



Centre for Innovative &
Entrepreneurial Leadership

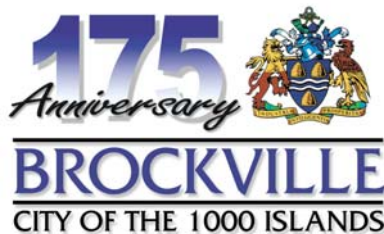
Community Vitality Initiative (CVI)

Phase One **SUMMARY** Report

Brockville, Ontario

June 2007

Local Sponsor: City of Brockville



Financially supported by:

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture,
Food & Rural Affairs



Ontario



Brockville Community Vitality Initiative (CVI) Summary June 2007

What is the Community Vitality Initiative?

The Community Vitality Initiative (CVI) is an engaging group process which analyzes the perceptions of community leaders and citizens on key indicators that are known to affect community vitality. Through an innovative system of online surveys, questionnaires, live meetings and focus groups, citizens and community leaders are asked about everything from the community's economic state to its environmental health to its support for the arts. The surveys also ask about such things as safety, learning, leadership, physical space, sense of community, and entrepreneurship.

The CVI team met with a group of 23 Brockville citizens on May 16, 2007, and 9 other Brockville residents answered the CVI questionnaire on-line. The full report on the CVI process in Brockville comprises 70 pages of easy-to-read graphs, charts, lists, and analysis. The report will be available at www.theCIEL.com.

The CVI was conducted in Brockville by the Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL) in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). The Community Sponsor in Brockville was the City of Brockville Economic Development Office, led by Dave Paul.

Brockville's strengths: nature, geographic location, the arts, and heritage.

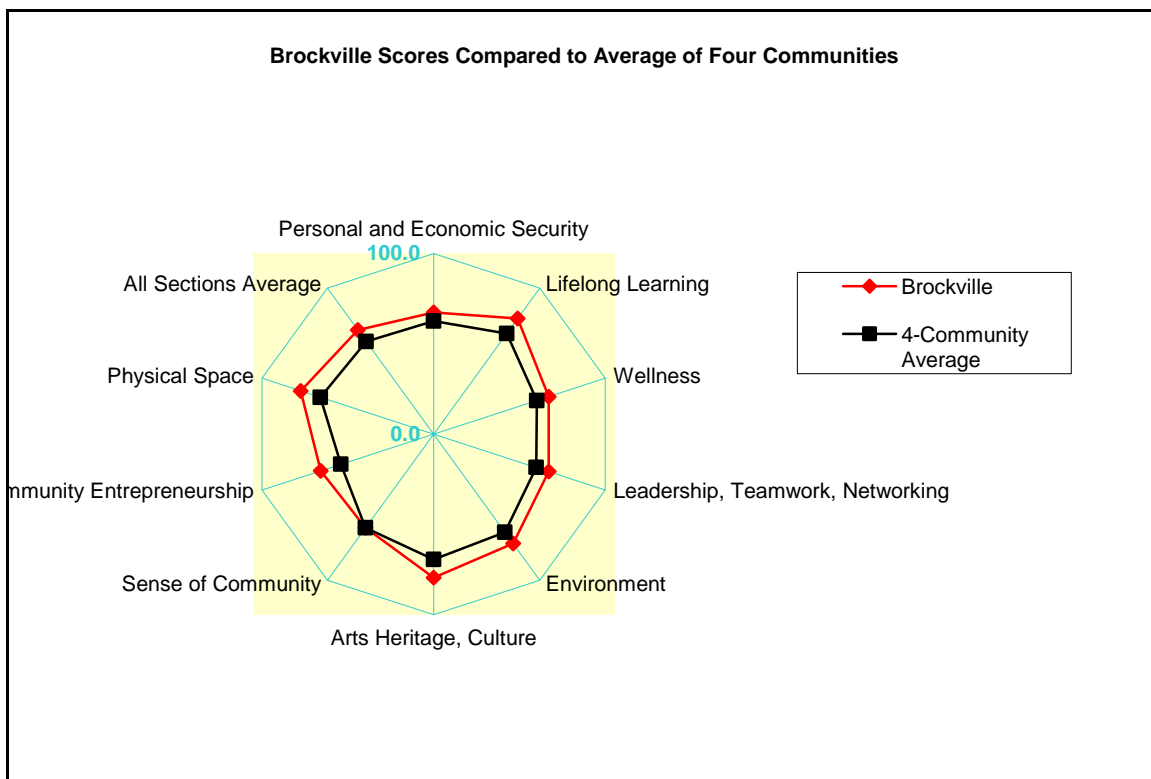
Brockville participants in the CVI process are genuinely proud of the natural setting of the St. Lawrence River and the Thousand Islands, and they are optimistic about the benefits of that environment in terms of personal quality of life, tourism, recreation, and business opportunities. They have good access to health care, a strong arts and culture scene, and considerable faith in their civic and business leaders. All of these perceptions have lead to a relatively high overall score of 79.1 in the CVI.

Needed: downtown revitalization, youth leadership, and a strategy to attract youth and young adults

At the same time, Brockville participants think their downtown area needs revitalization. The city has suffered manufacturing plant closures and there is hope that it can remain as economically viable as in the past. There is a strong desire to attract new businesses and industries. And the CVI participants are concerned about creating enough employment to discourage young people from moving away. These concerns are balanced by the location of Brockville in a web of larger cities and transportation routes, which gives the participants a feeling of security and optimism.

There is a need in Brockville to develop a young adult culture-- an entrepreneurial, recreational, and artistic culture that will appeal to young adults age 24-35, to attract them to Brockville to start businesses and families.

The radial graph below shows Brockville's scores for the nine sections of the questionnaire compared to the average for Brockville and three other communities which recently completed the CVI. Higher scores indicate areas of greater (perceived) strength while lower scores indicate areas of (perceived) weakness.



Possible Courses of Action

The following are some possible courses of action that Brockville could undertake to improve its vitality. CIEL offers these ideas based on an analysis of the responses received during the May 16th focus groups and survey and the subsequent on-line CVI survey. These are suggestions to get the discussion started in the community. On Wednesday, June 27, there will be a community meeting at which community members will respond to this report by identifying actions that will enhance community vitality in Brockville.

Possible Short Term Actions (actions completed in less than 12 months)	
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Youth and young adult recruitment and retention strategy (begin with research) ▪ Welcoming strategy for newcomers to invite/engage ▪ Youth entrepreneurship initiative (e.g. youth business incubator) ▪ Youth opportunity identification session (e.g. entrepreneurial, educational, recreational, and entertainment opportunities) ▪ Youth leadership and/or other volunteer building strategy for young adults ▪ Youth mentorship
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buy/shop local strategy ▪ Engage local media to highlight positive happenings in local media (e.g. organization of the month) to build pride ▪ Cooperative/joint marketing initiatives ▪ Cultural festival (e.g. a celebration of the river) ▪ Waterfront Park -- strategy to revitalize using free cultural and other events ▪ More profiling in the media (local & beyond) of the dynamic newcomers ▪ Advertizing on radio along the corridor promoting events and attractions ▪ Visuals along 401 to invite people to Brockville (e.g. a statue of a diver).
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quarterly town hall meetings
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Downtown vibrancy initiative (e.g. street vendors, etc.) ▪ Busking festival/Farmer's market ▪ Strategy to make citizens better aware of online and other learning opportunities

Possible Long Term Actions (actions taking more than 12 months to complete)	
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical recruitment strategy, possibly focused on aging/gerontology ▪ More promotion of lifelong learning
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alliance between local businesses/industry and educational institutions within two hours distance (e.g. engage their business schools in strategic/business efforts) ▪ Strategy to link strengths in affordable, diverse housing and indoor and outdoor recreational/fitness resources
Research, Administration, and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waterfront/downtown core redevelopment strategy focusing on downtown vibrancy ▪ Strategy for linking uptown to downtown ▪ Parking strategy ▪ Strategy to populate downtown with residents and businesses ▪ Youth facilities downtown
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary treatment of waste ▪ Waterfront restaurant as part of waterfront development strategy ▪ Build on success of recycling program by analyzing what the next step might be, using an environmental consultant from The Natural Step or similar organization. ▪ Waterpark

The Next Step

The purpose of the CVI report is not to present a final report card. Rather, it is a starting point for discussion and action. On Wednesday, June 27th, the CVI team will meet with Brockville citizens again to review the findings, pick actions and move to develop action groups for the community for the selected actions.

Brockville: The “Gut-CheckTwelve”

The following questions provide a snap shot of a community's vitality. They are taken from among the 100 questions on the CVI. These key questions can be used to inform future efforts aimed at improving quality of life in the community. If all respondents strongly agreed to a positively worded statement, the question score would be 100. If all respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, the question score would be 0. A response of “neither agree nor disagree” would be

scored as 50. A score over 50 would indicate that there is a perceived good capacity, while a score less than 50 would indicate a perceived lower capacity.

#	Question	Score	4-Community Average	% Difference
1a	Local middle-income earners can afford to buy a house in this community.	82	73	12
3c	You see many active, healthy-looking seniors in this community.	78.9	67	18
3j	For newcomers to the community and those who wish to, there are meaningful opportunities to get involved and make a difference in the community.	72.7	65	11
4b	On divisive community issues, there is civilized debate, a good flow of information, and inclusive, respectful consultation.	68.8	48	43
4d	Citizens and local government have an active dialogue. Citizens feel welcome to participate in local government processes and decisions.	64.1	49	31
5h	The community considers environmental sustainability in its community planning.	69.4	55	27
6f	We have at least one public festival that generates a feeling of magic and excitement.	79	78	2
7f	Residents are proud of this community. They are always promoting it to outsiders.	74.2	67	10
7e	Young adults age 25-34 consider the community to be a desirable place to live.	36.2	46	-21
8c	There are formal and informal forums (conferences, workshops, meetings) on business innovation, technology and technology applications.	64.7	42	55
9e	There are friendly public spaces where a variety of kinds of people feel welcome: parks, squares, fountains, outdoor cafes, benches, playgrounds.	89.8	74	21
9f	There is a vibrant town centre or community core.	59.4	52	15
	Average	69.9	59.6	17.2