



Commission de services régionaux **RESTIGOUCHE**

Regional Service Commission

Ville Baie-des-Hérons/Town of Heron Bay...Village Bois-Joli Village
Communauté Régionale de Campbellton Regional Community
Communauté Rurale de Kedwick Rural Community...District Rural District

REGIONAL STRATEGY

VOLUME 1

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GAGNON STRATEGIX
CONSULTATION | CONSULTING

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The local governance reform in New Brunswick, as set out in the Regional Services Delivery Act (RSDA) and accompanying regulations, introduces significant changes redefining the role and responsibilities of Regional Service Commissions (RSCs). Ten years after the creation of the RSCs, six new mandates have been assigned to them, in addition to the two original mandatory services and regional collaborative responsibilities:

INITIAL SERVICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- › Local land use planning
- › Solid waste management
- › Regional planning
- › Police cooperation
- › Emergency planning
- › Regional infrastructure planning for recreation, culture and sports, and the sharing of infrastructure costs.

NEW SERVICES

- › Community development
- › Economic development
- › Tourism
- › Sports, recreational and cultural infrastructure
- › Public safety
- › Regional transportation

Required by the Department of Environment and Local Government, each RSC had to present a regional strategy for the delivery of new pillar services. Produced under the direction of Stantec inc. and Consultation Gagnon Strategix inc. this regional strategy aims to identify the strengths and gaps in service delivery in the region, and to establish priorities and actions, primarily with regard to the new mandates. The document constitutes a frame of reference for the RSC Board of Directors and senior management for the next five years.

The regional strategy was developed in three main stages.

First, a situational analysis and assessment familiarized us with the organization's key issues, and enabled us to understand the trends and problems of recent years. Second, an extensive consultation strategy was carried out with stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, department directors, the management team, municipal chief administrative officers (CAO), community groups and the general public and First Nations. Third, on the basis of the previous steps, the regional strategy was developed and validated.

Discussions with stakeholders and the evaluation of inputs led to an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each of the new services. These are the foundations of the Restigouche Regional Services Commission's (RRSC) vision that **together, we are building a prosperous and inspiring region that promotes sustainable development**. RRSC's mission is to be leaders in local governance promoting this delivery of regional services and strategic partnerships. It shares the values of collaboration, fairness, respect, creativity, optimism, integrity, inclusiveness. The regional strategy unfolds in a set of statements and solutions for each of the services, initial and proposed, to guide the RRSC management team in the development of an implementation plan.

NEXT STEPS

This document will be followed by volume two (2), which will include the Implementation Plan for the CEO, the performance measures, the accountability framework and the detailed material from our consultations. Following adoption of the regional strategy by the RSC Board as provided for in the Act, the provincial departments involved will provide their comments and validate the strategies for the various pillars. These comments will be taken into consideration to provide added value to the implementation plan identified above. The RSC will also develop a communications strategy.

FOREWORD

Based on the scope of its territory and population, New Brunswick is comprised of a large number of territorial units. As a result, the province is fragmented and levels of services vary widely in both local and regional communities.

With a view to improving regional collaboration, Regional Service Commissions (RSCs) were created in 2012 to offer common services and enhance cross-region collaboration. Initially, the RSCs provided solid waste management, regional land-use planning and building inspection services. But in spite of establishing the RSCs, the regions of New Brunswick still face major challenges in terms of urban sprawl, ribbon development, protection of natural resources and climate change. Moreover, social issues, such as access to housing, immigration, employment, community support and public safety have been organized independently, according to a regional territory-based rationale.

Against this backdrop, a major reform of local governance was launched in January 2021. The *Working together for vibrant and sustainable communities* initiative aims to improve the governance structure of Regional Service Commissions, in order to modernize the former regional management system. Its purpose is to ensure better coordination and collaboration between the regions of the province through a more effective and sustainable system, as a result contributing to improving the quality of life of New Brunswickers. While this reform involves reviewing the administrative boundaries of local territorial units, its primary purpose is to expand the role and mandate of the Regional Service Commissions by entrusting them with regional leadership in the following areas: economic development, tourism promotion, recreational infrastructure cost-sharing, community development, regional/community transportation and public safety.

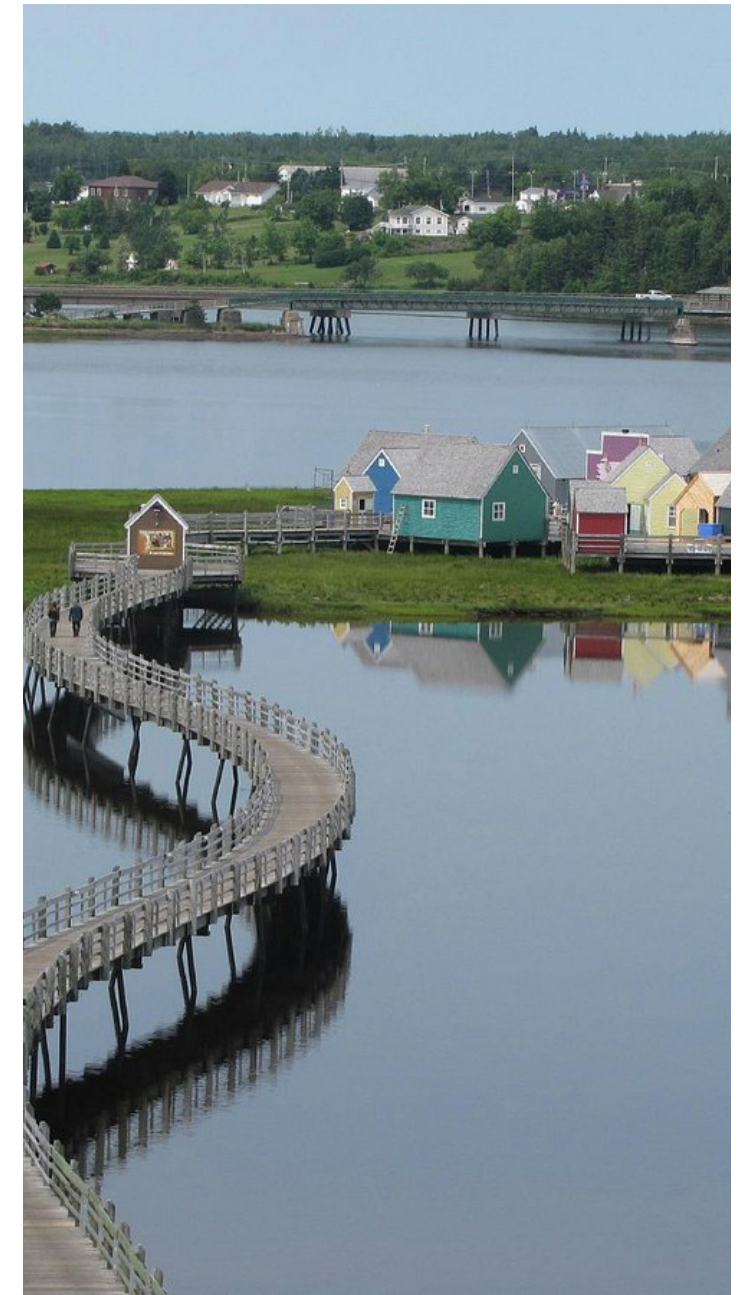
In this capacity, the RSCs are required to develop a comprehensive regional strategy to identify strengths and shortcomings in service provision, in this instance, in the Restigouche region and establish priorities and actions with particular regard to the additional functions mandated, in order to provide direction to the RSCs' Board of Directors for the next five years. Such a strategy must be approved by the Board of each RSC no later than July 1st, 2023. The RSCs' regional strategy provides a key opportunity for local governments and the rural district of each region to work closely with stakeholders on regional priorities regarding the RSCs' mandated services.

For RSCs to chart the course forward in the delivery of these new services that complement the existing services, strategic, focused, meaningful and timely engagement involving a roster of stakeholders is required. Moreover, given the many changes to the RSCs' organizational structure and their service delivery model, the regional strategy will need to guide the Commissions in ensuring that future services are of high quality and affordable to the public, boosting investment opportunities for economic development and tourism promotion, and helping regions attract entrepreneurs, newcomers and visitors from outside New Brunswick.

At the end of February 2023, Stantec Inc. and Gagnon Strategix Inc. were retained to help the Restigouche Regional Service Commission (RRSC) carry out the implementation of its regional strategy. Together with the RSC's administrative staff, an approach based on a bottom-up consultation process including working sessions with stakeholders was put in place. In addition, each mandated service was submitted to a strategic evaluation, so as to assess needs and actions to be undertaken in the short, medium and long term.

These first stages in the process supported the Restigouche RSC in the development of a vision statement, regional objectives and potential solutions. An implementation plan, including performance objectives and an accountability framework follow in a separate document. The approach used to develop the objectives was based on the SMART objectives assessment process, which is a statement of measure describing the process required to achieve objectives. The regional strategy will enable the RRSC to meet its legal obligations under the regional strategy and ensure that it meets minimum service expectations for each new service mandated. Ultimately, the regional strategy will follow the guidelines set out by the Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform. The strategy will provide the foundations for the development of the RSCs' sector-based plans and regional plan, as defined under the Regional Service Delivery Act.

The following pages present the methodology used to develop the regional strategy and mobilize stakeholders as well as the local First Nations, background information, the RRSC's vision, mission and values, a diagnosis, and sector-based objectives with potential solutions that ultimately came into the production of the implementation plan and accountability framework for the RRSC.



CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Following an action plan unveiled in 2011 for a new system of local governance in New Brunswick, 12 regional service commissions were created in 2013 pursuant to the Regional Service Delivery Act. Since the introduction of the new regional service delivery model, communities can now work together by sharing certain services and a common vision of regional development. As such, the new entity replaced the land use planning commissions, economic development agencies (“Entreprise” networks) and solid waste commissions across the province.

As of 2020, the Working together for vibrant and sustainable communities initiative of the provincial Department of Local Government, including its White Paper and Green Paper brought about a new definition of the RSCs’ accountability. While the changes in this process resulted in a number of legislative amendments, a consolidation of the Regional Service Delivery Act (S.N.B. 2012, c. 37) redefined and specified the legislative framework of the 12 regional service commissions.

Section 3.1(1) defines the commissions’ mandate, which includes developing and implementing a regional strategy.

3.1(1) The mandate of a Commission is:

- a. to provide or facilitate the provision of common services to its members,
- b. to develop and implement a regional strategy,
- c. to undertake activities related to regional economic development, regional community development and regional tourism promotion,
- d. to identify sport, recreational and cultural infrastructure in the region, to apportion the costs attributable to that infrastructure among its members and to ensure the management of any resulting agreements or contracts,
- e. to establish a public safety committee to exchange information and discuss resource sharing and joint planning by its members in relation to policing services, fire protection services and emergency measures planning services, and
- f. to work with its members to facilitate administrative, financial and other service arrangements.

Subsection 3.2(1) sets out the regional strategy requirements relevant to this consulting work.

3.1(2) In addition to the mandate in subsection (1), any Commission prescribed by regulation is mandated to develop a plan for integrating and coordinating services to address homelessness, poverty and mental health and may enter into agreements with the Crown in right of the Province for that purpose.

3.2 (1) A Commission shall develop and implement a regional strategy in accordance with the regulations, which shall establish priority services and actions with respect to:

- a. regional economic development,
- b. regional community development,
- c. regional tourism promotion,
- d. regional transportation,
- e. regional infrastructure, and
- f. any other matter prescribed by regulation.

Other legislation was also updated, albeit to a lesser extent, in order to consolidate the delivery of existing services and provide a framework for new accountability.

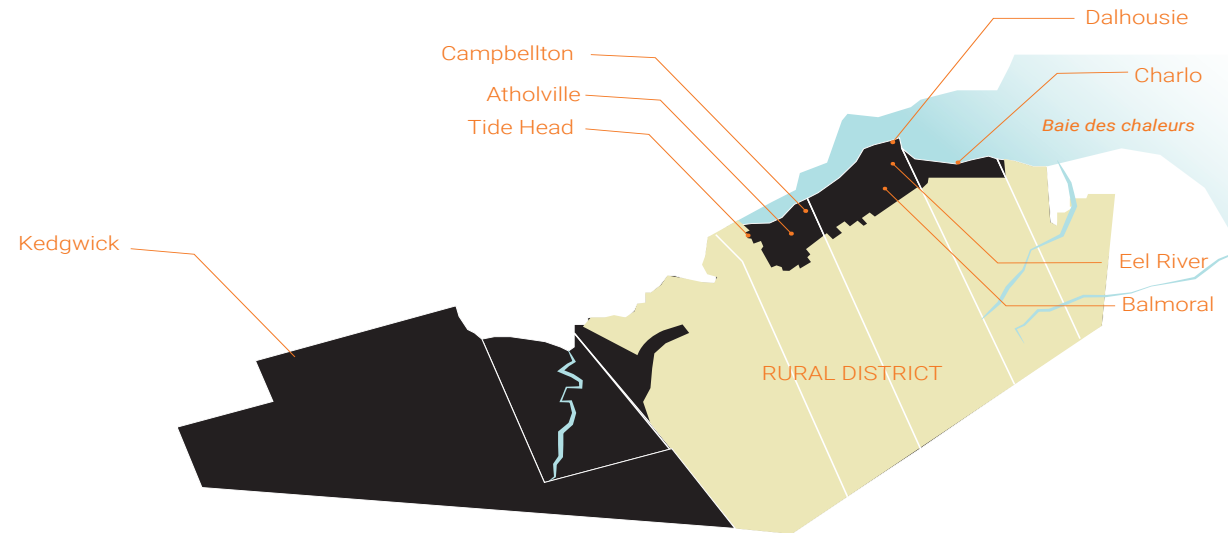
REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

Restigouche County is in the far north of New Brunswick and covers an area of 8,579.66 km². The Restigouche RSC falls within the county of Restigouche but does not include the municipalities of Saint-Quentin and Belledune. Restigouche County has a population of 30,955 while the RSC serves a population of 25,812. Since the recent reform of local governance several communities have been merged creating new communities. These municipalities include the Campbellton Regional Community, the Village Bois-Joli, the Town of Heron-Bay, the Rural Community of Kedgwick as well as the Restigouche Rural District. Here is the composition of Restigouche:

- › Campbellton Regional Community;
- › Bois-Joli Village
- › Town of Heron Bay
- › Kedgwick Rural Community
- › Restigouche Rural District

The Restigouche RSC is governed by a Board of directors representing 3 municipalities, 1 rural community and 1 rural district:

- › Campbellton Regional Community: Mayor Jean Guy Levesque and deputy mayor Mélanie Parent
- › Bois-Joli Village: Maire Mario Pelletier and councillor Donald Savoie
- › Town of Heron Bay: Mayor Normand Pelletier and deputy mayor Denis McIntyre
- › Kedgwick Rural Community: Mayor Eric Gagnon and councillor Steeve Savoie
- › Restigouche Rural District: Brad Mann and Loretta Smith



+30 955 RESIDENTS (RESTIGOUCHE COUNTY)	3 MUNICIPALITIES	1 RURAL DISTRICT	1 RURAL COMMUNITY
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RESTIGOUCHE REGION KEY ASSETS

The Restigouche community is distinguished by its rich cultural mix. Indeed, the population is made up of Acadian, Scottish, Irish and Mi'gmaq descendants. On the other hand, Restigouche County has the highest rate of bilingualism with more than 50% of its population speaking both French and English.

The natural beauty of the Appalachians, the Baie-des-Chaleurs, the majestic shores and the picturesque panoramas make it a very attractive region for nature lovers. The Restigouche region is also distinguished by the quality of life it offers, in particular by its proximity to nature, the affordable cost of living and the many services for families. The many leisure centers and family-friendly spaces offered by the region help to promote a healthy and active living environment. Moreover, the Restigouche community is known to be very dynamic and invested in its environment.

Thanks to the geographical location, infrastructure and to the quality of services offered by the region, companies benefit from significant advantages for export activities and direct links with the world. Indeed, the Restigouche region has the Charlo Regional Airport, Port of Dalhousie, the presence of CN and Via Rail as well as several industrial parks and land available. These components make it a very marketable and attractive place for investors.

Changing immigration trends, the cost of living and the coastal way of life are factors that are fueling interest in the area and are expected to continue. That said, the \$40 million in funding announced by the Province of New Brunswick on January 31, 2023, for RSCs to support their economic development, workforce development and newcomer retention services certainly support these anticipated growth and development trends.



SERVICE FRAMEWORK

The original RSC mandates were defined separately according to the circumstances and contexts of each of the 12 regional service commissions. The following is a brief overview of such services for the Restigouche RSC:

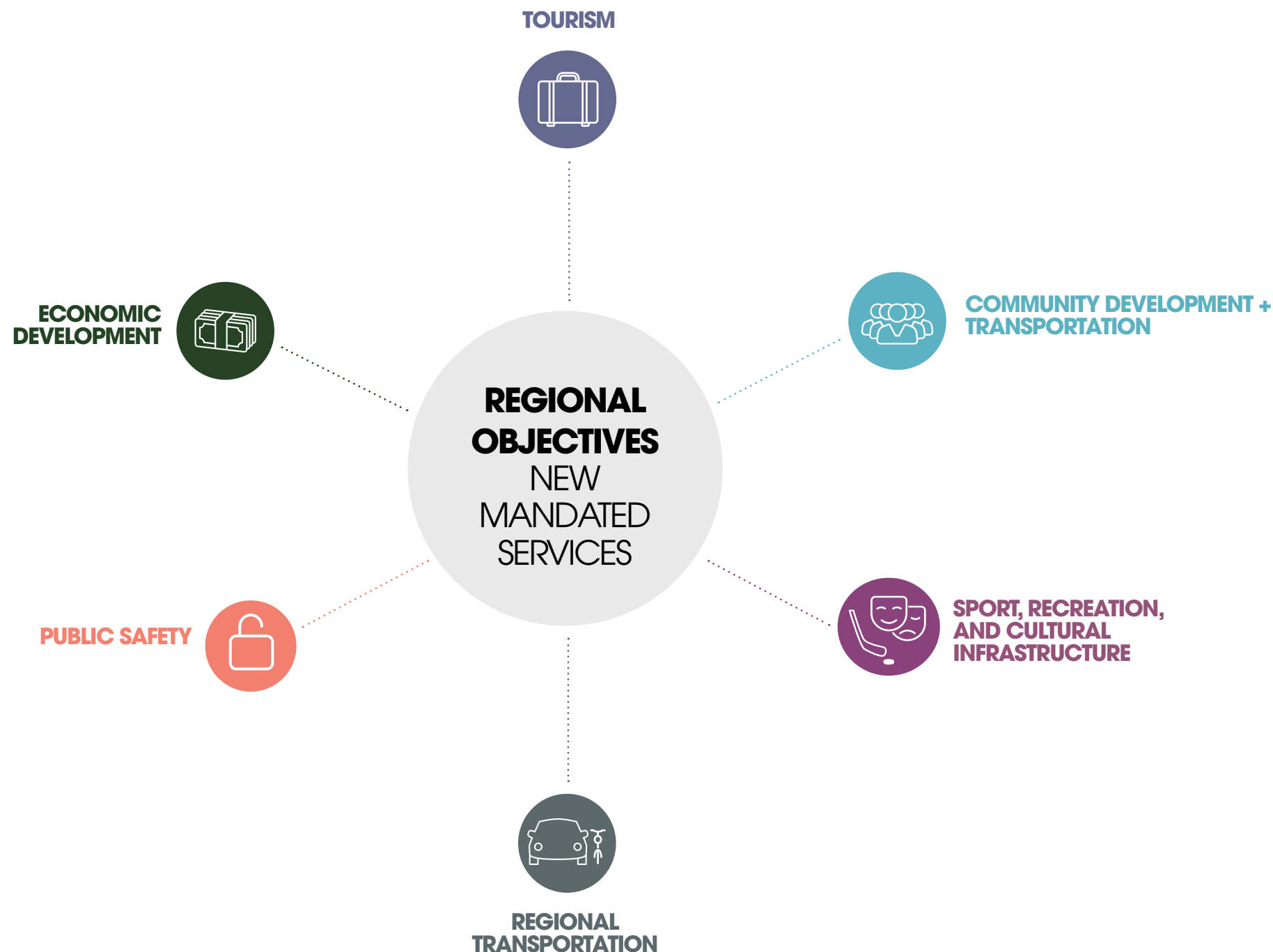
SOLID WASTE

The Restigouche Regional Service Commission (RRSC) provides solid waste disposal services to the municipalities, the rural community and the rural district in our region. This includes operating the transfer station, as well as coordinating various recycling programs, handling hazardous waste, and promoting composting. In addition to services, the RRSC offers public awareness campaigns and various educational activities.

LAND USE PLANNING

The Land Use Planning Division of the Restigouche Regional Service Commission provides land use planning services to all municipalities, rural community, and rural district within the territory of the Commission. This function includes developing rural plans, administering and executing plans, issuing building permits, development approvals, carrying out building inspections and approving subdivisions, etc. All municipalities and rural districts obtain their planning services from the Commission.

The Department of Local Government has established a specific framework for the new services to ensure that they are in line with government policies. Several discussion papers have set out the mandates for developing sector-based processes. The following pages present the new service mandates. The infographics are summary interpretations of the provincial guides presenting the new regionalized services.





COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT + TRANSPORTATION

MANDATE

Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) will be integrated into Regional Service Commissions (RSCs).

The RSCs will identify actions to make improvements in the areas of focus for the CINs under three pillars focused on achieving economic and social inclusion impact :

- › **Income Security;**
- › **Coordination of Programs and Services;**
- › **Inclusion and Healthy Communities.**

RSCs must develop goals that address the following priorities :

- **Make investments through a new social finance to increase the capacity and sustainability of social enterprises within non-profit organizations in New Brunswick**
 - › CINable.
- **Develop or expand existing school food programs at all schools in the region**
 - › CINable.
- **Improve access and reduce wait times for mental health and additions services**
 - › RSCs can work with regional health authorities and the Department of Health to help identify community support services and be a partner in planning for service delivery.
- **Develop additional goals focused on making improvements in the four high impact areas of the Community Capacity and Resiliency Framework :**
 - › Economic security and employment;
 - › Stage housing and a healthy built environment;
 - › Health, social service, justice, and education systems, and
 - › Environmental sustainability.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MANDATE

The role of regional service commissions (RSCs) in economic development falls into three broad categories of mandates :

- 1. Supporting Investment Readiness;**
- 2. Supporting workforce development and workforce growth;**
- 3. Supporting a healthy business community.**

RSCs must develop goals that address the following priorities :

- **Develop an action plan**
 - › Define a shared vision.
 - › Create profiles of regional assets.
 - › Create regional value propositions.
 - › Serve as a liaison for new investors.
- **Develop regional marketing activities**
 - › Consider synergies with tourism related activities.

→ **Develop a regional labour market partnership (LMP) forum or participate in the existing forum**

› Develop a regional labour market development and labour force growth strategy :

- Population growth;
- Labour force participation;
- Labour force growth;
- Employment growth;
- Retention rate for newcomers.

› Map out newcomer retention services in the region.

→ **Support a healthy business community**

› Map out existing business support services in the region without duplicating existing services.

→ **Collect data indicators on the regional economy**

› Support investment readiness and workforce development :

- Lands and buildings for development;
- Regional labour market data;
- Major training programs;
- Industrial parks;
- Other assets.



SPORT, RECREATION, AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

MANDATE

Regional Service Commissions (RSCs) provide a forum for local governments to **share the costs of major sport, recreation, and cultural infrastructure projects.**

RSCs must develop goals that address the following priorities :

- **Identify and assess existing infrastructure**
 - › Including school facilities and with consideration for post-secondary education and privately owned facilities.
- **Detail plans for the development of potential future cost-sharing agreements**
- **Conduct a strategic assessment to identify challenges, gaps, and opportunities in the region**
 - › Identify potential incentives to encourage communities to collaborate on infrastructure development addressing the issues identified in the strategic assessment.
- **Work with partners to provide inclusive opportunities**
 - › CINable.
- **Develop regional priorities with respect to new, renovated, or expanded regional or sub-regional infrastructure**
 - › Infrastructures relating to sport, recreation and culture.



PUBLIC SAFETY

MANDATE

Regional Service Commissions (RSCs) are required to establish a Public Safety Committee to coordinate **police, fire protection and emergency services.**

ROLES

POLICE

- › Improve communication and build relationships between communities, regions, and police authorities, and help identify key issues and priorities.

FIRE PROTECTION

- › Exchange information on fire prevention and suppression service issues and explore ways to improve sustainability and efficiency.

EMERGENCY

- › Share information, identify issues and consider possible actions with provincial officials.



TOURISM

MANDATE

RSCs must develop goals that address the following priorities :

- **Establish Regional Destination Marketing Organization (RDMO)**
 - › Represent all the region's stakeholders.
- **Create and execute regional marketing initiatives, programs, partnerships, and digital channels**
 - › May include :
 - Bilingual website or social media channels to promote the region and increase awareness.
- **Develop a regional tourism strategy**
 - › Must be aligned with the **provincial tourism strategy.**
 - › Must include :
 - A tourism marketing plan with a bilingual digital presence;
 - An implementation plan;
 - A dedicated budget.
- **Participate in and contribute to co-operative marketing**
 - › Must be established by the Department of Tourism, Heritage, and Culture.
 - › May include :
 - Advertising campaigns;
 - Provincial owned digital marketing channels (tourism website).



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

MANDATE

Regional Service Commission (RSC) regional transportation services must be consistent with the New Brunswick Inclusive and Sustainable Transportation Framework (under development).

RSCs must develop goals that address the following priorities :

- **Conduct a regional scan of existing transportation services in the region**
- **Develop and implement regional transportation goals to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability of transportation services**
 - › CINable.
- **Develop a regional integrated transportation strategy**
 - › Consider inter-municipal, inter-regional, and inter-provincial transit connections.
- **Develop a regional transportation service by leveraging existing transit services and/or develop new ones**
 - › Leverage, and support volunteer-based transportation initiatives (if they exist in the region).
 - ›

CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC THINKING PROCESS

STRATEGIC THINKING

METHODOLOGY

The recommended approach for developing the RRSC's regional strategy is a straightforward, structured process, which will enable the Board of Directors to provide the RRSC senior management team with a frame of reference for the next few years. The approach is defined through a coaching and facilitation process conducive to the joint development of a vision and mission statement, the identification of fundamental values, the definition of strategic objectives in line with the pillars (the regional services provided by the RRSC) and potential solutions, all leading to the development of the implementation plan.

The method used to develop the regional strategy is a well-known strategic planning method and consists of the following:

- › Develop a draft vision and mission; review the context using the SWOT analysis method (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)
- › Review and revise the vision and mission based on the history and a strategic assessment of each mandated service
- › Identify values in line with the vision and mission
- › Identify strategic objectives using the SMART methodology to meet the RRSC's mission and achieve the vision approved by the RRSC's Board of Directors, senior management, stakeholders and key community members

The following stages were involved in developing RRSC's regional strategy:

1

STAGE 1 : ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

DATA COLLECTION AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS

This first activity provided an overview of the RRSC's current situation through an analysis of previous strategic plans and annual reports. This exercise afforded valuable insights to gain a better understanding of the organization's key issues and the trends and problems of recent years.

TARGETED INTERVIEWS

This activity included targeted meetings, during which strategic discussions were held with the RRSC's Board of Directors and senior management. Those meetings helped in identifying the regional strategy to adopt based on the governance in place.

ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS

This activity involved outlining the RRSC's history and preparing a summary of certain relevant master plans, by-laws and administrative policies.

IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

This activity served to identify stakeholders and other parties involved likely to contribute to validating the regional strategy and defining the approach to use based on their feedback. Following a planning session with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and her senior management team, the draft approach was submitted and the public participation technique was validated. The focus group technique was selected and a stakeholder register was developed by the senior management team to make sure that everyone and every group likely to provide added value to the process were identified during the consultation process. Stakeholders were selected according to their level of influence and their interest in the strategic process.

A SMART goal is an action statement that describes what you need to do to achieve your objective.



Specific - Describes a specific action, behavior, achievement or result that is observable.



Measurable - Quantifiable, with indicators to measure it.



Audience-specific - Appropriate and tailored to your target audience.



Realistic - Achievable with available resources.



Time-based - Specifies a timeframe within which the objective will be achieved.

2

STAGE 2: CONSULTATION PROCESS

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSIONS WITH THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This activity involved holding participatory workshop meetings with the RSC’s Board of Directors. The purpose of those meetings was to develop the RSC’s vision, mission and fundamental values. To develop such statements, we conducted a SWOT analysis. The result of that activity was the definition of the RRSC’s mission, values and vision found in Chapter 4 of this report.

INFORMATION SESSION WITH MUNICIPAL CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS (CAO)

An information session was held with the CAOs of the RRSC municipalities. The aim was to provide them with an overview of the mandate and the process leading to the development of the strategic plan.

PLANNING SESSIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The purpose of those meetings was to develop the main strategic orientations and areas of action, particularly with regard to current and new mandates (regional transportation, tourism, economic development, regional sports and cultural facilities, public safety and community development). A SWOT analysis was used to gather feedback from the participants.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE RRSC DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

At this stage, a questionnaire was submitted to each department director to capture their respective needs and priorities over the next five years.

ENGAGEMENT WITH FIRST NATIONS

To ensure that our duty to engage a dialogue with First Nations is properly exercised and to respect the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Report, contacts with First Nations Chiefs will take place during the summer. Given the limited time, we will establish a dialogue that will be continuous. The mobilization of First Nations is not only a single occurrence for the regional strategy, but a demonstration of sustained and continuous mobilization through the delivery of services and community sharing, integrated with the RSC. During the consultation period relating to the development of regional strategies, an election campaign was taking place in Ugpî’Ganjig, so we didn’t contact elected officials during this democratic process. A new Chief and Council has been elected and sworn in, so we can initiate dialogues in the coming weeks when their council is in place. We also want to initiate a dialogue with the community of Listuguj located on the Quebec side when the community of Ugpî’Ganjig has been informed of regional strategies to respect the geography of the territory.

WORKING SESSIONS WITH THE RRSC’S SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Meetings were held with the senior management team to present the guidelines established by the RRSC’s Board of Directors and standing committees and to develop an implementation plan template for each new service mandate.

This stage also involved preparing the senior management team to use the tools proposed in the implementation plan and the periodic reports required for a follow-up with the Board of Directors. A SMART matrix was used to define each objective.

Next, a strategic assessment of the services offered was conducted to gain a better understanding of the interdependence with other services offered by the RSC or other regional and/or provincial parties involved. The purpose at this stage was to understand regional priorities in light of those of the Province. The levels of services were also analyzed, based on delivery models used in urban and rural areas for resources to be shared fairly. Each service was assessed using the SWOT tool to identify weaknesses requiring improvement and the threats identified in the RRSC’s risk management matrix.

3

STAGE 3: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT REGIONAL STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

At this stage, the draft regional strategy and implementation plan were completed with the Chief Executive Officer and the regional strategy committee and will later be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval. The implementation plan will include performance indicators, targets and timelines, along with the resources needed to carry out the strategies proposed.

FINAL REPORT

Once the feedback had been integrated, the final version of the regional strategy was presented to the Board of Directors and regional strategy committee members at a public meeting for review and approval. The report includes the RRSC’s vision, mission and values, along with a summary of recommendations for the next stages to implement the actions and an executive summary.

CHAPTER 3

DIAGNOSIS

DIAGNOSIS

To cut a clear path leading to the suggested objectives and solutions, this report presents an overview of the services with a view to highlighting the changes brought about by their regionalization and identifying how the services will connect with the other services. This section sets out for each pillar of service, both existing and new, the diagnosis established for each service following its analyses and assessments.



LAND USE PLANNING

All Restigouche municipalities are full fledged members of the planning services (planning and construction), which contributes to consistency in service delivery. There are some limitations with this model, including the ability to respond to requests in a timely manner. There is a real challenge in being able to provide regular permits and regulatory services while trying to develop new municipal plans and eventually regional plans. The employees in place have the skills to perform the tasks, but there is concern from the municipalities pertaining to the ability to speed up decision-making. The region would benefit from properly documenting the various decision-making processes to allow the municipal authorities receiving complaints from the public to be able to properly explain the regulatory obligations relating to land use planning. We should modernize our documents and open a dialogue with the municipalities to improve the relationship with them. It should also be ensured that the land use planning team understand other regional strategies, particularly with respect to economic development and housing challenges.

A second Planner on-staff will soon be certified. Other services are also being contracted from an outside planner for rezonings.



SOLID WASTE

The Restigouche region has a solid waste transfer site located in Campbellton. The waste received is then sent to the Red Pine landfill in Allardville. Since some municipalities must first bring their waste from the east to the west of the territory and then have it redistributed to the east again, an equalization formula has been agreed to provide compensation to communities disadvantaged by this additional trip. The staff in place is competent, but replacements are scarce, and the service cannot afford to operate outside regular hours, Monday to Friday. The facilities are of good quality and the equipment is updated over time. There are some opportunities to increase user awareness of the benefits of proper sorting to reduce landfill costs. The region could also encourage users to stop illegally dumping waste on off-road trails. Awareness of proper disposal of waste, as well as good recycling habits also needs to be improved.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT + TRANSPORTATION

Restigouche has the infrastructure to deliver various community development programs. Engaged organizations and volunteers are actively involved in several solutions such as food banks, mental health clinics and street workers. Community transit provides support for specified customers like families in need. The on-call service has a challenge in attracting volunteers to increase supply. The land is vast, and the services are not spread equally to all citizens. Affordable housing is one of the biggest issues in our region, as housing inventory is virtually non-existent. The level of awareness should be increased to allow the public to better understand all the services offered. An inventory and a mapping of services is paramount. Regional data and indicators should be studied to identify specific actions to move the region forward. The region could benefit from the arrival of social enterprise projects to fill certain gaps in the supply of services. An advisory committee was established in April 2023 and includes key stakeholders representing targeted groups, as well as government partners.



TOURISM

The region is surrounded by the Appalachian Mountains and is benefitting from the Restigouche River and the entrance of the Baie-des-Chaleurs. Its natural beauty attracts visitors, and its four-season tourism is well known. In fact, winter is one of its peak seasons with snowmobilers, skiers, and outdoor enthusiasts. The positioning of the Restigouche destination is alive, and the vision of tourism stakeholders is to make this destination vibrate through marketing and promotional campaigns. Mountain biking is a growing tourism product with its prime location at Sugarloaf Provincial Park. There is cohesion among tourism stakeholders and regional municipalities. A tourism strategic plan allows the region to drive actions identified in its implementation plan. The development of a tourism marketing strategy would allow the region to better channel its positive energy. The region could also benefit from strategic support for its tourist operators wishing to increase their service offer and better define their tourist products.

An Advisory Committee was set up in October 2022, which includes representation from communities and tourism operators. The committee guides our tourism undertaking and also acts as the RDMO. Our director of tourism is also setting up a committee of tourism/community officers to enhance collaboration with respect to municipal authorities. A website was initially under restigouche.ca/tourism, but will have its own in 2024.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Our Public Safety Committee was established in March 2023. The Restigouche region is served by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police through umbrella contracts, except for Campbellton which has a direct RCMP contract. In terms of fire departments, most municipalities operate with volunteer brigades, except for Campbellton, which has full-time firefighters in part of its territory. As for emergency measures, municipal plans are in place and have been structured by specialists in the field. The size of the territory and the lack of cellular service in several regions bring significant challenges, because in an emergency situation, it is not always possible to contact 911. The coverage of the ambulance service is difficult given the geographical area, and there is no search and rescue team to support the police and firefighters during an incident in the forest. An inventory of all regional assets is required to ensure that regional public safety be optimized and the creation of a strategic discussion forum between the various stakeholders would provide possible solutions to improve public safety. Regional coordination in emergency measures is important.



SPORTS, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The region was chosen to host the Canada Winter Games in 2003 and was also host to the Acadian Games, enabling it to acquire high quality sports facilities that meet the needs of its residents. At the recreational and cultural level, the facilities are also up to standard and allow the organization of regional events. Cost-sharing agreements for the main sports facilities, the Campbellton Regional Memorial Civic Center, and the Dalhousie Inch Arran/Recreaplex complex are in place with neighboring municipalities and users of the rural district. The first meeting of host entities and contributing communities were held in June 2023. The region has the capacity to host major sporting and cultural events and would benefit from a major event attraction strategy. Its reception capacity is limited by the volume of accommodation, but the arrival of AirBNB and other business models brings other opportunities on this side. A regional inventory of all cultural and recreational facilities would provide new information for decision makers.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The RSC established a LMP Labour market Partnership Forum in July 2023. To that effect, multiple actors have already been contracted.

The region has also initiated an ecosystem analysis and a distribution of kits for newcomers to major employers, including Vitalité and CCNB international students. The regional Economic Development Advisory committee has been approved, but challenges in recruitment of staff has delayed implementation.

CHAPTER 4

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

The following section presents the vision, mission and values of Restigouche RSC. The vision is focused on sustainable regional growth for each of the regions included in Restigouche RSC. The vision, mission and values reflect the aspirations of the region, taking into account the realities of each of the territorial entities that make it up.

These are the values that inform our ethical decision-making processes:



VISION

Together, we are building a prosperous and inspiring region that promotes sustainable development.



MISSION

Leaders in local governance promoting the delivery of regional services and strategic partnerships.



VALUES

- > Collaboration;
- > Fairness;
- > Respect;
- > Creativity;
- > Optimism;
- > Integrity;
- > Inclusiveness.

COLLABORATION	FAIRNESS	RESPECT	CREATIVITY	OPTIMISM	INTEGRITY	INCLUSIVENESS
<i>Teamwork, mutual aid, and the willingness to find solutions to regional challenges together.</i>	<i>Emphasizing the fair treatment of all our stakeholders.</i>	<i>Constitutes the basis of transparent communication and a healthy work climate which translates into daily courtesy and honesty in exchanges.</i>	<i>The ability to easily generate ideas, alternatives and solutions to a given problem.</i>	<i>We allow ourselves to step out of our comfort zone to access new skills and inspire our team of professionals.</i>	<i>We adhere to a moral code and a code of conduct.</i>	<i>We promote diversity of people and ideas by creating an environment where everyone has a sense of belonging with their team.</i>

CHAPTER 5

REGIONAL STRATEGY

REGIONAL STRATEGY

Regional Service Commissions (RSCs) were entrusted with a range of new services under the Local Governance Reform. To exercise leadership and provide a constructive strategic governance framework, the Board of Directors of each RSC must develop its regional strategies meant to provide the RSC’s senior management team with guidance in developing an implementation plan. Strategic planning is one of the most important responsibilities of a Board of Directors and a tool Board members can use to monitor closely the activities of the RSC’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and senior management team. Regional strategies are developed at the onset of new mandates and must be reviewed at the end of the first year of implementation, as the level of organizational maturity will be higher when all the RSC directors have at least one year’s experience within the organization. The Board members acknowledge the limitations of the strategies, including the importance of not duplicating existing provincial services and considering obligations and requirements that are part of funding or service agreements with provincial departments or other organizations.

The following pages provide a summary of all the Restigouche RSC’s regional strategies and a brief description of each service, including the major solutions that will be incorporated into its implementation plan. The plan will include measurable actions, timelines, a financial framework and an accountability framework and will be overseen by the Restigouche RSC’s Chief Executive Officer.



LAND USE PLANNING

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The region promotes the modernization of planning tools in order to recognize responsibilities, meet the expectations of municipalities and those of users of land use planning services.

Mapping of the various decision-making processes including the timelines to optimize the services rendered to municipalities and improve communications with users.

To support the proposed departmental actions, the regional planning service is an integral part of the implementation of regional strategies, through the scientific use of available data.

ACTIONS

- › Review municipal plans, zoning and subdivision by-laws;
- › Hire a development officer or by-law enforcer during the construction season;
- › Conduct an external survey of service users.
- › Set up forms for e-permit applications;
- › Illustrate the various decision-making processes to inform the population adequately;
- › Perform operations analysis to optimize the business model.
- › Determine the sectors of the territory likely to be affected by the impacts of climate change;
- › Distinguish areas of natural constraints affected by climate change;
- › Locate and map flood zones;
- › Adopt adaptation and resilience measures;
- › Include measures to take account of climate change in normative provisions.



SOLID WASTE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Awareness and communication with users on the importance of sorting solid waste and residual materials to reduce the volume of waste to be transported to the landfill site.

The region is showing leadership in recycling and looking at various innovative ways to improve the protection of its environment.

The standardization of solid waste and residual materials collection techniques is encouraged to standardize the levels of services offered throughout the territory.

ACTIONS

- › Educate citizens on good practices in solid waste management;
- › Awareness of use of single-use products;
- › Adapt the regulations concerning prohibited materials in recycling containers;
- › Promote responsible consumption habits.
- › Implement programs to raise awareness and manage recyclable materials;
- › Set up a collection of organic materials; Set up a collection operation for hazardous household waste;
- › Promote a uniform collection system in all communities in the region.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The community development committee lists all the community services offered on the territory and encourages stakeholders to offer equivalent services for all of Restigouche to counter challenges such as food insecurity, poverty and mental health.

A transit structure adapted to the region is conceptualized in order to define the level of service offered through needs analysis and studies.

Community development actively participates in regional discussions to identify affordable housing solutions allowing newcomers to integrate the region and to identify housing solutions for the homeless.

ACTIONS

- › Promote feedback and citizen participation in the development of possible solutions to improve conditions to minimize community challenges;
- › Take position through the analysis of strengths and opportunities to promote the implementation of interventions that will support regional community development;
- › Coordinate discussions with food security, poverty, and mental health support providers;
- › Set up the Breakfast Foundation.
- › Provide the region with transportation for people with reduced mobility;
- › Expand the transportation offer based on the needs of newcomers through partnerships;
- › Undertake the feasibility study to offer zero-emission vehicles.
- › Encourage a dialogue with municipalities and urban planners to identify concrete actions that could be integrated into municipal and regional plans, especially with regard to the shortage of affordable housing and the densification of city centers to reduce challenges associated with non-existent public transit.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Identify solutions to attract and retain newcomers and workers by highlighting the dynamic economic climate of the region, both in terms of employment and business opportunities.

Undertake and lead Restigouche's strategic thinking to establish regional economic data and indicators that will allow the region to be ready for immediate investments.

Carry out a survey of regional business opportunities to identify primary and secondary industries and supply chains to increase opportunities to deal with governments and other major contract givers.

ACTIONS

- › Establish a value proposition for the region that identifies the advantages of settling in Restigouche and the incentives available;
- › Facilitate the arrival and integration of new business owners by providing them with regional data and agencies who could help them;
- › Support the increase in the workforce, including specific actions to welcome newcomers and foreign workers;
- › Secure and maintain service agreements with Working NB.
- › Support visits to the region by potential investors and promoters;
- › Strengthening of the understanding of regional economic data to be able to represent them well to potential investors;
- › Promote workforce attraction (videos, testimonials, etc.).
- › Identification of concrete actions to promote regional economic growth;
- › Development of an economic profile of the region, including the inventory of industrial parks, available buildings as well as assets not exploited at full capacity (agricultural land, seaport, railway installations, airport hangar, factories, mills);
- › Carry out networking activities for newcomers with entrepreneurs and the population.



SPORTS, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Coordination of existing cost sharing agreements of sub-regional recreational and sports infrastructure is in place and discussions are encouraged on the sustainability and optimization of the services offered.

The region is carrying out an inventory of all its sports, cultural and recreational facilities to ensure that there are opportunities for all residents to have access to adapted and inclusive facilities.

The region ensures that regional interventions in economic development, attraction of newcomers and in tourism showcase the existing sports, cultural and recreational infrastructures in Restigouche.

ACTIONS

- › Identify benefits associated with optimizing the services offered and cost-sharing of regional and sub-regional facilities;
- › Identify gaps in the regional service offering and identify potential new activities.
- › Conduct regional needs analysis through studies and assessment;
- › Catalog regional support programs to promote access to facilities for the less fortunate in our society.
- › Participate and contribute to strategic discussions with provincial officials in economic development and tourism to ensure an integrated and coherent approach.



PUBLIC SAFETY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Responsibilities for public safety services are well defined and mapped to capture the scope of police, fire, and emergency services.

Centralization and coordination of regional communication by public security stakeholders to improve the dissemination of information to the public.

Study the gaps in the service offer to discuss with emergency measures responders to identify possible solutions for emergency situations that are not currently well serviced.

ACTIONS

- › Encourage the sharing of training opportunities for responders responsible for public security for the entire region;
- › Find approaches to encourage volunteerism in fire departments to recruit additional firefighters.
- › Organize information sessions with stakeholders responsible for the implementation of emergency measures plans in regional public institutions (schools, hospitals, nursing homes, sports facilities);
- › Distribute provincial information and communications to municipalities to ensure all stakeholders are updated on changes and new regulations;
- › Promote the importance of having emergency centers and 72-hour emergency kits to residents.
- › Discussion with public safety officials from other RSCs to share knowledge and learn from their best practices;
- › Organize an information day on public safety in the communities.



TOURISM

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Restigouche destination is promoted by all communities, and tourism leaders activate their adopted tourism strategic plan.

The region is developing initiatives to encourage the growth of the number of tourism products with industry stakeholders to contribute to regional economic development.

Active participation in promotional campaigns and partnerships to accentuate strategic communications and regional marketing aimed at visitors and tourists.

ACTIONS

- › Ensure understanding of regional priorities to meet the needs of tourism stakeholders;
- › Coordinate strategic interventions with economic stakeholders to ensure that our value propositions are common in attracting visitors and entrepreneurs;
- › Ensure that our regional promotion stakeholders understand the regional tourism strategy;
- › Participate and contribute to strategic discussions with provincial tourism officials to ensure an integrated and coherent approach;
- › Increase the visibility of Restigouche as a tourist destination.
- › Improve the region's tourism assets, services, and infrastructure;
- › Ensure the promotion and enhancement of tourist facilities, services, and infrastructures;
- › Take advantage of current events and activities;
- › Attract additional events and activities to the territory;
- › Monitor trends to be able to influence the development of tourism products.
- › Develop a regional marketing plan that will provide specific strategies for digital presence and other means of communication;
- › Optimization of digital tools to ensure that our website and our presence in social networks respond to trends and best practices.



AIRPORT AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Support Charlo Airport to ensure the maintenance of Restigouche airport services

Ensure designated highways are in good condition and public safety is prioritized.

Promote the use of security fences to protect citizens and respect wildlife.

ACTIONS

- › Promote existing services at Charlo Airport.
- › Advocate with governments for investments in the improvement and adequate maintenance, particularly in winter, of highway 11 and 17, as well as the need for wildlife fences.



HEALTH

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

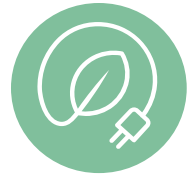
Promote and inform governments on the importance of maintaining health services and repatriation of recently lost services throughout the territory.

Actively participate in attracting and retaining healthcare professionals and workers.

Increased communication with the public to publicize existing services including the use of technological tools.

ACTIONS

- › Support retention initiatives such as the organization of recognition dinners with elected officials, tours of the region for newcomers;
- › Lobbying the government to maintain health services in Restigouche;
- › Establish a day care service for health workers;
- › Attraction and retention strategy to support Vitalité's efforts.



GREEN ENERGY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Identify wind projects compatible with the region and identification of competitive advantages of setting-up in Restigouche.

Mapping of the territory and preparation of technical information to highlight Restigouche as a destination for promising green energy projects.

Active engagement with green energy project proponents to provide political support to move projects forward.

ACTIONS

- › Study regional projects inspired by the bordering jurisdiction to identify business models that could generate royalties for municipalities;
- › Collaboration with the Port of Belledune in its green energy hub initiative.



TELECOMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Identifying gaps in cellular coverage in the region and raise awareness of the public safety risks related to this situation.

Intervention with private telecommunications companies to find solutions to improve the level of regional service.

Communication and public awareness on alternative solutions offered for cellular and wifi coverage in remote areas not served by major telecommunications industries.

ACTIONS

- › Obtain support from other regional stakeholders on the importance of having a stable internet network and cellular coverage throughout the territory;
- › Lobbying with federal and provincial governments to maintain pressure on telecommunications companies;
- › Promotion of available and existing high-speed Internet services to residents.

OVERVIEW TABLE

		COMMON SERVICES		NEW SERVICES				VOLUNTARY COLLABORATION				
		LAND USE PLANNING	SOLID WASTE	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	SPORTS, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE	PUBLIC SAFETY	TOURISM	AIRPORT AND TRANSPORTATION	HEALTH	GREEN ENERGY	TELECOMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	<p>The region promotes the modernization of planning tools in order to recognize responsibilities, meet the expectations of municipalities and those of users of land use planning services.</p>	<p>Awareness and communication with users on the importance of sorting solid waste and residual materials to reduce the volume of waste to be transported to the landfill site.</p>	<p>The community development committee lists all the community services offered on the territory and encourages stakeholders to offer equivalent services for all of Restigouche to counter challenges such as food insecurity, poverty and mental health.</p>	<p>Identify solutions to attract and retain newcomers and workers by highlighting the dynamic economic climate of the region, both in terms of employment and business opportunities.</p>	<p>Coordination of existing cost sharing agreements of sub-regional recreational and sports infrastructure is in place and discussions are encouraged on the sustainability and optimization of the services offered.</p>	<p>Responsibilities for public safety services are well defined and mapped to capture the scope of police, fire, and emergency services.</p>	<p>The Restigouche destination is promoted by all communities, and tourism leaders activate their adopted tourism strategic plan.</p>	<p>Support Charlo Airport to ensure the maintenance of Restigouche airport services.</p>	<p>Promote and inform governments on the importance of maintaining health services and repatriation of recently lost services throughout the territory.</p>	<p>Identify wind projects compatible with the region and identification of competitive advantages of setting-up in Restigouche.</p>	<p>Identifying gaps in cellular coverage in the region and raise awareness of the public safety risks related to this situation.</p>	
	<p>Mapping of the various decision-making processes including the timelines to optimize the services rendered to municipalities and improve communications with users.</p>	<p>The region is showing leadership in recycling and looking at various innovative ways to improve the protection of its environment.</p>	<p>A transit structure adapted to the region is conceptualized in order to define the level of service offered through needs analysis and studies.</p>	<p>Undertake and lead Restigouche's strategic thinking to establish regional economic data and indicators that will allow the region to be ready for immediate investments.</p>	<p>The region is carrying out an inventory of all its sports, cultural and recreational facilities to ensure that there are opportunities for all residents to have access to adapted and inclusive facilities.</p>	<p>Centralization and coordination of regional communication by public security stakeholders to improve the dissemination of information to the public.</p>	<p>The region is developing initiatives to encourage the growth of the number of tourism products with industry stakeholders to contribute to regional economic development.</p>	<p>Ensure designated highways are in good condition and public safety is prioritized.</p>	<p>Actively participate in attracting and retaining healthcare professionals and workers.</p>	<p>Mapping of the territory and preparation of technical information to highlight Restigouche as a destination for promising green energy projects.</p>	<p>Intervention with private telecommunications companies to find solutions to improve the level of regional service.</p>	
	<p>To support the proposed departmental actions, the regional planning service is an integral part of the implementation of regional strategies, through the scientific use of available data.</p>	<p>The standardization of solid waste and residual materials collection techniques is encouraged to standardize the levels of services offered throughout the territory.</p>	<p>Community development actively participates in regional discussions to identify affordable housing solutions allowing newcomers to integrate the region and to identify housing solutions for the homeless.</p>	<p>Carry out a survey of regional business opportunities to identify primary and secondary industries and supply chains to increase opportunities to deal with governments and other major contract givers.</p>	<p>The region ensures that regional interventions in economic development, attraction of new arrivants and in tourism showcase the existing sports, cultural and recreational infrastructures in Restigouche.</p>	<p>Study the gaps in the service offer to discuss with emergency measures responders to identify possible solutions for emergency situations that are not currently well serviced.</p>	<p>Active participation in promotional campaigns and partnerships to accentuate strategic communications and regional marketing aimed at visitors and tourists.</p>	<p>Promote the use of security fences to protect citizens and respect wildlife</p>	<p>Increased communication with the public to publicize existing services including the use of technological tools.</p>	<p>Active engagement with green energy project proponents to provide political support to move projects forward.</p>	<p>Communication and public awareness on alternative solutions offered for cellular and wifi coverage in remote areas not served by major telecommunications industries.</p>	

CHAPTER 6

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