s why you have to be very careful in these calculations and economic impact because it’s a one-sided study.

Further, the same interviewee discussed the important challenge of attracting people from outside the community to gamble, as there are casinos in many communities across Ontario. They stated that “if we just didn’t have casino gambling in the province then everybody’d be better off.” This quote discusses the challenges of how municipalities are often competing for developments, jobs and economic impact in their communities. In addition, another interviewee discussed:

The economics of [the casino]. Let’s take the actual money that’s spent there, that’s spent on the building and facilities, and what the taxpayers of Ontario would have to give us to be able to do it and see what the real return is on the money coming to the community in terms of a rate of return on investment. I think you’d find the return on investment that stayed within the community is incredibly small.

One interviewee discussed the fact that the new casino would not create a single job:

There isn’t a person that wants a job at the casino that won’t drive out to where it is now to get it. Cause lots of people already do. It’s no more [jobs] here versus out there [where it currently is located]. In fact, in here I think it would hurt employment. You could devastate your downtown. Casinos are designed to keep you in it. They don’t go out to shop, they don’t go out to restaurants. They’re designed so you don’t even know what time of day it is.

There was a clear focus on understanding the full costs of having a casino and for tax payers to see a clear return on investment for any development, and in particular, the casino. The decision to have a casino is dependent on growth to the
tax base, growth in local jobs, and being able to attract wealth from outside of the community and then keep it in the region.

In discussing economic growth locally, interviewees discussed other sectors including the “the focus on alternate energy around the globe.” The interviewee felt that:

This area has a lot of potential to capitalize on the alternative energy supply chain, whether it’s production of ethanol fuel, which stimulates agriculture through corn production or whether it’s the turbines that they make for the wind [here in the region]. They’re being put up all around the world and we could have a lot of great jobs here in producing those component parts and shipping them around the entire world, those types of things will bolster our local economy. I read an article that China produces 95% of the solar technology but they only deploy 5% in their own country. I just think there’s opportunity in this area that we could capitalize on that. I don’t know if it’s the best, most wonderful opportunity but I think it’s something – we’re doing some of that now and I think that’s an opportunity where we can leverage and grow.

In addition, there is still “pie in the sky thinking” that the region may attract a “Mazda plant or a Honda plant located on the edge of the city.” But there was also a key understanding from “studying economic development over the years - that it’s also very important that we try to ensure that our local economy is diversified.” In addition, one interviewee suggested, “I’d like to see developments that add value to what we have here already, whether it’s looking at the airport or the nuclear supply chain or the value added to agriculture, and new economic opportunity that leverages what we have here already.”

Core to development decisions is the concept of really understanding the costs and rewards of development to a community. The centrality of growth in describing the desired outcomes of development is clear. There also seems to be a
will to grow from within, focusing on leveraging existing businesses and local strengths for growth.

*Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Sales Revenue Growth*

Growth in GDP and sales revenue were obvious economic development outcomes for interviewees. One of the most commonly cited benefits of the casino in the region is the money that is given to the host municipality. One interviewee cited that:

> The casino in the county cuts a cheque to the municipality for something in the neighborhood of 4 million dollars every quarter. A larger casino in the City is approximately 20% more than that. So 5 million dollars every quarter influx into our tax base might reduce taxes that we’re being required to pay, might put more money in the pot for such things as policing, in fact, could be a long term benefit to the whole community.

Growth in revenues to the tax base in the municipality is seen as a clear benefit and outcome of the casino development.

Another interviewee focused on the downtown and stated that measures of economic development success would certainly [include] the studies of GDP and the ratio of retail sales, retail, and improving downtown because it’s been on a downward slope. The 250,000 square feet of empty office space – how much of that is being newly used?

Sales revenue was echoed as a clear measure of success by an interviewee with a private sector background, stating that:

> The way one measures one’s success is by accumulating successful sales. So, you could argue my philosophy for developing the economy in particular, is to measure success by having a vision and a plan, and executing that plan and the checkmark at the end of the day is “Can I look at economic activity directly – sales –, indirectly – marketing – and feel that the work that myself and our organization has done has contributed to that. So it’s very bottom line oriented.”
Growth in GDP and sales revenues reflect the “bottom line” of economic development. Focused on how the numbers reflect growth and affect the economy.

**Job Growth**

The number one cited result of economic development was “Jobs. Jobs. Jobs.” “Any successful economic development or investment or job creating institution should be able to point to jobs and opportunities and things it has provided elsewhere as a result of that investment. So that’s the kind of multiplier that we would seek to see.”

The local economic development agency has:

...public performance measures, which we publish. The quantitative ones really are about job creation – did we help the community create more jobs? There is certainly a tourism component to that – is tourism healthy and vibrant and growing? There is a wage rate component – are the jobs we’re creating of significant value? I think any job with this community is valued, but like all people in communities, you’d like to see a certain level of financial and economic prosperity.

Quality jobs that create significant value are important to interviewees. Jobs that provide a living wage (generally characterized as between $15-25/hour) and provide meaningful work for people were important to the interviewees. One interviewee prioritized

jobs - quality good paying jobs. I don’t want minimum wage retail sector jobs. I want, you know, 25 dollar an hour – decent jobs. Decent jobs, you know? That will help all of the negative publicity about our employment rate and our people on social services and it would just help in so many ways.

Ensuring the job opportunities are long-term and sustainable is very important to interviewees. One funder stated: “sustainability of the projects going forward and the creation of long-term jobs” are core components of new investments.

Furthermore, the interviewee stated that, “the application calls for a specific number
of jobs to be created and if those are created then that obviously becomes a successful development.”

Finally, there is an appetite to create jobs from within the community. To help existing employers grow and increase their number of employees.

We have things in this community that are not fully understood, or appreciated. And we need to make sure that whenever we’re looking at economic development that we appreciate the businesses that we have here today. And say to them how do I help you get from two employees, to four? How do I help you get from five to ten? How do I help you to get from ten to twenty? We’ve got a lot of really good businesses here right now, but frankly there are also an awful lot of small businesses here that have the potential to grow and expand and create new jobs and to be really successful and really contribute locally and I don’t see nearly enough focus on them from all levels of government and from the financial sector – the banks and so forth, to be true partners with these businesses.

In addition to increasing employment opportunities, interviewees discussed the growth in “spin-off results”:

“Obviously job creation is certainly number one. Spin-off results would be number two – so if you worked hard and established a new little business with ten employees then maybe [that creates an opportunity for] somebody to open in that same area.”

Overall growth in the number of high quality, meaningful jobs, and their spin-off benefits were the number one cited desirable outcome for economic development.

Community Leaders’ Visions of Development

Community Leaders’ visions of development in Peterborough are characterized by their experience of people and place leading towards strategies and tactics that achieve a particular vision. On the continuum explored in Chapter Two (Figure 2.1) and Chapter Three (Figure 3.1), these four thematic visions align with a capitalist vision and a government regulated market. Participants’ experience of this vision and their role in governing the market presents a tension in applying a
generational view, fairness in resource allocation, individualism, freedom of choice and interconnectedness, and value in the pursuit of growth. Their positive experiences of people and place promote a personal view guided towards a more pluralistic value system broadening the outcomes discussion beyond wealth accumulation. This pluralistic value system is inspired by a duty of care - for example, wanting to ensure the next generation experiences the same or better lifestyle. The following section will review the tensions that participants navigate in their lived experience of economic development strategies, tactics, and decision-making.

**Interpreting the Lived Experience of Economic Development**

This section presents findings in relation to Objective Two to understand the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development in Peterborough, Ontario. It responds to Research Questions Four, Five and, Six to identify and develop themes of lived experience. These themes provide an organizational structure for understanding the strategic and tactical trajectories that community members use to realize their visions of development. These three themes include:

- Rooting identity in place
- Setting the Scene for action (strategies/tactics)
- Balance as Outcome

These three themes describe how community members in the case study enact their visions and governance of development within a capitalist/private property
framework. The four visions of development will be applied to each of the three themes of lived experience to discuss how community members enact them, aiming to reproduce the system of community and economic development in the case study region. It will finish with a proposed model of system reproduction that can be used to have a stronger understanding of what we are sustaining and for who.

Rooting Identity in Place

Community leaders’ decisions were motivated by their experience of place and the people in it. Much of the experience that motivates their decisions comes from their observations of the region around them and their family experience in particular. This rooting of their identity in place is a core way in which they enact their vision of development in the community. The following will demonstrate how community leaders root their identity in place and explore how it impacts the four visions: generational focus, justness and/or fairness, individualism and interconnectedness, and value in the pursuit of growth.

Vision 1: Generational Focus

Personal and family experience was described as a contextual motivator for influential decision-makers in the community. Personal and family experience was used as a relational construct for creating a reference point for making decisions regarding planning and development. One interviewee, when describing the region, had a deep and long history of family in the region. After telling the family’s story, s/he related to the region as being “just perfect” representing the “small town family feel.”
Furthermore, personal and family experience is pivotal to their understanding of the world when making decisions. One community leader described the “unique opportunity” to experience life as “a poor farm kid,” “to be the first person in my immediate family to actually go to and graduate university,” to build a business from the ground up,” and to have the opportunity to now “be in public life.” S/he also referred to the diverse family members representing various groups such as those with disabilities and mental illness. All of this experience framed the understanding of the struggles people face and it has informed his/her leadership.

In the case study of the casino development, a primary concern for leaders was the “very significant impacts on certain people within society and families.” This opinion was counterbalanced with the motivation of creating jobs in the region so that family members could stay in their home community. One interviewee reflected, “I’ve got kids and I’d love to have the opportunity for my kids to get jobs and stay here locally. Rather than move to Calgary or out and about. So, that’s a consideration.”

The experience of family life is an integral point of reference for motivating particular outcomes and decisions in the interviews. Personal experience was often delivered anecdotally, and was generalized as a broad primary source of informing the interviewees understanding of issues. Interviewees referred to their past and present experience, often described within the context of family, as a key driver of their decision-making. This generalized approach of applying personal experience to
broader issues of economic development demonstrates the importance of lived experience in the everyday decisions of community leaders.

Past and present experience was described anecdotally and used to create a vision for the future of the region. One interviewee stated:

I've been in small business and I had at one point I think 26 employees plus my family, and what I never had was anybody ever come in and say “what is holding you from going from 26 to 40?” Nobody ever came in and asked me. Because there were answers to that. Right? And if we actually sat down as I challenge the local economic development agency and the business advocacy group to push economic development from that standpoint and to understand what you have and to embolden it, to strengthen it. Rather than to always chase the illusive next, you know, next investor. And if we really focus on that I think we’d see frankly, more.

In addition, decisions around having a casino in the community impacted one interviewee’s perception of place when they stated “you’re calling your community a second-class community by inviting a casino in.” Decision-makers in the interviews often extrapolate from personal and family experience to create a context for vision and action in defining preferred outcomes for their community. This act of extrapolating experience, grounds deep motivation for particular decisions within the context of individual lived experience.

**Vision 2: Fairness in Resource Allocation**

In many cases, interviewees discussed the challenges and opportunities in the region based on their experience in advocating for fairer outcomes. One interviewee discussed the importance of more cooperation to keep the “heart of the city clean” to “have a reason to [bring people] to come to the heart of the city so we can encourage healthy businesses.” Another interviewee discussed the “dream of the city becoming even more multicultural than what it currently is.” S/he also mentioned that, “The
First Nations community is still not as visible in the city as what it could be or should be given the number of First Nations who live in the area. It’s greatly improved in the 25 years I’ve been here. But, I think there’s still lots of opportunity for that to happen.” Harnessing opportunity to attract people to place, whether it is a location like the downtown or bringing out the diversity that exists in the city is a core strategy of development.

Many interviewees focused on ensuring jobs are paid at a living wage to create more just and fair opportunities for people. This is a key challenge expressed in the casino debate – attracting investment to your community while balancing the need for jobs that pay a living wage. An interviewee stated:

I don’t want to accuse whoever our future casino operator will be, but if they are a for profit company, governed by self-interest, knowing where the labour market is in Peterborough – why would they pay a living wage? Because people are desperate for work so they’re thinking about now and not the future. So that’s a depressing outlook on it but that’s what I see [as a challenge]. Balancing free market values with living wages is a challenge in attracting investment to a place as each community is competing for development opportunities in a global marketplace.

**Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and Interconnectedness**

Urban and rural boundaries create a sense of separation between areas and can create competition between municipalities for development opportunities. This sense of individual identity is also recognized as being deeply affected and interconnected within the region. Some interviewees described the challenges of these boundaries in thinking regionally when making decisions. This regional thinking can be important when competing on a global stage. One interviewee stated that:
The approach we need to take on a regional basis is not just centered on the county and not just centered on the city. It has to be something where there is buy-in on a regional basis. Otherwise it’s not going to work because a [young person] is going to apply for a job and they’re not going to ask if he lives in the city or county. So we have to get over that, work together and try to make it good for everybody in the area.

Working together is a strategy used to align interests and bring people together to cooperate from potentially disparate positions. Referring to the individualized identities as “islands” and understanding the interconnectedness of municipalities was a core concept for some interviewees. Further, it redefines place in terms of regions and aligns interests more closely to achieve outcomes that benefit a broader community than municipal boundaries. One interviewee stated that:

What always comes to the top is the need for everyone to work together. And I mean everyone, I mean the city, I mean the county. I mean local businesses. I mean absolutely everybody needs to adopt a positive, cooperative attitude. They need in many ways to get rid of man-made boundaries, and work together as a region - from an economic development standpoint. That does not speak to amalgamation or joining together as one unit – that is a totally different subject and that is certainly something I would personally never, ever, ever want to see. Because that’s what makes our life in this area so different and unique and the lakes and the rivers and the lifestyle - all those things. But working together is what has to happen. And get rid of the island mentality and let’s work together for the benefit of all of us.

In reference to the outcomes of development in a community, one interviewee stated and re-stated the importance of everyone in the region “seeing the big picture” and “not being an island.” The interviewee focused on “The decisions you make have to be for the betterment of the whole city. But even beyond that, we have to make good decisions that will benefit the whole region.
because we are economic partners. We’re not an island. The city is not isolated from everything around us.”

One interviewee also expressed an interest in working towards:

A better relationship with the county and the city. We would do a lot of things together but I think there’s still that [perception] where the city is the big bully picking on the poor township. I think we’ve tried to do the best we could and [to recognize] that we’re all players in the same thing. So, I would like to see a better rural relationship that way.

Again, focusing place within a regional perspective rather than a municipal perspective resonated stronger with interviewees.

Interviewees also shared the importance of proximity to larger urban centres that connect them to broader experiences and create greater access to markets. This again, points to a more regionalized focus when identifying with their local experience.

Now, we’re just far enough away [from Toronto] that part of what makes this region is that people around here still care about their neighbours. If there are challenges or people need help - the community is there. It’s gotten bigger over the years but there still is that sense of community. You know, a place people like to live. It’s safe. You can get anywhere you want, you’re close to Toronto and the joke used to be ‘Where’s a good place to go out for dinner in Peterborough? An hour and a half down the road in Toronto.’ But that’s not true anymore.

By considering a more regional perspective, interviewees scale their definition of “local” experience to better achieve their development goals. Our concept of place and “local” grows to create competitive advantage in the marketplace and obtain the desired outcomes in the community. Furthermore, there is a focus on placing value on aligning interests to find fair solutions to the casino
debate that respect the small town and neighbourhood feel while growing and maintaining a strong region with development opportunities.

**Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth**

There is a clear demonstration of concepts of the region being unique or having different attributes that make it a great place to live to promote growth. This uniqueness is often characteristic of the quality of life in the region. There is a strong desire to grow opportunities in the region that focus on recognizing these attributes of place. One interviewee stated that “Recognition that the city experience is different than the rural experience” is important. The interviewee discussed the challenges of the local tourism promoters “because they’ve got two masters [the city and the county].” This tourism “tension” between investing in the city or county focus was identified as an example:

> It often seems like the rural waterway focus comes out stronger than the urban opportunity. But I would like to see [the urban opportunity] grow. We know anecdotally that small businesses come to Peterborough because of the quality of life and I’d like to see more of that happen – continue to happen. We do have some amazing small businesses, restaurant scene and small bakeries. Those unique niche markets and audiences are there and there is lots of opportunities for that to continue to grow. We do need to build our tourism infrastructure though.

Another interviewee describes:

> one of the great legacies of the region’s development through the decades will be one of our strengths going forward and that is that we need to do things incrementally, in measured increments. We need to grow incrementally, and within areas that we grow we need to have great diversity. Diversity in the product, product mix, form of development, we need to have some medium and high density mixed in with low density. So when you take a look at this neighbourhood and even the areas of the city that have grown over the last 25-30 years, now there’s local commercial activity, there’s townhouse developments mixed in with single family housing, they don’t sit worlds apart. They sit near each other. We grew kind
of incrementally, radially, in a radial fashion from the city around all edges and we strived for diversity in what we’re about because it makes for good healthy communities to do it that way. I think going forward we need to stay true to what some of our distinctive qualities are as a community. We don’t have the hundreds of acres of tracked housing that you find in the GTA. And I never want to see us get to that. I want to see us be a good, vibrant, focus for development activity but in an incremental and diverse way.

Recognizing the incremental past and present development practices focused on diversity of land use is described as a unique attribute of place that is valued. It is contrasted against more homogenous development found in larger urban centres in the Greater Toronto Area and provides a unique identity for the community.

Focusing on sustaining these key attributes of the region demonstrates a desire to sustain the unique quality of life described by interviewees.

Distilling development practices and regional identity further, decision makers must prioritize the impact of outcomes on place identity. One interviewee stated that in making decisions, it is very important to “look at if it’s going to make the city, the community, better or worse? Is it going to enhance the quality of life?” Further, in discussing how subdivisions have been designed, quality of life in outdoor spaces like parks was not often initially included in drawings until public officials required it as part of their approval of the development. There was also a focus on “respecting the natural heritage of the area.” Other important questions raised by the interviewee for consideration in a decision are:

Is it bringing in jobs because people need that. Will it give people a reason to want to, or to continue to live in Peterborough? Is it respectful of the needs – the balance between the need for farmland and built area? Is there a better way to do it? Is there a cheaper way to do it? How much is it going to cost the taxpayer who ultimately has to foot at least part of the build? Are we giving them a significant return and on top of that is it in line with the community priorities?
The interviewee cited an example that:

You’d not have too much trouble finding people saying ‘we need jobs here, desperately’. They may question, do we need an expanded park or a new arena? But if there was something we could do to bring a new employer or expand a current one – they’d probably be well behind spending the money. There was no outcry over putting 27 million dollars into the airport. As an example. But, look at putting a bridge over Jackson’s Park – the whole community’s in arms. Partially because of the cost, partially because of the environment.

It is clear that interviewees consider the context of place in their decision-making and are deeply impacted by it. There is also awareness that they are crafting experience of place when they make development decisions and the importance of connecting that to the quality of life and economic values of citizens. In addition, while place has a strong role in development decisions, jobs, and attracting employment opportunities to the region does supersede other considerations.

**Setting the Scene for Action**

To set the scene for understanding the strategies and tactics used to manifest economic and community development outcomes, each interviewee was asked to discuss their level of influence on these decisions. Interviewees fit into three categories for the purpose of understanding their strategies and tactics in mobilizing towards a particular outcome: Formal influence, informal influence and little or no influence. Influence affects the strategies and tactics that are explored by individuals to achieve their preferred development outcomes. The following section will review how the four visions appear in the strategies and tactics used to influence development outcomes.
**Vision 1: Generational Focus**

This section will cover three areas of generational focus including:

- How the personal experience of family and place can create a sense of duty and affection for past and present sustaining of place.
- How community leaders find themselves setting the conditions to attract youth to sustain.
- Resource allocation and the perceived economic imbalance between generations.

Interviewees reflect on the importance of attracting youth and young families when trying to sustain a community. One interviewee stated that, “taking the youth population out of the downtown certainly affects the downtown and the future vision because if there aren’t young people seeing and involved in downtown then who will move forward to sustain the downtown?” Attracting youth to the downtown is a way to “sustain” it and therefore it is perceived that the young generation plays a powerful role in determining what is sustained in a community.

In attracting youth, interviewees discussed the primal importance of “getting a job.” That is why one individual “ran for council” so that s/he could “try to do something about it.” Another strategy discussed is creating “vibrancy” such as the arts, entertainment, festivals, good education, and employment opportunities in an effort to show young people that, “it’s worth coming here and putting down roots and staying.” Youth participation, then, is tied to community planning considerations and the “society” sets the conditions for which youth can choose to sustain. When interviewees had a strong sense of place identity, they often felt that the region was
a great place to live. One interviewee stated, “We’ve got to be able to give them [youth] the options of - at least the hope of being able to stay here.” Another interviewee shared that retention of youth is important in the community but recognized that some “young kids regardless of what’s available, they want to travel and explore different things.” Further, the bottom line attraction is perceived as primarily being able to offer a good job opportunity. Others wanted to “create more opportunities for people to be able to stay in Peterborough and keep some of the talent here like Trent [University] graduates.”

Finally, others talked about cultivating leadership in the next generation as a community development strategy and being honest about what leadership is about. The interviewee shared that:

[I've been] talking about us needing to cultivate the next generation of leadership. Not that those people aren't already leaders but we've got to name it. This is leadership. We've got to name it in this community and cultivate it. And I think part of it comes with (current leaders) saying ‘I don’t know that I’m leading, I’m just doing the best I can, you know, and I’m willing to.

There is a tactic of removing the mystique of leadership by being honest about how leaders lead in the community. This tactic disarms and could lead to creating more equality across generations in cultivating leadership. Current leaders define and cultivate these leadership skills, reproducing similarities across styles.

**Vision 2: Fairness in Resource Allocation**

Across interviewees there was a strong sense that development needs to recognize the risks and rewards in a way that is fair. This came through clearly in discussing the primary strategy of sharing casino revenue across the region rather than having
one municipality benefit from all of the gains and one municipality incur the social costs.

Many interviewees focused on a revenue sharing model between the City of Peterborough and the current township, which is home to the existing casino. One interviewee suggested that “all the municipalities - the city, county, and townships should share the revenue since [the casino] is a regional thing.” Another interviewee stated that “[The Casino] is going to draw people from a broader regional base so the proceeds from that should go back to the broader community.” A number of interviewees felt that the fairest scenario was that the funds derived by the township from the casino should be shared with the city who provides social services and incurs the social costs. This strategy focuses on fairness in terms of matching the rewards of development with the risks and costs of the development.

In the private sector, there is a strong focus on creating a fair playing field for businesses to compete locally, regionally, and internationally. This lens of business is key for one interviewee who discussed the importance of having an understanding that “if you pull a dollar out of your pocket and trace it back to its origins, it came from a private business. That’s where it started. Whether you work for the public sector or not.” This key perception promotes the importance of “not getting in the way of private enterprise. As much as private enterprise gets it wrong and does some short cuts and that sort of thing, you still have to allow growth and wealth to be created, and profit. All of those things are not dirty words.” Fairness in this context is around creating the right conditions for private enterprise to continue growing and creating employment opportunities and not putting up barriers.
Our basic philosophy as a business community is to advocate for opportunity and a level playing field. Government should create a level playing field and then get out of the way. Because there’s a tendency for government to legislate business. To us, legislation means that you are creating equal opportunity for everyone, not setting up roadblocks. Because in the end, we have to compete with our neighbours locally, provincially, federally, internationally and if we’ve got one hand tied behind our back then we’re not going to be able to compete.

This business philosophy points to a need for government to ensure fairness for citizens to pursue opportunity. The interviewee did say that “looking through the lens of business can easily be misinterpreted, because business certainly has a lot to answer for when it comes to short cuts like the train wreck in Quebec [2013 in Lac Megantic], but that is not what we would advocate for. We advocate for opportunity.”

Finally, one interviewee discussed the inordinate resources that go into generating “measurements and metrics” in the public sector.

I think from my perspective, far too much emphasis is placed on proving you’re doing things right. To me, if you’re doing things right you don’t have to prove it. You know, you don’t have to have a lot of numbers to validate things. And I think that organizations have gotten into a rut of devoting so much energy into collecting information that proves their merit or attempts to prove their merit when they should just be out there doing it.

S/he compared one department that is constantly justifying where money is spent and another department that has less pressure and micro-focus on numbers.

And I think it’s releasing, it’s freer, you’re able to focus more of your corporate energy on just making things happen, rather than overly being consumed with measuring. So, I think a good philosophy is to strike a balance between just doing good work as opposed to being compelled to prove you’re doing good work.
Fairness in this context is allocating the correct resources to the right outcomes and ensuring that the community is benefiting from the work that is being invested in to ensure a strong return on investment (ROI).

**Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and Interconnectedness**

Strategies and tactics regarding concepts of individualism, freedom of choice, and interconnectedness flowed from a central theme of connectedness between economic development and community development. In almost all cases, interviewees saw economic and community development as connected and in a few cases interviewees considered economic development a subset of community development even though it is not necessarily planned for that way in practice at a municipal level.

One interviewee discussed the push and pull feedback of community development and economic development and the importance of recognizing our interconnectedness as individuals.

I think it’s important that no one is isolated and everybody needs the community. If you’re a writer you need people who read. If you make music you need people who like to listen to music. So it’s not just business. Obviously, if you sell a product you need people who buy that product. [...] And as long as you – no matter what you’re doing I think – because you are part of that community which need each other...[we] have, therefore, a responsibility to one another. So, I think personally that’s what motivates me. If you’re part of a community – if a community has made you successful – has helped make you successful, you owe them something back. You know, nothing is a one-way street. I want to continue in this community and it’s a give and take. [...] It’s all so interconnected.

This quote aptly describes individual pursuit within the context of how the success of that pursuit is reliant on others. Other interviewees also remarked on the
challenges of global interconnectedness and the competitive labour market when attracting employment opportunities regionally.

When there was a decline in the auto sector and they laid off 12,000 people in Oshawa – the economy of that area really took a hit. And it’s one area that I’d like to see a return of some form of manufacturing but, I don’t think that’s a very realistic expectation. I know partly due to the fact that we have a high cost of producing and I find in Ontario and Canada that’s generally the case. If we produce it for ten dollars, they produce it in Mexico for four. They produce it for a dollar fifty in China.

This challenge of attracting investment in a higher cost labour market is challenging and alternative strategies need to be found through financial incentives, quality of life incentives and proximity to markets. This also reflects the freedom of choice that corporations have to move where they can find the lowest cost of production and attractive incentives.

Similarly in the case study of the casino, many interviewees felt that individuals should have freedom and “if people want to gamble that is their choice.” One interviewee emphatically shared the view that “You’re not going to tell me how to live at my house, and I’m not going to tell you how to live in your house, and you’re not going to tell me how to live, and I’m not going to tell you how to live. And the casino, to me, is a moral issue.” Freedom of choice is a core vision that comes through the tactic of distinguishing between moral issues and other issues. This tactic is used to work towards removing subjectivity from the decision and move towards a more objective assessment of development opportunities. This preserves the fundamental economic vision of freedom of choice where interviewees ask themselves, “who am I to judge what people do with their money?”
There is also a strategy of aligning interests and recognizing that as an individual entity it is important to connect with others to achieve goals. In some instances that requires education as a tactic to help others understand one’s objectives. One of the challenges for a local advocacy group is that:

there’s no other group in town that is involved in economic localization and we’re trying to bring them around. And I’ll be very frank, there are very few organizations, very few bank managers that have the least clue as to what economic localization is about. Let alone printing your own currency.

As a result, this advocacy group works diligently to build knowledge products, information, seminars, festivals, workshops, and other tools to create familiarity with the concept of economic localization and work towards educating others on their perspective. Advocacy and lobbying is a strong strategy and tactic for sharing and recruiting support for particular development outcomes. One interviewee shared that,

we lobby for business and we have a fairly clear cut philosophy when it comes to the business community and how it fits into the rest of the community. We see our core function as championing the cause, which is the free market enterprise system.

This group brings the interests of business owners in advocating for an economic vision, which supports the for-profit business community in the region. Finally, partnership and working together were strong factors in interviewee’s discussion of how we can have a “bigger view of what’s right for the greater majority of the region” or “how we can work together for the greater good.” The focus on inclusivity and partnership in decision-making and execution of development is a key strategy to recognize the importance of individualism and freedom of choice while still looking at “the bigger picture - not just the ‘not in my backyard’ crowd.” This
recognizes the connectedness of people in achieving the desired result at a regional level. It also reflects the socio-political influence of individuals who are in positions to bring people together around a preferred project. Within organizations, interviewees discussed trying “to involve and engage other departments always when we undertake major projects” and relying:

heavily on the advice and needs of my staff through their various facilities and departments. We also rely heavily on community input. Often community input is what identifies priorities, especially when we’re undertaking specific plans or strategic plans or facility plans. We also rely very very heavily on partnerships.

Partnerships are integral for seeing projects through to completion, and therefore, reinforces the strategic importance of recognizing interconnectedness in relation to achieving outcomes.

Lastly, the economic developer role is described as focused on “connecting with resources.” It is described as “always networking, lobbying, and coming up with new ideas that are unique to get to where you want to go and differentiate your project or your community from others.” This competitiveness of a region is perceived as being improved when there is “regional economic delivery and working cooperatively.” However, there is an emphasis on ensuring that, “the parts are delivering that model by always reviewing and looking at it.” This individual responsibility within a connected web of development is a core strategy of improving competitive advantage for a region while considering the individual municipal needs and development activity.

Successful outcomes of development also focus on recognizing value by aligning individual interests. For example, one elected official sees that the “biggest
measureable will be on election night. If people have appreciated what you’ve done.” The elected official’s ability to achieve outcomes is based on the accumulated will of the electorate to continue prioritizing the same outcomes by voting for them. Also, in relation to making decisions on the casino development, there was a desire to have all of the parties “really agree - not just fight out [an agreement] or compromise.” And, that the agreement should create better outcomes across the community. Better outcomes could include considerations such as return on investment on tax dollars, is it a good fit with the neighbourhood, does it create tax revenue and is it a community priority.

Overall, there was a strong sense of strategy and tactic around partnership, connection and aligning individual values towards a common goal. One interviewee shared, “I think you can make a healthy impact on a community, on your community by working collaboratively with other people and keeping a close check on your own self interest.”

**Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth**

Interviewees focused on the importance of long-term outcomes and growth through considering such things as return on investment, resiliency, and stronger value. There is also a strong understanding that the community and the economic development practices have to be very competitive to achieve those outcomes for the community.

One interviewee had a unique position focusing on concepts of value in growing a resilient local economy and stating, “I am trained by now to look at everything through a resiliency lens. And if this very simple lens of resiliency is a no
go, then I’m against it.” This vision of resilient economic development is demonstrated through the strategy used to develop an official local currency, which would have stored value.

[The currency] exchange is just a very small part of that, but an important piece. You’ve got to monetize to get resilience. We really believe that. You have to monetize in a local currency of value. A currency is not just a means of exchange it’s also stored value. And if you could localize the economy, which we intend to start to do then you get the stored value here and the currency becomes more and more valuable. There is no stored value behind the Canadian dollar, there’s no stored value behind the US dollar, it’s all debt. And it’s crashing fast. And so there’s either going to have to be inflation or both or a currency devaluation of huge proportions around the world.

This interviewee considers economic growth in terms of local resiliency and stored value in currency. Other interviewees considered more traditional economic indicators as a strategy to measure the effectiveness of a development strategy such as return on investment, current and future costs, and the long-term nature of the development. In the end, there is a clear understanding across many interviewees that:

when it comes to economic development we really have to be driving it. We have to be prepared to compete and we have to compete to win. We’re not going to win on everything that we go after, but we’re not going to be right about everything as public officials, but, you have to have the courage to get in there and dig and fight and scrap and claw because it is just so competitive. And you have to continue to compete for what you have. People in public life are often guilty of, kind of, the cattle herd mentality which is not to look at the field that you’re in and see that it’s a pretty good field but to look at the grass on the other side of the fence and think – we just really need to get at that grass over there. And you do it, kind of, at the exclusion of understanding and maintaining what it is that you have already.
This quote recognizes the struggle to compete in a global marketplace for development and employment opportunities and the importance of fighting for growth in the community by building on existing economic opportunities.

**Balance as Outcome**

One interviewee captured what many interviewees discussed when s/he said “balance is the outcome.” Across all interviews, perspectives and focuses, there was a strong emphasis on finding balance in making development decisions. This term is difficult to define and must be considered within the context of its use as “balance” does not necessarily mean a fair or just outcome. The goal of finding equilibrium in the distribution of risk and rewards across economic, social, and environmental interests may provide a stronger connection to the context in which the word “balance” is used.

**Vision 1: Generational Focus**

Interviewees focused on the difficulty of communities “greying out” and the challenge of ensuring that a more youthful population has a presence in order to bring balance to the area. There is also a perception that, “if you’re heavily into retired people your region’s income is going to be lower because they’re living on pensions. But that might not mean they’re living in poverty.” Balance was also very important in creating opportunities for interviewee’s children to “get jobs and stay here locally.”

Balancing investment into economic future was an important consideration as a measure of success for economic development. Analogies such as “planting the seed to grow a tree for the future” were a focus of making the community better for
the future. This demonstrates the challenge for current leaders to predict the needs of the future and invest accordingly. Balanced outcomes across generations, is an important consideration for interviewees. Identifying the challenges youth experience and allocating adequate resources to helping them achieve better outcomes is a primary objective. Better outcomes are described as finding a job at a living wage that allows them to achieve or exceed the wealth accumulation of their parents’ generation.

**Vision 2: Fairness in Resource Allocation**

Every development decision discussed in the interviews was described as having both positive and negative outcomes. In the case of the casino, the positive benefits were the economic spin-offs such as harness racing and the $4 million per quarter that went to the township’s tax base from the casino. The negative outcomes are the potential for increased crime rates, family issues, and domestic abuse, prostitution, problem gambling, etc. The main question discussed by both advocates for and against the casino state that casinos “generate all this money - but at what cost? That’s what has to be proven and that’s what the city has to decide.”

The primary challenge associated with development and investment decisions is balancing fiscal realities with social opportunities and costs. “But the reality of it is, sometimes you just can’t provide a level of care because you can’t afford to do it with the money you’re given.” Interviewees were always focused on getting the greatest growth out of every investment - balancing fiscal realities with social realities. One interviewee focused on:

...trying to move the yardstick of a community forward, but you innately understand there are people who - not of their own making -
have a particular challenge. So you have an obligation to them also. And you have an obligation to invest in public education, to give everybody a great chance in life. You invest in pubic healthcare because no one should be denied health care and have access to the best treatment available.

This idea of creating positive social and economic opportunities for all was important to interviewees; however, strategies on how to balance the fiscal realities with that ideal were not discussed. Possible solutions included creating job opportunities and to look at new ways of re-distributing wealth. In relation to the casino discussion, one interviewee suggested that they up the returns or re-distribute them - instead of having one person win $50 million for example have 50 people win $1 million. Considering balance through re-distribution rather than accumulating a lot of the gains in a single win, could create more opportunities in the community.

Interviewees focused on a need to create inclusive economic opportunities. One interviewee described a key measure of community economic development is “how we impact people who are not really traditionally in the workforce.” That impact could be working a few hours more than what they have worked before or “training people in employable skills and hope that they will then go off and contribute in any way they can to the community.” Current practices focused on the creative economy were challenged as “there isn’t much of a discussion of class, but I think there is some potential for Peterborough that would be good.” This quote points to the challenge of finding strong economic opportunities while still considering the socio-economic and class conditions of those development approaches. Larger employers were also praised by one interviewee for their focus
on offering jobs at more than minimum wage and offering education opportunities to help staff obtain their high school diploma at their expense and offering part-time, full-time and flexible hours. The job descriptions are not always the most desirable, but the interviewee stated that, “they are at least looking after their people and it’s still jobs...which is better than not having those jobs.” Finding a balance between financial and human development is considered more desirable by interviewees.

In terms of public funds and measures of success, one interviewee discussed the casino investment as “gambling with our future.” That with:

Only having so many resources available, this is not what I want to spend our resources on. And it is not going to have a great impact on the community and there are negative impacts that are on the community because of these kinds of places. But there are upsides so maybe a hundred minimum wage jobs is more important to the community than any other potential negatives. But I don’t see it as a good use of public funds or for economic development.

Interviewees were often in a place of comparing the benefits of jobs and the social costs. For one interviewee, finding balance between fiscal gains and social costs is in the negotiation with the casino to ensure that the casino has enough social and financial benefits to have a balanced outcome for the community. Furthermore, one interviewee discussed concern with the hyper-focus on metrics and reaching goals. S/he felt it was “narrow and myopic,” citing the importance of developing “more qualitative measurements that are not just about absolute growth and introduction of products - you can spend money on quality of life too."

**Vision 3: Individualism, Freedom of Choice, and Interconnectedness**

Our future’s inextricably connected to economics and there’s just no way we can get anywhere as an environmental group without the economic side and we also can’t rely on business as usual economics, it’s all corrupt, however, most people who are environmentalists are
extreme left people who think that we can just all of a sudden abandon the corporate capitalistic model and that’s not going to happen. So, the transition thing – the word is very convenient. How do we get where we are now to where we want to go? Without putting at least one foot in the current economic situation, that’s what we do and that’s the big differential of [this organization] is we try to walk a half a mile in the economic shoes of corporate Canada, or corporate capitalism.

This interviewee describes a common challenge of accessing opportunities to influence development decision-making and promote more pluralistic outcomes. Examples came up from multiple interviewees discussing these challenges and the difficult decisions around balancing these interests. The focus was on having a balanced view with “one foot in the current economic situation and one foot in [the organization].” By balancing weight in both, the interviewee finds more understanding of different views of a situation and can work towards incremental steps in aligning interests.

In finding balance there is also a strategy of “scale” used to describe problems. Many interviewees refer to having to “look at the big picture and not what’s right for just this little area. You have to look at the whole picture.” So concepts of scaling place and connectedness to place are important to consider in perceptions of problems and solutions. Balance becomes a factor of scale in decision-making towards particular outcomes for a community. This scaling of decisions creates powerful socio-political spaces where an individual may encounter serious negative consequences because of a “greater good.”
**Vision 4: Value in the Pursuit of Growth**

In describing growth in relation to balancing social and economic outcomes, interviewees focused on examples of other communities to explain ideas about what strong growth would look like for them. A few interviewees used similar sized cities as examples. One municipality made investments that have resulted in “world class infrastructure, rail, and highway transit links to metropolitan markets and, a higher average income than this region.” The other example looked at the successful outcome of a casino where the revenues from it were invested into municipal infrastructure to bring a new university to the downtown, which has now brought 3000 new students there. These two cities provide examples of growth and transforming cities towards more developed community outcomes.

Return on investment and multiplier effects are also key growth outcomes mentioned by interviewees. One person shared that, “Any successful economic development or investment or job creating institution should be able to point to jobs and opportunities and things it has provided elsewhere as a result of that investment.” Another interviewee suggested that economic measures should focus on “return on energy employed - how many barrels of energy do you take to produce one barrel of energy? R-O-E-E – Return on Energy Employed.” S/he suggests that as we get less barrels of oil for every barrel of energy, we lose “that excess energy to run our modern civilization which is key.” S/he also suggested that the amount of energy in a barrel of oil is phenomenal in relation to finding alternatives. That is why s/he focuses on localization and believes that “the region’s got to be about real production - that’s why all the people have to be about survival.”
Finally, jobs are still the key indicator of growth for the interviewees. Focusing “on raised sustainable employment - longer term jobs ideally rooted to the community....ideally that has decent wages attached to it.” Attracting jobs that are sustainable and well paying is a core growth strategy for interviewees in the region, balancing opportunity, with quality.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION: ON THE WICKED PROBLEM OF SUSTAINABILITY

Summary

The literature review and study of lived experience of community leaders in Peterborough, Ontario informed the primary research goal of this thesis to understand what is the role of lived experience in community leaders' vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities. In working towards this goal, the thesis explored two objectives and six research questions. As illustrated in Chapter Two and Chapter Three, Objective One set the scene for examining concepts and contexts of vision and governance of economic development in rurally situated small cities in the global north. As illustrated in Chapter Five, Objective Two explored the vision and governance of community leaders in a case study of Peterborough, Ontario. The findings from Objective One and Two work towards Objective Three to present a discussion of the emergent findings that will inform the development of an exploratory model of the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities. The latter is the focus of this concluding chapter.

In leading towards a model of lived experience, Objective One and Two consider the socio-political tensions experienced by community leaders in attempting to balance sustainability values within a neoclassical economic system. These socio-political tensions are experienced in an attempt to govern economic
development by: creating a fair playing field, balancing outcomes and reproducing experience of people and place for the next generation. These key findings inform Objective Three to explore the role of lived experience and how that experience is reproduced for the next generation. This model (Figure 6.1) demonstrates the centrality of vision (R1), strategies and tactics (R2 and R3), accessing decision-making opportunities (R6), setting the activities and measures for development (R5), and realizing preferred outcomes (R4).

These outcomes then re-inform the experience of people and place for the next generation and the cycle reproduces the socio-political relations of production for the next generation. Reinforcing socio-political relations of production results in a singular vision governing economic development and sustainability in the community. In this context, sustainable development to date has been rationalized as a system of indicators and measures with little attempt to influence the vision and governance of nations towards these ends. As such, it has been positioned as a desired outcome with little direction on implementation or connection to economic vision and governance strategy. This model contributes an understanding of how lived experience influences the vision and governance of economic development, strategies and tactics and the reproduction of socio-political hierarchies within lived experience of development for the next generation. It also concludes with policy recommendations for incremental change towards more just and sustainable outcomes in economic development.
Discussion

Through thematically analyzing nineteen interviews, participants demonstrated a multi-generational vision to grow our economies with fair distribution of resources, individualism, freedom of choice, and interconnectedness. In interpreting the lived experience of this neoclassical vision, the strategies used by community leaders still externalize our deep-rooted dependencies and caring relationships to varying degrees in order to balance economic outcomes. These visions are motivated by individual experience of people and place, in particular, family relationships. The following three motivators are central to the strategies used by community leaders to achieve their vision of development and make it “stick”.

A Fair Playing Field

Interviewees often discussed the need for a fair playing field. Their challenges, opportunities, tactics, and strategies demonstrate that they perceive greater influence on creating a fair playing field at a local level. There was a strong need to work together to create the economies of scale to be competitive on a provincial, national, and global stage. By aligning interests and partnering across municipalities in the region, they are attempting to create a fairer position to compete on a global stage. This can create tensions between rural and urban regions due to contextual understandings of space and place, making strategic alliances challenging (Dushenko, 2012). While emerging economic development strategies in rural places may attempt to focus on alternative or more pluralistic values such as sustainability through governance, they are situated within a neoclassical capitalist
and private property framework. Interviewees and emerging economic development strategies predominately still maintain the important focus on the freedom to pursue productivity, to be compensated for that activity, and the pursuit of unlimited accumulation (private property).

In achieving this productive agency, there is a core tenet of government to set the scene for just and fair conditions of competition as well as fair distribution of risks and rewards of development. Prioritizing the risks and rewards of development is challenging for community leaders in Peterborough and leads to a number of socio-political conflicts and opportunities. For example, corporations who have the freedom to move across borders have the ability to compare competing communities against each other to find a production location with the most incentives such as tax reductions, lower or minimum wages, etc. This process further creates dependencies on corporate jobs and continues to accumulate wealth and labour control within a corporation. In this way, a governance focus on entrepreneurship could be key to democratizing labour incrementally towards more distributed wealth. This focus on “small” - solopreneurs, small-scale family farms etc. is one solution also positioned by Orr and Hill (1978) as a means to decentralize production towards greater ecological protections and outcomes. By decentralizing labour opportunities, communities rely less on attracting global corporations and more on empowering the individual to control their production. Regulating towards a fair playing field and decentralizing labour opportunities in a community is a conceptual value that seeks to equalize the context of individual experience and may
incrementally impact the existing socio-political relations of production towards more sustainable outcomes.

**Balance as the Outcome**

Many interviewees demonstrated a desire for balance as an outcome. Sustainability presents a concept of finding a balance between social, economic, and environmental priorities. In a rurally situated small city, this desire to find a balance towards quality of life and economic outcomes is predominant where average incomes are lower but access to nature and a more relaxed pace of life can be found amongst those earning a living wage. Lower wages often becomes a measure for competitive advantage to attract investment and can become endemic within the rurally situated small city context. Furthermore, the quality of life opportunities can result in gentrification increasing the cost of living for locals while maintaining low average wages (Lewis and Donald, 2010).

Finding a “balance” is a core governance vision amongst many interviewees. This attempt to balance social, environmental, and economic variables in a decision, presents the socio-political tension of working within a legal and social system that prioritizes profit maximization. With visions that are often conflicted within a neoclassical economic development framework, making “balanced” decisions becomes a strategic challenge for those with formal and informal influence. These socio-political tensions create challenging scenarios where community leaders find themselves choosing between alternatives (not in my backyard, nature, development, windmills, cell phone towers, etc.). When choosing between alternatives, the economic outcomes make a compelling argument for development
within the neoclassical vision of governance. Motivating factors such as a duty to care for family and community creates tension for community leaders who are often challenged to make decisions within competing and conflicting positions on an issue. Making these decisions often results in the community leader feeling at risk with their position and in their community relationships further pointing to the incompatibility of profit maximization and care within a neoclassical framework. Balance as outcome is both a strategy to manage these divergent views and an attempt to maintain a bigger perspective on development decisions to encompass a duty to care.

**The Role of Lived Experience in Reproducing Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability**

Interviewees’ sense of duty to care was often situated within their experiences of place and family. Their future vision of place referenced childhood experiences, employment and entrepreneurial experiences, and reproducing those experiences of place for the next generation (i.e., good job, benefits, house, children, etc.). These individual experiences inform community leaders’ economic development decision-making. These decisions craft our experience of place for now and in the future. The act of making development decisions moves us closer to a common vision of place. Interviewees utilize their personal experience and influence to negotiate what the common vision of development looks like. Sustaining a common vision of place reproduces the socio-political relations of production through access to influence on development decisions. This creates opportunities to deeply impact the next generation’s experience of place and family.
The results presented in Chapter Four indicate that a person’s experience of people and place is a centripetal motivator for action in economic development and sustainability decisions. Lived experience informs our vision of the world and our conceptual values. These values form our ethical frameworks, which provide a lens for what we accept in the distribution of risk and reward in development decision-making. Our ethical framework prioritizes values and works toward a “common vision” for the future. This common vision sets the scene for action, influence, and impact in society. The common vision of economics in the global north is predominately-neoclassical economics (Harris, 2013). The globally pervasive neoclassical system of economics (Heron, 2008) values the mechanistic order (Heilbroner, 1967), focusing on a system of production that values profit maximization and wealth accumulation. This singular value system prioritizes profits over people and therefore all inputs into production, including technology, are used to that end. Furthermore, our social institutions govern our economies through a legal system, which prioritizes profits and protects the gains of those profits through private property rights. The social, economic, and environmental risks experienced by communities as a result of some development are often externalized from the equation. This vision and governance of economic development and sustainability prioritizes the mechanistic production of human activity, and externalizes relationships, care and our interdependencies for survival. What is clear from the interviews is that leaders in possession of varying degrees of influence experience conflicting feelings when balancing their contextual knowledge
of the unpredictable experiences of life, family, and caring for their community and the importance of making decisions towards stronger economic outcomes.

This discussion works towards achieving Objective Three to develop an exploratory model that contributes an understanding of the role of lived experience in community leaders’ vision and governance of economic development and sustainability. The model presented in Figure 6.1 illuminates how community leaders navigate socio-political tensions in developing their vision and governance of community development. Lived experience is the core motivator of vision for economic development, acting as the primary influencer of how community leaders envision the future. This model shows that as community leaders navigate the socio-political tensions of choosing between alternatives, they utilize strategies and tactics to realize their vision for the future. This vision is actualized through measurable outcomes that predict and transform the lived experience for the next generation. This forms the next generation’s vision and values of the world.
Figure 6.1: Exploratory Model of The Role of Lived Experience in Reproducing Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability
The model demonstrates that the lived experience of people and place is a powerful motivator and influencer on individual context for making decisions in this case study. Exposure to quality of life, nature, family, medical issues, business, etc. framed conceptual understandings of economic and community development for the interviewees. For some, experience of place broadened the factors incorporated into decision-making and for others it narrowed it to a very defined purpose or outcome, such as jobs. As described in Chapter Three, behavior is motivated by attitudes, social norms, and our perception of control (Ajzen, 1988). These motivations are developed and reinforced through one’s social inclusion in the political, economic and social aspects of a community (Ravanera and Rajulton, 273). Familial context provides a starting point from which to form one’s sense of belonging. Therefore, the lived experience of people and place through attitudes, social norms and our perception of control, determines social inclusion for people, re-constructing the socio-political hierarchy (Poeschl, 2009). The experience of family life, then, becomes an integral point of reference for experience in influencing social outcomes. Influencing social outcomes for people and place determined motivation to re-create or offer a similar experience to the next generation. This reproducibility motive, demonstrates the will to maintain the socio-political order through transferring a contextual legacy to the next generation.

This contextual legacy motivates the conceptual understanding from which we form our philosophy and approach to acting in the world. It positions us in the socio-political order. Furthermore, sharing a “common vision” for development increased opportunities to be successful in leadership positions in rurally situated
small cities. Interviewees cited very real challenges with having to balance their views on an issue with the peer pressure incited by a need for a common vision on issues. This shared vision is core to the stability of governance in rurally situated small cities.

Creating and maintaining one’s formal and informal influence, is determined by an ability to balance views with the common vision for development. This was more acute in a small region because everyone knows everyone. Taking an alternative approach to the common vision of development may have strong potential to incite incremental change, but due to the nature of working within the legitimized system, will often lack in scope and depth for challenging the current system (deCerteau, 1984). Furthermore, measureable results are core to a vision of economic growth. Whether the desired outcome is job creation, protecting green space or developing local supply chains, achieving these measures have an impact on the contextual experience of place for the next generation.

Reproducing Socio-Political Relations of Production Through Vision and Governance of Economic Development and Sustainability

Interview results and analysis point towards an organizational functionalist-structuralist approach (Morgan, 1980) to making development decisions in rurally situated small cities. This approach is “based upon the assumption that society has a concrete, real existence, and systemic character oriented to produce an ordered and regulated state of affairs” (608). Through a “common vision”, experience of people and place sets a context for the socio-economic order that permits some to enact strategies and tactics to influence decisions and community outcomes and measures.
Although, many interviewees stated the challenges of “balancing” viewpoints, the fiduciary duty to make decisions requires an ordering and prioritization of those views in making a decision. Therefore, “the scientist is distanced from the scene which he or she is analyzing through the rigor and technique of the scientific method” (Morgan, 1980, 608). This distancing from the scene alienates people from their relational experiences including aspects of caring for others. This scientific prioritization of value externalizes complexity so that variables are simplified to their basic machinations towards a rational decision. These ontological approaches to informing decision-making allude to the traditional approach of system dynamics where:

Successful systems (individual organizations/whole populations) are driven by negative feedback processes toward predictable states of adaptation to the environment. The dynamics of success are therefore assumed to be a tendency toward equilibrium and thus stable, regular and predictable (Stacey, 1995, 477).

Individuals in decision-making and influencing positions are held accountable through voting processes and other methods that give power or take it away through the voting public. Therefore, the decision-making systems “operate in a negative feedback manner to sustain regular predictable behavior [because] it is attracted to stable equilibrium adaptation to its environment when the rules are appropriate” (Stacey, 1995, 482). Applying sustainable development measures to traditional economic development practices act as negative feedback processes that lead towards the same outcomes and utilize the existing socio-political relations to facilitate a stable, regular and predictable outcome. Greater resiliency can be found in the positive feedback processes that innovate our existing socio-economic order.
by recognizing and negotiating the tensions of profit maximization and our relational experiences of care and our interdependencies.

Interviewees discussed the ultimate outcome in development decisions as finding a balance towards growth while respecting the way of life for people in a place. Strategies for doing this however, work through negative feedback loops within the existing system. The legal system also contributes by regulating and restricting the kinds of positive feedback loops that can be considered. In moving towards more just and sustainable outcomes, we must create a context that recognizes our interdependencies in the socio-economic order starting at our point of vision. Recognizing our interdependence through an ethics of care lens can reframe contextual experiences that define vision towards more sustainable outcomes for the future. Furthermore, considering our mutual rights among people to enable productive agency (Gewirth, 1996) within our scope of industry and care can provide a lens for working together for a fair playing field and a smaller ecological footprint (Orr and Hill, 1978). Understanding the role of lived experience creates a more authentic discussion about the distribution of risks and rewards of development. This can decentralize leadership to empower communities to take control of facilitating open engagement, policies, and actions (Paquet, 2004) that work towards a more ethical and inclusive dialogue for addressing the wicked problem of sustainability. It further questions our implementation of sustainability within our existing economic vision. Lived experience reminds us of the importance of returning economics to our moral science and philosophical roots, recognizing
our deeply interdependent lives, and a plurality of values in our shared lived experience.

Further Research

The purpose of this thesis is to understand the role of lived experience in community leaders vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities. The limitations in this study include:

- The scope of this research did not incorporate a validation stage of Objective Three which presented the model shown in Figure 6.1: The role of lived experience in sustaining and reproducing the socio-political relations of production. A literature review and follow up research study to validate the theory proposed would bring strength to the claims made.
- Exploring in other case study regions and with more interviewees would broaden the scope and sample size offering a comparative research opportunity.
- Participation is voluntary, and therefore, participants who agreed to be interviewed may have had a bias towards sustainability and a preference for a more pluralistic value system incorporating more than just economic factors into decision-making
- Being professionally networked to many of the interviewees may have limited the depth to which I probed the data in an effort to preserve my reputation, but it also created an opportunity as trust was already established with the interviewees.
Recommended further research would seek information with a representative sample size of the region to determine if the community leader’s vision and values were aligned with that of community members. This research methodology could also provide an understanding of whether certain strategies and tactics are more strongly related with earning influence in a community and therefore having the potential for greater impact on outcomes and system reproducibility. In addition, careful testing and validation of the model of the role of lived experience in sustaining and reproducing socio-political relations of production (Figure 6.1) would continue to validate my experience of describing the phenomenon I observe in the relationships between experience, actions, and outcomes towards system reproduction.

**Policy Recommendations**

Unchecked neoclassical economics has continued to create a larger gap in wealth distribution through its standard market-oriented approach with limited global regulation by government in the production of goods and services. To consider a more balanced approach, we need to plan for the conditions from which risks and rewards are distributed, rather than singular governance towards profit maximization. Through governance, we can set the conditions required to care first for human rights in relation to what is sacred (food, shelter, water, health) for human life. For example, with access to clean water being compromised in the global north (Canadian First Nations reserves, Flint Michigan, Walkerton, Love Canal, Brazilian Uranium mining disaster, to name a few), and throughout the rest of the
world, as well as corporate control of seed reproduction and other life sustaining rights, we need to question our economic ethics in how we prioritize value. In the case of poisoned water, the economic system should consider who is accumulating wealth and who is experiencing the loss of clean water? Which is more vital to life and how can we set the conditions to allow for the accumulation of wealth within a stricter parameter of maintaining the basic requirements of life? Our sense of balance has been narrowly focused within the confines of Perfect Markets, such that we prioritize how we balance our competitiveness within the market first, and pay little attention to sustainability in the long-term (Harris, 2003).

If we are to operationalize more just and sustainable outcomes, we must empower global institutions to create a fair playing field for individuals to pursue productivity and happiness. Market mechanisms are global in contrast to our public sector which is border-bound. This empowers the market to play to the lowest standard of living in its pursuits of unlimited accumulation. We need to empower our worldly philosophers to consider what global institutions can do to create policy for global markets in the future. We need a new networked global vision of economic development that is benchmarked against putting care for people first - not market mechanisms, and considering technology’s effect in determining the nature of our socio-economic order (Heilbroner, 1967). To create a fair playing field for people to pursue their productive agency, there must be a basic level of consumption afforded to all. Balance, then, could be considered a question of what is considered essential for the rights to productive agency for all people first and then
consider the accumulation of private property and wealth afterwards. This promotes a system of care ethics that recognizes our interdependencies for survival.

The following policy recommendations consider the role of lived experience in vision and governance of economic development and sustainability in rurally situated small cities.

1) Many interviewees described economic development as sort of a “sub-set of community development” (interviewee). If we are to consider a more pluralistic value system, then the structure in the municipal government should reflect the overarching role of community development to include economic development planning. This could also inspire economic development practitioners to consider more sustainable and socially beneficial outcomes from development initiatives (Grodach, 2011).

2) That philosophers re-connect economics to the actual lived experience of people recognizing the emergent and unintended actions in the market. This will align economic vision with our actual experiences of care and being cared for and recognize our interdependencies for survival.

3) The governance of our social institutions within the global north must be focused on immediately if we are ever to achieve more just or sustainable outcomes. The legal system obliges for-profit corporations to ensure profit maximization for its shareholders towards endless accumulation. There is room for innovation in this social institution to re-focus on prioritizing a pluralistic value system towards protecting the freedoms and unfreedoms
relationships of care (Hanvinsky, 2004), or our positive and negative rights to productive agency (Gewirth, 2006). Furthermore the empowerment of wealth accumulation has resulted in more widely distributed access to the legal system creating vast difference in power as it has to wealth. If we are to implement serious global sustainability outcomes, the legal system can be a powerful enabler of these activities in achieving a fair playing field for all.

**Concluding Comments**

Sustainability as a paradigm provides an opportunity for significant transformational change to realize a pluralistic value system that recognizes our deep-rooted interdependencies and our relationships of care. This paradigmatic shift requires a new framework to recognize our interdependencies and caring relationships. It has been shown in organizational theory that the best way to achieve transformational change is through incremental change (Morgan and Zohar, 1998). Leveraging smaller initiatives to “create contexts that facilitate and encourage change is fundamental competence for [leadership] in turbulent times” (Morgan and Zohar, 1998, 18). Moreover, leveraging smaller initiatives demonstrates the importance of scalability with regards to models of development, visions, and governance. This also supports the concept that one-size fits all approaches to development are ineffective and that community development must be context relevant. However, as an approach to development, scalability of an idea is crucial to its success (North, 2005). The ability to scale knowledge and action
derived through sustainable development initiatives in the world has the potential to provide incremental context changing opportunities. As an example, with over 700 voluntarily listed sustainable development initiatives recorded through the UN from around the world (United Nations, 2015), it is possible to see small incremental actions taking place towards sustainability as a paradigm. These small incremental initiatives challenge the basic assumptions of the neoclassical paradigm opening contexts for new ways of seeing and being to emerge (Morgan, 1980).
REFERENCES


http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/social_research/summary/v071/71.3.heilbroner.html


doi: 10.1007/s10767-007-9019-2


doi: 10.1177/1049732313509893


doi: 10.1177/0160017609336090


doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2012.08.009


doi: 10.1177/0042098009346867


doi: 10.1080/09654313.2010.504336


Occupy Together (nd). Retrieved on February 25, 2016 from:

http://www.occupytotgether.org/aboutoccupy/


typology. *Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development.*
Retrieved on September 13, 2015 from: http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-


*Inaugural address to the First National Capital Colloquium on the Governance


Social innovation and social entrepreneurship: A systematic review
doi: 10.1177/1059601114560063

Poeschl, G. (2009). Teaching and learning guide for: Fairness and power in family

Individuals and Society.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Roseland, M. (2012). *Toward Sustainable Communities: Solutions for citizens and


Startup Canada (nd). Retrieved on March 8, 2016 from: http://www.startupcan.ca/about/


## APPENDIX A

### OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANS IN RURALLY SITUATED SMALL CITIES IN ONTARIO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Peterborough, Ontario</strong></th>
<th><strong>Kingston, Ontario</strong></th>
<th><strong>Kawartha Lakes, Ontario</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater Peterborough Area Economic Development Corporation (GPA EDC)</td>
<td>Kinston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO)</td>
<td>City of Kawartha Lakes (Kawartha Lakes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vision

- **Peterborough, Ontario**
  - Assist with the development of an environment that facilitates the creation of wealth and expanded employment in a manner that increases our citizens’ standard of living and improves their quality of life.

- **Kingston, Ontario**
  - KEDCO’s vision is a Kingston that is a vital, dynamic and sustainable economic centre where research, innovation, investment and business enterprises thrive, and where a diversity of people want to visit, live, work and do business.

- **Kawartha Lakes, Ontario**
  - Included as part of the mission statement

### Mission

- **Peterborough, Ontario**
  - By the year 2020, the GPA will be sought out by many, and admired worldwide, as a uniquely healthy, diverse, enriched community which balances and promotes vibrant economic and employment opportunities while honouring the natural environment and valuing its cultural heritage.

- **Kingston, Ontario**
  - The Kingston Economic Development Corporation will work collaboratively with the City of Kingston and key local and regional strategic partners to achieve prosperity by developing and promoting economic advantages to sustain and grow the economy of Kingston.

- **Kawartha Lakes, Ontario**
  - The Community Economic Development Mission is to enhance our prosperity by providing accessible, well paying employment opportunities, through a diversified and enduring economy, that builds upon the past, while embracing the potential of the future.

### Values

- **Peterborough, Ontario**
  - GPA EDC defines its values as a set of guiding principles against which all proposed actions will

- **Kingston, Ontario**
  - The KEDCO Board and staff are committed to the following values and principles:

- **Kawartha Lakes, Ontario**
  - Kawartha Lakes states that the Mission will be executed in the most effective and efficient manner possible in
be measured. Our values are the standards that inform and inspire all of our activities, and distinguish us as a Corporation

- Sustainability (Development activities will be undertaken in a sustainable manner),
- Innovation (Challenges to wealth creation will be addressed in an innovative manner),
- Inclusivity (Initiatives will be undertaken in an inclusive manner),
- Differentiation (our activities will differentiate ourselves from the competition).

- Establishing and maintaining the public trust
- Integrity in all dealings with clients and stakeholders
- Openness and transparency
- Respect for client confidentiality
- Accountability for the use of all public funds
- Highest standards of professional conduct
- Organizational excellence through efficient and effective operating procedures
- Mutual respect between board members and staff
- Open, honest, respectful and collaborative board level discussion and debate
- Strong commitment to the best practices of corporate governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competitve Advantage</th>
<th>The Greater Peterborough Area (GPA) is ideally positioned for growth. Just over an hour’s drive from the Greater Toronto Area, six million people reside within a 200 mile/320 kilometer radius of the region. The GPA’s</th>
<th>Where you do business is as much a competitive advantage as how you do business. That is why Kingston should be your number one choice if you are considering relocation, expansion or want to make an investment in</th>
<th>In Kawartha Lakes, you can enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle that includes a lower cost of living, small town charm with big city services, historic downtowns, excellent schools and postcard-quality scenery.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>order to provide excellent value to the tax payer while contributing positively to the environmental and social well-being of the community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City’s &quot;environment first&quot; principle has been demonstrated through Council’s approval of the Green Hub Community Improvement Plan to encourage industry investment with a focus on clean or green technologies and services.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
proximity to major markets in Canada and the north eastern United States, combined with effective transportation systems that include an expanding commercial airport, rail links to North American markets and four-lane access to Canada’s major thoroughfare, Highway 401 less than 30 minutes away, makes Peterborough an unparalleled setting as a business location.

Strategic Opportunities identified for differentiation include:

- Developing our tourism industry into a premier-ranked tourist destination
- Ongoing and significant upgrades to economic infrastructure
- Expanding role of local post-secondary institutions in basic and applied research activities
- Continuing operation of transnational corporations in the region
- Developing the municipal airport as an global aviation

Ontario.

Kingston has plenty to help you maximize your bottom line. Just-in-time access to major markets with:

- a cost competitive environment
- modern infrastructure
- a highly educated, multi-lingual workforce
- a vibrant, liveable community
- our business service team to support your success

Kingston is one of Canada’s top 25 cities and has much to offer potential investors - a strategic location with access to markets, cost competitiveness, brain power, bilingual capability, and perhaps most important is the stable and diversified economy.

With a healthy balance between public and private sector employment, Kingston’s unemployment rate is consistently one of the lowest in the country.

Our relative diversity in dominant industries also helps shelter the city from economic

We have a skilled workforce suitable for the traditional industries of manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, retail, construction, as well as emerging technologies in geomatics, water management, medical supplies and agri-food services. Our Frost Campus of Sir Sandford Fleming College contains the highly regarded School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences.

We invite you to join us in our playground - close to Toronto, but just far enough away!
| Measures (if applicable) | Quality of Life measures include: financial health of our population, per capita income and consumption of goods and services by individuals or households. Other measures are based on work plan and achievement of strategic goals and objectives through a balanced scorecard. | • Kingstonomics (Economic Indicators including GDP, unemployment rate, personal income per capita, housing starts, retail sales)  
• Tourism visitor stats and hotel industry occupancy rates  
• Entrepreneurship stats (business starts, expansions, jobs created, investment facilitated, workshops)  
• Building Starts  
• Business | No clear measurables listed; however, there is an action plan that lists 3 pages of short-term, mid-term and long-term objectives that tend to focus on building partnerships, completing impact assessments and business retention studies as well as facilitating various community activities. |

- Potential construction of Darlington II
- Inward migration of an affluent seniors retiree population
- Ability of the new and expanded Peterborough regional health centre to generate wealth and employment
- The ability to attract new industrial, commercial and residential investment in the community
- Significant agricultural activity

downturns in specific sectors.
Kingston outperforms the region in job growth, low unemployment rates and educated labour force.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Starts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Jobs created,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investment,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>company visit,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created and won)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTERS

July 22, 2013

File #: 23035
Title: Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities.

Dear Ms. Teleki,

The Research Ethics Board (REB) has given approval to your proposal entitled "Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities."

The committee strongly suggests and encourages you to encrypt any data that is being collected that contains any personal or identifying information. Please add a statement to your consent form concerning this. For help with encryption services, please contact Trent's IT Department.

Please add a running footer to your consent form, with the date of Trent REB approval and consent revisions number (e.g., 01-Jan-12, Version 2), so that the consent form used can be easily identified in future.

When a project is approved by the REB, it is an Institutional approval. It does not undermine or replace any other community ethics process. Full approval depends upon the approval of all other bodies who are named as stakeholders in this research.

In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) your project has been approved for one year. If this research is ongoing past that time, submit a Research Ethics Annual Update form available online under the Research Office website. If the project is completed on or before that time, please email Karen Mauro in the Research office so the project can be recorded as completed.

Please note that you are reminded of your obligation to advise the REB before implementing any amendments or changes to the procedures of your study that might affect the human participants. You are also advised that any adverse events must be reported to the REB.

On behalf of the Trent Research Ethics Board, I wish you success with your research.

With best wishes,

Karen Mauro
Dr. Rory Coughlan
REB Chair
Phone: (705) 748-1011 ext. 7779, Fax: (705) 748-1587
Email: rcoughlan@trentu.ca

c.c.: Karen Mauro
Compliance Officer
Elizabeth Teleki
Sustainability Studies Program
GCS

May 15, 2014

File #: 23035
Title: Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities.

Dear Ms. Teleki,

The Research Ethics Board (REB) has given approval to your updated proposal entitled “Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities.”.

A reminder that the committee strongly suggests and encourages you to encrypt your data that is being collected. For help with encryption services, please contact Trent’s IT Department.

In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6.) your project has been approved for one additional year. If this research is ongoing past that time, please submit a Research Ethics Annual update form, available on the Research Office website.

Please note that you are reminded of your obligation to advise the REB before implementing any amendments or changes to the procedures of your study that might affect the human participants.

On behalf of the Research Ethics Board, I wish you success with your ongoing research.

With best wishes,

Karen Mauro
Dr. Chris Furgal
REB Chair
Phone: (705) 748-1011 ext. 7953 Fax: (705) 748-1587
Email: chrisfurgal@trentu.ca

c.c.: Karen Mauro
Compliance Officer
APPENDIX C

Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Date
Dear Participant:

I am writing to request your participation in the Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities research project, based out of the Sustainability Studies MA Program at Trent University and is approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board.

This research seeks to celebrate the unique and creative development strategies implemented in rurally situated small cities and to understand areas for improvement. The County and City of Peterborough have placed a strong emphasis on implementing strategic and sustainable solutions for the future as seen in the Sustainable Peterborough plan. This project seeks to understand the approaches, measures and outcomes important to you in the development of the Peterborough community as we all work together to ensure its viability.

As there are many aspects of development, this research will focus specifically on the case study of the casino in the Peterborough region due to its timeliness. Please note that this is not an assessment study to understand whether the County or City should develop a casino or its location. It is a study that seeks to understand the approaches, measures and expected outcomes of various community leaders, organizations and decision-makers throughout the County and City of Peterborough regarding this development.

You are being contacted because of the leadership role you or your organization plays in the formal and informal decisions that enable economic and community development in the County and City of Peterborough. If you are willing to participate, your participation will be
voluntary and would involve an interview which may take up to 1.5 hours, depending on how much you would like to share. Interviews will be conducted by me at a time and place convenient to you. During the interview you can refuse to answer any questions that you find objectionable or make you uncomfortable, and you may end your participation at any time. With your written consent, the interview will be recorded and, following the interview, you will be invited to edit your comments in the written interview transcript. The recording and transcript will not be shared with anyone other than you and a transcribe assistant; they will be strictly confidential. Your name and identifying information will also be kept confidential, and information from the interview will be protected by encryption, kept in a secure location at Trent University, and will be destroyed following completion of the project. Given the small size of the community, there is the possibility that other community members may know about your participation in the project; however, the information you provide during the interview will remain anonymous in the publication and presentation of findings.

In aggregate form, the information gathered will be used to inform small rurally situated cities of approaches, measures and outcomes for economic development. A thematic summary of the findings will be made available to you in the form of an executive summary and results will be published in my M.A. thesis as well as presented at conferences and published in scientific journals as the opportunity is available.

If you are willing to participate or if you have any questions, please telephone or email me using the information provided at the bottom of the page. Attached are two copies of an Informed Consent Form, one for you to complete and return at the time of the interview. Please keep this Letter of Information and the second copy of the Informed Consent Form for your records. For more information, you can also contact Professor Mark Skinner, thesis supervisor (705-748-1011 ext 7946; markskinner@trentu.ca) or Karen Mauro, Trent University Office of Research (705-748-1011 ext 7050; kmauro@trentu.ca).

Thank you sincerely for your consideration.

Elizabeth Teleki  
M.A. Candidate Sustainability Studies 
Telephone: 705-748-1011 ext. 7978  
elizabethkowa@trentu.ca
APPENDIX D

Consent Form
Interview Participant

Research Project: Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities

You are being invited to participate in an interview about community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities. The project is based out the MA Program in Sustainability Studies at Trent University and has been approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board.

This research seeks to celebrate the unique and creative development strategies implemented in rurally situated small cities and to understand areas for improvement. The County and City of Peterborough have placed a strong emphasis on implementing strategic and sustainable solutions for the future as seen in the Sustainable Peterborough plan. This project seeks to understand the approaches, measures and outcomes important to you in the development of the Peterborough community as we all work together to ensure its viability.

As there are many aspects of development, this research will focus specifically on the case study of the casino in the Peterborough region due to its timeliness. Please note that this is not an assessment study to understand whether the County or City should develop a casino. It is a study that seeks to understand the approaches, measures and expected outcomes of various community leaders and decision-makers throughout the County and City of Peterborough regarding this development.

You are invited to participate in a one-to-one interview to answer questions and discuss your ideas about community development approaches, measures (i.e. jobs created, quality of life indicators) and expected outcomes for the community. The interview will last approximately 1.5 hours. The interview will be conducted by Elizabeth Teleki, Masters Candidate in Sustainability Studies at Trent University as part of her thesis research. In order to respect your privacy and anonymity in the study, all responses will be analyzed thematically and all results aggregated into general findings. In addition, all participants will have the opportunity to confirm and edit their interview transcripts at the end of this form. Finally, any direct quotations used in the thesis will be confirmed with the interviewee prior to the thesis being published.
Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw at any time. If you do not wish to respond to particular questions, please skip over them. If you do not wish to participate, please let the researcher know (researcher contact information is provided at the end of this letter). There are no known risks to participating in this research.

We are committed to maintaining your confidentiality with the information that you provide, unless you wish otherwise. You will have the choice of us removing any identifiers from your answers so that no one can identify you in any published research findings or cite you after confirming the citation with you. Even in anonymity, it is possible that someone might identify you in published research findings based on circumstantial information, but we believe the risk of this happening and any other associated risks with this research project are minimal.

All information gathered in this research project will be provided and held by the host organizations. If the information is digital, it will be encrypted and stored on a password-protected computer and in a locked office and/or cabinet. Information from this research will be destroyed five years after the publishing date of this study. Data for this research project will be collected primarily by note-taking and voice recordings. In either case, your request to make off-the-record statements will be respected. This research project has been approved through the Research Ethics Board of Trent University.

With all of the above in mind, you are now considered fully informed and by signing below, that you freely give your consent to participate in the research project. Please check the boxes that are appropriate for you.

___ I have received a copy of this consent form.
___ I want to remain anonymous in the final report.
___ I agree to be quoted or cited, after confirming the wording.
___ I agree to be quoted or cited as needed, without further consultation
___ I would like to review my transcript to confirm and/or edit it prior to its inclusion in the study.
___ I do not need to review my transcript to confirm and/or edit it prior to its inclusion in the study.

_________________________        ___________________________    __________________
Participant Name                  Participant Signature               Date

If you would like more information about the survey or how the data will be used, please contact Elizabeth Teleki (705-748-1011 ext. 7978; elizabethkowa@trentu.ca), Professor Mark Skinner, thesis supervisor (705-748-1011 ext 7946; markskinner@trentu.ca) or Karen Mauro, Trent University Office of Research (705-748-1011 ext 7050; kmauro@trentu.ca).
APPENDIX E

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Community development approaches, measures and outcomes in rurally situated small cities

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction: This research seeks to celebrate the unique and creative development strategies implemented in rurally situated small cities and to understand areas for improvement. The County and City of Peterborough have placed a strong emphasis on implementing strategic and sustainable solutions for the future as seen in the Sustainable Peterborough plan. This project seeks to understand the approaches, measures and outcomes important to you in the development of the Peterborough community as we all work together to ensure its viability.

As there are many aspects of development, this research will focus specifically on the case study of the casino in the Peterborough region due to its timeliness. Please note that this is not an assessment study to understand whether the County or City should develop a casino or its location. It is a study that seeks to understand the approaches, measures and expected outcomes of various community leaders, organizations and decision-makers throughout the County and City of Peterborough regarding this development.

In aggregate form, the information gathered will be used to inform small rurally situated cities of approaches, measures and outcomes for economic development. A thematic summary of the findings will be made available to you in the form of an executive summary and results will be published in my M.A. thesis as well as presented at conferences and published in scientific journals as the opportunity is available.

This research has been approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board.

Instructions: The interview is scheduled for 1.5 hours, during which time you will be asked to answer a series of questions about your formal and informal economic and community development approaches, measures and outcomes that you use in your leadership/organizational role in the County and City of Peterborough. The interview will begin only after you have had a chance to read and sign the Informed Consent Form and any questions or concerns about the research project have been addressed.
Part A: Background Information

A1. What sector do you work in (e.g., public, private, not-for-profit, charity, other)?

A2. How long have you been in a position where you have made decisions or had responsibility for economic and community development:
   a. in the County/City of Peterborough?
   b. other places/communities?
      i. Can you name them or share the population size and province/country?

A3. Please tell me about the role of your organization within the County/City of Peterborough
   a. Please be specific about its connection to economic and community development

A4. What is your role within your group or organization and for how long?
   a. Please be specific about its connection to economic and community development

A5. Please tell me about your general influence and responsibility for overall economic and community development in the County/City of Peterborough?

Do you have the ability to:
   a. Officially approve or disapprove a development
   b. Recommend approval or disapproval to decision makers
   c. Direct public and/or private funds to a development
   d. Set research and policy for the City and/or County that determines what can and cannot be done (e.g., official planning, by-laws, land use, community plans, etc.)
   e. Advocate as an employee with financial/human resources for or against a development
   f. Advocate as a volunteer in the community for or against a development
   g. Provide expertise or commentary publicly on a development that may help form public opinion
   h. Or otherwise change or alter a development. Please explain.

Part B: General Approach to Community and Economic Development decisions

B1. Can you tell me about what guides your decision-making process? Why?
   a. What philosophy or approach do you take when making decisions about economic or community development opportunities in the County and/or City of Peterborough?
B2. What aspects or priorities of the development do you consider to be most important when making a decision?

B3. Can you define what economic development means for you?
   a. Feel free to use examples of activities
   b. for the County/City of Peterborough?

B4. Can you define what community development means for you?
   a. Feel free to use examples of activities
   b. for the County/City of Peterborough?

B5. What are the challenges you face in your work in the community, when making decisions about economic and community development?

B6. What measures or outcomes would demonstrate a successful impact for community development?

B7. What measures or outcomes would demonstrate a successful impact for economic development?

Part C: Peterborough as a rurally situated small city?

C1. Would you describe Peterborough as more urban, more rural or something else?
   a. Please explain.

C2. How would you describe Peterborough’s economy?

C3. What internal strengths and weaknesses does Peterborough face in developing its community and economy based on its size and rural surroundings?

C4. What external opportunities and threats does Peterborough have based on its small size and rural surroundings for developing the community and economy?

C5. What attributes make Peterborough similar or unique to more urban or metropolitan places?

C6. If you could envision a future for Peterborough’s development in the next ten years, what top three things would happen?

Part D: Casino Development

D1. What do you know about the casino development debate in the County/City of Peterborough?

D2. What is your position on the casino development debate in the County/City of Peterborough?

D3. What guided you to develop this position? Why?
   a. What do you believe are the opportunities and potential outcomes of your position?

D4. What do you believe are the challenges or potential issues of your position?

D5. What are the challenges you have or will face in your work in the community, regarding your position on the casino?
D6. In your view, what are the ways in which those challenges might be addressed?
D7. What measureable outcomes would demonstrate success of the casino development for you?

Part E: Conclusion

E1. Do you have anything you would like to add?
E2. Would you be willing to look over the transcript of this interview and add any additional thoughts so that you are content with your answers?
E3. Can you nominate another leader in the community for me to interview?

I will be in touch regarding the review of transcripts, and in the meantime, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. Your participation has been very valuable and is much appreciated. Thank you for spending this time to answer my questions.