Rural Development Institute, Brandon University

Brandon University established the Rural Development Institute in 1989 as an academic research centre and a leading source of information on issues affecting rural communities in Western Canada and elsewhere.

RDI functions as a not-for-profit research and development organization designed to promote, facilitate, coordinate, initiate and conduct multi-disciplinary academic and applied research on rural issues. The Institute provides an interface between academic research efforts and the community by acting as a conduit of rural research information and by facilitating community involvement in rural development. RDI projects are characterized by cooperative and collaborative efforts of multi-stakeholders.

The Institute has diverse research affiliations, and multiple community and government linkages related to its rural development mandate. RDI disseminates information to a variety of constituents and stakeholders and makes research information and results widely available to the public either in printed form or by means of public lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences.

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Information is critical in communicating ideas, involving and engaging others, and informing decisions. In Manitoba, the recent multi-stakeholder report titled: Regional Economic Development Strategies (2015) calls for more information. These working papers are in part a response to that call. These five papers are intended to add ideas to the conversation about rural regions from an economic perspective.

The approach taken with these papers is to provide information on topics relevant to economic development and at the same time moving the conversation from a local discussion to one about rural regions. One starting point is to find out more about the importance of regions. Another topic adding to our understand of regions is that Manitoba is already divided up into regions. Governmental agencies and many organizations subdivide the province up into many different regions. Another way of defining regions is one based on established economic models. We have also developed eleven indicators to help you compare one community to another and one region to another. Finally, we end where we began with examples of how this data might be combined into information graphics to contribute to more effective communications.

We know these working papers are a beginning, not the end, but they do add to many different conversations about rural regions. Let us know what you think of these papers and what else is needed to contribute to you learning and your conversation.

The working papers can be read in any order you wish.

1. Regional is Rural
2. Understanding Regions with Economic Models
3. Administrative Regions in Manitoba
4. Manitoba Municipality Indicators Database
5. Applying Regional Understanding to Municipalities

Bill Ashton, MCIP, PhD
Brandon, Manitoba
The Manitoba Municipality Indicators Database (MMID), updated Functional Economic Areas (FEAs) and Self-Contained Labour Areas (SLAs), along with better understanding of the creative class and poverty and population in resource based communities provides a lot of information for rural community leaders, provincial and federal policy makers, rural practitioners, and citizens to digest. A profile of the Municipality of Westlake-Gladstone is included as an example of one way to present information about their local economy.

Knowing where people live, work, and shop can help identify where potential markets are and where workers could live, or what they can do. The demographic information in the profile will help communities understand the basics about their local economy such as whether their population and tax base are growing or declining or how local average incomes compare to the rest of the province. This profile is intended to demonstrate one means of communicating the large amount of information compiled as part of this working paper series in order to support local decision-making and regional partnerships.

This profile format is not set in stone. Community leaders, practitioners, policy makers, and academics will have valuable input into the most effective way to collect and provide this information on an ongoing basis. This broader conversation fits in well with the goals of the Rural Economic Development Steering Committee as outlined in their 2016 discussion document, Big Heart, Big Talent, Big Future and Opportunity to Grow, and could potentially be led by the committee as part of their work. Included in their strategic priorities is the aim to establish coordinated, evidence-based plans; undertake impactful, coordinated marketing and promotions; and support targeted investments.
Community Profile

The Municipality of Westlake-Gladstone is part of a Self-contained Labour Area (SLA) with the Municipality of North Norfolk. It is also part of the larger Central Functional Economic Area (FEA), as well as the North Central Economic Region (ER) for Statistics Canada.

- A community’s SLA shows the local geographic area in which residents predominantly commute to and from work, with a minimum population of 3,000 and minimum tax base of $130 million. These boundaries could potentially change as data is updated.

- A community’s FEA shows the larger region in which there are potential employees, jobs, and consumers. These boundaries could potentially change as data is updated.

- A community’s ER shows which region they are in based on the data sharing agreement between Manitoba and Statistics Canada. These boundaries do not change.

In order to better describe the state of the Municipality of Westlake-Gladstone’s local and regional economies, economic and population statistics have been compiled. These statistics include population, tax base, income, working age population, employment rate, and portion of the population without a high school diploma.

- Population data was obtained from the 2001, 2006, and 2011 Statistics Canada Census.

- Total taxable assessment for 2010 and 2013 was provided by the Province of Manitoba for the RDI project, Indicators and criteria for strong Rural Municipalities in Manitoba.

- Due to poor quality data collected through the 2011 National Household Survey, data from the 2006 Statistics Canada Census were used for determining median income, working age population, employment rate and percentage of the population without a high school diploma.

- Percentage of the population without a high school diploma was used because according to the 2012 OECD report, Promoting Growth in All Regions, reducing the number of people in the region with low skills seems to matter more than increasing the number of people with high skills.
The population of Westlake-Gladstone in 2011 was 3,068. The municipality's population declined between 2001 and 2011 by 5.2% at an average annual rate of 0.57%. The bulk of the decline occurred in the beginning of the decade because there was a small 0.6% growth in the population between 2006 and 2011. Between 2010 and 2013, total taxable assessment grew at an average annual rate of 4.95% to $114 million.

The municipality had fewer people of working age than Manitoba, 59.5% compared to 66.3% in 2006. However, a higher number of people in the municipality were employed than the provincial average, 69.2% compared to 63.6%. 43.7% of the population in the municipality did not have a high school diploma, which is considerably higher than the provincial average of 29.5%.

In 2006, the median income for both males and females was below the provincial average. The average income for males in the municipality was $19,055 compared to $29,191 provincial, while the average for females was $17,140 compared to $20,169 provincially.
Self-contained Labour Area (SLA)

Municipalities by commuting patterns. Blank municipalities do not share commuting patterns with another municipality.
The Westlake-Gladstone and North Norfolk SLA is one of four SLAs in the Central FEA. The population of the SLA in 2011 was 6,830. It experienced a population decline of 3.4% between 2001 and 2011 at an average annual rate of 0.35%. The population grew by 1.7% between 2006 and 2011 which means the bulk of the decline occurred in the first part of the decade. The total taxable assessment of these combined municipalities grew between 2010 and 2013 at an average annual rate of 4.79% to a total of $305 million.

In 2006, the SLA had a lower number of people of working age, 61.6%, compared to the province, 66.3%. However, it had a higher number of people employed, 68.8%, compared to the province, 63.6%. The number of people in the SLA without a high school diploma was 44.8%, significantly higher than the provincial rate of 29.5%.

Median incomes for males and females in the SLA were below the provincial average. For females, the income ranged from $16,693 to $17,140, compared to a provincial average of $20,169. For males, the income ranged from $19,055 to $22,695, compared to a provincial average of $29,919.
Functional Economic Area (FEA)
The combined population of the municipalities in this FEA in 2011 was 32,217 people. The population experienced a small 2.4% decline between 2001 and 2011 at an average annual rate of .25%. The bulk of the decline occurred in the beginning of the decade because the population did not change between 2006 and 2011. The total taxable assessment grew at an average annual rate of 4.18% between 2010 and 2013 to a total of $1.5 billion.

The Central FEA had a slightly smaller number of people of working age than Manitoba, 61.9% compared to 66.3%; however, it has a larger number of people employed, 66.1% compared to 63.6%. The number of people in the region without a high school diploma was 38%, much higher than the provincial level of 29.5%.

The 2006 median income for males in the region ranged from $19,055 to $34,187, compared to $29,919 in Manitoba. The same year, the median income for females in the region ranged from $16,693 to $21,596, compared to $20,169 for Manitoba. The differences in median income levels indicate a gender income gap in this region.
North Central Economic Region

Map 13 - Statistics Canada Economic Regions

North Parklands
Southwest
Interlake
Southeast
North Central
South Central
Winnipeg

North Central Economic Region

Lake Manitoba
Westlake - Gladstone

Municipal boundaries

0 25 50 100 150 200 Kilometres
The combined population of the municipalities in this Economic Region (ER) was 42,504 in 2011. There was very little population change between 2001 and 2011 in this ER because the average annual rate of growth for that time period was 0.01%. The population did experience an increase of 1.5% between 2006 and 2011. The total taxable assessment in 2013 was $2.1 billion and it grew at an average annual rate of 4.52 between 2010 and 2013.

The North Central ER has slightly fewer people of working age than Manitoba, 63.2% compared to 66.3%, however, a larger portion of the population in the ER were employed, 68.6%, compared to the province, 63.6%. 36.8% of the ER’s population did not have a high school diploma, which is higher than the provincial rate of 29.5%.

The range of income in the ER goes above and below the provincial average for both males and females. For males, the median income ranges from $16,807 to $42,661, compared to a provincial average of $29,919. For females, the median income ranges from $15,915 to $24,246, compared to a provincial average of $20,169.
The classification of resource based municipalities by population and income provides insight into the local economy. Westlake-Gladstone is considered a resource-based economy, and using an analysis of population and income, it has a growing population with higher than average poverty, which suggests there are barriers to people leaving the municipality for higher incomes elsewhere.
Creative Class
Creative Class Variety by Municipality

Group:
- Q1 – Low Diversity
- Q2 – Medium-low Diversity
- Q3 – Medium-high Diversity
- Q4 – High Diversity

Municipal boundaries

Lake Manitoba
Westlake - Gladstone
The creative class is a term to refer to a group of jobs where the primary function is to be innovative and creative, such as engineers, teachers, and researchers. The intensity, concentration, and variety of creative class jobs is one way communities can better understand their local economy.

The municipality had a medium-high level with respect to the variety of creative class jobs. However, both the Census Division and FEA the municipality is in had a low concentration of people working in the creative class.
Conclusion

This example profile places the municipality at the heart of its region and, through the use of economic indicators and other data, paints a picture of where the municipality is situated with respect to their neighbours. Are they experiencing the same population change as their SLA or FEA? Are high school graduation rates low across the region or just in one municipality? This profile will likely lead to more questions than answers. This is a good thing. It is in these questions that common problems, regional opportunities, and shared visions come to light.