



# ***Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Work “Place” in Rural British Columbia***

**Nelson, June 2017**

**Sean Markey**



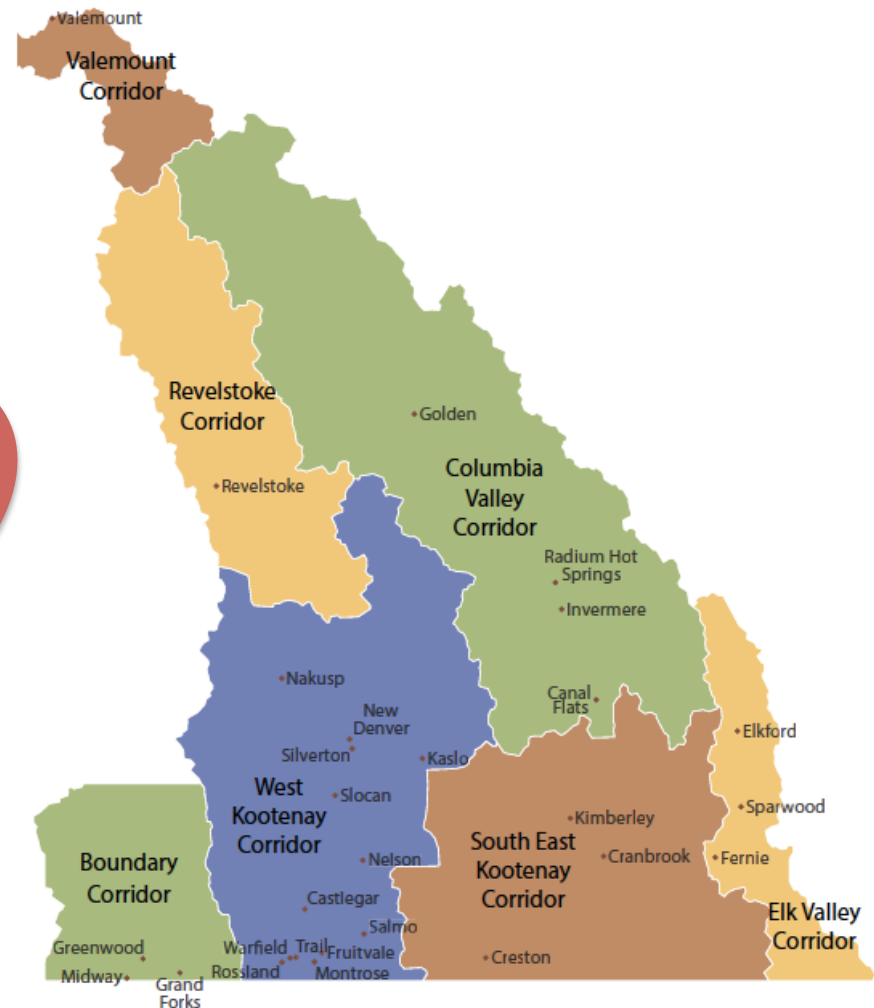
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# “ I LOVE THIS PLACE”

86%



# Outline

1. Introduction and context
2. Why a workforce strategy?
3. How did we get here?
4. Theory of change
5. Strategic foundations (what we control)
6. Structural foundations (what we influence)



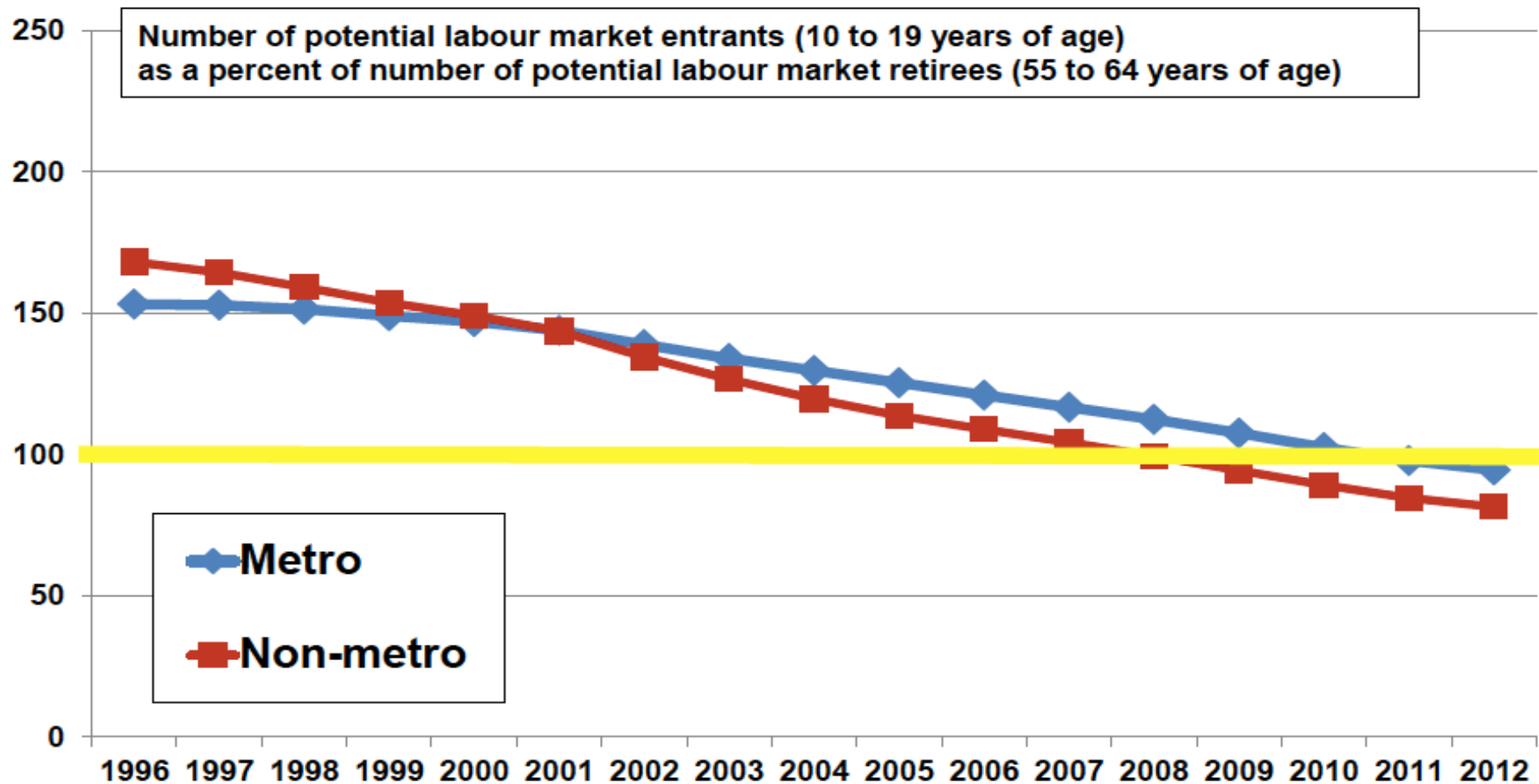
# Why Intervention?

- **Bigger Trends**

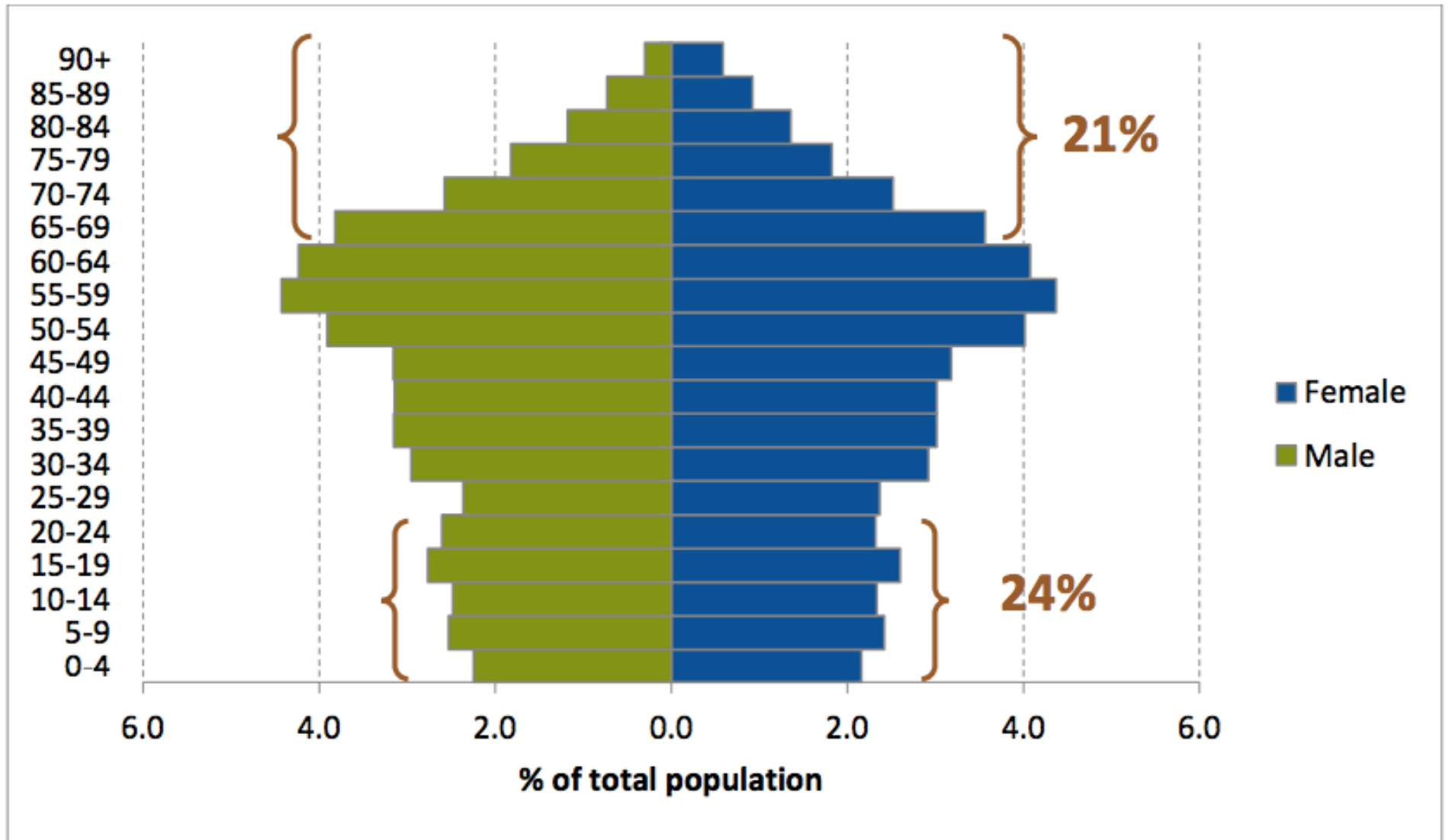
- People problem, not job problem
- Technology replaces labour
- Aging infrastructure
- Poverty
- Perpetual planning

# People Creation, Not Job Creation

Demographic replacement of working age population fell below 100% in 2008, non-metro Canada



\* Reclassification is not an issue in this time series. These data have been tabulated within the 2006 boundaries of metro and non-metro. Source: Statistics Canada. **Annual Demographic Statistics**. CANSIM Table 051-0001 and 051-0046.

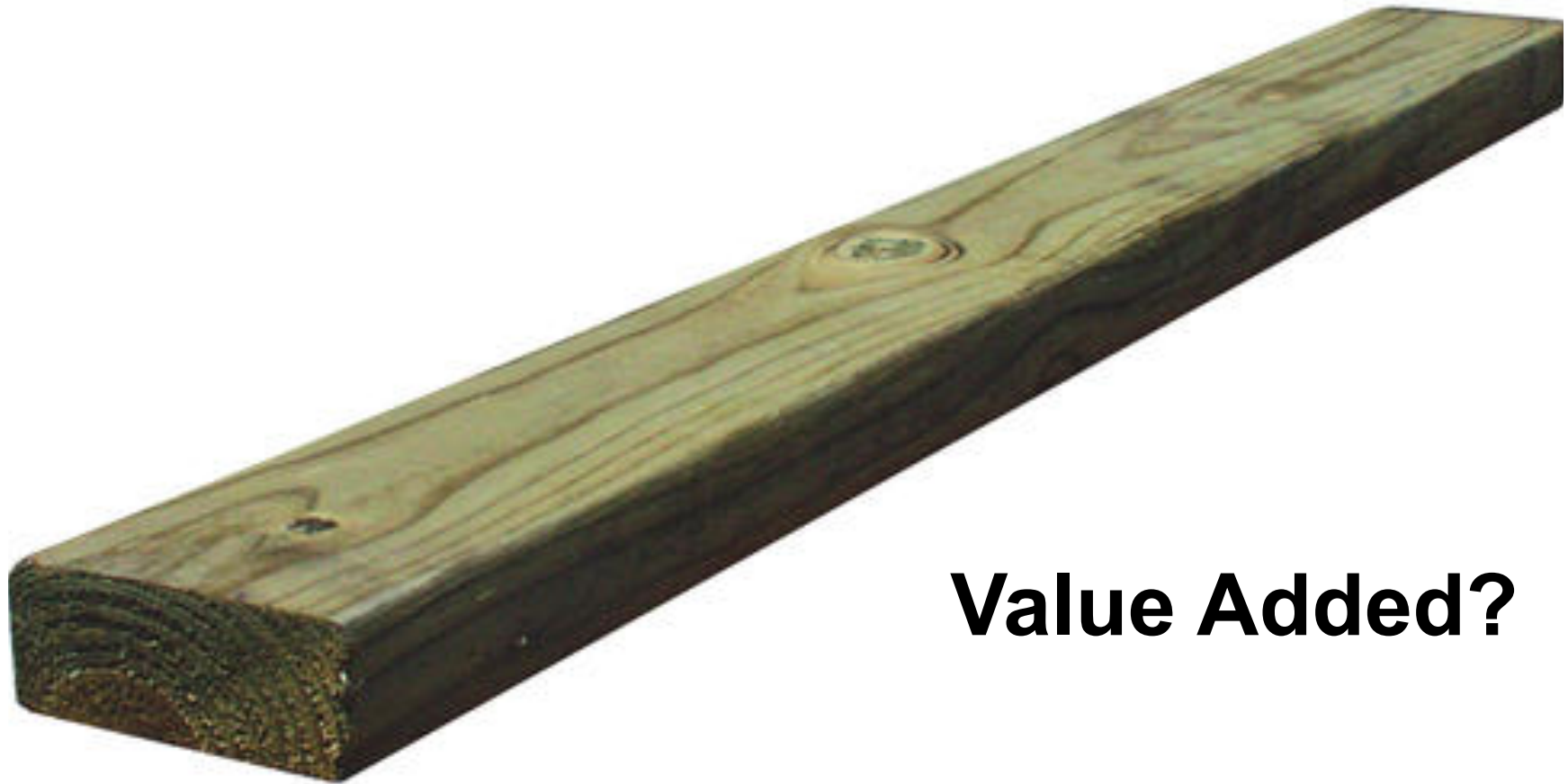


**Figure 2: Basin-Boundary population by 5-year age cohort and gender, 2015**

Source: Data: BC Stats, 2016b; Analysis: RDI

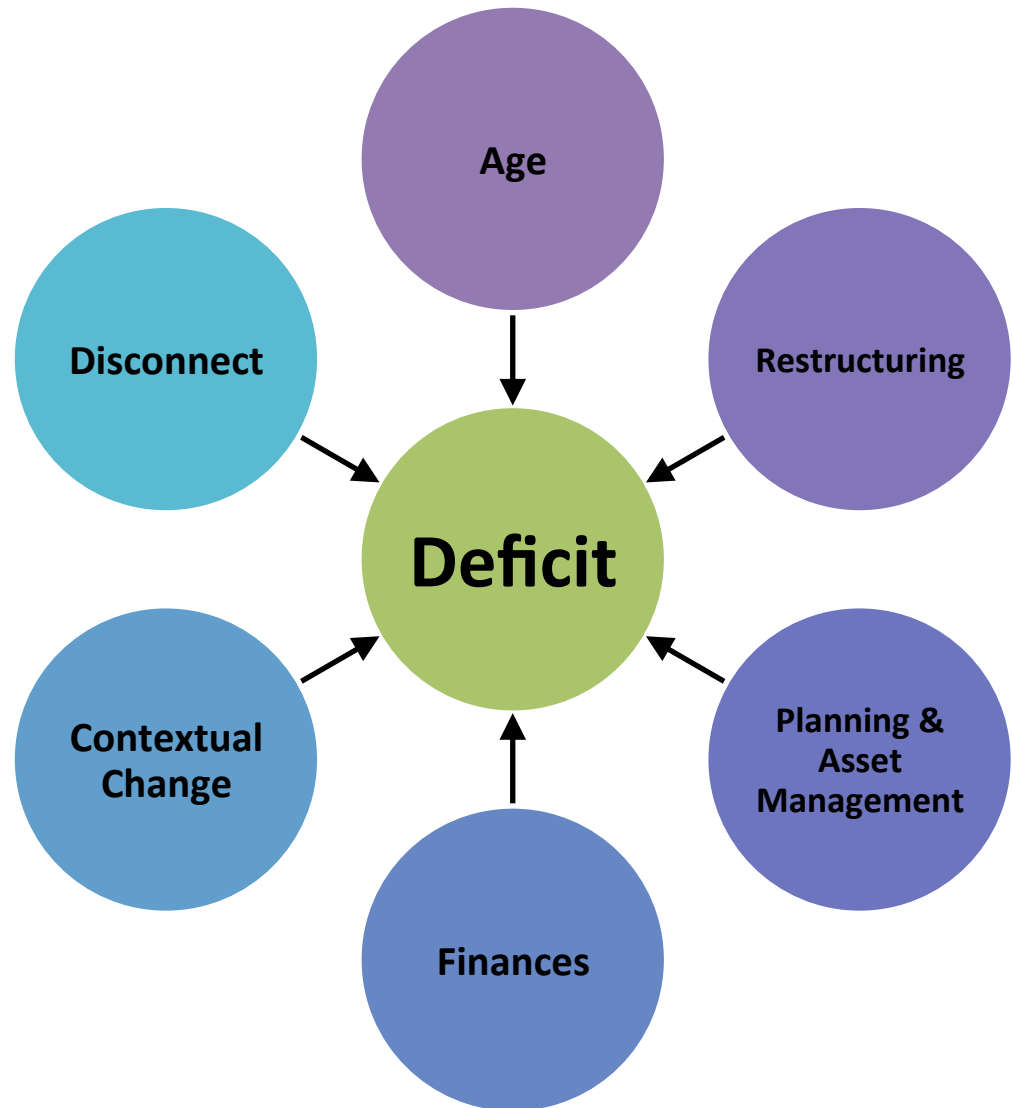


# Technology vs Jobs...



**Value Added?**

# Aging Infrastructure



# Poverty

## Child Poverty

- 1 out of 5 children in this Province is poor, 163,260
- Poor Child City
- Fifty percent of BC children being raised by single parents are poor
- Overall growing trend of inequality

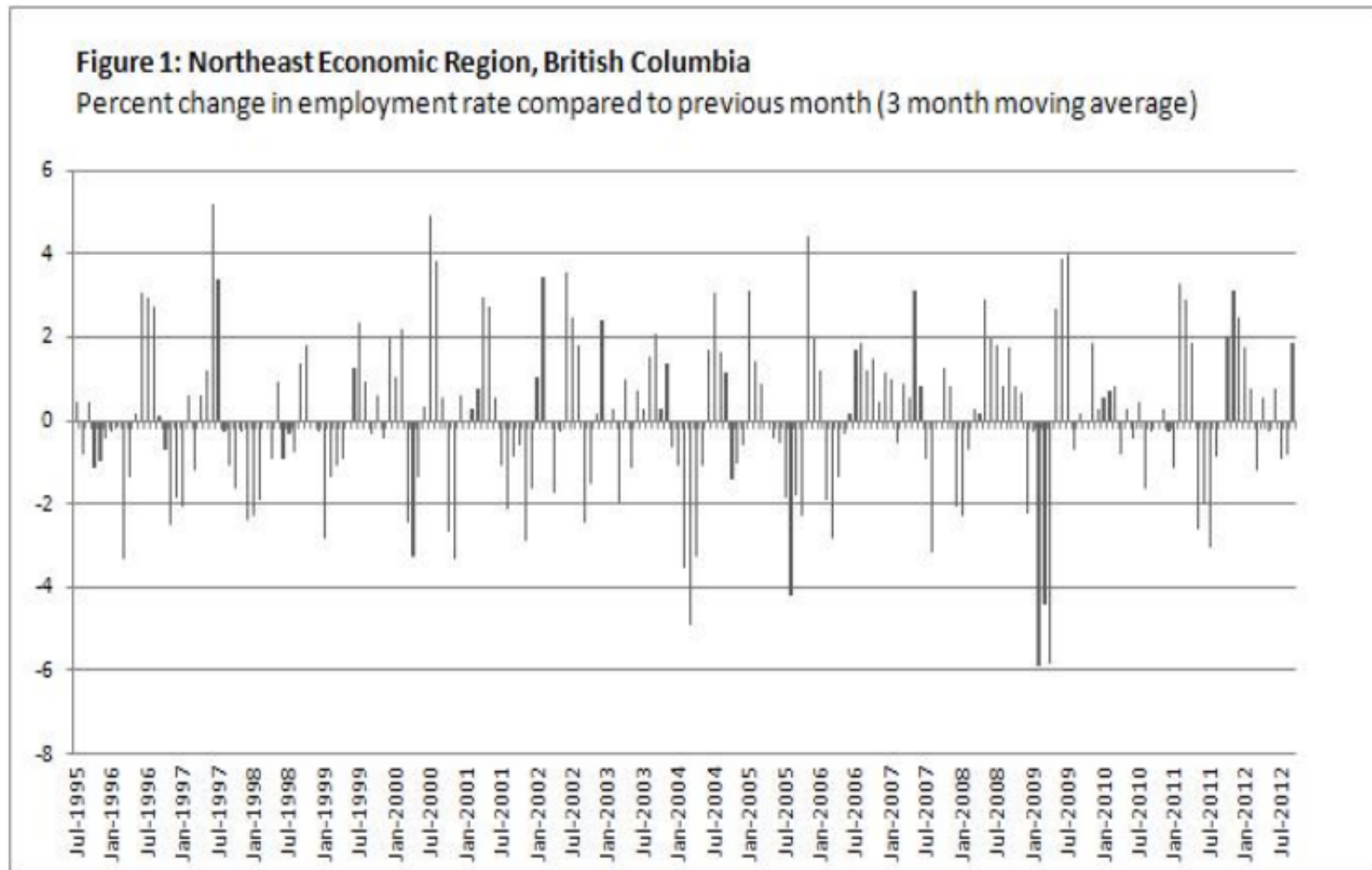
## BC Child Poverty Report Card





# Perpetual Planning

*Figure 1: Northeast Economic Region, British Columbia.*  
Percent change in employment rate compared to previous month (3 month moving average).



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0054.

# Can't Sit Still...Make Decisions



# Why Intervention?

- **Workforce Issues**
  - Rural precariat
  - Rural investment uncertainty
  - Type of work
  - Why rural?



# Why Rural?

- What is well-being in a rural and remote setting?
- Challenge the growth paradigm (New Brunswick)
- Why do people choose to live rural?



# HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- |                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Staples Boom            | 1950 - 1980 |
| 2. Restructuring           | 1980 - 2010 |
| 3. Reactionary incoherence | 2010 - ...  |

# BC in the 1950s

- Resource royalties subject to wide fluctuations
- Inefficient resource industries
- Community & industrial infrastructure of central/northern BC poorly developed
- Few secondary/support industries
- BC as a ‘have not’ province





# 1. Staples Boom






# 1950s – 70s Solutions



# The Long Boom...



British Columbia  
pop. change 1971-1981

-  Gain
-  No Change ( $\pm 0.4\%$ )
-  Loss

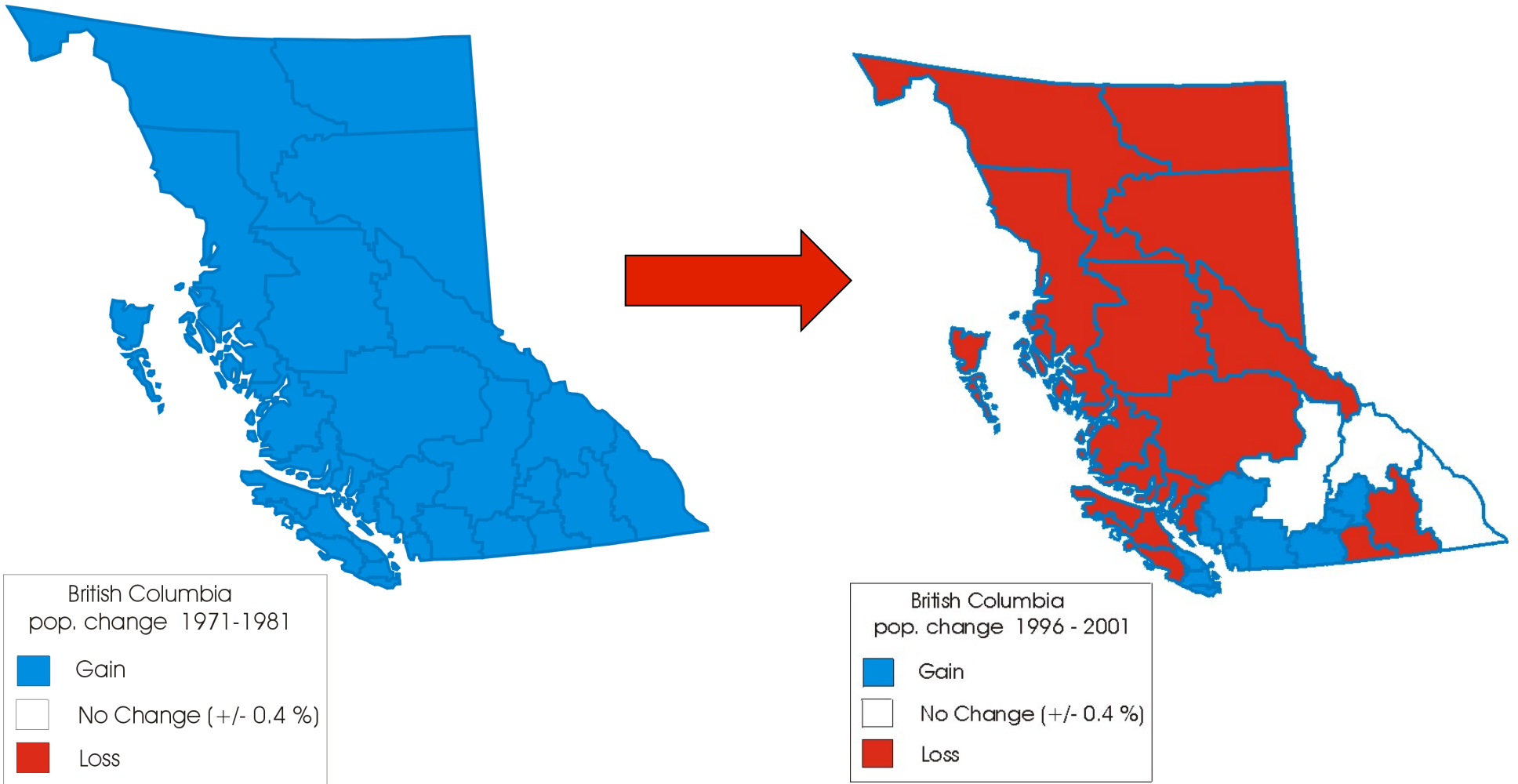


# Legacies...Challenges



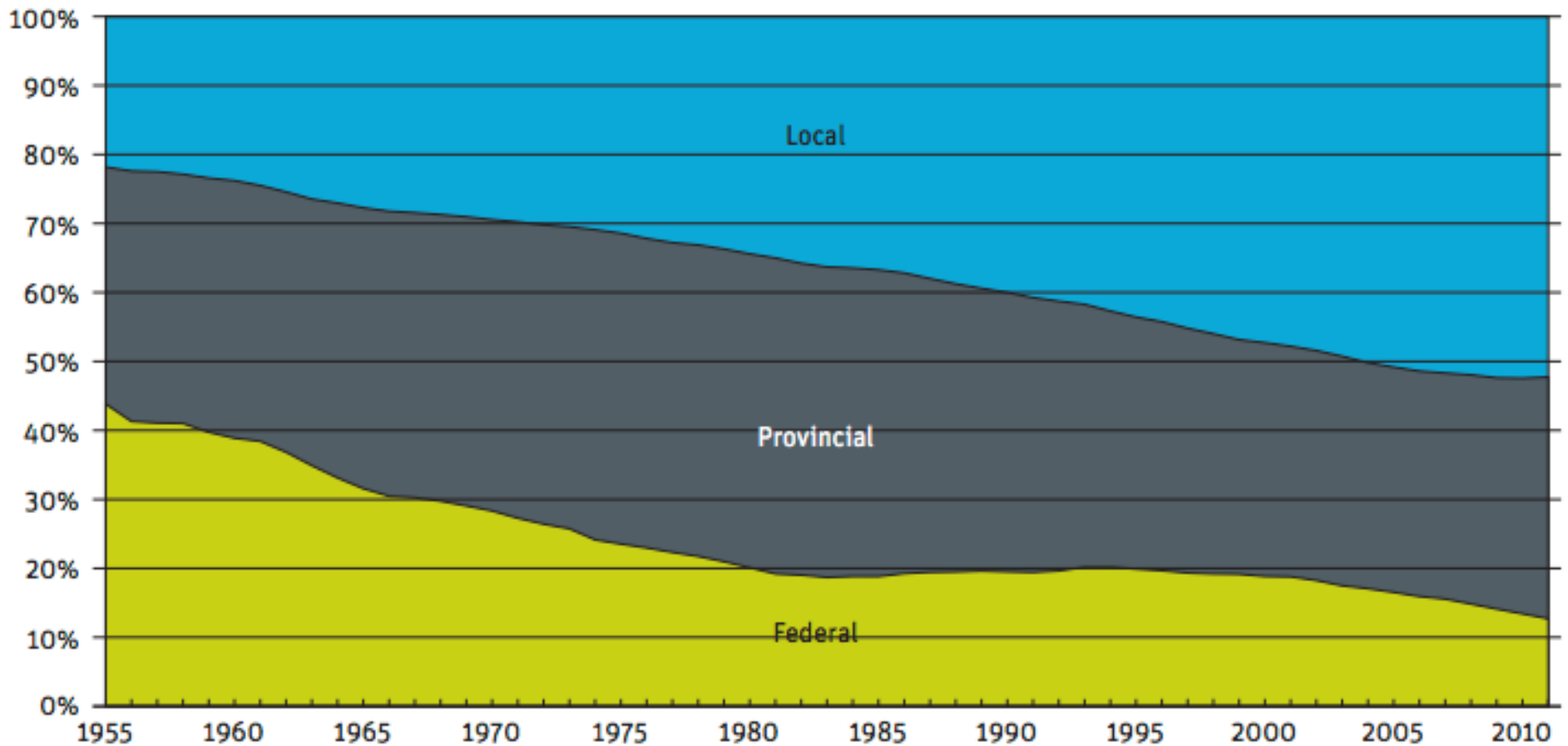


# 2. Restructuring...



# “Vacating the Field”

**CHART 4** Asset Shares By Order of Government, General Government, 1955–2011



# 3. Reactionary Incoherence

- Nostalgia for the past
- Confused ideology of intervention
- Stuttered, reactionary investments and programs
- Intense politicization of investments
- But...
  - Recognized need for investment
  - Considerable influence opportunity for local/regional

# Resource Bank





# Rural Canada - Resilience

- Resources and ecological services
- Employment opportunities
- Rural – Urban interdependence
- Social ties and commitment to place
- Aboriginal youth



# Rural Canada - Neglect

- Lack of an investment mentality
- Market-oriented policies miss opportunity of collaborative, integrated approach
- Running-down core infrastructure





# The Next Rural Economy

1. Continued resource sector
2. Place-based: comparative to competitive
3. Social economy
4. Labour mobility



# Theory of Change

1. Recognize the competing interests of capital, senior government and community/region
2. Emphasis on what you can control: community and regional development
3. Regional unity of vision and collaboration to leverage benefits and mitigate negative impacts



# Strategic Foundations



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# 1. Local Economy

1. Maximize local ownership of business
2. Maximize local self-reliance.
3. Spread models of triple-bottom line success.

(Michael Shuman)





# 2. The Whole Community Approach



*Investments?*




*Costs?*



<b>Community Development</b>	
<b>Physical infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>transportation</u>, communication, energy, community/regional facilities</li> </ul>	<b>Economic infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>access</u> to capital, <u>labour</u> force, networks, market information, training</li> </ul>
<b>Human infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>education</u>, training, health</li> </ul>	<b>Community infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>capacity</u>, leadership, participation, voluntary sector, culture, services</li> </ul>



# 3. Regional Development

- PUSH:
- State and industrial restructuring
  
- PULL:
- Economic competitiveness
- Social processes
- Territorial planning



# Findings: *Regional Structures*

- Weak, informal
  - Flexible, nimble
- Silos vs. territorial approach
- Jurisdictional tension
- MRC exception
  - But viewed as top-down within the region
- Lack of capacity for co-construction



# Findings: *Community vs. Region*



- “Reluctant cohesion”
- Zero-sum competitiveness
- Historical patterns of (economic) isolation
- Recognition that lack of collaboration is hurting
- External motivators

# Kootenay Regionalism

- Regional institutions: e.g. CBT, RDI
- Regional initiatives
- Commitment to place (but more community defined)
- Quick to mobilize (but reactionary)
- Organizations over-committed (capacity for collaboration low)
- Lack of trust in the region hindering innovation, collaboration



# 4. Poverty Reduction



Source: RDI

# 5. Reconciliation



# Structural Foundations



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# 1. Senior Governments







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## 2. Industry

### In Region Workforce Investments



R & D...

“D”

Grade

SFU

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## 3. Rural Communities

**From CASE MAKING to  
PLACE MAKING!!!**



# Conclusion

## Developing a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Work “PLACE”





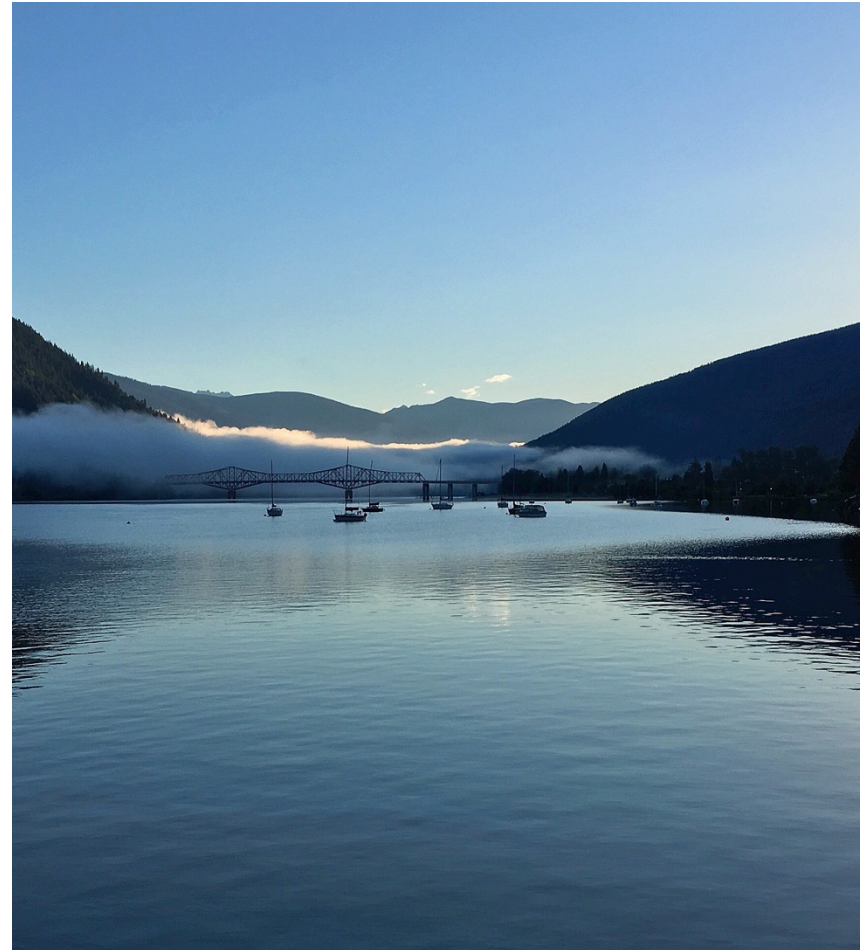
# Defining Place

- Place-based development is a holistic and targeted intervention that seeks to reveal, utilize and enhance the unique natural, physical, and/or human capacity endowments present within a particular location for the development of the community or region...
- Thank you, academia...

# Place-based Development

- *“It just may be the most radical act we can commit is to **stay home**”*
- Terry Tempest Williams
- *“The most radical thing you can do is **stay home.**”*

Gary Snyder



# Anywhereville, Rural BC



# Why Does Place Matter?

- Recognizing local assets
- Importance of services and amenities
- Governance of place
- Identities formed in place
- Sense of place critical for participation



R L D





# What Does Place-based Development Look Like?

- New forms of collaboration
- Place-based not sector-based policy and programs
- Bottom-up not top-down (co-construction)
- Proactive planning and telling not asking
- New approaches to planning
- Community – regional integration
- New organizations: institutions



# Thank You!

**Sean Markey**  
**School of Resource and Environmental**  
**Management**  
**[spmarkey@sfu.ca](mailto:spmarkey@sfu.ca)**

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# Key Questions

- What is our theory of change?
- Why would people, capital choose to invest in the region?
- What is good work?
- What is well-being in the rural and remote setting? And, how can a workforce strategy support it?
- How does existing local business fit into the workforce strategy?
- How does the regional workforce strategy support community development foundations?
- How can we improve regional working relationships at all levels to support and engage a workforce development strategy and implementation?
- How does poverty reduction fit into the regional workforce development plan?
- What is the role of reconciliation in workforce planning in this region?
- How do we effectively engage with senior governments from a proactive position of understanding regional goals and aspirations?
- How do we best leverage the skills and commitment to place in industry for integrated rural development and a thriving workforce?
- How will this workforce strategy engage regional citizens and workers?