



BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

RURAL OXFORD COUNTY

13/06/2012 Presentation of Project Results

Welcome!

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An industry-saving handshake

ROED Rural Oxford County Business Development U.R.C. 2011

Agenda

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- Project Background
 - Survey Background
 - Company Background
 - Survey Results
 - Data Highlights
 - Priority Issues
 - Secondary Issues
 - Action Plans



3 Project Background



4 Background

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- Began July 2011
 - Public Meeting and Volunteer Training September/October 2011
 - Survey Period – November 11 to March 12
 - Task Force Retreat – May 2012



5 Survey Background



Survey Background

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Completed Surveys	
Blandford-Blenheim	43
East Zorra-Tavistock	45
Norwich	43
South-West Oxford	48
Zorra	46
Total	225



Survey Background

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NAICS Sector	# surveyed	% of businesses surveyed
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	19	12%
Construction	28	18%
Manufacturing	26	29%
Whole Sale Trade	14	20%
Retail Trade	33	19%
Transportation and Warehousing	12	24%
Finance and Insurance	11	31%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	9	29%
Professional, Scientific and Professional Services	14	20%
Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	7	8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	7	30%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	10	22%
Accommodation and Food	17	29%
Other Services	22	26%

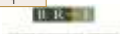


Survey Background

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Type of Business

	BB	EZT	NOR	SWOX	ZOR
Corporation	27	28	27	30	25
Sole Proprietorship	9	7	11	8	17
Partnership	6	1	6	10	5
Home-based business	3	4	2	4	6
Franchise	0	0	0	0	2
Co-operative	1	1	1	0	0
Limited Liability Partnership	1	11	3	1	0
Limited Liability Corporation	1	1	0	5	0
Non-Profit Corporation	1	1	0	0	0
Other	1	4	0	0	1



Survey Background

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Years in Operation

	BB	EZT	NOR	SWOX	ZOR
Less than 1	5	0	0	0	1
1 to 3	2	3	4	1	6
4 to 10	7	8	9	6	7
11 to 25	18	11	15	18	13
26 to 35	1	9	8	9	7
Over 35	10	14	7	13	12



Survey Background

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Number of Employees

	BB	EZT	NOR	SWOX	ZOR
1-4	19	18	18	17	27
5-9	12	9	10	18	8
10-14	3	3	6	4	3
15-19	3	3	0	0	3
20-29	3	3	3	4	3
30-49	1	4	2	1	0
50-99	1	2	4	2	0
100-299	1	2	0	1	1
300 or more	0	1	0	0	1



Survey Background

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Type of Employment

	BB	EZT	NOR	SWOX	ZOR
Permanent Full-time	340	671	377	551	895
Permanent Part-time	69	224	77	56	53
Temporary	2	75	2	6	2
Seasonal Spring	6	102	16	15	0
Seasonal Summer	15	97	63	27	55
Seasonal Fall	76	108	3	7	0
Seasonal Winter	15	0	0	30	0
Contracted Employees	11	4	60	1	9
Co-op Students	0	2	0	8	1



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Results

- Survey Results
- Priority Issues
- Secondary Issues



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Business Climate

Nearly all businesses rated the business climate as 'good' or 'fair'.

Businesses would like to see more relaxed regulations and a 'shop local' strategy.

In the past 3 years has your attitude about doing business in this community changed?

	Blandford-Biertheim	East Zorra-Tavistock	Norwich	SWOX	Zorra
Yes, more positive	12%	20%	19%	13%	33%
Yes, more negative	18%	27%	21%	28%	15%
No change, still positive	65%	51%	56%	57%	41%
No change, still negative	5%	2%	5%	2%	11%

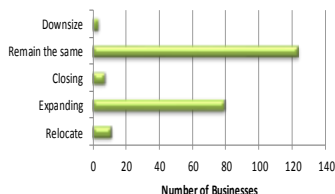
Future Plans

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Expanding businesses expect to an increase in: workforce, floor space and services for customers.

Nearly half (44%) of businesses are experiencing difficulties with these changes.

What would best describe your plans over the next 3 years?



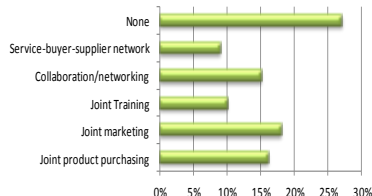
Business Development

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Most businesses do not have barriers in relation to information technology/internet.

Over half of the businesses are interested in working cooperatively with other businesses.

Are you interested in working cooperatively with other businesses to pursue any of the following?



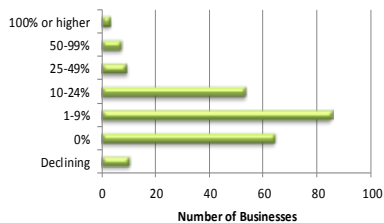
Markets

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The majority of businesses are planning sales growth within the year at their company.

70% of businesses reported receiving market research.

What is the projected sales growth at this company?



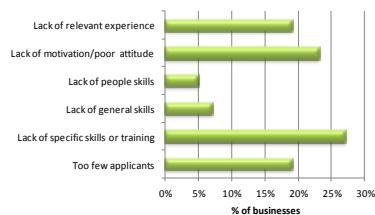
Workforce Development

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Over 40% of businesses expect their number of employees will increase.

45% of businesses reported difficulties hiring new employees.

How would you describe your hiring challenges?



Community Development

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What are the advantages and disadvantages of doing business in Rural Oxford?

- Advantages:
 - ▣ Proximity to major roads
 - ▣ Lower costs
 - ▣ Small/friendly community
 - ▣ Loyal customers
- Disadvantages:
 - ▣ Small/rural location
 - ▣ Too close to urban areas
 - ▣ Regulations



Community Questions

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What should be the economic development priorities for the Township?

Blandford-Blenheim	East Zorra-Tavistock	Norwich	South-West Oxford	Zorra
1. Support for farm community	1. Small business support	1. Health care services	1. Small business support	1. Support for farm community
2. Small business support	2. Mainstreet development	2. Attracting visitors	2. Support for farm community	2. Small business support
3. Community infrastructure/Development of recreational facilities	3. Support for farm community	3. Small business support	3. Community infrastructure	3. Community infrastructure



Priority Issues

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- Decided at the Task Force Retreat
 - ▣ Participants were given the survey results, and asked to identify what they saw as the major issues
 - ▣ Issues were voted on to determine the top priority issues and secondary issues for further work.



Priority Issues

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- BUSINESS NETWORKING
 - ▣ There is a need for a business network or association, interest to collaborate/network with other businesses, no forum for gathering.
- DEVELOPMENT PROCESS
 - ▣ Businesses feel that there are too many regulations and a complicated approval process.
 - ▣ *"Cut red tape and approval process to make it easier for existing and new businesses"* – Business owner



Priority Issues

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- JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND NEWCOMMERS
 - ▣ There is an issue finding people to fill jobs, and finding jobs for those under 30 and newcomers.
 - ▣ *"People will stay if they get jobs"* – Business owner
- APPEALING COMMUNITIES
 - ▣ There is a need for more appealing downtowns, villages and communities.



Priority Issues

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- PROMOTE LOCAL SHOPPING
 - ▣ Ensure basic goods and services are retained in rural Oxford.
 - ▣ *"Small towns need help to draw people in"* – Business owner



Secondary Issues

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- ❑ Closing of schools and churches in rural areas
- ❑ Toyota and CAMI drive wages up (costing other businesses more) but are good for the economy
- ❑ Parking issues
- ❑ Local proactive business recruitment
- ❑ Dissatisfaction with public utilities
- ❑ Business climate rated as "fair" by many
- ❑ There are opportunities missed with the large markets nearby
- ❑ Competition with larger chains/urban areas
- ❑ Increasingly negative feelings about doing business in the Township
- ❑ Availability of properly zoned land
- ❑ No interest in accessing Government programs
- ❑ Lack of transportation
- ❑ Not enough jobs for immigrants/newcomers
- ❑ Primary recruitment method of businesses is cold calling, so there is concern over whether they will be able to find the skills needed using this method in the future

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Action Plans

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Issue 1: Need to collaborate and network among businesses

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Overall Strategy: Provide information and opportunities for business networking in Oxford

Objective:

- ❑ Create a new business network in Oxford (such as a Chamber, BIA, or association) which could include businesses and farms from every township

Actions:

- ❑ Increase collaborations between businesses
- ❑ Promote networking events
- ❑ Set up shared Oxford Chamber program

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Issue 2: Businesses feel there are too many regulations and complicated approval processes

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Overall Strategy: Provide more support to business by reviewing regulations and processes, making improvements to these and then educating businesses about processes and steps involved.

Objectives:

- ❑ Issue identification
- ❑ Provide more economic development support, including simplifying the approval process
- ❑ Clarify role of business support centres

Actions:

- ❑ Township staff to meet with each other and County staff
- ❑ Make revisions to processes as necessary
- ❑ Provide contacts to businesses regarding approvals and regulations

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Issue 3: Finding qualified people needed for jobs and finding jobs for those 30 years and under and newcomers

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Overall Strategy: Work with and support existing Oxford Labour Force Development Strategy Implementation

Objectives:

- ❑ Check Oxford Workforce Development Strategy to ensure BR+E issues are covered in current plan

Actions:

- ❑ Look more closely at BR+E results
- ❑ Support the implementation of the Oxford Workforce Development Strategy
- ❑ Oxford Labour Force Strategy posted on municipal sites with links to services

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Issue 4: There is a need for more appealing downtowns, villages and communities

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Overall Strategy: Explore implementation of Community Improvement Plans (CIP) in townships who have towns and villages as well as engage volunteers to help through FICE programs

Objectives:

- ❑ Explore CIP Best Practices from other communities
- ❑ Establish a working group to set up CIP's where appropriate
- ❑ Engage volunteers to help through First Impression Community Exchange (FICE)
- ❑ Create and implement a strategy to improve community attractiveness

Actions:

- ❑ Investigate incentives for businesses
- ❑ Identify needs with area property owners and business tenants
- ❑ Provide FICE information to those interested
- ❑ Implement strategies to address findings

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Issue 5: Ensure basic goods and services are retained in rural Oxford

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Overall Strategy: Establish a Buy Local campaign

Objectives:

- ❑ Research what type of campaign is wanted by local businesses
- ❑ Create a 'buy local' working group
- ❑ Establish a marketing campaign and implement
- ❑ Create a business listing/directory to be posted on each Township website

Actions:

- ❑ Create a web-based survey for businesses
- ❑ Create a focus group to gather info
- ❑ Contact key stakeholders for invitation
- ❑ Develop budget and find funds
- ❑ Create strategy, marketing materials and implement



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THANK YOU!!

- ❑ Volunteers
 - ❑ Volunteer Visitors
 - ❑ Task Force Team
 - ❑ Task Force Retreat Participants
- ❑ Township Staff and Stakeholder Groups
- ❑ Survey Participants

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR LOCAL TOWNSHIP OFFICE