

# **Toward Prosperity**

## **Metro Halifax Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee Consultation**

July 25th, 2000

### **Discussion**

#### **Role of Government:**

- Support for the tone with respect to the role of government.
- Concerned about incentive to “prevent” growth in Halifax.
- The Chamber has an enormous reservoir of talent and is ready to help.
- Government must stay focused and guard against drift in its policies governments come and go but an economic strategy/policy needs to be above the political fray.
- Trying to serve everybody is a recipe for failure: make choices.
- If government wants to help rural areas, perhaps it could move government jobs there.
- Commercialization of university research is important.  
be clear on where we want to go and what opportunities we want to pursue.

#### **Business Climate:**

- Key's to economic growth: a more business friendly climate
  - A flexible, trained workforce.
  - Living within our means and a long term stable fiscal environment.
  - Need to get beyond thinking Halifax vs. the rest of the province: avoid artificial barriers.
- On Halifax/rural issue, there is a need for a “neutral” business climate.
- Infrastructure, exports and training are important for government to support.
- As Toronto drives Ontario, so Halifax drives Nova Scotia: Let the private sector do its thing.  
Halifax growth will spread.
- Any use of incentive must make economic sense.
- Nova Scotia is still stifled by its debt.

#### **Partnerships:**

- Partnership has been talked about at length: show us the model. What kinds of partnering?  
How will success be measured?
- Better intergovernmental relations are important. There are too many turf wars even where people want to do the right thing.

#### **Education:**

- Youth: there is a growing gap between educated and uneducated youth.  
Percentage not completing high school is too high. This issue needs a creative approach.

#### **Infrastructure:**

- Infrastructure: put in place what is necessary for Nova Scotia to do business globally e.g. 360  
Networks offers links to Europe and New England.

**Strategy:**

- A successful strategy must be sustainable. Build in public accountability and measurement. It would be useful to have third party review
- This process will need courage. You have a mandate to make significant change.
- The Performance Measures in Toward Prosperity are inadequate and need to be strengthened.
- Need to match assets and economic opportunities
- Pick a model and implement it, results are what matters.
- The model needs the right leadership and a clear government mandate.
- Consider roles rather than people.
- Possible links to HRM 2020 should be explored: follow the model in engaging the major players
- “show some trust to get respect”. There is a danger of being “seized with indecision”
- A dramatic departure seems to be the way to go.