

District of Cartwright – L'Anse au Clair

# Pre-budget Consultations

Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation  
&  
Labrador Straits Development Corporation

Joint Submission

Labrador Straits Development Corporation Forteau.  
NL A0K 2P0. 709 931 2065

[bmarshall@lfdc.ca](mailto:bmarshall@lfdc.ca)

Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation, Port  
Hope Simpson, NL A0K 4E0. 709 960 0470

[roxanne.notley@nf.aibn.com](mailto:roxanne.notley@nf.aibn.com)

**Barbara Marshall/Roxanne Notley**  
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Regional  
Economic  
Development  
Boards

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## INTRODUCTION

The following paper outlines the financial investment priorities of the District of Cartwright- L'Anse-au-Loup which includes the Labrador Straits and Southeastern Labrador. As the government of Newfoundland Labrador has publically voiced its interest in rural Newfoundland Labrador, we present this paper as a guide to where financial investment can occur to best meet the economic priorities, opportunities, and social developments of the region. These investments have the potential for government to action its' commitment to our rural/ coastal area.

This paper was prepared as a result of extensive ongoing consultations with our stakeholders which include municipalities, the business community, economic development agencies, sector associations including tourism, forestry, fishery and a wide variety of community organizations including recreation, youth, health, and community development agencies.

For information purposes, Appendix A contains a map of the region and a brief regional profile including population statistics and sector employment statistics collected as part of our strategic economic planning process.

Throughout this document, a number of recommendations are highlighted. This includes background information, impact and the regional recommendation.

There are many stakeholders from the region who indicated an interest in presenting at the prebudget consultations. Cost of transportation prohibits the ability of those involved in municipalities, youth programs, health programs, homecare programs, recreation programs, tourism development, small business, and emerging enterprises from being here. We recommend that future consultations include this district in the consultation schedule as coastal Labrador is a unique area of the province and of Labrador. Our current connection of the transLabrador highway could enable this engagement.

**Consultations Recommendation # 1:**

**Future pre budget consultations include the scheduling of a consultation session in the district.  
(Cartwright –L'Anse au Clair)**

Through consultation with stakeholders a number of areas for investment were identified. The areas of ***energy cost and availability*** and ***transportation*** were identified as the ***two main priorities*** of the region. Other areas for investment will be discussed later in the document.

## ENERGY

High energy costs continue to be a major challenge for businesses, municipalities and community development organizations in the region. These costs place unique financial burdens on these groups that are not experienced in central and western Labrador. High commercial and industrial rates not only impact economic development but also negatively impact the ability of municipalities and regions to offer services to residents.

Currently, energy needs in the district are met through a variety of delivery mechanisms. The Labrador Straits receives hydro power purchased by NL Hydro through the province of Quebec. This excess power from Quebec is provided on a recall basis. Power from this source can be recalled if it is needed to service Quebec customers. An example is last year when some of the power was recalled due to low water levels at the Lac Robertson reservoir. Supplemental power is provided by a diesel generating plant located in L'Anse au Loup. All power in the communities north of Lodge Bay is provided by diesel generating plants located in communities along the southeast coast. Diesel generation and recall power create problems for residential, commercial, and industrial users in terms of cost and availability.

The Regional Economic Development Boards are strong advocates for an Energy Replacement Program whereby all diesel plants are phased out. There are a few options that can be applied to supply adequate, affordable and reliable energy for the Labrador southeast coast. These include a grid line from central Labrador or the development of a local river. More than 20 years ago research was conducted on rivers in our region; this research indicated the ability to produce more than 40 mega watts of power. With today's technology that may now increase to 60 mega watts. As this is more power than the District requires, the excess power has the potential to be sold back into the grid which will help recuperate the initial development cost of the project. Access to this power will provide available power for all types of users (residential; commercial and industrial). A project of this magnitude would create much needed construction jobs for our many workers who are currently out west and will soon be home due to the down turn in the world financial markets.

### **Energy Recommendation # 1:**

**Development of the large river system networks throughout the District to provide hydro power. This is to include a reassessment of rivers and an economic impacts study.**

There is an expectation that when Lower Churchill is developed there will be provision for an alternative power supply for our communities. Nevertheless, we are receiving calls daily from town councils and industrial users concerning the high cost of energy. One example is from a community council of less than 400 people that had a monthly bill in excess of \$5,000. For the municipal building they pay – 9.63 cents per kwh first 900kw, and 14 cents per kwh on usage over 1000kw, the pump-house cost – 15.853 cents per kwh (based on demand) and the Lift Stations (Industrial rate ) – 16.845 cents kwh. The Arena in the Labrador Straits hydro bill for the period of November 7 – December 7, 2008 was \$5,071.64. The cost to operate this building in the Labrador City would be approximately 50% less (The Straits arena demand rate was \$942.43. For comparable usage the demand rate in Labrador West would be \$253.00. The energy charge in the Straits arena was \$3,521.56 while the charge in Labrador West for comparable usage would be \$965.28. (See Appendix B for comparison chart). It is impossible for a region of less than 1800 people to raise this kind of funds.

A retail business in Southern Labrador had to unplug freezers to manage the high cost of energy. The hydro bill for one month was \$3,746. The same business in Labrador West would be 1/6 of the cost (Southern Labrador demand rate is \$314.24 in Labrador West would be \$55.44; the Energy charge in Southern Labrador is \$1,636.03 while the charge in Labrador West would be \$251.08. (See Appendix B for comparison chart). This business would not be able to afford electric heat. They do heat by diesel fuel and this year there is an added burden because of the high rate for fuel as a result of price freeze on fuel in southeastern Labrador.

## **Energy Recommendation # 2**

**Reduction of costs for residential, commercial and industrial electrical customers in the region to reflect a cost that is comparable to the average energy cost now benefiting Western and Central Labrador.**

The impacts of the down turn in the pulp industry have affected our region. The fishery has been the bread and butter for so many in our region; the forestry at one time employed a large percentage of the workforce as well. Sawmills in our region cannot compete with markets in Labrador let alone North American markets, in fact the cost is so high that in the winter months sawmills were forced to close down because of energy costs. The industry has all but completely shut down during the past 12 months, it is uncertain that they will reopen because of markets drying up for non-commercial timber

(which represents 70-80% of the AAC). We have been researching other options, but again the deciding factor is energy cost. There is a solution that we have shared with the Natural Resources office, it is in biofuels.

A biofuel generator could provide power for those communities who are unable to be connected to the proposed hydro power grid mentioned earlier. As a result of a biofuels generator there would be new jobs created and make it possible to modernize sawmills to produce new products. The SADC is currently partnering on a pre-feasibility analysis of installing a single or number of (100kw), biomass fired, Co-generation (Electric – Thermal Hot Water) power unit, with the intent to sell power to the electrical utility and heat to public buildings and businesses in town. The project is based upon the assumption that the local sawmill will continue to operate and will be seeking an outlet for sawmill residues as well as non-saw log material. If the report is favorable the region requires the support of the province to assist with a demonstration project to produce power by using the local forest resource.

### **Energy Recommendation # 3**

**The province work with the region to determine a viable project for non-commercial timber in District 20 & 21.**

All regions of Labrador are lobbying to have a royalty regime put in place in conjunction with development of the Lower Churchill. This will assist in developing crucial infrastructure to move our economic agenda forward.

## TRANSPORTATION

Issues of transportation are heard all over this province. This document aims to make the government of Newfoundland Labrador aware of the unique challenges in our region and the new opportunities that are emerging in the future. Investment in transportation infrastructure can allow the region to strengthen its economy through increased business opportunities within Labrador, the province, and Canada. This includes opportunities in manufacturing, tourism, fishery, and other small business sectors. Recently a business opportunities study was completed as a result of the completion of the TransLabrador Highway. This document outlined data on traffic projections and related business opportunities as a result of the road completion. The following recommendations are based on the results of this study and consultations with the business representatives from the region, community leaders, local Labrador Transportation Advisory committee members, and development groups within the district.

In addition to impacts on economic development we attempt to outline the impact on individuals, families, and communities when effective transportation systems are not available. These impacts include the inability to access essential services and the large costs residents have to incur to move in and out of the region.

### *STRAIT OF BELLE ISLE FERRY SERVICE*

As a result of the completion of the TransLabrador Highway the Straits of Belle Isle Ferry Service now serves approximately 20,000 residents in Labrador. This number does not include the current 12,000 tourists to the region or future projections for tourism traffic. Anticipated increases in traffic require a new look at the service and how it can best serve the business community and residents of Labrador. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has instituted a winter pilot project which will see the service run from Blanc Sablon to Corner Brook. While providing a year round service is a step in the right direction, the pilot routing is not the best routing to serve Labrador in the long term. The distance from Blanc Sablon to Corner Brook and the resulting sailing time, cost, and limited trips per week make it difficult for the business community and the travelling public to use the service. We understand this is a pilot and encourage a serious assessment of the long term needs and demands on this service both in winter and in other seasons.

The Labrador Straits Development Corporation and The Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation met with business leaders to discuss recommendations for the service. This was in an effort to both inform the Department of Transportation and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as they plan for transportation investment.

**Transportation Recommendation # 1 :**

**The Department of Transportation and Works invest in winter port development on the Northern Peninsula in a location that reduces sailing time, cost to users, and provides for maximum ability of a vessel to dock in winter conditions.**

Currently, the Strait of Belle Isle ferry service is operated on contract with the province of Newfoundland Labrador out of a port in Blanc Sablon, Quebec. This port is inadequate in a number of ways. With traffic increases after the fall of 2009 local businesses who wish to build or develop new enterprises to service this increased traffic cannot do this. There is no space available near the dock and because it is located out of province, business operators in Quebec have the advantage. There are also restrictions on the ability of business operators to locate in Blanc Sablon. Additionally, the wharf is constructed in such a way that the ferry can only dock on one side. This creates problems and delays in the season where prevailing winds prevent docking. Plans for extending the service to a year round service will require investment in docking facilities. The current Port Infrastructure at Blanc Sablon will need upgrades. It is our belief that if investments in port infrastructure are to be made for a provincial service then they should be made within this province. This is a ferry service paid for by the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador should be operated from a port in the province. It will provide business opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador businesses.

In addition to the ferry service, a new port in the L'Anse au Clair to Cartwright district would be able to accommodate the emerging cruise ship industry. As ports in traditional cruise destinations reach capacity or have exceeded capacity, cruise operators are looking for new ports. Labrador is fast becoming one of these new destinations. Our area includes attractions such as the National Historic Site at Red Bay and the Battle Harbour site that are anchor attractions to operators in this industry.

Another option is the province move forward with the development of a fixed link across the Strait of Belle Isle. Over the years there has been a number of reports and research completed on this fixed link. With advancements in technology and engineering capability a fixed link is technological and feasible alternative.

### **Transportation Recommendation #2:**

**The province provide a long term transportation link between Labrador and the island whether a fixed link or a port facility in the Labrador Straits.**

Decisions regarding day-to-day operations for the Strait of Belle Isle ferry service are currently made by department officials located in a variety of locations around the province. This includes Goose Bay, Lewisporte, and St. John's. These are often decisions made regarding extra crossings as a result of delays, increased traffic volumes, and docking and traffic issues. There is great concern in the region that there are no onsite personnel from the department responsible for monitoring the service. This often leads to confusion and frustration for the travelling public and business users, and poor coordination of the service. As the opening of the TransLabrador highway and the extension of the service to a year round service will precipitate new challenges it is increasingly necessary to have a department official in the Labrador Straits to monitor the service. This will provide the department with accurate information on issues and operations and allow users of the service to have a local official to address questions and concerns.

### **Transportation Recommendation #3**

**The Department of Transportation secure a monitor/liaison officer for the Strait of Belle Isle ferry service.**

The region relies heavily on a well developed reservations system for the Strait of Belle Isle ferry service. Currently this service is provided by the operator and does not meet the needs of the traveling public or tourists visiting the area. Problems with accessing the system by telephone caused by limited hours of operation and required long distance calling from outside the province reflect on the region. Having the reservation system located in the Labrador Straits with local organizations responsible for this service can improve the accuracy of information and provide opportunity in the region.

### *Other Marine Infrastructure & Services*

A multimillion-dollar port facility is located in the community of Cartwright. There are many opportunities for this facility that the region is interested in exploring. Due to the strategic position of this facility, it can provide a key transshipment port for the north coast and northern Canada.

#### **Transportation Recommendation # 4**

**Assist with the research and opportunities for Cartwright Harbour, and port facility.**

The communities of Black Tickle, Norman Bay and William's Harbour are remote and not connected via the TransLabrador highway network. During the summer months a provincial ferry service connects these communities to the highway network, and provides goods and services. This service is vital to all communities.

#### **Transportation Recommendation #5**

**The department of Transportation and Works extend the ferry service to Black Tickle, Norman Bay and Williams Harbour when ice and weather conditions permit.**

## *ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE*

The main highway in the district stretches 414 km from L'Anse au Clair to Cartwright. In the early 1980's 43 km of this road was paved from L'Anse au Clair to Pinware. In the late 1980's, 33 km was paved from Pinware to Red Bay. Little resurfacing has been completed except for small sections of the road in the last 2 years (a total of about 5km). As one resident commented ... *"in 59 years of confederation we got 76 km of paved highway"*. In 2001 phase 2 of the transLabrador highway saw the gravel road connection from Red Bay to Cartwright with a number of access roads to communities. This road is used extensively to move goods and people in and out of the region. Many residents access medical services at Forteau and have to travel hundreds on kilometers on a dirt road. Bus tour operators refuse to travel over the gravel road to take tourists to the national historic district at Battle Harbour, an anchor attraction for the region. With increased traffic anticipated after the Cartwright to Goose Bay connection is completed in 2009 the need for pavement is a priority. It is anticipated people and goods will move in both directions.

Pavement of roads in Labrador has long been overlooked. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has committed to paving the section of road from Labrador City to Goose Bay. While we believe this is a good movement forward other sections of the TransLabrador Highway cannot be left to fall into further disrepair or left out of the paving plan. We believe the best solution is to have a paving schedule that plans for sections of the TransLabrador highway to be completed concurrently. The sections of the highway that run from L'Anse au Clair to Red Bay and Red Bay to Cartwright would be included in this paving schedule.

### **Transportation Recommendation #6 :**

#### **Government invest in paving the highway from L'Anse au Clair to Cartwright.**

The provincial historic site at Point Amour is the only provincially designated historic site in Labrador. This site is an anchor tourism attraction in the region in addition to the National Historic Site at Red Bay. Approximately 60% of bus tour operators refuse to travel on the 5km of gravel road to the site. Operators site the poor condition of the road as the contributing factor. Road washouts and crumbling road edges near the sea prevent many bus tour operators and RV tourists from visiting the site.

### **Transportation Recommendation # 7**

#### **Paving of the L'Anse Amour Road to the Point Amour Provincial Historic Site**

Travel along Phase 2 of the TransLabrador Highway between Red Bay and Lodge Bay during the winter months has raised safety concerns for residents. While weather conditions cannot be controlled there are small improvements that can mitigate safety concerns. The issue most often raised is snow accumulation in rock cuts along the road. This accumulation creates problems for snow clearing and often results in road closures. Residents and those travelling along the highway during the winter express concerns with snow accumulation in the rock cuts and the potential for travelers to get caught in these rock cuts during storm conditions. This is a real concern as an incident in the Labrador Straits in January 2004 resulted in a vehicle with two travelers being buried with snow while caught in a rock cut during a winter storm. This incident would have resulted in tragedy if not for the resourcefulness of the passengers and their survival skills. Only by luck were local residents able to locate the car which was buried by approximately 2 metres of snow. As traffic increases along the highway in the coming years it is necessary to develop a plan to resolve this serious safety issue. Department of Transportation officials have been aware of this situation by a number of residents and it has been raised with and by the Labrador Transportation Advisory committee members.

#### **Transportation Recommendation #8**

**Department of Transportation blast rock cut areas on phase 2 of the TransLabrador Highway to reduce snow accumulation in the winter months.**

Redevelopment plans are in place for the rerouting of the road along the Pinware River. Residents are concerned that there may be plans for a rock cut or rock cuts along this rerouting. The same problems with snow accumulation in rock cuts, similar to the section from Red Bay to Lodge Bay, can be anticipated.

#### **Transportation Recommendation # 9**

**Redevelopment of the road along the Pinware River avoid rock cuts to prevent snow accumulation and subsequent road closures.**

The region continues to lobby for road connections to the three unconnected communities in Zone 4, particularly Williams Harbour where the necessary study has been completed for this 18 kilometre connection to Pinsents Arm with only one significant crossing at Winter Tickle. This is approximately 100 metres wide by two to three fathoms deep. The money saved by both levels of Government as a result of this connection would offset the current costs to maintain and operate the local airstrip, and dock facilities.

### **Transportation Recommendation # 10**

#### **Road construction to William's Harbour**

A groomed winter trail is still the only transportation alternative for three unconnected communities along the southeast coast and these need to continue to be maintained by Government.

### **Transportation Recommendation # 11**

#### **Winter Trails subsidy for unconnected communities**

Over the years, millions of dollars has been invested in trail development in Labrador. It is a winter tourism potential that requires a comprehensive strategic plan to operate effectively. The development associations who were involved in trail maintenance and grooming realize that the cost providing a TransLabrador loop is not feasible. They are now investigating the potential of providing small networks of well-groomed trails providing 1-2 day excursions that can be market to attract snowmobile enthusiast and local riders for trail riding. A cluster of well-groom trails between Cartwright and L'Anse au Clair will attract new riders, resulting in new revenues to maintain and operate various trail networks within the region. As this develops the need for continued subsidies to trail operators is required.

### **Transportation Recommendation # 12**

**The Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs reinstate subsidies to Winter Trail Associations in the District**

### **Transportation Recommendation # 13**

**The government of Newfoundland and Labrador assist with a comprehensive business plan for regional winter trails network.**

*AIR TRAVEL INFRASTRUCTURE*

The growth and future success of the tourism industry relies heavily on a dependable transportation network. Since the announcement of one airport between the communities of Charlottetown – Lodge Bay we have been told several different plans for this airport. It is our responsibility to reiterate the need for an airport that can accommodate larger aircrafts and larger numbers of people at the facility. The regional airport that will replace community airports must provide all the services and amenities.

**Transportation Recommendation # 14**

**Construct a Regional Airport in Southern Labrador**

## MUNICIPALITIES

Many of the smaller municipalities in the region are struggling to maintain municipal infrastructure and maintain services. Many towns saw reductions in the mid to late 1990's in their Municipal Operating Grants. Many of these towns qualify for the 90/10 municipal infrastructure contribution programs. They cannot, however, access this program because much of their revenue is being allocated to operational expenses including road clearing, safe water systems, and electricity rates for town facilities and for some, water pumping systems. This prevents many towns from affording their 10% in municipal infrastructure projects. In order to maintain town infrastructure and to participate more fully in economic development these towns require increases in municipal operating grants.

### **Municipalities Recommendation # 1**

**Government increase municipal operating grants to towns**

## SECTOR SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

### *TOURISM*

There are many regions in the Province that should and must be developed. Cartwright – Lodge Bay is a region with many possibilities, and requires the help of professionals to help position this region as a must see destination. Destination Labrador is a very important agency to promote and market the products of Labrador, and we acknowledge the provinces commitment to supporting this very worthwhile project. As we develop more sites of interest and activities, we will be able to avail of the products and services of Destination Labrador more in the future. However, at this time the region is asking for a *Tourism Development Officer* to work with private and not for profit organization to help bring ideas to fruition. If Labrador is to achieve success in this industry, they will require the assistance of more than one tourism development officer. The District specifically requests a designated professional to be position in this region task with the responsibility to help develop new products.

#### **Tourism Recommendation # 1**

**The province funds a tourism product development officer for the Cartwright L’Anse au Clair region.**

The proposed Mealy Mountain National Park creates great expectations for the tourism industry in this region. During consultations, the province proposed a Provincial Waterway Park to include protection of the world-renowned Eagle River Plateau. The Mealy Mountain Park coupled with a Provincial Water Way Park is both great products to draw visitors to the region.

#### **Tourism Recommendation # 2**

**Finalize discussions for the Mealy Mountain Park and implement the Provincial Water Park Project.**

## *FISHERY*

With the current global economic crisis, processors may find themselves in a situation where they are unable to access a line of credit to begin operations for the coming season. Processors often need this line of credit to begin operations, as they do not always have available cash flow. We recommend the province establish a mechanism to guarantee or establish lines of credit for these processors during the current financial crisis.

### **Fishery Recommendation # 1**

**The government of Newfoundland Labrador establishes or guarantees a line of credit for fish processors to access during the current economic crisis.**

Harvesters in the fishing industry have also expressed concern with their inability to raise capital to invest in and expand their enterprises. This group is alarmed at the potential long term effects related to this financing problem. The existing fishers are aging, many enterprises are coming up for sale, and new entrants to the industry are down significantly. Those wishing to purchase enterprises and licences are generally young and have not built a strong credit history. This, along with the personal financing that is needed to access loans through banks that can be later considered for Loan Guaranteed programs, is often impossible for new entrants in this industry and those with limited credit. The high cost of purchasing and operating a fishing enterprise is a tremendous and often impossible burden. There is increasing concern for the economic stability and viability of the industry. Those stakeholders have requested a program to support fishers in accessing needed credit.

### **Recommendation #2**

**Government institute a program to support fishers in accessing credit at low interest rates.**

The fishery remains the largest employer and the backbone of the economy for communities in the district. Due to the poor state of infrastructure in communities reliant on the fishing industry we ask that government invest dollars that are required to maintain and or replace existing infrastructure. The regional economic development boards have completed an inventory of the state of critical infrastructure. One such facility is located in Pinsent's Arm where the wharf is owned by the community and was used by a fish processor. This community has experienced 100% employment, and the wharf must be replaced in order to continue operations this summer.

### **Fishery Recommendation # 3**

**Invest in fishing infrastructure in communities not under the jurisdiction of Small Craft and Harbours.**

#### *NATURAL RESOURCES*

Based on the report just released regarding Best Options for Labrador wood, SADC hosted a regional forum to discuss this report and the implications for central and the southeast coast. This includes the potential for a fuel pellet plant in order to utilize 100 % of the fibre, the supply of sawn products as input to a manufacturing operation in central and new markets on the Northern Peninsula as a result of the Phase III highway connection.

The closure of Abitibi Consolidated in Stephenville and most recently news that Kroger would no longer be buying pulp wood has caused a shut-down of the two major wood working businesses in the Zone. There is approximately 80m<sup>2</sup> of fibre available in the both districts 20 & 21, more than enough to support a small industry. The zone is calling upon government to provide economic development funds that are needed to kick start a new industry to utilize the fibre that exists within the zone.

### **Natural Resources Recommendation # 1**

**Make available economic development funds to assist in providing alternatives for the forestry industry because of affects of the down turn in the pulp wood industry.**

Mink Farming is a new industry for the District. The farm fur industry is showing signs of growth and new business opportunities are emerging. To support the development of this industry (start up of new farms) which will lead to the sustainability of a Feed Kitchen?

### **Natural Resources Recommendation # 2**

**Support the development of a district Feed Kitchen that is needed to support the growth of the Fur Farming industry.**

*Connectivity for remaining communities*

While public policy in recent years has made substantial effort and resulted in improved information communications technology within the rural regions of this province, there remains a number of communities that must not be overlooked for the provision of high speed internet services. While Labrador has realized considerable advancements for the provision of ICT services, we still have 11 communities that continue to endure an antiquated level of service for basic telephone and internet. These communities include our smallest locations with the greatest need for access to digital services and information, including education, health, business and basic communication. All of these communities with the exception of one are in the District of Cartwright-L'Anse au Clair. Because service providers will only upgrade within our smallest communities on a business-case model, we believe it is the role of government to invest in a technology option that delivers an advanced level of internet services for residents and businesses of these communities. Connectivity for rural homes and businesses is no longer a luxury but a necessity and provides tools that contribute to the prosperity and human development of rural areas.

**IT Recommendation #1**

**Government invest in the provision of high speed IT services for the following communities: Capstan Island, Pinware, Red Bay, Lodge Bay, Black Tickle, Pinsent's Arm, William's Harbour, Paradise River, and L'Anse Amour, Norman Bay.**

*CDLI's video-conferencing services*

We draw your attention to the fact that many of the Provincial schools are now equipped with video-conferencing capability through the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI). This video-conferencing capacity holds a wealth of potential to benefit the education system and the communities in general. The technology is currently available for use only by the Schools, Department of Education and other government purposes. With adequate human and financial resources to facilitate the administration and coordination of extended use of the video-conferencing equipment and services, other sectors, municipalities, community-based organizations and businesses can benefit immensely throughout the rural regions of the Province.

We recommend that government change its current policy for use of CDLI's video-conference equipment to allow community use and provision funding for coordination services that would promote and support this usage. Access to CDLI's video-conferencing would permit rural communities to

participate in training workshops, discussion forums and consultation sessions that are often held in larger towns and become prohibitive due to the extreme travel costs within regions such as Labrador.

### **IT Recommendation # 2**

**Government expand the utilization of existing CDLI services to include community users through the provision of coordination services and policy change.**

The phone service in several isolated communities is obsolete and in need of upgrade. The phone lines are noisy with static which makes fax and dial up internet impossible. There are times when the long distance lines do not work, and in case of emergencies, VHF has to be used instead. The telephone communications provider is aware of these issues. Repairpersons conduct regular maintenance on the system, however, the system should be replaced to at least a microwave system where extra long distance lines can be added and other communication features become available. In isolated communities access to reliable phone service is often a lifeline for the communities particularly in emergency situations. Due to the low numbers of customers in these communities the current provider may not be able to recover their investment in needed infrastructure upgrades and replacement. For this reason the aid of government programs is needed to help subsidize this capital investment.

### **IT Recommendation # 3**

**Government provide a subsidy program to replace the radio base communications systems in isolated communities.**

Wireless communications are not available along the TransLabrador Highway. This creates serious safety issues for local residents, business travellers, as well as visitors. While a satellite phone loan system has been implemented along the road it is not a long term strategy and does not provide for safe and secure travel along the highway. A long term plan for cell coverage in the region is necessary both from a safety concern and a business development concern.

### **IT Recommendation # 4**

**Government support the development of cell phone service in the district**

## HEALTH SERVICES

### LABRADOR MEDICAL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Many residents of the area travel to a number of health facilities including St. John's, Corner Brook and St. Anthony. Currently the Labrador Medical Travel Assistance program only reimburses those who travel by air. This prevents patients who travel by vehicle from accessing the program. Many residents choose to travel by vehicle for a number of reasons primarily because of cost and the ability to have a family member accompany them. Often times this is necessary as patients travel for major surgery, chemotherapy treatments and other major services that require the support of a family member.

#### **Health Recommendation # 1**

**The Labrador Medical Travel Assistance Program extended to include transportation by private vehicle.**

The current medical transportation assistance program requires patients to pay up front for travel costs and reimbursed. This works well for patients with the financial resources to pay for travel costs. Many residents, however, do not have the financial resources to pay up front for airline tickets, hotel/hostel fees or meals. When they do not have the funds to pay for travel many opt not to travel for medical assessment or treatment. We request the province rectify this situation by implementing a voucher system when patients have to travel for medical services.

#### **Health Recommendation # 2**

**The Labrador Medical Travel Assistance Program includes a voucher system as well as a claim system.**

## HEMECARE

Homecare Services are provided through a variety of models across the province. These services are especially vital in rural areas where there is limited access a variety of health care professionals and services. In the Labrador Straits, a non –profit organization provides these services and are finding it increasingly challenging to maintain the level of service with budgets that have not been increased. Demand for service is increasing. Without further investment to cover staffing and operating costs they will be forced to reduce service to clients. A brief outlining the issues was submitted in December, 2008 to the Department of Health for review.

#### **Health Recommendation #3**

**Government increase the community based grant to Labrador South Homecare to ensure the continued provision of service to clients.**

**Appendix A**

**Map of the Region and Regional Profile**



Map of the Region

## REGIONAL PROFILES

### LABRADOR STRAITS

**Base Population**                **1817**

Source: 2006 Census Data; Statistics Canada, Government of Canada

#### **Major Employers**

Fishery	256 employed
Small Business*	322 employed
Government Services and NGO's**	166 employed
Transient Workforce	70 employed

Source: LSDC Survey 2008

### SOUTHEASTERN AURORA REGION

**Base Population**                **2615**

Source: 2006 Census Data; Statistics Canada, Government of Canada

#### **Major Employers**

Fishery	467 employed
Small Business	162 employed
Government Services and NGO's	286 employed
Transient Workforce	24 employed

Source: SADC Survey 2009

Note: Fishery numbers capture processor and core fishers only

SMALL BUSINESS

Sector	# of Businesses Labrador Straits	# of Business Labrador Southeast Coast	# of Employees Both fulltime and seasonal Labrador Straits	# of Employees Both fulltime and seasonal Labrador Southeast Coast
Agriculture	2	1	3	1
Fur Farming	1	1	9	2
Accommodations/Food Services	8	17	79	41
Retail	20	29	66	62
Financial Services	3	3	23	11
Building Supplies	4	2	22	3
Manufacturing	7	1	23	3
Construction	1	1	10	10
Outfitters	4	3	18	6
Wholesalers	4		10	
Service Sector (Includes hairdressers, automotive services, technology	20	12	60	21
TOTAL	74	70	322	162

**Appendix B**

**Labrador Hydro Rates Comparison Chart**

		Southern Labrador	Labrador Straits	Labrador West
<b>Residential Rate</b>				
	First Block	9.631 kWh		
	Second Block	11.028 kWh		
	Over 1000	14.951KWh		
	All kWh		9.631 kWh	2.730 kWh
	Basic Charge	15.56 mt	15.56 mt	6.83 mt
<b>Less 10 kilowatts</b>				
		16.845 kWh	11.609 kWh	4.501 kWh
	Basic Charge	19.76mt	17.85 mt	9.10 mt
	Single Phase	19.76 mt	17.85 mt	9.10 mt
	Three Phase	36.23 mt	35.70 mt	20.0 mt
<b>10 Kilowatts or greater (example of SL Municipalities rates fall here)</b>				
	Basic Charge	28.10mt	20.55mt	
	Single Phase	28.10mt	22.55mt	
	Three Phase	61.27mt	35.70mt	
	Winter Demand		8.62mt	
	Other Demand/ All LW	12.47 kW	7.12mt	2.20 kW
	First 150 kWh per KW		9.163 kWh	
	Excess/ or All	15.853 kWh	6.863 kWh	2.433 kWh
<b>110 Kilovolt - 1000 (example of Straits Municipalities rates fall here)</b>				
	Basic Charge		92.53mt	
	Winter Demand		7.45 kVA	
	Other Demand/ All LW		5.95 KVA	2.00 kVA
	First 150 kW per kVA		9.032 kWh	
	Over/All LW*		6.714 kWh	2.103 kWh
<b>Street Lights</b>				
	250W	19.50mt	19.50mt	9.53 mt
	100W	15.43mt	15.43mt	8.75 mt
	150W	19.50mt	19.50mt	11.90 mt
	250W	28.89mt	25.89mt	15.95 mt
	400W	35.39mt	35.39mt	20.10 mt
<b>1000 kVA and Over</b>				
	Basic Customer Charge		185.08mt	
	Winter Demand		7.04 kVA	
	Other/ All LW		5.54 kVA	1.75 kVA
	First 100,000		7.649 kWh	

Over/All LW	6.589 kWh	1.733 kWh
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