

STIRLING COMMUNITY IN ACTION COMMITTEE



PREPARED & COMPILED BY
ANDREW REDDEN, M.Sc.(PL)
PROJECT COORDINATOR
FEBRUARY, 2006



Chairperson's Message

On behalf of Stirling's Community in Action Committee (CIA), I am pleased to present the final report and Action Plan for Phase I of the revitalization of downtown Stirling.

Since early 2005, we have conducted a great deal of research to learn as much as possible about the local economic and social situation. We are now in a position to make informed choices, bring into focus an overall vision of Stirling's downtown future development and pinpoint common objectives directed at achieving workable and lasting results.

It should be highlighted that the success of our initiative is a result of the collaboration and participation of members of the community. It is an organic approach to development, not just another consultant's report to sit on the shelf. We are here for the long haul. Our Committee consists of business owners, residents-at-large, municipal politicians and community organizations who volunteer to take action on issues surrounding their downtown area and they remain in the community following the release of this report.

It is also an integrated approach producing short and long-term actions in four key streams of activities:

- Organizational/community engagement elements – building up collaboration
- A physical design component – enhance built and natural environment
- An economic development component – attraction and retention
- A marketing/promotion/communication component

The CIA would like to thank The Rural Development Branch, Rural Development Division of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs for providing technical assistance and guidance. We also would like to thank The Township of Stirling-Rawdon for sponsoring this Initiative and for recognizing the opportunities for economic development and community revitalization. We also are obliged to thank our Project Coordinator, Andrew Redden, for helping us drive the initiative forward and for helping us compile and organize this report. We are all volunteers, so having a full-time Coordinator to keep us moving along is vital for the success of this initiative.

We are excited to have reached this stage in the process and look forward to accomplishing our goals in 2006 and beyond as outlined in this report.

Sincerely,

Ruth Potts
Chair



Developing A Work Plan

Special thanks to our contributors

In addition to those whose names might have been missed at a Committee retreat or the streetscape imaging workshop, the following is a list of insightful and committee participants who contributed ideas, critiques and background material for this project:

- Garry Ball
- Zeff Bernstein
- Dan Bradey
- Rosanna Clark
- Lin Clarke
- Yolanda Ellis
- Rebecca Hayward
- Lise Jacob
- Peter Kooistra
- Edith Edgecombe Kooistra
- Ken LaPalm
- Louise Livingstone
- Caragh O'Neill
- David Potts
- Ruth Potts (Chair)
- Michael Regan
- Kathy Reid
- Jack Rushnell
- Megan Seres
- Caroline Smith
- Jeremy Solmes
- Steve Tubb
- Joan Wilkinson

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Technical, Research and Community Support provided by the Rural Programs Branch staff

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Stempski Kelly
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Downtown
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Andrew Redden,
Project Coordinator



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Recommendation Summary

The following recommendations in **bold** were identified as priorities at a Committee meeting on January 19, 2005

Organization Recommendations

1. **Sustain and ensure long-term funding for the employ of our Project Coordinator**
2. Secure the support and cooperation of main street businesses
3. Recruit and encourage membership in the Main Street process
4. Better communication to businesses about meetings and events
5. Enhance the work of Comfort Country, build on what we have
6. Sustain participation in the Main Street Revitalization Initiative beyond the term of formal funding
7. Publicize our progress to the community and celebrate achievements
8. Ensure all those involved understand their role and purpose
9. Target and involve specific community organizations and businesses with the potential to contribute to recommendations and actions
10. Use successful initial projects to encourage the participation of other businesses
11. Identify channels of funding and financial support and pursue those opportunities

Marketing Recommendations

1. **Organize activities to promote dialogue and develop ties between the key players (i.e. breakfast meetings with merchants, after work socials, etc.)**



2. Distribute more material on what's happening in downtown Stirling (i.e. distribute Township logo or Main Street logo on signage, t-shirts etc.)
3. Businesses should be receiving letters praising them for their work in Stirling
4. Hold events to promote local businesses and to develop a sense of pride and belonging amongst merchants (celebrate openings, business anniversaries etc.)
5. Full-time Village Coordinator needed to curb communication barriers and motivate people
6. Promote the personal service that you cannot get in the city
7. Create a Buy Locally Campaign
8. Increase promotion of small town "comfort" feel (you're at home here)
- 9. Greater effort to promote the area through Comfort Country**
10. Revitalize, redevelop and protect our heritage buildings and sites
11. Coordinate joint marketing promotions such as a "No GST Weekend" that all businesses participate in to get people's attention and wanting to come and explore and shop at our businesses
- 12. Work with the Township to start a Youth Advisory council to allow young people to develop activities that are popular to them and make them feel wanted and involved in the governance of the municipality**
- 13. Present the revitalization strategy to residents at a public meeting to seek their participation**
14. Make residents and visitors more aware of the historical and cultural elements of Stirling-Rawdon to strengthen their sense of pride and attachment to their community (e.g. continue to support Festival Theatre, offering tours like Doors Open etc.)
- 15. Organize more festivals for the downtown core**
16. Create a more festive atmosphere through decorative lighting, banners, improved signage etc.
17. Present Stirling as a destination in Watershed magazine and other magazines



18. Frequent joint/advertising on local and regional media
19. BIA to produce a directory of businesses and services that is free – those published would share the cost

Design Recommendations

- 1. Add decorative wall at “Mac’s corner” (i.e. “Welcome to Stirling”)**
- 2. Establish Village Square (i.e. Covered Bridge/Cenotaph) as Stirling’s focal point**
3. Develop Mill Pond as a natural attraction
4. Add celebratory banners to poles, removable planters
5. Encourage the proper renovation of storefronts and facades (e.g. Community Improvement Plan CIP)
6. Make streets more “pedestrian friendly” (e.g. traffic calming measures)
7. Use municipal regulations to encourage and provide a framework for potential investors (i.e. CIP)
8. Provide incentives and tax breaks for building and business owners to improve their storefront facades
9. Review signage by-law to reflect the image that we would like to project (in collaboration with merchants)

Economic Development Recommendations

1. Develop a strategy for diversification, location and commercial recruitment:
 - a. Determine the niche markets for downtown Stirling (utilize market threshold analysis etc.)
 - b. Focus on specialized products and quality to be more competitive (don’t always compete with Belleville)
 - c. Focus on specialized products, goods and leisure activities in Stirling such as arts and crafts, small gift shops, cafes, brew pub(s)
 - d. Explore regional businesses already serving the Belleville & Quinte West area that could make Stirling their HQ.
2. Be responsive to the needs of various customers (seniors, families)



3. Increase awareness about the importance of presentation, product quality and personalized service, to differentiate ourselves from the big box shopping area:
 - a. Hold training sessions on joint advertising and marketing, help with identification of shared use of buildings and provide business networking sessions
 - b. Have workshops on Advertising/marketing and Window displays / Interior store design
- 4. Use existing business owners to help with the recruitment of new businesses (Create a Business Ambassador Program)**
5. Orient entrepreneurs about the areas identified as good opportunities and inform them about potential market share recoveries
6. Explore opportunities for existing expansion rather than start completely new



INTRODUCTION

Background - Brief History of Stirling

The first body officially to govern the area at a local level was that of Rawdon Township. The first municipal government was formed in 1850 and a town hall which also served as a church and community meeting place was erected on Village Lot 47 of Lot 10, Concession I, Rawdon Township; the lot was purchased for about sixty-one dollars. For the next eight years the village and the township affairs were run from those offices which early maps show as having been located on the triangle formed by Edward, Mill and Victoria Streets.

In 1858, Stirling was officially incorporated and declared a village. Boundaries were set and Rawdon Township had to begin a search for new offices. The building which had served village and township was sold for \$1,000. Stirling's second town hall is still standing although not in its former glory. It has become a seed and feed store and mill.

Development of the village and township was steady; by the dawning of the 20th century Stirling had a population of about 1,000; today's population stands at about 2,000 (total of 4,500 including the former Rawdon Township population). Many of the early industries, most tied to farming, have disappeared with time and the village serves as a picturesque bedroom community for people working in Belleville and Trenton.

Since 1858 we have gone from pioneer settlement to a modern flourishing town; but we are lucky that several homes and buildings from almost any era in Stirling's history remain to remind us of our rich heritage.

Today the village and the township have been reunited. Stirling is an enchanting village with tree-lined streets, limestone buildings, magnificent Victorian architecture and turn-of-the-century storefronts. A thriving arts community includes painters, woodworkers, writers, a flourishing theatre, and regular musical venues.



The rural area of Rawdon still features many fine farms set amid rolling hills. Communities such as Harold, Spring Brook and Bonarlaw dot the stretch of highway between Stirling and Marmora.

From www.stirling-rawdon.com as provided by Lewis Zandbergen, President, Stirling-Rawdon Historical Society



Where is Stirling?

Stirling-Rawdon Township is located 20 minutes north of the 401 from either Trenton or Belleville, and it is about half way between the major cities of Toronto and Montreal. According to Statistics Canada (2001), the former Village of Stirling has a population of 2,149 while the former Rawdon Township is home to 2,738 people. Combined, the amalgamated Township of Stirling-Rawdon in has a total population of 4,887.

Figure 1: Map demonstrating location of Stirling



Source: www.stirling-rawdon.com



Community in Action Committee (CIA)

In February, 2005 The Township of Stirling-Rawdon recognized the opportunities for economic development and community revitalization becoming a partner with three other neighbouring municipalities – Marmora & Lake, Centre Hastings (Madoc) and Tweed - in the pilot projects for Main Street Revitalization. To help ensure the success of this Initiative and oversee the process, a Project Coordinator was hired in May of 2005 to work with all four communities.



Other Ontario communities currently working on main street revitalization include Omemee in Kawartha Lakes and Havelock in Peterborough County. The Rural Development Branch, Rural Development Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is working closely with all six communities and regional staff have provided a great deal of organization assistance and technical information.



Background - Downtown Revitalization

The Main Street Revitalization Initiative builds on the community's strengths with a commitment to improving the local economy of the businesses located in town.

The revitalization of Stirling's downtown depends on four elements:

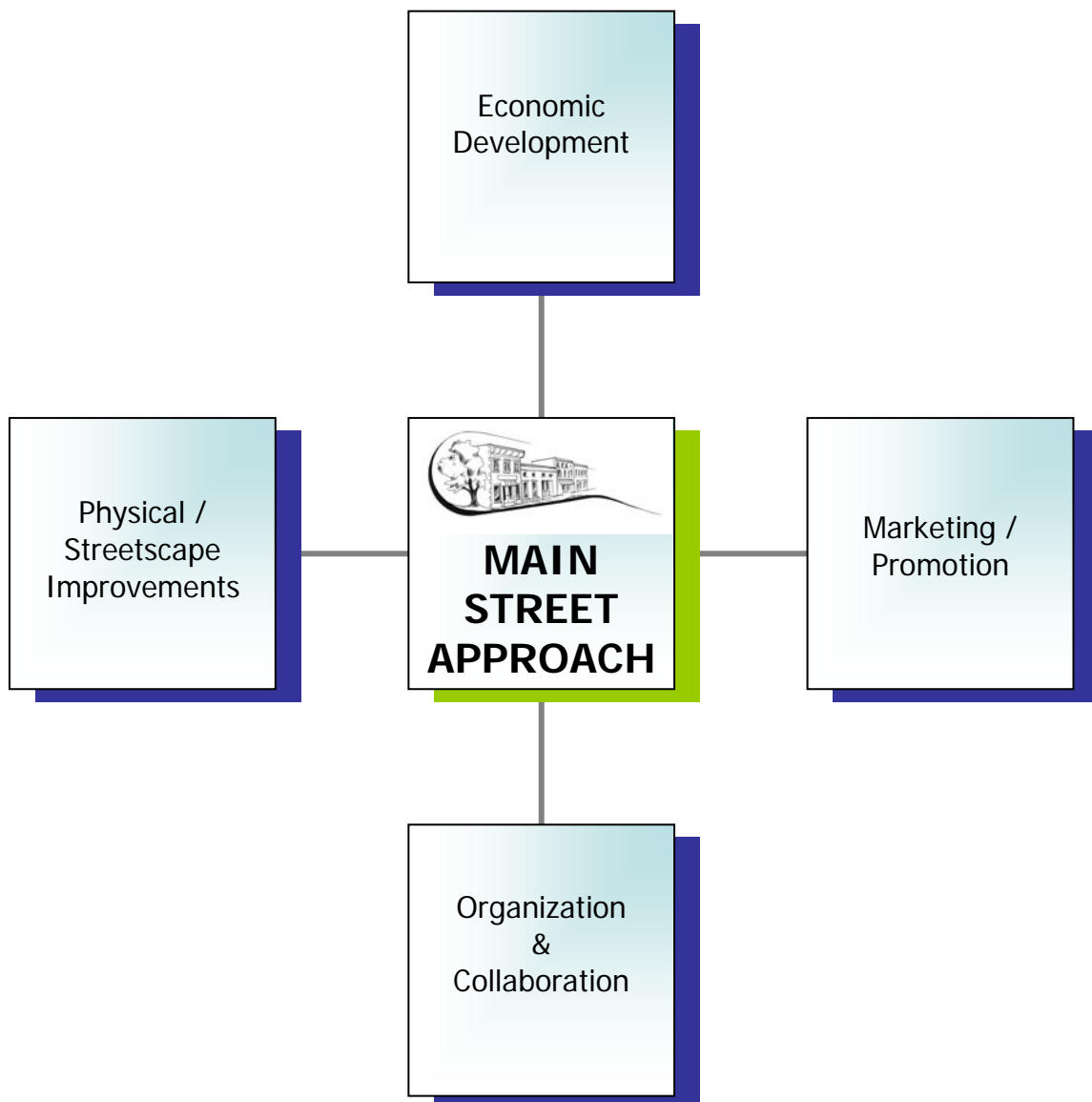


- A strong **organization** representing business, individuals, organizations and the municipality that manages the community revitalization efforts
- An attractive, interesting, and functional **physical** environment that enhances the buildings, public spaces, streetscapes, and waterfront



- A **marketing** plan to draw people to the town working to enhance its image, & hosting events and activities
- An **economic development** plan that aims to attract investment, new development, while retaining and expanding the existing businesses and services

Figure 2: Integrated elements of the Main Street approach





Concentrating on these four elements combined is a proven and widely used method for downtown revitalization. Many communities across Quebec, Alberta and the United States have successfully revitalized their communities and their downtowns using this method. Francois Varin - Executive Director of the Rues Principales initiative in Quebec - practices this method and the Committee in Stirling worked closely with Monsieur Varin.

The Process and stages of the project

Francois Varin kicked off the project in February, 2005 when he highlighted the process and the benefits of participating in a downtown revitalization project at a presentation to interested community members at the Stirling Theatre. Stirling-Rawdon community leaders and municipal representatives enthusiastically agreed to participate. Soon after, Stirling joined forces with Marmora, Madoc and Tweed to form the Main Street Revitalization Initiative.

The process included:

- Organizing the Management Committee (one in each town)
- Hiring a project coordinator
- Completing an initial analysis of the town's appearance
- Analyzing the Local Economic Situation
- Analyzing the Business Mix
- Surveying Business Owners
- Surveying Residents of Stirling-Rawdon
- Determining the Trade Area
- Formulating Community Design Concept Plan
- Developing a Revitalization Strategy and Implementation plan

Why revitalize downtown?

Healthy downtowns represent healthy communities. There are a number of reasons including:



- ✓ Improves image and first impression
- ✓ Makes use of existing buildings
- ✓ Develops community
- ✓ Provides residents with retail and services
- ✓ Downtown remains an employment centre
- ✓ Expands the tax base
- ✓ Avoids blight and abandonment
- ✓ Keeps dollars in the community



The Management Committee

The main objective of Stirling's Management committee has been to assemble all partners around the same table so that they could share concerns, contemplate issues and arrive at a consensus to identify solutions and actions to revitalize the community. The Committee adopted the name "Community in Action Committee" (CIA) and its membership has consisted of a representation of merchants, building owners, organizations, municipal representatives and quite simply individuals interested in revitalizing their downtown.

The Committee's activities are to:

- Coordinate revitalization work and activities;
- Create a climate of confidence, cooperation and mutual assistance among all of the town's major key players or partners;
- See to it that data and knowledge concerning the actions or activities of partners that have an impact on the overall economic revitalization process are communicated as clearly as possible;
- Assess the situation at the outset so as to be able to compare the data later and thereby evaluate the progress made;
- Explore ways to finance the process in the short and long term;
- Guide the project coordinator in carrying out the work



The CIA appreciates the effort and time given by the following members (past and present):

- Garry Ball – Trenval CFDC Director (former)
- Zeff Bernstein – Business owner
- Dan Bradey – Resident
- Rosanna Clark – Resident
- Lin Clarke – Resident



- Yolanda Ellis – Business owner
- Rebecca Hayward – BIA Intern (former)
- Lise Jacob – Resident at large
- Peter Kooistra - Mayor
- Edith Edgecombe Kooistra – Resident
- Ken LaPalm – Business owner
- Louise Livingstone – Journalist
- Caragh O'Neill – Economic Development Intern
- David Potts – Business owner
- Ruth Potts (Chair) – Lions Club
- Michael Regan – Deputy Mayor
- Kathy Reid – CAO, Township of Stirling-Rawdon
- Jack Rushnell – Agriculture Museum, Farmer
- Megan Seres – Ministry of Municipal Affairs Intern
- Caroline Smith – Stirling Theatre
- Jeremy Solmes – Councillor, Township of Stirling-Rawdon
- Steve Tubb – Architect, Resident
- Joan Wilkinson – Business owner

The Project Coordinator

Considering that the members of Stirling's CIA volunteer their time and efforts, someone is needed to keep the initiative moving forward. In cooperation with the other participating communities, an agreement was drafted to hire a Project Coordinator.



The role of the Coordinator is to foster favourable relations among the various partners and coordinate all activities associated with carrying out the revitalization projects planned by the Committee. Andrew Redden was hired as Project Coordinator in May, 2005 and spends at least one day per week in each of the four communities (Marmora, Madoc, Stirling & Tweed).

Andrew Redden, Project Coordinator



The Analysis

To inform the work of the CIA, a number of surveys, workshops and economic analysis was undertaken. A range of information was brought forward in presentations and summary reports at meetings. Together with the various perspectives and understanding of the downtown by the many sectors represented on CIA, this information was compiled to provide a solid footing on which to base recommendations for realistic and achievable goals and actions.



A substantial amount of planning and effort went into collecting new information (e.g. preparing and conducting surveys) as well as pulling together the statistics available for the area from secondary sources such as the Census. These reports reflect the contributions of many people and organizations (i.e. the businesses and individuals who took the time to participate in the surveys; support from local business

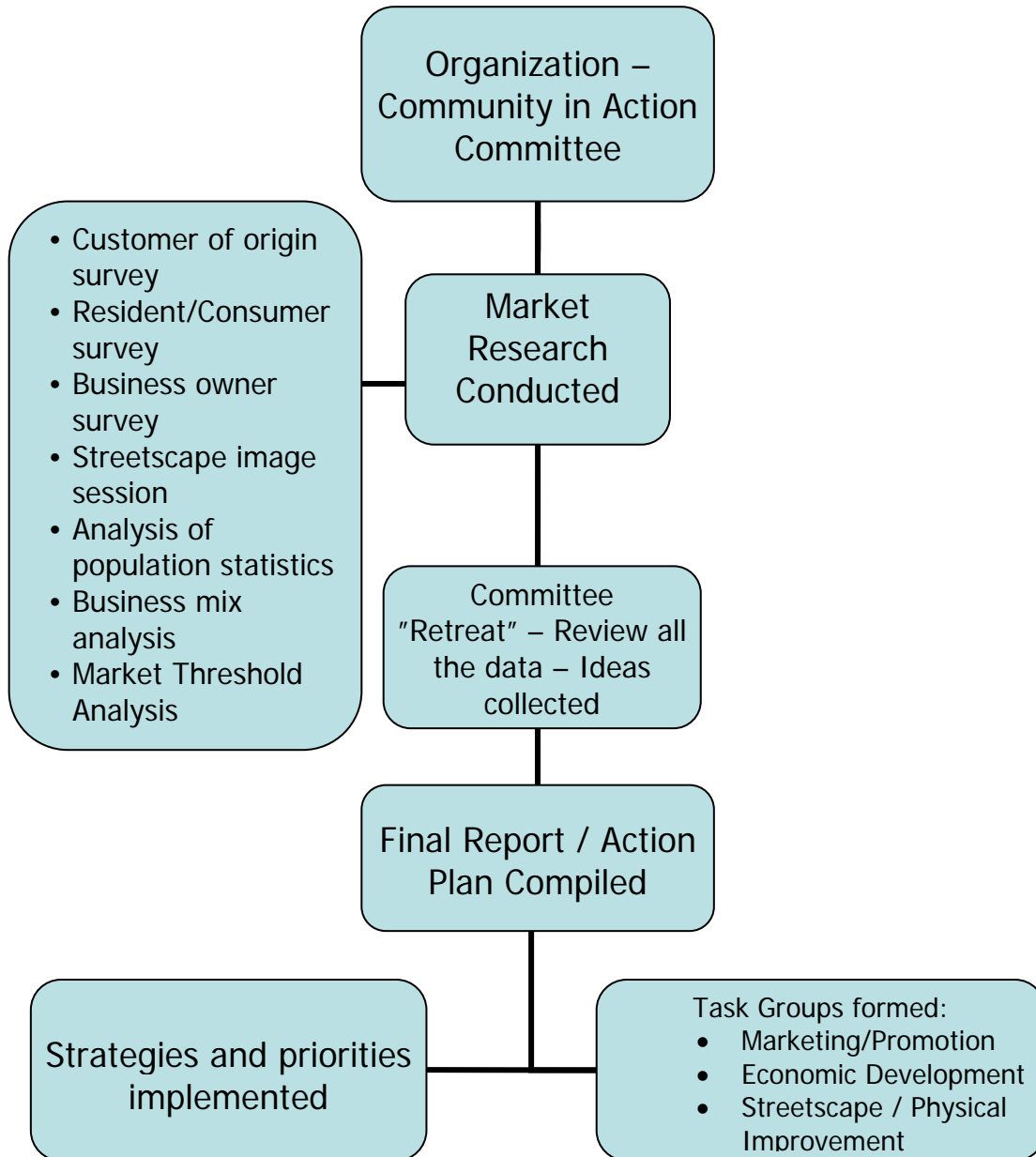
organizations and service clubs; the effort of volunteers on the committees and the Project Coordinator; as well as provincial technical assistance and financial support for the assistance of a design professional).

The bulk of the reports reflects the basic components of a Downtown Market Analysis and therefore includes key factors that influence supply and demand for retail and service businesses. For example, this included the number of businesses in different categories, local spending and household characteristics in the trade area, shopping preferences of residents as well as the perspective of local business owners. Nevertheless, a Main Street process requires the preparation of an integrated action plan and so the process also featured attention not only to business development opportunities but also to potential physical improvements and the opinions of residents about these types of issues. The CIA gathered for a "Retreat" on November 10, 2005 which was organized in a focus group format to review all of the data and collect comments, reflections and ideas on the market analysis as presented.



For a better understanding, Figure 3 outlines the process and some of the work accomplished to date.

Figure 3 – Stages of the revitalization process





Available Background Reports

Following the collection of all the market analysis, a number of reports were produced summarizing the results including:

- Community Design Concept Plan (Appendix A)

This schematic plan illustrates the suggestions and ideas for physical improvements stemming from a community workshop. It contains preliminary drawings to describe potential priority projects in each community. Depending on the community, the concept plans reflect subjects such as: signs; building facades/murals; street furniture and plantings; pedestrian movement, safety and lighting; and parking.

- Local Economic Analysis (Appendix B)

This power point presentation incorporates secondary statistical information on basic trends in the area such as: population change; resident labour force; the proportion of people working in different sectors; employment rates; and where people are working. The presence of major national retailers/power centres in the region that are competing with the downtown and the retail “pull” of communities in the region is also noted.

- Business Mix Analysis (Appendix C)

The numbers and types of businesses in the downtown and the vacancies are described in this report and mapped. Business counts are compared to similar sized communities and overall averages of businesses per capita or market thresholds to provide a preliminary “gap assessment” that could be the subject of more detailed evaluation as potential business development opportunities.

- Business Survey: Executive Summary and Full Report (Appendix D)

Extensive face-to-face interviews were conducted using the Provincial Business Retention and Expansion survey. Business owner perspectives on key issues and what types of changes and initiatives they would support are presented.



- Resident Survey: Summary Report (Appendix E)

Residents were asked to provide information on such questions as where they shopped for particular types of goods, what new stores they would like to see and what they liked and disliked about their downtowns. The results are summarized in this report.

- Trade Area Report (Appendix F)

People shopping at various locations in the downtown were stopped and asked for their postal code and the community they were from. This customer origin survey was used to help define the boundaries of the primary trade area where 75% of the customers originate. Maps of the trade area are included in the report along with extensive tables and charts comparing the demographic, income and household characteristics of people in the trade area with the county and the province. Estimates of the total spending for different types of merchandise are provided.

These reports led to the recommendations and Action Plan as provided in this report and provide a wide array of useful information as the Initiative moves forward. They are all provided as Appendices at the end of this document and can also be accessed on the Internet by visiting www.comfortcountry.ca Please contact the Project Coordinator for further information.

Formulating the Community Design

Under the direction of the Consulting Team of Stempski Kelly and Assoc. Inc., Sean Kelly led a public focus discussion on two separate occasions (Sept. 20 at the Stirling Theatre & Nov. 10, 2005 at the Lions Hall).

Sean initially met with the CIA on August 9, 2005 to determine local priorities, to complete measurements and drawings of the downtown and conduct a preliminary assessment of the town.



The public visioning exercise when he returned in September included a presentation by Sean on the town's priority sites for development and a session that enabled participants to describe their ideas for town improvements. At the participants' direction, artists/architects drew the ideas on large drawing boards and listed the primary features of the idea. The participants then rated the ideas in terms of: I love it! Needs more designing or Belongs elsewhere.



Sean then returned in November with draft sketches and preliminary costs for the recommended design projects.

Consultant Sean Kelly collecting ideas from workshop participants



Participants discussing & sketching potential streetscape improvements



Developing the Revitalization Strategy and Action Plan

At the final retreat on the morning of November 10, 2005, members of CIA and other interested people from the community met at the Lions Hall and gathered all the analysis and design recommendations to assist in the formulation of goals, objectives and actions. The following Action Plan is a product of this meeting and provides a matrix which outlines actions to undertake in the next few years to ensure the economic revitalization and harmonious development of Stirling's downtown commercial/main streets area. The Stirling-Rawdon Strategic Plan (2005) has also been reviewed and some of the recommendations – specifically those that relate to downtown Stirling – have been recognized and incorporated in this Action Plan.

The identified actions will not all be completed in the next year. Some might be critical that this Initiative is not meeting their expectations and assumed timelines. The fact of the matter is that there are strong economic forces at work that have historically worked against small downtowns and this is often the reason our downtown requires attention in the first place. Patience and understanding is required.

Nonetheless, CIA has set realistic expectations based on the wants, needs and desires of potential downtown users and of those businesses already situated downtown. The CIA has also voted for the Actions that they consider their top priorities. This helps to give a sense of what we need to do first and avoid feelings of being overwhelmed or questions such as "Where do we start!?"





Additionally, despite having compiled and launched this report, it is important to remember that there remains a great deal of work to accomplish and further studies and analysis may be necessary, especially with regard to construction or streetscape design plans. We have a good sense of where we want to go and this document provides that. As one local resident has said, "This report is the end of the beginning". Therefore, this Committee, its partners and perhaps municipal council must be willing to support further research and design sketches when necessary to proceed.

For a better understanding of what the Actions listed on the following pages will do, each Action contains the following labels:

- Enabling – meaning an action/item in place to "make possible"
- Sustaining – meaning an action /item intended to "give strength, to support"
- Enhancing – meaning an action/item to "improve, heighten or intensify"

CIA will endeavour to appoint members to task groups to provide a greater sense of responsibility and to provide further sense of direction, one for each of the following areas of the Main Street approach:

- Marketing/Promotion,
- Economic Development
- Physical Streetscape Improvement

To avoid any duplication of efforts, task groups can work with existing groups in the community to get the job done (i.e. BIA, Lions Club, Committees of Council, Comfort Country). Task groups will be responsible to follow the objectives and actions established with guidance and support from our Project Coordinator.



Stirling Main Street Action Plan Matrix





TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Marketing/ Promotion	A. Improve the dialogue between partners involved in the improvement of Stirling's commercial main streets	1. Improve collaborative efforts and communication between groups, business owners, DBIA, Township, economic development organizations, and the Community in Action Committee.	a. Organize activities to promote dialogue and develop ties between the key players; improve communication between key players and the Township (i.e. breakfast meetings with merchants, after work socials, etc.) b. Recruit more volunteers to ensure long-term participation and to assist those participants already involved in the process	Sustaining Enhancing
		2. Increase participation and unite the business community	a. Distribute more material on what's happening in downtown Stirling (i.e. distribute Township logo or Main Street logo on signage, t-shirts etc.) b. Businesses should be receiving letters praising them for their work in Stirling c. Hold events to promote local businesses and to develop a sense of pride and belonging amongst merchants (celebrate openings, business anniversaries etc.) d. Full-time Village Coordinator needed to curb communication barriers and motivate people	Enhancing Sustaining Enhancing Enabling



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Marketing/ Promotion	B. Improve promotions of Stirling's downtown/ main street as a place to visit, shop and do business	1. Encourage authenticity in what Stirling offers to visitors and to local residents and promote what makes the community different, better and special	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote personal service that you cannot get in the city b. Create Buy Locally Campaign c. Increase promotion of small town "comfort" feel (you're at home here) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustaining Enabling Enhancing
		2. Work together with Comfort Country partners to "bundle" heritage and cultural attractions, programs and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Greater effort to promote the area through Comfort Country b. Revitalize, redevelop and protect our heritage buildings and sites (e.g. Community Improvement Plan) c. Coordinate joint marketing promotions such as a "No GST Weekend" that all businesses participate in to get people's attention and wanting to come and explore and shop at our businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing Enabling Sustaining



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Marketing / Promotion	C. Encourage, improve and promote quality of life for residents of Stirling	<p>1. Involve young people in the governance of the community and on the Main Street Committee(s) in order to foster their sense of community pride and encourage their community involvement</p> <p>2. Get residents and businesses in the downtown excited and interested in the development and revitalization of their downtown and encourage their participation in the decision-making process</p>	<p>a. Work with the Township to start a Youth Advisory Council to allow young people to develop activities that are popular to them and make them feel wanted and involved in the governance of the municipality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use Northumberland County Youth Advisory Council as a model <p>a. Present the revitalization strategy to residents at a public meeting to seek their participation. This strategy will include this Action Plan (and final report) from the CIA and the Township's response to the Strategic Plan</p> <p>b. Make residents and visitors more aware of the historical and cultural elements of Stirling-Rawdon to strengthen their sense of pride and attachment to their community (e.g. continue to support Festival Theatre, offering tours like Doors Open etc.)</p>	<p>Enabling</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enhancing</p>



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Marketing / Promotion	D. Highlight the special attractions, activities and shops in downtown Stirling	<p>1. Encourage greater pedestrian traffic and develop activities along Stirling's main commercial streets</p> <p>2. Inform residents and visitors of the selection, type and variety of stores and services available in downtown Stirling</p>	<p>a. Organize more festivals for the downtown core (e.g. Arts Festival, hold an exhibit for local artists, work clinics or workshops in front of shops, a "Butterfest" or "Creamfest")</p> <p>b. Create a more festive atmosphere through decorative lighting, banners, improved signage etc.</p> <p>a. Present Stirling as a destination in Watershed magazine and other magazines</p> <p>b. Frequent joint/advertising on local and regional media</p> <p>c. BIA to produce a directory of businesses and services that is free – those published would share the cost</p>	<p>Enhancing</p> <p>Sustaining</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Sustaining</p> <p>Sustaining</p>



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Streetscape / Physical Enhancement	E. Improve the physical environment and streetscape of downtown Stirling	<p>1. Improve the physical landscape of the main streets and highlight its charm and help business owners and building owners improve their store front facades</p> <p>2. Encourage quality physical improvements to Stirling's main street businesses</p>	<p>a. Add decorative wall at "Mac's corner"</p> <p>b. Establish Village Square (i.e. Covered Bridge/Cenotaph) as Stirling's focal point</p> <p>c. Develop Mill Pond as a natural attraction</p> <p>d. Add celebratory banners to poles, removable planters</p> <p>e. Encourage the proper renovation of storefronts and facades (e.g. community Improvement Plan)</p> <p>f. Make streets more "pedestrian friendly" (e.g. traffic calming measures)</p> <p>a. Use municipal regulations to encourage and provide a framework for potential investors (e.g. CIP / Brownfields incentives)</p> <p>b. Provide incentives and tax breaks for building and business owners to improve their storefront facades (e.g. CIP)</p> <p>c. Review signage by-law to reflect the image that we would like to project (in collaboration with merchants)</p>	<p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enabling</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enabling</p> <p>Enabling</p> <p>Enabling</p>



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Economic Development	F. Ensure necessary commercial diversity in order to meet the needs of customers	1. Be more responsive to the needs of consumers to control commercial leakage	<p>a. Develop a strategy for diversification, location and commercial recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine the niche markets for downtown Stirling (utilize market threshold analysis etc.) - Focus on specialized products and quality to be more competitive (don't always compete with Belleville) - Focus on specialized products, goods and leisure activities in Stirling such as arts and crafts, small gift shops, cafes, brew pub(s) - Explore regional businesses already serving the Belleville & Quinte West area that could make Stirling their HQ. <p>b. Be responsive to the needs of the various customers (seniors, families)</p>	Sustaining



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Economic Development	G. Enhance business environment and skill set of business owners and their employees	1. Offer special support to merchants and better guide and encourage young entrepreneurs	<p>a. Increase awareness about the importance of presentation, product quality and personalized service, to differentiate ourselves from the big box shopping area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hold training sessions on joint advertising and marketing, help with identification of shared use of buildings and provide business networking sessions - Have workshops on Advertising/marketing and Window displays / Interior store design <p>b. Use existing business owners to help with recruitment of new businesses (Create a Business Ambassador Program)</p> <p>c. Orient entrepreneurs about the areas identified as good opportunities and inform them about potential market share recoveries</p> <p>d. Explore opportunities for existing expansion rather than start completely new</p>	<p>Enabling</p> <p>Enabling</p> <p>Sustaining</p> <p>Sustaining</p>



TASK GROUP	GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	TYPE OF ACTION
Entire Management Committee	H. Keep the Main Street Revitalization Initiative alive for years to come and not just end when the current term of formal funding lapses	<p>1. Keep the position of our Project Coordinator in place for more than the current 3 year term so that we have staff in place to keep things happening</p> <p>2. Recruit and encourage participation in the Main Street Revitalization Initiative</p>	<p>a. Ensure our municipal government and Council realize the necessity of having a Project Coordinator to help us drive the initiative and keep it moving</p> <p>b. Sustain our local government's participation in the Main Street Revitalization Initiative beyond the current term of formal funding</p> <p>c. Identify new channels of funding and financial support and pursue those avenues</p>	<p>Enabling</p> <p>Sustaining</p> <p>Enabling</p>
			<p>a. Use successful initial projects to encourage the participation of other businesses</p> <p>b. Publicize our progress to the community and celebrate achievements</p> <p>c. Secure the support and cooperation of main street businesses</p>	<p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enhancing</p> <p>Enhancing</p>



APPENDICES – MARKET ANALYSIS

The Appendices are the available background reports on the market analysis that was conducted. They are included with this report, or visit www.comfortcountry.ca to download the complete set, or contact Project Coordinator Andrew Redden for hard copies at 613-847-6366 or by e-mail: aredden@centralhastings.ca