

Our Communities - Our Future!

Empowering New Brunswickers with the ability to make local decisions

Strengthening our communities for the future requires that we think beyond what we have and what we value today. The new Rural Community model is a governance option for residents to consider as they look to the future.

What is a Rural Community?

A Rural Community is made up of at least two Local Service Districts (LSDs), or a LSD(s) and a village(s), with sufficient population and property tax base, that join together to create one viable community. When local communities come together to form a Rural Community, the residents of the Rural Community become what is called a “body corporate”. This means that, just like municipal residents, they have the ability to elect a council. The Rural Community Council has the authority to make local decisions in response to the community’s local service needs.

What services must be provided?

When a Rural Community is established it *must* only provide one service- community planning. It has, however, the option to take on the responsibility for additional services at a pace the community is comfortable with and at a cost it can afford.

The Rural Community model will not be imposed on communities. If communities are not ready, or are not interested, the Provincial Government will not impose change.

Why consider becoming a Rural Community?

The new Rural Community model provides residents with increased control over local matters including the provision of local services. It brings the resources and decision-making powers closer to community members.

It does so by allowing for the creation of a locally elected body, a Council, charged with the ability to make decisions for the benefit of the Community and to provide a stronger voice in regional affairs. For example, a Rural Community Council could gain the authority to make decisions on a community’s behalf regarding the installation of streetlights. Currently, Provincial Cabinet approval is required when handling local service decisions (e.g. street lighting).

Rural Communities will also have the opportunity to develop and deliver services more suited to the community in terms of needs and cost effectiveness. And, as with the municipal model, incorporation as a Rural Community means having representation on regional commissions such as a solid waste commission.



Who can become a Rural Community?

Any group of adjacent LSDs, or a village(s) and an adjacent LSD(s), that support the establishment of a Rural Community and have a sufficient population and property tax base, can become a Rural Community. A population of 2,000 and a tax base of 100 million dollars are the target criteria for establishing a viable Rural Community.

Other local government options -

The addition of the Rural Communities option does not replace the other local government options already in place. It is still possible for a LSD to be annexed to (become part of) an existing Municipality, and existing Municipalities are still able to amalgamate to form a larger Municipality.

Where to get more information

The Department of the Environment and Local Government is committed to providing information, advice and support to communities interested in the Rural Community model, and to continue building positive relationships with all communities in the province.

Rural Community Model fact sheets:

- Fact Sheet # 1 - Local Governance: Current Structure and New Opportunities
- Fact Sheet # 3 - Process for Becoming a Rural Community
- Fact Sheet # 4 - Functions of a Rural Community
- Fact Sheet # 5 - Contact Information and Resources

View the fact sheet series on-line by visiting: www.gnb.ca/0009/0376/0004/English/0001-e.asp.

You can also contact your Local Services Advisor at the nearest regional office of the Department of the Environment and Local Government.

For additional fact sheets, contact:

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