



Observatoire estrien
du développement des communautés

For Immediate Release

THE DASHBOARD, AN ESSENTIAL MOBILIZATION TOOL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES

(Sherbrooke, December 1st, 2010) Finally! Thanks to the Community Dashboard created by L'Observatoire estrien du développement des communautés (OEDC), statistical data, comparable to that of Statistics Canada and the Institut de la statistique du Québec, are now available at a small scale for the 66 local communities of the Estrie region, thus allowing them to better target their development.

In fact, Paul Morin, president of the Observatoire and researcher in social development at the University of Sherbrooke, notes that « a fine understanding of each population is essential for the efficient development of communities, to reinforce the implementation of strategic planning, domestic politics and local interventions. It is through this understanding that the Dashboard can display statistical data on income, demographics, economic activity, etc., but also qualitative data on each community's potential for development, such as the feeling of security, citizen participation or the interactions of local dynamics.

This tool, whose data is available in its entirety on the OEDC website (www.oedc.qc.ca), is much more than a simple tool: "In Memphremagog, the establishment of the Dashboard was an exercise in which more than one hundred people participated. In and of itself, the process of establishment and development of a tool is major accomplishment. More than a statistical portrayal of the communities in the Estrie region, the Dashboard allowed its actors to reveal the dynamic identity of our environment, to understand the inter-influence of strengths and weaknesses of each zone comprised in our territory," states Mrs. Vicky May Hamm, mayor of Magog..

Mr. Eric Bourgault, rural development agent in the regional county municipality of Val-Saint-François and coordinator of the Cross-Industry Strategic Dashboard, adds that: "what is interesting is that the data is available by local community, by RCM and on both regional and provincial scales." Mr. Yvon Boisvert, Community Life Coordinator for the City of Sherbrooke, continues: "The Dashboard of Communities is an exceptional tool for correctly evaluating a given situation; it allows districts that so desire to elaborate their action plans in terms of social and community development."

The Dashboard began in spring of 2008 when 66 local communities of approximately 5,000 people were defined as the Estrie region. To ensure validity and the respect of ethical considerations, certain rural towns were grouped together while certain urban neighbourhoods were divided. Afterwards, a series of varied indicators were chosen. In total, the Dashboard of Communities offers 19 indicator categories (i.e. age of the population) which break down into 126 elements of information (i.e. 14 age divisions).

This participative and cross-industry undertaking was coordinated by L'Observatoire estrien du développement des communautés in collaboration with the Direction de la santé publique et de l'évaluation de l'Estrie. Numerous other partners who have also invested in this project are the Conférence régionale des élus de l'Estrie, les Centres de santé et de services sociaux de l'Estrie, Emploi Québec, the City of Sherbrooke, Centraide-Estrie, the SADC in Estrie, and the Statistics Canada community liaison program. "This has been a total success for partners of the Estrie, a nice collaboration between the regional and local, between the city centre and the RCM, between researchers and individuals in the field," concludes Mr. Paul Morin.

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For further information

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