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'Back of the Envelope': Pragmatic Planning for Sustainable Rural Community Development

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Abstract

Canadian communities are struggling with a significant infrastructure deficit. Hidden within this challenge is an opportunity to re-envision and re-construct communities using the principles and practices of sustainable community development. Research repeatedly illustrates, however, that communities struggle to implement sustainable alternatives, even when their planning documents are infused with the principles of sustainable development. The purpose of this article is to address this 'implementation gap' from a rural perspective. Rural communities face particular capacity barriers to conducting innovative and integrated planning. Using data drawn from a case study of Craik, Saskatchewan, the article presents findings that illustrate a variety of pragmatic techniques rural communities can adopt to bridge the implementation gap and successfully complete sustainable development projects.

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