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Introduction

As part of the Harris Centre’s Thriving Regions Partnership Process, on October 26th, 2021 the Centre hosted the first in a series of four workshops for the Humber Valley Region. Just under 30 people from communities across the region (see Appendix B for a list of workshop attendees) met in Cormack to:

- Share their vision for a thriving Humber Valley region;
- Identify specific ideas and opportunities that could support community, economic and social development in the region;
- Cluster these ideas into “themes”; and
- Select three priority areas that can be used to solicit applied research proposals by Memorial University researchers.

The Harris Centre is releasing a Call for Expressions of Interest from Memorial University faculty, staff and students to complete research projects focusing on the priority themes that were identified. A proposal evaluation committee comprised of local and academic members will choose which researchers will move forward in the process and attend a second workshop later in 2021. These researchers will then refine their research plans and incorporate input from the residents in the region. Ultimately, this process will result in the Harris Centre funding up to three publicly engaged research projects in the Humber Valley region at up to $15,000 each.

About the Thriving Regions Partnership Process and this Workshop

The Harris Centre’s Thriving Regions Partnership Process (TRPP) is an opportunity for Memorial University to work with people and communities in the Humber Valley region to help promote a thriving social and economic region through the funding of publicly engaged research projects in the region. Over the course of 14-16 months, participants in the TRPP process will select, shape and learn from three community-engaged research projects (funded by the Harris Centre up to $15,000 each) related to regionally-identified priorities.

The TRPP program builds upon and has taken the place of the Centre’s Regional Workshop programming that was undertaken from 2005-2016. To date, the Harris Centre has engaged with five regions through the Thriving Regions Partnership Process, providing an opportunity for Memorial University to partner with people throughout the province in promoting and developing thriving regions through research, teaching and engagement.

For the purposes of this initiative, the regional leadership team has defined “the region” as the area including the following communities: Steady Brook, Little Rapids, Humber Village, Humber Valley Resort, Pasadena, Pynn’s Brook, Little Harbour, St. Judes, Deer Lake, Reidville, Cormack and Howley.
A local leadership team is helping plan and promote this process in the Humber Valley region; see Appendix A for the list of team members.

Selected Regional Priorities

Through a combination of individual reflection, group brainstorming, and smaller break-out group discussions, workshop participants identified a series of topics they felt are relevant to the region and could benefit from applied research. After workshop attendees generated and clustered their ideas, they were invited to vote in two different ways for regional priorities. Participants used 3 dots for what they viewed as “the most important” themes and 3 stars for those themes “they cared about the most” (i.e., most likely to dedicate their time and energy to supporting).

From this process and additional discussion among workshop participants, the below three themes were selected by participants as being most important for the region and the best fit for potential applied research by Memorial University:

1. **Regional supports for social, mental and physical well-being**

2. **Regional supports for training, education and innovation**

3. **Regional supports for sustainable population and labour**
NOTE: Workshop participants discussed and agreed upon the following two additional important notes for interested researchers.

A. Workshop participants are particularly interested in applied research projects in the above categories that take place in the context of and/or can be applied to one or both of the following sectors:
   a. Agriculture and food security
   b. Tourism development

B. In addition, workshop participants expressed their desire that all research projects should take into account and demonstrate their contribution to healthy natural environments (e.g., climate change mitigation or adaptation) and healthy, thriving communities in the region.

(See Appendix C for a list of all of the identified themes and topics.)

Next Steps

With the completion and release of this report, the Harris Centre is opening the Humber Valley Thriving Regions Applied Research Fund. This is beginning with a call for Expressions of Interest from Memorial faculty, staff, and students looking to develop projects to address one or more of the top three regional priorities identified in the previous section of this report. A Fund Evaluation Committee, comprised of local members from the Humber Valley region as well as academic members from Memorial University, will review the Expressions of Interest and decide on three projects to move forward in the region.

A second workshop will be held later in 2021, during which the three chosen researchers will travel to the region to meet with community members, local partners and stakeholders from the region. The researchers will present their planned research, gather feedback, and develop partnerships to further refine their research. Following the second workshop, the selected researchers will submit expanded research plans which will then be reviewed by the Fund Evaluation Committee to ensure that the projects still reflect what was originally proposed, while also incorporating local input and the development of community partnerships.

Once the projects are approved, the researchers will receive their funding and move forward with their projects. The researchers will continue to engage with people in the region throughout their projects, and an additional session will be planned when their projects are at or near completion to share results and discuss next steps.
About the Harris Centre

Named in honour of the late scholar and former Memorial University President Dr. Leslie Harris, the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development was established on October 1, 2004. Dr. Harris was known for his integrity and independence, while making a practical contribution to Newfoundland and Labrador. The Harris Centre continues this commitment as Memorial University’s hub for public policy and regional development. It links Memorial faculty, staff, and students with the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and supports research, public engagement, and teaching in areas of regional policy and development. Working with all units at Memorial, the Harris Centre builds connections, encourages informed debate and supports collaboration, enhancing the University and the province through mutually beneficial partnerships. Since its inception, the Harris Centre has developed a suite of knowledge mobilization and public policy tools and has increased the university’s presence in communities and region across the province.

https://www.mun.ca/harriscentre/whatwedo/thrivingregions/
Appendix A – Humber Valley Thriving Regions Core Planning Team

Tobi Biggin, CBDC Humber
Bill Dawson, Steady Brook
Mark Lamswood, Town of Deer Lake
Lauralee LeDrew, Upper Humber Settlement (Cormack)
Lexie McKenzie, Western DMO
Dawn Park, Community Sector Council
Carole Spicer, Spicer Facilitation (Pasadena)
Marvella Wells, NLOWE
Jason Young, Town of Deer Lake
Appendix B – List of Attendees

- Crystal Anderson-Baggs
- Roseann Brake
- Melinda Boone
- Angela Brockway
- Hanora Crocker
- Bill Dawson
- Brent Decker
- Sharon Evans
- Rorie Folkertsma
- Terri Gilbert
- Lee Harvey
- Ingrid Hillyard
- Mark Lamswood
- Lauralee Ledrew
- Marina MacNeil
- Sarah Maher
- Lexie McKenzie
- Carmelita Morgan
- Marie Morris
- Jennie O'Keefe
- Peter Richards
- Janice Ryan
- Paul Taylor
- Rob Thomas
- Lydia Tucker
- Marvella Wells
- Melissa Young

Memorial University (The Harris Centre and Grenfell Campus facilitators):

- Jennifer Buxton
- Bojan Fürst
- Chris Paterson
Appendix C – List of All Identified Themes and Associated Topics

[The following are listed in alphabetical order by theme name (as identified by workshop participants. After each theme name are the results of the voting process engaged in by participants at the workshop. Underneath each theme are the ideas and topics generated by workshop participants and then clustered together. Priority themes are in bold.]

_Agriculture & Food Security [13 dots; 10 stars]_
- Supporting local across all industries
- Agri-tourism – how to connect commercial farms without intruding; tell their story in the background “atmosphere of the region”
- More government support for smaller artisan businesses
- Farmers market development; moving opportunities around the region
- Fall food festival
- Support sustainability awareness – food markets; incorporate in stores

_Environment and Sustainability [6 dots; 6 stars]_
- Natural environment is an intrinsic part of all processes/decisions (i.e., climate change)
- Reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions; climate change mitigation
- Highlighting sustainable-environmentally mindful businesses & organizations within the region

_Policy & Governance [4 dots; 5 stars]_
- Sharing of services – multi-region sharing of human resources, shared costs; e.g., shared municipal enforcement officer
- Land use development – consideration for the value of green spaces; less urban style residential and commercial development; policy changes required; advocacy for the prevention of resource exploitation
- Balance of power – policy around creating councils and committees that are representative of all groups
- New waste disposal site (locally); regional composting and recycling

_Social, Mental and Physical Well-Being [combination of social growth & development; health & wellness; affordable & appropriate housing] [11 dots; 12 stars]_
- Healthcare – retention & recruitment of medical professionals; subsidized travel for medical necessity
- Space and $s for mental health training sessions
- Everyone has access to healthcare in every community
- Affordable and appropriate housing – 20+ year-olds (single); families; seniors
Seniors have independent living options in their community; should not be regionalized

Influence of transient workforce on social wellbeing for family and community structures

Assistance with programs identification & monetary support for well-being education and awareness

Regional assessment and collaboration – what asserts do we have and how can we combine/use them better

Spaces for youth (other than sports) – rec center, youth focused

Network of services for seniors; assistance with renewing license, shopping, etc.

Intergenerational opportunities; all ages; to encourage permanent population growth

Opportunities for transfer of knowledge/skills (traditional) – gardening, hunting, angling, farming, baking, etc.

Social community growth & support

**Sustainable Population and Labour** [11 dots; 7 stars]

Potential population increase, but not enough preventing deregionalization including retail, organized sports, schools education

Population growth – immigration and repatriation; “stay here” campaign, more positive messaging for youth; recruitment and retention of skilled and educated people

Increase awareness of non-traditional workforce; help identify skills and abilities of all residents; address HR shortages

“Newcomers in Cormack” – register/license Cormack Kitchen; opportunity for cultural meals 1x/week (including indigenous)

Incubator models for youth and new Canadians

Immigration influence – seeing things with fresh eyes

Work-life balance – flexible schedules; improves attraction and retention

**Technology, Innovation and Growth** [0 dots; 0 stars]

Increased bandwidth capacity

Sector growth and innovation

**Tourism, Culture & Recreation** [12 dots; 16 stars]

Family friendly affordable winter spaces

Heritage tourism – educate frontline staff; positive engagement with locals

A branded approach to Humber Valley

Tourism – waterfront development; increase in services

ATV trail development & access; link all communities

Humber River – fishing, floating, sea-doo/boat use

Winter tourism promotion – strong partnerships with key stakeholders to aggressively campaign; supporting the small businesses vital to winter tourism
Humber Valley Thriving Regions Partnership Process
Workshop #1 (October 26, 2021) | Summary Report

- HVR golf course; beach house
- Government support regional partnerships & education
- Heritage tourism – get the word out, large advertising/marketing initiative
- Developing experiences, partnerships within the region
- Marble Mountain needs to become more than a ski hill – year round operation
- Heritage/Environmental hiking trails & development
- Heritage tourism – need community education; get locals to “buy in” first

Training, Education and Innovation \{7 dots; 8 stars\}
- Futuristic training and education
- Educate youth on entrepreneurship (how to start a business); train them young
- Successful business incubation
- Mental health/wellness training – youth & adult
- Renewable energy growth – new jobs and training
- Social enterprise development – access to more funding; education about the benefits of social enterprise
- Entrepreneurial education and funding – need single point of contact for multiple gov sources
- Assistance with program identification & monetary supports for education & awareness

Transportation \{5 dots; 10 stars\}
- Public transportation in region
- Accessible transportation
- Different transportation options for networks, different vehicles, all seasons, young and seniors, non-resident/tourists
- Increased charging stations for electric vehicles
- ATV connection within the valley – coordinated regional approach to development of a route; governance structure
- Taxi movement for people