

COMMUNITY GROWTH STRATEGY

For

THE MIRAMICHI REGION

Prepared by P.K. Consulting

February 28, 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents a plan (Community Growth Strategy) to advance the economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability objectives of the community, within the boundaries of Enterprise Miramichi (EM). The CGS is an integrated plan that will provide all three levels of government a more complete picture of how the Miramichi region is developing while highlighting opportunities for growth and investment.

The CGS presents a high level view of relevant issues and desired projects in four principal areas: economic, social, cultural and environmental. The CGS is the result of a broad-based community consultation process that was driven from the bottom-up and, therefore, reflects the views of the stakeholders and the current socio-economic context of the region.

In addition to its being a plan to help guide efforts to achieve broad community needs and aspirations, the CGS will also serve to influence a revision of the priorities, goals and objectives set forth for the EM's economic development strategy for the region. This planning and consultation process, therefore, will result in the production of two documents: the integrated CGS (this document) and an updated Strategic Plan for the region.

The initial data gathering (survey questionnaire/interview) process was directed at local communities (municipalities, Local Service Districts and First Nations) and the identified issues and proposed projects were mainly local in nature, as was expected. However, the needs and opportunities identified through the EM Advisory Forum workshop held on January 13, 2007 focused almost exclusively on region-wide concerns. This report captures both levels of identified need and opportunities, including recommendations on how to improve things.

Economic Sector Priorities:

Though forestry and forestry-based manufacturing continue to be the mainstay of the Miramichi economy, tourism, value-added manufacturing (particularly metal fabrication and value-added wood products for the export market) and knowledge-based industries (animation and upscale Customer Contact Centres) were identified as key sectors providing the greatest opportunity for economic expansion and job creation in future.

Priority social, cultural and environmental issues in the Miramichi were identified as:

Social:

1. Drug abuse
2. Health and physical fitness
3. Shifting demographics:
 - a. Youth out-migration
 - b. Seniors care: who will look after seniors?
4. Access to health care
5. Education: large illiterate population

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Cultural:

1. Education/Literacy:
2. Need to promote the Miramichi culture
3. Culture of EI/seasonal work (needs to change)

Environment:

1. Maintain and improve water quality (river)
2. Preservation of ground water
3. Air pollution reduction (from fuels)- i.e. transportation
4. Insecticide spraying (better forest management)
5. Identify causes and treat high rate of cancer in the region

Region-wide Projects/Initiatives:

Projects/initiatives were proposed to help address some of the priority issues and needs of the region (and capture opportunities) – in the four targeted areas:

Economic:

1. Transportation (implementation of the ADI Report recommendations)
2. Gas Pipeline (extend to northern New Brunswick)
3. Bio-fuel (capture agriculture and forestry potential to produce)

Social:

1. Health and Wellness (including drugs and health care)
2. Shifting demographics

Cultural:

1. Language (bilingualism/multilingualism)
2. Open River Museum
3. Schools as Community Centres
4. Metepenagiag Heritage Park

Environment:

1. Transportation (ADI Report recommendations)
2. Recycling projects
3. Stronger enforcement of environmental laws (more teeth in laws)

Additional detail on these priority issues and projects are presented in the body of this report. As well, considerable information with respect to survey results, workshop report recommendations and related materials is detailed in the appendices. This is a comprehensive report that represents the views of a broad representation of Miramichi business, civic and political leaders who have given substantially of their time. Implementation of any number of the proposed strategy and project initiatives presented in this report should contribute substantially to the enhancement of the Miramichi region's socio-economic wellbeing.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

This paper presents a plan (Community Growth Strategy) to advance the economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability objectives of the community, within the boundaries of Enterprise Miramichi (EM). The CGS is an integrated plan that will provide all three levels of government a more complete picture of how the Miramichi region is developing while highlighting opportunities for growth and investment.

The CGS presents a high level view of relevant issues and desired projects in four principal areas: economic, social, cultural and environmental. The CGS is the result of a broad-based community consultation process that was driven from the bottom-up and, therefore, reflects the views of the stakeholders and the current socio-economic context of the region.

In addition to its being a plan to help guide efforts to achieve broad community needs and aspirations, the CGS will also serve to influence a revision of the priorities, goals and objectives set forth for the EM's economic development strategy for the region. This planning and consultation process, therefore, will result in the production of two documents: the integrated CGS (this document) and an updated Strategic Plan for the region.

It is important to note that though the CGS was facilitated by EM, it is to be owned by the community. The updated Strategic Plan, on the other hand, will be developed and owned by EM's Board of Directors. The objective is not to expand EM's mandate, but to provide the agency and the community with a tool to better communicate to governments and stakeholders a more integrated approach to economic development.

The existing strategic plan, entitled *A Strategic Plan for the Miramichi Region* (2003), is being updated by the EM Board of Directors, with the assistance of a consultant, in parallel with the CGS process. In doing so, EM is endeavoring to build on its existing community economic development strategy. The updated Strategy will result from a rigorous analysis of the region's economy and its performance over the past three years of Strategic Plan implementation. It will also be influenced by the advice and recommendations derived through the CGS consultation process but focused on EM's area of responsibility; namely economic development. The end product will be a plan that is owned by EM and supported by their partners.¹

The preparation of the CGS was undertaken in response to a Federal-Provincial agreement requiring the development of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan or, in the case of New Brunswick, the CGS. Development of the Strategy is funded by the Department of Local Government and was to involve municipalities, Local Service Districts (LSDs) and First Nation (FNs) communities in the region. In carrying through on this responsibility, the province decided in favor of "piggy-backing" on the existing economic strategic planning process, that was getting underway at the time, by regional enterprise agencies (EAs). To this end, the Province has partnered with EM, as well as 12 other EAs, to develop their respective integrated plans (CGS).

¹ Partners: These are local and government agencies with and through whom EM works to successfully plan and implement its strategic plan; e.g. BNB, RDC, PETL, ACOA, HRDC, Miramichi Community Business Development Corporation, and member Municipal Councils, are considered full partners in the Enterprise Agency structure.

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The revised Strategy will include measurable (attainable) benchmarks and objectives, and establish the means to set priorities, through collaboration with stakeholders and partners that match resources and opportunities. In undertaking this initiative, it was considered imperative that the plan have a high level of community involvement which is reflected in the process outlined below.

1.2 Approach and Methodology

This section briefly outlines the study approach and methodology (see Work Plan, Figure 1)²

In keeping with their responsibility to lead the planning process, the EM Board of Directors established a Regional Planning Committee (RPC) to oversee the planning and consultation process. The Committee was comprised of EM Board members and staff as well as their government partners, including representatives from the Department of Local Government (Appendix A). A consultant agency (AMEC) was engaged to assist with the planning process, including the preparation of the two (earlier mentioned) strategy documents.

At the outset, all relevant documents were reviewed, including the region's economic development strategy (2003), to assess the current situation and identify potential issues.

The RPC agreed to undertake a combined interview and survey questionnaire process. Interview Guides and Questionnaires were prepared by the consultant to survey all municipalities, LSDs and FNs in the Miramichi region for purposes of identifying their community's respective economic, environmental, social and cultural issues and needs. Face-to-face interviews were requested with the municipalities and the questionnaires sent to all targeted informants (13 in total). A cover letter accompanied the distributed questionnaires explaining its purpose and requesting that the informants consult with all relevant groups in preparing community responses.

Group interviews were conducted by the consultant with the City of Miramichi and Village of Doaktown councils, and completed questionnaires received from seven of the thirteen informant groups. The result of the research initiatives is summarized in Appendix B.

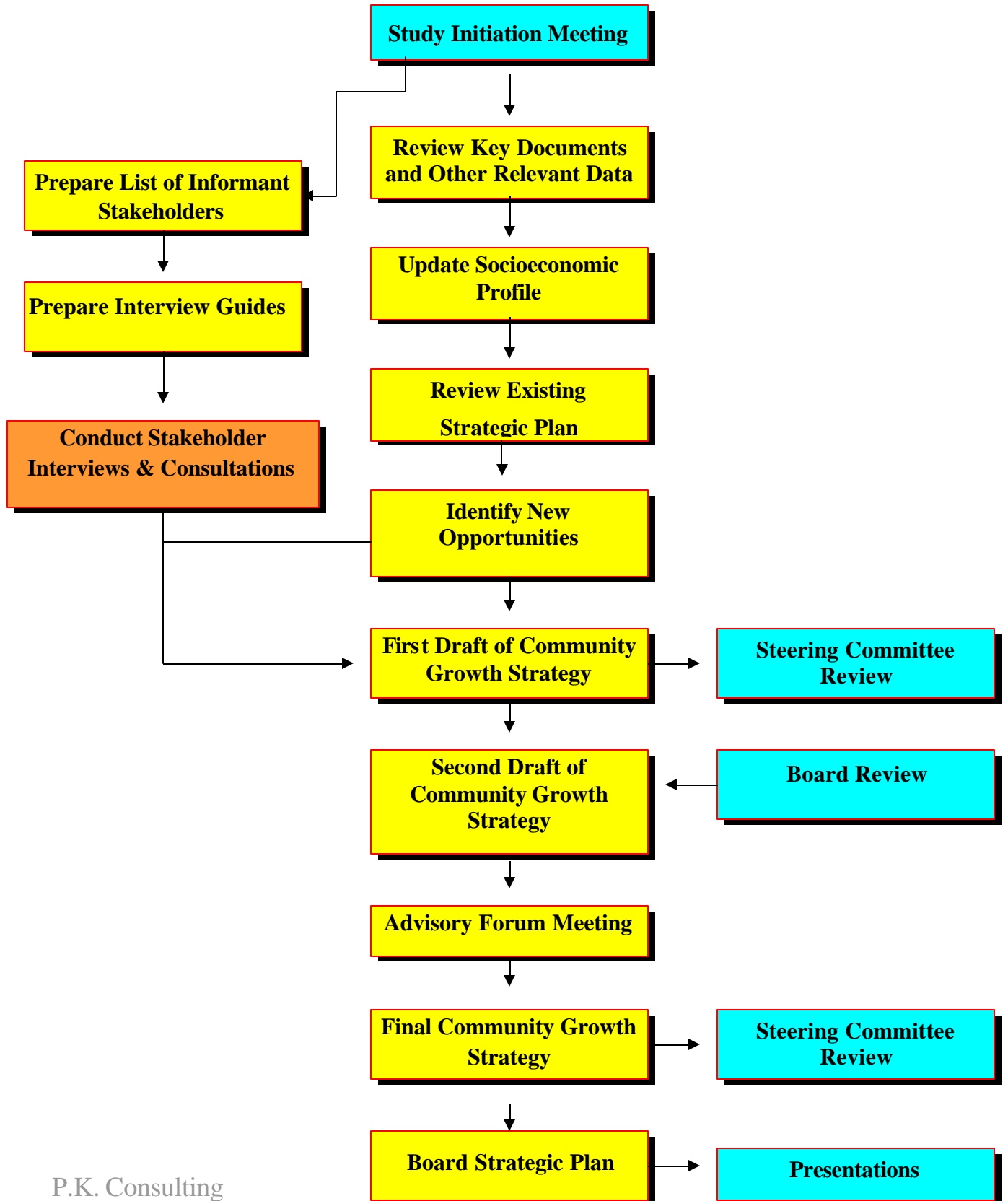
This research data was consolidated and incorporated into a work book that was used to prepare participants to an Advisory Forum workshop held at the Rodd Miramichi on January 13, 2007. Thirty-two community, business and political leaders participated in the workshop and helped prepare a draft Community Growth Strategy. Their deliberations and recommendations are incorporated into this report, together with the other research data above mentioned, and serves to form the core elements of the CGS (see Appendix C).

Simultaneous with the CGS survey questionnaire and interview process, an analysis of the region's economic development performance was undertaken using a Results-based Logic Model analysis (see EM Strategic Plan Update 2007) with a particular focus on performance in the

² The Work Plan encompasses the work for both CGS and the updated economic development strategy.

FIGURE 1

Work Plan



region’s “economic base”. In addition to one-on-one interviews with EM staff, group interview sessions with the region’s sector groups, facilitated by EM staff, were conducted for purposes of assessing past sector performance as well as receiving industry input and recommendations for planning forward – the new strategy.

Finally, the economic recommendations from the Advisory Forum Workshop were also used to help update the EM economic development strategy –for final presentation (and approval) to the EM Board of Directors.

1.3 Community Growth Strategy versus Community Economic Development Strategy

Strategic planning is about making a conscious and deliberate effort to take charge of and give direction to the destiny of your community. Strategy is about making choices

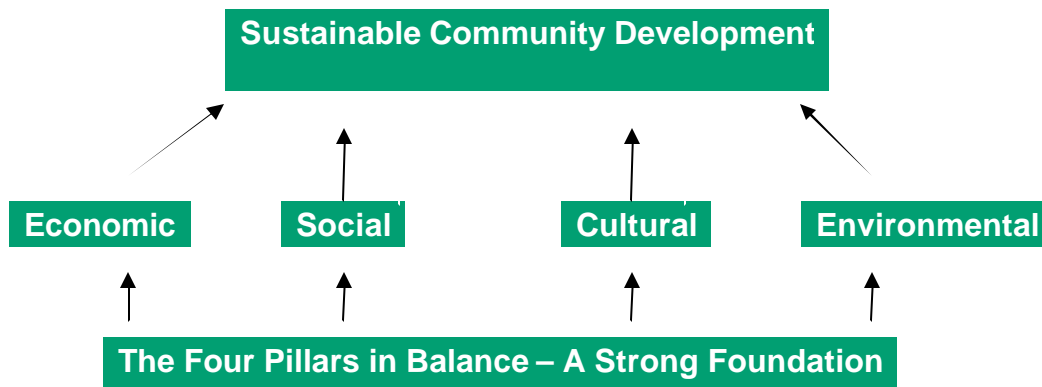
As mentioned, there are two documents to be prepared from this planning process:

- *Community Growth Strategy (CGS)* – which is the result of the Advisory Forum workshop and associated initiatives;
- *Community Economic Development strategy (CED)* – which is to be prepared by Enterprise Miramichi (assisted by the consultant) with input from the CGS process. It is important to note that EM has implementation responsibility for the CED but **not** for the CGS). The CED strategy will concentrate on what needs to be done to improve the economic circumstances of the Miramichi and is, therefore, a more focused plan. Figure 2 below presents a schematic representation of the CGS

FIGURE 2

Community Growth Strategy

Actions required to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions of the Miramichi to achieve sustainable community development



2.0 Synopsis of the Region

2.1 Development Indicators

Enterprise Miramichi established short-term, intermediate-term and long-term goals in preparing its Strategic Plan (2003). The overall SP goal was to stimulate the development of the “economic base” of the Miramichi region and to diversify it. In the short-term (three years) the desired results were to be on jobs and business growth and development. It is against these “success indicators”, as well as other quantitative and qualitative measures, that performance of the local economy over the past three years (2003-06) has been assessed as part of this strategic planning initiative (see Development Indicators, Appendix D).

In addition, as part of this current strategic planning process, additional indicators of regional economic performance have been developed as part of the Results-Based Management and Accountability Framework model above mentioned (see EM Economic Strategy Update 2007).

2.2 Situation Analysis/Diagnostic

A comprehensive Situation Analysis, including a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, of the Miramichi economy was undertaken as part of the 2003 economic development Strategic Plan process and is incorporated into an associated Background Report. During the current CGS process, research analysis focused on the identification of changes that have occurred in the regional economy during these past three years. A synopsis of these recent changes, as identified by the various surveyed informants, is the following:

- UPM Kraft mill closure, resulting in \$700-800K loss in taxes, 400 jobs & almost \$20M in direct salaries (Despite this setback the region has rebounded very well from all indications)
- Satellite companies shipping/installing in Alberta (from Miramichi)
- More retail and Customer Contact Centres (call centres) now in the region
- Retail Power Centre (Miramichi region is now more of a retail hub)
- More confidence in the region (than a couple of years ago): people spending, more housing, real-estate values up and more investment interest

It is worthy of note that the above expressions of improvement in the local economy tend to be supported by the results-based, quantitative analysis that is being carried out as part of the economic strategy planning process which is happening in parallel with the CGS exercise. Preliminary economic analysis indicates that the Miramichi has experienced net positive job growth in the region’s “economic base”, generally in keeping with the economic targets set in the 2003 Miramichi Economic Strategy. Should these gains be real, it would suggest a significant improvement to a regional economy that has been experiencing continuous negative growth or degradation for over the past twenty years. It will be interesting to have these numbers confirmed and determine whether such apparent net growth is sustainable on a go-forward basis. The Economic Strategy Plan update, with the input from the CGS process, should seek to focus on those areas that offer the best prospects for growth in the years ahead. This will mean securing

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and strengthening the industry base currently in place (traditional industries) while building on those sectors which offer the best prospects for future growth. The economic analysis and recommendations of CGS process will help to point the region in the most promising direction.

Despite a number of very positive indicators of regional economic revitalization over the past three years, some lingering or negative impressions remain. Respondents expressed that:

- Out-migration has resulted in declining population and loss of skilled pool of workers
- There is a continuing lack of product sales in fisheries
- No growth (business and population) is occurring in smaller rural communities
- There are fewer young families in rural communities
- There is a continuing strain on (depletion) natural resources; e.g. forestry, fish and peat.
- Rationalization of existing industries is continuing
- Exchange rate impact, high energy prices and a slow down in US economy remains a concern, especially in a region such as the Miramichi that is distant from its markets.

Respondents identified the main socio-economic shifts that have occurred in the Miramichi region over the past 3 years (demographics, employment, income, labour force, education, etc.), as follows:

Demographics:

- Loss of skilled people to Alberta (opportunities elsewhere)
- This is generally hurting the local economy though some money is returning to region
- Demographics will affect all Miramichi industries (talented pool of workers, etc.)
- Respondents expecting the declining population trend to continue
- More young people are required in the region
- Nothing to encourage our Educated Youth to stay in the area
- First Nations have a young population

Unemployment & Exodus of Skilled Labour:

- Miramichi currently experiencing one of highest rates of unemployment in province (combined with an aging and migrating labour force of skilled workers)
- Technology replacing jobs
- Mill operations reducing number of shifts/jobs
- Labour force is reputed to have one of the highest levels of illiteracy in Canada
- Some companies view rural NB as a place to get cheap labour; e.g. Call Centres
- The region needs skilled workers: focus has been on Liberal Arts
- Too much dependence on EI; less focus on education

2.3 Key Issues

Advisory Forum workshop participants identified the following as the key issues facing the Miramichi in each of the four targeted areas (numbered items indicate priorities):³

³ The Advisory Forum participants had the benefit of the various respondent interview and questionnaire results upon which to draw in forming their more region-wide assessment and recommendations.

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Economic Issues:

- Disparity with respect to economic conditions between the Miramichi and rest of province (need to reduce the degree of disparity)
- Equality of opportunity - northern NB vs the south (need to provide incentives for fair and equal opportunity between the two regions; e.g. natural gas)
- Need to move away from concentration on forestry (natural resources) and pursue greater diversity in the Miramichi region economy (Miramichi experiences a weakness with respect to its dependency on natural resources industries. However, this does not suggest neglecting efforts to maximize resource development potential)
- Partnerships: region and industries must partner and collaborate to achieve success
- (Community leaders) must take active roles (encouragement of politicians)
- Educate workforce - to make shift from seasonal to full time work & to address changing demographics
- Transportation deficiencies (Route 108)
- Bio-fuel opportunities

Social Issues:

1. Drug abuse
2. Health and physical fitness
3. Shifting demographics:
 - a. Youth out-migration
 - b. Seniors care: who will look after seniors?
4. Access to health care
5. Education: large illiterate population

Cultural Issues:

1. Education/Literacy:
 - a. There are different perspectives of what culture is (Irish, Scottish for example or theatre and the arts, etc.);
 - b. Language and its connection to heritage
2. Need to promote Miramichi culture:
 - c. Need to identify and share what we have in the region (communicate). We do not know what we have in the region; i.e. what is available;
 - d. Tend to promote everyone else's culture but our own – proud to be Canadian – need to preserve our culture;
3. Culture of EI/seasonal work:
 - e. EI is destroying the ambition of our people (content to stay in the cycle);
 - f. Need to provide incentives for people to work/train in the off time.

Environmental Issues:

1. Maintain and improve water quality (river)
2. Preservation of ground water
3. Air pollution reduction (from fuels)- i.e. transportation
4. Insecticide spaying (better forest management)
5. Causes of cancer: identify and treat high rate of cancer (thought to be environmentally related) in the region

3.0 Key Economic Growth Areas

The Miramichi Advisory Forum identified the region’s “key economic growth areas” below stated. However, it is important to point out that these do not necessarily indicate the most important economic sectors in the Miramichi economy. For example, forestry and forest-based manufacturing is still by far the most dominant segment in the region’s economy and one that deserves and will require continuing attention and support. However, its potential for growth appears limited, except perhaps with respect to moving up-scale in certain niche areas of value-added. The sectors and sub-sectors identified below are listed in order of importance or priority with respect to the Advisory Forum participants’ perception of their growth potential. In other words, Advisory Forum members perceived that these particular sectors, if properly nurtured and developed, will offer the best prospects for regional growth and prosperity going forward. However, they expressed that the region should not neglect its traditional industries.

3.1 Priority Sectors (to foster growth and development in the Miramichi)

3.1.1 Tourism

Tourism is perceived as having considerably more potential than the region has so far been able to extract from this sector. Though this is considered a sector with much greater growth potential, it should be recognized that tourism is perhaps the most competitive economic sector in the world and marketing and suitable product are key to success. Development of this sector will require clear product definition and vision.

3.1.2 Metal Manufacturing and Value-Added

The Miramichi region has a solid base of metal industry manufacturers, a number of whom have been steadily growing, and increasingly exporting across North America and beyond. This is strong evidence of their becoming “world-class” competitors, thus providing a strong base on which to build for economic development purposes.

The region is showing signs of slowly moving up-scale in other value-added areas, such as wood processing and other resource-based areas. There appears to be considerably more potential at this higher level in the value-chain than is currently being realized. There are a number of obvious constraints that make for competitive disadvantage in this area, not the least of which is the deteriorated condition of the region’s transportation and service infrastructure as well as low education and employment skill levels.

3.1.3 Knowledge-Based Industry (KBI)

A few years back, the Miramichi had an early lead in developing a base of KBI industries. However, there has been some slippage in recent years and the earlier momentum needs badly to be re-captured. One continuing promising sub-sector is that of animation. The Miramichi has a small base of companies supported by a nationally recognized Animation program at the Miramichi Community College. This sub-sector appears to offer real promise to help move the region forward in the KBI business.

The Miramichi also has a fair representation of Customer Contact Centres. However, most of these are currently at the low-end of the scale in this business. To build on the current base of companies, in helping to move the Miramichi economy forward in this sector, the region must find the means to go upscale. The ability to do so will, in part, be dependent on the quality and education of the workforce and prospective workers' willingness to accept full-time employment. The Miramichi cannot hope to be competitive at the low end of this industry due to its relatively high-cost structure vis-à-vis its competition which is world-wide.

3.1.4 Bio-Fuels

The Miramichi has underutilized agricultural potential, as well as for wood and wood waste materials. With the current and expected continuing high cost of energy in future, the Miramichi region should explore the potential and cost-benefits of developing bio-fuels from these under utilized sources.

3.1.5 Health Care Products

The potential for development of certain health care products, for a growing industry sector, appears to be under the radar screen in the region at the moment. Advisory Forum members expressed that they saw real potential for developing a number of such products locally and recommended these be explored.

3.1.6 Retirement Communities

The Miramichi, it was proposed, possesses real potential to be attractive as a retirement community. Such a concept should not be viewed as simply a retirement village (s). Rather it is intended that the region should become a retirement community; i.e. retirement community-friendly in seeking to provide those amenities, services, etc. that interest, attract and retain retirement age people; e.g. summer homes, condos and apartments, assisted living facilities, etc.

3.1.7 Retail/Service Sector

The retail/service sector has improved noticeably over the past three years, especially with the build-up in the former Douglastown area. The region appears to be on its way to becoming the retail/service hub of Northeastern New Brunswick as proposed in the 2003 Strategic Plan. It will be important to build on these gains and to keep this sector on a positive development path.

3.2 Economic Strategy Considerations

The stated priority sectors reflect the beliefs and perceptions of participants to the Miramichi Advisory Forum workshop. These will be passed along to Enterprise Miramichi in preparing the Strategic Plan Update (2007-10). However, it should be respected that responsibility for determining the region's economic development strategy is vested with the Enterprise Miramichi Board of Directors. It will be their final decision as to which of this reports recommendations should be included in that strategy.

In preparing the region's economic development strategy, Enterprise Miramichi might wish to consider the following, in addition to the Advisory Forum's recommendations :

- Focus on sectors tied to the region's competitive advantages, global, national and provincial trends, education capacity and innovation capacity.
- Focus on sectors that provide greatest opportunity of success ("work with what we have")
- Strengthen the competitive advantages of partnerships (e.g. NBCC, NRC, business and government)
- Provide support to existing, established and successful entrepreneurs to facilitate their evolution to expanded business activity. Specific needs include: business diagnostics, problem solving, marketing analysis, business plan preparation, market penetration, e-commerce tools (web sites, Internet transactions), electronic accounting and bookkeeping, human resource management, and governance (Board of Directors, decision-making, organizational structure)
- Upgrade skills and education at all levels for all age groups. Provide essential skills training to meet the specific needs of local business (avoid "over-education"). Encourage NBCC-Miramichi to provide finishing courses to keep learners in the region.
- Convince semi-retired, ex-region, successful entrepreneurs to return to the region and start new ventures.
- Work with local educational and financial institutions and entrepreneurs to improve business preparedness, access to capital, future planning, and reporting to banking standards.
- Leverage improving education levels of the 55-64 age group to start new businesses, backfill labour force gaps and mentor budding and established entrepreneurs.
- Work with GNB to upgrade critical infrastructure: highways, broadband, energy.
- Work with BNB to increase access to financial capital (venture, loans, program funding, etc.) in the province.
- Work with municipalities to provide critical infrastructure, a welcoming environment for newcomers, and a supportive atmosphere and relevant facilities/activities for youth.
- Enhance the emerging spirit of cooperation amongst Enterprise Miramichi, Chaleur-Restigouche-Peninsula: develop a formal and scheduled mechanism to share information, address common issues, and collaborate on common projects (e.g., Rivers and Bays Tourism Strategy).
- Enhance awareness and encourage use of (by employers) of the CV (curriculum vitae databank) - candidates with post secondary training desiring to return to the region.
- Provide a convenient and consistent means by which employers can advertise job openings.

The key growth sectors for the region should be selected on the basis of the factors of production that can be influenced at the regional level: people, infrastructure, access to capital, land/location,

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and natural resources. Competitive factors which are not controllable by the region include: currency exchange rates, labour rates, energy costs, financing costs, transportation costs and offshore competitive forces. Unless there are mitigating and compelling reasons to do otherwise, Enterprise Miramichi should not focus its efforts on the sectors which are highly vulnerable to factors where emerging economies enjoy significant competitive advantage. Enterprise Miramichi should focus attention on sectors where there is critical mass - already existing or strongly promising.

The prosperity of a region depends on the productivity with which it uses its human, capital and natural resources. This is manifested in the way in which its firms compete. Productivity is a function of macro-environmental factors, the quality of the micro-economic business environment, and the sophistication of company operations and strategy. Together these determine the capacity for a region to produce internationally competitive firms and support rising prosperity.

Macro-environmental factors consist of political, economic, social and technical elements that can present enterprises with both opportunities and threats, but over which even the largest of business have little, if any, influence. A stable macro-economic environment featuring low inflation, low and stable interest rates and taxation policy favourable to savings and investment create an environment in which competitiveness is possible.

However, prosperity is actually created by the micro-economic foundations of competitiveness: the workers, firms, markets and associated institutions in which competition actually takes place. This is also where Enterprise Miramichi (and supporting organizations) is best able to support the conditions for enterprise development.

Figures 3 and 4 present a schematic representation of the above recommendations in helping the reader to more readily understand and appreciate the suggested framework.

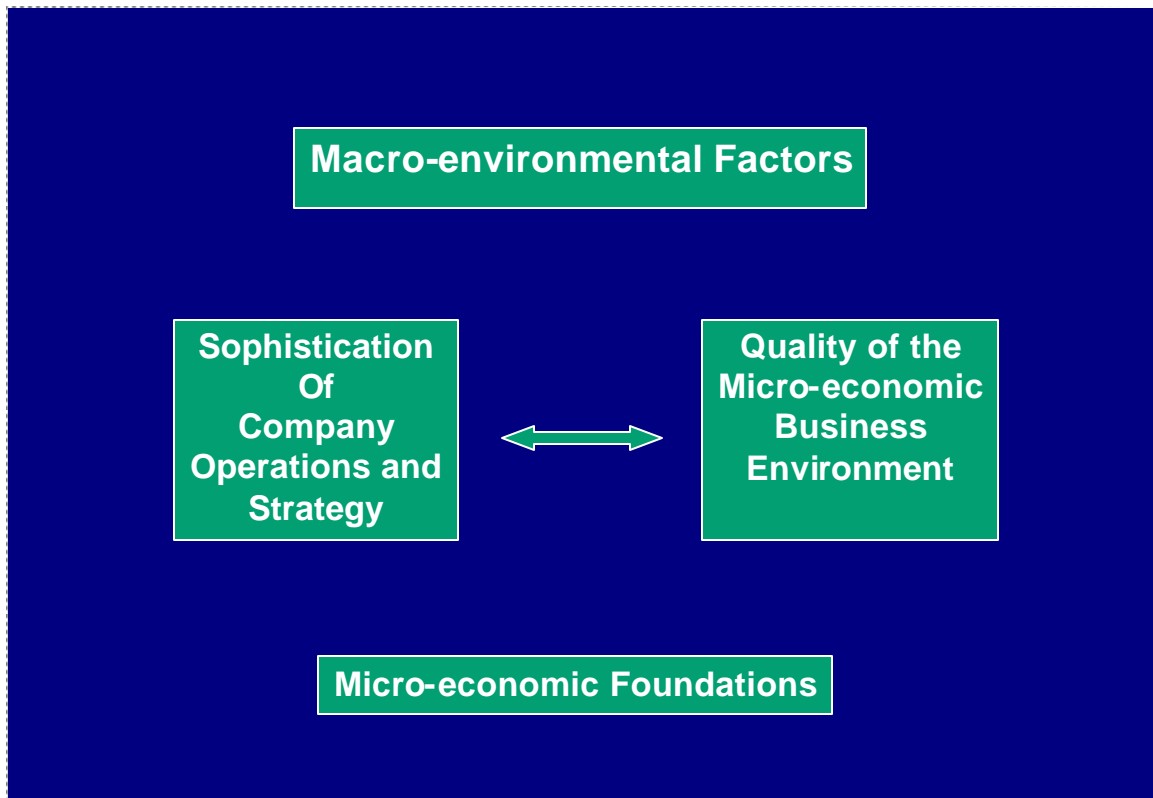
3.3 Economic Strategies and Action Plans

As part of their workshop responsibilities, the Miramichi Advisory Forum proposed action plans on how to address their three top priority growth sectors - for purposes of strengthening the sectors in a manner that will foster business growth and success (see appendix C for details - *Community Growth Strategy Workshop Report*). Action Plans for the following were prepared:

- Tourism
- Value-added manufacturing
- Knowledge-based industry (KBI)

Figure 3

The Competitiveness Model



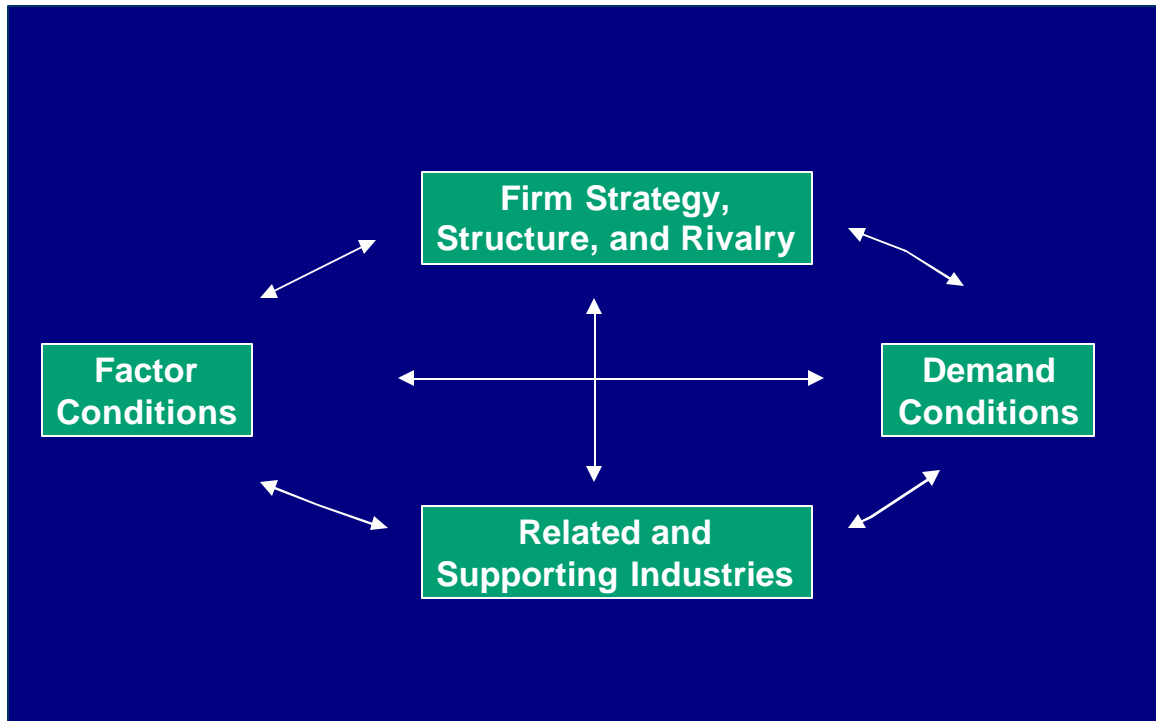
4.0 Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Plans and Priorities

4.1 Background

The following plans and priorities are presented on two levels: region-wide and local (municipal, LSD and FN). The interview and questionnaire surveys served up mainly local level issues and projects as was expected. The Advisory Forum participants were asked to identify issues and projects, in each of the four targeted CGS areas, on a more region-wide basis. Thus, this section of the report presents both levels of identified need and opportunity; i.e. local and regional.

Figure 4

Microeconomic Business Environment



4.2 Issues, Projects and Priorities

Key Issues were identified and prioritized - from a regional perspective - in Section 2.3 above. Action Plans were prepared by Advisory Forum workshop participants for each of the top three issues in the four targeted CGS areas (again see Appendix C for details). Key issues at the local level are identified in Appendix B.

Key Economic Growth Areas (sectors and sub-sectors) are identified and prioritized in section 3 above. Section 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, and 4.2.4 present identified priority projects at the regional, municipal, LSD and FN levels respectively. Details for each of these can be viewed in Appendices B and C.

4.2.1 Miramichi Region-wide Priority Projects

Projects

Economic Projects:

1. *Upgrade transportation infrastructure:*
 - a. *Route 108*
 - b. *Route 8*
 - c. *Route 126*
 - d. *Airport (to handle charters)*
 - e. *Railway improvements*
2. *Northern NB gas pipeline extension*
3. *Bio-fuel (develop using agricultural resources)*

Social Projects:

1. *Health and Wellness, including drugs and health care:*
 - a. *Must access the Provincial Health and Wellness Strategy*
 - b. *Determine how to communicate it clearly and effectively to the community; e.g. success of Mango Program*
 - c. *Need a team approach where different departments such as departments of Health, Family and Community services and Health and Wellness are working together; i.e. share budgets and tackle project together*
 - d. *Identify a Health Care Centre of Excellence for the Miramichi region; e.g. kidney, drugs, type of cancer, diet physical fitness, etc.*
 - e. *Must lead the way and push for funding to emphasize prevention in health and wellness.*
2. *Shifting Demographics:*
 - a. *Need to create vibrancy in the community (region); e.g. eliminate boredom so as to keep our youth at home and support our growing Seniors Community*
 - b. *Need to bring the four groups together (economic, social, cultural, environmental) perhaps four times a year to monitor and review actions that have been taken (or not taken) on the issues facing the Miramichi in the four referenced areas;*
 - c. *Must work in parallel; i.e. tear down silos (e.g. if a group wants to develop a social, cultural or environmental product/service then the business community must support and accompany group to government to communicate the need for assistance and support;*
 - d. *Make a list of successes and accomplishments and promote the heck out of them to the community and the world.*

Cultural Projects:

1. *Bilingualism: make training available to private sector:*
 - a. *Should not be cost-restrictive;*
 - b. *Should not be just French and English;*
2. *Open River Museum/Metepenagiag Heritage Park*
3. *Library, Access Centre, Nova Program – bring these together and make our schools community centres;*
4. *Join with Miramichi Region Multicultural Association (MRMA)*
5. *Integrate culture/language into the school system at an early age*

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Environmental Projects:

1. Transportation: Upgrade transportation infrastructure (see Miramichi Transportation Study by ADI, 2007)
2. Improve/expand recycling projects
3. Establish stronger laws to enforce environmental corrections; e.g. hook ups to municipal sewers
4. Recruit a “champion” to review causes/treatments for environmental diseases.

4.2.2 Municipalities

Priority project identified by the region’s municipalities are the following:

City of Miramichi:

- Implementation of Transportation Study (see ADI Study of *Transportation Strategies in Support of Economic Development in the Miramichi [2007]* for details and cost-estimates)
- Extension of Natural Gas Pipeline to Northern NB (feasibility study required)
- Complete northern By-Pass (phase 2) from Beaverbrook Blvd to Route 11, \$25-35M
- Research and Development- provision of researchers at NBCC Miramichi
- Three Extra Development Officers for Miramichi Region, \$450,000/annum
- Expansion of University Programs at Miramichi Campus, \$1.25M
- Center of Wellness
- Miramichi Open River Museum (MORM)
- Refit Former NB Power Generating Station using environmentally friendly fuel sources

Village of Doaktown:

Transportation systems (roads) and lagoon development and retention are Council priorities

- South Road Upgrade, \$900,000
- Chip Seal Village streets, \$40,000
- Upgrade road to industrial park
- Promote Salmon & Woodsmen Museums as joint summer camp experience
- Jobs (a priority)
- Manufacturing
- Retirement housing with bowling alley and/or swimming pool
- Playground park
- Combined walking trails
- Sewage lagoon repair and retention

Blackville

- Youth activities
- Sewer extension

4.2.3 Local Service Districts

Black River-Hardwicke:

- Achieving consensus on time/season/ eligibility to harvest scarce natural resources –fishing and hunting

Lower Newcastle -Russellville:

Enhance Gordon's Wharf, \$40,000
High speed internet
Cable TV

Upper Miramichi:

- School library, Nova program and access centre
- Eight week joint summer school project (Salmon & Woodsmen Museums)

4.2.4 First Nations

Eelground:

- Vocational & skilled trades training
- Technology & telecommunications
- Expansion of Drug Treatment, \$250,000K
- Drug Education & Prevention, \$150,000K
- Emergency Shelter
- Tourism Dev Plan, \$100,000K
- Environmental Assessment of Region, \$250,000K
- Long-term environment planning & support of all partners

Metepenagiag:

Business Centre/Retail Outlets at Metepenagiag Heritage Park, \$4M
Adventure Lodge expansion, \$750K - \$1M
Fighting Drugs!
Language program –Mi'kmag
River clean up

5.0 Implementation

It is important to note that implementation of the region's CGS will rest foremost with the proponents of each of the proposed initiatives. This means that the social, cultural and environmental projects will be implemented by the lead organization as identified in Table 4.X. in Appendix B of this document. However, the RPC will undertake to direct this report and recommendations to the appropriate authorities to ensure they are aware of the Miramichi region's needs and expectations, as identified through this process, in each of the targeted areas.

Economic recommendations, from the CGS, will be presented to Enterprise Miramichi for consideration. Economic related functions, which fall within the mandate of the Enterprise Agency, will be implemented in accordance with the Action Plan provided in the Board of Directors Strategic Plan.

All province of New Brunswick-related recommendations, of an economic nature, will be channeled through BNB for appropriate action. All other government related recommendations will be presented to the Department of Local Government for distribution and representation to the appropriate government department or agency.

The measurement of performance for economic related functions will be guided by the measurement framework provided in the Board of Directors Strategic Plan. The measurement of achievement for social, cultural and environmental projects will be monitored by a regional level committee, perhaps the RPC, specifically charged with that accountability

6.0 Conclusions

The CGS is a plan that has been developed by the people of the Miramichi, with consultative assistance. It presents a list of key issues and projects, together with associated strategies and action plans on how to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental circumstances of the region in future. The plan presents both region-wide as well local issues and opportunities, in each of the four targeted areas, which require attention and action.

The paper also identifies the economic growth areas (sectors and sub sectors), on a priority basis, for consideration by the Enterprise Miramichi Board of Directors in updating their Economic Strategic Plan for the region. The document further proposes how these priority economic sectors of the region can best be strengthened and enhanced so as to support business growth and expansion, thus generating wealth and employment in the region.

Finally, the report presents a comprehensive list of projects/initiatives, with associated responsibilities and timelines that are recommended for consideration and action by various lead groups and organizations and their partners. Implementation of any number of these proposed strategic and project initiatives should contribute substantially to the enhancement of the Miramichi region's socio-economic wellbeing. On a cautionary note, it will be important not to attempt everything at once. Priorities will need to be addressed in a systematic manner.

APPENDICES

Regional Planning Committee

Pam Ward, EM Board (Chair)
Stephen Rae, EM Board
Gordon Scott, EM Board
Andreas Avenriep, EM Board
Jack Christie, EM Board
Gerald Fournier, Local Government
Claude Innes, BNB
Michael Lavigne, ACOA
Brian Donovan, EM Staff
Paul Daigle (AMEC)

EM Community Grow Strategy Interview/Questionnaire Results

Questions and Summary of Responses from Miramichi Municipalities, LSDs and FNs

Economic

What are the most important changes to the economy that have taken place your area (community) in the past 2-3 years? Provide quantitative evidence where possible.

UPM Kraft mill closure (\$700-800mm loss in taxes, 400 jobs & almost \$20M in direct salaries)
Retail Power Centre (Miramichi region is now more of a retail hub)
Out-migration has resulted in declining population and loss of skilled pool of workers (west)
Satellite companies shipping/installing in Alberta (from Miramichi)
More retail and Customer Contact Centres (call centres)
More optimistic mood in region (than a couple of years ago): people spending, more housing, real-estate values up and more investment interest
Exchange rate impact and slow down in US economy (negatives)
Lack of product sales in fisheries
No growth (business and population) in smaller rural communities
Fewer young families in rural communities
Village has seen some significant developments in the last three years. This tends to be primarily in the service sector; e.g. Call Centre; Tim Horton's; a new auto parts store; a new Health Clinic; a new service station and some new general retail.
Purchase of Bowater's land by Irving with downsizing and loss of jobs.
Decrease in Tourism's adverse effect on the Central New Brunswick Woodmen's Museum
Not being able to acquire commitment of fibre from Crown Lands to enable potential businesses to purchase and operate the former Colter Hardwood Mill.
Vocational training opportunities for our members via Aboriginal Skills Employment Partnership
Biggest loss for Metepenagiag occurred in commercial fisheries (i.e. snow crab) from a drop in prices from \$3/lb to \$1/lb in 3 years. Represents huge loss in revenue to band administration.
Downsizing: (Blackville) mill only open three days per week

Which economic sectors in the region seem to be functioning successfully? Why? How is this demonstrated? Is this trend likely to continue?

Manufacturing: "a new maturity- local firms participating in much larger markets"; i.e. exporting
Metal fabrication (better collaboration/cooperation among the metal fabrication firms)
Value-added wood (possibility of pellet factory)
KBI (growth in animation; e.g. FatKat)
Peat industry ("needs more support from government")
Construction ("housing represents a big opportunity")
Retail-service: Power centre is drawing from a larger geographic/market radius (new buying public includes an expanded francophone market)
Oyster fishery
Mussel aquaculture
Forest manufacturing: JD Irving mill should be running as long as lumber lasts. This one main employer in village pays well and tends to provide permanent work.

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

“Many other businesses are doing well”

Technology: manufacturers that can access long-term contracts

Computer or Contact Centre-based services sector

Tourism (Open River Concept, camping, etc.)

Tourism: salmon fishing

Which economic sectors in the region are having difficulty? Why? How is this demonstrated? Is this trend likely to continue?

Forestry:

- Natural resources; i.e. forestry, recreational fishery
- Forestry sector experiencing mergers, takeovers and rationalization (technology replacing jobs) Village is dominated by one significant player and they have gone from eight suppliers of wood to four. It is believed this will be further diminished.
- Weyerhaeuser – threat of closure (allocation of resources)
- Stumpage fees (need for a new formula fee structure)
- Exchange rate presents an added challenge
- Forestry (First Nations) because of limited access. Need support from local partners - for more or improved access; i.e. Woodlands Division
- Poor lumber market

Tourism:

- Tourism numbers are down – trend will continue unless marketing improves
- “Tourism is probably suffering the most”
- Rate of exchange is a disincentive to travel
- Tourism “industry at a crossroads” but has potential – product is weak (need “product” to market)
- Tourism needs new tourism coordinator – paid staff
- Open River Concept requires \$2 to \$3 million
- Winter tourism – mild winter weather poses problems for retailers and outdoor adventurers
- Metepenagiag Heritage Park

Fisheries:

- Age of fishers/demographic issues; efficiencies and EI benefit issues
- Commercial fishery (government seems to be favoring the aquaculture sector)
- Costs have increased in recent years but gross catches are increasing more slowly. Profits are not there and this will force people to move west to seek employment

Transportation and Energy:

- Miramichi region has a transportation disadvantage vs southern NB; i.e. infrastructure (roads) and competitive service (rail) place local firms at a disadvantage - costs and distance to markets
- Regional industry needs competitive options (transportation, energy [natural gas], etc.)
- Energy: failure to extend natural gas pipeline to northern NB

Service-Retail sector: somewhat volatile with new developments and closures

R&D: Miramichi has problem accessing R&D funds

General:

- “None are operating successfully: Without some new business starting this is likely to continue”
- Businesses have mostly part-time help (not any benefits).
- At present the population of the area are discouraged
- Need to establish one lobster season for all; one moose hunt for everyone; one law for harvesting

Which economic sectors or businesses appear to offer promise for the future. Why? What is the rationale for this assessment?

Manufacturing:

- Value-added manufacturing (nurtured through Miramichi Prosperity Fund)
- Forestry: secondary and tertiary (value added) if competitive (specialized niches): needs competitive options (transportation, energy, etc.)
- Forest manufacturing – small communities dependent on single industry
- Manufacturing (have the raw material ... educated people and resources)
- Value-added exports could serve to keep young people in the area

Forestry:

- Proposal to start a Wood Products Park for small businesses to work together (Boisestown): small companies would have shared equipment such as Dry Kilns and Loaders, etc. Requires a commitment of quality saw logs from Crown Lands to encourage the re-opening of the Hardwood Mill.
- Pellet mill

Tourism:

- Needs better signage from TCH; better road access, local campers
- Tourism sector is not structurally set up – product and logistically
- Region has the basic product (places and people)
- An aging, more affluent tourist is available
- Metepenagiag Heritage Park

Mining (base metals)

KBI:

Animation and 3D gaming

Miramichi has the resources – educated people

Customer Contact Centres

Opportunities in telecommunications service that can be done locally

Transportation: through existing road, sea, air & railway system

Education / R&D:

- Education: “adding value to people”
- R&D: opportunities exist with NRC information pipeline

Construction:

Housing: new models are being developed in the housing sector

General:

- Nothing
- Whole spectrum

What are the main shifts that have occurred to the socioeconomic milieu in the area over the past 3 years (demographics, employment, income, labour force, education, etc.)?

Demographics:

- Region reputed to be losing some 500 people per annum (going west)
- Generally hurting local economy (some money coming back from Alberta)
- Demographics will affect all Miramichi industries (talented pool of workers, etc.)

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

- Respondents expecting the population decline trend to continue
- Loss of skilled people to Alberta (opportunities elsewhere)
- More young people required
- Nothing to encourage our Educated Youth to stay in the area
- First Nations have a young population

Unemployment & Exodus of Skilled Labour:

- Miramichi currently experiencing one of highest rates of unemployment in province (combined with an aging and migrating labour force of skilled workers)
- Technology replacing jobs
- Mill operations reducing number of shifts/jobs
- Labour force is reputed to have one of the highest levels of illiteracy in Canada
- Some companies view rural NB as a place to get cheap labour; e.g. Call Centres
- Need skilled labourers: focus has been on Liberal Arts
- Too much dependence on EI; less focus on education

Within the context of the above, in your opinion, what are the primary elements that should be incorporated into a CGS strategy?

Education and Training:

- Literacy: region has one of the lowest levels of literacy in Canada
- All facets: trades (skilled workers), university courses (NBCC), affordable education/youth; campus status in Miramichi;
- Expand 1 year university program on Miramichi (out of community college) – needs \$15,000 subsidy per year (\$1.25 million per year for post-secondary education on Miramichi)
- Trades: not enough welders being trained to replace those retiring (lack of trained/experienced trades teachers)
- Need to place more emphasis on opportunities in vocations. First Nation members have more opportunity for training in university than vocational
- With a large youth population we need to focus on vocational/trades training to fill immanent shortage of skilled trades
- Eel Ground is working on a workforce assessment and will be requesting assistance from Enterprise Miramichi to develop our workforce for the long-term

Demographics:

- A focused immigration policy should be established for region
- Survey of existing businesses focused on HR needs in next 5 yrs to replace aging demographics

Manufacturing:

- More manufacturing (particularly value-added, finished products)
- There must be something to encourage growth in Rural Communities. Continually raw materials are being shipped elsewhere. If Rural Communities are to survive there must be something done to encourage the Value Added manufacturing utilizing a portion of the forest products being shipped out of the area, province and country.

Tourism:

- Need more tourism – need more brochures promoting the opportunities and what could make the area more sustainable

R&D:

- Access to high speed connection in NBCC
- A PhD at the college (to help access R&D program funding)

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Transportation:

- Push for a level playing field for transportation – manufacturing, tourism

Tourism:

- Tourism Strategy
- Open River Museum – phases 2 & 3
- Conference centre

Economic Development:

- Additional development officers for the region

Action:

- “Can study all you want. Until action is taken we could have a very large retirement area”.
- Need to identify who and how to address strategic issues and move projects forward

What should be done to ensure that the growth strategy, once developed, should be ‘recognized’ throughout the region and implemented? What, if anything, should be done to more effectively communicate it?

- Strategy must be good, believable and do-able
- Presentations at schools, churches, community halls, group meetings and newspaper releases – with updates on a regular basis
- The strategy needs to be supported and disseminated regionally
- Community-based advertising
- Buy-in requires understanding and strong partnerships
- Foster collaborative partnerships – a united community
- Set common goals that allow for on-going measurement and accountability
- The very survival of our area depends on something being done to reverse the present trend. The Government must be made aware of the seriousness of this situation.

Environmental

What is the most pressing or important environmental issue (s) that needs to be addressed in this region?

- High rate of cancer (related to environmental factors?)
- Closure of Kraft mill has improved environment dramatically
- Environment is improving, especially since closure of kraft mill
- River banks are deteriorating – partially result of rising sea levels and climate change - \$ 30 million required over 10 years (to address river bank problem)
- Ground water – community needs a local transfer station
- Sewage lagoon repair
- Extending sewer
- River pollution
- Our forests must be preserved for future generations. The current trend towards a GREEN ENVIRONMENT must be continued.
- Need fewer transports on the road

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Positive Indicators:

- River is coming back to healthier state
- Rivers and streams are getting better (focus must remain here)
- Many local companies investing to comply with government environmental regulation

What is the most important environmental project/initiative (s) that needs to be undertaken in the best interest of the environment and social wellbeing of the region?

Power Plant: possible clean-up (NB Power responsibility)

Less wood (should be) harvested along rivers & streams

The health of the Miramichi watershed for personal health

Need for transfer station

Sewage services

Sewer extension

Sewage lagoon repair – too much effluent being discharged into the Miramichi river (salmon swimming in it)

Promote GREEN ENVIRONMENT

Development should not happen at the expense of the environment. Environmentally sensitive development should be a given. Need to plan with future generations in mind.

River cleanup / river bank reconstruction

Social

What is the most pressing or important social need/issue (s) that needs to be addressed in this region?

Illiteracy:

- NB has highest illiteracy rate in Canada and Miramichi has a high rate in NB

Education:

- need to find ways to make it easier for people to go back to school
- need to train people to enable them to get off Social Assistance and Welfare
- need to give people self confidence

Health and Physical Fitness:

- high levels of obesity
- cost of maintaining children in organized sports is getting too high for many

Drugs:⁴

- Drug abuse in many communities is becoming a major challenge for social service providers – impacts crime rates, child neglect and creates a cycle of abuse
- Addiction services needs to be addressed
- Drugs gets lots of press
- Youth and drugs (were mentioned by a number of respondents as a serious problem)
- Prescription drugs
- “Drugs and high recreational costs are related”

⁴ Drug abuse was mentioned a number of times as a social issue, the author separated from other health related issues.

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Social Disparity:

- Greater division of (social) class occurring
- Income levels are lower
- 90% of MLA's workloads have to do with Family/Community Service issues
- Need social assistance numbers (for comparisons with other regions)
- Social values (are changing)

Jobs:

- lack of job opportunities, especially in more rural areas
- Need full year-round employment to replace seasonal employment.

Shifting Demographics:

- Youth leaving community after school
- Retiring people return

What is the most important social project/initiative (s) that needs to be undertaken in the best interest of the overall social wellbeing of the region?

Literacy and Education:

- More education
- Private sector participation in Literacy initiatives
- Community Academic Services (CAS)
- Community Assets Building Model needs to be supported
- Government policy (education) must change
- Need for more collaboration (lack of collaboration among government departments)
- Community asset building (need for long-term strategy)

Drugs:

- Groups such as MACY, Thrive!, Mango, MRAC, addiction services and Community Academic Services Program need to be nurtured, expanded and financed to assist in combating these social deterrents
- Kick-the-Drugs Campaign: Drugs are destroying communities
- Have prevention treatment available to stop abuse of prescription and recreational drugs
- Need to put drug dealers out of business – increased enforcement
- More youth activities

Social/Recreational::

- Recreation so young people will not be on street
- No Sunday shopping or fishing – Sunday should be a family day
- Retirement housing and would like to see a bowling alley and/or swimming pool.
- Need to ensure that the new combined school for Boiestown and Doaktown area has the School Public Library, Nova program and Access Centre
- All (residents) need to feel they are valued partners in the development and opportunities that occur in the region

Jobs:

- Bring in some industry or industries and possibly a grocery store as there is only one at present

Cultural

What is the most pressing or important cultural need/issue (s) that needs to be addressed in this region?

Multicultural (hard to hold multi-cultures together – need to create a level playing field)

Miramichi viewed as a bit of an English enclave (in a largely Acadian region)

“Community is being discriminated against due to language demographics of region”

Concern regarding French-English relations

Preserving the Mi’kmaq culture: language development biggest tie to culture

General population needs to be aware of First Nations and other minority challenges and contributions

First Nations have been marginalized

Maintenance and development of region’s cultural tourism assets:

- Metepenagiag Heritage Park
- Open River Concept (phases 2 & 3)
- Atlantic Salmon Museum
- Central New Brunswick Woodmen’s Museum

What is the most important cultural project/initiative (s) that needs to be undertaken in the best overall interest of the region?

Promote Miramichi’s 4 major cultures: (Irish, Acadian, Scots, First Nations) working together

Miramichi should work to manage continuing good relations between linguistic groups

Need to have school system bi-lingual for all

Need to work for a common goal

Joint societies – French, English, Scots, etc. - should not be looking at a separate hospital association and promoting divisive information/directives to their respective members

Promote Mi’kmaq language

Multicultural groups may present opportunities to develop immigration strategies (to help address out-migration)

Develop/maintain cultural projects (see above)

Seek consensus (agreement) on when it is the best time / season to harvest our resource

Promote the areas Salmon and Woodmen Museums as a joint summer camp experience

Atlantic Salmon Museum and the Central New Brunswick Woodmen's Museum: must work together to survive (promote 8 week Summer School project)

AGS initiatives need to be inclusive of First Nations and other minorities – this will require a major on-going, inclusive approach

Table 4.X: Projects and Priorities (this table is populated for each municipality, LSD and First Nation in the region)

| Municipalities, LSDs and First Nations | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| Economic | | | | | | |
| Priority A Projects | Description | Rationale (and fit with CGS) | Estimated Cost | Benefits | Lead Organization | Partners |
| City of Miramichi | Transportation Infrastructure | Implement ADI report recommendations | See study | See study | Government of NB | Government of Canada |
| Black River/ Hardwicke | Consensus on time/season/ eligibility to harvest natural resources –fishing and hunting | Resources are increasingly scarce. Need to agree on when to harvest & equality of opportunity to do so | | | | |
| Lower Newcastle/ Russellville | Enhance Gordon’s wharf | River system | \$40,000 | Increase Tourism | Local comm. | |
| | Hi Speed Internet | | | Growth | Community | |
| | Cable TV | | | Housing | | |
| Village of Doaktown | Repair and expansion of South Road and Prospect | Narrow - not safe | \$900,000 | Safer road | Applied for MRIF funding | ? |
| | Produce Cut Hardwood for processing for value added products | | | | | |
| Eelground FN | Vocational & skilled trades training | Workforce & employment opportunity assessment | | Workforce trained for regional opportunities | Province of NB Federal Gov’t Industry | City Villages FNs & LSDs |
| Metepenag g FN | Business Centre/Retail Outlets at Heritage Park | Spin-off from Heritage Park | \$ 4 million | | Metepengiag First Nation | |
| Priority B Projects | Description | Rationale (and fit with CGS) | Estimated Cost | Benefits | Lead Organization | Partners |
| City of Miramichi | Natural Gas Pipeline extension | Offers Northern municipalities the same competitive advantage being offered to the Southern NB Municipalities | Feasibility study needed | Alternative source of energy. Will assist in attracting manufacturing companies. | Government of NB | Gov of Canada Affected municipalities |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------|--|--|---------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Complete Northern By-pass from Beaverbrook Blvd. to Route 11, which bypasses the northern part of the City | In the past it was felt that having a highway running through a municipality ensured the that people would visit that location, but that trend is changing and people are now looking for efficient infrastructure that allows them to make the choice of whether they will visiting or not? | \$25-30M | | Province of NB | Gov of Canada City |
| | Provision for researchers to be located at the NBCC-Miramichi campus through NRC and NBCC-Miramichi agreement. | There is currently a high-speed research network (CA*Net 4) linking the Miramichi facility to others in the province but it is not being utilized to it's maximum potential due to the lack of commitment of designated researchers. | TBD | Most of these initiatives are linked to the IT sectors from a research perspective but many applications could be linked directly with resource-based industries. | NBCC-Miramichi | Province of NB City NRC |
| | Three Extra Development Officers for Miramichi Region to be assigned "seek and find" duties for the Miramichi Region in the sectors of retail, manufacturing, and IT | With the current announcement of Weyerhaeuser closing indefinitely in February of 2007 and the constant uncertainty of UPM Miramichi's Greenwood facility there is a need to have different types of industry to replace the positions that could be potentially lost. | \$450,000/yr | Create sustainable economy that is not fully reliant on forestry industry, champions to drive regional agenda, create new business and employment opportunities | Federal & Provincial Governments | City |
| | | | | | | |
| Village of Doaktown | Chip Seal Village streets | Bring to standard | \$40,000/km | Streets in bad shape | Village of Doaktown | |
| | Road to industrial park | To help attract industry | | | | |
| | Promote Salmon & Woodsmen Museums as joint summer camp experience | Feasibility study was commissioned | | Status of study not known at time of interview | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | Technology | | | | | |
| | Telecommunications | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Metepenagiag FN | Adventure Lodge expansion | Spin offs from Park – successful and growing | \$750K - \$1M | Often overbooked | Metapenagiag FN | |
| | | | | | | |
| Eelground FN | Technology & telecommunications | Local opportunities abound | | Workforce trained for existing & future opportunities | Province of NB Federal Gov't Industry | City Villages FNs & LSDs |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| Social | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|----------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Priority A Projects | Description | Rationale (and fit with CGS) | Estimated Cost | Benefits | Lead Organization | Partners |
| City of Miramichi | Expansion of University Programs at Miramichi Campus to offer wider variety of educational alternatives to the Miramichi Region | During the last provincial election 5 million dollars over the next four years was promised by the Liberal Government to assist in expanding the current University programs offered at Miramichi campus which is located at NBCC Miramichi. | \$1.25M | Assist in retaining/ attracting youth in the Region, increase alternatives for continuing education for citizens of the Miramichi, creation of employment (professors/ administrative), increase potential number of post secondary graduates in the Region which assists in attracting different types of industries. | Government of New Bruswick | |
| | Centre of Wellness: Embrace wellness initiatives that are currently being coordinated within the region and incorporate them into City of Miramichi's Strategic Plan | Studies have shown that the Miramichi Region has some of the highest social problems within Canada on a per capita basis. | Unknown | Reduce drug related addictions, reduce health related problems. | | |
| Village of Blackville | Youth Activities | | | | | |
| Village of Doaktown | Jobs (a priority) | Keep people in area | | Will help population to grow | Village | |
| | Manufacturing | | | | | |
| | Retirement housing with bowling alley/swimming pool | Large number of seniors | | | | |
| | Grocery store | | | | | |
| Eelground FN | Expansion of Drug Treatment | | \$250K | Regain productive contributing community members | | |
| | Drug Education & Prevention | | \$150K | | | |
| | Emergency Shelter | | | | | |
| Metepenagieg FN | Fighting Drugs! | Partnered Communities | | | shared | FN & City Mir |
| Upper Miramichi | Hardwood Mill to produce cut hardwood for value added | A must for community growth and stability | \$1M | Save a Rural Community | Community Cooperative | Ent Miramichi ACOA |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| LSD | products | | | | | |
|---------------------|--|---|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Upper Miramichi LSD | School library, Nova program and access centre | Ensure that the new combined school for Boiestown and Doaktown area has the School Public Library, Nova program and Access Centre. | | | | |
| Culture | | | | | | |
| Priority A Projects | Description | Rationale (and fit with CGS) | Estimated Cost | Benefits | Lead Organization | Partners |
| City of Miramichi | Miramichi Open River Museum (Phases 2 & 3) to have a museum without walls to reflect the natural history and beauty of the region. See attached business plan. | Phase 1 of the M.O.R.M. is currently under way. This project incorporates four of the distinct cultures within the City of Miramichi (Irish, Acadian, First Nations, Scottish). Utilize existing areas of interest and market them as a complete package, while focusing on the diverse cultures located within the region. | See Business Plan | See Business Plan | City of Miramichi | Province of NB Government of Canada |
| Village of Doaktown | Bowling alley Swimming pool Playground park Combined walking trails | Keep young people off streets | | Healthy living | Village Government | |
| Eelground | Tourism Dev Plan | Part of larger tourism development | \$100,000K | Larger, more varied offerings & multi day excursions | Ent Miramichi Province Federal Gov't | FNs Villages LSDs |
| Metepenagias FN | Language program –Mi'kmag | 50/53 native languages endangered: Mi'kmag is one | | | First Nations (3) | Red Bank Eelground Burnt Church |
| Upper Miramichi LSD | 8 week joint summer school project (Salmon & Woodsmen Museums) | The Atlantic Salmon and the Woodmen's Museum need to work together to survive. | | Survival of museums and economic benefits to region | | |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| Environment | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Priority A Projects | Description | Rationale (and fit with CGS) | Estimated Cost | Benefits | Lead Organization | Partners |
| City of Miramichi | Refit former NB Power generating station located on Water St. in the former town of Chatham using environmentally friendly fuel sources. | Current facility is not being utilized but the possibility of upgrading it to an environmentally friendly generating station helps reduce green house gases and increase the availability of alternative sources of energy. | Needs feasibility study | Reduction of green house gases, creation of employment, utilization of a vacant generating station. | | |
| Village of Blackville | Sewer extension | | | | | |
| Village of Doaktown | Sewage lagoon repair and retention | Too much effluent discharged into river – salmon, swimming | Waiting for engineer report | Salmon preservation & better swimming | Village | Government |
| Eelground FN | Environmental Assessment of Region Long-term environment planning & support of all partners | We will not be stuck with cleanup costs for industries that pollute & leave | \$250,000K | Accurate assessment of existing situation | Federal & Provincial Governments | FNs Villages City |
| Metepenagieg FN | River clean up | River is our best selling point - keep it clean | | | | All |

Enterprise Miramichi Advisory Forum Workshop Report

Introduction

A workshop involving the Miramichi Advisory Forum was held at the Rodd Miramichi on Saturday January 13, 2007 commencing at 9:00am until 2:00pm. The purpose of the workshop was to prepare a Community Growth Strategy (CGS) for the Miramichi Region, building on the results of the survey questionnaire and interview process that involved all Enterprise Miramichi area municipalities, Local Service Districts (LSDs) and First Nation communities (FNs).

Some thirty-two Advisory Forum members (community, business and political leaders from across the Miramichi region) participated in the workshop.

The CGS is an integrated plan that will provide all three levels of government a more complete picture of how the Miramichi region is developing while highlighting opportunities for growth and investment. The preparation of the CGS was undertaken in response to a Federal-Provincial agreement requiring the development of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan or, in the case of New Brunswick, the CGS. Development of the Strategy is funded by the Department of Local Government and is to involve both municipalities, Local Service Districts (LSDs) and First Nations (FNs). In carrying out this responsibility - to prepare the CGS - the Province has partnered with the Enterprise Agencies (in our case, Enterprise Miramichi).

Once completed, the CGS is to include the following:

- Strategic Issues/Projects
- Action Plan (to address issues/projects)
- Ownership (responsibility), timelines and estimated resource requirements (to move priorities forward)

Background

The Miramichi CGS is one of 13 such strategies currently being prepared in province. These strategies are intended to feed into the overall Enterprise NB Strategy and need to be linked to the following:

- Canada Innovation strategy and growth sectors
- NB Prosperity Plan
- Human Resource programs
- Primary Delivery Agencies
- Gas Tax Agreement Rebate

A Community Growth Strategy endeavors to identify and address those actions required to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions of the community (region) in order to achieve sustainable community development. The CGS, therefore, is to be based on four “pillars”:

- Economic
- Social
- Cultural
- Environmental

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

In addition to being a stand alone strategy, the CGS will also serve to influence a revision of the priorities, goals and objectives set forth for the Enterprise Miramichi economic development strategy for the region. This planning and consultation process, therefore, will result in the production of two documents: the integrated CGS and an updated Community Economic Development Strategic Plan (CED) for the region.

Community Growth Strategy versus Community Economic Development

“Strategic planning is about making a conscious and deliberate effort to take charge of and give direction to the destiny of your community”. Strategy is about making choices

As mentioned, there are two documents to be prepared from the planning process:

- *Community Growth Strategy (CGS)* – which will result from the Advisory Forum workshop and associated initiatives;
- *Community Economic Development strategy (CED)* – which is to be prepared by Enterprise Miramichi (assisted by the consultant) with input from the CGS process. It is important to note that EM has implementation responsibility for the CED but **not** for the CGS). The CED strategy will concentrate on what needs to be done to improve the economic circumstances of the Miramichi and is, therefore, a more focused plan.

Approach and Methodology

Preparation of the CGS was to involve broad-based community consultations that were to be driven from the bottom-up. To this end, a Regional Planning Committee was established by Enterprise Miramichi to oversee the planning and consultation process (see appendix B). The Committee is being assisted in its work by Paul Daigle, President of P.K.

Under the direction of the Regional Planning Committee interview guides/survey questionnaires were prepared by the consultant for data gathering purposes:

- Interview Questionnaires sent to all municipalities, LSDs & FNs
- Groups interviews were held with Municipalities:
 - City of Miramichi
 - Doaktown
- Input of Regional Development Committee
- Additional research by the consultant
- The Advisory Forum Workshop

Community Growth Strategy Recommendations by the Miramichi Advisory Forum

The Advisory Forum workshop was a highly interactive session in which the consultant/facilitator guided workshop participants through a number of tasks in developing a draft CGS. In addressing these tasks, participants were divided into four groups or teams; namely, economic, social, cultural and environmental. The following sections, under this general heading, identify both the tasks and the participant responses (recommendations):

Task # 1:

Teams 1 & 3 *What are the primary elements that should be incorporated into a CGS strategy?*

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Responses:

- Concentrated effort to motivate tourism (players need to take active role) ownership of vision (What is the vision of our tourism association?)
- Literacy, trained employees, basic infrastructure
- Jobs: “If you have jobs... they will come” (It was perceived that out-migration is not a significant issue – workers will come if there are opportunities. Therefore, focus should be on employment creation. This may require community transition to a “nice place to live” – attractive to new employers and employees.
- To encourage existing players (industry) to grow. They can promote growth. (Should place greater emphasis on expanding local firms to expand vs “seek and find”
- Northern Gas Pipeline extension
- Transportation: implement Miramichi Transportation Study - Route 108 a priority
- Other modes of transportation also important: upgrades to route 8, twinning of route 11, improvements to rail infrastructure (and service) and port facilities.
- Skilled workforce – all facets (sectors)
- Secure product/resource; i.e. tourism)
- Infrastructure – Highways (Route 108)
- Keeping young people in region – a youth maintenance strategy
- Industry paying decent wages
- Communications – outlying communities (cable, internet (high speed)
- Literacy
- Belief in ourselves and our abilities (confidence)

Teams 2 # 4 *What should be done to ensure that the growth strategy, once developed, should be ‘recognized’ throughout the region and implemented (effectively communicate it)?*

Responses:

- Distribution of the CGS
- Develop Committee to lead (Regional Planning Committee?)
- Common people must know about CGS to bring buy-in (grass roots)
- Talk about the successes; celebrate the growth
- Need for checks and balances
- Monitor the work being done
- Branding of strategy – should be visual
- More involvement with government – better two-way communications

Task # 2

Economic/Environmental/Social/Cultural Teams were asked to answer the following:

2. *What are the most pressing or important (economic/environmental/ social/cultural) issues that needs to be addressed in this region?*

Economic Issues:

- *Disparity with respect to economic conditions between the Miramichi and rest of province (need to reduce the degree of disparity)*
- *Equality of opportunity - northern NB vs the south (need to provide incentives that will provide for fair and equal opportunity between the two regions; e.g. natural gas)*
- *Move away from concentration on forestry (natural resources) and pursue greater diversity in the Miramichi region economy (Miramichi experiences a weakness with respect to its*

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

dependency on natural resources industries. However, this does not suggest neglecting efforts to maximize resource development potential)

- *Partnerships(region and industries must partner and collaborate to achieve success)*
- *(Community leaders) must take active roles (encouragement of politicians)*
- *Educate workforce - to make shift from seasonal to full time & address demographic issues*
- *Transportation deficiencies (Route 108)*
- *Bio-fuel opportunities*

Social Issues:

1. *Drug abuse*
2. *Health and physical fitness*
3. *Shifting demographics:*
 - c. *Youth out-migration*
 - d. *Seniors care: who will look after seniors?*
4. *Access to health care*
5. *Education: large illiterate population*

Cultural Issues:

1. *Education/Literacy:*
 - a. *There are different perspectives of what culture is (Irish, Scottish for example or theatre and the arts, etc.);*
 - b. *Language and its connection to heritage*
2. *Promote our culture:*
 - a. *Need to identify and share what we have in the region (communicate). We do not know what we have in the region; i.e. what is available;*
 - b. *Tend to promote everyone else's culture but our own – proud to be Canadian – need to preserve our culture;*
3. *Culture of EI/seasonal work:*
 - a. *Destroying the ambition of our people (content to stay in the cycle);*
 - b. *Need to provide incentives for people to work/train in the off time.*

Environmental Issues:

1. *Maintain and improve water quality (river)*
2. *Preservation of ground water*
3. *Air pollution reduction (from fuels)- i.e. transportation*
4. *Insecticide spaying (better forest management)*
5. *Causes of cancer: identify and treat high rate of cancer (thought to be environmentally related) in the region*
2. *What are the most important (economic/environmental/social/ cultural) projects/initiatives that need to be undertaken in the best interest of the (environmental/social/ cultural) wellbeing of the region?*

Economic Projects:

1. *Upgrade transportation infrastructure:*
 - a. *Route 108*
 - b. *Route 8*
 - c. *Route 126*
 - d. *Airport (to handle charters)*
 - e. *Railway improvements*
2. *Northern NB gas pipeline extension*

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

3. Bio-fuel (develop using agricultural resources)

Social Projects:

1. Health and Wellness, including drugs and health care:
 - a. Must access the Provincial Health and Wellness Strategy
 - b. Determine how to communicate it clearly and effectively to the community; e.g. success of Mango Program
 - c. Need a team approach where different departments such as departments of Health, Family and Community services and Health and Wellness are working together; i.e. share budgets and tackle project together
 - d. Identify a Health Care Centre of Excellence for the Miramichi region; e.g. kidney, drugs, type of cancer, diet physical fitness, etc.
 - e. Must lead the way and push for funding to emphasize prevention in health and wellness.
2. Shifting Demographics:
 - a. Need to create vibrancy in the community (region). Have to eliminate boredom so as to keep our youth at home and support our growing Seniors Community
 - b. Need to bring the four groups together (economic, social, cultural, environmental) perhaps four times a year to monitor and review actions that have been taken (or not taken) on the issues facing the Miramichi in the four referenced areas;
 - c. Must work in parallel; i.e. tear down silos (e.g. if a group wants to develop a social, cultural or environmental product/service then the business community must support and accompany group to government to communicate the need for assistance and support;
 - d. Make a list of successes and accomplishments and promote the heck out of them to the community and the world.

Cultural Projects:

1. Bilingualism: make training available to private sector:
 - a. Should not be cost restrictive;
 - b. Should not be just French and English;
2. Open River Museum/Metapenagiag Heritage Park
3. Library, Access Centre, Nova Program – bring these together and make our schools community centres;
4. Join with Miramichi Region Multicultural Association (MRMA)
5. Integrate culture/language into the school system at an early age

Environmental Projects:

1. Transportation: Upgrade transportation infrastructure (see Miramichi Transportation Study by ADI, 2007)
2. Improve/expand recycling projects
3. Establish stronger laws to enforce environmental corrections; e.g. hook ups to municipal sewers
4. Recruit a “champion” to review causes/treatments for environmental diseases.

Task # 3

Economic Team was asked to:

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

- *List, in order of priority, those economic sectors, sub sectors or businesses that offer the most potential for the future growth of the Miramichi region.*
 1. *Tourism (participants recognized this is a very competitive economic sector where funding and marketing activities are key to success. Sector employs large numbers of low-skilled workers)*
 2. *Metal manufacturing and value-added across all natural resource sectors (Value-added could be along the lines of arts and crafts; e.g. instead of cutting trees for lumber or pulp, the output could be high-end crafts like furniture or musical instruments; the output of which would support the tourism industry and enhance the fabric of the community, making it more dynamic and creative – a nice place to live)*
 3. *Knowledge Based Industries (KBI) - Animation and customer service centres must strive to move up scale in customer contact centre business as Miramichi cannot be competitive at the low end of this industry due to cost structure, Moving up the food chain will depend on the quality and education levels of the local workforce and its wiliness to accept full time employment (Was expressed that Customer Contact Centres were at the mature stage, and would be lost to locations with lower labour costs and/or replaced with technology.*
 4. *Bio-fuels (tap region’s underutilized agriculture potential)*
 5. *Health Care products: there are a number of such products that could be developed locally (outputs of KBI sub-sector)*
 6. *Retirement Communities: not simply retirement village (s); i.e. the region (must become retirement community friendly; e.g. amenities, services, summer homes throughout community and countryside, condos and apartments in urban areas, assisted living facilities, etc.*
 7. *Retail Sector: continue to grow to compete against larger centres or become “the retail hub” of the North East.*

Task # 4

Economic Team was asked to:

Prepare an Action Plan that identifies what specific actions or initiatives should be taken, and by whom (responsible entity), to strengthen each of the top three strategic sectors/sub sectors/businesses (and thus foster economic and business growth and expansion in the region) as identified by their respective teams (see Action Plan Worksheet)

1. Tourism:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Cost Est</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> | <i>Completion</i> |
|--|------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Tourism Strategic Plan (region)</i> | <i>\$30,000</i> | <i>MRTA</i> | <i>Ent Miramichi</i> | <i>2008</i> |
| <i>Staffing & funding MRTA (Prosperity Fund)</i> | <i>\$300,000</i> | <i>MRTA</i> | <i>City of Miram</i> | <i>2007</i> |
| <i>Develop an appealing Regional Tourism Product and Miramichi “brand”</i> | <i>\$100,000</i> | <i>MRTA</i> | <i>Municipalities NB Tourism</i> | <i>2008</i> |
| <i>Rationale: Need to “brand” the region’s tourism strategy.</i> | | | <i>C of Commerce ACOA/Federal</i> | |

2. Value-Added Manufacturing:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Cost Est</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> | <i>Completion</i> |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>Promote expansion of existing firms</i> | <i>Per case</i> | <i>Enterprise</i> | <i>City of</i> | <i>On-going</i> |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| | | | | |
|--|------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Promote job quality, innovation & improved technologies</i> | | <i>Miramichi</i> | <i>Miramichi Province</i> | |
| <i>Seek to diversify Miramichi economy</i> | | | <i>Private industry</i> | |
| <i>Implement Miramichi Transportation Study recommendations (to lower transportation costs & improve efficiencies)</i> | <i>TBA</i> | <i>City of Miramichi</i> | <i>Province of NB Government of Canada</i> | <i>TBA</i> |
| <i>Extension of Natural Gas Pipeline to Northern NB (feasibility study)</i> | | <i>City of Miramichi</i> | <i>Enterprise Mir Province of NB ACOA C of C</i> | <i>Dec 31, 2007 study completion</i> |

3. Knowledge-Based (KBI):

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Cost Est</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> | <i>Completion</i> |
|--|-----------------|------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <i>Nurture existing animation studio & NBCC to encourage growth</i> | <i>TBA</i> | <i>NBCC & Animation Studio</i> | <i>City of Miramichi Ent. Miramichi Province of NB</i> | <i>On-going</i> |
| <i>Target former students of NBCC to return to Miramichi (to grow sector)</i> | | | | |
| <i>Strive to ensure Miramichi is the primary location in NB for animation sub sector</i> | | | | |

Environmental/Social/Cultural Teams are asked to:

Recommend what specific actions or initiatives should be taken, and by who), to address each of the top three strategic issues as identified by their respective teams.

Social

1. Drugs, Health & Wellness, and Health Care

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|---|--|--|--|
| <i>To address the Drug, Health & Wellness, and Health Care issues facing the Region</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Reactivate the Action Group on the Social Determinants of Health</i> <i>Have Action Group work with the Department of Public Health to lead the file.</i> <p><i>Rationale:</i> The mandate of Public Health best encompasses the whole area of Health & Wellness (Water Quality, Personal Health, Community Health)</p> <p><i>Cost:</i> \$ 150K per annum (salary, travel, administration, etc.)</p> | <i>Public Health in collaboration with the Action Group for the Social Determinants of Health.</i> | <i>Healthy Active Living</i> <i>Miramichi Alzheimer Society</i> <i>Miramichi Big Brothers</i> <i>Miramichi Carrefour Beausoleil</i> <i>LSD Representatives</i> <i>City of Miramichi</i> <i>NBCC Miramichi</i> <i>MRHA</i> <i>Hospital</i> <i>Chamber of Commerce</i> <i>Action Group for Social Determinants of Health</i> <i>Miramichi Literacy Council</i> <i>Canadian Mental Health Association</i> <i>Police and RCMP</i> <i>Child Safety Research & Innovation Centre</i> |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

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|--|--|--|--|
| | | | <p><i>First Nations English & French School Districts Enterprise Miramichi Downtown Business Associations</i></p> <p><i>Completion Date: April 1, 2010</i></p> |
|--|--|--|--|

2. Shifting Demographics:

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Need to address the shifting demographics facing the Miramichi.</p> <p>Improving economic development will become a challenge when the region is faced with out-migration of youth and others. This will certainly impact on the growth and prosperity of our region.</p> | <p>1. What is the reality of out - migration? Conduct a survey/study to determine how serious the situation is regarding youth and people leaving the region.</p> <p>2. If it is determined that situation is serious, develop a strategy and action Plans to improve the culture-of-confidence in the Region</p> <p>3. Encourage our young people to stay to improve the vibrancy of the community (more women).</p> <p>Estimated Cost: \$ 125K <i>(for both studies combined)</i></p> <p><i>Funding to come from Municipal, Provincial, Federal sources, including Northern NB Development Fund and BNB</i></p> | <p><i>Enterprise Miramichi (in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce)</i></p> | <p><i>Enterprise Miramichi Dept of Post Secondary Education & Training Chamber of Commerce ACOA Downtown Bus Assocs City of Miramichi Mir. Youth House NBCC Miramichi BNB LSDs English & French Schools Youth Groups Senior Groups Carrefour Beausoleil University</i></p> <p><i>Completion Date: April 1, 2008</i></p> |

3. Celebrating Region's Successes:

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>The Miramichi region fails to celebrate its success and its hospitable culture.</p> <p>By promoting & improving communication of our community and region Miramichi will be able to grow the culture of confidence that our</p> | <p>Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and promotion program for the region</p> <p>Estimated Cost: \$ 400K-\$500K</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary • Marketing/Communication • Travel • Admin | <p><i>Municipalities & First Nations</i></p> | <p><i>Enterprise Miramichi ACOA LSD Representatives City of Miramichi NBCC Miramichi Carrefour Beausoleil BNB Chamber of Commerce Village of Blackville Village of Doaktown</i></p> |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| community needs to become strong and prosperous. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Etc. <p><i>Funding to come from Municipal, Provincial, Federal sources, including Northern NB Development Fund and BNB</i></p> | | <p><i>Downtown Bus Assocs FN Communities University</i></p> <p><i>Completion Date: April 2010</i></p> |
|--|--|--|---|

Cultural

1. Education/Literacy in the context of Language-Culture:

| Issue | Actions | Lead Org | Partners |
|---|---|---|---|
| Create awareness of potential that exists if we are better educated in terms of our culture & economic impact this could have. Bilingualism is key. However, illiteracy is a stumbling block: | <p><i>Create partnerships with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Miramichi Literary Council</i> <i>Multicultural Association</i> <i>Identify & work with other cultural groups</i> <i>Link with MRTA</i> | <p><i>Advisory Forum: Regional Planning Committee would bring it forward to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Literacy Council</i> <i>MRMA</i> | <p><i>NBCC Miramichi – language training School districts Libraries Chamber of Commerce Local business people Local government Provincial Department of Education</i></p> |
| | <p><i>Assist with education and bilingualism</i></p> | | |
| | <p><i>Lobby for free bilingual training for all New Brunswickers to achieve:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Greater skills</i> <i>Greater understanding of culture</i> <i>Greater economic opportunities</i> | <p><i>Province of NB NBCC Miramichi</i></p> | |
| | <p><i>Start the process to address needs of Open River Museum</i></p> | <p><i>GMCC & MRTA</i></p> | |

2. Change Culture of Seasonal Work/Workers:

| Issue | Actions | Lead Org | Partners |
|--|---|---|---|
| Provide incentives to work/train off-time seasonal workers while on EI (while also contributing to cultural development in the region) | <p><i>Bring issue/idea forward to provincial government (PETAL)</i></p> | <p><i>Regional Planning Committee</i></p> | <p><i>Provincial Government (PETAL)</i></p> |

3. Promote Culture in Region:

| Issue | Actions | Lead Org | Partners |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Sharing/promoting that which is taking place in the region; i.e. the culture | <p><i>Create & share a cultural inventory that would entail the culture of each area as well as cultural activities</i></p> | <p><i>Open River Museum</i></p> | <p><i>Municipalities Special Interest Groups Miramichi Salmon</i></p> |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | | <i>Conservation Boisestown Woodman's Museum</i> |
|--|--|--|---|

Environment

1. Regulatory Enforcement:

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| <i>Strengthen the laws with respect to environmental corrections; e.g. hook ups to municipal sewers</i> | <i>Review existing regulations & strengthen enforcement (put teeth in the laws)</i> | <i>Province of NB Miramichi River Environmental Committee</i> | <i>Municipalities</i> |

2. Transportation:

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|--|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Improved regional transportation infrastructure & services will lead to reduced consumption of fuel and lower impact on environment</i> | <i>Complete and implement the Miramichi Transportation Study Report recommendations</i> | <i>City of Miramichi</i> | <i>All regional associations</i> |

3. Reducing High Rate of Cancer in Region:

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>Miramichi region has a higher than national average incidence of cancer that is believed to be induced by environmental elements</i> | <i>Establish Centre of Excellence for health issues, to determine causes & recommend changes that will lead to reduced incidences of cancer</i> | <i>Health Committee</i> | <i>Department of Health City of Miramichi Regional Hospital</i> |

Task # 6⁵

Teams were asked to recommend what specific actions or initiatives should be taken, and by whom, to address each of the top three strategic **projects** as identified by their teams.

Economic:

Tourism Projects:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <i>MRTA funding</i> | <i>Application made to Miramichi Prosperity Fund</i> | <i>Enterprise Miramichi</i> |
| | <i>Coordinate with EM to determine what additional information or partners are needed</i> | <i>City of Miramichi</i> |

⁵ Task Five was skipped (prioritizing projects/initiatives) as this was done in concert with Task Two.

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Value-Added Manufacturing Projects:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Expansion of existing firms</i> | <i>Push for company-driven initiatives to assist in “bridging gaps” between northern NB & south; i.e. tax incentives, employee incentives, etc.</i> | <i>Possible Chamber of Commerce involvement</i> |

Knowledge-Based Sector Projects:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Embrace (focus on) Animation industry:</i> | <i>Provide incentives for start-ups in this sub-sector</i> | <i>Government of NB</i> |
| | <i>Seek funding under Prosperity Fund</i> | <i>Ent. Miramichi</i> |
| | <i>Introduce scholarship program</i> | |

Branding the Miramichi

Finally, during the conclusion of the meeting, the issue of branding the region was raised. It was felt that a single identifier for the Miramichi Region be developed so that it could be used to market everything in the region. This identifier should reflect the diversification present in the Miramichi Region.

Social:

1. Drugs, Health & Wellness, and Health Care:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| <i>Immediate action items</i> | <i>Chair of Enterprise Miramichi will discuss with the Regional Planning Community of the Community Growth Strategy about how it will move forward this social priority by formally presenting the strategy and action plan to the Action Group on Social Determinants in particular Ms. Ginette Pellerin of the Department of Public Health for the Miramichi Region.</i> | <i>Regional Planning Committee</i> |

2. Shifting Demographics:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| <i>Immediate action items</i> | <i>Chair of Enterprise Miramichi will discuss with the Regional Planning Community of the Community Growth Strategy on how it will move forward this social/economic priority by formally presenting the strategy and action plan to Executive Director of Enterprise Miramichi for development and funding.</i> | <i>Regional Planning Committee</i> |

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

Cultural:

1. Bilingual/Multilingualism:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|--|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Free access to bilingualism/multilingualism</i> | <i>Cost-benefit analysis: Secure funding for cost-benefit analysis</i> | <i>Enterprise Miramichi</i> | |
| | <i>Lobby government (various levels)</i> | <i>Enterprise Miramichi</i> | <i>businesses</i> |
| | <i>Pilot project: Open River Museum</i> | <i>MRTA</i> | |
| | <i>Evaluation of pilot project</i> | <i>Province of NB</i> | |

2. Open River Museum/Metepenagiag:

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | <i>To get other entities involved</i> | <i>MRTA</i> | |

Environmental:

Recycling Project

| <i>Tasks</i> | <i>Actions</i> | <i>Lead Org</i> | <i>Partners</i> |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>To improve/expand recycling projects</i> | <i>Support the new regional sorting centre so as to reduce the need for landfills and traffic trips to landfills</i> | | |

Next Steps

- Community Growth Strategy will be prepared with input from today's session
- CGS will be presented to the Regional Planning Committee
- CGS will be communicated to Department of Local Government
- Economic Recommendations will be referred to EM
- EM Board will consider recommendations in preparing EM Strategic Plan update

Conclusion

The consultant wrapped up the day's session with a summary of what transpired. He then turned the session back to Enterprise Miramichi Chairperson, Pam Ward, who thanked everyone for the participation.

List of Workshop Participants

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thomas Linkletter | Miramichi Chamber of Commerce |
| Roger Martin | Carrefour Beausoleil |
| Pam Ward | Enterprise Miramichi |
| John McLaughlin | City of Miramichi |
| Kristy Hamilton Stewart | Service Canada |
| Jeffrey MacTavish | City of Miramichi |
| Alphonse Turbide | Baie Ste Anne Chamber of Commerce |
| Stephen Rae | Enterprise Miramichi |
| John MacKay | Mayor, City of Miramichi |
| Jack Christie | Enterprise Miramichi |
| Gerald Williston | Hardwicke/Black River |
| Gerry Chiasson | Hardwicke/Black River |
| Rick Brewer | MLA South West Miramichi |
| Scott Clowater | Boisestown LSD |
| Michelle Cadogan | MC2 Marketing/Arts Association |
| John W Foran | MLA Miramichi Centre |
| Lisa Waters | Addiction Services MRHA 7 |
| Michael Lavigne | ACOA |
| Paula Hare | Sunny Corner LSD |
| Marie-Paule Theriault | NBCC Miramichi |
| Earl Campbell | Police Chief, City of Miramichi |
| Charles Stewart | Mayor of Doaktown |
| Charles Hubbard | MP |
| Gordon Scott | Enterprise Miramichi |
| Bill Fraser | MLA Miramichi Bay-du-Vin |
| Carmel Robichaud | MLA Miramichi Bay-Neguac |
| Gerald Fournier | Local Service Advisor |
| Claude Innes | Business New Brunswick |
| Rick Lloyd | Business Development Bank |
| Martin Savoie | |
| Brian Donovan | Enterprise Miramichi |
| Wayne Carpenter | Enterprise Miramichi |
| Paul Daigle | P.K. Consulting |

Economic Development Indicators for the Miramichi Region

Short-Term Goals:⁶

Goal: To increase the number of jobs in the region

- Jobs:
 - To create
 - To maintain
- Businesses:
 - To create
 - To expand

Intermediate-Term (5-7 years):

- To increase employment in the region:
 - To increase number and range of employment opportunities
 - To reduce unemployment and underemployment
 - To increase labour force participation rates
- To increase income in the region:
 - To increase personal disposable income
 - To increase earned income closer to national average
- To enhance the tax base of regional communities:
 - To maintain
 - To expand
- To decrease social dependence:
 - To reduce social assistance payments
 - To reduce the level and rate of regional out-migration
 - To increase post-secondary education levels in the Miramichi region

- To increase business performance:
 - To increase regional output of goods and services, especially in “basic sectors”
 - To increase exports of value added goods and services
 - To increase R& D and innovation in the region
 - To increase business investment
 - To increase regional productivity

Long-Term (10 years +):

⁶ Because the short-term timeframe (three years), it was considered wise to focus on this first goal for measuring progress; i.e. to maintain and increase the number and range of employment opportunities. This in turn was to be tied to the number of new and expanded businesses. There were other “lead indicators” employed as well; e.g. objectives tied to infrastructure and service/process improvements, objectives for labour force development and training and objectives for engaging the “partners”.

Miramichi Community Growth Strategy

- To enhance local control over the regional economy - more business decisions locally; e.g. more regional/head offices
- To achieve greater self reliance {increase the number (ratio) of self-employed Miramichiers in economic base companies}
- To decrease the average age of the workforce
- To increase the working age population ratio
- To increase real personal income per capita by 7 percent to reach or exceed the provincial average by 2012.
- To ensure the Miramichi is among the top 3 NB CEDA regions in R&D expenditures per capita by 2012
- To increase labour productivity by 10 percentage point to reach or exceed the provincial average by 2012.
- To increase the percentage of exporting firms and the percentage of its non-resource-based exports by 2012.
- To increase post-secondary education levels in the Miramichi region.