

GUYSBOROUGH COUNTY REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

***Strategic Planning Report
2007 - 2011***

Prepared for:

Guysborough County Regional Development Authority

Prepared by:

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the Guysborough County Regional Development Authority's Strategic Plan for 2007 – 2011. The plan has been developed by conducting extensive community research, convening workshops, and through action team planning.

Over the past five years, the Guysborough County Regional Development Authority (GCRDA) has worked within the parameters of a Strategic Plan that covered the period 2003 - 2007. That plan was developed in 2003 following a very similar process as was carried out this time.

The GCRDA has closely adhered to that plan in conducting its activities. The strategic priorities of the previous plan included:

- ❑ **Strategy 1:** promotion of the importance of rural lifestyle
- ❑ **Strategy 2:** adding value to natural resources
- ❑ **Strategy 3:** enhancing and maintaining infrastructure

The RDA has used the strategic plan to address priority strategies by implementing various tactics to achieve results. These strategies and associated tactics formed the basis of the Annual Business Plan. The Business Plans identified specific activities, inputs, outcomes, and groups to be targeted.

GCRDA has built on the strength of the planning process used in 2002 to carry out the current planning process. The key difference has been the use of an independent contractor to facilitate and assist in the process of developing the plan. Gardner Pinfold Consulting under the direction of a Steering Committee that was comprised of GCRDA Board members and staff undertook the following:

- ❑ Update Economic Outlook Report,
- ❑ Administered mail out surveys of the community residents, leaders of the community and operators of businesses,
- ❑ Facilitated a leaders forum,
- ❑ Facilitated action team meetings,
- ❑ Prepared the draft plan.



OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS

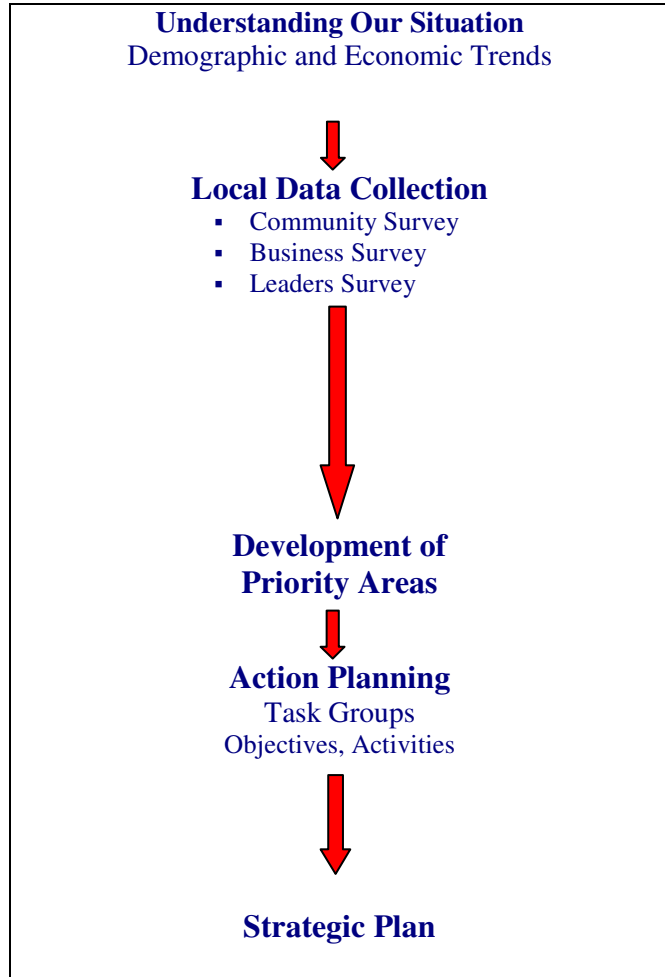
Several methods were used to gather background information for the Strategic Planning. The flow chart on the following page illustrates the overall planning process undertaken.

- ❑ **Economic Outlook** – In 2005, An Economic Outlook Study was prepared for the County. The document analyzed data on demographic and economic trends in order to present a clear picture of the current economic situation facing Guysborough County. As part of the planning process, this document was reviewed by Gardner Pinfold and updated.
- ❑ **Meetings with Municipal Councils** – As a first step, a representative of Gardner Pinfold met with each Municipal Council to provide an overview of the Strategic Planning process and to seek their views on key issues.
- ❑ **Survey Data Collection** – An extensive community mail out survey was carried out to which 447 county residents responded. Leadership surveys were also distributed and 54 community leaders responded. A similar business survey was also administered with responses received from 73 operators.
- ❑ **Strategic Planning Leadership Forum** - Community leaders from business, municipal and the volunteer sectors were invited to participate in a one-day workshop. Leaders from all areas of the county participated in a full-day workshop where they received summaries of the community data, demographics and participated in planning activities. A summary of the forum results was prepared. Gardner Pinfold facilitated this forum and the top forum issues for actions were selected based on the priorities of those participating.
- ❑ **Steering Committee Determines Focus for Action Teams** – A facilitated session was held with the Steering Committee to establish what role the RDA can undertake related to each priority area identified at the Leadership Forum. The Committee also nominated participants for each Action Team.
- ❑ **Action Teams** – Each Action Team participated in a facilitated three-hour workshop. Using the data collected and drawing on their own knowledge and experience, members of the action teams offered priorities for action. Action team initiatives have been completed for the following:
 - employment opportunities
 - training and education
 - rural needs
 - infrastructure
- ❑ **Steering Committee Revised Vision and Established Priorities** – Through a final facilitated session, a vision associated with the Strategic Plan is defined and priorities for actions are established.

Time Line



Strategic Planning Process





MEETINGS WITH MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

As a first step in the planning process, a representative of Gardner Pinfold met with each of the Municipal Councils including:

- ❑ Town of Mulgrave
- ❑ Town of Canso
- ❑ Municipality of Guysborough
- ❑ Municipality of St. Mary's

A presentation was made that outlined the key steps to be undertaken as part of the strategic planning process. A review was provided on how the previous Strategic Plan had been utilized by the GCRDA and summary of the Economic Outlook Study was also presented.

Following the presentation, a facilitated session was conducted where participants were asked to provide their thoughts on:

- ❑ The current economic situation,
- ❑ What had changed since the last strategy was completed in 2002,
- ❑ Available opportunities to the county at the present time.

The key issues identified by the various councils included:

- ❑ Population decline; youth are leaving and it is impacting on provision of services,
- ❑ Also some workers have to leave home to earn an income,
- ❑ Need to retain and attract people,
- ❑ Need good jobs matched with right training to provide youth opportunities,
- ❑ Need follow-through on previous development opportunities that have been researched,
- ❑ Need to work together,
- ❑ Cell coverage and high speed internet.

IV

UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Guysborough County has a varied economic past, largely centered on the fishery (landings and processing) and resource extraction (mining and forestry). In the past, the towns and the County enjoyed great economic success from these natural resources. Declines in quota, international competition in processing of some fish and shellfish species, and the groundfish moratorium in 1992 deeply affected some of the most important employers in the County, and in some small towns whose livelihood depended on the fishery.

The discovery of natural gas on the Scotian Shelf has had a positive impact on Guysborough County. This occurred initially through servicing of offshore vessels at Mulgrave, and more recently through construction of the gas plant at Goldboro and the Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline running through Guysborough County, as well as through fabrications and service contracts for local firms. Unfortunately, offshore oil and gas activity has proven a less than stable and predictable base on which to rely. While high-paying jobs are available from time to time during drilling and construction phases, few long-term jobs are available for County residents.

Alternate strategies for economic development: the tourism sector, the tele-service industry, and innovative ocean-related food and nutrition products have helped support communities in providing stable employment and prospects for growth.

Though the County is diverse in its population distribution and traditional economic activities, there is a sense of cohesion as many of the communities are facing the same challenges: declining population, aging population, and few new employment opportunities with which to grow local economies and reverse these trends.

Proposed developments, including a Container Terminal at Melford Point and Liquefied Natural Gas and petrochemical project at Goldboro, show promise for future economic development, though bringing these opportunities to fruition is not without challenges.

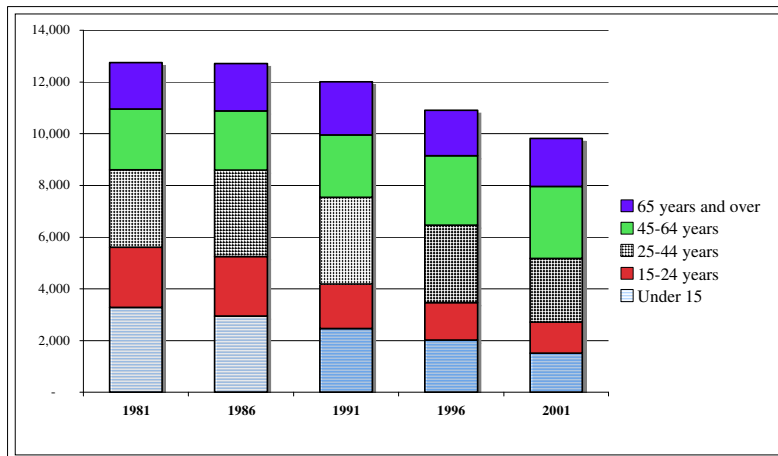
In early 2005, the RDA commissioned an Economic Outlook Study for the County. This report has been reviewed and updated as part of the Strategic Planning process.

The past decade has confronted Guysborough County with major economic challenges, and the region faces an uncertain future. Since the early 1990s, the downturn in the fishery and unpredictable markets for other natural resources have presented challenges to employment and population retention. The trends are characterized by high out migration of the prime working age groups, an overall aging population, limited employment growth, relatively low participation rates, relatively low household income, and continued high unemployment. These represent familiar patterns in rural Nova Scotia resulting in increasing difficulty in maintaining acceptable levels of health and education services.

Indicator	Trend
Population Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Decline of 29% from 1981 levels of 12,752 to 2006 levels of 9,058 ❑ Trend indicates further decline to 6,600 by 2016 ❑ 19-44 year old age migrating out of the county ❑ Leads all NS counties in relative size of out migration for 1997-2002
Labour Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Declined 16% between 1986 and 2001 ❑ Participation rate well below provincial average
Unemployment Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Has risen from 13.4% in 1981 to 22.9% in 2001, more than double the provincial average ❑ Understates true unemployment rate because of low participation rate
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ 2001 figures estimate 23% less employment than 1986 ❑ Strongest sectors traditionally in the fishery and fish processing
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Household income steadily below provincial average ❑ 30% of incomes from government transfers
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Student enrollment down 57% since 1981 ❑ 18 schools in 1981; 5 schools in 2004

The following chart shows the overall decline in population by age group. The impact of out-migration shows the significant decline in the proportion of population accounted for by those under the age of 44 years.

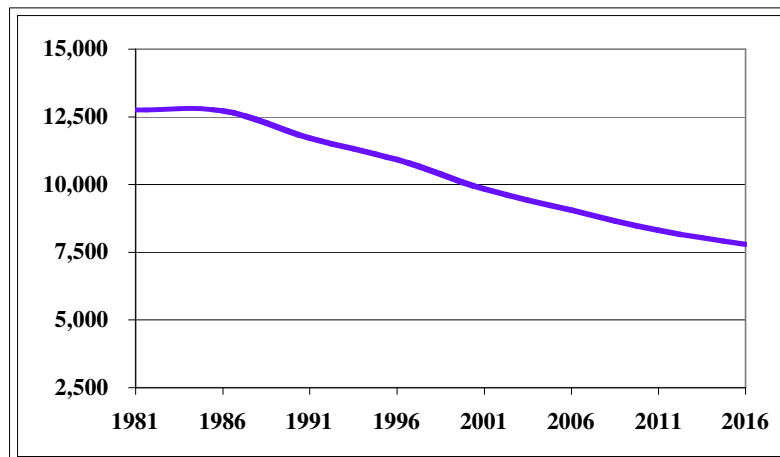
Population Composition by Age Group – 1981 - 2001



Source: Statistics Canada

As part of the Outlook Study, a total population projection for Guysborough County was made out to the year 2016. It shows a decline to approximate 7,800 persons.

Total Population Forecast



Source: Gardner Pinfold

Recently released 2006 Census Population data confirms the projection of overall population decline for Guysborough County as estimated in the Outlook Report. The forecast estimated population to be about 9,000 persons in 2006. As shown in the table below, Guysborough County population dropped by 7.8% between 2001 and 2006 from 9,827 to 9,058.

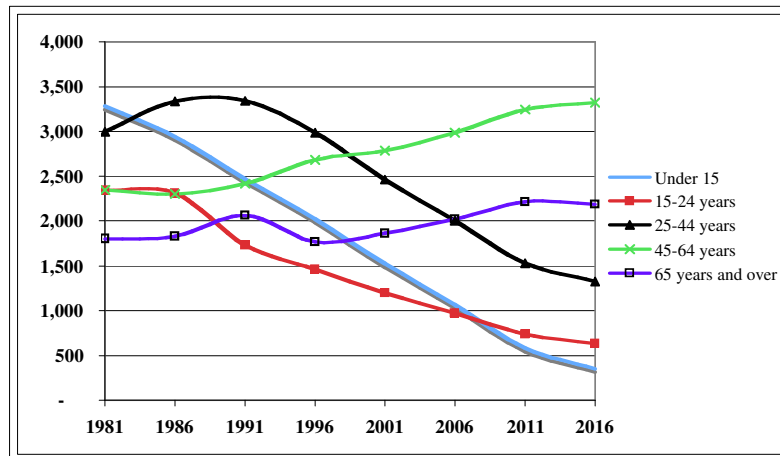
Area	2001	2006	% change
Municipality of Guysborough	5,165	4,681	-9.4%
Municipality of St. Mary's	2,766	2,587	-6.5%
Town of Mulgrave	904	879	-2.8%
Town of Canso	992	911	-8.2%
Total Guysborough County	9,827	9,058	-7.8%

Population declines in recent years have constrained Guysborough County's ability to grow its communities. With potential workforce families leaving the county, there are two effects: first, a general lack of skilled workers to operate the industries which remain, and second, the absence of new industries emerging due to a stagnant economy, be that real or perceived.

Guysborough County is not unique in its general pattern of out migration. Anecdotal evidence suggests that residents of Guysborough County are "trading up" to larger centres: Canso residents moving to Guysborough; Guysborough residents moving to Antigonish; Sherbrooke residents moving either to Antigonish or Sheet Harbour. The end result is a general trend toward urbanization and migration to centres located outside Guysborough County. The trend appears to be leveling off, but the danger exists that some communities have felt the impacts of out migration so much that any further losses to population could affect the viability of these small towns and the commercial services offered in these centres.

The chart below illustrates a projection of Guysborough County population to 2016, based on out migration and demographic data from 1996-2001. Underlying this projection is the assumption that no catastrophic events occur such as a collapse of the crab or shrimp fishery, or the closure of a major employer. It shows that all age groups under 45 continue to decline in number, while the 45 and over age groups continue to increase, reflecting the lower mobility of these groups. This results in a total population of 8,300 in 2011, and about 7,800 by 2016.

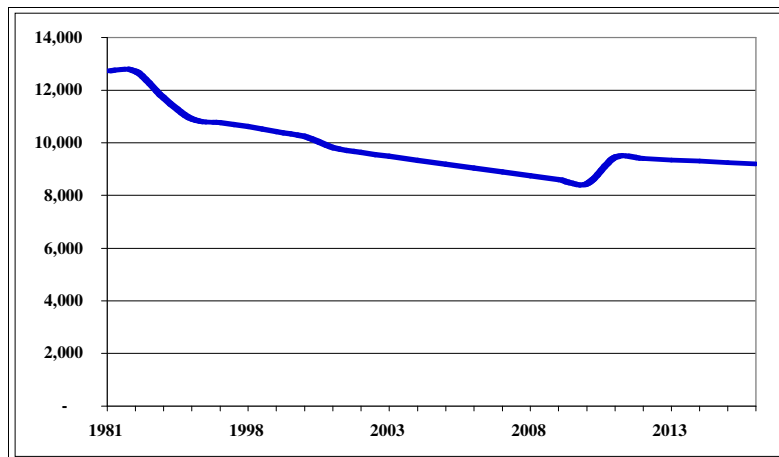
Population Forecast (Age group) to 2016



Source: Gardner Pinfold

With the promise of the proposed LNG and petrochemical facility having the potential to provide a start to rejuvenating the Guysborough County economy, the effect of the Keltic Project on population was considered in the Outlook Report. It was estimated that the net effect on the overall population would be about a 1,000-person increase. This is illustrated in the next chart. Unless there is a steady increase in employment opportunities accompanying the Project, a continued decline in population (albeit at a lower rate than the recent experience) could be expected after the initial influx.

Population Forecast under Keltic Scenario



As part of the update of the Outlook Report, the following observations can be made related to various economic sectors:

- ❑ Fish processing sector continues to weaken
- ❑ Inshore fish harvesting has been positive
- ❑ Tourism sector continues to weaken
- ❑ Forestry hurt by Stora shut down. Rate of recovery uncertain
- ❑ Oil and gas sector stable future dependent on LNG and petrochemical
- ❑ Melford Point Container Terminal being investigated
- ❑ Potential cited for additional export aggregate operation

1. **ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCE – CONCLUSION**

The update of the Economic Outlook Study, combined with the results of the community, leaders and business survey, clearly show the economy of Guysborough County to be in a state of decline.

Evidence of the decline includes:

- ❑ A high out-migration rate of prime working age people.
- ❑ An overall aging of the population.
- ❑ Limited employment growth.
- ❑ Continued relatively high unemployment.
- ❑ Low household income.
- ❑ Unpredictable markets for traditional natural resource sectors and the tourism industry. These problems are being compounded by the current strength of the Canadian dollar.
- ❑ This decline is resulting in challenges for communities to maintain acceptable levels of health and education service.

Despite the challenges noted above for the economy of Guysborough County, there are a number of very significant private sector led initiatives that are in varying stages of development. These include:

- ❑ **LNG Petrochemical Project:** In mid-March 2007, Keltic Petrochemicals Inc. and Maple LNG were granted regulatory approval from the Province of Nova Scotia to move forward with their proposed \$4.5 billion project to be sited at Goldboro. The critical remaining steps for the proposed development include federal regulatory approval, shareholder approval and, in the instance of the Petrochemical project, a contract for supply of liquefied natural gas. The target to begin construction is late 2007 or 2008. Total construction employment could exceed 3000 people over three years with 600 permanent positions during the operating phase.
- ❑ **Melford Container Terminal / Logistics Park:** A \$300 million container terminal, as well as a logistics park has been announced for Melford, Guysborough County. A private sector consortium, including SSA Marine, CenterPoint Properties, Trident Holdings and Rail America are now proceeding with project final design as well as the environmental permitting stage. The terminal will serve as a major entry point for goods coming from the Far East. There will be an estimated 500 construction jobs. Construction start-up is expected in the first quarter of 2008, with start-up in 2010. The facility is expected to have a start-up capacity of 1.5 million TEU's. Operational employment at the container terminal is anticipated to exceed 200 people. The logistics parks will provide 100's of additional jobs.
- ❑ **EnCana – Deep Panuke:** This \$700 million project will make landfall at Goldboro and tie into the Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline. This project has received a positive recommendation for approval and will serve to extend the life of the existing facilities located at Goldboro. As part of the Deep Panuke project there is potential to locate an operational supply base at Mulgrave which would result in increased employment and service opportunities.

- ❑ **Headwaters Refinery-Melford:** A proponent is now undertaking a site evaluation. Three sites are being considered – two of these are within the Melford Industrial Park. The company is interested in building a \$2-3 billion refinery. Construction employment would exceed 2000 people for two years and operational employment would exceed 100 persons. This would also have a significant impact on Municipal Assessment.
- ❑ **Aggregate / Mineral Development:** There is multiple investor interest in assessing aggregate potential at various sites over the next five years. There is also gold mining interest concentrated in areas of the county currently experiencing high unemployment and out-migration.

The GCRDA Strategic Plan has been formulated to deal both with current challenges faced by traditional industries, and to prepare communities to allow the full participation in the major projects cited above. It is paramount that the opportunities associated with these projects be maximized by Guysborough County residents and their families.

V

DATA COLLECTION

A key part of the strategic planning process was to collect information and view points from community residents, leaders and business representatives.

A mail out survey was designed to gather the opinions of the residents of Guysborough County. The survey was administered by Gardner Pinfold and was focused on the factors related to the individual's decisions to live in Guysborough County, their satisfaction with programs and services and their ideas about future development.

A similar approach was taken to identify the business community's viewpoint. Surveys were mailed out to all the existing businesses in the county with focus on the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in Guysborough County with an opportunity for individuals to identify problems and solutions.

To gather the perceptions of community leaders, a survey was also mailed to an identified list of stakeholders. This was a more in-depth survey that focused on many different aspects of development within the county. It included identification of strengths and weaknesses for development including aspects such as quality of life, labour situation, education, local leadership, transportation, availability of utilities and real estate. This survey also provided the leaders with the opportunity to identify development problems and suggest approaches that could be used to solve them.

All of the above information was compiled and presented at the Leadership Forum where economic development issues were identified and priorities for the GCRDA five-year strategic plan were developed.

1. COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

- ❑ 1200 surveys mailed out (300 to each municipality). Almost 100 returned to sender as addressee had moved.
- ❑ Over 457 responses were entered into a database. Each municipality returned no less than 110 surveys.
- ❑ Survey structured to allow comparisons to survey conducted in 2002.
- ❑ The survey achieved representation by municipal unit, age groups and education levels comparable to the population trends.
- ❑ The majority of respondents were long-term residents of the county (70% more than 30 years).
- ❑ The summary represents the views of employed, unemployed and retired members of the community.
- ❑ Most respondents reported they paid attention to county developments
- ❑ Half of the respondents belong to one or more community organizations and they volunteer an average of more than two hours per week.
- ❑ People live in Guysborough County because of the quality of life, due to family ties, the quality of hospitals, recreation opportunities, schools and employment opportunities

- ❑ Level of interest in recent economic developments has increased since 2002 when 22% of population reported they did not pay much attention. In 2007, this had dropped to just 2%.
- ❑ Reasons for living in Guysborough County:
 - Quality of life still cited as very important.
 - Family ties and good schools becoming even more important.
 - Housing availability and recreational opportunities have dropped in terms of importance.
- ❑ Level of satisfaction with programs and services:
 - Generally level of satisfaction has been trending down.
 - In previous survey, people were mostly satisfied with 8 of the 28 options presented. Only 5 this time.
 - Decliners included - garbage, fire, telephone, environmental protection and cleanliness of communities.
- ❑ Level of dissatisfaction:
 - Job availability - high level of dissatisfaction virtually unchanged.
 - Availability of retail - has dropped significantly.
 - Level of dissatisfaction with roads and highways not as great but still of concern.
 - People still largely dissatisfied with availability of job training and adult education.
- ❑ When asked about balance between job creation and environment, 64% of respondents in 2007 wanted a balance achieved between the two.
- ❑ Awareness of GCRDA:
 - Increase in awareness to 88% from 84%.
 - Area of least awareness was St. Mary's
- ❑ Comments re: action to make Guysborough County better place to live:
 - Heavy emphasis on job creation and attracting industry.
 - Need to keep young adults in County.
 - Improve infrastructure highways - and other services.
 - More cooperation between communities.
 - Process resources in the County.
- ❑ Survey Responses by Municipality
 - Levels of satisfaction very similar for many of the services and programs listed.
 - Highlights:
 - More in Mulgrave not satisfied with healthcare and affordable housing.
 - Dissatisfaction with condition of roads and highways greatest in Guysborough and St. Mary's.
 - Property tax dissatisfaction in Canso and Mulgrave.
 - Mulgrave happier with cell and internet availability.
 - Canso happier with internet.

2. LEADERSHIP SURVEY SUMMARY

- ❑ Mail-out survey to 124 leaders in Guysborough County - 54 returned.
- ❑ Asked respondents about their view on various strengths and weaknesses from a development perspective across a number of categories.

Results can be compared to 2002 survey under the following headings:

Community Context

- ❑ Of the 21 quality of life indicators, 8 showed no change from 2002-2007.
- ❑ Four showed a positive trend including cost of housing, both hospital and health facilities and availability of recreational facilities.
- ❑ Nine indicators showed a drop. Most significant were overall quality of housing - programs for both seniors and youth.

Local Education

- ❑ Trend related to involvement of higher education institutions in communities quite weak in both surveys.
- ❑ Also noted as weakness and trending downward were availability of post-secondary education and technical programs in high schools.
- ❑ Strengths were quality of both elementary/secondary schools and involvement of residents and parents in schools. All trending upward as well.

Local Governments

- ❑ No change related to fire and garbage - both considered strong strengths.
- ❑ Level of police protection trending down.
- ❑ Cooperation of local government with business trending up and seen as strength by 60%.
- ❑ Cooperation of local government seen as weakness by 62% in 2007 down from 57% in 2002.

Local Leadership

- ❑ Level of volunteer effort considered a strength by 78% in 2007 - up a bit.
- ❑ On balance, 4 of 12 indicators considered strength by majority. These included the level of volunteerism, the level of staff at Municipalities and GCRDA, and the level of leadership commitment to growth.
- ❑ Funding for development groups from 3 levels of government considered weak but improving.
- ❑ Level of cooperation in development considered weak by 70% of those surveyed.
- ❑ Private sector involvement also weak (72% in 2007).
- ❑ Awareness of development weak (85%) and trending downward.

Labour Situation

- ❑ Most alarming category.
- ❑ Of 11 categories, only 2 are considered strengths by majority - availability of unskilled/semi-skilled and clerical workers.
- ❑ Virtually all indicators are trending down, including those related to availability of training - availability of skilled workers and management personnel.
- ❑ Level of wages - availability of apprentice programs and availability of quality jobs all seen as weaknesses by more than 90% of respondents.

Transportation

- ❑ Of 7 indicators, only adequacy of wharves and harbours seen as a strength. 70% in 2007 - unchanged from 2002.

- ❑ Condition of roads seen as weaknesses by 88% - unchanged.
- ❑ Other indicators related to shipping, public transportation air service all seen as weaknesses by over 90% of respondents.

Utilities

- ❑ More balance across the 12 indicators.
- ❑ Cost and availability of water considered strengths.
- ❑ Cable TV - internet service both improving and scored in mid-range.
- ❑ Greatest weaknesses included cost of electricity and natural gas - availability of natural gas - and cell coverage.

Real Estate

- ❑ All indicators (8) in this category considered weak by majority.
- ❑ Those showing at least positive trends included - availability of industrial building space, commercial, retail and office space.
- ❑ Considered very weak was the availability of sub-divided sites for new houses and suitable commercial space.

Capital for Development

- ❑ Trends related to these indicators largely unchanged between 2002 and 2007.
- ❑ Availability of home mortgages seen as strength by 68%.
- ❑ Low interest loans for business considered strength by 52%.
- ❑ Low interest loans for industry weakness by 55%.
- ❑ Availability of Venture capital weak by 65%.

Marketing Characteristics

- ❑ Only 1 of 13 indicators considered to be strength by majority - location for serving foreign market.
- ❑ Impact of tourism industry has dropped from being seen as a strength by 77% in 2002 to 49% in 2007.
- ❑ Adequacy of local media for promotion split in terms of strengths and weaknesses.
- ❑ Adequacy of marketing programs for tourism have also dropped from 49% strength in 2002 to 25% in 2007.
- ❑ Major weaknesses include:
 - Availability personal services.
 - Range of professional retail services.

Leaders' Suggestions

Leaders also made many suggestions to deal with various identified problems.
Key themes included:

- ❑ Out migration of youth noted by many as a significant issue.
- ❑ Need to create more good jobs by attracting industry.
- ❑ Many had comments about need for greater cooperation between municipalities and development partners.
- ❑ More training.

- ❑ More marketing.
- ❑ Improve infrastructure.

3. BUSINESS SURVEY SUMMARY

- ❑ Mail-out survey to 283 members of business community in Guysborough County. 73 respondents entered into database.
- ❑ Business community was asked for their opinion on 39 socio-economic attributes that can influence business development in the County.
- ❑ Overall 11 of the 39 were seen as strengths in 2007, down slightly from 13 in 2002.
- ❑ The highest noted strengths in 2007 included - public safety, quality of local university, medical services, level of municipal taxes and real estate costs.
- ❑ Those scoring lowest included: transportation-related - roads, air and railroad, labour skills and education, availability of local job training, cost of electric power.
- ❑ The business view on several of the attributes changed significantly from 2002-2007.
- ❑ Those moving in a positive direction included - availability of commercial and industrial sites and quality of primary and secondary education.
- ❑ The view of several other categories dropped significantly including: productivity of the work force, availability of labour (down from being seen as a strength by 62% in 2002 to only 28% in 2007), labour skills and education (down from 48% strength in 2002 to 14% in 2007), consumer loyalty to local business, wharves and harbours, electric services and housing availability.
- ❑ Business operators also offered many suggestions for initiatives for next five years.

Themes of Suggestions

- ❑ Long-term job creation.
- ❑ Offer youth local opportunities.
- ❑ Need to stop out migration.
- ❑ Upgrade highways.
- ❑ Develop target attractions.
- ❑ Market for tourism.
- ❑ Train young people for work in local businesses.
- ❑ Recruit new businesses.
- ❑ Establish more cultural and recreational facilities.
- ❑ Promote Guysborough County as good place to locate business - quality of life - sell county as a whole.
- ❑ Keep and process local resources.
- ❑ More cooperation among Municipal units.
- ❑ More small business support.
- ❑ Better cell and internet service.
- ❑ Support development of big industrial projects - petro chemicals - LNG - Container Port.
- ❑ Don't just support big development projects.

VI

COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM

A Community Leadership Forum, facilitated by Gardner Pinfold, was held on Saturday February 3, 2007 at Chedabucto Place in Guysborough. The event began with a presentation of the demographic / economic trends followed by discussion. The presentation of the survey data followed. The participants were then asked to work in four small groups that were arranged to include regional diversity and representation by sector.

1. MORNING

In the morning, each breakout group discussed:

- Their personal values.
- County values.
- What Guysborough County should be in 2015.
- Reviewed the Vision Statement that associated with the 2002 – 2006 Strategic Plan.

Suggestions offered related to revisions for the vision are as follows:

- Sense of confidence
- Innovation
- Culture and heritage
- Inclusion
- Compassion
- Education and awareness
- Remove “environment is not harmed”, replace with environmentally responsible development
- Remove residents are healthy
- Remove reference to young people
- Visions should reflect a cohesive community

Proposed 2007 – 2011 Vision

“The GCRDA will be the catalyst to make Guysborough County a place where people of all ages can live, prosper and enjoy the natural environment.”

Checklist that Leaders comments are reflected and a few other options:

The GCRDA will be the catalyst to make Guysborough County a place (or is a cohesive community) where people (inclusive) of all ages (inclusive of both youth and seniors) can live (requires the compassion, reflects culture and heritage, inclusion) prosper (requires confidence, innovation, good infrastructure, access to education and training) and enjoy the natural environment (or enjoy their natural surroundings suggests development is done responsibly)

Connect with our energy (could add the tagline below the vision statement).

2. AFTERNOON

During the afternoon breakout session, each group was asked to:

- Identify economic development issues.
- Discuss the role the GCRDA could play in addressing issues.
- Identify development opportunities.
- Pick five top priorities.

The key issues as identified by groups in their breakout sessions are as follows:

Group One

- Employment opportunities
- Government support and better designed programs for rural communities
- Infrastructure – transportation, IT, communications
- Decline in tourism
- Control over resources

Group Two

- No Federal/Provincial job creation/relocation plan for county as related to public/private sectors
- No Federal/Provincial policy to address rural community decline or to counter urban centric view
- Not enough employment opportunities resulting in decrease in population
- Lack of incentives for business retention or new start ups
- No permanent post secondary educational institutions in the county

Group Three

- Lack of quality job opportunities with benefits
- Lack of labour market focused education system – post secondary, accessible
- Provincial/Federal recognition of rural communities and duty to them
- Lack of infrastructure – cell service, highways, health care services (specialized), and education
- Lack of community cohesiveness

Group Four

- Viable employment within Guysborough County, out-migration, good work ethic
- Infrastructure, roads, telephone
- Need of all levels of government to focus on the serious issues facing rural communities, metro vs. rural
- Industrial opportunities developments
- Quality of life (positive) natural beauty

The facilitator, as part of the plenary discussion merged the issues that were similar in intent and reduced the list of 20 to the following 12 issues. These were then voted on by participants to establish the top four issues.

Issue	Votes
Employment Opportunities	23
Post secondary training/education in county	9
Federal/Provincial Duty to Rural Needs including decentral	21
Infrastructure	9
Guysborough County cohesiveness	4
Decline in Tourism	1
Local Control of Resources	2
Support Industrial development	2
Quality of life	1
Fed/Prov plan for government and private sector job creation	4
Incentives for business retention/startups	4
Promotion local	1

It was then proposed that Action Teams would be established for each of the top 4 priority issues. Participants were offered the opportunity to volunteer to be on an Action Team of interest.

VII

ACTION TEAM PLANNING

Following the Community Leaders Forum, Gardner Pinfold facilitated a session with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to prepare a brief Terms of Reference for each of the Action Teams. It was agreed that each Action Team Planning sessions would be introduced with the following preambles.

Strategy 1 – Rural Needs

Preamble

This is a follow up area of action to the previous Strategic Plan when Rural Living was an area of priority. There continues to be a decline in rural lifestyle, as declining population has led to a reduction in the level of services provided to rural residents. The GCRDA needs to undertake activities that communicate and demonstrate to all levels of government the scale of the issues faced by rural residents and the relative impacts these are having on the provincial economy. A coordinated approach is required to deliver these key messages to decision makers.

Strategy 2 – Access to Post Secondary Education/Training

Preamble

The existing business community is reporting difficulty in finding new employees with appropriate skill sets. The prospect of large industrial projects(s) presents opportunities for local residents provided they have matching job qualifications. At present, there is limited access available for county residents to post secondary educational opportunities. The GCRDA needs to facilitate training and educational opportunities that are labour market focused, accessible to local residents and are of an appropriate scale for Guysborough County.

Strategy 3 – Employment Opportunities

Preamble

To address issues related to declining population there is a need for the GCRDA to be proactive in ensuring there are viable employment opportunities in Guysborough County. Activities will address issues faced by the existing business community as well as through the promotion of new development opportunities. In particular, the focus needs to be on both the needs of current residents and on attracting new residents to the county.

Strategy 4 – Infrastructure

Preamble

Attention to infrastructure requirements is essential to enhance economic development opportunities. Existing infrastructure must be maintained and enhanced. New development projects will require various infrastructure investments. The role of the GCRDA in addressing infrastructure needs can be related to planning and advocacy. The GCRDA role as champion of the development of high-speed internet is a good example of its potential contribution to infrastructure development.

GCRDA staff organized the Action Team Meetings to continue the process of developing strategic priorities.

The schedule for the sessions was as follows.

Action Team	Date met	Number of Community Participants	Number of Staff Participants
Rural Needs	February 19, 2007	11	4
Secondary Education	February 27, 2007	13	2
Employment Opportunities	February 19, 2007	8	4
Infrastructure	February 21, 2007	6	4

Again, each Action Planning Session was facilitated by Gardner Pinfold. The sessions followed an agenda where participants were invited to:

- Identify problems associated with the topic area,
- Suggest causes of the problems,
- Discuss potential actions,
- Identify resources that could be brought to bear on the issue,
- Establish on a consensus basis the priority that should be attached to the various issues.

A summary of issues and potential actions as identified by each Action Team follows.

Employment Opportunities Action Team

Issue	Potential Action
Succession Planning for Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote business/labour force opportunities internally and externally • Investment attraction • Identify what business are needed • RDA take the lead for Business Retention and Expansion with support from CBDC and ACOA
Promotion of Guysborough County for Opportunities Internally and Externally Large, Medium, and small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate Staff • Market Research (Ideal: make use of local inputs) Exports • Early identification • Explore best practices in other rural areas • Need outside investment to improve general business climate to induce internal investment
Transportation / Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify challenges when other opportunities are looked at
Labour Force Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify supply of what skills are here and demand of what skills are required immediate and in the future • Provide information • Gap identification- training programs to address gaps • When research is completed – form strategy
Small Customer Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment attraction in all sectors • Expand customer market area • Look at raw materials within county
Community Based Ocean Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue with industry • Research center of excellence
Services for Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify who seniors are: needs and interests • Identify services required, “Retirement Villa”
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal with housing issues as projects become reality • General planning done in collaboration with municipality
Centralization of employment related to government services and large companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Guysborough as location for expansion of companies • Loudly resist erosion of services

Infrastructure Action Team

Issue	Potential Action
Transportation	
Auld Cove Interchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • due to poor planning and neglect • The RDA can work with the municipality to bring awareness
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution could be using the school bus system in the county
Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for central transport routes that are all season/weather • Examine the impacts of these different all season/weather routes. • Examine the needs of industrial park highways • Small Harbour Wharfs (Medium) • -Challenges to Harbour Authorities
Conflict between Aquaculture, Tourism, Recreational and industrial water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA could provide information on potential conflicts
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ship Chandlry/Logistics Center in the area(Medium) • Continue to promote Mulgrave as an offshore supply base(High) • Landing Strip(Low) • -RDA could investigate the cost/potential. • Linking transportation opportunities and the Atlantic Gateway(Very High) • HWY 344 improvements and bridges. (Medium) • EMO Audit on Bridges (Low)
Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA could Study the proposed alignment and routing of the Melford Line • The RDA could Study the potential conflict issues • The RDA could look at spin off impacts of rail
Social Recreational	
Sustaining existing facilities: schools, theaters, tourism infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure insurance and risk of liability • RDA could investigate the grouping of non-profits to provide lower insurance rates
ATV Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a decrease in the number of trails available for ATV use • Designated areas for ATV use • Pilot corridors through protected areas
Cell Service	
Land Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melford is owned by the province and it should be owned by a municipal unit or RDA • Too many jurisdictions involved • There should be a local committee to deal with land ownership issues • Look at the servicing costs associated with industrial parks • The GCRDA should take ownership issues to the NSARDA to research

Issue	Potential Action
	and create a model to allow for transfer
Free Trade Zones in areas around the province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA can check on the status of these zones
Port Master Plan	RDA to participate on consultations for the Port Master Plan
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deficit of housing/Sub-division • Explore Market Opportunities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Supplies Partnerships Senior Facilities Cottage Country Affordable Housing Mobile home park
3 phase power	Identify where required
Reliable transmission problems	
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to overcome transmission issues
Water/Sewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security (municipal) • Industrial water supply
Incubator Malls throughout the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -Business Service Centers could be part of a small mall
Healthcare /Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining • Utilization of existing infrastructure
Public Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missed opportunities (e.g. regional correctional facility) • Decentralization

Rural Needs Action Team

Issue	Potential Action
Community Knowledge of the RDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend monthly meetings of community groups and organizations • Have supported community organizations promote the efforts of the RDA • More leadership role by the RDA on projects to see them through
Maintaining Infrastructure To Support And Maintain Rural Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the role infrastructure plays in retaining families • Maintenance of infrastructure (operational costs) • Identify the needs of services to retain the population • Participate in senate hearings – senate report on rural poverty • Impact of losing existing services
Bureaucratic Indifference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a set of examples of policies/decisions/regulations made without consideration of rural areas – assessment of CAP program, Wilderness Protection Area, government office space • RDA Association to lobby government regarding decentralization • Analyze the economic social impact of policies and regulations – matrix • Role for voluntary planning
Incentive Programs For Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information for spin-off activities to be sustainable over the long term • Professional information package for potential investors or proponents • Communicate advantage of rural; communities to the private sector • Municipal infrastructure incentives – RDA work with municipal government to identify needs • Follow through on IT investments on rural areas where is the ROI? – broad band, cell phone
Economic Development Programs Specific To Rural Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify indicators for decision making • Identify need for policy changes • Design a pilot program to prove these programs work • Voluntary plan to raise awareness – form recommendations related to rural issue including population decline
Lobby Government On Tax Incentives In Rural Areas For Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not municipal – corporate and personal tax – northern tax credit • Develop what the rural communities need advocated • RDA prepare submissions during the senate hearing meetings on all topics that impact Guysborough County
Local Input On Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in an IRM committee • Staying involved (communicating, networking) • RDA be the public input in legislation • Land use planning • Joint involvement with municipalities

Post-Secondary Education Action Team

Issue	Potential Action
Access to Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband Look at areas not currently being served and develop a community plan to deal with the gaps in service • Clustering- “Nodes” of service- Learning Pods, locations for access to alternate delivery bring people together where the supports are. • Make use of C@P sites and existing technology in school facilities
Perception Issues related to Opportunities And Labour Market Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deal with perception issues • Labour Market Information provided/shared and at an earlier age • Communicate at the Grade 9 level with students and parents • Explore Model programs such as Career Paths (NL) O2 Program (NS);Career bus model in Alberta an example of a mobile shop program • Develop a training agenda as an outcome of the labour market analysis • Identify critical mass opportunities, employment opportunities (development) and generic needs of society • Explore targeted trades to fill gaps in the county • Identify key training needs example rotational training in other areas • Succession planning for businesses and self employed • A role for NSARDA? • Identify training opportunities in tourism to make use of existing tourism infrastructure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA role labour market analysis, research opportunities to address a local need and market analysis of others who may come to the county for training • Work in partnership with Industry and Educational Institutions to develop a training agenda. • Skills Database upgrade – to plan training that is effective and timely.
Cost of Education Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of increased costs in accessing education for residents of Guysborough County
Local delivery as a way to reduce cost of access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that that issue of cost is brought to the forefront • Raising awareness • Researching best practices around the world for delivery of education
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation within the county and externally • Funding provided, which often doesn’t get to travel provider, is required to survive • Getting available funding focused
Literacy and other adult education issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Issues challenges • Adult literacy • Unrealistic expectations on the part of some parents
Lack of Adult Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore technology

Issue	Potential Action
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify issues such as Disabilities, individuals unaware of learning disabilities, lack of support for assessments; lack of mental health services and a disability coalition (conversation with NSCC on this) • Identify needs for various services and form partnerships to provide the services • Explore Child care issues • Training opportunities associated and potential facility located within the county Could start as a satellite site of NSCC(ex Digby & Amherst) • Learning Centre in Civic Centre?
Business and Industry becoming more involved in training and contributing \$\$\$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form partnerships • How best does the RDA communicate with small business? • Challenges associated with business in “survival mode” • Chamber of Commerce
Transition between training and jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Youth Internship • Target new businesses /match with local individuals that have completed training • Explore Best practices example Service Learning

VIII

STRATEGIC PLAN

On June 5, 2007 the GCRDA board and staff participated in a strategic planning retreat. The strategic goals and tactics were reviewed, amended and approved at that time. A revised vision was also agreed to. The tables on the following pages outline each of the priority strategies with specific Strategic Initiatives described in terms of activities, potential partners, projected outcomes and how each can be evaluated. Annual Business Plans will be developed to include annual activities, outcomes, inputs, target groups and societal outcomes for each strategic area.

Vision

“The Guysborough County Regional Development Authority will be the catalyst that makes Guysborough County a place where people can live, prosper and enjoy the natural environment”.

Resources Required

We have included a brief forecast of resources needed for each strategic initiative. Staff time is required for each initiative. Over the life of the plan there will be times when certain job skills, will be needed for tasks that are not available from existing staff. GCRDA staff will, as part of the business planning process, assess the needs and provide for these required skills by training existing staff or hiring new staff, either full time or on a term basis. An example of this is policy research, analysis and report writing. A person with these skills could be hired to work on specific initiatives. Also, GCRDA’s Special Projects Manager has been the only staff member performing the investment recruitment function. For the past few years he has been able handle this on his own. With the number of investment projects currently underway it is expected there will be a need to add another staff member to this task. This may be accomplished by providing training for current staff or hiring new staff.

We have also noted where project funding, both private sector and public sector, will be required. Again the actual amounts required and sources will be determined as a part of annual business planning process.

An implementation schedule is presented in a Gant Chart immediately following the Strategic Initiatives Tables.

Strategic Initiatives / Logic Model

STRATEGY 1 – RURAL NEEDS				
Strategic Initiative 1.1: Increase the priority of rural living issues with municipal, provincial and federal governments.				
Activities	Partners ¹	Projected Outcomes	Evaluation	Resources Required
Promote the awareness of rural needs to federal and provincial representatives by analysis, co-ordination and advocacy	GCRDA , Municipalities, Local Business Community, Team Guysborough	Recognition of the importance of rural needs by federal and provincial government representatives	Rural needs included in priorities of senior levels of government	Staff time; research, analysis and report writing; possible project funding
Strategic Initiative 1.2: Increase the opportunity for input and control of natural resources/county assets.				
Advocate for local input and control of identified natural resources/county assets	GCRDA , Municipalities , NS Dept. of Natural Resources, Local Business Community, GCCBDC, Team Guysborough	More local control and input regarding industrial lands and more timely responses to potential investors	Number of land sales; number of collaborative planning committees with local participation and number of plans with local input	Staff time; research, analysis and report writing; possible project funding
Strategic Initiative 1.3: Promote the Provincial Immigrant Nominee Program.				
1. Provide information on program. 2. Collect information required for community-identified nominees	GCRDA , NS Dept. of Immigration , GCCBDC, Business Organizations, Local Community	Increased number of immigrants	Number of candidates identified	Staff time, project funding
Strategic Initiative 1.4: Identify what is needed to retain and expand businesses in Guysborough County.				
Undertake the NSARDA Business Retention and Expansion Program	GCRDA , NSARDA , Local Business Service Providers- GCCBDC, ACOA, NSDED, NSBI, Local Business Community	Identify issues of individual businesses	Number of businesses visited and issues referred to business service providers	Staff time, staff training and project funding
Strategic Initiative 1.5: Provide support and assist in building capacity of local businesses via a sector organization.				
Assist businesses in establishing a local organization(s) throughout the mandated area	Local Businesses , Provincial and neighbouring Chambers of Commerce, GCRDA, GCCBDC	Local businesses having influence on public policy	Number of organizations established	Staff time

¹ Lead Partner is in bold font.

STRATEGY 2 – ACCESS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING				
Strategic Initiative 2.1: Identify gaps in training for potential industrial development.				
Activities	Partners²	Projected Outcomes	Evaluation	Resources Required
Work to provide relevant training opportunities for local residents	GCRDA , Industry Proponents, Organized Labour, Training Institutions (Public and Private), NS Dept. of Education, Service Canada, Guysborough Career Resource Centre	Enhanced local workforce	Number training opportunities and number of residents employed by large projects	Staff time, public and private sector project funding
Strategic Initiative 2.2: Promote the establishment of a rural transportation system.				
Research and develop a business case for an alternative rural transportation system	GCRDA , Municipalities, Strait Regional School Board, Private Sector Operators	Residents can affordably travel to work, school and other services	Establishment of an expanded transportation system in the mandated area	Staff time; research, analysis and report writing; project funding
Strategic Initiative 2.3: Continue to work with local literacy network.				
Work with partners to support the delivery of literacy training within the county	Guysborough County Adult Learning Association , GCRDA, NS Dept. of Education, Service Canada, Guysborough Career Resource Centre, NS. Dept. of Community Services	Enhanced local workforce	Increased literacy statistics	Staff time
Strategic Initiative 2.4: Facilitate access to post-secondary education and training locally.				
1. Promote innovative use of technology to deliver programs. 2. Co-ordinate and encourage partnerships to provide training facilities locally. 3. Identify training opportunities in tourism to be delivered locally at existing tourism facilities	GCRDA , NSCC, Private Training Groups, NS Dept. of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Organized Labour, N S Dept. of Education, Service Canada, Guysborough Career Resource Centre, Municipalities, Local Tourism Operators	Enhanced local workforce	Number of programs delivered, number of facilities available locally, and the number of training programs delivered in tourism facilities	Staff time, project funding

² Lead Partner is in bold font.

STRATEGY 3 – EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES				
Strategic Initiative 3.1: Continue Investment Attraction efforts.				
Activities	Partners³	Projected Outcomes	Evaluation	Resources Required
1. Identify and target potential investors. 2. Act as a liaison between potential proponents and governments and the community	GCRDA, Municipalities, Provincial Government, Federal Government, Organized Labour and Project Proponents	Increased investment in the area and resulting employment and other economic benefits	Number of investors targeted and the number of projects in various stages of development	Staff time, project funding
Strategic Initiative 3.2: Assess potential of the county's mineral resources.				
Identify and promote mineral exploration and investment opportunities within the county	GCRDA, NS Dept. of Natural Resources, Mining Industry, NS Dept. of Economic Development, Municipalities	Increased investment in minerals and aggregate and resulting employment & other economic benefits	Number of projects in various stages of exploration or development	Staff time, project funding
Strategic Initiative 3.3: Develop a Labour Market Strategy				
Facilitate a skills inventory survey	GCRDA, Service Canada, Organized Labour, Industry Proponents, ACOA, NS Dept. of Economic Development, NS Dept. of Community Services, Career Resource Centre	Ability to market existing labour force and effectively plan future training requirements.	Number of local residents employed in large projects	Staff time, project funding
Strategic Initiative 3.4: Identify and promote value-added manufacturing opportunities.				
Promote value-added opportunities related to large projects	GCRDA, Large Project Proponents, InnovaCorp, NSBI, ACOA, N.S. Dept. of Economic Development	Further investment as a result of large projects	Number of downstream/ ancillary projects in various stages of development	Staff time
Strategic Initiative 3.5: Assist in the co-ordination of community-based management of our ocean resources.				
1. Partner with local organizations to establish a research centre of excellence. 2. Continue to dialogue with stakeholders, i.e. ESSIM, etc. 3. Expand the GCSAI database to include items such as municipal land use. 4. Promote application of habitat alteration, destruction or disturbance (HADD) compensation locally	1. Guysborough County Inshore Fishermen's Association, 2. DFO 3. GCRDA 4. Local River Associations. NS Aquaculture Association, NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture	Optimize the use of ocean resources to benefit local area and reduce potential use conflicts	Centre established, database enhanced and the number of HADD projects initiated locally	Staff time

³ Lead partner is in bold font.

STRATEGY 4 – INFRASTRUCTURE				
Strategic Initiative 4.1: Continue to assist the community, business and local government to lobby for improved communications.				
Activities	Partners⁴	Projected Outcomes	Evaluation	Resources Required
Work with service providers to expand coverage of high-speed internet and cell phone coverage in the county	GCRDA, NS Dept. of Economic Development Municipalities, Community, Local Businesses, ACOA, Service Providers	100 % cellular telephone and high-speed internet coverage in the mandated area	The percentage of the area covered	Staff time
Strategic Initiative 4.2: Promote and assist with a Strait of Canso Port Master Plan.				
Participate in the development of a Port Master Plan and utilize plan to promote and plan investment priorities	Strait of Canso Superport Corp., GCRDA, Municipality of the District of Guysborough, Municipality of the County of Richmond, Private Sector, Atlantic Gateway Council	A guide to regional promotion and development of the Strait of Canso	Plan completed and number of times plan utilized to plan development	Staff time
Strategic Initiative 4.3: Continue to assist with the development of community infrastructure.				
Assist groups with planning and project proposal development	GCRDA, Community Groups, Possible Funders, Municipalities, Private Sector	Improving the quality of life for local residents	The number of plans and projects completed. The number of different communities assisted in the mandated area	Staff time
Strategic Initiative 4.4: Assist with the development of alternative energy projects.				
Assist groups and municipalities interested in alternative energy projects	GCRDA, Private Sector, NSPI., Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments	Reduced reliance on fossil fuels	The number of programs and projects completed	Staff time
Strategic Initiative 4.5: Continue to work with the private sector, community groups, municipalities and large project proponents to meet current and future housing needs.				
1. Co-ordinate the development of a Housing Association(s) throughout the mandated area. 2. Target real estate developers to provide permanent housing opportunities for new residents	GCRDA, Municipalities, NS Dept. of Housing, Large Industry Proponents, Private Sector Developers, Real Estate Brokers	An increased and more diverse housing stock to meet the needs of forecast residential growth	The number of new housing units built	Staff time, project funding
Strategic Initiative 4.6: Continue to promote development of the Strait of Canso as a key part of the Atlantic Gateway – road, rail, air and marine infrastructure.				
Liase with government, investors and Atlantic Gateway council	GCRDA, Strait of Canso Superport, Investors, Fed., Prov. and Mun. Gov't transportation service providers	Enhanced support for regional transportation infrastructure	Amount of infrastructure investment in region	Staff time

⁴ Lead Partner is in bold font.

Timeline for Implementation of Strategic Initiatives

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<i>1.1 Increase the priority of rural living issues with municipal, provincial and federal governments.</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>1.2 Increase the opportunity for input and control of natural resources/county assets.</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>1.3 Promote the Provincial Immigrant Nominee Program</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>1.4 Identify what is needed to retain and expand businesses in Guysborough County.</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>1.5 Provide support and assist in building capacity of local businesses via a sector organization.</i>	x	x	x		
<i>2.1 Identify gaps in training for potential industrial development.</i>	x	x	x		
<i>2.2 Promote the establishment of a rural transportation system</i>	x	x	x	x	
<i>2.3 Continue to work with local literacy network</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>2.4 Facilitate access to post-secondary education and training locally</i>	x	x	x	x	
<i>3.1 Continue Investment Attraction efforts</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>3.2 Assess potential of the county's mineral resources</i>	x	x	x	x	
<i>3.3 Develop a Labour Market Strategy</i>	x	x	x		
<i>3.4 Identify and promote value-added manufacturing opportunities</i>	x	x	x	x	
<i>3.5 Assist in the co-ordination of community-based management of our ocean resources.</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>4.1 Continue to assist the community, business and local government to lobby for improved communications</i>	x	x	x		
<i>4.2 Promote and assist with a Strait of Canso Port Master Plan.</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>4.3 Continue to assist with the development of community infrastructure</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>4.4 Assist with the development of alternative energy projects</i>	x	x	x	x	x
<i>4.5 Continue to work with the private sector, community groups, municipalities and large project proponents to meet current and future housing needs</i>	x	x	x		
<i>4.6 Continue to promote development of the Strait of Canso as a key part of the Atlantic Gateway road, rail, air and marine infrastructure</i>	x	x	x		
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012

IX

LINKAGES BETWEEN GCRDA STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND PROVINCIAL / FEDERAL / MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

As part of the preparation of the Strategic Plan, the strategic initiatives chosen for action have been reviewed against the vision, strategies, and priorities of the three levels of government who are all key partners of the GCRDA. Following an overview of government strategies and priorities, a summary table making specific linkages between GCRDA's Strategic Initiatives and each government strategy has been prepared.

1. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Through the Office of Economic Development, the provincial government has prepared its economic development strategy titled "Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity 2006.

Vision

- ❑ Our vision is of a thriving Nova Scotia that by 2010 in Canada to live, work, do business, and raise families.

Within this document they also identify a number of other strategies that have either been developed or are in the process of being developed.

- ❑ Seizing the Opportunity – Nova Scotia's Energy Strategy.
- ❑ The Skills Nova Scotia Framework
- ❑ Towards Sustainable Environment, our green plan
- ❑ Immigration Strategy
- ❑ New Forestry and mineral strategies are also being developed. Nova Scotia's branding initiative with its key attributes, new positioning, and tagline – Come to Life, provides a foundation on which we can build. The goal of the initiative is to promote a clear and positive image for the province through programs, partnerships and policies, both at home and around the world.
- ❑ Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity 2006 pulls together all of government's planning and strategic thinking.

Strategic Focus Areas

- ❑ Financial Capital – (Investment)
- ❑ Natural Capital – (Natural Resources)
- ❑ Built Capital – (Infrastructure)
- ❑ Human Capital – (Labour Force)

- ❑ Social Capital – (Regional Capacity)
- ❑ Trade and Competitiveness
- ❑ Productivity Through Innovation
- ❑ Business Climate

Put the right human, social, financial, natural and built capital in place, and you have, by definition, improved the business climate. We need to focus on creating a business climate that supports our ultimate goal of sustainable competitiveness and our export and productivity priorities.

Making it Happen

- ❑ Government can set the stage for sustainably competitive economic growth, but ultimately business makes it happen. Effective partnerships will be fundamental to progress. Those partnerships will extend beyond the provincial government to include federal and municipal governments, businesses and community groups.

Call to Action

- ❑ Building a skilled workforce
- ❑ Making affordable energy available
- ❑ Increasing our productivity
- ❑ Developing the Atlantic Gateway

2. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) works in partnership with Atlantic Canadians to improve the economy of the region through the successful development of business and job opportunities, and thus pursues its mandate "... to enhance the growth of earned incomes and employment opportunities..."

In order to effectively pursue its mandate, the Agency has identified three strategic outcomes that reflect its mission and the benefits it strives to provide to Atlantic Canadians. These outcomes are:

- ❑ Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size.
- ❑ Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada.
- ❑ Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic Economy.

Agency Priorities for 2007-2008

ACOA's Ongoing Priorities

- ❑ **Improve the climate for business growth** for small and medium-sized enterprises to help them start, expand and modernize their businesses.
- ❑ **Carry out policy analysis and research** to determine the areas in which ACOA can act to carry out its mandate most effectively.
- ❑ **Advocate the interests of Atlantic Canada** to make new government initiatives more responsive to the needs of Atlantic Canada through **Advocacy Champion files**.

- ❑ **Help communities build their capacity and confidence** in order to identify and co-ordinate the implementation of priorities for economic development in their region.

ACOA's New Priorities for 2007-2008

- ❑ **Foster Improved productivity and competitiveness of innovative technologies**, through enhanced efforts to assure the realization of their commercial opportunities.
- ❑ Explore the feasibility and options for improved productivity and competitiveness in the renewable resource sectors.
- ❑ Conduct studies and undertake other activities targeting the Atlantic Gateway to devise a corporate strategy.
- ❑ **Establish management priorities** that focus on the Government of Canada's governance and accountability agenda, values and ethics, and succession planning Agency-wide.

ACOA's Approach

- ❑ Working with partners in all levels of government, the private sector, academia and non-governmental organizations, ACOA seeks to advance economic opportunities and innovation in order to serve the needs of businesses, organizations, individuals and communities in Atlantic Canada.

3. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

The four Municipal Governments in Guysborough County do not have current economic development plans. A key part of the planning process to develop this strategy were the initial meetings convened with each of the councils to discuss their key issues, area of priority and overall participation in the process. Each council was also represented at each of the four Action Team planning sessions.

The key issues and priorities identified by the various councils included:

- ❑ Population decline; youth are leaving and it is impacting on provision of services.
- ❑ Also some workers have to leave home to earn an income.
- ❑ Need to retain and attract people.
- ❑ Need good jobs matched with right training to provide youth opportunities.
- ❑ Need follow-through on previous development opportunities that have been researched.
- ❑ Need to work together.
- ❑ Cell coverage and high speed internet.
- ❑ Development of affordable housing.
- ❑ Local Community College opportunities.
- ❑ Economic development related to infrastructure.

4. SUMMARY OF LINKAGES

Linkages Between GCRDA Strategic Initiatives and Provincial/Federal/Municipal Development Strategies and Priorities

GCRDA Strategic Initiatives	OED – Opportunity for Sustainable Prosperity	ACOA 2007-08 Priorities and Strategic Outcome	Municipal Governments
1. Rural Needs	Strategic focus <input type="checkbox"/> Social Capital – Regional Capacity Other strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration Strategy	Outcome <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic and sustainable communities <input type="checkbox"/> Policies and programs to strengthen economy Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Help communities build capacity and confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Need to retain and attract people <input type="checkbox"/> Follow through on previous opportunities
2. Employment Opportunities	Strategic focus <input type="checkbox"/> Human Capital <input type="checkbox"/> Social Capital <input type="checkbox"/> Business Climate Other strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Culture Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Strategy	Outcome <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive and sustainable enterprises Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Improve climate for business growth. <input type="checkbox"/> Help communities build capacity and confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good jobs matched to right training <input type="checkbox"/> Need to retain and attract people
3. Infrastructure	Strategic focus <input type="checkbox"/> Build capital <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Business climate Other strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic Gateway Strategy	Outcome <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic and sustainable communities <input type="checkbox"/> Policies and programs to strengthen economy Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Improve climate for business growth <input type="checkbox"/> Help communities build capacity <input type="checkbox"/> Improve productivity <input type="checkbox"/> Activities targeting Atlantic Gateway	<input type="checkbox"/> Cell coverage and high speed internet <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development related to infrastructure
4. Post-Secondary Education	Strategic focus <input type="checkbox"/> Human capital - Labour force Other strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Nova Scotia Framework	Outcome <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic and sustainable communities <input type="checkbox"/> Policies and programs to strengthen economy Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Improve climate for business growth <input type="checkbox"/> Help communities build capacity <input type="checkbox"/> Improved productivity	<input type="checkbox"/> Good jobs matched to right training <input type="checkbox"/> Local Community College opportunities

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MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The GCRDA board, committees and staff will undertake an Annual Review of the Strategic Plan. The staff will compile evaluative data based on the outcomes and criteria developed for the current Business Plan. The outcomes of the Annual Review will determine the activities and outcomes for the coming year's Business Plan. The annual evaluation approach and activities will be consistent with the recently developed Enhanced Performance Management Framework prepared as part of the Structural and Operational Review of the Nova Scotia Regional Development Authority.