

**Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity
Annual Progress Report 2007-08**

**APPENDIX A
Strategic Focus Area Overviews**



STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA OVERVIEWS

Appendix A describes initiatives and accomplishments, in addition to those outlined in the second Annual Progress Report (2007–08), taking place across government that support the objectives outlined in *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity 2006*. This appendix also provides additional detail on several initiatives that were briefly highlighted in the summary report. (see www.gov.ns.ca/econ/ofsp)

Taking Action on Business Climate—Environment for Growth

Goal

To create a business climate that attracts out-of-province investors and encourages local businesses to start and grow in ways that support sustainable competitiveness

Government's Priority: Provincial tax structure

improvements in efficiency, competitiveness of tax system, tax incentives

- A new Foreign Convention and Tour Incentive Program that rebates the HST for certain convention and tour operators, was established in 2007 in cooperation with the federal government. This program is an important tax incentive for attracting tourists to Nova Scotia.

Government's Priority: Provincial regulatory environment

improvements in quality and effectiveness of provincial regulatory system through the Better Regulation Initiative

- A consistent regulatory environment across the four provinces will create opportunities for business. In April 2007, ministers and officials from the four Atlantic provinces and representatives from the private sector met in Moncton to discuss rule and regulation reform for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). A four-province consultation on easing red tape and regulatory burdens will result in a report and recommendations going to the Council of Atlantic Premiers.
- Several recent legislative changes will decrease the regulatory burden for business. Changes to the Rental Property Conversion Act clarified the information required to be filed for conversion of a property to other uses, for example, condominium corporation. A review of the Companies Act resulted in simplified procedures and less paperwork to register a company.
- A new scaling manual is available online at www.gov.ns.ca/natr/forestry/scalers. It describes updated legislation and regulations to simplify and standardize the way Nova Scotians measure the quantity of wood products from harvested trees. The accurate measurement of primary wood products affects woodlot owners, woods workers, contractors, truckers and the paper or saw mills that use those products. The implementation of a fair and consistent province-wide scaling system helps create the winning conditions required for sustainable prosperity within the industry.

- A regulatory development section was established within the Department of Energy's Strategic Policy Planning and Services Division. The new section is responsible for managing departmental regulations consistent with the Better Regulation Initiative.

Government's Priority: Provincial Procurement

environmentally intelligent, cost-competitive government purchasing

- An enhanced Atlantic Procurement Agreement, signed in January 2008, promotes productivity, quality development, and standardization of public procurement in Atlantic Canada. The agreement provides greater access to provincial government purchasing by reducing interprovincial trade barriers. Lowering the overall tendering thresholds from \$25,000 to \$10,000 will open new public sector business opportunities in the other Atlantic provinces for SMEs.
- Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) Silver standards have been adopted for the procurement of desktop computers, notebooks, and monitors. This is an internationally recognized standard used to help purchasers evaluate, compare, and select products based on their environmental attributes. EPEAT provides a clear and consistent set of performance criteria for the design of products and provides an opportunity for manufacturers to secure market recognition for efforts to reduce the environmental impact of its products. On a go-forward basis, the province will consider moving to Gold Standards as more manufacturers become certified.
- Twenty-three vehicles have been acquired under the Green Vehicle Procurement Policy. Evaluation criteria consider life cycle costs and environmental impacts. The first tender was issued December 18, 2007, and has since been awarded. Procurement Services has issued and awarded three additional tenders. Three of the four tenders were for single vehicle leases and the fourth tender was for the purchase of 20 vehicles. Tenders have been issued for nine additional vehicles, two of which will be leased and seven will be purchased.

3

Government's Priority: Public policy and monitoring

balanced budget, reduced debt, monitoring progress

- An Offshore Accord Agreement with the federal government was established in 2007.
- The province established a process to negotiate with the federal government for the resolution of Crown Share disbursements.
- In March 2008, the province made a commitment that at least 70 per cent of any Crown Share funds attributed to the 2007-08 fiscal year or before will be used to toward the province's debt.

Taking Action on Productivity through Innovation

Goal

To promote increased productivity through innovative products and processes that eliminate waste of all kinds

Government's Priority: Innovative processes — improved efficiency

technology adoption, process design, best practices, productivity improvements for high-growth-potential SMEs

- The province, in cooperation with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, is working on the next Agricultural Policy Framework, which will include a framework to support public investment in science and innovation. Objectives include
 - strong scientific capacity focused on a wide range of both food and non-food priority areas
 - increased private and public investment in agricultural research
 - an overall business climate more conducive to innovation, whether developed domestically or acquired internationally
 - increased ability to use the knowledge and technologies to innovate, adapt, commercialize, and adopt products and processes to improve competitiveness, profitability, and sustainability
- InNOVAcorp has implemented a state-of-the-art integrated voice and data network for use by its client companies. The network, which includes advanced IT support to client companies, removes the typical technology barriers that negatively affect time to market, customer service, and productivity.
- Tourism Culture and Heritage is using technology to promote its message including
 - Nova Scotia's Google Earth portal, which has been downloaded by over 21,000 users since its launch in March 2007 at www.novascotia.com/en/home/googleearth
 - the Historic Places Initiative, which includes an online listing of over 700 historic places at www.nshistoricplaces.ca. This initiative increases public accessibility to heritage information and public knowledge of the social, economic, and environmental benefits of heritage conservation.
 - funding to support the Federation of Nova Scotia Heritage to maintain and deliver the 'Passage Project,' an award winning technology program designed to assist community museums better organize records and increase public accessibility to heritage records.

Government's Priority: Innovative products — commercialization

private and public sector research and development, business incubation, support and coordination, customized commercialization services, demonstration projects

- InNOVAcorp continues to engage educational institutions at multiple levels in order to fuel entrepreneurial activity. Early Stage Commercialization Fund identifies and supports high-potential commercialization opportunities, the creation and presentation of Nova Scotia relevant business school case studies, and proactive engagement with science, engineering, and business schools.
- InNOVAcorp's High Performance Incubation (HPi™) business model helps high potential Nova Scotia and knowledge-based companies overcome traditional hurdles to business growth. The model comprises three interwoven resources, incubation infrastructure, business mentoring, and seed/venture capital investment. The numbers show the HPi™ business model is working. In 2007–08, InNOVAcorp's mentoring services advanced the efforts of more than 159 Nova Scotia-based early stage companies and 34 university research-level projects. At fiscal year end, its incubation facilities topped 87 per cent occupancy. InNOVAcorp's annual client survey, conducted in February 2008, demonstrated that 92 per cent of clients are satisfied with its services and that 88 per cent would recommend them.
- A two-year market research analysis project identified “nutritious and convenience food” product categories as new development opportunities. This joint project was undertaken by the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association, Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC), and the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture. These findings have already been utilized by the Tree Fruit Bio-product Research Program at NSAC to develop a five-year project. This will result in the innovation of five categories of value-added fruit products from the primary agricultural products that are being produced in the Annapolis Valley.
- The province provided Business Development and Project Management Support to the Atlantic Bio-Ventures Centre for two initiatives, “Creating Wealth from Atlantic Bioresources” project and the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada-Science and Innovation Modular Portable Microfactory Development Project. The projects target new product development in the nutraceuticals, cosmeceuticals, and functional ingredients market sector.
- The Science and Innovation Microfactory was opened in February 2008 in AgriTech Park in Truro and will be deployed for trials on blueberry and cranberry pumice extraction.
- Support is available to encourage primary and secondary producers in the agri-food and seafood industries to increase production of new, high-quality, and value-added products. In 2007–08, the Department of Agriculture has partnered with industry and other relevant stakeholders and organizations to support a total of nine projects with a total value of just under \$600,000.

- The buy local strategy, Select Nova Scotia, was successfully launched during the summer of 2007. The goal of the initiative is to increase the awareness and consumption of Nova Scotia-produced and processed agri-food products by Nova Scotians. Components of the program include a public relations and marketing campaign, retail promotions, direct marketing events and promotions, food service promotions, the Select Nova Scotia website, industry participation, and business development support.
- A series of workshops focused on best practices in agri-food product development has been created. Workshop topics include new product ideas, food product formulations, communication, promotions and product launch, and food safety and shelf-life. The workshops were developed by the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Industrial Research Assistance Program, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Taste of Nova Scotia.
- Targeted research and development initiatives in key areas, including a Seafood Processing Sector Study, Saltfish Market and Product Development Study, and a comprehensive overview of financing options/programs to help increase the competitiveness of Nova Scotia's fisheries and aquaculture industries were conducted by the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture.
- The Provincial Tourism Economic Impact Model is being updated to enhance tourism industry economic performance measurement. The model's new forecasting tool will enable more informed private and public sector decision-making based on a better understanding of the contribution tourism makes to the provincial economy. The model will estimate the economic impacts of construction, ongoing operation, and incremental tourism activity associated with new tourism projects.

Taking Action on Trade and Competitiveness

Goal

Support economic growth through an integrated, collaborative approach to trade, investment, and development of sustainable goods, services, and communities at world standards

Government's Priority: Export development

increase the number of exporters, support current exporters, diversify customer base, increase awareness of trade, increase exports of new products/services

Brand Development and Awareness

- Despite the high value of the Canadian dollar, the trade development team at Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) has already exceeded many of its targets for 2007–08. Since April 1, 2006, the team has arranged more than 2,000 selling/partnering meetings and has assisted more than 300 clients in further penetrating existing markets.
- To facilitate easy access to trade service providers, Trade Team Nova Scotia has revitalized its website and created new promotional materials for both domestic and international audiences. Under its new URL, www.tradeteamnovascotia.com has averaged over 5,000 unique visits to the site per month since its launch in November 2007. The trade video and lure piece has been sent to 50 Canadian Foreign Service offices abroad. An advertising campaign for domestic audience to encourage interest in exporting was launched in February 2008.
- Trade Team Nova Scotia is improving its reach by working through intermediaries such as Regional Development Authorities, industry associations and chambers of commerce with the aim of creating awareness of trade services and programs and improving its referral network. Over 20 such meetings took place in 2007-08.
- Over 200 companies participated in 11 Trade Team Nova Scotia outreach events with over 55 per cent reporting that they were very likely to seek more information on exporting as a result of the sessions.
- The 23rd Annual Nova Scotia Export Achievement Awards honoured seven Nova Scotia companies with combined export sales contributing more than \$314 million to the province's economy. These included Laurentian Steel Fabricators, Neenah Paper Company, Neocon International, Focal Technologies Corporation, AG Research Inc., and Bulldog Interactive Fitness. The award for Exporter of the Year went to Secunda International.

- Through the “Come to life” initiative, the province participated in external marketing campaigns by
 - developing promotional materials for various trade shows and missions. The materials promote Nova Scotia “Come to life” and all that it represents, including business opportunities.
 - organizing marketing campaigns promoting all aspects of the province in key target markets. The campaigns include key facts from some of our charter members, many of whom are exporters.
- In 2008, workshops with “Come to life” charter members will help to identify ways they can support the “Come to life” initiative. Support by the private sector for the initiative is vital in helping to expand our reach into markets throughout the world and telling Nova Scotia’s story to various audiences.
- Nova Scotia hosted the Travel Media Association of Canada Conference, promoting the province to more than 200 travel media and industry representatives. In 2007, Nova Scotia received an estimated \$35 million worth of free publicity through articles in magazines, newspapers, and websites.

Skills Development

- Federal and provincial agencies worked together to improve the capacity of Nova Scotian companies in their efforts to conduct business with multilateral development banks and international financial institutions.
- InNOVAcorp’s HPI™ business model continues to provide highly relevant hands-on assistance to high potential export oriented companies.

Market Entry Support

- Tourism Culture and Heritage is investing in export development through
 - the Export Development Program for Music that provides \$350,000 to support marketing and touring of artists and music business professionals
 - the Industry Growth Program, investing \$443,000 to assist the Nova Scotia cultural industries to continue to make significant inroads into international markets and working with government and association partners on several initiatives designed to create growth and bring greater prosperity to our cultural producers
 - development of an export strategy for cultural products, that is strategically aligned with the Provincial Export Strategy — *Going Global, Staying Local*. In 2007–08, the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council presented a strategy with 12 recommendations to the province for consideration. Implementation is expected to start during the 2008–09 fiscal year.
- Trade missions completed during the 2007–08 fiscal year included missions to Central Florida (Consumer goods sector mission), Scotland (King’s County mission), Caribbean (IBDA building products mission), St. Kitts and Jamaica, Iceland, and Panama (IBDA).

- Trade activities have been expanded to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, with the United Arab Emirates as the main focus. The province participated in the Environment 2007 Conference, as well as relationship building in the waste management sector and trade missions to the World Future Energy Summit and United Arab Emirates in January 2008.
- The province facilitated the development of new Nova Scotian agricultural products and modification of existing products intended to improve access to emerging and existing German markets.
- The Department of Agriculture developed, coordinated and participated in incoming and outgoing missions and media tours to promote Nova Scotia's agricultural products. Agricultural sales for 2007–08 are projected to be \$10.5 million.
- The Department of Energy led several trade missions to the United Kingdom, Trinidad, and Alberta to promote Nova Scotian capabilities in both gas and oil and renewable aspects of the energy sector.

In-market Assistance

- During a recent solid waste management and environmental technology fact finding mission, the province facilitated sales of Lunenburg-built ABCO boats for environmental protection and monitoring purposes in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The patrol vessels were purchased by the Tobago House of Assembly for use by their Coast Guard and Marine Affairs department.
- Nova Scotia is looking into opportunities for research in cellulosic technology, and the possibilities to become a hub for ethanol distribution in Eastern Canada and the New England States. Nova Scotia is well positioned, due to an abundance of forest waste as a feedstock for ethanol and an advantageous port location.
- In March 2008, the province signed an agreement with the Venezuela-owned oil company Petroleos de Venezuela, South America (PDVSA) to provide Nova Scotia-based, customized energy training.
- A Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Government of Nova Scotia and the Government of Panama will allow this province to share its combined expertise in ambulance systems.

Sustainable Competitiveness

- Strategic initiatives are being initiated to increase new investment in organic agriculture including
 - on-going support for the Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network (ACORN)
 - the Transition Management Initiative, a business planning resource to assist producers in managing the transition to certified organic production
 - project support for Farmer Profiles Sales Sheets for Restaurants and ACORN representation at the Organic Value Chain Round Table
 - financial and planning support for an annual conference
 - a departmental representative on the Organic Federation of Canada
 - business development, management, and marketing resources relevant to organic farmers and food entrepreneurs
 - support and partnership in the development of the Nova Scotia Organic Council, announced in January 2008
- The Ministers' Task Force on Tourism, a committee of ten Nova Scotia Cabinet Ministers, worked to strengthen tourism industry competitiveness and increase exports. Key achievements include coordinated federal and provincial investment in the new Joggins Fossil Cliffs Centre that opened in April 2008, a gateway marketing initiative to boost awareness of Nova Scotia in key export markets, enhanced transportation access to Nova Scotia, and support for sustainable tourism.
- Close to 300 participants took advantage of the Forum for International Trade Training programs offered by the World Trade Centre Atlantic Canada, and supported, in part, by the province. This training equips individuals and businesses with practical skills they need to succeed in today's competitive global markets.
- A new reservation system for provincial parks has been implemented that will support the parks' role as tourist attractions. The updated reservation system allows visitors to reserve specific camp-sites at provincial campgrounds by phone or online and has significantly increased the number of reservations, including those from out-of-province.

Government's Priority: Reducing barriers to trade

trade agreements, partnerships with other governments, Atlantic regional co-operation, efforts to identify and overcome barriers to trade, business development programs that address barriers

- The province is participating in ongoing discussions on trade agreements between Nova Scotia and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. These discussions build on the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the two jurisdictions.
- The province is involved in various trade-related initiatives
 - implementation and subsidy issues related to the Softwood Lumber Agreement
 - work on issues related to internal trade, labour mobility, energy, transportation, and dispute enforcement is underway as mandated by the Council of the Federation
 - an agreement reached with New Brunswick with regard to beer resulted in improved access to the New Brunswick market for local beer producers. Nova Scotian breweries will benefit from new market opportunities and operational efficiencies
 - participation in the Canada-European Union Joint Partnership Study Interdepartmental Committee that is looking at measures to ensure credential recognition
 - negotiations with the federal government to ease restrictions on inter-provincial domestic bulk apple shipments
 - consultations between the provincial and federal governments on labour and environmental trade side agreements, including Chile and Peru
- EduNova, NSBI, and the Department of Education partnered on a joint mission to Ottawa that raised the profile of Nova Scotia and its world-class education system.
- The province continued to cooperate with regional partners to promote and develop tourism through the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership and the Atlantic Canada Cruise Association.
- A new gateway was initiated to collaboratively promote the province in key tourism markets with direct air access to Nova Scotia. Partners include Nova Scotia Tourism Culture and Heritage, Destination Halifax, Halifax Stanfield International Airport, Communications Nova Scotia, NSBI, and ACOA.

Government's Priority: Investment attraction

attract new businesses to Nova Scotia, IT and communications, knowledge sector, private-sector-funded R&D from large multinational companies

- NSBI worked to attract a number of new companies, as well as supporting growth in existing companies, for instance:
 - xwave grows its security, defence, and aerospace operations in Nova Scotia.
 - ServiCom Canada Limited expands its Sydney operations.
 - Minacs, an international business-process outsourcing company, expands in Port Hawkesbury.
 - IMP Aerospace Components, a division of IMP Group Ltd., expands its Amherst operation.
 - IT Interactive Services Inc., a leading web-search advertising and software-development company, expands its Halifax headquarters, setting the stage for international growth.
 - Symcor Inc., a leading North American business-process outsourcer for the financial services industry, grows its Halifax location.
 - Acrobat Research Nova Scotia Ltd. is building on its success in rural Nova Scotia, opening a location in Greenwood, Kings Co. as the company's provincial headquarters.
 - General Dynamics Canada, a leading developer of electronic systems for military command and control, sets up operations in Nova Scotia.
 - Trihedral Engineering Ltd. expands its Bedford operation.
 - Paragon Advanced Development Ltd. expands its existing Nova Scotia office, adding to the province's international profile among leading global businesses.
 - Keane Canada Inc. announces that it will create up to 375 new jobs in Halifax within the next five years.
 - Citco, an international financial services company, is making Halifax one of its key locations, creating up to 325 new jobs over the next six years.
 - Modern Media, a homegrown digital marketing company, is expanding in Nova Scotia, creating up to 100 new jobs within the next five years.
 - Ascenta Health Ltd., is expanding its Dartmouth headquarters and creating up to 35 new jobs. The company develops award-winning natural health products and is an industry leader in omega-3 fish oil supplements.
 - ICT Group, Inc. in Sydney recently won a contract to provide client care support for Bell Mobility. Much of this new service work will be done at ICT Group's contact centre in Sydney, creating up to 200 new jobs.
 - Atlantic All-Weather Windows Limited is expanding in Nova Scotia, creating up to 200 jobs at its new Amherst location.

- The province attracted foreign direct investment through the expansion and development of targeted investment initiatives and partnerships in the agriculture, fisheries, and aquaculture industries. This included the implementation of a three-year investment plan, investment promotion, in partnership with the Office of Immigration, for new producers and foreign direct investment of \$1.6 million in Nova Scotia's agri-food sector.
- An investment attraction strategy was developed, aimed at reinvigorating offshore and onshore gas and oil exploration activity.
- A second flight version of the external marketing campaign "Under Your Nose" was conducted in Boston as part of an initiative that promotes key facts about Nova Scotia opportunities in a variety of sectors.
- In early 2008, "Come to life" launched "Discovery," an external marketing campaign, in Boston. The campaign highlighted people and companies who have discovered Nova Scotia and promoted the opportunities that exist for companies that may be new to Nova Scotia.
- Key interdepartmental partnerships were formed between Nova Scotia "Come to life" and government departments and agencies, including Tourism Culture and Heritage, NSBI, Education, and Energy. These partnerships help the province to speak with one voice to various markets with a unified message about Nova Scotia and the opportunities available here.
- Tourism Culture and Heritage worked with partners to communicate the new tourism investment attraction initiative and investors tool kit, Nova Scotia Tourism: The Business Advantage. The Department is working to expand the recently launched website www.gov.ns.ca/tourisminvestment to feature business development tools and other resources.

Taking Action on Financial Capital—Investment

Goal

Ensure that financing is available for opportunities that will create a more sustainably competitive economy

Government's Priority: Access to capital — capacity building; opportunity matching; gap analysis

Develop and maintain public and private-sector funding mechanisms; facilitate capital formation; match angel investors, venture capitalists, commercial lenders, and public sector funds with qualified businesses; identify and work to address any gaps in existing funding mechanisms

- The Industrial Expansion Fund is one method the government of Nova Scotia uses to support economic development in the province. It is key to helping industries involved in innovative research and technology, while contributing to a prosperous and sustainable business climate for Nova Scotia. The fund has considerable flexibility in the amount and type of funding it can provide. Examples:
 - Michelin — The project will help Michelin's Nova Scotia plants remain at full productive capacity by further enabling the company to continually invest in the renewal and expansion of its facilities. The investment will help maintain and grow employment, while ensuring plants remain competitive and at the leading edge of technological developments.
 - C-Vision — Management of C-Vision had identified significant market opportunities in aerospace and defense and related industries. However, significant investments were needed to develop standards above current levels and testing and assembly equipment. The project supports growing exports, increased productivity, and creation of sustainable jobs in a high-technology industry through the company's Amherst manufacturing facility.
 - The Industrial Expansion Fund continued to help businesses, such as Cider House Co. Ltd., Oland Breweries, MedMira Inc., and Lewis Mouldings and Wood Specialties, expand their export markets.
- The Community Economic Development Investment Fund had its fourth consecutive record-setting year. Nova Scotians invested \$5.3 million last year (2006-07) in an array of businesses such as renewable energy, an RV park, co-op grocery stores, and high-tech and environmental enterprises. These investments fuel economic growth in rural and urban areas around the province. Nova Scotians who buy shares in the funds may qualify for a 30 per cent tax credit and can hold shares as investments in self-directed RRSPs.
- Through the management of the Nova Scotia First Fund, InNOVAcorp operates as an active and effective venture capitalist. Over the last five years, InNOVAcorp has leveraged more than \$22.7 million from angel and strategic investors, and other seed and venture capital funds. Ten million dollars of this investment capital originated outside Atlantic Canada.

- InNOVAcorp's internationally recognized HPI™ business model is designed to close the gap between knowledge-based start-up companies requiring and receiving capital investment.
- Origin BioMed Inc., a Halifax-based biotechnology company, took its innovative products to new North American markets with the support of investment partners, including the NSBI venture capital team.
- The Fisheries Loan Board provides long term fixed-rate funding, which enables the fishers and aquaculturists of Nova Scotia to take advantage of economic opportunities to maximize jobs and growth. The Board provided \$20 million in financing for new vessel construction, used boat purchases, re-powers, equipment, technical modifications, and developing or enhancing the aquaculture industry.
- The Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund was introduced to enhance the agricultural infrastructure in Nova Scotia. In 2007–08, the fund provided support to four projects for \$750,000 with a total of \$2,356,750 committed over the next four years.
- In support of the province's tourism investment attraction initiative, a pilot project is being developed to identify regional tourism investment opportunities for business and destination development.
- The province is working with the tourism industry and funding partners to explore access to capital needs for the tourism sector.

Taking Action on Natural Capital—Sustainability

Goal

Manage our natural capital to sustain our quality of life, our economy, and our environment

Government's Priority: Sustainable competitiveness

green business opportunities, sustainable practices, environmental technologies products and services, natural resource strategies, aquaculture strategy, sustainable competitiveness concept in business plans, climate change, renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy strategy

Supporting and implementing sustainable practices

- In 2007–08, the province used recycling technologies to repave 96 km of highway.
- Nova Scotia “Come to life” is incorporating messages on sustainable competitiveness and highlighting a healthy economy by way of a healthy environment through marketing materials, specifically the website www.novascotialife.com.
- InNOVAcorp continues to encourage the “clean/green” aspects of its existing and prospective client business strategies. In the recent province-wide I-3 Technology Start-up Competition; 23 per cent of the 121 submissions included “clean/green” as core to the company’s value proposition.
- The province, in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, has provided an estimated \$6.2 million in 2007–08 toward on-farm environmental initiatives. These include land development, water management, farm windmills and other agri-environmental initiatives, bio-diversity initiatives, and support for beneficial management practices that address on-farm water and soil quality issues.
- The Pereau River Project, a surface-water monitoring project in the Annapolis Valley, is allowing farmers to better manage water use and protect the resource.
- Changes to the Forest Sustainability Regulations provide landowners with more flexibility in options for silviculture - the art of producing and tending a forest. The changes allow more options for uneven-aged forest management and selection treatments and provide more focus on appropriate tree species when landowners select crop trees to manage. The changes also help increase productivity potential in plantation management.

- Through Tourism Culture and Heritage, the province actively works with partners to preserve, promote, and interpret Nova Scotia's diverse cultural, heritage, and tourism resources. Some initiatives include
 - providing a science-based review of major industrial undertakings and encouraging sustainable development through the process of environmental screening and review of registered Environmental Assessments
 - supporting the provincial acquisition of lands along the Mersey River to ensure the protection of significant Mi'kmaq archaeological resources
 - supporting the protection of prime Nova Scotia property for recreational and tourism opportunities, coastal access, inland waterways, and wildlife habitat
 - supporting key priorities of the Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development Strategy and Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism.
- Groundwater will be better protected because of Nova Scotia's Septage Treatment Facility Assistance Program. Sixteen septage lagoon operators have been awarded about \$900,000 to upgrade facilities. The program supported the Municipality of the District of Chester's purchase of an Altinex dewatering truck, which was developed in Norway and required refitting before it could be used in Canada. This new technology reduces the dependence on septage lagoons, lowers transportation costs, and creates economic opportunities for local residents.
- Nova Scotia is the first province to offer a mandatory training course for septage professionals. The course teaches safety procedures for handling and transporting liquid waste, equipment use, emergency spill response, and measures to improve public and environmental health. As of April 2007, all septic tank professionals are required to be certified and this training course must be taken within the first year of certification.
- In cooperation with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, the Department of Energy and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations have developed a Model Wind Turbine By-law and Best Practices Manual for Nova Scotia Municipalities.
- Visitors to the province can now buy Nova Scotia wine at select Visitor Information Centres.

Sustainable resource use and strategies for sustainability

- Building on the Drinking Water Strategy, the Province of Nova Scotia initiated the development of a comprehensive Water Resource Management Strategy to be completed by 2010. This is also one of the targets of the new Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. Led by Nova Scotia Environment, an interdepartmental committee consisting of ten provincial departments was formed to oversee the development of the strategy. The first round of public consultations on the strategy began in January 2008.

- Work is continuing on a comprehensive provincial natural resources strategy covering forests, minerals, parks, and biodiversity. The ultimate result will be a policy framework that supports sustainable natural resource management, the conservation of a healthy natural environment, and current and new economic opportunities linked to these resources.
 - Phase One of the strategy development process is underway and is being led by Voluntary Planning (VP). A Project Committee has been selected to review worldwide research on the four components and host a series of public meetings in 2008 where citizens and stakeholders will be invited to express their views and values.
 - In Phase Two, an independent panel will review VP's final report and conduct further research in relevant areas. The panel will also coordinate additional stakeholder meetings and prepare a final report and recommendations to the Minister. In Phase Three, the strategy will be developed by the Department of Natural Resources, using the information gathered from Phases One and Two.
- The participants in the Round Table on the Environment and Sustainable Prosperity were appointed in December 2007. The Round Table, consisting of members from industry and non-governmental organizations, is mandated to advise the Minister of Environment on sustainability issues and monitor progress toward the targets outlined in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act.
- To achieve the target of 12 per cent protected lands, the province is working with partners, such as the Colin Stewart Forest Forum, on the scientific and technical framework for the identification of high value conservation lands in a province-wide system plan.
- The Department of Agriculture, together with its partners, is implementing development initiatives in agriculture related to environmental sustainability including
 - an Environmental Goods and Services pilot project under development in the St. Andrews Watershed
 - the implementation of a follow-up process to the Environmental Farm Planning (EFP) Program, which will involve assessing the degree of adoption of Beneficial Management Practices and the extent to which the EFP Action Plan is being implemented by the farm operation
 - the establishment of a Farm Energy Conservation Coordinator position to address several farm-level projects including on-farm energy conservation audits
 - the establishment of a five-year Farm Energy Conservation Research Chair through the Nova Scotia Agricultural College
 - preliminary discussions with the Department of Energy and the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to establish a "Nova Scotia Farm Energy Strategy." This strategy will establish a platform through which the agriculture sector addresses opportunities in alternative energy, energy conservation, and renewable energy

- participation in Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Watershed Evaluation of Best Management Practices Program. The Thomas Brook Watershed, located in the Annapolis Valley, is one of seven watersheds in Canada participating in this program. As part of the program, a series of Best Management Practices have been implemented throughout the watershed in an attempt to identify their water quality improvement attributes.
- Through Tourism Culture and Heritage, the province actively works with partners to preserve, promote, and interpret Nova Scotia's diverse cultural, heritage, and tourism resources. Some initiatives include
 - developing government's first Heritage Strategy, which supports the implementation of a Coastal Management Framework, a Comprehensive Water Resource Management Strategy and other projects to enhance environmental stewardship. Over the next five years, the Heritage Strategy: *A Treasured Past, A Precious Future* will provide a vision and framework to manage heritage resources in a more coordinated and effective way.
 - promoting the pan-Canadian document *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* by delivering training courses, developing support material, and liaising with stakeholders to promote the environmental benefits of heritage conservation
- The Growing Opportunities conference, funded through the Renewal Chapter of the Canada-Nova Scotia Agricultural Policy Framework, addressed challenges producers face when selling goods in the local market.

Ecosystem Protection

- The following are examples of the province's ongoing efforts to expand the proportion of Crown lands and coastal access available to Nova Scotians and/or contribute to the provincial goal under the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act to legally protect 12 per cent of the land mass by 2015.
 - The Mahone Islands Conservation Association arranged for 16 hectares of islands to be donated by the members of the Long Island Preservation Society for the use and enjoyment of all Nova Scotians. The members of the Long Island society agreed to donate, at no cost, Long Island, Dry Island, Centre Island, and Snipe Island in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg Co. to the province.
 - The Blandford Nature Reserve is now protected under the Special Places Protection Act. The Act offers the province's highest level of protection for plants and wildlife. The province now has 17 nature reserves. The new nature reserve protects 320 hectares of Crown land, including a rare coastal jack pine ecosystem and a number of provincially rare plant and lichen species.

- Thirty new protected areas in six Nova Scotia counties will preserve old-growth forests, rare ecosystems, unique wetlands, historic and cultural sites and extensive natural frontage on many lakes and rivers. The province will designate all of the 10,050 hectares (24,834 acres) of land acquired from Bowater Mersey Paper Company Ltd. Eleven areas will become nature reserves, 12 will be provincial park reserves, and seven will be wilderness areas.
 - The Brothers Islands, near Lower West Pubnico, Yarmouth Co., and Grassy Island, near Tancook Island, Lunenburg Co., were designated as wildlife management areas. These two small islands provide protection for breeding seabirds, including the endangered roseate tern.
 - The province will designate 1,350 hectares (3,350 acres) of Crown lands between Highway 103 and the Bicentennial Highway, adjacent to the Bayers Lake Business Park. The Blue Mountain — Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area will be within the boundary of Nova Scotia's capital, Halifax Regional Municipality.
 - The province is taking steps to designate a new wilderness area on about 14,000 hectares of Crown land in the Ship Harbour Long Lake area of Halifax Regional Municipality. As part of a groundbreaking agreement involving industry, environmental groups, and government, Neenah Paper, which holds licensed forest rights in the identified area, has been given permission to harvest one final time on specific sites. The province has also agreed to provide the company with wood supply elsewhere in return for the company foregoing its lease in the area. (NSE)
 - The province purchased more than 70 hectares (180 acres) of beach and ocean frontage, including Carter's and Wobamkek Beaches, Queens County, 21 hectares (53 acres) on Moshers Island, Lunenburg County, and 65 hectares (160 acres) of land adjacent to the Lake Rossignol Wilderness Area in Queens County.
- The province has made a commitment that 10 per cent, up to \$25 million, of a potential Crown Share payment attributed to the 2007-08 fiscal year or before will be used to help purchase protected lands through the Nova Scotia Crown Share Land Legacy Trust.
 - In October 2007, the province announced that it would invest up to \$20 million over five years to purchase parcels of industrial forest land from viable forestry companies under the Forestry Transition Program. In March 2007 the first acquisitions under this program were completed, including
 - land from NF Douglas and Company Limited in Queen County valued at up to \$1.5 million
 - land from Freeman Lumber in western Nova Scotia values at up to \$2 million
 - parcels from Comeau Lumber Ltd. in Annapolis, Digby, and Yarmouth Counties worth up to \$1 million.
 - Changes are being made to enhance and better protect the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park. Three hundred and thirty-one hectares of land are now officially designated as the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park. Activities such as hunting, trapping, forestry, and mining will be prohibited.

- The Mooseriver Gold Mine will go ahead under strict conditions to protect the environment. Mine operators must conduct regular monitoring and ensure complete reclamation of the site when the work is finished.

Energy and climate change

- The Department of Energy, with direction from the Deputy Ministers Forum on Sustainable Prosperity, initiated the renewal of the Provincial Energy Strategy and the development of a Climate Change Action Plan. An interdepartmental committee was established to ensure policy considerations from across government are included in the process. A series of 13 public workshops and 18 stakeholder meetings have been held to date. It is anticipated that the renewed strategy and Climate Change Action Plan will be published in 2008.
- The province continues to design new buildings to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. As well, work is underway, within established budgets, to reduce energy consumption in existing buildings. An interdepartmental action team has been established and standards are being developed to support the Climate Change Action Plan.
- Nova Scotia Environment is developing an implementation plan to reduce emissions of fine particulate matter and precursors to ground level ozone.
- The Utility and Review Board has initiated a regulatory hearing process regarding electricity Demand Side Management (DSM). DSM programs cut energy consumption and reduce peak electricity demand. The hearings started in April and will consider funding levels, specific programs, and program expenditures for 2008 and 2009. Three early start programs have already been given preliminary approval. The Dalhousie School of Management, on behalf of Conserve Nova Scotia, has conducted consultations on how an electricity DSM program would be administered. Their recommendations to government are expected in late April. Nova Scotia Power Inc. will be interim administrator until an independent administrator is established.
- A number of programs have been developed to help Nova Scotians save energy:
 - The provincial government is matching select federal rebates (ecoEnergy Program) through the Nova Scotia EnerGuide for Houses program to encourage homeowners who wish to make their homes energy efficient.
 - Energy meters are now available on loan from all public and Nova Scotia Community College libraries in the province. Most household appliances can be plugged into the meter to determine their energy usage.
 - Together, Nova Scotia Power Inc. and Conserve Nova Scotia invited all 55 towns and municipalities to participate in the LED holiday light exchange.

- Smart Lighting Choices subsidizes the cost difference between energy-efficient and regular lighting products. Commercial building owners can now benefit from energy-efficient, high-performance T8 lighting products at a reduced cost. The province is also investing \$400,000 to upgrade older lighting at Nova Scotia Community College campuses, resulting in a reduction of approximately 850 tonnes of carbon emissions each year.
- The Residential Energy Affordability Program helped 105 low-income households make energy-efficiency upgrades to their homes. This resulted in savings to the homeowners of up to 30 per cent on their energy bills and a reduction of about 4.6 tonnes per year in greenhouse gas emissions for each house.
- Conserve Nova Scotia received the 2007 Energy Star Promotional Campaign of the year award for the “Retire Your Furnace” rebate program.
- The province made an initial contribution of \$3.5 million to support Capital Health’s conversion to lower-emissions natural gas.
- New per-axel weight limits provide provincial truckers with a more fuel-efficient tire option. Recently introduced wide-based single tires cut operating costs and energy consumption.
- The province has invested in new energy efficient transportation initiatives in both urban and rural areas. The Ecology Action Centre has received funding to expand initiatives in transit and ride-matching, with about 65 per cent of the funding focused on community-based sustainable transportation projects.
- Until the end of April 2008, Nova Scotians were able to visit a new exhibit at the Discovery Centre in Halifax to learn about climate change in a fun and humorous way. The Climate Change Show educated visitors and encouraged people to take action.

Taking Action on Built Capital—Infrastructure

Goal

To support infrastructure that can be sustained, and will support current and future economic activity

Government's Priority: Transportation

Atlantic Gateway, highways, ports, airports, rail

- In October, the province participated in the Port of Halifax's business and fact-finding tour of India. The tour gave the province a better understanding of how India could become one of Nova Scotia's markets over the long term.
- Nova Scotia "Come to life" continues to promote the Atlantic Gateway and include accessibility messages in Nova Scotia "Come to life" communications, including marketing campaigns. The initiative partnered with Halifax Stanfield International Airport to promote Nova Scotia at the 2007 International Air Transport Association Conference in Toronto.
- A contribution of \$7,500 was made to the Independent Marine Ports of Canada for the establishment of their organization.
- A Memorandum of Understanding with Partnerships BC will help Nova Scotia explore new possibilities for building roads, health facilities, courts, and other projects. Nova Scotia will use the company's expertise and experience to assess whether some of the province's most pressing infrastructure demands could be met through the strategic partnership methods.

Government's Priority: Broadband and wireless

high-speed Internet access for all Nova Scotians

- Nova Scotia's has one of Canada's strongest community-based systems for access to information and communication technology and training. About 200 C@P (Community Access Program) sites provide 1,000 computer terminals in libraries, community centres, and other locations across the province. The Broadband for Rural Nova Scotia initiative will provide many opportunities for C@P site staff, who are well-trained in technology, to help citizens learn to take full advantage of new high-speed opportunities.

Government's Priority: Municipal infrastructure

support for economic development related infrastructure projects

- Through various federal and provincial programs, the province has contributed approximately \$65 million to municipal infrastructure projects. These projects include water, waste water, solid waste management, and public transit.
- The province is investing one million dollars in regional tourism development initiatives in communities throughout the province. These investments support economic development and infrastructure projects, such as attractions, scenic look-offs, or interpretation, that help strengthen Nova Scotia's tourism industry.
- The province invested \$500,000 toward the revitalization of the Town of New Glasgow. The Making Places – Recreating the Experience theme builds on the town's assets while creating reasons for people to live, work, shop, and dine in the downtown.

Government's Priority: Industrial Lands

future industrial land needs

- In 2007, the province, through NSBI, transferred two sewage treatment plants in the Debert Air Industrial Park to the Municipality of Colchester County. This will enable the municipality to manage and operate the utilities according to the overall vision for the industrial park.
- Tourism Culture and Heritage continues to work with NSBI, Aboriginal Affairs, Colchester County, and the Mi'kmaq community to move the transfer of Debert industrial lands forward, while ensuring the protection of significant Palaeo-Indian archaeological resources. Archaeological protocols have been developed to assist negotiations regarding future industrial development.
- As clean-up and reclamation moves forward on the former Sydney Steel Plant (Sysco) property, 18 tenants have already set-up in Harbourside Commercial Park at this site.

Government's Priority: Knowledge Park

knowledge-based cluster

- InNOVAcorp has partnered with Halifax Regional Municipality to continue the Highway 111 Mount Hope extension into the Knowledge Park. This infrastructure is expected to be completed in 2008 and will enable other knowledge-based companies to take advantage of the Knowledge Park.

Taking Action on Human Capital—Labour Force

Goal

Take a long-term view to ensure that Nova Scotia's workforce continues to be a magnet for business

Government's Priority: Population

demographic assessment, immigration, Skills NS Framework, R4 Strategy (Retain, Retrain, Repatriate, Recruit), engage under-represented populations

- In 2007, Opportunities Nova Scotia, a two-phased initiative in support of the 4R strategy (Recruit, Retrain, Retain and Repatriate), was implemented across the country. Phase I connected Nova Scotia employers and job seekers in key locations across the province. Phase II took 11 of the province's major employers (plus the Nova Scotia Association of Regional Development Authorities) across the country to repatriate talent to the province. For each phase, a series of five networking events was held, supported by comprehensive multimedia marketing and online recruitment campaign at www.opportunitiesns.ca. To date, Opportunities Nova Scotia has networked 4,362 jobseekers in Nova Scotia and across Canada with 106 Nova Scotia employers to discuss employment opportunities in the province. Phase II's online recruitment activities will continue until June 2008.
- The province is introducing a new immigration stream that will attract more immigrant entrepreneurs. Consultations on the entrepreneur stream were held with immigrant and business organizations in the spring. Their input will be used to implement a new option under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program for people who want to settle and establish a new business or invest in and manage an existing business in the province.
- The government directly promotes supports for older workers through the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW). The TIOW is a federal/provincial/territorial cost-shared initiative that will be completed March 31, 2009. To date, \$1.85 million has been committed to projects; 84 per cent of the funds spent are federal and 16 per cent are provincial. Approximately 200 unemployed older workers across the province will receive help to find work through the first 13 projects funded under the TIOW. A second call for projects was issued with a deadline of May 9, 2008. Details on the program and application process can be found at www.olderworker.ca. The federal government recently announced a continuation of the initiative into 2012.
- Under TIOW, the Age Advantage Program: Transition Program for Older Workers was developed to provide career practitioners with the fundamentals to help displaced and unemployed older workers navigate life and work changes and discover satisfying income earning activities. A facilitators' manual on the delivery of a series of 20 workshops has been developed. Training was provided to 37 practitioners in Sydney, Stellarton, and Bridgewater.

- An investment of \$865,000 was made in Workplace Education programs to help business and labour organizations upgrade the skills of the existing workforce and to help specified groups and individuals enter or re-enter the workforce. This includes offering support to workers who have been displaced as a result of downsizing or closures. For example, significant support was provided to establish transition centres to assist former TrentonWorks and Moirs employees reintegrate into the labour market. One hundred and nineteen work-based programs were delivered at 80 worksites across Nova Scotia. Eight projects under the One Journey: Work and Learn program were delivered in the health, automotive, social services, and trucking sectors. Business and industry contributed \$935,000 to support these work-based programs.
- High school students from across the province learn about the career opportunities in information technology (IT), thanks to a new awareness program – Where Will IT Take You? A partnership between the Department of Education, the Information Technology Industry Alliance of Nova Scotia, and NSBI, brought the Information Technology Opportunity Awareness program to every region of the province. With the program, students, parents, educators, and community leaders learn how IT skills can translate ideas into innovations.
- NSBI launched techportjobs.com, a dedicated information and communications job site that links recent graduates, local professionals, and expatriates with information on employment opportunities in communications and technology (ICT) in Nova Scotia.
- NSBI launched its five-year plan, which outlines its objective of working with clients to create the right jobs for Nova Scotians. The focus is on higher-paying jobs in line with the skills of the province's well-educated workforce.
- The province has partnered with the Nova Scotia Aboriginal community, the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada, and Service Canada in developing the Nova Scotia Coordinated Aboriginal Apprenticeship and Trade Strategy. The strategy will establish a coordinated partnership and service platform supporting initiatives aimed at increasing Aboriginal apprenticeship awareness, skills development, apprenticeship registration, program completion, and employment in Nova Scotia. The division has committed significant in-kind contributions to the project in addition to a financial commitment of \$150,000 over three years.

- The Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum was formed in 1997 as a partnership of the three levels of government to strengthen relationships and to resolve issues of mutual concern. Economic Development is the provincial co-chair of the Tripartite Forum's Economic Development Working Committee (TEDWC). TEDWC encourages labour market participation, employment, and economic activities to enhance the overall conditions of Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia. TEDWC's 2007–08 priorities include
 - Aboriginal skills and labour market development
 - apprenticeship and trades strategy
 - Mi'kmaw cultural heritage tourism strategy
 - Mi'kmaw youth entrepreneurship strategy
 - industry entrance pre-employment training program
 - First Net website
 - enhanced integration with the Mi'kmaq Rights Negotiation processes
 - participation in the Atlantic Policy Congress' Atlantic Economic Development Strategy
 - participation in the Atlantic Aboriginal Economic Development Research Initiative.
- A conference on Aboriginal and Mi'kmaw youth was held in Debert in February 2008. The conference focused on the role Aboriginal youth will play in addressing coming labour shortages and current workforce challenges. Conference workshops were designed to help front-line professionals identify contacts, resources, and tools to help clients make informed decisions about education, career, and job opportunities. More than 75 representatives from Aboriginal groups, employers, government, and the NSCC attended.
- Nova Scotia's first Aboriginal set-aside, through the Sydney Tar Ponds Agency, will provide businesses with a majority aboriginal ownership an opportunity to benefit from the clean-up and to gain skills and training for further construction work.
- Nova Scotia "Come to life" launched "Road to Life" billboard and print campaigns in Calgary and Toronto aimed at reminding expatriate Nova Scotians about the quality of our lifestyle, job opportunities, friends, and family back home.
- In Ottawa, more than 200 expatriates attended a luncheon, hosted by the Premier, to celebrate Nova Scotia and invite expatriates to return.
- In 2008, Nova Scotia "Come to life" will focus attention on youth and working with various government departments to engage and retain youth through awareness programming and partnerships with government initiatives.

Government's Priority: Education system

primary and secondary education, post-secondary education, Learning for Life, preparing for skill shortages

- More students will be better prepared for careers in Nova Scotia with the expansion of a successful high school program. Options and Opportunities gives students on-the-job experience while they are still in school. In the 2007–08 provincial budget, the government of Nova Scotia announced it would invest an additional \$1.5 million to expand the program to grade 11 in all 27 schools now offering it in grade 12. It will also expand to eight more schools in the province.
- In 2007-08, more than 200 employers supported Options and Opportunities students through work placements and that number will grow with the expansion of the program.
- In June 2006, the department launched the Invest in Youth initiative to encourage employers to get involved. At the end of the 2007-08 fiscal year, nearly 6,400 employers had joined a database that schools can access to identify learning opportunities for students ranging from job shadowing to co-op and youth apprenticeship.
- Parents as Career Coaches, www.parentsascareercoaches.ca, is a three-session program that helps parents/guardians better understand today's labour market and prepares them to support/discuss career planning and educational choices with their children. In the 2007–08 academic year, the program was made available to all high schools across the province, with 37 schools scheduled to complete the program.
- The Department of Education has committed \$400,000 annually to the Workit Youth Apprenticeship Initiative to provide a career pathway to the skilled trades for 16–19 year-olds. Information and awareness about skilled trade careers is also shared with high school students, educators, employers, and parents. One hundred and sixteen youth apprentices registered in 2007-08, bringing the total to 154. Go to www.workitns.ca for more information.
- The Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program provides greater worker mobility across Canada. Red Seal certification allows qualified tradespersons to practice their trades in all provinces and territories in Canada without having to write further examinations. Currently, there are 49 Red Seal trades. A total of 694 Interprovincial Red Seals were issued to qualifying candidates in 2007-08.
- In April 2007, the federal government announced the details of the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant as part of three new financial incentives for apprenticeship training in Canada. By April 2008, 1248 apprentices in Nova Scotia had applied.
- The province has established an Apprenticeship Award Program to encourage the completion of participants' apprenticeship programs and reduce their financial burden. Apprentices are eligible for progression and completion bonuses in years three, four, and five of their program. Each scholarship is worth \$350.

- A collaborative apprenticeship pilot program was implemented through Nova Scotia Community College in 2007 and nineteen employers have made a multi-year commitment to the program. The collaborative model ensures that trades students have the opportunity to complete their apprenticeship and find employment in Nova Scotia.
- The Department of Education continues to produce, distribute, and provide access to career planning resource materials, guides, and labour market information.
- To meet the needs of adults who wish to improve their literacy and essential skills and/or attain their high school diploma, Nova Scotia has created a comprehensive system of tuition free programming available through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning. There are over 170 programs offered across the province in both English and French. More than \$6.6 million in annual funding is provided to this initiative.
- This year, the province has doubled its investment in adult-focused family literacy programs. Family literacy is an inter-generational approach to education that fosters learning and literacy within the family. Examples of family literacy programs include reading circles for parents or caregivers and children, adult literacy programs that focus on health and parenting, and workshops for parents and caregivers on how to support their child's educational development.
- New learning opportunities for targeted communities, including increased services to several Aboriginal communities, were created.
- NSBI, in partnership with Saint Mary's University, Dalhousie University, and the Certified Management Accountants of Nova Scotia, hosted a panel discussion with some of the world's largest financial services companies that have set up shop in the province. The panel was designed to raise awareness among high school, college, and university students and graduates about the range of opportunities in Nova Scotia's financial services sector.
- The Ministers Task Force on Tourism is reviewing workforce challenges impacting the tourism sector with a view to address skill shortages in the coming decade.
- The province is supporting the reintroduction of the certified medical laboratory technologist program at the new Nova Scotia Community College Harbourfront campus in Dartmouth. One million dollars is being invested to finance the training laboratory and fund annual operating costs.

Taking Action on Social Capital—Regional Capacity

Goal

Capitalize on ways to expand economic opportunity throughout the province, maintaining a balance in quality of life

Government's Priority: Community development

implementation of Community Development Policy, training community leaders, network development, support for agencies that work with disadvantaged communities and populations

- All initiatives of the Community Development Policy program demonstrate corporate leadership in the area of social capital. Priorities for 2007–08 include
 - Celebrating Communities Conference and Awards
 - Volunteer Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee
 - production and delivery of community development training modules for public sector employees
 - tools and training for Community Counts, a community-based statistical system
 - Community Vitality Program to support community-based practitioners' participation in learning events
 - youth engagement initiative in partnership with Irondale Theatre Ensemble and Heartwood Centre for Community Youth Development
- A new Public Sector Community Development Training program is being developed to provide provincial government employees with a deeper understanding of the community-based building blocks of sustainable competitiveness and the strategic relationship between innovative economic development and sound environmental stewardship.
- The efforts of community leaders to plan, prioritize, and implement destination development activities are supported through the Tourism Destination Area process. In the past year, the province has cost shared on several projects within destination areas to support their development efforts.
- Through the Nova Scotia Historic Places Initiative (NSHPI), Tourism Culture and Heritage, in partnership with Environment and Labour, organized and delivered the workshop “Code Compliance for Heritage Buildings.” This workshop focused on relationship building with other provincial departments, building officers and fire inspectors. NSHPI will also facilitate a conference to promote the advantages of heritage conservation to community leaders, heritage organizations and the general public.

- Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics Online was launched at a new website, www.novascotiagenealogy.com. The website provides public access to one million digitized and fully searchable images of birth, marriage and death registrations in Nova Scotia dating back to 1864. The site, developed in partnership with Unisys Canada Inc., is the first of its kind in Canada. Public access to the site is free of charge, while electronic or paper copies of registrations may be purchased online through credit-card transactions. The website is updated regularly; 12,000 marriage records as early as 1763 were added in October 2007 and the addition of 90,000 delayed registrations of births as early as the 1830s is planned for early 2008.

Government’s Priority: Regional planning and development

support strong regional approach to economic development, work with regions to assess new business development opportunities, support key industry associations

- InNOVAcorp continues to actively participate in business communities across the province. Further, InNOVAcorp is deeply involved in both the Life Sciences and ITC sectors in Nova Scotia. In 2007-08, its visibility and accessibility to the younger 18-30 demographic in Nova Scotia was significantly increased through both face-to-face and innovative online initiatives. These activities are paying dividends already as InNOVAcorp’s opportunity pipeline increases significantly year over year.
- InNOVAcorp’s province-wide I-3 (Idea, Innovation, Implementation) Technology Start-up Competition engaged all of Nova Scotia’s Regional Development Authorities and developed partnerships with over 25 professional services firms across the province. I-3 has been a catalyst for communities to strengthen the support capacity available for Nova Scotia’s early-stage business ventures.
- The province supported the efforts of public/private sector organizations and associations that are charter members of the Nova Scotia “Come to life” initiative to promote their messages both within Nova Scotia and to external markets.
- NSBI completed more than 3,000 meetings with small businesses across all areas of the province since its inception in 2001.
- The Department of Agriculture partnered with the Atlantic Canada Organic Research Network in a “Farmer Chef Meet and Greet.” This provided an opportunity for niche farmers and artisan producers to network with local chefs in an effort to increase the local food content in Halifax restaurants.
- Recognizing Nova Scotia’s unique sense of place, culture and environment, the Department of Agriculture assisted the Nova Scotia apple, wine, pork, and beef sectors to develop sector strategies that capitalize on the province’s competitive strengths.
- The province launched new tourism travel regions to better align and promote Nova Scotia’s regional tourism products and experiences. The new travel regions will be published in the 2008 Doers & Dreamers Guide and on www.novascotia.com.

- Tourism Culture and Heritage renewed its focus on collaboration and strengthened partnerships with stakeholders such as the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS), the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council, Regional Tourism Industry Associations, Taste of Nova Scotia, and Golf Nova Scotia.

Government’s Priority: Entrepreneurship and small business

support for entrepreneurs starting or running high-value firms, integrated support system for entrepreneurs, training programs, strengthened linkages between educational research institutions and the business community

- Under the New Opportunities Business Development and Investment Initiative, the province provided development funding and economic analysis in support of strategic industry development and competitiveness of agri-food businesses. Funded initiatives for 2007–08 included
 - development of a potential model and resource material to support Community Food Micro-Enterprise
 - Agri-Food Innovation Award to support access to business development programs and services
 - analysis of current and future business development needs amongst agriculture and fish businesses
 - development of a framework for Competitive Transition of the agri-food sector
 - identifying alternative development opportunities for potatoes based on changing demographics
 - highlighting opportunities and tactics for selling more local food in alternative marketing systems
 - provision of business development support to the Nova Scotia wine sector to develop tools and methodologies for targeting local wines to priority markets
 - support for the development of a risk management tool for business managers transitioning to certified organic
 - development of a strategy for development of the Nova Scotia beef industry that recognizes our unique place and environment.
- The Nova Scotia “Come to life” Charter Membership Program brings together various sectors, including business and research/educational organizations, for networking opportunities. The initiative ran an external marketing program focused on the life sciences community in Nova Scotia, with the goal to raise awareness about companies involved in this sector and potential investment opportunities.
- In 2007–08 an internal marketing campaign by the Nova Scotia “Come to life” initiative featured small and thriving Nova Scotian businesses. The television and online campaign focused on the many reasons these businesses decided to open in Nova Scotia and how they are now growing as a result of that choice.

- InNOVAcorp continues to deliver highly relevant seminars to its existing and prospective clients. Through 2007–08, there were over 15 seminars held covering topics such as go-to-market strategies, recruiting and retention, export sales, public speaking, Scientific Research and Experimental Development tax credits, pricing and packaging, and preparing for access to capital.
- The Department of Agriculture sponsored a Business Development Conference, “Growing Opportunities,” in March 2007. The focus of the conference was exploration of options for getting local food production into major retail channels.
- Tourism Culture and Heritage provided funding to the Tourism Human Resource Council to develop and deliver a series of masterclass workshops on specific topics directed to senior managers and owners of tourism businesses.