

THE LESLIE HARRIS CENTRE OF REGIONAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT



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# SUMMARY REPORT

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## BURIN PENINSULA THRIVING REGIONS WORKSHOP #1

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Marystown Hotel

Marystown

October 29, 2019

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## Introduction

As part of the Harris Centre's Thriving Regions Partnership Process, on October 29, 2019 the Harris Centre hosted the first in a series of workshops for the Burin Peninsular Region. Approximately 15 people from communities across the region met in Marystown to

- Share their vision for a thriving Burin Peninsula region;
- Identify specific ideas and opportunities that could support community, economic and social development in the region;
- Cluster these ideas into "themes"; and
- Select three priority areas that can be used to solicit possible applied research by Memorial University researchers.

The Harris Centre is releasing a call for Expressions of Interest from Memorial University faculty, staff and students to complete research projects focusing on the priority themes that were identified. A fund evaluation committee comprised of local and academic members will choose which researchers will move forward in the process and attend a second workshop early in 2020. These researchers will then refine their research plans and incorporate input from the people in the region. Ultimately, this process will result in the Harris Centre funding up to three publically engaged research projects on the Burin Peninsula Region at up to \$15,000 each.

# About the Thriving Regions Partnership Process and this Workshop

The Harris Centre’s Thriving Regions Partnership Process is a new program that has taken the place of its Regional Workshop programming that was undertaken from 2005-2016. This new process includes development of more sustained relationships with people in regions throughout the province, as well as dedicated funding for Memorial researchers to complete projects in those regions. The Thriving Regions Partnership Process is providing an opportunity for Memorial University to work with people on the Burin Peninsula region to help promote a thriving social and economic region through the funding of publically engaged research projects focused on priorities identified by people from within the region.



A local advisory committee is helping plan and promote this process in the Burin Peninsula region, including people from the following businesses and organizations: College of the North Atlantic–Burin; Regional Women in Business Network, Grand Bank Development Coporation); Dynamic Air Shelters; Fortune Hotel; Laurentian Legacy Tours; and NL Dept of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation. (See Appendix A for the list of committee members.)

## Priority Themes

A combination of individual reflection, group brainstorming, and smaller break-out group discussions were used to determine the priority themes. The seven themes below emerged as being important for the region. After attendees generated and clustered their ideas, they were invited to vote in two different ways for regional priorities. Participants used 3 yellow dots for what they viewed as “the most important” themes and 3 green dots for those themes “they cared about the most” (i.e., most likely to dedicate their time and energy to supporting). The following are the results of this process (listed from most to fewest votes):

### **Realizing Our Tourism Potential {22 votes; Y=10, G=12}**

- Arts/Theatre Heritage Preservation
- Increased tourism opportunities and operators
- Build/Upgrade 360 kms of multi-purpose trails
- Capture the stories of the peninsula; engage visitors through stories; use technology to make it [stories] accessible and connect to players
- Tours, itineraries and promotion for community & tourism
- Tourism network on the Burin Peninsula
  - Electronic footprint
  - How do we look to the market
  - Study existing inventory & existing marketing efforts
- Regional sharing and collaboration
- Cross promotion of trails (hiking and ATV)
- Like to see parking lot out front full of pickup trucks and trailers loaded with ATVs/UTVs

### **Senior and Child Friendly Communities {12 votes; Y=1, G=11}**

- Senior living – happy and healthy
- More family entertainment
- Quality of life: safety, freedom, fresh & clean
- Concerned with increased criminal activity

- Senior day care
- Encourage self-management of health

### **Attraction & Retention of Workers and Families {10 votes; Y=10, G=0}**

- Concern: not having sufficient employees to meet workforce demands due to aging and decreased population
- Need an immigrant workforce
- Workforce development
- Concerns related to our healthcare systems
  - Having well-staffed hospitals and clinics
  - Increased regional training opportunities for future human resources requirements in our regional health care system
- Encourage self-management of health
- Labour contracts for major projects

### **Ocean Health & Seafood Opportunities {8 votes; Y=6, G=2}**

- Aquaculture research facility
- Increased emphasis on saltwater resources (e.g., kelp production)
- Aquaculture opportunities, direct & indirect
- Bay management & fisheries engagement
- Opportunities in fishery
- Fish waste (fish hide tannery; crafts industry)
- Value added fish meal or kelp fertilizer

### **Waste as a Resource {7 votes; Y=3, G=4}**

- Waste diversion; innovation & strategies, divert to crafts & practical use
- Green innovation

- Wastewater treatment
- Wastewater management – how can it be improved?
- Waste reduction in communities – make it a creative challenge

## Innovative Opportunities to Utilize Existing Physical Infrastructure {3 votes; Y=1, G=2}

- Existing housing inventory; old houses and existing infrastructure
- Planning for buildings (especially vacant) & promotion of potential (re)use
- Land management & planning
- Well paved roads

## Agricultural Capacity & Development {2 votes; Y=1, G=1}

- Return to past farming practices (i.e., selling roadside)
- Substantial supply of land for growing & building
- Land management & planning
- Value added fish meal or kelp fertilizer

Workshop participants also identified the following two additional idea clusters. After further discussion, they agreed these are areas that people within the room (and the broader region) could and should seek to take action on without the benefit of additional research.

- Burin Peninsula entrepreneurial incubator; more education & support for community enterprise
- Digital innovation & networking for community development, including
  - Interconnected people & communities; using technology to know who & what is available; engage people
  - Communications network
  - Innovation through community engagement; tap the wealth of talent, skills and resources in our communities
  - Digital promotion
  - Digital economy – how does BP participate?

- Broadband & cellular service
- Concern: regional emergency preparedness

Finally, workshop participants identified two additional issues they felt should be considered in any/all potential research projects:

- 1) **Unique regional asset** – trade & export opportunities (via St. Pierre & Miquelon) and potential access to European Union funding.
- 2) **Ongoing concern** – public processing timeliness and beauracratic “red tape” impeding innovation and development.

### **Priority Themes**

Following a final review and discussion of the above results by workshop participants, the Harris Centre agreed to:

- a) Solicit letters of Expression of Interest from Memorial researchers interested in developing projects that will address one of the above regional priorities – with particular emphasis on the top four; i.e.,

- i. **Realizing Our Tourism Potential**

*The Burin Peninsula has a number of unique and compelling assets, including its proximity and relationship with St. Pierre & Miquelon. Building upon existing tourism assets, products and services, workshop participants see opportunities for further developing and combining these in ways to advance tourism across the region.*

- ii. **Senior and Child Friendly Communities**

*Healthy communities find ways of providing opportunities for people of all ages – seniors, youth, families, etc. – to engage in and contribute to community life. Workshop participants expressed desire for finding innovative, fiscally responsible approaches for meeting the needs across different age groups within the region.*

- iii. **Attraction & Retention of Workers and Families**

*Similar to many rural regions in the province, the Burin Peninsula is experiencing demographic shifts and the associated challenge of meeting the staffing needs for*



*businesses and service organizations. There is strong interest in identifying strategies for attracting new people and families, and for retaining those already in the region.*

**iv. Ocean Health & Seafood Opportunities**

*The Burin Peninsula has a long history of working with and on the sea. Building upon this tradition and existing assets, there is interest in exploring new opportunities in seafood and saltwater resources (e.g., fishery, aquaculture, kelp resources, value-add products from existing waste streams, etc.).*

- b) As part of its “brokering” function, explore options for supporting further regional discussions related to “Burin Peninsula entrepreneurial incubator; more education & support for community enterprise”.

## Next Steps

With the completion of this report, the Harris Centre is opening the Burin Peninsula Thriving Regions Applied Research Fund. This is beginning with a call for Expressions of Interest from Memorial faculty, staff or students looking to develop projects to address one or more of the top three regional priorities. A Fund Evaluation Committee, comprised of local members from the Burin region as well as academic members from Memorial University, will review the Expressions of Interest and decide on three projects to move forward in the region.

A second workshop will be held in early 2020, during which the three chosen researchers will travel to the region to meet with local partners and stakeholders. The researchers will present their planned research, gather feedback, and develop partnerships to further refine their research. They will submit expanded research plans following the session, which will then be reviewed by the Fund Evaluation Committee to ensure that the projects still reflect what was originally proposed, while also incorporating local input and the development of community partnerships.

Once the projects are approved, the researchers will receive their funding and move forward with their projects. The researchers will continue to engage with people in the region throughout their projects, and an additional session will be planned when their projects are at or near completion to share results and discuss next steps.

## About the Harris Centre

Named in honour of the late scholar and former Memorial University President Dr. Leslie Harris, the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development was established on October 1, 2004. Dr. Harris was known for his integrity and independence, while making a practical contribution to Newfoundland and Labrador. The Harris Centre continues this commitment as Memorial University's hub for public policy and regional development. It links Memorial faculty, staff, and students with the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and supports research, public engagement, and teaching in areas of regional policy and development. Working with all units at Memorial, the Harris Centre builds connections, encourages informed debate and supports collaboration, enhancing the University and the province through mutually beneficial partnerships. Since its inception, the Harris Centre has developed a suite of knowledge mobilization and public policy tools and has increased the university's presence in communities and region across the province.

<https://www.mun.ca/harriscentre/whatwedo/thrivingregions/>

## Appendix A – Burin Peninsula Thriving Regions Core Planning Team

Trevor Bungay, Economic Development Officer – Marystown Field Office, NL Dept of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation

Vanessa Jackman, Business Development Officer, College of the North Atlantic – Burin

Judy Peach, Co-ordinator, Regional Women in Business Network, Grand Bank Development Coporation

Kay Riggs, Chief Operating Officer, Dynamic Air Shelters

Brian Rose, Business Owner/Operator, Fortune Hotel

Carl Slaney, Owner/Guide, Laurentian Legacy Tours

## Appendix B – List of Attendees

Tanya Bishop

Trevor Bungay

Everett Farwell

Patti Giovannini

Elroy Grandy

Vanessa Jackman

Jeff Pittman

Brian Rose

Sandra Shallow

Carl Slaney

Laurella Stacey

Brenda Stapleton

Joanne Stirling