



# Vibrant COMMUNITIES

## **Vibrant Communities**

### **Annual Report 2010**

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**Prepared for:**

**Vibrant Communities Steering Committee**

**January 25, 2011**

# Table of Contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. THE CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. TRAIL BUILDER COMMUNITIES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. SUPPORTS TO COMMUNITIES .....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 FINANCIAL SUPPORT .....	13
4.2. COACHING.....	15
4.3 CROSS COMMUNITY LEARNING.....	16
4.3.1. <i>The Vibrant Communities Communiqué</i> .....	16
4.3.2. <i>Convenor Calls</i> .....	17
4.3.3. <i>Communities of Practice (CoPs)</i> .....	17
4.3.4. <i>Face to Face Events</i> .....	17
<b>5. VC BY THE NUMBERS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
5.1 PARTNERS ENGAGED .....	20
5.2 LEVERAGED DOLLARS.....	21
5.3 INITIATIVES.....	21
5.4 BENEFICIARIES.....	22
5.5 BENEFICIARY ASSETS .....	23
5.6 LOCAL POLICY & SYSTEM SHIFTS.....	25
5.7 COMMUNICATION.....	26
<b>6. LEARNING PRODUCTS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
6.1 STREAM ONE: COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIES.....	27
6.2 STREAM TWO: WORKING COLLABORATIVELY.....	28
6.3. STREAM THREE: ENABLING POLICIES AND FUNDING .....	28
<b>7. DISSEMINATION.....</b>	<b>30</b>
7.1 ENGAGE NEWSLETTER .....	30
7.2 WEBSITE.....	30
7.3 TELE-LEARNING .....	31
7.4 EXTERNAL COACHING, PRESENTATIONS, WORKSHOPS .....	32
<b>8. VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CAPACITY .....</b>	<b>32</b>
8.1. HUMAN RESOURCES.....	32
8.2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES .....	33
8.3. GOVERNANCE.....	34
<b>9. EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>10. EXPLORING POST 2011.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>11. PRIORITIES FOR 2011 .....</b>	<b>38</b>
11.1 SUPPORTS TO TRAIL BUILDERS.....	38
11.2 SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS.....	38

11.3 LEARNING DELIVERABLES .....39  
11.4 CITIES REDUCING POVERTY.....39

**APPENDIX A – J.W. McConnell Family Foundation Grants to Trail Builders**

**APPENDIX B – Budget for National Supports**

# 1. Introduction

This document provides an account of the activities, products and results of the Vibrant Communities initiative for 2010 and describes the priorities and directions for 2011.

The audience for the report is the Tamarack Board of Directors, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the Caledon Institute of Social Policy and the Maytree Foundation. The report contents are organized with the assumption that readers are familiar with the history and background of Vibrant Communities.

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## 2. The Context

The context for poverty reduction work in Canada continued to improve in 2010. This includes general support for efforts to reduce poverty and for reducing poverty through place-based, comprehensive and collaborative activities.

The public support for poverty-reduction has been strong for several years. In 2008, over 88% of respondents to an Environics poll reported that they wanted Canada to be a leader in poverty reduction and 86% felt that government could help to greatly reduce poverty. In October 2010, The Hamilton Spectator surveyed citizens prior to the municipal election and over 80% indicated that poverty was the most pressing issue that elected officials needed to address.

This support is reflected in concrete responses to reduce poverty. Six out of ten provinces continue to work on poverty reduction strategies, including: Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The two provinces with the longest running strategies – Quebec and Newfoundland & Labrador – have reported significant progress on their initial priorities and have renewed their strategies for four year action plans with larger financial commitments. The Governments of Nunavut, Yukon and Northwest Territories are in consultation to develop social inclusion and poverty strategies. There are active poverty reduction coalitions in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. In Alberta, the all party Standing Committee on the Economy recommended research into a poverty reduction strategy.

There is more support – albeit less action – at the national and Federal level. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities joined the Canadian Teachers Federation in asking for a national poverty reduction strategy. Senators Hugh Segal and Art Eggleton continued to advocate action on their Senate Sub-Committee on Cities 2009 report *From the Margins: A Call for To Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*. In November 2010, the Federal Government's Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities released

'Federal Poverty Reduction Plan: Working in Partnership Towards Reducing Poverty in Canada'. Included in this report is a recommendation calling on the Federal Government to immediately commit to a federal action plan to reduce poverty in Canada that would see, during its first phase, the implementation of the recommendations in the report. The proposed action plan incorporate a human rights framework and provide for consultations with the provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal governments and organizations, the public and private sector, and people living in poverty, as needed, to ensure an improvement in the lives of impoverished people. MP Tony Martin presented Bill C545 – An Act to Eliminate Poverty in Canada in 2010.

Finally, the number and variety of place-based efforts to address poverty has improved. The Government of New Brunswick has established twelve local economic and social exclusion roundtables across the Province as part of its provincial poverty reduction strategy. Cities such as Hamilton, Ottawa and Niagara Region have municipal poverty reduction plans while New Westminister and Esquimalt have adopted living wage policies. Vibrant Communities staff counts an additional 50 community roundtables devoted to poverty across Canada.

The members of Vibrant Communities -- Trail Builders, sponsors and staff -- were actively encouraging and shaping many of these opinion and policy shifts. The Caledon Institute was particularly active in various government policy discussions and research at the municipal, provincial and federal level. This was recognized in the formal references to Trail Builders and Vibrant Communities in various provincial strategies and plans as well as informally in several private conversations with people close to the policy making process.

## Some Significant Policy Changes in Canada in 2010

Government	Changes	Vibrant Communities Activities
Federal Government	<p>House of Commons receives a report from the Standing Committee on Human Resources calling for a resolution to develop an immediate plan to eliminate poverty.</p> <p>Senate Sub Committee on Cities releases report 'From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness' with over 74 recommendations focusing on housing, homelessness, income transfers, training, education and employment insurance.</p> <p>MP Tony Martin – Bill C545 – An Act to Eliminate Poverty in Canada</p>	<p>Numerous Caledon reports, papers and presentations, including: <a href="#">The Federal Role in Poverty Reduction</a></p> <p>A number of Vibrant Community partners presented to HUMA during their cross-Canada hearings in Summer 2009</p> <p>VC St. John's, Hamilton, Caledon and Tamarack present to the Senate Sub-Committee hearings. Mentioned in final report.</p> <p>A number of Vibrant Communities partners have hosted presentations by Senators Segal and Eggleton and by MP Tony Martin.</p>
British Columbia	<p>A variety of province-wide and community based efforts to encourage the creation of provincial poverty reduction strategy.</p>	<p>Vibrant Communities coach and three Trail Builders in BC continue to participate in larger discussions to advocate for poverty reduction policy.</p> <p>CHALLENGE work on affordability index used to encourage the passing of living wage policies by municipalities of New Westminster and Esquimalt.</p>
Alberta	<p>Standing Committee on Economy recommends research into provincial poverty reduction strategy.</p>	<p>Trail Builders in Edmonton and Calgary were one of many co-sponsors of inter-municipal social forum with 18 cities and towns to discuss a provincial policy.</p> <p>Tamarack and Caledon were presenters at forums.</p> <p>VC Calgary member sponsors motion for federally anti-poverty act.</p>
Saskatchewan	<p>Continued local support for provincial poverty reduction plan.</p> <p>Province approves payday Loans Regulation to prohibit harmful lending practices.</p>	<p>Tamarack provides coaching support to a poverty reduction coalition, supported by United Way, in Saskatoon.</p>
Manitoba	<p>Premiers Council to advise on <a href="#">All Aboard: Poverty Reduction Strategy for Manitoba</a> is created. Implement six measures related to poverty reduction, including expansion of two neighbourhood based initiatives.</p>	<p>The Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council continues to be influential in creation of strategy</p> <p>Tele-learning session held in 2010 to highlight Manitoba strategy.</p>

Ontario	Ontario government implements a variety of measures related to <a href="#">Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy Annual Report</a> , including full day learning for 4 and 5 year olds in priority neighbourhoods, and a review of the social welfare systems. Release second annual report, Breaking the Cycle.	<p>Mark Chamberlain, Chair of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and Michael Mendelson of the Caledon Institute of Social Policy are two citizen members of the Government of Ontario Results Team.</p> <p>Tele-learning session held in 2010 to highlight Ontario strategy.</p> <p>Hamilton continues to be involved in promoting provincial policy issues.</p> <p>Alan Broadbent, Mark Chamberlin, Paul Born, Liz Weaver meet with Minister to discuss place-based poverty reduction.</p>
Quebec	Release of 2010-2015 poverty reduction plan with \$7 billion, an increase of \$3.5 billion from 2004-2009.	<p>Representatives of Saint Michel and Trois Rivières still discussion with Provincial representatives regarding the place-based role in reducing poverty – particularly at the neighborhood level.</p> <p>Caledon develops research paper.</p> <p>VC partners in Saint Michel carry out two tele-learning sessions on strategy in French and English.</p>
New Brunswick	A variety of measures implemented as part of the <a href="#">New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Strategy</a> in November, 2009. Includes creation of Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation to support 12 place-based efforts modelled after Saint John VC.	<p>VC SJ continues to play instrumental role in strategy, particularly in local Economic and Social Inclusion Networks.</p> <p>Tamarack interviews James Hughes, DM Social Development, about questions that VC might answer for place-based poverty reduction element of the strategy.</p> <p>Caledon continues to provide research support.</p>
Newfoundland & Labrador	Public consultations held to inform next 4 year action plan on poverty and 2010 budget contains \$134 million to support 80 projects: up from \$30 million and 20 projects in 2006.	<p>Caledon completes policy paper on the poverty.</p> <p>Tamarack holds tele-learning session with civil servants involved with strategy.</p> <p>Jamie Gamble interviews Aisling Gogan, Director, Poverty Reduction Strategy for VC Summative Assessment.</p>
Nova Scotia	Province announces three measures to improve income security as part of the <a href="#">Nova Scotia Poverty Reduction Strategy</a> on April 3, 2009.	<p>Tamarack holds tele-learning session with civil servants involved with strategy.</p> <p>Liz Weaver attends provincial poverty reduction conference in October 2010.</p>
Prince Edward Island	Minimum wage increases by over 3% an hour.	No direct support in 2010.
Yukon Territory	Office of Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction holds consultation in spring to shape	<p>Yukon strategy profiled in Engage.</p> <p>Connections are made with Yukon Economic and</p>

	social inclusion and poverty reduction strategy.	Social Inclusion team.
Nunavut	Public engagement process launched to help create the territory's first anti-poverty strategy.	Nunavut progress is profiled in Engage. Liz Weaver provides coaching supports to Nunavut poverty planning team.
Northwest Territories	Minimum wage raised in 2010 and set to increase again in 2011.	Tamarack attends Anti-Poverty workshop in Yellowknife. Northwest Territories progress is profiled in Engage.

### 3. Trail Builder Communities

There are currently thirteen Trail Builder collaborative planning tables located in cities across Canada participating in Vibrant Communities. Each was chosen to participate because they are committed to reducing poverty through comprehensive and collaborative efforts. The total includes the initial six Trail Builders who began their work and/or received Vibrant Communities support between 2002-2005:

- Quality of Life Challenge, B.C.'s Capital Region
- Opportunities Niagara, Niagara Region
- Vibrant Communities Saint John
- Vive Saint Michel, Montreal
- Vibrant Communities Edmonton
- Vibrant Communities Calgary

It also includes an additional seven Trail Builders who began their work and/or received Vibrant Communities support from 2006 to 2009:

- Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
- Vibrant Surrey
- Opportunities Waterloo Region
- Les Desmarches, Trois Rivieres
- Vibrant St. John's
- Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council
- Vibrant Abbotsford

The following two charts provide a brief description of the status of each of the Trail Builders, including Opportunities Niagara which ceased operations in 2008, but is now replaced by the Regional Municipality of Niagara Region, the group stewarding a municipally driven poverty reduction effort. The Regional Municipality is now participating in select VC learning activities and accessing VC coaches.

## The First Group of Six

Community	Year	Update
Victoria	Funding completed in 2010.	Despite the turnover in staff and uneven financial supports, the group continued to be involved in promoting an affordability index in the Region and was influential in encouraging the City of Esquimalt to pass a living wage policy, the first municipality in Canada to do so in many years. CHALLENGE staff has also been involved in BC VC, a network of VC communities working with a broader poverty reduction coalition in the Province.
Niagara	Closed in 1 <sup>st</sup> Year of Sustainability Funding	The Regional Municipality of Niagara is continuing poverty reduction efforts and is allocating \$1.5 million annually to local efforts, with an emphasis on poverty reduction in neighbourhoods. Regional representatives are participating in Communities of Practice and Vibrant Communities are providing coaching to the group.
Edmonton	Declined 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Sustainability Support	Vibrant Communities Edmonton continued to carry out research and networking in two neighbourhoods as part of a “poverty reduction focus” of the City of Edmonton’s Great Neighbourhoods program. It has been involved in city and province wide discussions about reducing poverty. The group did not meet the requirements for a third year of sustainability funds but appears likely to be involved in the Learning Community and accessing coaching.
Calgary	Will Enter 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Sustainability Support	Vibrant Communities Calgary has a new staff team and has been an influential role in the all party Standing Committee on the Economy to request research on a poverty reduction strategy for the Province, working to ensure that poverty reduction was a priority issue of the municipal election – and winning candidates; securing an increase to municipal fair fares transportation initiative after hearing it may be cut.
Saint Michel	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Sustainability Support	The group continues to support a larger number of projects in a variety of areas related to poverty reduction (e.g. employment, housing, recreation) and continues to work on its second strategic plan. The group played a key role in Haiti relief for the neighbourhood and is also active in discussions with Government of Quebec about ways to support neighbourhood integration.
Saint John	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Sustainability Support	The group continues to nurture the provincial commitment to reducing poverty and has submitted its interest in coordinating one of the provincial government supported Economic and Social Exclusion Corporation, a mechanism for multi-sectoral leadership around poverty in the Province. Assuming this role will require VCSJ to adapt to a larger geographic area, roles (e.g. funding), and relationships. This includes adapting the Niagara Region’s “Job Bus” project to Saint John and expand into other areas such as childcare.

## The Second Group of Seven

Community	Year	Update
Hamilton	Entering 4th Year of Action Learning	The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction developed an action plan for the next five years which will focus on 9 key deliverables including making Hamilton a living wage community, adopting a universal school nutrition program and focusing on social inclusion. Howard Elliott, Managing Editor of The Hamilton Spectator is the new chair of the Roundtable and fifteen new members are being recruited to join the roundtable in moving forward on its action agenda.
Surrey	May Enter 1st Year of Sustainability Support	The group has recovered from changes in staff with the hiring a very strong community builder. Its reflection session in October confirmed that VC Surrey has helped with a variety of programmatic and systemic outcomes in the last two years, as well as a new commitment – and framework for change – to get at root causes of poverty, particularly in the areas of workforce development, asset building, homelessness and food security.
St. John's	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Action-Learning Support	The group continues to make progress in all six priority areas and appears to be building significant community capacity. Their evaluation framework is very strong and will contribute to the learning and engagement of its partners. They are experiencing tensions in staffing and governance that do not appear to have affected their overall performance.
Waterloo Region	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Sustainability Support	In 2010, the group continued work on shifting public attitudes about poverty, helping shape a regional poverty reduction strategy, supporting a group of persons with low income with community development and education efforts, create new projects in the area of community gardens and markets, and encourage more organizations to integrate the sustainable livelihoods framework, a multi-dimensional asset-building poverty reduction framework, into their program and policy work. The group will focus on exploring a new vision and framework for change in 2011.
Trois Rivieres	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Action Learning	The group's work in social economy initiatives continues to be very strong and they have met or have exceeded targets for employment and training. The group is working with Saint Michel to co-ordinate a new network focusing on place-based social integration and inclusion and active in policy discussions.
Abbotsford	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Action Learning	The leadership group has been active in organizing the voice of low income residents and working to raise the profile of poverty in municipal elections in the City. This complements their earlier and continued work on substantive issues in the area of housing, income and education.
Winnipeg	Entering 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Action Learning	The group has begun to see the results of their efforts at starting new programs and shifting policies, particularly in the area of education and housing. The group held a very well attended and successful poverty reduction forum in the autumn, which in turned yielded broader support from leaders and organizations.

## 4. Supports to Communities

Vibrant Communities continued to provide a variety of supports to Trail Builder to assist them in their efforts to reduce poverty using collaborative and comprehensive approaches. These supports include:

- Grants
- Coaching
- Cross-Community Learning

The purpose of these supports is to improve the effectiveness and ease with which Trail Builder groups develop, unfold and adapt their efforts to reduce poverty.

It is important to note that Vibrant Communities supports represent only a partial contribution to the activity and performance of Trail Builder communities. Trail Builders also access financial, technical and learning opportunities from a variety of sources as well. Moreover, it is up to the collaboration members themselves to take the supports ‘wholesaled’ by VC sponsors and effectively ‘retail’ them for their local effort, adapting them as required.

### 4.1 Financial Support

Trail Builders can access four types of grants in Vibrant Communities to support their local work, each with a distinct purpose and features. These are:

#### *Building Conditions for Success*

Vibrant Communities will contribute resources to eligible communities working to prepare a community plan, finalize multi-sector leadership, create the partnerships and mobilize the resources to support and guide a multi-year local effort to reduce poverty. The one time \$20,000 grant is provided on a one to one matching basis.

### *Action-Learning (aka Implementation) Grants*

Vibrant Communities will contribute up to \$100,000/year for up to three years on a one to one matching basis to eligible communities implementing their multi-year community plan. It is available until the end of the Vibrant Communities campaign in 2011.

### *Renewal Grants*

Communities are eligible to apply for a fourth year of funding of up to \$100,000/year on a one to one matching basis to assist them renew their community plan, partnerships and resources for a subsequent multi-year initiative to reduce poverty. It is available until the end of the Vibrant Communities campaign in 2011.

### *Sustainability Grants*

Vibrant Communities will contribute resources to eligible communities who are implementing a subsequent multi-year effort to reduce poverty. The grant is up to \$50,000/year and offered on a two to one matching basis and is available for up to three years and/or until the end of the Vibrant Communities campaign in 2011.

Additional information on the criteria and process for securing and maintaining the grants is available through Trail Builder Information Sheets.

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation administers the financial contributions to Trail Builders while Tamarack staff coordinates the application and reporting process on behalf of the Foundation.

The Foundation distributed a total of \$584,916 to Trail Builders in Tamarack's fiscal year ending November 30, 2010. In December of 2010 the Foundation distributed \$554,750 bringing the total distributed in direct grants to communities since 2002 to \$5,065,832.

A detailed account of the disbursements to Trail Builders is provided in attachment A.

## 4.2. Coaching

Trail Builders receive coaching support from one or more of the six ‘coaches’ associated with Vibrant Communities whose work is coordinated by Tamarack. This includes two types of coaching:

### *Regional Coaching*

Trail Builder Communities have access to Tamarack supported Vibrant Communities coaching with expertise related to the VC approach. These coaches are regionally based and able to provide up to 7 days of coaching/year plus resources to cover the costs of one on-site, face-to-face visit. Coaches’ work on issues identified by the Trail Builder and are limited by the following two restrictions: (a) the coaching must include, at minimum, a focus on creating and periodically reflecting on the group’s framework for change; and (b) the coaching cannot focus on technical work easily done by local staff or consultants.

In 2010, most communities used seven days or slightly more of regional coaching time, down from ten in 2009. This includes Surrey, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Waterloo, St. John’s and Saint John. Four communities used less than allocated coaching time:

- The CHALLENGE used only 2.4 days due to the wind-down of that group’s operations,
- Vibrant Abbotsford used only 4 days due to staff turn over and leadership changes,
- Les Demarche Trois Rivieres (2.25 days) and Saint Michel (3.75 days) used less than their allocated coaching time though more than in previous years. This was due to the introduction of a new coach – Mike Toye – for Quebec.

### *Pooled Coaching*

All Vibrant Communities coaches have areas of special expertise which any Trail Builder community can access in addition to the support they receive from their own regional coach. For example, a Trail Builder in Ontario may request assistance in engaging business, an area in which Garry Loewen – a coach for Winnipeg – has special expertise. The current capacity to provide pooled coaching is budgeted at approximately two days per community annually.

Communities used approximately 3 days of pooled coaching time in 2010, down from approximately 11 last year. This drop is in part due to the apparent less demand for supports that could not be provided by the regional coach AND because of the increase in problem solving and information sharing between coaches during coaches meeting.

## **4.3 Cross Community Learning**

There are four mechanisms in Vibrant Communities to assist Trail Builders in keeping up-to-date with each others work, provide opportunities for joint learning; and assist in the creation of new and practical knowledge and tools that they can use in their day to day work. These are: the VC communiqué, convenor calls, communities of practice, face to face events.

### **4.3.1. The Vibrant Communities Communiqué**

Tamarack sends out a monthly internal newsletter to the lead staff and volunteers of all Trail Builder initiatives that includes: an update of progress provided by each Trail Builder; a list of upcoming VC learning events; summaries of new resources to support local work; and, Poverty Watch – a summary of key events related to reducing in poverty in Canada.

### **4.3.2. Convenor Calls**

Representatives from all Trail Builder communities participate in bi-monthly teleconference sessions to identify and discuss issues of common interest and opportunities for just-in-time learning (e.g. structuring a leadership roundtable). In some cases, members who wish to explore emerging issues in depth make arrangements to do so on their own. In the December 2010 call, for example, convenors agreed to meet again to explore each other's experiences dealing with changes in leadership and strategy.

### **4.3.3. Communities of Practice (CoPs)**

Communities of Practice are theme specific, member driven, generally time-limited networks of people interested in exploring a 'practice' related to their work in more depth. Participants identify the learning priorities, agenda and follow-up action from these sessions, while VC staff provide logistical support (e.g. arranging teleconferences).

In 2010, the active CoPs included those on Living Wage, Evaluation and Engaging Business. Due to a lack of broad and consistent participation, the Business CoP was discontinued in the spring of 2010. At the same time, a new CoP for municipally supported neighbourhood change efforts was started in the autumn which includes representatives from Edmonton, Calgary, London, Ottawa, Hamilton and Niagara Region.

### **4.3.4. Face to Face Events**

Vibrant Communities offer four different types of events to provide opportunities for participants of Trail Builder communities to meet and work together face-to-face. These include:

*a. Regional/National Forums*

Regional/National Forums offer Trail Builders, communities and regional intermediaries (e.g. a United Way) an opportunity to meet face-to-face to: share learning; explore issues, knowledge and/or know-how emerging from Vibrant Communities; and, explore opportunities for changing regional policies.

Regional/National forums take place when Trail Builders within a region express a strong interest in having such an event and have mobilized other regional intermediaries to support the work of co-convening and funding the event. Vibrant Communities sponsors typically participate in the design, some delivery and occasionally some funding support for the event.

There were four forums in 2010:

- Fredericton, New Brunswick (June 7 – 9), Community Perspectives Conference: a provincial forum exploring social and economic inclusion for New Brunswick
- Northwest Territories (October 6-7): A cross-sector meeting to develop a poverty reduction strategy for the Northwest Territories.
- Truro, Nova Scotia (October 22-24): Poverty Reduction Forum – a provincial forum with well known national guests to explore poverty reduction work in Nova Scotia.
- Edmonton (November 16): an inter-municipal forum to discuss a provincial poverty reduction strategy in part co-sponsored by VC partners in Alberta and featured speakers from Caledon and Tamarack.

*b. Pan-Canadian VC Forums*

Trail Builder representatives, VC sponsors and selected guests periodically meet face-to-face to: exchange ideas; explore select themes related to their work in more depth (e.g. living wage community of practice); and, make decisions about the design and operations of the Vibrant Communities initiative. VC sponsors and Trail Builders co-design the event. VC sponsors make available resources for Trail Builder travel costs.

There were two forums in 2010:

- Hamilton (May 17-18): Convenor Meeting - approximately 30 VC sponsors and Trail Builder representatives met to “make sense” of the results of the initiative over the last 7 years and explore the implications of the wind-down of the Action Research phase of Vibrant Communities at the end of 2011.
- Toronto (May 10-11): Strategic Dialogue on Place-Based Poverty Reduction - over 40 people met to explore the state of poverty reduction efforts and the issues related to place-based poverty reduction in Canada in the future.

c. *“Know How” Institutes*

Trail Builders are invited to participate in various Tamarack-coordinated training institutes that explore different aspects of working collaboratively on complex issues such as poverty. In the past, these have included the annual Communities Collaborating Institute, the Collaborative Leadership Institute.

In 2010, 24 persons from 10 Trail Builder communities participated in Tamarack’s 2010 Communities Collaborating Institute in Kitchener Ontario, which highlighted a variety of themes related to poverty reduction, including: an update from Anne Kubisch of the Aspen Institute on twenty years of research into comprehensive community initiatives, the release of the end-of-project evaluation report on VC, and a variety of tools and techniques and knowledge that has emerged from Vibrant Communities. For more information on the Institute, see: <http://tamarackcommunity.ca/cci.html>

## 5. VC By The Numbers

The following section describes the performance of participating Trail Builder communities in four categories: partners engaged; resources leveraged; households affected; and assets developed.

### 5.1 Partners Engaged

The total number of organizations and leaders that Trail Builder communities have engaged in their work to 2009 increased by approximately 12% over 2009.

Partner Engaged					
Sector	Target for 2011	December 2007	December 2008	December 2009 <sup>1</sup>	December 2010
Business	400	355	560	528	466
Government	500	247	450	352	503
Voices of Experience	400	145	311	536	717
Non-profit	700	376	763	668	786
Other		131	429	626	569
Total	2000	1,254	2,513	2,710	3,041

The slight decrease in the numbers of businesses reflects a ‘tighter’ interpretation of engagement in 2009. Trail Builders have exceeded the national targets for engagement.

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<sup>1</sup> Decreases in some categories represent a shift to counting partnering organizations, rather than counting the total number of individuals from those organizations participating in the work.

## 5.2 Leveraged Dollars

To date, local Trail Builders have leveraged over \$14.6 million dollars for their work based on a matched investment by the J.W. McConnell Foundation of nearly \$4.6 million.

Resources Mobilized from 2007-2010 (Cumulative)				
Community	December 2007	December 2008	December 2009	December 2010
McConnell	\$2,745,000	\$3,207,500	\$4,452,166	\$5,065,832
Communities	\$6,730,303	\$8,340,906	\$12,023,554	14,634,042
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$9,475,303</i>	<i>\$11,548,406</i>	<i>\$16,475,720</i>	<i>\$19,154,874</i>
<i>Leverage</i>	<i>2.45</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>2.7</i>	<i>2.89</i>

The increase in the total dollars raised from 2008 to 2009 reflects the addition of several new Trail Builder communities. The modest increase in the financial leverage of the McConnell grants reflects, in part, the requirement of Trail Builders in the Sustainability Stream (i.e. Victoria, Edmonton, Calgary, Saint John and Saint Michel) to provide two-to-one matched grant dollars (up to \$50,000), an increase from the one-to-one matching requirements in action-learning grants (up to \$100,000).

## 5.3 Initiatives

Trail Builder communities have increased the number of initiatives they have completed, are implementing or are in planning since 2009.

	December 2009	December 2010	% Change
Completed	29	64	+120%
In Implementation	90	117	+20%
In Planning	38	49	+29%
Total	157	230	+ 46%

The increase in the number of completed initiatives is due to many initiatives meeting natural timelines (e.g. a pilot project for neighbourhood markets). The increase in the

number of initiatives in implementation or planning simply reflects the larger number of Trail Builders managing active poverty reduction campaigns.

## 5.4 Beneficiaries

Since 2002, Trail Builders report that their 183 completed/in-implementation initiatives have benefitted 194,785 individuals and households. This includes 47,892 individuals in 2010.

<b>Beneficiaries<sup>2</sup> (Cumulative)</b> <b>(Target for 2011 – 100,000)</b>				
<b>Community</b>	<b>December 2007</b>	<b>December 2008</b>	<b>December 2009</b>	<b>December 2010</b>
Victoria	13,655	17,225	17,229	17,554
Saint John	2,753	4,246	7,146	20,205
Edmonton	663	2,833	4,572	4,572
Saint-Michel	1,671	8,287	27,208	29,772
Calgary	15,022	20,161	20,359	23,761
Niagara	2,218	2,178	2,178	2,178
Surrey	92	186	373	503
Hamilton	NA	44,343	61,685	85,825
Waterloo	NA	636	1,335	1,510
Winnipeg	NA	NA	82	3,217
St. John's	NA	173	606	860
Trois Rivières	NA	NA	3,846	4,349
Abbotsford	NA	NA	274	529
<i>Total</i>	<i>36,074</i>	<i>100,268</i>	<i>146,893</i>	<i>194,785</i>

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<sup>2</sup> Total number of individuals or households directly assisted by specific poverty reduction strategies to which Trail Builders have contributed. A given individual or household may benefit from more than one strategy. Decreases in some categories represent a shift to counting partnering organizations, rather than counting the total number of individuals from those organizations participating in the work.

This exceeds the national target of 100,000 households and represents an increase of over 30% in one year. This is due to dramatic increases reported in Hamilton and Saint John and substantial increases in Calgary, Saint Michel and Winnipeg.

## 5.5 Beneficiary Assets

The previous section describes the rough number of individual and households affected by Trail Builder efforts. This section describes 'how' they were affected by listing the different types of assets they accumulated in five areas: personal, physical, social, human and financial.

The number of assets accumulated by individuals and households in Trail Builder communities has increased in all five areas:

- Personal: + 139%
- Physical Assets: + 102%
- Social Assets: + 35%
- Human Assets: + 51%
- Financial Assets: + 19%

The overall number of reported assets has increased from 258,182 in 2009 to 380,554, an increase of 47%.

Vibrant Communities sponsors and communities are currently preparing an analysis of how many strategies contributed more than one asset per beneficiary as well as completing case studies on a smaller pool of comprehensive strategies to understand the degree to which poverty was reduced.

<b>Individual and Household Assets<sup>3</sup></b>			
<i>Personal Assets</i>	Dec. 2009	Dec. 2010	% Change
Inner Resources	6,577	15,692	+139%
<i>Subtotal</i>	6,577	15,692	+139%
<i>Physical Assets</i>			
Emergency Supports	10,942	15,195	+39%
Food	5,758	33,914	+489%
Housing	3,723	6,829	+83%
Transportation	13,392	14,733	+10%
Dependent Care	2,281	2,317	+1.6%
<i>Subtotal</i>	36,096	72,988	+102%
<i>Social Assets</i>			
Civic Participation	53,149	71,640	+35%
Networks	13,384	18,021	+35%
<i>Subtotal</i>	66,533	89,661	+35%
<i>Human Assets</i>			
Health	15,118	36,353	+140%
Life Skills	30,375	38,304	+26%
Financial Literacy	488	2,196	+350%
Education	21,405	26,786	+25%
Employment Skills	10,606	13,837	+30%
<i>Subtotal</i>	77,992	117,476	+51%
<i>Financial Assets</i>			
Employment Income	11,852	18,363	+55%
Non-Employment Income	42,021	48,778	+16%
Savings and Capital Assets	552	858	+55%
Reduced Debt/Reduced Costs	16,559	17,738	+7%
<i>Subtotal</i>	70,984	84,737	+19%
<i>Total</i>	258,182	380,554	+47%

<sup>3</sup>Resources, capacities and entitlements that individuals and households can draw upon to meet their ongoing needs and aspirations. Participants in a specific poverty reduction strategy may achieve improved assets in more than one area.

## 5.6 Local Policy & System Shifts

In addition to pursuing programmatic initiatives that directly result into new assets for low-income households, many Trail Builders work in a way that addresses systems and policies that underlie poverty in their community.

Since 2006 to 2010, Trail Builders report:

- 47 initiatives involve local bodies partnering with national or regional partners to address policy issues,
- 45 strategies have helped to expand community involvement in the policy-making process, including low income residents, or foster community-government collaboration on policy issues,
- 20 initiatives have resulted in increased participation of low income residents in reshaping programs and services,
- 44 initiatives have created mechanisms that facilitate multi-partner collaboration in the delivery of programs and services,
- 10 strategies have resulted in increased participation on the part of low income residents in shaping the design and delivery of programs meant to assist them.
- 6 strategies have altered the way poverty reduction initiatives are funded and generated 28 instances of increased funding for poverty reduction initiatives,
- 40 strategies have produced policy changes in particular substantive areas such as transportation (e.g. City of Calgary and City of Hamilton adopting a low income bus pass).

The degree to which Trail Builders have contributed to these strategies and changes varies from modest to significant. The number of shifts may be under reported given that VC has required Trail Builders to monitor policy shifts only in the last several years and the fact that many shifts may still go unobserved or undocumented.

## 5.7 Communication

While Trail Builders are seeking to generate reductions in poverty and shift the policies and systems underlying it, they are also trying to strengthen the local will and capacity to reduce poverty.

Each community has undertaken some type of communications campaign designed to expand awareness about poverty and increase local involvement in poverty reduction efforts. Each campaign includes some combination of the following tools: website; newsletters; reports; media coverage; and, learning events.

Some key statistics for 2010 include:

	December 2008	December 2009	December 2010	% Increase Over Year
Reports Disseminated	120	160	237	+48%
Media Stories	1286	1,787	2,791	+56%
Learning Events	181	245	353	+54%

The Trail Builder communities continue to report year over year increases in the volume of communication activities in their work. The dramatic increase in activities between 2009 and 2010 appears to be due in large part to increased activities associated with Trail Builders in New Brunswick, British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario being actively involved in municipal and provincial elections.

It is difficult to determine the effect of these communication activities on the public's understanding of poverty and its commitment to reduce it. However, in some cases, the link appears to be strong. For example, over 80% of Hamiltonians report that poverty was the number one issue in the city's municipal campaign last year, something participants of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction feel is due in part to the ongoing and in-depth coverage of poverty issues by the Hamilton Spectator. In Calgary, Vibrant Communities Calgary used forums, social media and lobbying efforts to raise the profile of poverty, helping it to become one of several election issues, including part of the policy platform of the winning candidate.

## 6. Learning Products

Vibrant Communities put a great emphasis on building the “knowledge and know-how” about place-based, collaborative and comprehensive efforts to reduce poverty, based on the experience of Trail Builders, as well as the experience of other place-based approaches. Our work in product development has focused on three streams. These are:

- Stream One: Comprehensive Strategies
- Stream Two: Working Collaboratively
- Stream Three: An Enabling Policy and Investment environment.

The progress of Vibrant Communities in developing resources in each of these streams is described below.

### 6.1 Stream One: Comprehensive Strategies

The first action-learning stream focuses on the “substance” of reducing poverty with a special emphasis on place-based, collaborative and comprehensive efforts. In particular, Vibrant Communities sponsors and Trail Builders have sought to answer the following questions:

- What do ‘comprehensive strategies’ to reduce poverty look like?
- What are the factors that make them more likely to pull together and be implemented? What are the barriers?
- What are the types of outcomes that can be anticipated from such strategies?

The research process to explore these questions included a combination of literature review, expert interviews and case studies. This year the VC team produced 1 tool, 4 policy papers/thought pieces, and 11 community stories on the topic.

## 6.2 Stream Two: Working Collaboratively

The second action-learning stream focuses on the process of working collaboratively and comprehensively on poverty reduction in communities. The purpose of this stream is to explore models, tools and techniques that could be useful for the staff and leadership groups of community change efforts. The work of this stream focused on the following six broad operational areas:

- Leadership, Governance & Community Engagement
- Researching & Planning
- Evaluation & Learning
- The Convenor Support Group: Staffing, Resources, Sponsorship
- The Resiliency & Sustainability of Community Change Efforts

In 2010, the VC team published 2 thought-piece and 3 community stories in this stream of learning.

## 6.3. Stream Three: Enabling Policies and Funding

The third and final action-learning stream focused on strengthening the policy and investment environment for place-based, collaborative and comprehensive efforts to reduce poverty. The work in this stream builds upon the extensive work VC sponsors and Trail Builders have done in the areas of funding and government dialogue with an emphasis on the following areas:

- Investing in Place-Based, Comprehensive Efforts to Reduce Poverty: Funding Purpose, Levels and Relationships
- Policy Options for Reducing Poverty
- The Process of Government-Community Collaboration

In 2010, Caledon and Tamarack produced 2 policy papers/thought pieces and 44 stories directly and indirectly as part of its work on this action-learning stream.

## Summary of Resources Produced in 2010

Stream	Tools	Policy Papers/ Thought Pieces	Community Stories
Stream One: Comprehensive Approaches to Reducing Poverty	None	<p>Determining the Value of Comprehensive Community Initiatives. Anne Makhoul, Eric Leviten-Reid</p> <p>Comprehensive Community Initiatives: Lessons Learned, Opportunities for Moving Forward. Nimira Lalina</p>	<p>Hamilton's Hostels to Homes Project</p> <p>BC Transit Ticket Assistance Program</p> <p>The Neighbourhoods Project: Vibrant Abbotsford Talks about Poverty</p> <p>Make Tax Time Pay: Program and System Change Successes</p> <p>Surrey's Project Comeback (Draft)</p> <p>Niagara's Job Bus (Draft)</p> <p>Hamilton's Approach (Draft)</p> <p>Calgary Fair Fares (Draft)</p>
Stream Two: Working Collaboratively & Comprehensively	The Story Telling Resource (Draft)	<p>In development</p> <p>Approaches to Measuring: Community Change Indicators</p>	<p>New Brunswick's Business Leaders Talk about Poverty Reduction <b>Anne Makhoul</b></p> <p>The CHALLENGE in BC's Capital Region: Engaging Business</p> <p>Poverty and Disability: My Lived Experience</p>
Stream Three: The Enabling Policy & Investment Environment	None	<p>Breaking down the welfare wall in New Brunswick Briser le mur de l'aide sociale au Nouveau-Brunswick</p> <p>Reconstructing Social Assistance in New Brunswick: Vision and Action <b>Ken Battle, Michael Mendelson, Sherri Torjman</b></p> <p>Poverty Reduction in Quebec: The First Five Years.</p>	<p>Creating Election Excitement: All-Candidates Poverty Forum in Abbotsford</p> <p>Vibrant Calgary Rides the Social Media Wave <b>Anne Makhoul,</b></p> <p>New Brunswick's "Overcoming Poverty Together" Plan Earns Praise and Creates Hope/Le plan « Ensemble pour vaincre la pauvreté » du Nouveau-Brunswick récolte des éloges et sème de l'espoir</p>
Total	1	6	13

## 7. Dissemination

In addition to participating in the Trail Builder learning opportunities described above, Vibrant Communities provided people and organizations not directly involved in Vibrant Communities with three opportunities that have been designed specifically to share learning emerging from Vibrant Communities.

### 7.1 Engage Newsletter

Tamarack's monthly e-newsletter, "Engage!" profiles the work of the Vibrant Communities initiative including featured stories on resources and stories emerging from the work of VC Communities; announcements about open VC learning events; and, updates from select Trail Builder communities. In 2010, 6,800 people subscribed to this newsletter from across Canada and beyond, up from 6,100 in 2009.

### 7.2 Website

The Vibrant Communities website posts updates and descriptions about the major publications and training from Vibrant Communities, as well as information about major milestones achieved by each Trail Builder community. The Vibrant Communities website is part of the larger Tamarack website and is therefore accessible to both Vibrant Communities participants and the public at large.

	December 2009	December 2010	% Change
Unique Visitors	56,962	43,217	-24%
User Sessions	83,334	71,713	-14%
Webpage Reviewed	516,177	465,915	-10%
Pages Per Viewer Session	6.2	6.4	+3%
Downloads (e.g. reports)	655,458	745,385	+14%
Download per Unique Visitor	11.5	17.2	+50%

The general pattern is that there are fewer unique visitors to the website who come less frequently. When visitors do come, they view more pages and download more resources than in previous years.

### 7.3 Tele-Learning

Vibrant Communities offers regular tele-learning conferences on VC related tools and resources to people and organizations not involved in Vibrant Communities. In 2010, there were 10 tele-learning sessions with people on 1,334 registered lines. This is one more session and 448 more registrants than in 2009.

Month	Topic	Registrants
January	Measuring Poverty Ontario's Deprivation Index (Michael Mendelson)	100
February	Getting the Most from Evaluation (Jamie Gamble)	113
March	Nfld/Labrador Poverty Reduction Plan (Donna O'Brien and Daniel Mason)	84
April	New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Plan (James Hughes)	47
May	Nova Scotia Poverty Reduction Plan (Brenda Murray and Uli vom Hagen)	65
June	Ontario Poverty Reduction Plan (Marian Mlakar and Catherine Laurier)	135
June	Developmental Evaluation (Michael Quinn Patton)	199
	Development Evaluation (Michael Quinn Patton) – additional registrations	302
August	Manitoba Poverty Reduction Plan (Jon Foster)	41
September	Review of Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategies Reduction Plan (Sherri Torjman)	129
October	The VC Evaluation: Part B (Jamie Gamble)	47
November	Quebec Poverty Reduction Plan (Yves Levesque and Anne Roberge) – French	32
December	Quebec Poverty Reduction Plan (Yves Levesque and Eric Theroux) - English	40
	Total	1,334

It is important to note that the number of registrants describes the number of lines registered per call. In many cases, there are more than one person per line (e.g. a group of people who listen to the call together and then conversation).

## 7.4 External Coaching, Presentations, Workshops

Vibrant Communities staff is regularly invited to communities across Canada to share their learnings and information about the tools and techniques that are emerging from the Vibrant Communities experience. Staff has begun to track these requests to determine themes and patterns for the summative evaluation of national supports. In 2010, the number of coaching assignments, presentations and workshops to non-Trail Builders on VC related topics was over three dozen and reached several hundred persons.

## 8. Vibrant Communities Capacity

The following section describes the status of several key elements of Vibrant Communities capacity over 2009: human resources; financial resources; and, governance arrangements.

### 8.1. Human Resources

The staffing model for Vibrant Communities is a small group of full & part time staff complemented by a mix of purchase of service agreements and contract staff.

The full and part-time staff team includes:

- Executive Director – Mark Cabaj
- Systems Change Lead/Lead Coach – Liz Weaver
- Learning & Evaluation/Atlantic Coach – Eric Leviten-Reid (.65 FTE)

The fee-for-service arrangements include:

- Contracts for learning coordinators (Brenda Doner, Trail Builder Learning, Sylvia Cheuy, External Learning & Dissemination)
- Research papers by Sherri Torjman and community stories & case studies by Anne Makhoul

- Coaches who provide assistance to communities and develop tools and resources (i.e. Garry Loewen, Mike Toye, Mabel-Jean Brannan)
- Administrative support and communication services from Tamarack
- Technical support on issues related to translation and special assignments (e.g. research, evaluation, technology) (i.e. Susan Curwood, Guylaine Leclerc)

These arrangements worked well in 2010, though they will change in 2011 to reflect the different work involved in the last year of the action-research phase and the concurrent evolution of Vibrant Communities Canada.

## 8.2. Financial Resources

	Total	Direct Grants to Communities	National Supports
Board Approved budget 2010	\$1,683,258	\$955,334	\$727,924
Projected Actual 2010	\$1,269,036	\$584,916	\$684,120
Budget 2011	\$1,395,527	\$784,750	\$610,777

The above table is based on Tamarack's fiscal year which is December 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup>.

The financial resources required to provide Trail Builders with grants and national supports is \$1,395,527 in 2011. These resources are secured through a combination of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation; the Maytree Foundation; Human Resources Development Canada; and, a series of other philanthropic and private funders.

The details for the Vibrant Communities budget are provided in two separate documents: VC Grants to Trail Builders, VC National Budget. These documents are located in appendices A and B.

### 8.3. Governance

The sponsors of Vibrant Communities continue to govern the policies and operations of the initiative through an Advisory Committee comprised of representatives of three organizations:

- Tamarack (Paul Born, Liz Weaver)
- Caledon Institute (Sherri Torjman, Anne Makhoul)
- The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation (Tim Brodhead, Dana Vocisano)

Mark Cabaj and Eric Leviten-Reid participate as ex-officio members of the Committee and provide staff support to the group.

In addition to making joint decisions on the overall direction and policies of the Vibrant Communities, each sponsor organization is responsible for operations of their own area of support for the initiative:

- Tamarack: learning, coaching, evaluation
- Caledon: policy and research
- The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation: grants, dissemination to funders

The Steering Committee anticipates that this governance arrangement may evolve as discussions regarding how Vibrant Communities sponsors might support place-based, collaborative and comprehensive efforts after 2011 (See Section 10).

## 9. Evaluation

In addition to the regular monitoring of key statistics and reflective processes of Vibrant Communities, The Vibrant Communities Steering Committee completed the first of a two part end-of-project summative evaluation of Vibrant Communities in 2010. The key features of this evaluation include:

- Phase One (December 2009 to July 2010) - to identify the questions VC stakeholders wished to see addressed in the final evaluation and to form initial conclusions based on data and studies already developed through the work of Vibrant Communities
- Phase Two (July 2010 to Spring 2011) - to deepen the understanding of phase one results and the value and effectiveness of the national supports to communities.

Tamarack contracted Jamie Gamble (Imprint Consulting Inc.) to facilitate the first round of the summative evaluation. With extensive assistance from Eric Leviten-Reid, evaluation and learning coordinator for VC, Jamie completed a series of interview of likely “users” of the report to surface the questions they wanted answered in the evaluation, analyzed existing data on VC to uncover patterns and themes, facilitated sense-making sessions with Steering Committee members and Trail Builders, and produced several drafts of an evaluation report.

The evaluation report was finalized in August of 2010 and released at the Tamarack’s Communities Collaborating Institute in September. An electronic version of the report is available at the Evaluating Vibrant Communities webpage at [http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g2\\_VC\\_Evaluation.html](http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g2_VC_Evaluation.html) and 12 page executive summaries of the evaluation and desk-topped booklets are available upon request.

The highlights of the dissemination of the results so far:

- 160 participants were present at the media launch of the report at Tamarack’s Communities Collaborating Institute in September 2010,

- 6,700 Engage! E-newsletters subscribers received a copy of the report in their email,
- 80 registrants attended a tele-learning seminar with Jamie Gamble and Eric Leviten-Reid,
- 505 people attended 10 community presentations to poverty reduction roundtables in Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Halton, Abbotsford, and Waterloo.
- 1382 people attended presentations at conferences, forums or national planning groups in Ottawa, Toronto, Truro, Yellowknife, Edmonton, Kelowna, Adelaide and Auckland.

The Steering Committee approved a revised dissemination strategy, which includes distributing hard copies of books, presentations to organizations and conferences, articles and one-on-one conversations to end of 2011.

Gamble has completed and presented the results of interviews with likely users of the second part of the end-of-project evaluation to the Steering Committee in December 2010. The major theme of the proposed work is an emphasis on evaluating the national supports (i.e. funding, learning, coaching, policy and research, etc.) to Trail Builder communities. He will be present a refined proposed scope of work for Steering Committee approval on January 17, 2011.

## 10. Exploring Post 2011

The sponsors and founding communities originally envisioned an action-research initiative on poverty reduction that would initially run three to four years and then, if the early results were encouraging, extend the initiative for another phase, which they did in 2006. In April 2008, the sponsors decided that the action-research activities of Vibrant Communities would discontinue by the end of 2011.

In order to systematically explore what – if anything – might be required to strategically support place-based poverty reduction efforts in Canada after 2011, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and Tamarack – An Institute for Community Engagement hosted a strategic dialogue about place-based poverty reduction efforts in Canada. In May 2010, forty-six business, government, philanthropic, academic and community sector leaders met for two days in Toronto to review the strengths and challenges of working collaboratively to tackle poverty in Canada and the United States.

The group surfaced a number of things that could be done to support place-based poverty reduction efforts in the future, and Vibrant Communities sponsors and staff agreed to facilitate the “next steps” in that evolution, a decision they confirmed in June of 2010 at their monthly meeting.

In the autumn of 2010, Vibrant Communities staff presented the Steering Committee with a strategy to establish a “task force” to explore and create an expanded initiative to support place-based poverty reduction in Canada, one that would include an expanded number of communities and more ambitious goals (e.g. reduce poverty for one million Canadians). This initial proposal has been modified based on conversations with Steering Committee members and possible task force members.

## 11. Priorities for 2011

The Vibrant Communities staff team have completed a detailed work plan for the action-research phase of Vibrant Communities January 1, 2010 to December 30, 2011 organized around four major priority areas.

### 11.1 Supports to Trail Builders

The majority of the work plan focuses on ensuring that Trail Builders continue to receive a variety of supports for their local work. This includes:

- Learning activities (e.g. tele-learning, communities of practice, convenor calls)
- Grants to eligible Trail Builders
- Coaching support
- Dissemination activities through the VC communiqué, newsletter, web updates, as well as workshops and presentations.

It also includes expanding the number of communities involved in cross-community learning activities and coaching supports as part of the emergence of the next iteration of Vibrant Communities Canada.

### 11.2 Summative Evaluations

Vibrant Communities staff will complete the dissemination of the first part of the summative evaluation as well as complete and disseminate the second part of the summative evaluation.

The dissemination effort of part one will include:

- Presentations to Trail Builder and non-Trail Builder community roundtables.
- An evaluation results “tour” of VC Core Partners
- Targeted conversations with funders and policy makers across Canada
- Presentations at major conferences

- Articles in Journals and Publications

The activities related to the second part of the evaluation include: approval of an evaluation scope of work, completion and review of draft results, preparation of final results, and preparation and implementation of a dissemination plan.

### 11.3 Learning Deliverables

Vibrant Communities staff will focus on completing a variety of deliverables that capture the major learning's of the Vibrant Communities initiatives from s

- A series of papers and case studies exploring Comprehensive Strategies to Reduce Poverty
- An on-line Field Manual and book with tools for Collaboration and Comprehensiveness
- A final Book summarizing the results and learning of Vibrant Communities
- A Story-Telling Resource that describes the value of using stories to communicate issues related to poverty and different strategies for integrating story-telling strategies in place-based poverty reduction efforts
- Several independent papers related to policy and practice issues (e.g. municipal poverty reduction efforts).

These deliverables will be completed in phases throughout the year: e.g. the story telling resource is scheduled for completion in February 2010, the comprehensive strategies papers are scheduled for April 2010 while the VC book and Field Manual will likely be completed in the autumn.

### 11.4 Cities Reducing Poverty

Vibrant Communities staff will support the implementation of a six month workplan (December 1, 2010 to May 30, 2010) to support the emergence of a Cities Reducing Poverty initiative across Canada. The highlights of the plan include:

- The creation of a task force from 10-12 senior leaders across Canada to help design, champion and engage, and resource the new initiative,
- Engage communities in the Cities Reducing Poverty network which includes communication, learning activities and coaching,
- Engage stakeholders at the provincial and national level that provide funding or policy support to place-based efforts to participate in a stakeholder roundtable of approximately 20 organizations,
- Mobilizing approximately \$2.5 million to support the work of the new initiative.

These activities are designed to build the conditions of success to create a high profile Council, Community Roundtable and Stakeholder Roundtable and a “Cities Reducing Poverty Action Plan”.