



Appendix
Overview of Feedback

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This section outlines a detailed account of feedback that was received through the consultation sessions, feedback forms and written submissions. There were several themes that emerged through the analysis of the feedback and they are identified in the following pages. It should be noted that included in this section are a number of suggestions made by participants that are not necessarily the views of Government. Further analysis will be required to assist Government in determining what is affordable and achievable in setting its strategic priorities for Labrador.

Transportation

Transportation remains a significant issue in Labrador, with the highest priority being a safe and affordable transportation system. Transportation was a predominant theme throughout all consultations and impacts all other themes outlined in the following sections. There are many thoughts on how transportation plays a key role in all aspects of life in Labrador. The argument remains with residents that Labrador's transportation system is not comparable to that of the island portion of the province and is important for the progression of social and economic development in the region.

Trans Labrador Highway

In all consultations, the main transportation infrastructure requirement is the hard surfacing of the Trans Labrador Highway in its entirety. Residents were adamant that this is necessary to the future development of the region and are concerned that the current state of the 'highway' has negative impacts on attracting business and tourists to their communities.

"I've lived in Labrador all my life from western Labrador to Goose Bay and I don't think we should accept anything less than a paved highway with the lines painted on the road."
(Upper Lake Melville Session, July 17, 2006)

Labradorians want a highway that meets National Highway standards and stated that the provincial government needs to determine what type of hard

surface is best for northern climates, chip seal or asphalt. A suggestion was made that Government should deal with the dust associated with the Trans Labrador Highway from Labrador West to Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Until there is a hard road surface there needs to be dust reduction on the roads (calcium is used on the south coast, Churchill Falls and Sheshatshiu).

The Red Bay-Lodge Bay portion of Phase II continues to be a contentious issue for that region with closures occurring during the winter due to heavy snowfalls. Residents on the south coast want the rock cuts between Red Bay and Lodge Bay fixed or eliminated altogether.

A concern that was raised specifically in Labrador West and the Labrador Straits was the connection through Quebec to the rest of Canada. People want the Province to lobby the Quebec government to have Routes 389 (Baie Comeau to Fermont) and 138 (Natashquan to Elgin) upgraded to be comparable with the Trans Labrador Highway.

In its written submission, the Nunatsiavut Government requests that the Province fund a feasibility study on the development of a road from North West River to Rigolet. Rigolet has an ice free port that could provide additional opportunities for shipping to the north coast. There are mixed feelings within communities on the north coast regarding road connection and residents would like consultations by the Nunatsiavut Government to occur before a decision is made on any road connection.

Marine Service

Marine service was an issue raised throughout the sessions with most comments being fairly strong and contradictory depending on the region of Labrador.

People want Government to realize that the marine service is part of the road system. Many participants called for separate passenger and



freight vessels to service Labrador ports. Concerns of residents included inconsistency of routing, scheduling, and services on the vessels. A consistent marine schedule was highlighted as a key component to a reliable and effective service. Changes in transportation routes affect coastal communities and the way they provide services within those communities.

The shipping hub for the north coast of Labrador was a topic of discussion in most regions. Depending on where you live, people are split as to where the route should originate. Arguments were heard for both Lewisporte and Cartwright. In addition, there were arguments put forward to have freight shipped out of Happy Valley-Goose Bay for coastal communities.

A message provided throughout Labrador was to have the Apollo ferry operate year round, pending ice conditions, to provide a link to the island portion of the province. In addition, stakeholders in the Labrador Straits drew attention to the lack of space on the Apollo for medical travel from the Labrador Straits to St. Anthony. This makes it difficult to travel for medical reasons on such short notice.

Air Service

The completion of Phases I and II of the Trans Labrador Highway has impacted air service to coastal regions. Airlines have reduced flights due to decreased usage and increased costs. Residents aren't happy with current provision of air service.

The most frequent topic brought forward in the sessions was the high cost of air travel in and out of Labrador. This is an issue for all regions regardless of where you are flying.

A new air terminal for Happy Valley-Goose Bay was referenced often as being necessary to accommodate growth and development of the region. In addition, suggestions were made for larger, more centralized airports on both the north and south coasts of Labrador to accommodate larger aircraft.

"We don't have a reliable air service so I think probably the only way we're going to solve it here in South Eastern Labrador is if we have an airstrip in a centralized area that is capable of handling probably a plane larger than the twin otter."
(South East Coast Session, August 15, 2006)

The Labrador North Chamber of Commerce has indicated there may be future opportunities with the establishment of an air link from Labrador to Iqaluit.

Winter Trails

Labradorians want the groomed trail system completely developed throughout all regions of Labrador. Trails should be a top priority and snowmobile associations have requested to have the Labrador Grooming Subsidy increased to reflect the rising cost of fuel and insurance.

A common theme across transportation sectors is the impeding access to markets for shipping goods to and from Labrador. Shipment of goods and the costs associated is a major concern to residents, specifically on the coast of Labrador. This relates to all facets of transportation; air, marine and road. Connections to other parts of the province and other provinces were emphasized as critical to the future economic prosperity of Labrador.

Natural Resources

The development of natural resources was a recurring topic of interest throughout the stakeholder consultations. Electricity, fishery, forestry, agriculture and mining are believed to offer many opportunities for future developments. Protection of the environment, while developing natural resources, was seen as an important underlying theme throughout all regions. It was requested that further research be conducted into areas which may need to be formally protected in Labrador. Developments in the natural resource areas must recognize environmental concerns and risks and protect the environment.



Throughout the consultation process there were reoccurring themes pertaining to Labrador's electricity needs.

Access to Electricity

Throughout Labrador, the discussion regarding hydro-electric power centered on the need for an affordable, accessible source of electricity. The Central Labrador Economic Development Board echoed the sentiments of many in their discussion regarding the region's current electricity demands and capacity. They feel that there is not enough hydro electricity across the region for development initiatives with little room for expansion or development. During the Labrador West consultation session it was stated that a block of electricity should be designated for future development in Labrador and it should be included with the development of the Lower Churchill, possibly through an adjacency principle.

The Lower Churchill was discussed widely across the region as well as the potential for growth that this development could bring. During the Labrador West consultation session participants discussed the need to transmit electricity throughout Labrador. There was discussion by many groups that power lines should also be extended to the coast as the north and south coasts and Labrador Straits experience the highest prices for electricity usage in Labrador.

Feedback indicated that future development of Labrador's industries hinges on accessible, affordable electricity. In the Labrador West consultation session, participants discussed the importance of ensuring the sustainability of the Iron Ore Company of Canada. The need for accessible electricity for development was also echoed when discussions turned to forestry, mining, the fishery and other potential projects.

Participants at the Labrador West consultation session indicated that development opportunities have been lost in their area because of lack of electricity. This had been reiterated in the Upper

Electricity

Similar to the Northern Strategic Plan, the Province's Energy Plan also engaged in a consultation process involving a wide variety of stakeholders throughout the province. The Energy Plan will provide a foundation for the prudent development and management of the province's energy sector.

Throughout Labrador consultation participants identified electricity as a focus area and discussions encompassed two main themes: affordability and accessibility. The information obtained through the Northern Strategic Plan and Energy Plan consultation process will assist the Province in making policy decisions for the region.

"We need to have affordable, sustainable power to develop our resources to give us an even field to compete in the marketplace."

(South East Coast Session, August 15, 2006)

Lake Melville consultation session with regard to the expansion of 5 Wing Goose Bay and potential developments in the natural resources sector.

It was also expressed during consultation sessions that the Province should consider alternate sources of electricity, such as wind generation, as another source of electricity.

Affordable Electricity

The challenge for all coastal communities is to access affordable electricity that will also meet development demands of the region. During the south coast consultation session the attendees discussed how many of the rivers in their area could be used for hydro development which would also bring the added bonus of job creation for their area. The north coast consultation session included discussion on having more consistent hydro rates throughout the region.

It was suggested that alternative forms of electricity generation should be investigated in an effort to reduce costs on coastal Labrador.

While western and central Labrador have some of the lowest hydro rates in the province, comments were made at some sessions that coastal Labrador experiences some of the highest rates, (even though heavily subsidized by the provincial government) as they depend on diesel generation as sources of heat and electricity. It was also stated in the consultations that communities using diesel as the primary fuel source need to look at alternate sources of electricity in order to be competitive for development opportunities and community growth.

Industry discussion regarding fuel consumption focused on the need for an enforced base line price for petroleum for resource development. It is difficult for industries, such as the fishery, to compete mainly due to the high fuel costs to get to fishing grounds, handle the fish at the plant and transport product to market. The Torngat Fisheries session also noted that current hydro rates are expensive and that there is not enough hydro feed available to operate both the snow crab and groundfish plants at the same time.

Fishery

During the consultation sessions, discussions on the fishery brought attention to both existing commercial fisheries and experimental fisheries. It was evident throughout Labrador that the fishery was seen to be an important part of the current and future economic environment of many communities. This is particularly true of the south coast, straits, and northern Labrador.

Stakeholders identified that Government currently offers assistance with programs related to experimental fisheries. Feedback indicated that there is a desire to continue such programs and a belief that there are future economic prospects related to the experimental fisheries.

During the session in Port Hope Simpson it was expressed that the fishing sector should be a priority for growth and sustainability. It was proposed that this could be achieved by utilizing different species; reconfiguring the crab fishery to extend the season; developing aquaculture projects; and by fully utilizing fish offal.

A lack of adequate cold storage facilities was an issue raised during consultations on both the north and south coasts of Labrador. Concerns were related to exploring opportunities to move product from the plant to market. Industry stated that





limited storage could be alleviated with the establishment of a storage facility. It was stated that the provision of a storage facility would enhance potential opportunities to access partnerships with Nunavut to bring species to a larger market. During this discussion stakeholders indicated that while Government may be able to assist with some of the initial analysis and investigation related to the feasibility of these projects, the actual projects should be pursued by private industry.

Stakeholders throughout Labrador stated that availability and cost of suitable transportation systems was having a detrimental effect on the ability to access markets. As a result of this concern, it was requested that existing subsidies for marine shipping be maintained and the possibility of an air subsidy was also raised as a way to increase the access to an expanded market, such as Nunavut.

Opportunities in the sealing industry were raised through several forums with industry and community representatives throughout Labrador. Further developments within the seal fishery were definitely seen as a possibility. This was particularly evident during the session along the south coast.

Agriculture

Agriculture was identified as a potential growth industry in many areas of Labrador throughout the consultation process. Feedback indicated that it was viewed as a virtually untapped resource within Labrador. Stakeholders expressed feelings that the industry does not have many formal support mechanisms in place. It was requested that the Government formally recognize the Labrador Agricultural Advisory Committee and give it a mandate and mechanization to enable them to meet their objectives. Industry stakeholders said that the Northern Agrifoods Development Strategy, a component of the Agriculture Policy Framework, provided positive support from both the federal and provincial governments. As this strategy is currently being renegotiated, farmers now feel positioned to have input into the new agreement.

"We're producing almost nothing here of what we consume right now, but everybody in this room knows from backyard gardens in past history in this area; that we can and have produced wonderful food and consumables that we spend a lot of money for in the stores and bring in from very far distances away. We grow that stuff ourselves here, and there are a lot of problems, but huge number of opportunities in that regard as well. And that's something that needs to be developed." (Upper Lake Melville Session, July 17, 2006)

It was brought to attention, that particularly in the agriculture field; policies developed for the whole province may not meet the needs of the farmers in Labrador and may have an impact on development. One of the recurring issues raised during consultations was difference between farmers leasing land as opposed to being permitted to purchase land.

In considering development of this industry infrastructure was identified as lacking. Desired infrastructure developments related to agriculture include a large animal vet, slaughter house and processing facilities. A vegetable storage facility in central Labrador is seen as a first step towards future development.

Forestry

During consultations all areas of Labrador indicated a desire to further develop the forestry industry. The immediate request was that the government commissioned study entitled the Strategic Plan to Develop Labrador Secondary Manufacturing and Value Added Wood Products Industry be released and acted on in the near future. This document was subsequently released on November 2nd, 2006. The stakeholders want Government to ensure that all Forestry Management Plans are maintained and followed. It was identified during a session in central Labrador that the plan for District 19 is very restrictive in relation to industry development and needs to be reviewed. In central and southern Labrador a particular area of concern was a plan

identifying access to resources on the south side of the Churchill River. Secondary processing is seen as having the greatest economic potential.

Industry indicated that opportunities for growth are dependent upon the availability of suitable and affordable transportation routes. The importance of accessing markets in order to be able to sell the raw and finished products was also raised. Another issue raised by industry was the need for continued reforestation programs to exist along side any future developments in the forestry industry for long-term sustainability.

Mining

Industry representatives highlighted the challenging environment the mining sector currently faces. Primary concerns were focused on three main areas. It was indicated that recruitment of professional and skilled trades' persons, given the current demand globally for such skills, is constraining operations and new development. Challenges associated with retaining skilled workers were also identified as being a significant problem. Industry representatives emphasized the importance of having well functioning communities with access to healthcare, education, housing, efficient transportation networks and recreational facilities as critical links in attracting and retaining employees to settle and work in northern communities. Electricity pricing was also raised as a very significant factor in the sustainability and growth of mining operations in Labrador.

Tourism, Culture and Heritage

Almost all consultations touched on some aspect tourism, "culture or heritage". Many respondents suggested that culture and heritage is a great strength and is also a great product that many tourists would like to experience. Some participants said tourism is the only sector that cuts across all regions and is one that all of Labrador can really work together on.

"...there is only one sector that crosses all regions of Labrador and that is tourism...tourism [priorities] can be pan-Labrador" (Labrador Straits Session, August 16, 2006)

Tourism

There was consensus throughout Labrador that the tourism industry is a sector for growth. It was further suggested that the tourism sector is the only one that cuts across all regions and can be approached from a Pan Labrador perspective. Further comments included; Labrador needs to begin marketing on an international basis, and there are many international winter sport possibilities to avail of in Labrador. A common theme was that although each region is unique Labrador should be working together to explore all possible opportunities.

Based on feedback specific areas of growth include; nature and wildlife photography, more fully utilizing cultural and historic resources (including the Norse background and the abandoned communities), expansion of the outfitting industry (hunting, fishing and eco-tourism), Agri-tourism and expansion of the cruise ship industry.

There are many existing strengths identified throughout the consultation process. The beautiful scenery in Labrador is a huge strength. The Torngat National Park Reserve, the proposed Mealy Mountain National Park and the Battle Harbour Historic Trust have potential to assist Labrador's tourism industry. The Labrador Winter Games, regional winter festivals and the Cain's Quest Snowmobile Endurance Race are great examples of winter tourism products that have a lot of potential.

Throughout the consultations participants mentioned a number of significant challenges to the tourism industry as well. Many people said that there is inadequate transportation infrastructure to support the tourism sector. The fact that the Trans Labrador Highway is not completed and is not hard surfaced is a huge deterrent to potential tourists. Some stated that many tour buses come across the Strait of Belle Isle and drive to Red Bay on the pavement but refuse to go north to Battle Harbour and beyond because of the dirt road. Another issue included the poor condition of the road to L'Anse-Amour lighthouse.



The configuration and running of the ferry systems was identified as a problem for the industry. The system needs to be more reliable and efficient, which means better scheduling, more equitable rates (compared to the rest of the province) and year round operation across the Strait of Belle Isle pending ice conditions. Additionally, passenger service should not be compromised for freight service at any time of the year.

The winter trail system was also identified as a potential area for growth and development. There is a large trail network in place but some indicated that it needed to be improved upon and the product needed to be more consistent with respect to grooming and maintenance.

There are also a number of specific items people mentioned that could help to improve certain situations within the tourism industry. One of these is that the provincial government should advocate for Battle Harbour to receive heritage funding from the federal government. Another is that highway signage needs to be improved to help tourists. More interpretive materials and kiosks were suggested for various tourist points of contact. Another suggestion was that there needs to be skills development and capacity training in the crafts and tourism industry to fully meet the needs of the growing tourism industry.

There is also an aspect of the tourism industry that overlaps with the culture and heritage sector. Many people at various sessions stated that Labrador's unique culture and heritage should be supported to help the tourism industry. There should be more interpretation centers and museums built to showcase Labrador's unique people and cultures.

Other comments about tourism included that tourism tends to be a fall-back resource. Tourism is considered a supplementary industry to other sectors. The fishing or mining industries, for example have long been the mainstay for many communities.

Culture and Heritage

Labrador's many distinct cultures and heritages emerged as a theme throughout consultations. There are many cultural differences but there are also similarities like the resilience and determination of all Labrador people. Some people stated that the diversity that is present in Labrador is great strength. Recognizing the distinct cultures and heritages of Labrador was mentioned a number of times when developing policies and regulations. For example there are various languages spoken in Labrador and participants would like the provincial government to be more cognizant of communicating with people in their own language.

As mentioned in the tourism section, culture and heritage was closely linked by respondents to tourism gains and benefits. Many people also mentioned the preservation of various Labrador cultures on its own merit. It was emphasized that the continuation of cultural activities is important and needs to be supported and fostered.

Participants suggested that cultural events such as the Mina Hubbard Celebrations and the Creative Arts Festival could be seen as a generator for more tourism as well as create opportunities for theatre education and craft development.

It was also suggested that there is a huge market for the craft industry but it is under developed. The Labrador Craft Marketing Agency is in place but it is beginning to experience a shortage of producers and craft products. There needs to be craft workshops to educate new producers in product development, quality control and other important facets to grow this aspect of the economy and keep traditional Labrador craft skills alive.

The delivery of youth and adult cultural exchange programs within Labrador to learn more about each other and respective regions was suggested.

Capacity Building

Building capacity within Labrador is the foundation for all social and economic development. Building capacity begins with the education system. This system is responsible for producing individuals who are able to fulfill the job market of the future. When the local labour pool does not provide the desired employees, recruitment efforts are vital to capacity building. In all situations, retention is important to successful capacity building as well. Recruitment, retention and human development are all equally important in the process of capacity building.

Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and retention was a recurring theme in stakeholder and industry sessions throughout all regions of Labrador. The specific issues may vary; however, the overall concerns are the same across

the region. This concern is the difficulties faced in attracting and retaining a labour force sufficient to meet the current and future needs of the region.

Some of the issues that were raised in relation to recruitment included out migration, lack of housing, lack of services and amenities, lack of educational programs, cost of living, transportation systems and costs, access to childcare, and limited medical services. Residents are leaving communities in an effort to receive higher salaries. Communities on the north coast and in Labrador West in particular expressed concerns related to a lack of suitable and affordable housing. A lack of services and amenities, such as recreational facilities, banking services, and shopping were reported as having detrimental effects on recruiting efforts. People declared that if more training programs were offered locally more people would be able to utilize the programs. People indicated that electricity, food and travel costs are significantly higher in the north. The condition of the current transportation systems, in particular the road networks, are seen as a deterrent to recruitment by the stakeholders. As a result of attracting more women into the workforce there is increased demand for childcare. The issues and concerns related to the availability and costs of childcare are summarized in the Human Development section.



"...what is more important than recruitment and retention? And how can anyone expect to recruit and retain young professionals with families, if you don't have daycare...."

(Upper Lake Melville Session, July 17, 2006)

Concerns were expressed throughout Labrador regarding the lack of healthcare services offered. There are limited specialist clinics and costs to travel to appointments outside the region are often prohibitive. Community representatives reported problems with difficulties in attracting people to low pay, low skilled jobs. This is enhanced further due to the fact that many communities have an aging workforce.

According to the consultations, once employees are recruited, retention becomes the issue of concern. It was identified that all of the factors affecting the ability to recruit people to work in Labrador are the same factors which affect the ability to retain them. People believe that training local people to be qualified to fill local jobs is the most effective tool in retaining employees which connects closely with the desire to provide local training.

Several suggestions were made at the session on how the problems currently faced may be rectified. With regards to recruiting and retaining educators and healthcare professionals in particular, it was suggested that more incentives be offered to them.

Human Development

A variety of issues related to human development were raised throughout all areas of Labrador. Human development issues impact all aspects of social and economic development throughout the region. This incorporates early childhood education, primary/secondary education, post-secondary education and the workforce in general.

In the area of early childhood education, the lack of available spaces, staff, and high operational costs were the major issues raised. This is summarized as issues related to quality, affordability and accessibility. The Early Childhood Development Association in central Labrador presented a submission indicating that the ability to recruit and

retain professionals throughout Labrador is directly linked to the provision of an adequate education system, including early childhood education. "Research has shown that when children start school behind they tend to stay behind." And that "...high quality early childhood education helps prepare children to succeed in school and become better citizens." The Association cited that in Quebec 40% of children enrol in day care for early development, in Labrador it is 15% of children who enrol. Academic achievement begins early and should be fostered throughout a child's education.

With regards to the primary/secondary system, a recurring theme that was raised during consultations was the relationship between the primary/secondary education system and Aboriginal education. It was expressed that Aboriginal education was being left out of the system. The question was raised whether language and culture actually factor into the learning curve. Through the sessions it was indicated that the curriculum doesn't always fit what is needed by students with regards to specific language and cultural needs. Recruiting and retaining teachers to work in Aboriginal communities and to teach the language was viewed as a solution to this issue. Related to this is the level of cultural knowledge held by the teaching staff.

Labradorians for Peaceful Communities, among others, feel that there needs to be more done to orientate people relocating to Labrador to work and live so they are better prepared and more knowledgeable of the region.

It was expressed that the current educational system is not always working for people on the north coast. Many people who may not be academically inclined may be able to succeed at technical skills programs. During consultations throughout the region it was identified that there is a need to do more with respect to promoting trades at the secondary level. Also related to this matter, is the fact that traditional skills and knowledge are not valued academically.



It was stated that more incentives are needed to keep youth in school so that an increased number of Aboriginal youth can complete high school.

"Our culture is the basic issue to deal with... because we have a different way in learning. I hear a lot of people say that Inuit learn a lot better hands on..."
(North Coast Session, August 28, 2006)

Through the Northern Strategic Plan sessions, several requests were made for intervention from Government to improve the existing system. These requests included increased investment into programs, particularly trades; recognition that distance education is not suitable for all students; changes to the teacher allocation formula for coastal communities; and more research into the low succession rates.

Access to programs in Labrador, availability of apprenticeship programs, and the associated costs were the most common issues raised in terms of post-secondary education. It was clear that people want to be able to access post-secondary programs as close to home as possible and if not viable within smaller communities, it should be available elsewhere in Labrador.

"...recruitment and retention is a major issue right now in Labrador especially with skilled trades....businesses need to put more into training and development to get local people to stay here, to get involved with those programs..."
(Labrador West Session, July 18, 2006)

The need for easier access to apprenticeship programs was reiterated several times during the consultations. It was affirmed that once people have completed trades programs requiring an apprenticeship they need to be able to access the requirements without too much difficulty or costs. It was also stated that existing programs take too long to complete and a more streamlined program needs to be available to get people into the workforce sooner.

Government needs to address the shortage of trade's people immediately according to the information presented during the consultations. Post-secondary training for apprenticeships is not available entirely within Labrador. Participants must go to another location to do so and often do not return. This concern is even more evident among female single parents. It was suggested in Labrador West that training be made available in the local area and incentives created to remove the obstacles that currently exist.

The role and presence of Memorial University in Labrador was raised several times. Concerns were raised over the fact that the Director position for the Labrador Institute continues to be vacant after two years, and that the advisory board has not been active during this period. Limited programming is offered within Labrador. The Labrador Institute is currently focused on research; however, an increased focus on educational programs is required as well.

While on the south coast, human resource development was viewed as a priority for future growth and sustainability. The comment was made that "We need to develop more skills within our people".

Partnerships

Throughout Labrador there is a growing realization that in order to address community issues there needs to be clear communication and an understanding of the roles of local organizations and governments. This holds true from the grass-roots community groups, who must work together to look at creative ways to pool resources, to how Aboriginal, provincial or federal governments can assist with service delivery, appropriate policy development or funding.

One comment that was repeated in sessions was there are too many groups working in isolation of each other and more should be done to work together on issues. By working together it would be easier to understand the role of each organization and look at meeting the gaps to address issues.



“There’s a lot of time and energy being placed on coming up with ideas [in communities] that would be beneficial for the economy and we just seem to hit brick walls from time to time. A lot of team work and partnership should be in development. Now it has to be taken it to the next level, by those in a position of authority, to make some of these ideas become reality.”
(Upper Lake Melville Session, July 17, 2006)

There were many layers of partnerships that were explored in consultations across Labrador and ways in which each partner could best serve residents. Session discussions examined how partnerships for the economic and social development of communities, regions and Labrador as a whole can be fostered or strengthened.

In many sessions throughout Labrador, including the north coast consultation session, it was indicated that Government often has not provided clear communication and communities did not have a good understanding of program availability or departmental responsibilities within regions. It was also noted that a quicker response time in providing answers to queries should be a standard practice by Government.

Further to strengthening communication, people suggested that Government should do more increase awareness of government initiatives and the roles of each agency.

It was mentioned on a number of occasions that Government often develops population-based policies which may not be representative of

Labrador’s dynamics due to the lower population of this portion of the province. The ability for regional offices to make decisions that will impact Labrador was discussed and noted that provincial government departments in Labrador should have more autonomy for decision making.

During the Labrador West consultation session it was mentioned that the Province should be doing more to talk to community organizations and listen to what they have to say about what communities need. During this same consultation session, participants noted that Government is to be complimented on consultations being held of late throughout the province that show that Government is listening to the people of the province.

There was much discussion about collaboration and planning in all sessions. The sentiment that federal, provincial, municipal and Aboriginal governments need to collaboratively look at the resources of each government and discuss how they will meet the needs of communities was expressed many times.

During the Upper Lake Melville consultation session it was noted that Government should be using suggestions provided by volunteers and community organizations for program development and policy formation. A lot of time and energy is placed on developing ideas and groups feel they are not being heard. Partnerships between all levels of government and local groups need to be forged.

Partnerships with other provinces and territories, particularly Nunavut, were also seen as potential areas of exploration. The Labrador North Chamber of Commerce expressed that pursuing developments related to Nunavut and other Northern areas holds great promise. Government should play an active role in pursuing these opportunities. Torngat Fish Producers Cooperative noted the potential for economic partnerships with Nunavut as a possibility for the expansion of existing businesses and the further development of the industry.

Throughout the consultation process it was identified by Aboriginal groups as well as community leaders that the first step to providing clear communication and interaction between governments/groups is to settle outstanding land claims. Labrador Metis stakeholders want the federal government to make a decision on whether or not to accept the Labrador Metis Nation land claim. Each Aboriginal group stated that only through defined land claim agreements will there be certainty as to the role of each government. This will also assist with providing clear direction regarding future developments and the sustainability of communities governed by Aboriginal governments.

In consulting with the Nunatsiavut Government the need to identify and clarify jurisdictional issues between the Province and the Nunatsiavut Government was identified for future action. The Nunatsiavut Government has noted that it wishes to be treated as a third order of government in Canada.

Governance and communication were also discussed during the initial Aboriginal Women's Conference. It was recognized by participants that there needs to be communication between provincial, federal and Aboriginal leaders who are aware of the gravity of issues in communities and who can communicate with Aboriginal women's groups. This was seen as a large step towards finding a balance to ensure that these socio-cultural concerns can be addressed.

Capacity building and how it relates to service delivery by Aboriginal governments was also noted in some of the consultation sessions with emphasis being that more needs to be done to help communities and roles need to be explored as to how to work with governments. All groups stated that they are looking at creating brighter futures for their communities.

It was expressed in many of the consultations that regional knowledge could be increased through initiatives such as exchanges, including youth cultural exchanges, within Labrador to learn more about each other and look to ways to share/pool resources and information.

During the Labrador West session participants maintained that people throughout the province need to know about the opportunities that exist in Labrador for employment instead of the continued out-migration of skilled workers and professionals to Alberta.

During the Upper Lake Melville consultation session it was suggested that Labrador needs to be marketed as a whole. Labrador needs to become a provincial focal point and its assets need to be marketed well to show what the area can offer. It was also suggested that Labrador needs to develop its own identity and provide northern development information like other northern jurisdictions do



across Canada. Public and private collaboration through a “Team Labrador” approach needs to be considered to endorse development opportunities within the different communities in the region.

Programs and Services

Many people throughout the consultations stated that the “one size fits all” approach to programs and services does not work in many parts of Labrador. It was suggested that the intent of government policies has to be the same all over the province but the implementation can and should be different in unique regions. Most of the comments people made through all sessions could be categorized into five major themes including: healthcare; basic infrastructure; recreation and sport; business development; and other government services.

Healthcare

Many people throughout Labrador want greater access to healthcare, including more specialized services being offered in the region and an improved Medical Transportation Program.

As in many parts of the province, people in Labrador would like improved access to many medical professionals including doctors, dentists and mental health professionals. This could be best accomplished through more visits by specialists to each area of Labrador. This issue was more pronounced on the coast of Labrador but it was also an issue in central and western Labrador. Access to specialized services and recuperative care should be available in the local area as much as possible. Patients are expected to pay for their own travel back to Labrador when using the Medivac service. The family of a deceased person is also expected to pay for the airfare for the return of the body if a person dies while receiving medical treatment outside of Labrador. Participants stated that people in Labrador should not be required to pay in either of these situations.

“...Labrador is a little different...if you have to have a CAT scan you may have to drive eight hours at the best of times...”
(Labrador West Session, July 18, 2006)

There were concerns expressed regarding the level of mental health support throughout Labrador and the need for more psychiatrists or other mental health professionals in the area. One participant went on to say that a full time person to help deal with mental health issues would be a good idea.

Issues surrounding the Medical Transportation Program were raised throughout the consultation process and two underlying suggestions that emerged were; increasing the subsidy and timelier processing of claims. Many participants suggested that the Labradorians should have reasonable access to publicly funded healthcare facilities at a reasonable cost. Additionally, participants want Government to consider covering road travel and not just air travel for all people traveling for health reasons. It was also suggested that there needs to be increased awareness about the Medical Transportation Program.

Finally, seniors housing and adequate seniors care facilities for those requiring long-term or specialized care was raised as an issue that needs to be dealt with on a regional basis.

Basic Infrastructure

There were a number of comments from south coast communities about the need for water and sewer infrastructure. Many local service districts and smaller municipalities said that they cannot afford to build such systems of infrastructure and want Government to consider covering the costs associated for these communities.

In Happy Valley-Goose Bay it was suggested that a sewage treatment plant is needed for health and environmental reasons.

Recreation and Sport

School Sport Newfoundland and Labrador suggested that the funding for the Labrador Travel Subsidy, which provides a percentage of the funding for high school sport teams traveling to the Island portion of the province, be increased to reflect the rising costs of airline travel. It was also suggested that the funding be raised so that students could participate in 7 of the 12 possible



provincial sports competitions, representing an increase of one competition opportunity over 2005.

In the Labrador Straits it was mentioned that a recreation director needs to be funded for the area so that programming can then be developed and delivered.

Business Development

Participants from a number of areas made suggestions that affect business development. Most areas indicated that Government's Red Tape Reduction Initiative was a step in the right direction but that access to programs and funding was still difficult.

It was also suggested that access to capital is a problem in Labrador and that the provincial government should take measures to try to improve this situation.

It was suggested that Government can improve already existing programs like the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development's Cooperative Information Program by promoting them more. The Business Retention and Expansion Program, which the provincial government funded, was also commended and it was suggested that it should be followed through with a second phase to work on some of the issues that were identified.

Many participants want the provincial government to work with local areas and the federal government to create incentives for large companies to purchase locally which could include rebates or tax breaks.

Other Government Services

The accessibility and the affordability of housing were identified as concerns in Labrador West. The current prosperity in Labrador West is resulting in rising rent and the people living in rental properties cannot afford the increase. This has caused people to live with family or friends and has created "hidden homelessness".

Respondents in Labrador West also highlighted that improvements are needed in the justice system such as increased court time, a family court judge in the area, and more support for lawyers, legal aid and other community support programs.

On the north coast there was concern in the location of court proceedings. Participants commented that court is held at the bar in the communities and this situation is not acceptable.

One common concern that emerged throughout a number of regions was the importance of women's shelters. These were viewed as essential for the health and safety of women and families in Labrador. Many suggested that core funding be continued to keep these shelters open and accessible for women in all communities was essential.

Participants from the south coast of Labrador indicated that provincial government should hire a municipal planner to help smaller municipalities in their rezoning efforts. At the present time small rural municipalities are required to hire a consultant to complete this work for them and this is not feasible for most. If the provincial government would hire a planner all communities could take advantage of the same resource.

Other Issues

Other issues that emerged included the current communication systems within Labrador. It was suggested that improvements in the quality of phone service is desperately needed. It was also suggested in the Labrador Straits that provincial government needs to build upon and support Labrador's growing IT sector. Participants suggested that the work of SmartLabrador was a great foundation and would like to see further growth in this sector. Additionally, wider access across Labrador to cell phone service was considered beneficial to a number of people. Another issue from the remote areas of Labrador is a lack of financial services.



Aboriginal Peoples

While many of the issues and concerns raised by Labrador's Aboriginal groups arise due to the challenges of providing and accessing programs and services in isolated and remote communities, several issues have been raised as being particularly pertinent; specifically, education and the need to value, protect and foster the distinct cultures and languages of the Aboriginal peoples of Labrador.

Both the Nunatsiavut Government and the Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu Bands stress the need to improve the level of primary, elementary, and secondary education available in their communities and to do so in a manner that protects and promotes their distinctive languages and cultures. Innu and Inuit recognize the importance of education in increasing the number of skilled Aboriginal professionals in their communities. This is important not only so that programs and services can be delivered by individuals who speak Innu-aimun and Inuktitut but by professionals that are sensitive to cultural differences.

The Labrador Metis Nation agreed with the Nunatsiavut Government and Innu Bands that more specialized training and university courses should be available locally. Local availability would both reduce the cost of education and training and mitigate the cultural shock often experienced by

Aboriginal students (and other residents of small, isolated communities) when they pursue higher education in urban centers.

Aboriginal peoples have asked the Province to ensure that the programs and services delivered to them best meet their needs and respect the different Aboriginal cultures. The Province is committed to doing so through the devolution of provincial services and by working with them and the federal government to "close the gap" between the economic, social and educational attainment of Aboriginal peoples when compared to other Canadians.



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