Community Story-telling: Engagement as a Cultural Mapping Technique

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Mapping Culture: Communities, Sites and Stories
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Outline of presentation

- Cultural mapping in Ontario, Canada
- Community case studies
- Methodological challenges in mapping intangible cultural assets
- Critical reflections
Ontario’s Municipal Cultural Planning Inc.

- A non-profit coalition of organizations and agencies
- 2010 – Published *Cultural Resources Mapping: A Guide for Municipalities*
- Used primarily as a tool for development and planning
Types of cultural resources

Tangible cultural resources
- Cultural industries
- Cultural occupations
- Community cultural organizations
- Cultural facilities and spaces
- Cultural and natural heritage
- Cultural events and festivals

Intangible cultural resources
- Values, stories, customs, traditions
## Assets mapped by size of community (N=64)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of community</th>
<th>Tangible</th>
<th>Intangible (planned)</th>
<th>Intangible (actual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (under 20K) (N=26)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (20K to 100K) (N=15)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (over 100K) (N=23)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case studies of intangible narratives in cultural maps

- **Large community – County of Essex and City of Windsor (pop. 388,782)**
  - [http://www.culture.windsor-essex.info/](http://www.culture.windsor-essex.info/) and City of Windsor (pop. 210,891)
  - [http://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/Culture/Pages/Community-Stories.aspx](http://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/Culture/Pages/Community-Stories.aspx)

- **Medium-sized community – Town of Georgina (pop. 43,517)**
  - [http://www.georginamaps.ca/](http://www.georginamaps.ca/) and the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation (pop. 275)
  - [http://georginaisland.com/](http://georginaisland.com/)

- **Small community – Municipality of Wawa (pop. 2,975)**
Windsor-Essex stories

Explore the Spaces & Facilities of Windsor-Essex

- Archive
- Arts Studios
- Commercial Art Galleries
- Design Studios
- Dinner Theatres
- Interpretive Centres
- Pay and Specialty TV Studios
- Public Art Galleries
- Public Outdoor Spaces
- Theatres
- Fine Arts Schools
- Arts Centres
- Broadcast Studios
- Commercial Museums
- Digital and Media Studios
- Motion Picture & Video Production Studios
- Libraries
- Performing Arts Facilities
- Public Museums
- Sound Recording Studios
- Visual Arts Facilities

Honouring the Past
Click through the slideshow below to see what’s been contributed so far—might be anything from fact and folklore to legends and even the occasional "stretching". Be sure to add your own chronicles through the link at the bottom of the page.

Windsor Vacuum
This video is the Windsor Vacuum "What If..." Commercial, created by Suede Productions.

Celebrating the Present
Click through the slideshow below to experience the "now" in Windsor-Essex. Or click on the "Tell Us Your Stories" link at the bottom of the page to add your current contributions.

Broken City Lab
Justin Langlois of the Broken City Lab talks about the importance of the arts in Windsor.
City of Windsor stories

Community Stories

A Part of the Windsor Culture Map

Though the major focus of the cultural mapping project was tangible cultural resources, attention was also paid to intangible resources or community stories. Local stories are the “DNA of culture,” helping make sense of place and relationships in our community. During the research phase, the public identified the most important stories that helped contribute to defining Windsor’s unique identity. From a long list, the ten most commonly identified stories were developed into short narratives for you to read.

Community Story to Share?

As we continue to update the Windsor Culture Map, we look forward to expanding on this set of stories in the future by working in partnership with the community. We invite you to help add to our Community Stories. City of Windsor and Windsor Culture Map staff will review the information submitted for accuracy and content prior to publication. Submissions must include the following:

- 200 to 300 words
- Your write-up must be submitted in English, but we encourage you to also submit the write-up in your native tongue, and we will include both versions online. Note: If you are writing in a native tongue, please also provide the translation for the following heading. Cultural Mapping
  - Community Stories
  - 4 photos (high quality, high resolution, copyright free)
  - Captions for each of the photos submitted
  - Submit to: culturalaffairs@city.windsor.on.ca
  - Subject line: “Cultural Mapping Community Stories - Submission”

First 10 Community Stories

The following 10 community stories were prepared as part of the initial cultural mapping project:

- [Story 1]
- [Story 2]
- [Story 3]
- [Story 4]
- [Story 5]
- [Story 6]
- [Story 7]
- [Story 8]
- [Story 9]
- [Story 10]
Both hard copy cultural map and digital maps available at
http://georginamaps.ca/
Chippewas of Georgina First Nation

Chippewas of Georgina Island

The Georgina Island Storytelling Project

Our stories celebrate our heritage and identity as Chippewa people. They preserve and teach our Indigenous ways of knowing and knowledge for the future generations of Georgina Island. In the tradition of oral history over generations, our youth - in their turn - will carry on this legacy to protect and share our proud history and who we are as the Chippewas of Georgina Island.

Featured Story

Surviving the Trip across Lake Simcoe

Sandra Big Canoe

It was a warm summer day on May 30th, 1985. My eight-year-old daughter, Donna, and I were coming home from a shopping trip.
If there is one thing about Wawa which makes us incredibly unique, it is our amazingly diverse and rich history. Almost every aspect of the dynamic Michipicoten/Wawa story-line has a connection to the fascinating history of our young nation.

The Michipicoten First Nation ancestors learned how to survive in this rugged corner of the continent. They shared their skills and knowledge with the first European explorers and helped to establish some of the first commercial enterprises like fur trading, fishing and mining. Michipicoten became a hub for travel and exploration north to Hudson’s Bay and West to the rest of North America. Almost every iconic Canadian adventurer and personality studied in our grade school history books, travelled through the Michipicoten region and made a stop at the small congregation of buildings associated with either the Northwest Company or Hudson’s Bay Company trading posts on the banks of the Michipicoten River.

Since Michipicoten had an established source of supplies and communication links, it became a crucial jumping off point for those men and women employed at the growing chain of work camps all throughout the region. Migration through Michipicoten included all types of workers, from all corners of the world. They were supplied and sent on their quest to fulfill all types of vocations. Lumberjacks, cooks, railroad navies, miners, dam builders, trappers, fishermen, lighthouse keepers, POW’s, prison guards, road-builders, and physicians.

The following list of cultural heritage resources and assets in the Wawa area was compiled through your input during the Wawa Cultural Mapping project which was completed at the end of April 2012.

Click on the locator pin for more detailed information on each cultural heritage site or element. Click on the “Collected Resource” tab to see the full list of historical assets submitted for this project. If you see anything missing and have any additional items you want to see on this list, please click on the “Submit a Resource” tab and fill out the form, send an email to culture@wawa.ca or enter them on our Wawa Cultural Map Facebook page.
The WAWA Youtube video
(http://wawaculture.com/the-project/)

THANK YOU WAWA!

Here is a short 5 minute video filled with images and sounds of Wawa’s incredible cultural assets. Enjoy!

The purpose of this video is to thank the residents of Wawa for their participation in the Wawa Cultural Mapping Project in 2011-2012. It is a quick snapshot of all the incredible cultural resources and assets in our amazing town! For a look at a complete list of all of Wawa’s natural and cultural assets compiled during this project, go to the Cultural Resources page on this website. ENJOY!
Wawa Culture Facebook page
Methodological challenges – Intangible cultural mapping

- Little recognition of intangible culture as part of “ecosystem services”
- No standard way to classify values, stories, customs and traditions
- Suggested methodology would engage citizens to incorporate:
  - Narrative
  - Open-ended classification
  - Assignment of relative importance
  - Spatial relevance
Critical reflections

- All case study communities used various elements of the alternative methodology
- Narrative approaches dependent upon continued forum for story-telling
- Engagement of community needed to capture what is “cultural”
- Assignment of weights tends to favour positive narratives
- Difficulties of “codifying the uncodifiable” persist
Thank you!

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