




Rural Community Development Branch - Overview

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Director
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What does “Rural” do?

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- The Rural Community Development Branch (RCDB) is part of OMAFRA’s Economic Development Division.
 - Branch supports rural Ontario by **helping clients** to building strong, vital communities with diversified economies and healthy social and environmental climates.
 - Branch works with rural communities, municipalities, businesses and organizations to help facilitate economic development initiatives through the delivery of numerous **funding** and **service** programs.

“RCDB is a catalyst for prosperous rural economies.”





Funding Programs

- Branch provides analysis, administration and delivery of the following funding programs:




Funding Programs:


- Rural Economic Development Program
 - Building Canada Fund's Communities Component
 - Building Canada Plan/ Major Infrastructure Component
 - Canada-Ontario Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund
 - Infrastructure Stimulus Funding
 - Broader Public Sector
 - Rural Connections Broadband Program
 - Building Broadband in Rural and Northern Ontario
 - Food Safety & Traceability Initiative
 - Millennium Partnerships Initiative
 - Ontario Biogas Systems Financial Assistance Program
 - Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund
 - Ontario Funding of Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund Projects
 - Ontario Market Investment Fund
 - Ontario Small Town and Rural Development Infrastructure Initiative
 - Ontario Small Waterworks Assistance Program
 - Rural Summers Jobs Service Program
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Service Programs



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- Branch service programs and resources build partnerships that help increase capacity for economic development, deliver resources that encourage job creation and investment, and connect communities to fuel insight and innovation:

Service Programs:

- Community Economic Analysis Tools
 - Rural Economic Development Data and Intelligence (REDDI) website
 - Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E)
 - First Impressions Community Exchange
 - Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario
 - Downtown Market analysis
 - Team up with other ministries and agencies to support economic development
 - Regional economic development advisory services
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Our Approach

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- Resource & Tool Development
 - research and transfer best practices in local economic development
 - develop or adapt resources and tools for communities and regional staff
 - train and build capacity of practitioners to identify local economic development solutions
 - Regional Advisory & Client Support
 - Principles
 - enable local organizations
 - work with local leaders to build capacity and
 - inform their decision-making
 - locally initiated harnessing the unique characteristics, strengths and potential of the local community.
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Our Clients

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- Rural municipal EDOs & other staff with ED responsibilities
 - Rural economic development organizations (e.g., ED Commissions)
 - Rural business organizations
 - Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Areas
 - Key provincial ED practitioner organizations
 - Economic Developer's Council of Ontario (EDCO), Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs)
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Tools and Resources



- **Community Economic Analysis (CEA) tools** – provides information, analytical tools and data to boost capacity for effective local economic development planning by rural communities.
www.reddi.gov.on.ca
- **First Impressions Community Exchange** – guides and booklets assist communities to learn about their strengths and shortcomings from an outsider's perspective.
- **Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E)** – a community-based economic development program to support existing businesses in the community.
- **Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO)** – a set of case study communities to enable sharing of best practices for rural communities responding to human capital decline that challenges their economic growth plans.
- **Downtown Market Analysis** – focus on revitalizing downtowns and to assist communities to work with local businesses and stakeholders to develop a local strategy and prepare an action plan to stimulation economic development.
- **Regional advisory services** – 8 regional teams deliver customized coaching and assistance

For more information visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/>



Tools



Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E)

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- 60-80 % of all new jobs in a community come from existing businesses, so engaging in a dialogue with local business owners makes sense from an economic development perspective.
 - BR+E is an objective and highly structured business visitation program aimed at identifying the challenges and opportunities faced by the local business community.
 - By building strategies to help businesses address those challenges and realize opportunities, communities can work to create a climate that further supports and fosters entrepreneurship.
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Tools



Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO)

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- CIRRO is a toolkit that assists rural communities in developing strategies that make them more attractive and welcoming to newcomers.
 - By making themselves more attractive to newcomers, communities not only are in a better position to address critical talent gaps in the local workforce, but they are also in a much better position to attract and retain immigrant entrepreneurs.
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Tools

Downtown Market Analysis

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- Market analysis data generated through the use of downtown revitalization resources provides entrepreneurs with critical insights into the characteristics of their local trade area.
 - In addition to general socio-economic data, market analysis data can provide information on expenditure potential: entrepreneurs can find out how much the population in the trade area spends on a wide cross-section of goods and services each year.
 - This information is invaluable to entrepreneurs in setting business strategy and in developing business plans.
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Other Resources

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- **Business Development Branch**, OMAFRA – knowledge, connections and expertise in food processing investment attraction, local business support and export market development.
 - **Agriculture Development Branch**, OMAFRA – provincial resources and expertise for agriculture production information, research and value chain expertise.
 - **Ministry of Economic Development and Trade** – regional business services, investment and trade, small business programs.
http://www.ontariocanada.com/ontcan/1medt/en/home_en.jsp
 - **Ministry of Tourism and Culture** – marketing, business development, investment attraction and regional tourism centres.
<http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/home.shtml>
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Appendix: Our Regional Offices

