



Labrador City and Wabush : Resilient Communities

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Benefits of Labrador West

Established community = reduced start up costs for industry

Suited for operation phase of projects

Experience of labour force

Resource companies share in the value of creating community through corporate stewardship.

Community amenities key for retaining workers.

Link to natural environment – recreation amenities.



Boom Bust Cycle



Last big Bust 1982

Hundreds of homes vacant for approx 8 yrs

Homes sold by banks and companies for \$5,000-\$25,000

Affordable homes and affordable apartment rents until 2005

2010 – same homes sell for \$325,000 - \$549,000
rental rates now \$1,000 per bedroom i.e. 1
bedroom apt 1,200, 2 bedroom \$2,000 and
house rental \$5,000 month!

Challenges of Labrador West

- Economic dependence on single industry
- Growth impaired due to subsurface mineral rights
- Transient Workforce Population
- Expense of building/operating in remote northern location



Challenges: Single Industry



Market is volatile

Community grows and diminishes in response to the resource

Non renewable = finite.

Challenges: Growth

- Expansion/development encroach on mineral reserves
- Land management strongly influenced by Provincial interest and local industry
- Growth responds to market conditions – often lags behind needs of community and industry



Challenges: Flyin/Flyout Arrangements

Necessary for resource projects when workforce needs are high but short lived. I.e. construction phase

Transient residents – not fully engaged in community (i.e. lack of community involvement and volunteerism. Often project negative image of the region due to their lived reality.)

Negative perception amongst long-term residents of “contractors”.

Accommodation prices pushing people off property market – corporate acquisition of residential land.

Inaccurate census data = unknown impact on community



Challenges: Expense of building in northern locations

Modular builds/limited selection of building materials

Aesthetic quality of built environment is secondary to cost

Buildings constructed as 'temporary' structures.

Speaks to residents – impairs connection to place.

Cost of infrastructure.



Universal Characteristics of a Resilient Community

- Designed with intent
- Create a sense of place
- Complimentary land uses
- Adaptive
- Built with nature



Design Feature: Centeredness

Centers are essential for economic complexity, local identity and sense of place

A place for community members to work together, share interests and have places that draw them together for face to face civic engagement

Centers that exist on neighborhood levels (parks, schools) and town levels (squares, commercial facilities, central business districts)

Decentralization = sprawl= land use conflicts



Design Feature: Connectivity

Applicable to both natural environment and built environment

Connectivity key for functioning ecosystems – ie. Chains, webs, cycles

Key to the function of a community – transportation, trails

Counters piecemeal environmental decision making.

Connectivity recognises interrelation of towns and environment.

Takes a large, comprehensive perspective



Design Feature: Accessibility



To services and various land uses

Multi-modal development

Of information - for residents to participate in decision making

Of differing transportation modes

Empowers residents – creates inclusion

Design Feature: Place

Overall urban form is tailored to landscape, region and place

Each landscape produces distinctive communities with different regional configurations

Urban habitation filled with nature.

Relationship with nature part of our identity



Design Feature: Density + Limited Extent



Resilient landscape form depends on a concentrated density of habitation

Concentrated towns protect habitats essential for biodiversity

Primary cause of habitat loss = expansion of human habitation

Promotes the effective use of space

Opportunities for Action:

Regional Growth Strategy

Embracing Winter City Design

Promoting Density

Alternative housing options – row house development, affordable housing, multi-unit buildings, mixed use development



Opportunities: Winter City Design



Tailoring built environment to climate
+ topography

Embracing use of alternative modes
of transit (snowmobile, snowshoe, ski)

Creating civic spaces for winter

Integrating land uses

Opportunities: Regional Growth Strategy

Comprehensive approach to land use management.

Unified effort sister municipalities
Labrador City and Wabush

Engages community, industry and
provincial government

