

# 2017 Rural Ontario Foresight Papers

## TOPICS & AUTHORS

**TRACY BIRTCH**



**Volunteerism in Rural Communities:  
"How well is the heart of our community beating?"**

Director, Social Research and Planning Council & Community Impact,  
Perth-Huron Social Research and Planning Council  
Interests: Social Issues-Quality of Life, Living Wage, Violence against Women  
[Website](#)

"Volunteerism has long been the driving heartbeat of vibrant communities, with the emerging trend of aging populations and a society that is increasingly pinched to serve; the health of our communities may be at serious risk."

**PAUL CHAMBERLAIN**



**Business Succession and Rural Community Economic Development:  
"Rural Business Succession: Innovation Opportunities for Local Communities"**

Ontario Programs Manager,  
Canadian CED Network  
Interests: Social Enterprise, Poverty Reduction, Youth Peer Mentoring  
[Website](#)

"A multi-dimensional review of innovative community-based rural business succession strategies with case studies and recommendations for policy and practice."

**CHARLES CIRTWILL**



**Northern Ontario Perspectives:  
Commentaries on the Rural Foresight Papers**

President and CEO,  
Northern Policy Institute  
Interests: Government Structure, Business-Government Relations, Education  
[Website](#)

"NPI exists to inform and educate not just policy and decision makers, but everyone involved in and impacted by public policy. It will be the job of NPI to tell you that something that sounds good really isn't – from our perspective at least."

**MICHAEL FENN**



**The Impact of Megatrends on Rural Development:  
"The impact of Megatrends on Rural Development in Ontario: Progress through Foresight"**

President,  
Fenn Advisory Services Inc.  
Interests: Rural Development, Land Use Planning, Public Infrastructure  
[Website](#)

"Rural Ontario faces major societal and economic changes in response to emerging "megatrends". By anticipating these trends, rural Ontario can deal with them realistically and channel them to its advantage."

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### DAVID FRESHWATER



Place-Based Rural Policy:  
"Growth Beyond Cities - Place Based Rural development in Ontario"

Professor, Agricultural Economics,  
University of Kentucky  
Interests: Rural Development, Public Policy, and Finance

[Website](#)

"The paper argues for a dynamic approach to rural policy in Ontario that recognizes that different parts of the province's rural territory have distinct development potential that is currently underutilized."

### CHRIS FULLERTON



The Visiting Economy:  
"The Visitor Economy and Rural Cultural Amenities"

Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Geography & Tourism Studies  
Brock University  
Interests: Rural Geography, Urban Development, Land Use Planning

[Website](#)

"This paper presents the 'visitor economy' concept and the various ways in which a strategically-managed visitor economy can enhance rural communities, particularly those that aim to harness local cultural amenities for tourism development purposes."

### CATHERINE MIDDLETON



Rural Infrastructure: Broadband:  
"Infrastructure for the Future - The Importance of Broadband in Rural Ontario"

Professor and Canada Research Chair, Ted Rogers School of Management,  
Ryerson University  
Interests: Broadband Policy, Digital Infrastructure

[Website](#)

"This paper examines the importance of broadband infrastructure as an enabler of the digital economy and describes the characteristics of broadband networks that will be necessary to allow individuals, communities and businesses to participate in digital society in the future."



RURAL ONTARIO  
INSTITUTE



Measuring  
Rural Community  
Vitality

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Ministry of Municipal Affairs

