

Elizabethtown-Kitley Cultural Mapping Project

From 2 July to 30 December, 2013, the Heritage Elizabethtown-Kitley Committee, Chaired by Tracy Gayda, spearheaded a Cultural Mapping Project of the Township. The Committee was very grateful for the support of the Government of Ontario through *The Creative Communities Prosperity Fund* (CCPF) and the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley.

From the outset, this project was about building community by engaging the community with the questions: “What was great about their neighbourhood? What contributes to their Quality of Place and Quality of Life?”

The Project Co-ordinator, Lynne Clifford-Ward, along with the Heritage Committee and the Township’s Planning and Development Department, raised awareness about the project in the local media and encouraged community participation through on-line surveys; mail-outs; brochures; two September lunch Workshops; interviews; emails; Power Point presentations including Township Business of the Year Luncheon; a Township Business Fair; phone calls and a business Facebook page.

Some background...

On January 1, 2001, within the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Elizabethtown Township (in the south) was amalgamated with Kitley Township (in the north). A predominately rural community of 9,700 adjacent to the St. Lawrence River in the south and Rideau Lakes in the North, framed by Augusta and Merrickville-Wolford Townships in the East, Front of Yonge, Athens and Rideau Lakes Townships in the West, Elizabethtown-Kitley Township is comprised of 557.80 sq km. This expansive geographic area, with testimony to its endurance including century- old stone buildings, also includes modern farm operations and crops, such as beef, dairy and sunflowers by the acre.

By identifying and mapping the Township’s cultural assets and knowing “what’s in their neighbourhood” it is hoped that residents will be encouraged to reach out and build stronger community across this vast Township. Ideally, it is also hoped that the map may attract visitors, encourage economic entrepreneurial opportunities in the area and inform future planning of the Township.

What is Cultural Mapping? Why should it be done?

To paraphrase Jeannette Hanna, when one lives in a place, it’s difficult to stand back and describe its special character. **Cultural mapping** is a tool to help identify and articulate characteristics which make a place unique.¹ This uniqueness creates the Quality of Life and Quality of (authentic) Place. What we are describing, in essence, is Culture being “who we are and what we do”.

¹ Greg Baeker, [Rediscovering the Wealth of Places](#), (St. Thomas: Municipal World, 2010) 92.

Richard Florida, the leading exponent of the Creative Economy, suggests that **Quality of Place** is now a core competitive advantage *because business and investment follow people – not vice versa.*²

Dan Taylor and Greg Baeker, who were driving forces behind the successful explosion of the rural economy (viniculture, food and art) in Prince Edward County, Ontario, suggest that communities with unique histories and distinctive natural and cultural heritage features are **magnets** for creative people.³

By systematically identifying the township's cultural **resources** and **strengths**, the mapping indicates what makes Elizabethtown-Kitley Township a great place to live.

Knowing what makes our Township unique, we can more fully use the information as a competitive advantage. It can also strengthen community and build civic pride.



How did we create this Cultural Map?

The journey to obtain the mapping information was through community engagement and research.

- A **brochure**, which explained the project, was distributed to various locales throughout the Township, such as Libraries, Township offices, Post Office, businesses and farms.

² Greg Baeker, Dan Taylor, Economic Restructuring through Culture in Small Towns and Rural Areas: Building Creative Rural Economies. A Case Study of Prince Edward County, Ontario (2008),4.

³ Greg Baeker, Dan Taylor, Economic Restructuring through Culture in Small Towns and Rural Areas: Building Creative Rural Economies. A Case Study of Prince Edward County, Ontario (2008), 10.

- A **display** was created for the Elizabethtown-Kitley Business Fair in June 2013.
- A two sided rack **card** was issued to 5,000 residents through the Township Autumn 2013 tax notice, requesting input from residents.
- Interviews, emails and phone calls were made to stakeholders.
- Business cards were distributed, featuring contact details and an invitation to “Like us” on the Cultural Mapping business Facebook page
- **Workshop Invitation advertisement** was placed in papers (EMC Smiths Falls and EMC St. Lawrence).
- **Newspaper articles announcing and describing the project;** and **photos** from the community Workshops, appeared in the local media and raised awareness about the Cultural Mapping Project. Coverage included EMC Smiths Falls and St. Lawrence; Brockville Recorder and Times; The Mural, Athens; SNAP, Brockville, and Eastern Ontario Network.
- Through two **Cultural Mapping Workshops**. One was held in Toledo on September 14, 2013 and 156 Cultural Assets were recorded by 16 participants. A second Cultural Mapping Workshop in Lyn, on September 28, 2013, recorded 173 Cultural Assets with 18 participants. For many, this quantity of cultural assets was an unexpected outcome for the geographically expansive and predominately rural Township.





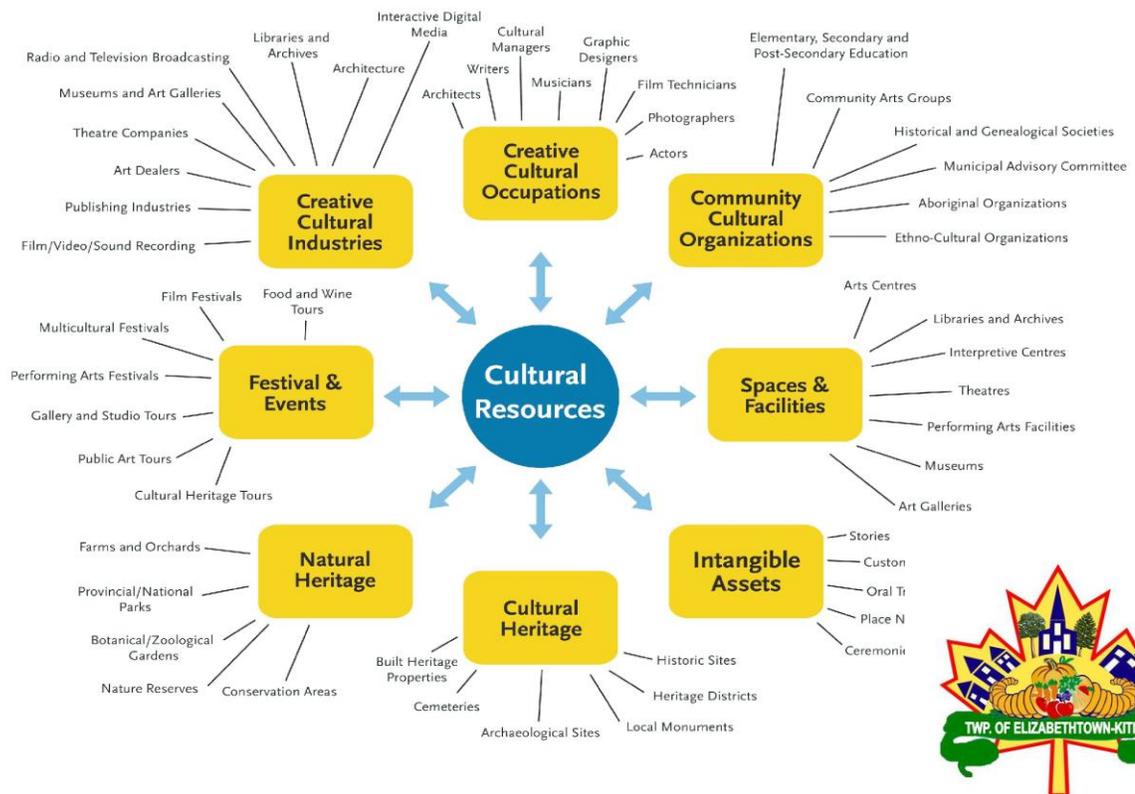
- The Project Coordinator presented a Power Point **presentation** re: the progress of the Project to invited guests, Township Councillors, and other government officials at the *Elizabethtown-Kitley Township Business of the Year Luncheon* on Oct 3, 2013.
- A business **Facebook page**, *Elizabethtown-Kitley Cultural Mapping Project*, was created. It has become an interactive and fun community building tool which can be accessed through the Township website. It lists community events – from Santa Claus Parades and Craft Fairs, to Remembrance Day services and Car Rallies; displays seasonal and historical photographs; contributes insights to local history; and, provides information and progress re: the Project.



To help organize and frame our choices of what to include in the Cultural Map, Cultural Assets (or Resources) were more or less broken into the following categories as suggested by Municipal Cultural Planning Inc. (MCPI):

- **Creative Cultural Occupations** (such as artists, musicians, crafts persons);
- **Cultural Heritage** (such as historic sites, buildings, cemeteries, aboriginal sites);
- **Community Cultural Organizations** (such as community, arts or religious organizations);
- **Cultural Spaces and Facilities** (such as libraries, museums, halls, sport facilities);
- **Creative Cultural Industries** (such as museums, art galleries, libraries and archives, publishing, film / sound recording);
- **Natural Heritage** (such as forests, parks, conservation areas, farms, scenic areas);
- **Festivals and Events** (such as fairs, craft festivals, art tours, sporting events), and,
- **Intangible Assets** (stories, oral traditions, customs)

For more information re: Cultural Resources, see *Cultural Resource Mapping: A Guide for Municipalities*, 2010, www.ontariomcp.ca



A note about *Intangible Cultural Assets* in a global context:

2013 marks the 10th Anniversary of the General Conference of UNESCO adopting the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. UNESCO states Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.⁴

To support this, a Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity continues to grow yearly, raising awareness and providing recognition of intangible heritage.⁵

The Intangible Assets for Elizabethtown-Kitley Township includes stories and maps of its industrial heritage in such diverse industries as cheese factories, tanneries and mills.

Conclusion

As stated in the outset, this cultural mapping was all about helping the community rediscover – and sometimes discover – what is in their neighbourhood. After all, if you do not know what you have, how can you possibly plan for the future? Connect with one another? Attract others – visitors, entrepreneurs, businesses - to experience your “authentic place”?

We hope you enjoy “discovering” the Cultural Assets of this vast Township called Elizabethtown-Kitley.

It is important to recognize that this Cultural Map is a “living document” on the web. Should you have comments, notice omissions or could perhaps provide us with more updated information, please let us know: mail@elizabethtown-kitley.on.ca. There is also a Request Form available for listing new Cultural Assets. We would love to hear from you!

Like to know more about Cultural Mapping and Cultural Planning? Here are a few suggestions for further reading:

Baeker, G. *Rediscovering the Wealth of Places – A municipal cultural planning handbook for Canadian communities*, (Municipal World, St. Thomas, ON), 2010.

Hume, G. *Cultural Planning for Creative Communities*, (Municipal World, St. Thomas, ON), 2009.

⁴ <http://hyperallergic.com/81220/eight-unexpected-traditions-preserved-as-our-intangible-culture/>

⁵ <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/news/Eleven-new-inscriptions-on-the-Representative-List-00073>

Florida, R. *The Rise of the Creative Class*, (Basic Books, New York), 2002.

Rowe, J. *What's Your Story? Cultural Mapping – Best Practices Manual for Rediscovering Small Town Canada*, (Wawa, ON), 2012.

Stewart, S. *Cultural Mapping Toolkit: A Partnership Between 2010 Legacies Now and Creative City Network of Canada*, (2010 Legacies Now, Vancouver, BC), 2010.

Cultural Resource Mapping: A Guide for Municipalities, 2010, www.ontariomcp.ca

Acknowledgements:

This project would not have been possible without the genuine interest of many residents across the length and breadth of the Township. Heritage Elizabethtown-Kitley Committee is very grateful for their contributions and encouragement.

Hearty thanks to all who participated in the Cultural Mapping Workshops on two beautiful Saturdays in September; and everyone who readily answered the Co-ordinator's phone calls and emails; welcomed the Project Co-ordinator into their home for interviews; made suggestions in the surveys; took time to listen about the Project's progress and "liked us" on Facebook. Local media interest in the project was also sincerely appreciated.

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DISCLAIMER

Great effort has been made to ensure that the information in this database is accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive as of mid **December 2013**. The Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley cannot assume liability resulting from errors or omissions. Inclusion of a group, programme or service does not imply endorsement, nor does omission reflect on the contribution that an organization makes in a community. We would kindly suggest that you verify the information before acting on it.