

Toward Prosperity Shelburne County Roundtable

May 27th, 2000

Notes:

Beaches:

- “Adopt - a - Beach” program could be beneficial.
- The highways leading to the beaches are deplorable.
- Need to ensure safety in order to encourage tourism.
- Need to increase the number of rest areas and garbage cans in order to improve conditions for tourism.
- How do we increase “Shoulder Season” tourism?

Lobster industry:

- The lobster industry one of the more reasonably managed fisheries. We need to continue to manage the season, size and allow limited entry.
- The native fishery is a threat.

Tourism:

- Sand beaches - “Why can we not have benches on beaches? garbage cans? etc.”
- Need designated rest areas on beaches.
- **Potential for a longer season**
- Must encourage operations to open earlier (May 24) and remain open longer.
- We need to have a strategy in place.
- Must reduce the seasonality of our tourism business, should start offering a comprehensive package.
- Could perhaps combine lobster and tourism industries - environmental tourism?
- Could develop the fall season as the predominant shoulder season.
- Need an 18 hole golf course and resort.
- We must address the lack of accommodations available to tourists.
- possible attractions:
 - Whale Mating area
 - Trade Missions
 - we need a “gimic”
 - need to “sell the sizzle, not the steak”
- Tourism in Cape Breton is a year-round operation.
- Should use provincial maps to promote tourism.
- Need to improve the signage situation.
- Should have one tourist association for Yarmouth, Digby, Shelburne and Queens.

Assets in the Barrington Strait area:

- hospital
- Community Colleges
- our history
- We need to create an awareness campaign regarding our **minority** groups.
- We have a multi-talented work force.
- Our people have a basic entrepreneurial spirit - we are a 'resourceful people.'

Obstacles to development:

- lack of risk takers
- need to maintain tough incentives
- lack of capital
- The banks are not user-friendly to business.
- We need to make room for government to work with the banks.
- Banks do not need to take risks.
- We need a strategy that includes greater communication between departments.
- There are considerable literacy problems in Shelbourne, have 7, 8, 9 year-olds who cannot spell their names.
- The lack of computer literacy needs to be addressed.
- Need to bring computers into the homes of low income people.
- The Community College is under-utilized and is threatening to close.
- Need to develop a fisheries school and create a centre of excellence for literacy.
- Our educational programs need to be flexible.

3 Best Opportunities:

- harbours
- airports
- We have an adaptable workforce.

Youth:

- Our youth has a greater understanding of what entrepreneurship is.
- We need more activity for our youth.
- We need a community co-ordinator for our youth and seniors.
- Inadequate funding is a major problem.
- Need more fall service at the hospital.
 - requires greater business investment
 - would attract people to the area i.e. the New Germany Cottage Hospital
 - medical centre

Infrastructure:

- Infrastructure includes more than roads.
- Need to develop multiple uses for our resources - fishing, forestry and farming.
- Must add value to our products before sale.
- Should process goods locally and then ship them globally.
- Should look at using fishing bi-products as an industry resource.
- Work needs to be done on developing environmentally correct products.

- Should focus on strengths that are unique to our community i.e. beaches, lobster fishing, harbour and climate.

Government Role:

- Need supportive government programs. This region has a lack of self-confidence/esteem.
- Need to establish a balance between support and dependency.
- Must develop the infrastructure necessary to promote diversity in our traditional industries.

- “Do more with less!”
- Need to improve the red tape situation.

Industries:

- New business ideas usually come from existing business people.
- Need to have fewer roadblocks in obtaining investment tax credits.
- Possibilities for attracting more businesses could be a Payroll Tax Credit, Dividend Tax Credit.
- Need to promote the boat-building industry.

Vision:

- Even Shelbourne is not self-sufficient.

Volunteer Base:

- Need to increase support to volunteer groups.
- At present volunteers are over-worked and are burnt out.