



Governance and Service Delivery – Rural Districts

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Local Governance Orientation



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Outline

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Background - Rural Districts

- Rural districts were established to ensure elected representation at the local level for all New Brunswickers
- During consultation, residents stated that they wanted representatives elected at the local level for all areas – not just for those living in a local government
- Residents are now represented by elected councillors to advise the Minister on local issues
- The elected councillors form Rural District Advisory Councils (RDACs) in each of the 12 regions



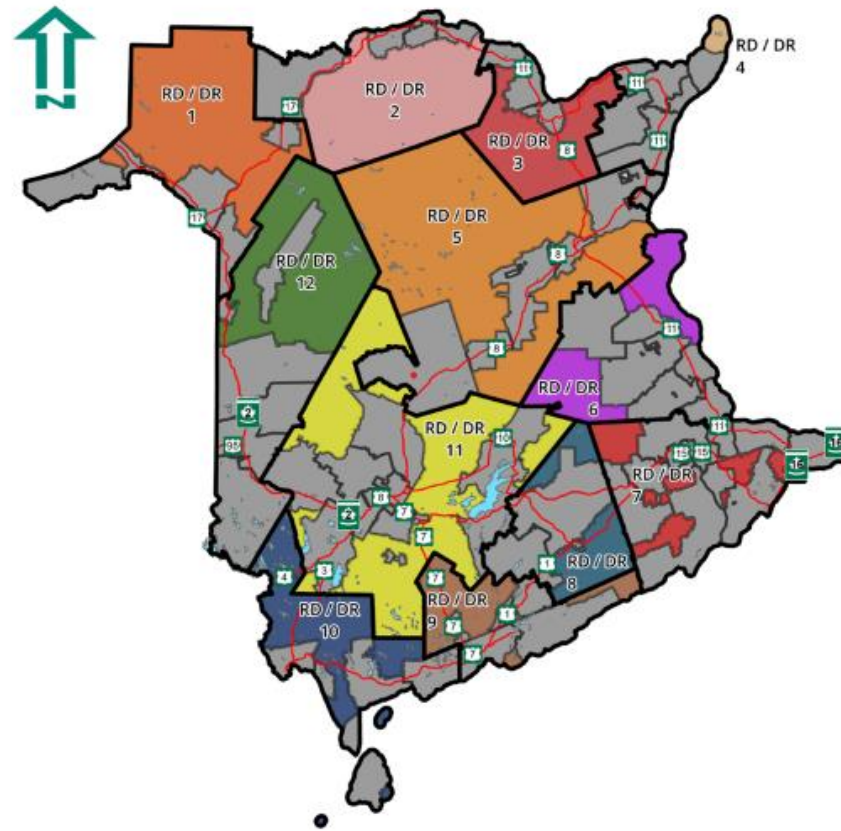
Background - Rural Districts

- A rural district is a new local governance structure that brings together former local service districts (LSDs) – or part of them – that are outside local government boundaries
- The former structure had 236 LSDs, which has now transitioned into one rural district in each of New Brunswick's 12 regions
- As part of strategic restructuring under local governance reform, LSDs or portions of them were included in a new local government, or became part of a new rural district





Background - Rural Districts



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|--|------------------------------------|------------|
| Regional Service Commissions / Commissions de Services Régionaux | Rural Districts / Districts Ruraux | RD / DR 6 |
| Local Government / Gouvernement Locale | RD / DR 1 | RD / DR 7 |
| | RD / DR 2 | RD / DR 8 |
| | RD / DR 3 | RD / DR 9 |
| | RD / DR 4 | RD / DR 10 |
| | RD / DR 5 | RD / DR 11 |
| | | RD / DR 12 |

Date: 2022/08/04

0 25 50 100 km NAD 1983 CSRS New Brunswick Stereographic

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Background - Rural Districts

- In choosing to serve in public office, rural district advisory councillors have committed to work for their constituents and will play an important advisory role in their communities
- Councillors know their areas - the strengths and opportunities, and how best to attain the quality of life that rural New Brunswickers expect
- As such, they are uniquely qualified to advise the Minister on what is needed in their district



Rural District Advisory Council Structure

- A total of 12 rural districts with elected councillors to provide advice to the Minister in relation to the interests of their districts
- Rural District Advisory Councils (RDACs) are composed of a minimum of three councillors / maximum of six - based on a region's rural district population
- A minimum of **four** regular meetings must be held annually and a chair will be selected by councillors. For some Rural Districts, a second councillor will have to be selected to sit with the Chair on the Regional Services Commission
- Each councillor will receive remuneration based on a schedule and process administered by the Department of Environment and Local Government



Roles and Responsibilities – Rural District Advisory Council (RDAC)

- Serve as locally elected representatives for constituents of the rural district to provide advice to the Minister
- Select a chair for the advisory council and for some RDs a second councillor to sit on the RSC
- Build and sustain an effective working relationships with stakeholders and partners to:
 - Support the preparation of an annual budget and establishment of the rural district tax rate
 - Advise on services of the rural district
 - Advise on community planning matters at the Minister’s request
- Participate in RDAC meetings and other community meetings announced by the Minister



Roles and Responsibilities - Chair

- Chairs all meetings of the Rural District Advisory Council (RDAC)
- Creates agendas for meetings in collaboration with rural district manager (RDM)
- Liaises with RDM on matters related to the rural district and in preparation for RDAC meetings
- Represent the rural district on the Regional Service Commission (RSC) board:
 - Report to RDAC councillors on discussions/decisions held at RSC meetings
 - Report to the RDM between regular meetings to ensure that actions are taken and that special meetings are called when needed
 - Represent the best interest of the whole rural district even if elected within a ward election structure. At large and per ward councillors must see the rural district as a whole district.



Roles and Responsibilities - Councillors

- Serve as the locally elected representatives for the constituents of the rural district
- Builds and sustains an effective working relationship with various stakeholders and partners to:
 - Advise on services of the rural district;
 - Advise on community planning matters, at the Minister's request;
- Participates in advisory committee meetings as required, as well as other community meetings announced by the Minister;
- Select a chair for the advisory council
- Represent the best interest of the whole rural district even if elected within a ward election structure. At large and per ward councillor must see the rural district as a whole district.



Roles and Responsibilities – Rural District Manager

- Serves as the Minister's representative in each rural district
- Responsible for coordinating services delivered to the rural district either through the province or other contract service provider
- Employed by the department to work with the rural district advisory councillors



Differences between LG structures

Rural districts (RDs) - established through *Local Governance Act*

- Elected councillors on rural district advisory councils (RDACs) serve as advisors to the Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform on local issues

Local governments (LGs) - established through *Local Governance Act* and various regulations

- An accountable and transparent level of government with elected mayor and councillors (councils) empowered to provide services and establish bylaws; supported by administrative staff

Regional service commissions (RSCs) – established through the *Regional Service Delivery Act* and various regulations

- Board of directors consisting of mayors of each local government and rural district advisory committee chair;
- Established to replace solid waste commissions and land use planning commissions – now have expanded mandate



Services provided to Rural Districts

The Province, through the Minister, continues to be responsible for the delivery of the following services in rural districts through each Rural District Manager:

- Police
- Fire
- Land Use Planning
- Animal Control
- Management of Dangerous and Unsightly Premises
- Solid Waste Management
- Emergency Measures



Roads

- Roads in the former local service districts (LSDs) remain the responsibility of the Province, whether the LSD merged with a local government or became part of a rural district
- Rural District Advisory Committees (RDACs) will work through their rural district manager to communicate their priorities to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure



Land Use Plans

- All areas of New Brunswick will soon be covered by a land use plan
- The Minister will provide land use planning in rural districts
- Services include:
 - Enforcement of zoning regulations
 - Rural plan regulations
 - Rural plan bylaws made or adopted under the *Community Planning Act*.
- Rural districts will have five years to create land use plans



Rural Districts – Code of Conduct

Each RDAC will have a Code of Conduct that includes the following:

- Guidelines for representing the RDAC and communicating on its behalf
- Respectful interaction with councillors, RDM, staff, and the public
- Confidential information
- Conflict of interest
- Improper use of influence
- Use of community assets and services



Next Steps

- Election results were announced on November 28, 2022, and successful candidates have accepted office or will do so soon
- Appointments will be made by the Minister in areas where vacancies existed following the election
- Rural district managers will meet with the rural district advisory councils in the near future to go over a number of topics, including communications, remuneration, oath of office, code of conduct, and other matters