

Annual General Meeting

Southern Labrador Development Association

Coordinators Report

Date: October 13, 2022

Location: Florian Hotel, Forteau

The following projects/activities were initiated over the past year and are still in progress

Labrador Pioneer Footpath Project Phase 1

Phase 1 includes construction of the Gateway Trail, signage/ branding/marketing concepts, signage fabrication, and engineering. The work began with the Gateway Trail extension from the Border to the connect with the Jersey Trail. The work began in September 2021 but due to weather work ceased in October the same year. Due to difficulties with hiring, the restart of construction on the new was delayed until August 2022. The new extension is now complete except for signage and wayfinding. Our work crew is now upgrading and rerouting some sections between L'anse au Clair and Forteau. Trail work is expected to be finished for this construction season by the end of October. The RFP for the fabrication of signage for the L'Anse au Clair to Pinware section has been released. Quotes were received from Leaman Signs, Signs 1st, and H&F Designs. Based on the evaluation criteria within the RFP, the quote from Leaman Signs was accepted by the Board of Directors at the August 10th meeting.

A funding proposal for Phase 2 has been submitted to ACOA, Regional Development Program (IET), and TransCanada Trail. The proposal will call for the trail upgrading from L'Anse au Clair to Pinware for a total of \$535 000. A meeting to discuss the funding was held with ACOA and IET on Tuesday, July 26th. Given that Phase 1 is not yet complete, and it is unlikely that Phase 2 can be started this year, both funders have agreed that, while the project can be approved, no funding will be released until next fiscal year. Phase 3 will be the Pinware to Red Bay section.

Seniors Services Office/Age Friendly Committee

The Seniors Services Office, with financial assistance from the International Grenfell Association, was established in October 2021. The office continues to be busy with clients for various services. With the financial support of the New Horizons for Seniors Program, community outreach has commenced. Ms. Aimee Buckle is the Senior Services Officer. Abigail Linstead was hired under the provincial summer student program as an assistant with the on-going work of the Office. Under the present funding arrangement, and unless other funding is arranged, the program will conclude in October 2023. An application for continuation of funding has submitted to International Grenfell Association.

SLDA Website/Organizational Review/Governance

Labrador Data has been contracted for the development of a SLDA website. Some of the conceptual design and the framework for the website has been completed. Also, a rebranding of SLDA logo is underway. Input from directors on the logo design would be appreciated. The new logo will also require approval from the Board of Directors.

The organizational review and governance piece of the project has been awarded to KDP Consulting Inc. The new by-laws, Memorandum of association, and policy manual have been reviewed by the consultant, Keith Publicover.

Regional Community Garden

Our proposal to ACOA under the Canada Community Revitalization Program for improvements and expansion to the regional community garden, at a cost of \$100 000, is still under consideration.

Farmers & Crafts Market

An application for funding to ACOA under the new Rediscover Main Streets Program has been approved for \$52 000. The purpose of the new program is to get people out and about again following the 2 years of pandemic. SLDA is proposing a series of three Farmers and Craft Markets to be held in different communities over the period of August to October of this year. Roseann Linstead has been hired to manage the program with duties commencing on July 4th. Plans are now underway for three farmers and craft markets to be held at L'Anse au Clair (August 27th), West St. Modeste (September 24th), and L'Anse au Loup (late October)

Community Hub

A meeting with the program managers of the Community Hub program took place in June. As indicated earlier, the funding support for the hub is \$9500/year for the 2-year pilot. Apparently, there will not be any further activity towards the program during the summer months.

Youth Mental Health Program

In late 2019, SLDA was successful in obtaining a \$4000 grant under the Community Addictions Prevention and Mental Health Promotion Fund for a mental health awareness project for Labrador Straits Youth. Unfortunately, due to the covid pandemic, the funds were never used, and the original planned activities required amendments. Last year we joined forces with the Community Youth Network and arranged for a mental health awareness workshop. After two postponements, the workshop was held on the weekend of May 27, 2022. Consultant Ms. Lisa Sheppard of Lamaline NL conducted the activity. The workshop was well attended by youth and an evening session for parents went very well.

The Southern Labrador Economic Enhancement Project

A proposal to address the demographic and economic situation in the Labrador Straits has been submitted to ACOA.

Canada census data illustrates the lowering population in the Labrador Straits:

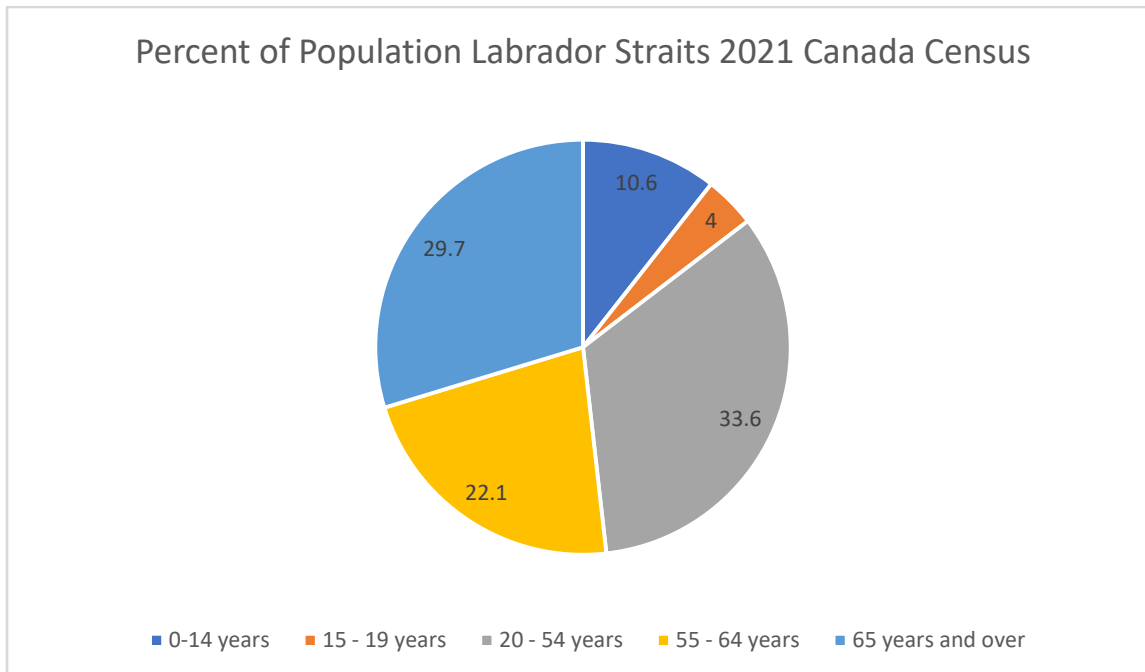
Canada Census Total Population by Labrador Straits Communities					
Town	1991	1996	2001	2016	2021
L'Anse au Clair	263	264	241	216	219
Forteau	580	505	477	409	377
L'Anse au Loup	630	621	535	558	692
Capstan Island	43	40	42	41	55

Pinware	175	144	140	88	64
West St. Modeste	288	275	264	111	102
Red Bay	202	170	175	169	142
Total	2181	2019	1874	1592	1651

As demonstrated by the pie chart below, that in addition to the population decline, the population by age data is perhaps more concerning.

For example, the 2021 Canada Census data shows that 51.1% of the total population of 1651 were 55 years of age or older

while just 14.6% were 0 - 19 years old. The data clearly indicate an aging population coupled with a shrinking labour market pool.



The following is the project description of the proposal:

The proposed Southern Labrador Economic Enhancement Project intends to strategically address the demographic and economic problem being experienced in the Labrador Straits through a collaborative process involving the business community, municipalities, and all other stakeholders. The proposal objectives can be achieved by program delivery in three main areas:

1. **Engaging with the business community for the purpose of attracting, recruiting, and retaining new Canadians to the Labrador Straits.** The business community may need to be more aware of resources and opportunities that may be available, and individual employers could be assisted with process of recruiting capable and suitable candidates for job opportunities.

2. **Collaborating with municipalities, the existing Age Friendly Community Committee and Seniors Services Office, Association of New Canadians, and other groups to work towards a higher level of welcoming and age friendly community structure in the Labrador Straits.**

Promoting the strengths of our communities, encouraging inclusiveness for all people of all ages, and building on areas of community that need improvement will be a major starting point towards a more welcoming and age friendly community that can attract and retain workers and visitors.

3. **Consultations with agencies and groups to explore ways of building on and expanding the existing tourism industry.** For example, creating an improved visitor experience through further promotion and development of the tourism assets of the Labrador Straits would make a significant impact on tourism visitations. Also, the winter and spring seasons provide many opportunities to expand the tourism industry.

The proposal has been submitted to ACOA as a 3-year pilot with a total estimated cost of \$535 000.

Green Depot

The Green Depot operation located in L'Anse au Loup closed for business at the end of August 2022. The Multi Materials Stewardship Board have been trying to maintain the operation, but to-date have not found another operator. A Request for Proposals closed on May 12, 2022. SLDA was contacted by Gordon Wall of MMSB for SLDA as a possible operator and SLDA did look at the potential revenues and costs involved. With annual revenues approximately 60K vs. the cost of a facility, salaries, and other expenses, it would appear that there is little room for profits. Nevertheless, the loss of the operation may well be detrimental to the area in terms of environment impact and to the existing land fill site capacity.

Cost of Petroleum Products in Labrador Straits

On August 4, 2022, I sent the following email to the Public Utilities Board with copies to all Labrador Straits municipalities, SLDA Directors, all Labrador MHAs, and our MP Yvonne Jones:

"I would like some information and clarification of how petroleum prices are set in Labrador and especially Zone 10. First of all, who determines and how is it determined that prices are set on a seasonal basis? Secondly, are there any other occasions when prices have been set on any other basis? For example, the last adjustment that occurred in zone 10 saw an increase from \$1.20/L to \$2.35/L. even though, according to information I have received, there was no new tanker supplied fuel. I do understand there would be additional distribution costs due to oil being delivered from one area of Labrador to another, but if that is the case, the increase seems a bit extreme. Whatever the case, there needs to be some transparency and the public should be made more aware of what is happening with respect to the regulation of petroleum prices in Labrador.

While prices are gradually declining in other areas, Labrador residents and businesses are still paying the highest prices in Canada. These high petroleum prices, along with all the other higher costs of goods and services are crippling the economy and the cost of living of all Labradorians.

It is time that a thorough review of this situation is undertaken and without any undue delay."

The PUB has responded clarifying the process in place for determining petroleum pricing but offering no resolution to the huge gap prices in our area as compared to island prices. The PUB has also indicated that there will be a review regarding pricing, distribution, and storage of petroleum products for Labrador soon. Notification of the review will most likely be communicated through the PUB website.

Conclusion

While SLDA has made significant progress over the past year, there is still more work to be done. With the support of our municipalities, the two largest businesses in the area, and individual volunteer members, we have managed to procure approximately well over \$300 000 over the past year for the various projects previously mentioned. To continue to move forward and address the challenges we face, a stronger membership base will be necessary. SLDA by-laws provide for four categories of paid membership:

- Individual
- Organizations
- Businesses
- Municipalities

In order for SLDA to acquire the capacity to fully address its mission of social and economic betterment of the communities of the Labrador Straits, a diverse and strong membership representing all factions of our communities will be necessary. While membership revenues have helped SLDA's financial operating position, the main sources of project funding are federal, provincial, and private organizations. With a strong and representative community base, SLDA will be in a position to continue to access, at a broader and higher scale, the government funding programs that are available.

There is no doubt that one of the greatest challenges facing our communities today is the demographic illustrated earlier in my report. Our population is declining, our labour force is shrinking, and our young and educated are leaving. There are no easy answers to a complex problem, but there will be no solutions if it is not addressed. This is a concern for all of us, and I truly believe that we all need to combine resources and energies to address what is the mission statement of SLDA (formed in 1974) the social and economic betterment of the Labrador Straits.

R. Hancock

SLDA Coordinator