

Toward Prosperity Annapolis County Roundtable

June 12th, 2000

Notes:

Assets in the Annapolis Valley:

- affordable homes and a low cost of living
- excellent educational institutes in close proximity
- temperate climate
- good capacity and infrastructure for business growth
- proximity to New England markets
- diversity in the traditional sectors (i.e. farming and fishing)
- rich in heritage and culture
- friendly people
- competitive municipal tax rates
- scenic surroundings
- a part of Canada
- free trade

Challenges and Obstacles:

- loss of traditional retail trade areas
- lack of adequate public transportation
- lack of student housing
- lack of conference facilities
- not enough community champions
- solid waste
- government downloading
- Low household incomes are sucked up by operational costs.
- An aging population with insufficient support.
- youth - out migration
- funding shortfall for mature students
- high dependancy on social programs
- lack of entrepreneurship training
- poor literacy levels
- There is a lack of tourism during the shoulder season.

Roles:

- Government needs to provide support for Coastal Communities.
- Senior levels of government are out of touch.
- There is no mechanism in place for senior bureaucrats to “touch base”.
- Rural and urban communities have different issues and different realities, and government sometimes has difficulties recognizing this.

- Need to stop the trend towards a “city state”.
- Must not let the market economy drive government.
- Government must live up to its infrastructure obligations such as highspeed internet, gas, highways. These are life lines for rural communities.
- Must ensure that wharfs are maintained.
- Need to open up currently monopolized services to other providers.
- There is a need for a regional economic strategy as opposed to a provincial one.

Vision:

- Nova Scotia will be a world leader with respect to:
 - citizens
 - communities
 - business
 - government
 - We will focus on leadership.
 - We will be leaders in entrepreneurship.
 - We will be leaders in export.
 - We will be leaders in Information Technology (IT).
 - We will practise sustainability.
- In the area of innovation:
 - We will build on our Smart Communities designation.
 - We will keep our rural focus and increase consistency.
 - We will adapt and adopt.
 - We will lobby our lenders to support risks.
 - We would like support for inventors, patent holders.
 - The availability of invention seed funding should be improved.
 - We will provide support for people with good ideas to develop them.
 - Venture capital should be more accessible.
- In the area of infrastructure:
 - We will renew key infrastructure.
 - We will ensure that the wharf’s life cycle costs are covered.
 - We will develop and maintain a standard for roads.
 - We will re-establish the rail lines.