

News Release

Environment and Local Government

Feasibility study launched for establishing York region Local Service Districts as a rural community

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FREDERICTON (GNB) – A feasibility study has been launched to examine whether the local service districts of Keswick Ridge, Douglas, Kingsclear, Bright and a portion of Queensbury should regroup to become a rural community.

The study follows an initial assessment, public meetings and a local petition.

"The study will confirm the boundaries and determine the feasibility of such a project," said Environment and Local Government Minister Serge Rousselle. "This is achieved through public consultations, which will result in the creation of a draft proposal that will then be shared with residents of the concerned local service districts during information sessions. If the project is deemed feasible and there is sufficient support from residents, a plebiscite will be called so they can vote on the proposal."

The study will determine what differences forming a rural community could make for the residents. This includes:

- number of councillors;
- initial staffing needs;
- services that the rural community would be responsible to provide;
- the effect on property taxes; and
- how a rural community could help meet the needs and interests of the community.

Consultation sessions and public meetings will be held so that the communities are well-informed and given an opportunity to ask questions and express opinions.

Residents are encouraged to participate in this process.

The rural community model has characteristics similar to those of a municipality but is designed to serve rural areas. It is designed to put community decisions in the hands of its members, help them plan the future they want, and enable them to ensure that local services meet their needs and make the best use of property tax revenue.