

Emerging Considerations on Municipal Capacity and Governance



Overview



Who is he anyway?

What would he have to say?

So what?

How can we meet the gap?

So what am I saying?

A few questions





Who is he anyway?



Background

Me

30+ years

Experience at Federal,
Provincial and Municipal
level

13 years with Irish Loop
Development Board

5 years as mayor/councilor
and some time as a CAO

My Company

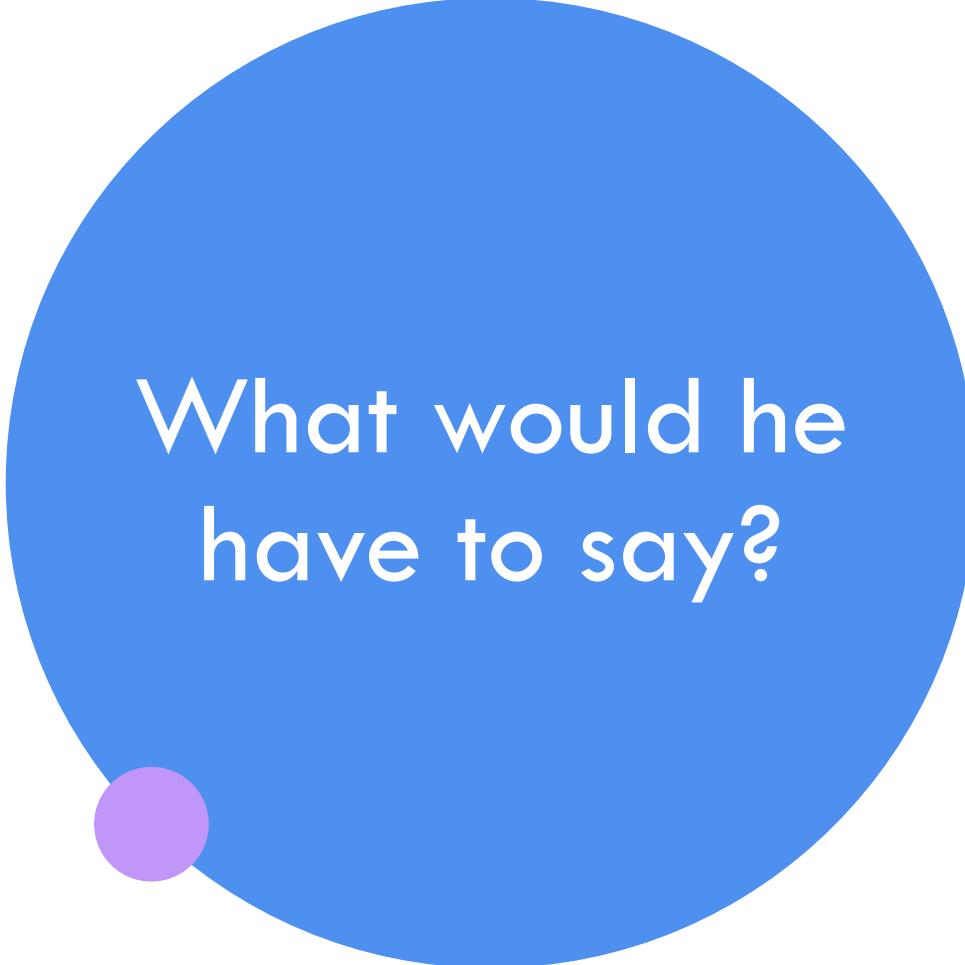
Planning, governance and
development

Over 120 projects since 2011

Over 50 municipal related
projects – large planning to
small governance sessions

Edited update of the
Municipal Council Handbook
in 2014





What would he
have to say?



A significant shift in the role and expectations of local government

Implications for local governments on their operations and their capacity to meet these emerging needs

Consider the following:



Crime is spiking

Crime is spiking in
Conception Bay North, and
the RCMP's pleas are
getting a cool response

Justice minister slams door
on increased funding,
saying the RCMP needs to
address vacancy rates.

CBC News · Feb 21, 2024



Multi-pronged solution needed for housing

Corner Brook cannot solve 'acute' housing crisis on its own, mayor says

Jim Parsons says a multi-pronged solution is needed to tackle housing issues



CBC News · Feb 21, 2024

Coastal Erosion

Trepassey's breakwater was built last July with emergency funding. It lasted only a few months. Project cost about \$900,000 through federal emergency funding

CBC News · Feb. 27, 2024



Tent Encampment

Toilet brought to mayor as students aim to keep park bathrooms open for tent encampment

CBC News · Nov. 27, 2024



A few questions

- Are there other emerging program areas where you're seeing need?





So what?



So where is this going?





How can we meet
the capacity gap?



Do we have sufficient
capacity to meet these new
emerging requirements?
Not all of it, but we have
some.



Regional Government is not on

N.L. government says no to regionalization plan

CBC News · Apr 27, 2023



Seven dirty words you can't say in government...

I understand this is a community newspaper and I am not allowed to use dirty words. Let's see if we can sneak this one past the editor.

Ready? Regionalization. Okay, so maybe it's not one of George Cartier's seven famous words, but in provincial politics it sure is.

Regionalization is the word government uses for its plan to make people who live in smaller communities, or in unincorporated areas, pay tax or in some cases more tax.

The problem is those people don't want to.

Most municipalities and areas in question say government should give them more money.

The problem there is government doesn't want to either.

The latest Liberal Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs joined a long line of former ministers in February announcing big plans for regionalization. It's going to happen, she said with confidence and authority. Government has a plan.



Work in Progress
By Ivan Morgan

got e-mails between the premier's office and the Department through an access to information request. Officially, government says full speed ahead. Privately, e-mails from the department indicate there seems to be no "appetite" for change.

In the immortal words of a former Premier, "You betcha."

Make no mistake, it's a dirty word that will raise more ire in the public than any of the customary ones.

Years ago, a buddy of mine who was a small-town mayor told me all about that dirtiest of words. A socially minded fellow, he would once a month hold a mayor's

on regionalization might live things up.

It sure did. Building capacity was exceeded an hour before it started. The RCMP had to be called for traffic and crowd control. Most had to stand outside. They made themselves absolutely clear — no thanks.

I knew all the reasons for wanting to implement regionalization. Some of them are good reasons. Many municipalities struggle to even pay the power bill for the few streetlights they have. They need more money. Some see nearby unincorporated communities as a tax base. So does the provincial government.

The problem is the people living in these areas really, really don't want it. Really don't.

Many MLAs have told me privately they are very worried about forcing that dirtiest of words on folks in their district who don't want it. The word "undemocratic" has been used.

It's a political nightmare. The Liberals are using tough talk hoping to make this hap-

us they were renaming Red Indian Lake, that was that. Done deal. Take it or leave it.

You'd think they'd learn. Forcing things on people — even good ideas — is a very risky move politically.

How risky? Allow me a short anecdote. Many years ago, there was a government plan afoot to amalgamate (another dirty word) Portugal Cove and St. Phillips. Government arranged a public meeting. I lived in St. Phillips and like practically every one of my neighbours I had to take time from my very busy life to attend the meeting.

I got there early, but the room soon filled. There was a delay while speakers were booked up for the crowds outside. No one was there in support. The local MLA of the time bravely stood at the podium, a nervous smile on his usually face. He was very unhappy. How unhappy?

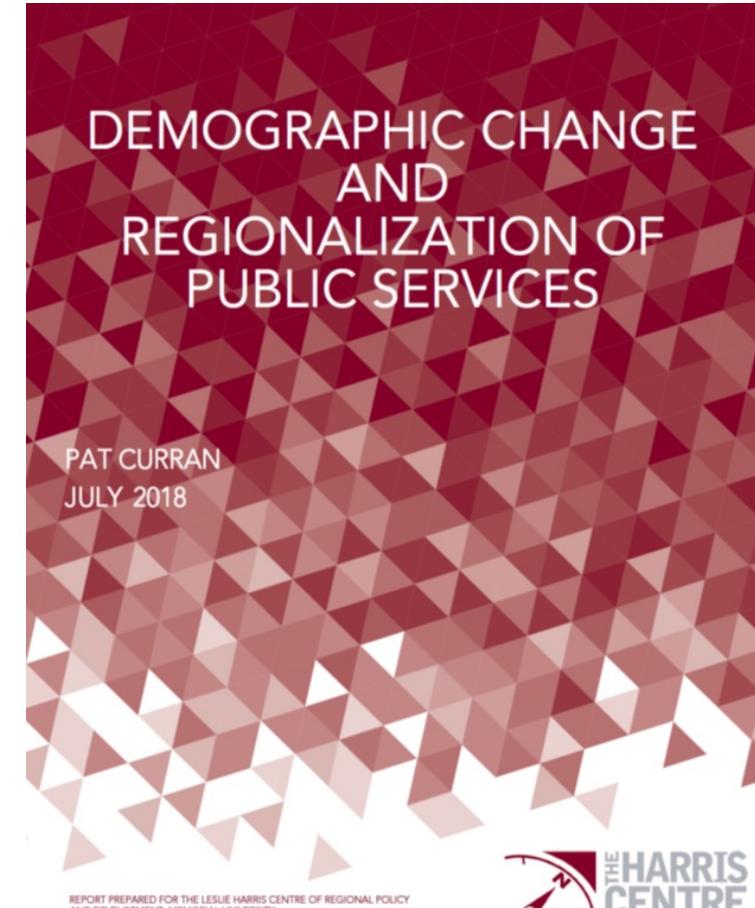
While we all sat waiting, I noticed someone go out the back door of the community centre, which was behind the stage. When the door opened, I saw the MLA's

Regionalization Benefits Unclear

“Will greater regionalization save rural Newfoundland and Labrador? No. However, it might enable rural areas to adapt to the new reality and challenges facing rural and remote communities in the province.”



Pat Curran



What about local capacity?

In recent months PCA has assessed municipal uptake across three (3) separate capacity building program open to local government including:

- CCBF (former Gas Tax Fund)
- CCB (DIET)
- CAS (CBDCs/ACOA)

Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF)

- \$136,983,065 total budget
- 99 capacity building projects in total
- \$4.0 million total for capacity building projects (2.92%)
- \$717,353 (.52%) actually spent

Community Capacity Building (CCB) Fund

- 190 project between 2019 and 2024
- 20 municipal project (10.53%)

Consultant Advisory Service (CAS) Program

- 735 projects since 2014
- 37 municipal projects (5.0%)

General Approaches to Planning

MNL Municipal Census 2021 - mixed approach and lack of an overall planning culture

- 76.25% without an economic development plan
- 65.38% without an asset management plan

So what am I saying?

- Municipalities are under increasing pressure for a broader range of emerging service requirements
- You have asked for increased authority and have been given it within the new legislation
- You have a need to plan yet you appear to not be using all the resources available to support you



A few more questions

- Do you believe you have the capacity to address some of these challenges?
- Have you used any of the programs above, or other programs, to support planning in your community?
- Were you aware that these programs existed to support capacity?





Thank you

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