

Toward Prosperity Richmond County Roundtable

June 26 , 2000

Discussion

Opportunities in Richmond County and Nova Scotia:

- The Oil and Gas industry.
- Richmond County has to do a better job marketing itself for tourism and needed help developing the Information Technology Sector as it would attract a younger generation.
- Point Tupper has opportunities not only for Richmond but for all Nova Scotia. With such industries as Petrochemicals, Oil and Gas, Shipping on the horizon there will be a large demand to meet the needs of these companies.

Government Role:

- Government is not supporting small business ventures enough.
- The province should begin to decentralization with the constructions of a Shipping Port in Point Tupper. This will spread out the economic prosperity. Nova Scotia should not paint Richmond with the same brush as Cape Breton Regional Municipality.
- Government is being reactive rather than proactive. Government must take a more active role in supporting the liberal arts, such as music due to the fact that the banks are not interested.
- There is a need for government agencies to get back to their clients faster, if the private sector institutions can do it why can't government. Government should have more representation in the local area from government agencies.

Education/Training:

- Many people do not have the skills that would allow them to take advantage of the opportunities arising from Oil and Gas. Government should take a more active role in giving these individuals "Life Readiness" skills so that they can take their place in the workforce. We need to teach people how to learn. People who have life readiness skills are easier to train on the job and usually learn faster.
- We need to help those who cannot learn using the traditional ways of teaching. Too many of these people fall through the cracks.

Traditional Industries:

- We should not forget the traditional industries such as the fishery. There is still room for economic growth in the fishery, many of the shrimp fleet off the coast of Richmond are from New Brunswick.

Banks:

- Banks should be obliged to spend X amount of dollars by the government. Banks are not investing enough in business ventures.

Partnerships:

- Government should be partnering with the Credit Union in order to support the growth of small businesses. As all these multi-million dollar mergers take place the small business is smaller than ever and its important for the province and credit unions to step in and give them all the support they need in order to stay competitive.

Communication:

- There is a lack of communication between the various levels of government.

Infrastructure:

- There is a need for a common user wharf in Point Tupper. Office space and other infrastructure should be developed in Point Tupper so it can attract industry.
- More money is needed for infrastructure. Many villages such as St. Peters must now consider placing a moratorium on building because the current waste and water systems cannot accommodate any more growth.
- Richmond has a hard time accommodating industry because of the lack of water and sewer as well as other infrastructure.
- There is a need for vast improvements in the IT infrastructure. Richmond County needs better line speed and connectivity so that we can offer a home for IT base firms to come in and setup.
- It is important to preserve the Airport in Halifax.

Politics:

- Politicians should not be signing off on projects.

Funding:

- There is a need for core funding for the local community groups as well as Richmond County's own Regional Development Authority.