



**Initiative on the New Economy**

**Service Provision in Rural and Small Town Places:  
A Report for Usborne, Ontario**

**Services Research Centre  
University of Northern British Columbia**

**Summer 2003**



A project of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation  
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## INITIATIVE ON THE NEW ECONOMY - ABOUT THE PROJECT

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The *Initiative on the New Economy* project of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) works closely with residents, service providers, voluntary organizations, business members, and decision makers to identify factors that contribute to building capacity in rural and small town places across Canada. This new endeavour, referred to as NRE2, follows an earlier CRRF project called *New Rural Economy* (NRE).

Capacity is the ability of people residing in a place to mobilize their assets and resources to cope with stress and transition, or to capitalize on opportunities. Such capacity is built from trust and relationships grounded in institutions, organizations, businesses, and services alike. The Initiative on the New Economy (NRE2) builds on four key themes to explore capacity including *local governance, communications, services, and the environment*. This report explores the relationship between services and capacity.

This report looks at services available to site residents as one way to measure standard of living, which is part of local capacity. We focus on the current levels of services provided (i.e., service provision) in rural and small town places that are used for NRE2 research across Canada. In particular, this document compares services available within thirty minutes of Usborne, Ontario (a former township now part of the Municipality of South Huron) with those found in other NRE research sites across Canada, including Ontario. One benefit of this analysis is that it enhances our understanding of site resources so that residents, researchers, and policy-makers can assess levels of need and potential strengths for development.

The data used for this report are based on site profile surveys conducted in the summer of 2003--the third site assessment conducted since 1998.

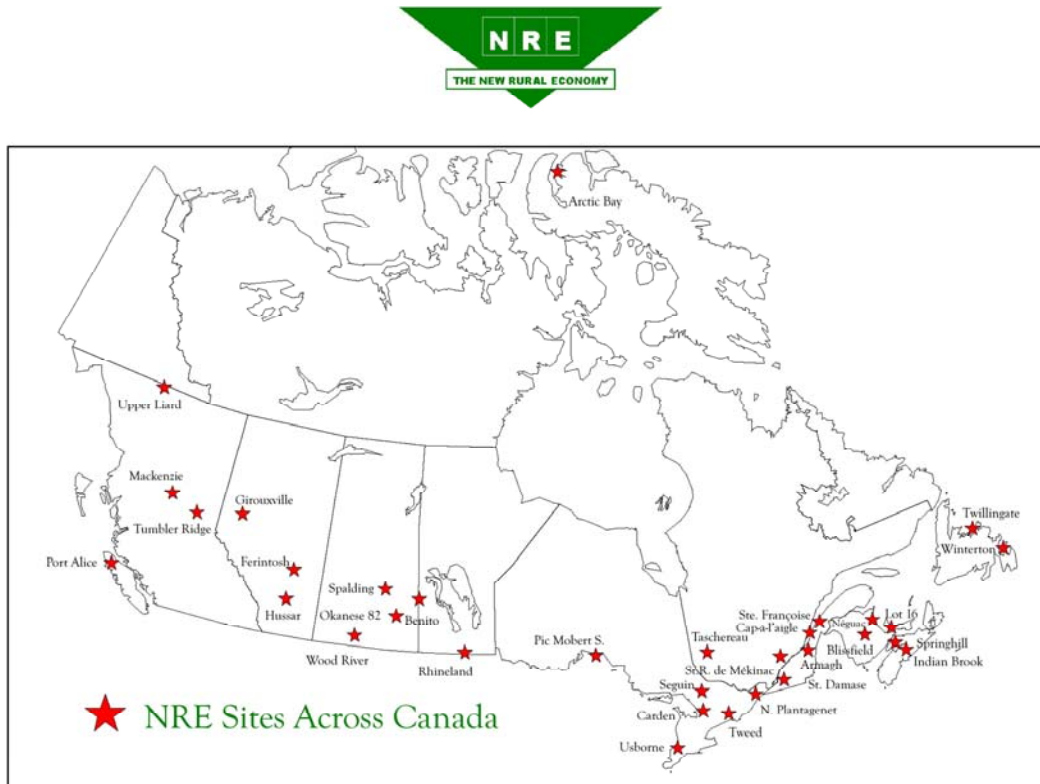
## ABOUT THE SERVICE INVENTORY

The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation has been conducting research in 32 rural and small town places from across Canada. These sites form a “rural observatory” in which we examine aspects of the *Initiative on the New Economy* project. The sites participating in this project reflect the diversity of the Canadian landscape, and include forestry and mining towns, farming communities, and tourism towns. Furthermore, some of these places are located adjacent to metropolitan areas, while others are more isolated.

In the summer of 2003, researchers visited 22 sites across Canada to update a service provision inventory. Data were collected to examine the availability of a range of services including:

education  
health  
protection services  
legal  
business services  
communication  
elderly and childcare  
government

community  
transportation  
recreational  
basic shopping  
commercial shopping  
economic development organizations  
housing



## AVAILABILITY

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Copies of all site reports on services availability were distributed to participating sites. Additionally, copies have been posted on the INE website ([nre.concordia.ca](http://nre.concordia.ca)) and on Greg Halseth's website (<http://web.unbc.ca/geography/faculty/greg>).

An overall report entitled *Service Provision in Rural and Small Town Canada* report is available in a number of locations. At the University of Northern British Columbia, the document has been deposited at the Weller Library or can be accessed on Greg Halseth's website: <http://web.unbc.ca/geography/faculty/greg>. Copies are also available on the website for the Initiative of the New Economy at: [nre.concordia.ca](http://nre.concordia.ca).

For further information about this report or other available reports on services, please contact Greg Halseth at:

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**INITIATIVE ON THE NEW ECONOMY  
SERVICE PROVISION IN RURAL AND SMALL TOWN PLACES: A REPORT FOR USBORNE,  
ONTARIO**

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**Site Description – Usborne, Ontario**

Usborne is a former township located on the southeastern corner of Huron County, bordered by Perth County to the east and Middlesex to the south. Highways 4 and 23 provide an efficient link between Usborne and the city of London, the core of which is about 40 km to the south from the centre of the township.

Usborne is dominated by a commercial farm landscape (172 farms, 1996). Cash crop and livestock operations had a total value of \$34 million in sales in 1996 and provided employment for 40 per cent of the workforce. Most residents rely on the adjacent towns of Exeter and St. Mary's for basic services and various retail needs.

The population within Usborne is dispersed. There is no town or village. Two hamlets are located near the centre of the township, Elimville and Winchelsea. Both hamlets have a small number of dwellings. Kirkton and Woodham, both on the eastern boundary, are dissected by Highway 23. Half of each village is in Usborne, the other half is in neighbouring Perth County. A recreation centre is located in Kirkton.

There are two conservation areas in Usborne, both managed by the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority. One area is a pond created by a dam. The other area is a woodlot with walking trails.



## POPULATION PROFILE - USBORNE, ONTARIO

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The population of Usborne, Ontario declined from 1,535 residents in 1996 to 1,490 residents in 2001 (Statistics Canada 2001). Overall, it still has an older, family-oriented population. There is a large population of seniors in Usborne. This will have important implications for planning the delivery of a range of services, such as health services and social housing. The community also faces a challenge with youth out-migration.

<b>Population</b>	<b>Site: Usborne</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Population in 2001	1490	780	710
Population in 1996	1535	770	770
1996 to 2001 population change (%)	-2.9	1.3	-7.8
Total - All persons	1,490	780	710
Age 0-4	60	25	30
Age 5-14	210	105	105
Age 15-19	135	65	65
Age 20-24	90	50	45
Age 25-44	385	215	175
Age 45-54	245	130	115
Age 55-64	180	95	90
Age 65-74	120	55	60
Age 75-84	60	30	30
Age 85 and over	10	5	5
Median age of the population	40.3	40.5	40.1

Source: Statistics Canada 2001.

## SERVICE PROVISION IN RURAL AND SMALL TOWN PLACES

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Services play an important role in retaining and attracting residents and businesses as they enhance local standards of living. However, rural and small town places across Canada are experiencing tremendous change stemming from economic and social restructuring in an increasing global economy. Some places have been experiencing population declines since 1960. At the same time, federal and provincial government policies have been withdrawing some of the service infrastructure that can provide a foundation for revitalizing rural and small town places and assist residents to cope with stress. Some rural and small town places adjust by establishing innovative services or diversifying their local economies. These types of innovation suggest one way by which services help to build capacity within a place.

Services also help to build capacity by providing opportunities for building relationships, partnerships, and trust, which subsequently can lead to new partnerships and innovative ways for delivering services where they might otherwise not exist. Together, services can help to enhance local standards of living and reduce out-migration from rural and small town places.

### NOTE:

- In this analysis of service availability in NRE research sites, the term “local” refers to services that are available either within Usborne or within 30 minutes of Usborne’s boundary. It is thought that, on average, residents can get to these services by car/transportation in approximately 30 minutes or less.
- Tables presented contain two columns for comparison with Usborne. One is the percentage of NRE sites across Canada where the specific service is locally available, the other is the percentage of NRE sites in Ontario where the specific service is locally available.

### **Educational Services**

Educational institutions play a role in maintaining a standard of living in rural and small town places. Besides formal education, schools provide amenities through their libraries, theatres, and art galleries in places that would otherwise not have access to such services. Such establishments also contribute to economic development. For instance, community colleges can provide skilled and professional workers, act as a broker of services, and be a repository of information. They can also have facilities for designing programs and services, responding to the changing labour market conditions of small places.

When compared with other NRE sites across Canada, the availability of local educational services for Ontario sites is above the national average (Table 1), with the exception of elementary schools. Residents of Usborne have access to all educational services locally.



**Table 1: Availability of Education Services Locally - 2003**

<b>Services</b>	<b>Canadian NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Ontario NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Usborne</b>
Pre-school/kindergarten	95.5%	100%	✓
Elementary school	95.4%	75.0%	✓
High school	95.4%	100%	✓
CEGEP / College	68.2%	75%	✓
Continuing Education	81.8%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

## Health Services

Health services play an important role in attracting and retaining new workers and residents. During times of economic and social restructuring, closures in hospitals and the centralization of physical and mental health services can be difficult for the elderly and the poor who do not have access to a vehicle or who live in a place with limited transportation services. The loss of health care jobs may also lead to a further decline in the local economy and population.

In rural and small town places examined for NRE2, many health facilities are available locally (Table 2a). Of particular interest is that approximately 20% of the sites across Canada do not have local hospital or emergency services, about one-third does not have a local baby delivery facility, and more than 50% are without CT scan services. This carries important implications for residents of these sites commuting for medical emergencies or health care reasons. Within Ontario research sites, all of the health facilities listed in Table 2a, with the exception of a CT scan, and most health services listed in Table 2b are available locally.

**Table 2a: Availability of Health Services Locally - 2003**

<b>Services</b>	<b>Canadian NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Ontario NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Usborne</b>
Hospital	77.3%	100%	✓
Health centre / CLSC	90.9%	100%	✓
Medical clinic	90.9%	100%	✓
Blood / urine testing facility	95.5%	100%	✓
X-ray facility	95.5%	100%	✓
Baby delivery facility	63.6%	100%	✓
CT scan facility	45.5%	50.0%	✓
Pharmacy	90.9%	100%	✓
Ambulance	90.9%	100%	✓
Emergency services	81.8%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

Residents of Usborne have access to all health services locally, including a CT scan facility. This situation is consistent with other rural Ontario sites. On average, residents of Usborne have greater access to health care services than residents in the majority of Canadian sites in the research sample.

**Table 2b: Availability of Health Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Doctors	95.5%	100%	✓
Nurses	95.5%	100%	✓
Dentists	86.4%	100%	✓
Dental surgeons	45.5%	75.0%	✓
Optometrists	81.8%	100%	✓
Home care visits	100%	100%	✓
Social workers	86.4%	100%	✓
Public health nurse	90.9%	100%	✓
Physiotherapy	86.4%	100%	✓
Speech therapy	81.8%	100%	✓
Occupational therapy	68.2%	100%	✓
Respite care	81.8%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

It is well known that the availability of health care professionals is limited in rural areas. Overall, the Ontario NRE sites have greater access to health care services locally than the majority of Canadian NRE sites. Residents of Usborne have access to all health services locally.

### Protection Services

Protection services contribute to community capacity in a number of ways. In essence they provide a basic sense of security and comfort for residents. Volunteer fire departments and various crime watch programs also create opportunities for individuals to be involved with each other in pursuit of common service goals. Such experiences can build trust and leadership.

Protection services are less available locally in NRE sites than most other services. Most notably, as shown in Table 3, less than 25% of the NRE sites across Canada have local Police/RCMP services. As well, less than half of the sites have access to Neighbourhood Watch or Rural Crime Watch locally. Fire departments (95.5%) and 911 services (86.4%), however, are accessible locally for NRE sites across Canada. While there is less access to fire departments and 911 services locally in Ontario sites, Police/RCMP and Neighbourhood Watch Program are on average more accessible.

**Table 3: Availability of Protection Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Police	25.0%	100%	✓
Fire department	95.5%	75.0%	✓
911 emergency line	86.4%	75.0%	✓
Neighbourhood Watch	37.5%	50.0%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

Residents of Usborne have access to all protection services locally. The above findings are generally consistent with other rural Ontario sites and better than most other sites in rural Canada.

### Legal Services

Legal services may not be plentiful in rural areas, but our data suggest that many NRE sites have such services available locally (Table 4). Residents of Usborne, and of all other Ontario sites, have access to all legal services locally.

**Table 4: Availability of Legal Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Lawyer	77.3%	100%	✓
Notary	86.4%	100%	✓
Court	81.6%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

### Financial Services

Businesses also play a role in providing a range of activities that may lead to an improved standard of living for rural residents, as well as enhancing the viability and stability of their communities. Business members often play an important role in community development when they contribute to voluntary associations either as members or in a leadership role. Small local businesses are also an important source for fundraising and sponsoring specific local organizations or events.

Overall, financial services are accessible locally for NRE sites across Canada (Table 5), with a few exceptions. Only 50% of NRE sites across Canada have access to micro financing locally, while only 68.2% have local access to an insurance office. Ontario NRE sites have greater

access to all financial services locally than the other NRE sites. Residents of Usborne have access to all financial services locally.

**Table 5: Availability of Business Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Banks	86.4%	100%	✓
Credit Union / Caisse Populaire	95.5%	100%	✓
ATM	95.5%	100%	✓
Micro-financing	50%	75.0%	✓
Insurance office	68.2%	75.0%	✓
Industrial park	81.8%	100%	✓
Real estate	81.8%	100%	✓
Accounting	90.9%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

## Communications

Communication services allow residents to maintain contact with family and friends. With improved communication infrastructure, such as telephone services, Internet, and cell phone service, rural and small town places can attract businesses that no longer have to be located in cities, and therefore might improve local employment opportunities. Communications services can also support business networks. As Table 6 indicates, communication services are substantial in Usborne and across the NRE sites.

**Table 6: Availability of Communication Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Cell phone – analog	95.5%	100.0%	✓
Cell phone – digital	63.6%	100.0%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

## Elderly and Childcare Services

Childcare services are an important element of the educational and care services in rural and small town places. They also enhance adult residents' ability to participate in the labour force. Nursing and retirement homes are an important consideration for elderly residents and their families who care for them. As the Canadian population ages, the need for such services also rises and many rural and small town places may find they are not well equipped to deal with seniors' needs.

Most NRE sites across Canada are equipped to meet the needs of young families or seniors locally (Table 7). All Ontario sites, including Usborne, offer daycare, nursing, and retirement homes locally.

**Table 7: Availability of Child and Elderly Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Daycare	86.4%	100%	✓
Senior citizen's nursing home	86.4%	100%	✓
Senior citizen's retirement home	81.8%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

### Government Services

Town halls and post offices are the most frequently available government services in rural and small town places. Post offices not only provide a service and identity, but also opportunities for routine social interaction to build relationships. Government services also play an important role in community capacity by providing a local source of employment, expertise and knowledge for residents.

The NRE sites examined across Canada offer a variety of government services locally to their residents (Table 8). Sixty-eight per cent of the sites have a local employment office (HRDC) and 77.3 per cent have local social assistance offices. During economic and industrial restructuring or plant closures, members of households experiencing stress will have access to these services to help them cope.

**Table 8: Availability of Government Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Human Resources Dev. Canada	68.2%	100%	✓
Employment Insurance	72.7%	100%	✓
Provincial Auto License Office	81.8%	100%	✓
Social Assistance Office	77.3%	100%	✓
Town hall	90.9%	75.0%	✓
Post office	95.5%	75.0%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

Overall, NRE sites in Ontario have greater access to HRDC, employment insurance, provincial auto licensing office, and social assistance office services. Residents of Usborne have access locally to all government services/offices listed in Table 8.

## Community Services

Community services can provide an important foundation from which to build relationships, and can be important sources to draw upon during times of economic and social stress. The availability of community services in rural and small town places varies considerably (Table 9).

**Table 9: Availability of Community Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Food bank	77.3%	100%	✓
Clothing exchange / depot	59.1%	75.0%	✓
Second hand stores	81.8%	100%	✓
Youth drop-in centre	68.2%	50.0%	✓
Women's drop-in centre	50%	100%	✓
Senior's drop-in centre	68.2%	50.0%	✓
Halfway house	36.4%	50.0%	✓
Women's resource centre	54.5%	75.0%	✓
Personal aid services	90.9%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

In Ontario, the local availability of community services is similar to the national sample. Ontario sites have greater access to food banks, clothing exchange / depot, second hand store, a women's drop-in centre, a half-way house, a women's resource centre, and personal aid services, but less access to youth and senior's drop-in centres. Residents of Usborne have access to all community services locally.

## Transportation

Transportation infrastructure has important implications not only for attracting economic activity to a place, but also for enhancing the standard of living of residents in rural and small town places. Freight services are especially important for attracting industry by providing additional options to export products. Without adequate, affordable transportation options, mobility can be difficult for youth, seniors, those with disabilities, and/or those unable to afford a vehicle. Thus they are compromised regarding movement within and without the site for using necessary services in adjacent centres. Being mobile enables citizens to be more involved in the community, to develop local friendship ties and support networks, and to engage in social activities.

The number of sites with gas stations and automobile repair services compared to those with other forms of transit reflects Canada's general reliance on the automobile (Table 10). Other transportation services are less frequently available locally, most notably local transit service, passenger rail service, boat / ferry services, and airport service.

**Table 10: Availability of Transport Services Locally - 2003**

<b>Services</b>	<b>Canadian NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Ontario NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Usborne</b>
Local bus transit	18.8%	50.0%	✓
Inter-community bus station	81.2%	100%	✓
Train – passenger	50.0%	100%	✓
Train – freight	68.2%	75.0%	✓
Airport	50.0%	100%	✓
Helicopter port	59.1%	100%	✓
Boat / ferry terminal	45.5%	50.0%	N/A
Taxi	81.8%	100%	✓
Gas station	87.5%	100%	✓
Automobile repair	95.5%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

The availability of transportation services varies in Ontario NRE sites. All of them have a local gas station, automobile repair shop, taxi service, airport, helicopter port, an inter-community bus station, and a passenger train service. This is better than NRE sites across Canada. Residents of Usborne have access to all transportation services locally.

### **Recreation Services**

Based on a review of all NRE sites, recreational services are most widely available when compared to other service categories. This bodes well for the retention and attraction of residents, as well as the overall standard of living in these places. Recreational services available locally include community playing fields, community centres, libraries, municipal parks, hiking trails, and campgrounds (Table 11). Many of these places can be important for fostering a sense of community.

Across Canada, most residents have local access to either an indoor or outdoor skating rink. Recreational services less frequently available across Canada included indoor and outdoor swimming facilities, municipal athletic clubs, live performance theatres, and provincial parks.

When compared to the national sample, Ontario sites have greater access to all recreation services, with the exception of outdoor skating rinks, municipal athletic clubs, and provincial parks. Residents of Usborne have access to all recreation services locally.

**Table 11: Availability of Recreation Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Curling rink	86.4%	100%	✓
Bowling lanes	72.7%	100%	✓
Indoor municipal swimming pool	68.2%	75.0%	✓
Outdoor municipal swimming pool	63.6%	75.0%	✓
Indoor municipal skating rink	72.7%	75.0%	✓
Outdoor municipal skating rink	72.7%	25.0%	✓
Community playing field	100%	100.0%	✓
Community gym	87.5%	100%	✓
Community centre	95.5%	100%	✓
Municipal athletic club	63.6%	50.0%	✓
Theatre (live performance)	68.2%	100%	✓
Cinema (movie theatre)	72.7%	100%	✓
Museum	86.4%	100%	✓
Library	100%	100%	✓
Municipal parks	95.5%	75.0%	✓
Provincial parks	50.0%	75.0%	✓
Tennis courts	86.4%	100%	✓
Skiing trails	81.8%	100%	✓
Hiking trails	90.9%	100%	✓
Golf courses	81.8%	100%	✓
Campgrounds	95.5%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

## Shopping

Shopping services contribute to the success of the local economy, and are considered to be an important gauge of economic health of rural and small town places. Shopping is also an important recreational activity and provides opportunities for social interaction. Low levels of shopping services can lead to out-of-town shopping and perhaps even out-migration.

The NRE2 service inventory indicates that most sites across Canada are able to offer shopping services that residents would need to access on a more frequent basis, notably grocery stores (Table 12). When compared to the national sample, Ontario sites, including Usborne, have slightly better access to basic shopping services.

All NRE sites across Canada have minimum convenience service centres locally (Table 13). These places generally offer a hardware store, a drug store, a bank, and two other convenience functions such as a variety store. Most of the sites have a local full convenience centre. These places offer all the services of a minimum convenience centre, plus a laundry or dry cleaning store, jewelry, appliances, or furniture, clothing, lumber, building materials, shoes, garden supplies, and a motel or hotel. Finally, less than 41% of Canadian sites have access to a complete shopping centre locally, and even fewer have access to a wholesale retail centre locally.



**Table 12: Availability of Basic Shopping Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Grocery store	100%	100%	✓
Farmer's market	68.2%	100%	✓
Liquor store	100%	100%	✓
Bakery	90.9%	100%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

**Table 13: Availability of Commercial Shopping Services Locally - 2003**

Services	Canadian NRE Sites % Yes	Ontario NRE Sites % Yes	Usborne
Minimum Convenience Centre	100%	100%	✓
Full Convenience Centre	90.9%	100%	✓
Partial Shopping Centre	77.3%	75.0%	✓
Complete Shopping Centre	40.9%	75.0%	✓
Secondary Wholesale Retail Ctr	27.3%	75.0%	✓
Primary Wholesale Retail Centre	18.2%	75.0%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

When compared to NRE sites across Canada, an asset of sites in Ontario is the availability of local commercial shopping services. The majority of Ontario sites have access to all commercial shopping services, and when compared to the national sample, Ontario has overall greater access locally—especially when comparing access to wholesale retail centres and complete shopping centres. Residents of Usborne have access to all commercial shopping services locally.

### **Economic Development Organizations**

Economic development organizations can play an important role in assisting community residents to attract not only additional businesses, but also a wider population base. While there is not a broad range of economic development organizations in NRE sites, it may be important to note that only 22.7% of the sites across Canada have local community business development centres and federal/provincial agencies (Table 14). Furthermore, less than half of the Canadian sites have access to local business development corporations, economic/community trust, real estate boards, and rotary clubs. When compared to the national sample, Ontario has better access to 6 of the 10 economic development services. Ontario shifts from one extreme to another: all Ontario sites have access locally to career training/placement, financial business/consulting, and tourism association services but, at the same time, they do not have access locally to federal/provincial economic development agencies or economic/community trust services.

**Table 14: Availability of Economic / Development Organizations Locally - 2003**

<b>Services</b>	<b>Canadian NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Ontario NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Usborne</b>
Community Business Dev. Ctrs	22.7%	25.0%	
Fed / Prov Econ. Dev. Agencies	22.7%	0.0%	
Chamber of Commerce	59.1%	50.0%	✓
Local Business Dev. Corporation	37.5%	25.0%	✓
Economic / Community Trust	31.8%	0.0%	
Career Training / Placement	77.3%	100%	✓
Financial / Business Consulting	77.3%	100%	✓
Real Estate Boards	45.5%	75.0%	✓
Tourism Associations	77.3%	100%	✓
Rotary clubs	40.9%	50.0%	✓

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

Residents of Usborne have access to most economic development services locally, with the exception of a community business development centre, a federal/provincial economic development agency, and economic/community trust services.

## Housing

Housing has been used as an incentive to attract residents to rural and small town places and has significant impact on residents' standard of living and attachment to place. Lack of housing options can be a problem in rural and small town places and may contribute to out-migration patterns. Social service housing is a new category added to the NRE service inventory for 2003.

Although subsidized housing does not appear to be widely available locally across Canada (Table 15), there are strong regional differences. All Ontario NRE sites have access locally to all social

**Table 15: Availability of Social Housing Services Locally - 2003**

<b>Services</b>	<b>Canadian NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Ontario NRE Sites % Yes</b>	<b>Usborne</b>	
Co-op Housing	72.7%	100%	✓	
Rent Supplement Units	77.3%	100%	✓	
Subsidized Housing - Seniors	72.7%	100%	✓	
Subsidized Housing - Families	90.9%	100%	✓	
Subsidized Housing - Single People		72.7%	100%	✓
Subsidized Housing - Special Needs	63.6%	100%	✓	

Source: CRRF NRE 2003 Site Profile.

housing service. When compared to the national sample, Ontario sites have greater access to social housing services. Of particular interest, only 63.6% of sites across Canada have access to subsidized housing for individuals with special needs locally. Residents of Usborne have access to all social housing services locally.

### **Challenges and Opportunities for Usborne, Ontario**

In January 2001, the (former) Usborne Township became part of the new Municipality of South Huron. The past three years later has been a process of learning. The former Council of Usborne and its residents, for example, did not deal often with issues such as water services and economic development. Such 'town' issues have now become increasingly important to Usborne. The new municipal structure means that everyone must find a balance between town and country issues. To the benefit of Usborne residents, the recent municipal election of November 2003 provided some stability and assurance that country voices will be heard. The sitting Usborne Council member was re-elected. As well, the Mayor, who is from Usborne, was also re-elected.

A benefit of the municipal amalgamation has been to 'erase' the boundary between the town of Exeter and Usborne. Prior to amalgamation, business and residential expansion was 'spilling over' the existing town boundary and discussions took place about extending the town boundary. As a result of the amalgamation this boundary no longer exists. Managing growth and services is much easier, thus providing new opportunities for better planning.

At an international level, Usborne's agricultural economy remains tied to the politics of world markets. This means competing with farmers around the globe and bearing the impacts of international trade policies. In Canada, agriculture policies are under increasing pressure to meet farmers' interests and, in particular, ensure Canadian farmers can sustain a rural livelihood.

As with all NRE sites, service provision remains an important element for Usborne's prosperity. This report provides a brief synopsis of services available for Usborne residents' compared to the situation in other NRE sites in both Ontario and across Canada. Such information is a small contribution to Usborne's knowledge base for the township and its residents as they endeavour to maintain and develop local economic and social resources.

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