

Guysborough *County*

Regional Development Authority

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jobs!

GCRDA Strategic Plan 2012-2017



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jobs!

For over fifteen years, the Guysborough County Regional Development Authority has been a catalyst: helping make Guysborough County a place where people can live, prosper and enjoy the natural environment.

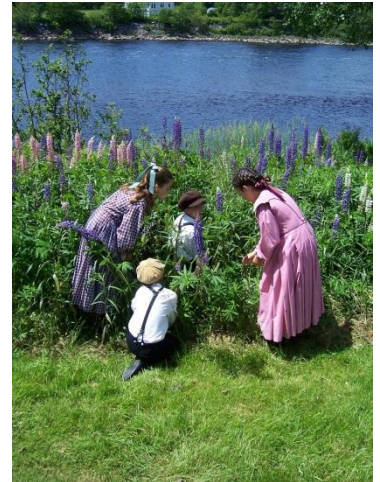
This has been very challenging work. Fisheries and forestry no longer provide the levels of employment they did 20-30 years ago. And over the past decade, nearly 1,400 residents (14% of the population) have left the County in search of jobs. Household income here remains only two-thirds of the provincial average, and unemployment is 6% higher.

But despite the harsh realities, there is reason for hope. The GCRDA and its partners have been patiently nurturing new opportunities that will begin to reverse the tide. The community has asked the RDA to dig-in, stay the course, and help realize the employment opportunities that are so desperately needed.

This plan was developed to guide the GCRDA from 2012 to 2017. It is built upon broad consultation with Guysborough County's residents, business people, and community leaders. The Board provided overall leadership for the strategic planning effort. The methodology included: a community survey (402 respondents), a situation analysis discussion paper, a community leaders' forum, and planning sessions with the board and staff. The final document you are reading now was officially adopted at the Board's meeting in February 2012.

Two recurring themes dominated our planning discussions: a lament for the people who have left the region, and a cry for the jobs needed to bring them home. The latter was often attached to a sense that significant employment opportunities are close-at-hand – and that the RDA is doing great work.

“Jobs!” are a clear and pressing priority for Guysborough County. And over the coming five-years, as new employment opportunities are created in the County, the title of this strategy will take on new meaning. It will shift from urgency to excitement, becoming an exclamation of the “jobs!” that were realized.

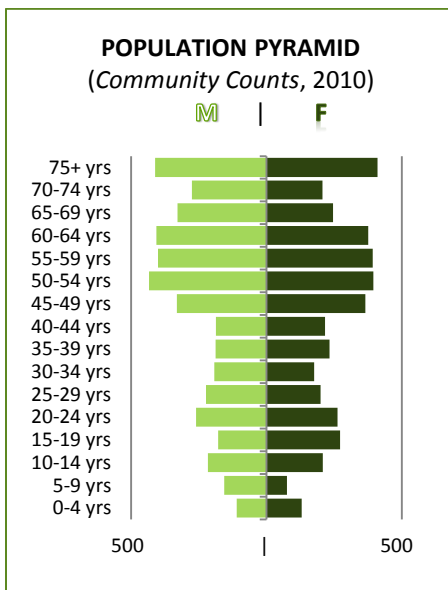
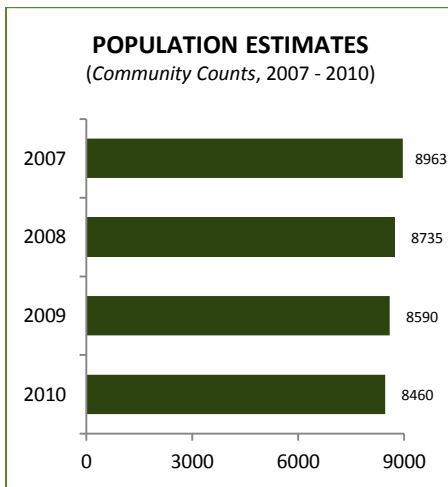


THE REGION

HEADLINE INDICATORS

(FP Markets, 2011)

Population: 8,400
 Households: 3,700
 Avg. Household Income: \$50,700
 Retail Sales: \$52.0 m



SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Guysborough County has been feeling the impacts of economic change and urbanization. Over the past decade, net out-migration totalled 1,400 residents (14% of the population). The average income remains only two-thirds of the provincial average, and unemployment is 6% higher.

Guysborough County’s economy is built upon a wealth of natural resources. The primary industries still account for over 700 jobs (mostly in fisheries and forestry). But this is nowhere near the level of employment those sectors provided 20-30 years ago.

The region is home to Nova Scotia’s off-shore oil & gas industry. Local individuals have benefited from employment in the Sable Offshore Project, but there has not been sufficient critical mass to develop a secondary industry. At the time of this strategy, the Deep Panuke project is beginning at Goldboro, with first gas expected in 2012. This project should continue generating employment through its expected 13-year life.

Mineral resources are also abundant in the region, from aggregate to gold. In fact, Guysborough County has a rich history of gold mining. There is community support for mining in the region, but development is delayed by red tape.

Guysborough County’s greatest natural advantage continues to be its location on the Strait of Canso. The Strait is the deepest natural ice-free harbour in North America and the second busiest port by tonnage in Canada. Construction of the Maher Melford International Terminal is slated to begin in 2012.

A detailed socio-economic analysis has identified sectors of the economy where Guysborough County has already been experiencing competitive advantages¹ or opportunities².

GREATEST ADVANTAGES	GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES
– Manufacturing	– Arts, entertainment & recreation
– Professional, scientific, technical services	– Wholesale trade
– Information & cultural industries	– Utilities
– Services (“other services”)	– Transportation & warehousing
– Accommodation & food service	– Professional, scientific, technical services
	– Services (“other services”)
	– Manufacturing
	– Construction
	– Mining, oil & gas extraction

¹ Competitive advantages were assessed using the “Shift and Share” model.

² Opportunities were assessed using “Economic Base (Location Quotient) Analysis”. The “greatest opportunities” are considered sectors with strong multipliers.

SUPPORTING & RESISTING FORCES

During the strategic planning process, community leaders identified the critical forces that are supporting and resisting Guysborough County's success.

There was widespread agreement that the region's greatest positive forces are its people and natural resources.

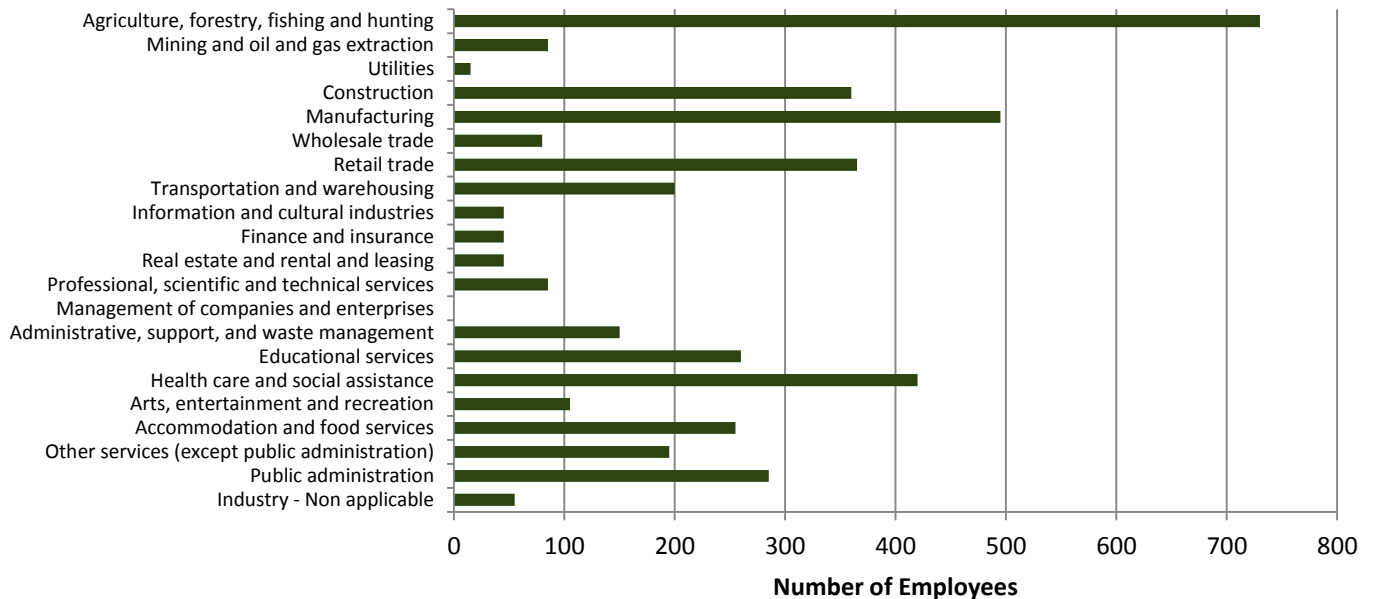
Meanwhile, two types of forces were identified as the greatest impediments to progress: dissonance between "local priorities" and "Halifax policies", and the lack of local employment/industry.

BUSINESS COUNTS (Community Counts, 2010)

Small (0-49 employees):	538
Medium (50-99 employees):	10
Large (100+ employees):	<u>5</u>
Total:	553

TOP SUPPORTING FORCES	TOP RESISTING FORCES
- People	- Misalignment of local and provincial/federal priorities
- Natural Resources	- Rural vs. Urban
- Local Government & Service Organizations	- Lack of Industrial Jobs/Tax Base
- Lifestyle	- Lack of Jobs
- Recreation & Related Facilities	
- Anticipation of Growth	
- Services & Infrastructure	
- Existing Businesses	
- Harbours & Ports	
- Diversity	

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (Statistics Canada, 2006)





THE RDA

CORE COMPETENCIES

Since its formation, the Guysborough County Regional Development Authority has proudly supported hundreds of businesses and community projects. Some of the most memorable successes have included:

- Broadband (High Speed Internet)
- Business Builders & Trail Blazers (youth programs)
- Defining the Region’s Mineral Resources
- “Get out in Guysborough” Guide Book, Blog, and Information Kiosks
- Many community halls & interpretive centres, i.e. Scotia Ferry Museum, Port Bickerton, etc.
- Proposed Maher Melford Terminal and Black Point Quarry
- RFP for Community Small Wind Feed-in Tariffs
- Sable Offshore Energy Project and Deep Panuke Project
- Stanfest, Festival Savalette, Chedabucto Place Theatre

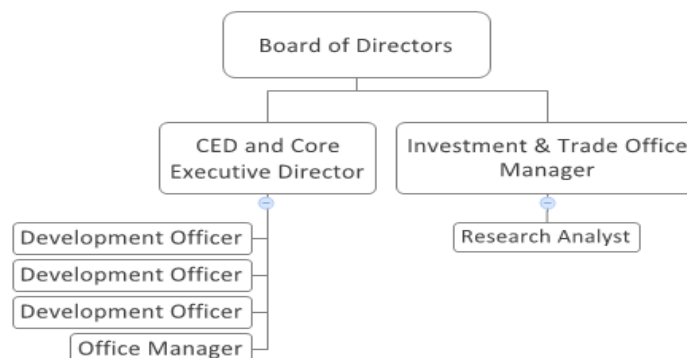
The RDA’s contribution to these success stories has been as catalyst and facilitator. This is clearly the role where the RDA has been able to provide the greatest value. And the RDA has become extremely competent in this role:

- Being connected to the community;
- Fostering connections within the community, and to outside resources;
- Putting projects together;
- Way-finding / interpreting funding programs; and
- “Adding voice” to the community’s interests.

These core competencies are possible thanks to the GCRDA’s unique “human capital”. The relatively long tenure of GCRDA staff provides for strong community relationships. This low-turnover has also allowed skills and knowledge to accumulate, and employees to become well-rounded economic development generalists.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The GCRDA has a unique organizational structure that focuses both on investment attraction and community economic development.



PARTNERS

The GCRDA is a three-way partnership between the municipal, provincial and federal governments. The financial partners include:

- The Municipality of the District of St. Mary’s
- The Municipality of the District of Guysborough
- Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development & Tourism
- Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
- Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

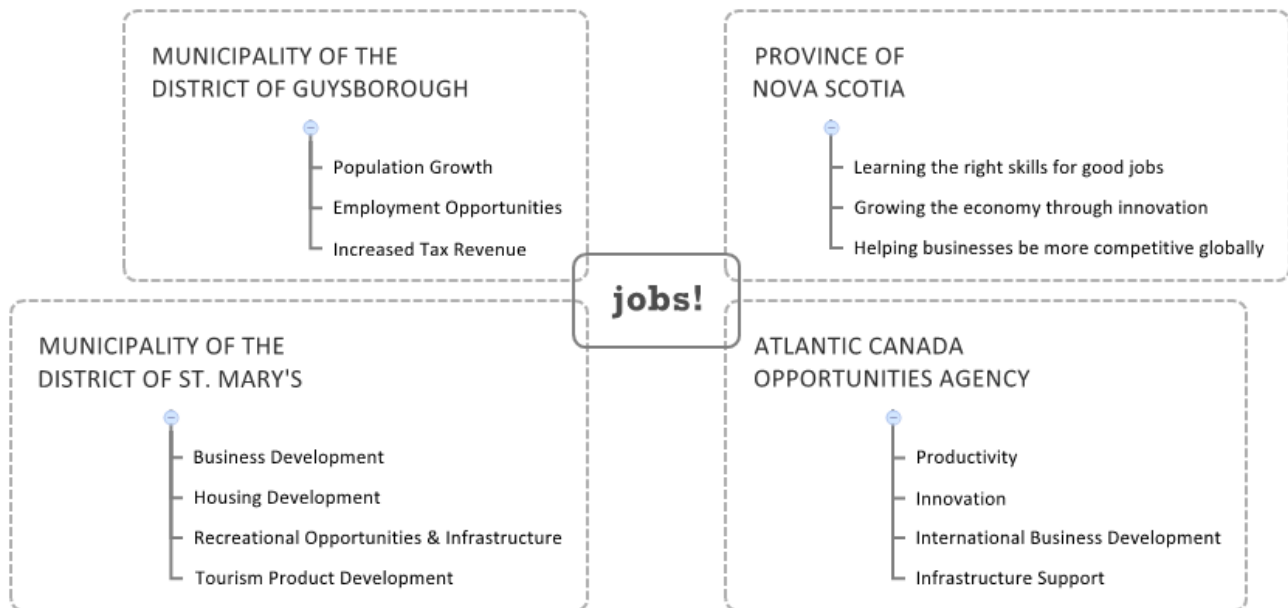


The RDA also works closely with the Towns of Mulgrave and Canso (until its dissolution). These communities are considered partners even though they do not have the financial resources to participate as funders.

PARTNER PRIORITIES

There is clear alignment between the priorities of GCRDA’s four funding partners and the “jobs!” impetus expressed by our community throughout the strategic planning process.

The diagram below draws the most directly relevant priorities from each funder’s most recent strategic plan.



GOALS

From 2012-2017, the GCRDA will lead its communities and partners toward six strategic goals.

Strategic Direction	Goal	RDA Service Areas
<i>Attracting Investment</i>	1. <i>Attract job-creating private sector investment to Guysborough County.</i>	Business Development, Communication & Marketing
<i>Retaining & Expanding Existing Businesses</i>	2. <i>Help existing Guysborough County businesses retain and expand employment.</i>	Business Development
<i>Developing Community Infrastructure</i>	3. <i>Support the development of critical community infrastructure and partnerships.</i>	Community Development
<i>Examining Development Issues</i>	4. <i>Examine and report to the community on issues related to Guysborough County's economic development.</i>	Information & Research
<i>Engaging Youth</i>	5. <i>Provide programming that engages youth in Guysborough County's economic future.</i>	Skills, Learning & People Development
<i>Welcoming People</i>	6. <i>Welcome new and returning residents into Guysborough County communities and labour markets.</i>	Skills, Learning & People Development, Communication & Marketing

STRATEGY MAP

The following diagram illustrates GCRDA's 2012-2017 strategy. All six goals support the "jobs!" outcome. Goals 3 and 4 help to create an environment that supports development. Goals 1 and 2 directly support job creation. Meanwhile, goals 5 and 6 ensure that people are available to fill those jobs.

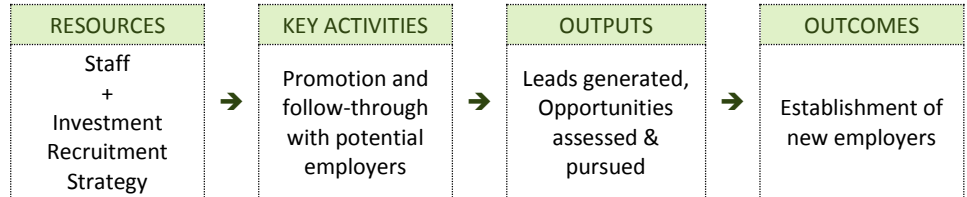




TACTICS

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT

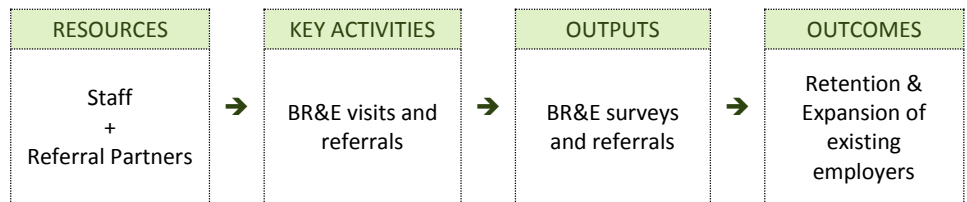
Goal 1: Attract job-creating private sector investment to Guysborough County.



Key industries: Transportation and Distribution; Mining, oil and gas extraction; Renewable Energy; Manufacturing; Forestry.

RETAINING & EXPANDING EXISTING BUSINESSES

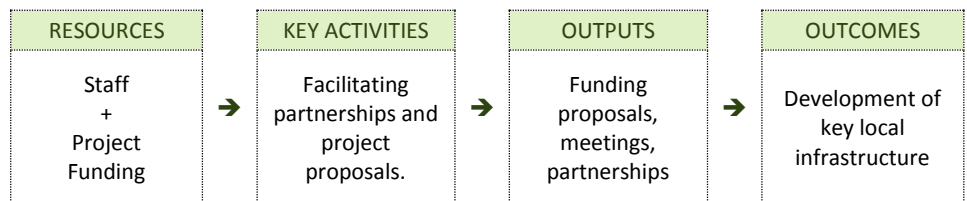
Goal 2: Help existing Guysborough County businesses retain and expand employment.



Key industries: Transportation and Distribution; Mining, oil and gas extraction; Manufacturing; Tourism, Arts, and Culture.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

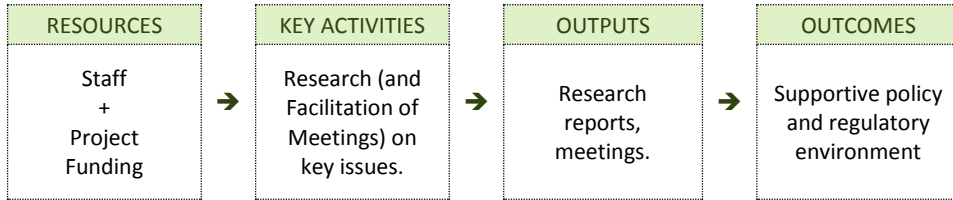
Goal 3: Support the development of critical community infrastructure and partnerships.



Focus on projects that will have the greatest impact, in areas such as: Housing; Arts and Culture; Tourism; Transportation; Recreation; Health Care.

EXAMINING DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Goal 4: Examine and report to the community on issues related to Guysborough County's economic development.

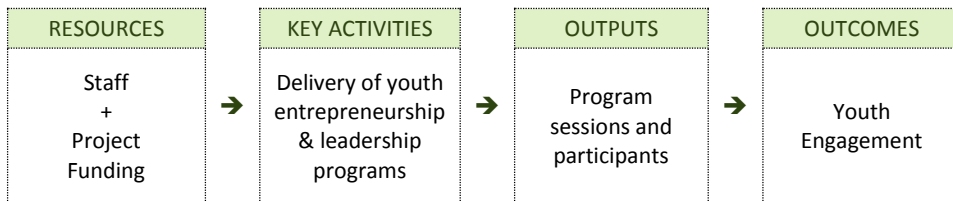


Key topics such as: crown lands and protected lands, coastal zones, mining, defined regulatory processes, and transportation and education and training opportunities.



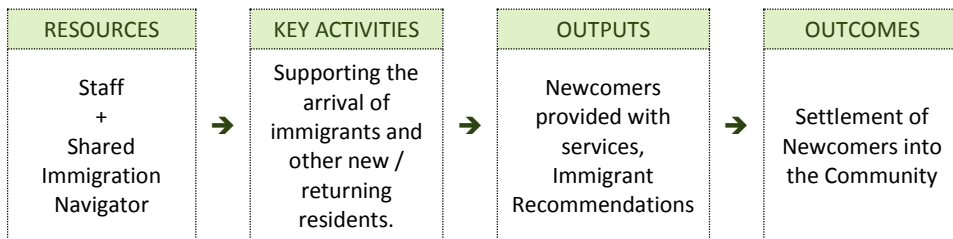
ENGAGING YOUTH

Goal 5: Provide programming that engages youth in Guysborough County's economic future.



WELCOMING PEOPLE

Goal 6: Welcome new and returning residents into Guysborough County communities and labour markets.



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