



Labrador Transportation Plan

Public Submission

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November 15, 2006

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What is the NLDDL?

- The NLDDL is a non-partisan advocacy group striving to improve the social, cultural and economic situation in Newfoundland and Labrador
- Our membership is made up of current and former residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- The NLDDL is not affiliated with any business interest or political group and is fully funded by its membership.



Excerpt from Discussion Paper.

“...Well functioning transportation networks are critical prerequisites to successful economies and major influences on the quality of life in a region. Infrastructure facilitates economic development and is essential to investment, productivity and competitiveness. It is also a major contributing factor to quality of life by providing citizens with access to quality goods and services, including health care and social services. People and investment are attracted to areas with well functioning, high quality transportation infrastructure that allows for the efficient and cost effective movement of goods, people and resources.”

*Excerpt: Page 1 - The Development of a Sustainable Transportation Plan for Labrador
Consultation Document 2006
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador*





How do we Proceed?

Based on the stated objectives presented by the provincial government, the question becomes, how do we best ensure that our transportation goals are met and that we can:

- Grow the economy;
- Improve quality of life;
- Facilitate economic development;
- Promote investment;
- Provide access to services; and
- Allow for efficient and cost effective transportation of goods, services and resources.



Why is NLDDL Concerned with Labrador Transportation Issues?

- While desperately needed improvements to Labrador's internal transportation infrastructure are the core issue being addressed, as they should be, it must be recognized that Labrador itself is a part of the province as a whole. In order to ensure that the objectives identified are met, Labrador cannot be viewed in isolation.
- The NLDDL strongly believes that the physical separation between Labrador and the island of Newfoundland has created a psychological, social, cultural and economic divide among our people that has hampered the province's development and more specifically the development of Labrador.



A complete Plan

- The NLDDL believes that any transportation plan for Labrador would be incomplete without addressing the ability of our people to move as easily between Labrador and the island as they might between Labrador and the rest of Canada.
- The Completion of any highway system that allows for ease of access to Quebec and the rest of Canada while ignoring our inability to easily move people, goods and resources inside the province, would be short sighted and contrary to the goals identified.





The Missing Link

- The transportation, economic and social needs of Labrador cannot be planned in isolation. To do so would result in an incomplete plan that would not address the province's objectives or the urgent need to connect our people with each other and with the rest of Canada. To address these needs would require:
 - improving the Labrador highway system;
 - upgrading the Northern Peninsula highway.
 - constructing a fixed link between the island & Labrador.



The benefits of a fixed link

- A fixed link would enable people, goods and resources to be moved easily between both areas of the province and across Canada:
 - Year round;
 - at a lower cost than air travel; and
 - more reliably than existing ferry services which are subject to:
 - mechanical issues;
 - weather conditions;
 - Seasonal closures;
 - limited capacity; and
 - labor disputes.



The benefits of a fixed link

- A fixed link, in conjunction with a completed highway system between Labrador and Quebec, would provide a stable and viable year round route for tourists and for the import and export of goods between the entire province, the rest of Canada and the Eastern United States.



The Benefits cont...

- A link would reduce the need to run, maintain and replace ferries in those areas immediately served by the link and road connection. This has the potential to save the province tens of millions each year which could be used to offset the cost of maintaining the link itself.
- With modern engineering and design techniques, many of the problems identified by the government's fixed link pre-feasibility study can be addressed in a cost effective manner.



The Benefits cont...

- A fixed link can be designed in such a way that it allows not only for the movement of people, but for the transportation of oil, gas, electrical energy and mineral resources between both parts of the province and beyond.
- Although Labrador's population is identified in the discussion paper, population density and dispersal, as it exists today, is a non-factor. Industry and employment, by their very nature, attract residential movement and population change. A fixed link that allows for the free movement of goods, people and resources would attract industry and foster population shifts throughout the province, especially in the areas of Labrador and Newfoundland closest to the link itself.





The Benefits cont...

- The ability to easily transport hydro power, wind power, oil, gas and mineral resources throughout the entire province would provide Newfoundland and Labrador with:
 - A strong incentive for industrial investment & development;
 - The ability to leverage our resources for the benefit of our people;
 - Provide a valid link in the creation of the federally proposed “East/West Power Grid”.
 - Create the first infrastructure component for the future development of a natural gas pipeline.



The Benefits

- Tourism is quickly becoming a major component of the Newfoundland and Labrador economy. A fixed link would:
 - Be welcomed by tourists from Canada and the Eastern United States;
 - Would improve Labrador's ability to attract resident tourists from the island portion of the province & visa versa; and
 - As the only sub-sea tunnel in North America, the link itself would attract tourists who are interested in viewing and traveling this route.





The Benefits cont...

“...being explored is the concept of using the infrastructure, and Happy Valley-Goose Bay’s strategic location, as part of a larger transshipment operation to move goods and services to and from Canada’s north and the whole circumpolar region.”

*Excerpt: Page 5 - The Development of a Sustainable Transportation Plan for Labrador
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The Benefits cont...

- Oil and shipping industries from many nations are already planning ways to take advantage of the current polar ice melt and the opening of the North West Passage which is expected within the next 5 to 15 years.

This sea route will cut thousands of miles off the distance vessels must travel between markets around the world. The route will also see many of these vessels travel directly down the coast of Labrador and potentially past the island of Newfoundland.

Developing a means to easily transport fuels, raw materials and goods across our entire province will allow us to better position ourselves to take advantage of the potential this reality brings with it.





Summary

The government of Newfoundland and Labrador has identified specific points that the Labrador Transportation plan are intended to address:

- Growing the economy;
- Improving quality of life;
- Facilitating economic development;
- Promoting investment;
- Providing access to services; and
- Allowing for efficient and cost effective transportation of goods, services and resources.

How can these goals truly be met without the development of a fixed link and the ability to freely move people, goods and resources about inside Newfoundland and Labrador?





Closing

The concept of a fixed link between Newfoundland and Labrador has been discussed for decades. It isn't going away.

With each passing year improvements in technology make the project more and more feasible. A link **will** be constructed eventually, of that there is no doubt.

The only questions are when it will happen and which government will have the **vision** to ensure that our entire Country, and especially our province itself, are finally united.

