

# Final Report – October 31, 2022

Southern Labrador Development Association (SLDA)

## ‘Rediscovering Our Main Streets’ Labrador Straits Farmers’ and Craft Markets



Prepared by:  
Roseann Linstead, Project Coordinator

# Final Report

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## Background

### **Rediscovering Our Main Streets, Our Communities, No Matter How Big or Small...**

Through this project we have brought people together, reconnected, supported the economy and provided overall fun experience that everyone enjoyed!

'Rediscover Main Streets' funding through Atlantic Canada Opportunities Association (ACOA), along with community partnerships with Craft Council NL, Labrador Straits Historical Development Corporation (LSHDC) and Provincial Airlines, supported Southern Labrador Development Association (SLDA) in achieving their overall project goal.

## Thank You

To SLDA Board, **Thank You** for selecting me for this rewarding opportunity!

I thoroughly enjoyed my work, I feel that I have accomplished all aspects as Project Coordinator job description, key responsibilities, range of duties and undertakings. COVID pandemic had presented many challenges for folks including not being able to gather; this project has helped make a positive change moving forward. Through this project we were able to bring folks together safely within our communities, highlight and support various local artisans, crafters, and community groups, building on what we have and support local businesses and the economy.

*Roseann Linstead*

## Brainstorm Session to...

### ‘Rediscovering Our Main Streets’

- During a *brainstorm session* held in May 2021, hosted by Community Sector Council (CSC NL), whereby I was Regional Network Facilitator for the project, we captured great discussions and feedback from community individuals. The feedback was compiled, shared with participants and presented to SLDA staff along with a ‘core group’ to review and clearly identify and define from the contributions provided how to advance projects and initiatives in the region.
- The brainstorm session was attended by a great cross-section of individuals from all communities in the Labrador Straits region, including 19 nonprofit organizations and community groups; representation was attended by the three sectors: community sector, private sector, and the public sector.
- The session was an effort to bring people together, to determine individual and shared priorities and high-level ideas on how to advance the region, collectively. Folks were encouraged to identify challenges and needs and to connect opportunities and resources.
- The follow-up session was an opportunity to share to SLDA staff and the ‘core group’ what was learned through the CSC NL project and how our learnings and built networks, could be continued beyond the project. It was identified and matched with a funding opportunity available through Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) titled, ‘Rediscovering our Main Streets’.
- Through collaboration, CSC NL and SLDA developed an application and was approved to coordinate and host a series of three (3) Farmers’ and Craft Markets throughout communities in the Labrador Straits region.

## ‘Project has been instrumental...’

This project has been instrumental in connecting and bringing people together, building trust, starting initiatives that I feel will continue in the future and has brought this region closer in terms of communication and cooperation, creating positive change here in the Labrador Straits area. Below are some highlights and outcomes of this project:

### **Connecting, Networking and Bringing People Together**

- Through this project we were able to bring people together within the communities in the Labrador Straits region and beyond.
- Folks from neighboring communities in Quebec were invited and participated in the Farmers’ and Craft Markets along with folks from Southeastern and Central Labrador participated as vendors and visitors.
- The events featured vendors, demonstrations, prizes and live music.
- Connecting and ‘leaving your mark’ was a great way for folks to be a part of the events. The Association for New Canadians (ANC) participated and invited folks to leave their handprint on creative designed canvases at each event. These completed community canvases will be displayed at the SLDA building.
- SLDA Volunteer Age-Friendly Committee and Seniors Services Office shared about the initiatives and services available. Information was also shared about the Volunteer Community Advisory Council (a community committee coordinated through Labrador Grenfell Health (LGH) working together to help improve primary health care)
- Sharing Our Cultures – the event provided an opportunity for the organization to share about the resources available.
- Junior Rangers (at last market) – availed of the opportunity to have a table and shared about the organization, recruit some new members and assist as volunteers at the event.
- The markets offered an opportunity to connect, network, brought people together, by getting creative with what we have and building on it.

### **Communication and Cooperation**

- By building on and being creative with what we have, we were able to get the message out to folks efficiently and effectively to engage participation in the events. Our ‘eye-pleasing’ graphics and social media messages captured peoples attention.
- By updating the SLDA social media page with a fresh cover and regular posts, individuals ‘liked, followed and invited friends’ to follow the page, thereby increasing the number of followers on the SLDA page.
- Regular communication kept folks interested and engaged in the upcoming events. This was also a way of sharing about any upcoming job opportunities in the area.
- ‘Posting, Tagging and Sharing’ created a wider range. With regular posts and tagging municipalities and organizations and by sharing to the public message board and flea market pages, we were able to reach more folks. This encouraged vendors and



community individuals to like and share the posts, thereby building an even wider range, over 10k.

- For our final and largest market, we wanted to ensure information about the events reached everyone in the straits region, therefore we chose to place a colorful, two-pager flyer in all the mailboxes in the area and we were able to do this while keeping costs down. Folks appreciate receiving the printed info flyer.
- We put out a 'call for vendors' for the first market and had waiting lists for the following two markets and we were able to accommodate all vendors. The interest and enthusiasm grew and vendors wanted to be a part of the events.
- CBC Labrador Morning heard about the events in the area and reached out with interest in doing a live interview to conclude their weeks' topic related to small businesses. We shared lots of interesting items about the event, from bringing people together, to 'chicken poop bingo', music, paying-it-forward, tabs 4 Cameron, vendors, local artisans and crafters, traditional skills sharing and young entrepreneurs. Having young entrepreneurs partake as vendors at each event was exciting and linked nicely to small business week.

### **Creating Positive Change**

- Through the Farmers' and Craft Markets, SLDA was able to create positive change in the area. Encouraging folks from all communities and outside the region to come together for these events. By hosting the events in different communities, no matter how big or small, created a 'hype' and excitement in all communities.
- Feedback from Vendors noting that these markets were different, very well organized, lots of variety, fun and they 'felt a part of the event'. Vendors valued the regular communication informing them about the 'housekeeping' information, set-up times and also appreciated the help provided by volunteers.
- We have received heaps of encouraging optimistic feedback noting the value of this project, Farmers' and Craft Markets, and the positive change that it has brought to this area; recommending to continue hosting similar events.

### **Vendors and Markets**

- A variety of vendors participated: young entrepreneurs, local artisans, crafters, community groups and organizations.
- Folks were able to sell their knitted goods, hand-crafted items, offer photography service and food services; community groups sold tickets as part of fundraisers while organizations were able to share about services available in the area.
- Each event was at capacity per venue size and each event continued to grow with interest and enthusiasm. Initial 'call for vendors' grew to having a 'wait list' for the future markets.

### **Free Event to Vendors and Visitors – Donations Accepted for Various Causes**

- Through this project we were able to offer the events free for vendors and visitors. The free event provided an opportunity to accept donations for various causes and folks felt really good about donating and helping out. (See more information about the causes in the market summaries below)

## Community Partnerships

- This project has certainly brought people, organizations and communities together by way of partnerships. Folks recognize the value and benefits in working together.
- Collaboration with community partners helped make these events successful.
- We connected with Craft Council NL to learn about best practices for craft markets and they were excited to offer partnership for the event. They provided \$2500 along with aprons and reusable bags. We were able to have local crafters assist with creating decorative canvases, photo opts and images printed on the reusable bags. The bags and aprons were distributed to vendors and volunteers and allowed for prizes for visitors.
- Labrador Straits Historical Development Corporation (LSHDC) offered to partner to provide entertainment at the events. Having local entertainers and music at the events creates a relaxing and fun atmosphere and has proven to be very beneficial in bringing folks together.
- Provincial Airlines – we reached out to Provincial Airlines to seek a grand prize of airline tickets. The purpose of having a grand prize helped encourage folks to attend the events. PAL donated two airline tickets and we selected the prize winner at the last market.
- Donations from Downhome Magazine and prize package. Downhome provided us with 200 copies of the April 2022 edition along with a free 6-month subscription to their magazine. We asked folks to enter their name to win the prize pack.
- Agriculture NL provided us with information brochures for young farmers and activity books and stickers for young visitors.
- Thank you notes and tokens of appreciation, printed apron and bag, were sent to all partners.

## ‘Mentorship’ - Labour Market – Young Entrepreneurs

- *‘Mentorship is a valuable tool for turning one’s vision into reality. Mentors are expected to guide and advise their mentees, helping them build a successful career or gain a solid footing within a certain organization.’ - [www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org)*
- Through this project we were able to provide mentorship to young entrepreneurs by way of they being able to partake in these events. They were exposed to working alongside other entrepreneurs, learning sales and business tactics.
- Each market we had young entrepreneurs partake, upwards of six at the last market, some a little more experienced than others and all taking away valuable learnings.

## Labour Market, Supporting Businesses and Going Forward

- By utilizing the SLDA Facebook page by *tagging* communities and various groups which created a greater reach and increased followers, we were able to share high quality info posts about the upcoming events.
- By way of the prizes at each event, *visitor prize*, *vendor prize* and *suggestion prize* we were able to support businesses in the region. The winner of each of the prizes at each event were able to select any business in the region for their \$100 prize coupon.

- Going forward, businesses, community groups and organizations could greatly benefit by having a paid resource to continue with social media development, information shares of what is happening in the region, community events, job opportunities, funding opportunities, etc., along with assisting organizations with writing grant proposals and completing funding applications. Having this resource available would greatly connect and help various community groups, organizations and businesses.

## **Volunteers**

- Volunteer Planning TEAM – town clerks and community individuals were invited to be a part of a volunteer planning team, to offer ideas and provide feedback to help in planning the events. This was greatly supported by various individuals partaking in weekly hybrid meetings.
- Through this project we recruited over 40 volunteers to help out with various activities related to the events. Student volunteers were able to achieve required volunteer hours, community individuals enjoyed sharing their time and skills by volunteering. ‘Volunteers are the heart of the community’
- Volunteers – this event allowed for volunteers, young and old, and physically challenged individuals to help out, bringing more awareness to volunteerism and the value in the community.
- An appreciation lunch was provided to the volunteer planning team and tokens of appreciation were presented to other volunteers.

## Farmers' and Craft Markets (Series of Three (3))

### Market #1 – L'Anse Au Clair, Town Hall

- 18 vendors (most vendors consisted of a team of two individuals)
- 234 visitors
- Local entertainers – local musicians provided entertainment throughout the event with volunteers of all ages partaking to share their musical talent.
- Demonstration: Molasses candy making was provided by a senior from the area at two of the markets and candy was available for the third event as well, even though the individual was not able to attend. Candy demonstration provided folks with a sample of the delicious candy and a deep appreciation for how the candy is made. Some individuals recorded the candy making process and attempted to make it on their own, so we invited folks to partake in the next market as part of the 'traditional skills sharing'.
- Demonstration: Rug Hooking and Community Rug. Demonstrations was provided by a senior from the area who attended all three of the events. Folks were invited to partake in making the community rug. The completed rug will be framed and displayed at the SLDA office, along with pictures of the event and a summary.
- Farm animals were onsite. One local individual brought along some chickens and little 'Nelly' the goat. Folks really enjoyed this addition
- Seniors Bus on the move – folks from the senior's complex attended the event utilizing the Labrador Grenfell Health Senior Bus. They thoroughly enjoyed music, vendors, food and demonstrations.
- Positive feedback from vendors, visitors and businesses in the area; one business even ran out of fuel that day!
- Donations of \$430 were accepted for the SLDA's Volunteer Age-Friendly 'Pay-It-Forward' initiative.

### Market #2 – West St. Modeste 'Partridgeberry Festival' – *Double Venue Event*

- *Hurricane Fiona impacted the event and we had to reschedule for following week; The Festivals' dance was postponed to the following Farmers' Market due to entertainment logistics.*
- 32 vendors (most vendors consisted of a team of two individuals)
- 300 visitors
- Double venue – Town Hall and Oceanview Resort
- Building on what we have – this was a fantastic opportunity to partner and build on community events. We shared about the festival events on social media to encourage participation.
- Local entertainers – local musicians provided entertainment throughout the event with volunteers of all ages partaking to share their musical talent.
- Traditional skills sharing demonstration of molasses candy. A young newcomer assisted with the candy making and learned the art of making molasses.
- Community Rug demonstration continued, and folks were engaged to add and build the community rug.



- Farm animals were onsite. Chickens and little 'Nelly' the goat attended the second event which was a favorable attraction for all.
- Traffic Control for the area – We had extra safety measures put in place to allow for a designated crossing area as the venues were directly across the main road from each other. Volunteers, signage and messages on social media helped get the message out to motorists and all complied. Special thanks to Department of Transportation and Works for sharing signage for the event.
- Donations were accepted for young Aiden O'Keefe whose family is from the area. Aiden was battling cancer and going through stem cell transplant. We reached out to Canadian Blood Services who provided us with information cards and KIND bars to distribute. Donations of \$1300 was provided to Aiden's family.
- Vendors prize basket – We asked all vendors to donate an item from their table and volunteers sold tickets on the basket of items. (Vendors were eager to participate) Funds of \$486 was collected for Hurricane Fiona relief and these funds were combined with the regional Volunteer Fire Brigade fundraiser and forwarded to Canadian Red Cross for the Port aux Basque and area. Over \$10k combined was raised in the region.

### **Market #3 – L'Anse Au Loup – Regional School-Labrador Straits Academy**

- 'Fall into Christmas' theme
- 49 vendors (most vendors consisted of a team of two individuals)
- 500+ visitors
- Musical entertainment was provided thru community partnerships; *The Flummies* (coordinated through LSHDC) and Dave McHugh (community partnership with Recreation Committee of West St. Modeste). Feedback from some vendors and visitors was that the music was a bit too loud; we tried our best to adjust during the event, but given that the event was in a gymnasium presented a bit of a challenge in keeping the volume controlled. Lesson learned for future events.
- Folks shared some traditional dancing while enjoying the music, this added value and impact to the event.
- Community Rug demonstration continued, and folks were engaged to complete the community rug. The rug has been completed and presented to SLDA, it will be framed and displayed at the SLDA building.
- Farm animals were onsite (outside the building with a tent donated and set up by the Canadian Rangers and Junior Rangers). Chickens, bunnies and little 'Nelly' the goat attended which was a favorable attraction for all.
- Photographer onsite to take Christmas photos – we helped a young individual with setting up and offering family photos at the event. This was a positive addition to the market.
- Donations were accepted for the National Children's Memorial Event that happens here in the region. Donations of nearly \$800 was collected and being given to the planning team.
- Vendors prize basket – We asked all vendors to donate one item from their table and volunteers sold tickets on the basket of items. (Vendors were eager to participate)

Funds of \$205 was collected for the SLDA's Volunteer Age-Friendly Pay-it-Forward initiative.

- Free blood pressure checks – another great addition to the market.

## Learnings, Observations and Recommendations

Labrador Straits region has many valuable resources yet limited paid resources to connect, build, support and help strengthen one another. One main observation learned through the previous pilot project with CSC NL and through this Farmers' and Craft Market project is that the area has limited paid skilled resources available. There are many wonderful concepts and ideas for increased social and economic growth, however with limited resources available and organizations operating with the help of volunteers. Many volunteers have young families, are working full time or are involved with several organizations and groups; some are facing 'volunteer burnout' and many feel they are limited with the time, energy or skill set they can offer and therefore groups are limited to advancement and progression.

Learning and observations through these projects and having 'boots on the ground' and 'fresh eyes in the area', show that many individuals, communities and organizations want to connect and work together, and I feel there is a need to have a 'connector', a paid resource to work on economic development for the region, to help make that happen. Having this resource would enable individuals, community groups, organizations, businesses and communities to learn what others want to do and how they do it so as not to 'reinvent the wheel' and encourage more sharing; learn about what folks are planning, build priorities lists, become aware of funding opportunities. This resource could meet, connect and combine the necessary information to build strong collaborative funding applications and proposals and coordinate projects which would enable groups to follow through on proposed ideas for social and economic growth.

By reaching out and making initial connections, building trust, developing partnerships, working together and making it happen, has shown that not everything has to be perfect to be effective and sometimes you just have to go with what you got, get creative, grow and build on what you have.