

2024/25

Cape Breton Regional Municipality REGIONAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK Business Plan



CAPE BRETON
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR
TRACEY BOUTILIER



On behalf of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality Regional Enterprise Network Board (CBRM REN), I am pleased to share with you the 2024/25 CBRM REN Business Plan.

This plan outlines the strategic actions the CBRM REN will focus on in 2024/25, in addition to the regular work of our economic development team, as we work to promote CBRM, grow investment in our communities, and connect entrepreneurs to the resources they require to grow their businesses over time.

As CBRM REN Board Chair, I am excited to continue working with the Cape Breton Partnership team on this important work in the year ahead.

FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
TYLER MATTHEIS



The 2024/25 CBRM REN business plan continues to be guided by the CBRM Forward Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy provides this annual business plan with strategic directions for population growth and retention as well as economic growth and diversification. New this year is an effort to also align the business plan to the **Forward. Together.** plan – Unama’ki – Cape Breton’s Population and Economic Growth Strategy.

This plan will inform our workplans and task priorities throughout the year, which will be carried out by the CBRM REN team, and supported and augmented by the broader Cape Breton Partnership team.

We are pleased to work closely with CBRM Council and staff and the Economic Growth Network to build the municipality’s capacity and seize the opportunities surrounding us. A strong and growing CBRM is essential for a strong and growing Unama’ki – Cape Breton. Our team is eager to move **Forward. Together.**

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CBRM Regional Enterprise Network



The CBRM Regional Enterprise Network is funded by the Province of Nova Scotia and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

It is administered by the Cape Breton Partnership which maximizes the value of the funders' investment, leverages that investment to have a greater impact, and collaborates with other partners, funders, and projects that it is responsible for (like the *Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership*) to deliver operational synergies across Unama'ki – Cape Breton.



CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

CBRM's Economic Development Vision and Mission were crafted as part of the comprehensive CBRM Forward initiative.

CBRM's Economic Development Vision

The CBRM is a hub of economic opportunity and prosperity.

CBRM's Economic Development Mission

Together, we are building community, growing economic opportunity, and fostering an environment where business and residents thrive.





Cape Breton Partnership

The Cape Breton Partnership is Unama'ki – Cape Breton's private sector led economic development organization, powered by over 130 private sector companies from across all sectors, communities, geographies, and cultures.

VISION

A thriving Unama'ki - Cape Breton

MISSION

To transform Unama'ki – Cape Breton into the most creative and prosperous place on earth

PROMOTE

Our Island as a great place to live, work, and invest

GROW

A culture that values and celebrates creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship

CONNECT

Entrepreneurs and companies to the resources they need to succeed



CBRM Direction: Strategic Vision and Priorities

CBRM Vision

An inclusive, prosperous, vibrant community through culture, diversity, and innovation.

CBRM Mission

To work with the community to create a safe and welcoming CBRM that fosters wellbeing and inclusive opportunity.

CBRM Values

Inclusion. Innovation. Community Pride. Collaboration. Accountability.

Priority Areas

1. Economic Development
2. CBRM Charter
3. Development of Harbours
4. Population Growth & Inclusivity
5. Diversified Revenue Streams



CBRM Direction Budget and Key Areas of Focus



CBRM Planning and Economic Development Budget

2024 Approved CBRM Planning and Economic Development Budget (March 2024)



Expenditures by Department Planning & Economic Development

Expenditure Summary 2024-25	Projected Operating Results 2023-24	Approved Budget 2023-24	Proposed Budget 2024-25	Budget Increase (Decrease)	% Change
PLANNING, INSPECTIONS AND BY-LAWS	3,381,682	3,589,859	4,017,907	428,048	11.9%

- ▶ Housing Action Plan Initiative \$310K (offset by reserve transfer)
- ▶ 1 FTE – By-law enforcement officer \$70K
- ▶ Remove bi-annual Pictometry contract for 2024-25 (\$70K)
- ▶ Contractual increases in salaries and benefits account for remaining variance.

2024 CBRM Budget Presentation available here:

https://www.cbrm.ns.ca/images/Media_Summary_2024-25_budget.pdf

2024 CBRM Budget Documents available here:

<https://www.cbrm.ns.ca/budget-documents.html>



Key Areas of Focus

Five Strategic Priorities were identified in the CBRM Forward planning process in 2022, and are outlined in CBRM’s Economic Development Strategy, adopted by Council on August 23rd, 2022.

These priorities remain the Key Areas of Focus in 2024-25

1. Economic Development Capacity
2. Leveraging Local Strengths
3. Population Growth
4. Strategic Partnerships
5. Optimizing Regional Projects

Download the full CBRM Forward plan here:

<https://capebretonpartnership.com/research-report/cbrm-forward-economic-development-strategy/>



CBRM Direction - CBRM's Economic Development Network



Figure 1 in the CBRM Forward Economic Development Strategy is shown here. As stated in the strategy, “*Economic development is much broader than providing the staff and budget for an economic development department.*” It goes on to state that “*A strong regional and provincial economy will also provide positive benefit to the CBRM.*”

In 2024/25, the CBRM REN will continue to work to achieve both the goals of CBRM Forward and **Forward. Together.** for the benefit of all of Unama’ki – Cape Breton, and the CBRM as its most populous and urban area.



Learn more about the **Forward. Together.** plan here:

<https://capebretonpartnership.com/research-report/forward-together-unamaki-cape-breton-economic-development-population-growth-plan/>

Implementation Plan – Progress on Recommendations

Economic Development Strategy Goals	# of Recommended Actions	Actions Started / In Progress / Completed	Actions Not Started or Unknown Status	Progress Visualization
Economic Development Capacity Ensure the CBRM has the necessary tools, processes, and resources to attract and retain investment	18	14	4	
Leveraging Local Strengths Grow the economic potential of the CBRM’s strategic advantages Foster opportunities in tourism, marine development, culture, entrepreneurship, postsecondary education, and as Cape Breton’s urban hub	22	16	6	
Economic Opportunity through Population Growth Address workforce development needs, grow the local consumer base and ensure a sustainable tax base	7	5	2	
Strategic Partnerships Collaborate on areas of mutual benefit to maximize impact and return	6	4	2	
Optimizing regional Projects Support and maximize the economic return to the local economy for regional projects	5	4	1	
TOTALs	58	43	15	

Province of Nova Scotia Direction for Nova Scotia RENs

The Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development is responsible for creating the climate for broadbased economic growth and prosperity including establishing plans and policies for economic growth and community economic development in the Province.

Though the outcome agreement has not yet been provided by the Department, these are the three key areas the CBRM REN (and all NS RENs) are required to demonstrate progress in, as per the 2023/24 Outcome Agreement, to ensure communities experience growth and prosperity:

Strategic Sectors

- Grow strategic sectors of our economy.

Productivity

- Work with all sectors to become more productive and prosperous.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

- Provide support and investment in innovation and entrepreneurship.

Province of Nova Scotia Economic Development Direction

Government Business Plan (Budget 2024-25)

NOVA SCOTIA

**BUILDING NOVA SCOTIA,
FASTER**
BUDGET 2024-25



Select Priorities from the Government Business Plan:

- Healthcare
- Economy
 - Housing Faster
 - Work & Affordability
 - Strategic Sectors
 - Competitiveness & Productivity
- Communities
 - Cost of Living
 - Resilient Green Communities

A top priority for the government remains the transformation of health care, a priority that exhibits in the

CBRM through the unprecedented investment in hospitals and as shown in the *Building Tomorrow* campaign that intersects with the priorities of the CBRM REN.

The Economic priorities are in alignment with this business plan. The CBRM itself through many initiatives is making progress on housing, and this plan and the general work of the CBRM REN aligns with the broader government agenda.

The efforts of the CBRM and the CBRM REN are also in alignment with the governments priorities in the Cost of Living, and resilient Green Communities – especially economic opportunities with Offshore Wind and Green Hydrogen.

Department of Economic Development Business Plan

NOVA SCOTIA

BUSINESS PLAN

2024-25

Economic Development



Department of Economic Development Priority Actions 2024-25

1. Growing Nova Scotia's Strategic Sectors
 - Support of COVE
 - Support of the Verschuren Centre
2. Enabling increased productivity for business
 - Primarily with InvestNS
3. Supporting Innovation and Entrepreneurship
 - Fund organizations that support early-stage businesses and entrepreneurship ecosystems (like Navigate and Makerspace)
4. Ensuring all communities experience growth and prosperity
 - Work with Regional Enterprise Networks
 - Deliver the Community Economic Development Fund
 - Support local producers, manufactures, consumers and supporting initiatives to the soon to be launched Nova Scotia Loyal



InvestNS Key Areas of Focus, 2024-25

1. Growing Nova Scotia's Strategic Sectors
2. Enabling increasing productivity for all sectors and businesses across the province
3. Investing in new ideas and entrepreneurship to grow the economy
4. Ensuring all communities experience growth and prosperity



Strategic Areas and select Key Priorities from the 2024-25 Build Nova Scotia Business Plan

1. Healthcare Infrastructure
 - Transition to Community Facilities
 - CBRM Healthcare Redevelopment – **Supported by the Building Tomorrow Campaign**
 - Halifax Infirmary Expansion Program
2. Telecommunications Infrastructure
 - Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative
 - Expanded Satellite Internet Service Rebate Program
 - Cellular for Nova Scotia Program
3. Land, Asset and Environmental Management (including Open Hearth Park in Sydney)
 - Environmental Monitoring
 - **Includes wastewater treatment facilities in Sydney**
 - Zwicker & Co. Warehouse, Lunenburg Foundry Shipyard, Boat Harbour Cleanup Project, and Dartmouth Cove Assessment

Province of Nova Scotia Economic Development Direction



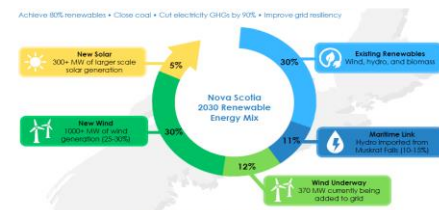
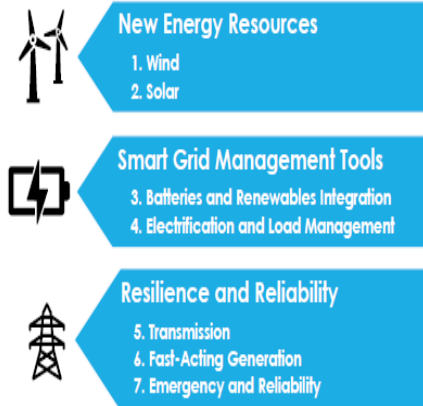
Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR), 2024-25 Priority Actions

- Advancing the Development and Sustainable use of Clean and Renewable Energy
 - Includes Community Solar, Active Transportation, Clean Power, Green Hydrogen, Offshore Wind, Geothermal, and other efforts complementary to the work of the CBRM REN.
- Ecological Forestry Transition and Conserving Wildlife
- Maintaining the Provincial Parks System and Achieving Land Protection Commitments
- Managing Crown Lands and Natural Resources for Public Benefit

Nova Scotia's DNRR-led Green Energy Initiatives

Nova Scotia's 2030 Clean Power Plan

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables



Nova Scotia Offshore Wind Roadmap



Offshore Wind Roadmap

← In 2022, the Province set a target to offer leases for 5 GW of offshore wind energy by 2030.

The opportunity for developers seeking seabed leases can be broadly outlined as follows:

- Nova Scotia jurisdiction: access to seabed rights suitable for the first commercial scale project(s) from as early as 2024.
- Canada-Nova Scotia jointly managed jurisdiction: access to seabed rights suitable for commercial scale projects from 2025.
- Test and demonstration: access to seabed rights specifically for testing and demonstration from 2026.



Green Hydrogen Action Plan

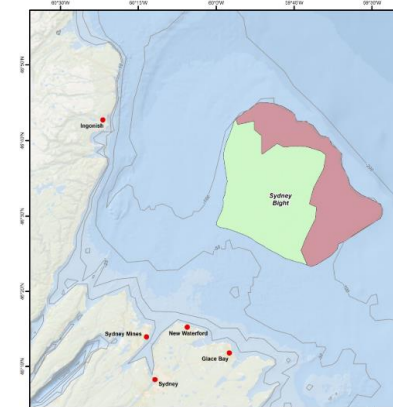
← Nova Scotia is actively pursuing the development of a green hydrogen sector, positioning itself as a leader in clean economic growth and environmental stewardship.

- Goal 1:** Create the conditions for a sustainable and prosperous green hydrogen sector that produces local benefits from both domestic and export opportunities.
- Goal 2:** Support the development of competitive green hydrogen export opportunities.
- Goal 3:** Ensure the green hydrogen sector is developed in alignment with Nova Scotia's environmental and climate change goals.
- Goal 4:** Support engagement efforts to foster transparent communication and meaningful community participation in the green hydrogen sector.
- Goal 5:** Ensure that safety is paramount along the entire green hydrogen supply chain.
- Goal 6:** Invest in skills training and development to ensure a strong domestic workforce that supports the green hydrogen sector.
- Goal 7:** Support green hydrogen sector development through research and innovation projects.

CBRM: Nova Scotia's Power Generator

Energy generation has long been an important part of the CBRM's economy and the success of Nova Scotia as a province. Local coal production for electrical generation in Lingan, Point Aconi and Point Tupper, combined with Wreck Cove power generating station in Victoria County and more recently the Maritime Link which makes landfall also at Point Aconi makes Unama'ki – Cape Breton critical to the province's electricity system. As a result, the island is also home to a significant amount of transmission infrastructure, in addition to a large labour force both in direct and indirect jobs.

The potential of Offshore Wind and Green Fuel development in the CBRM is an opportunity to



Continue this legacy in renewable energy.

← The Interim Report from the [Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia \(Spring 2024\)](#) identifies Sydney Bight as a Potential Future Development Area (PFDA).

Province of Nova Scotia Economic Development Direction

Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration Business Plan



Department of Labour,
Skills and Immigration
Priority Actions 2024-25

- 1. Create opportunities to sustainable population and economic growth
 - Continue to increase approved PNP and AIP applications, with a focus on the construction and healthcare sectors
 - Promote recruitment of healthcare professionals in partnership with other departments
 - Continue to support settlement service provider organizations
 - Continue to attract and retain francophone newcomers throughout the province
- 2. Advance inclusion, learning and employability for all
 - Support the implementation of the Minister’s Panel on NSCC Pre-Apprenticeship and Trades Training recommendations
 - Implement the Actions for Accelerating the Growth of Skilled Trades in Nova Scotia
 - Support the implementation of Nova Scotia Microcredentials Framework
- 3. Provide pre-arrival employment programs and services to families of military personnel who are transferring to Nova Scotia (Seamless Canada initiative)
- 3. Enable safe, fair, diverse, welcoming and productive workplaces
 - Minimize red tape for skilled workers credential recognition (focus on housing construction)
 - Continue work in priority areas to reduce the occurrence of accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses
 - Support the Worker’s Compensation Review Committee
 - Continue to promote Nova SAFE, Nova Scotia’s safety mobile app
 - Translate key labour standards resources ... [and] ensure employer compliance (to better serve foreign workers)
 - Expand the suite of employer services available through Nova Scotia Works Online (focus on youth and equity-deserving workers)

Performance Measures

Create opportunities for sustainable population and economic growth	2024-25 Target
# of net interprovincial migrants per year	10,000
# of new immigrant landings per calendar year	7,000
# of NS Nominee Program certificates issued per calendar year	3,500
# of endorsements in the Atlantic Immigration Program per calendar year	2,500
Advance inclusion, learning and employability for all	2024-25 Target
# of new employers in the apprenticeship system	200
# of new apprentices	1650
# of new journeypersons	1000
% of apprentices who identify as belonging to equity-deserving communities, including women	25%
# of clients receiving employment services, education and training supports	18,000
Enable safe, fair, diverse, welcoming and productive workplaces	2024-25 Target
# of inspections conducted in sectors which employ foreign workers	50

People: CBRM’s Growth Imperative

As in the 2023/24 Business Plan, the goal of the CBRM REN remains to help the CBRM achieve annual population growth of 1.2% and annual workforce growth of 0.5%. A growth rate of this pace will result in a population of approximately 125k and a workforce of about 53k by 2040.

Review “[CBRM: The Growth Imperative](#)” for more information.



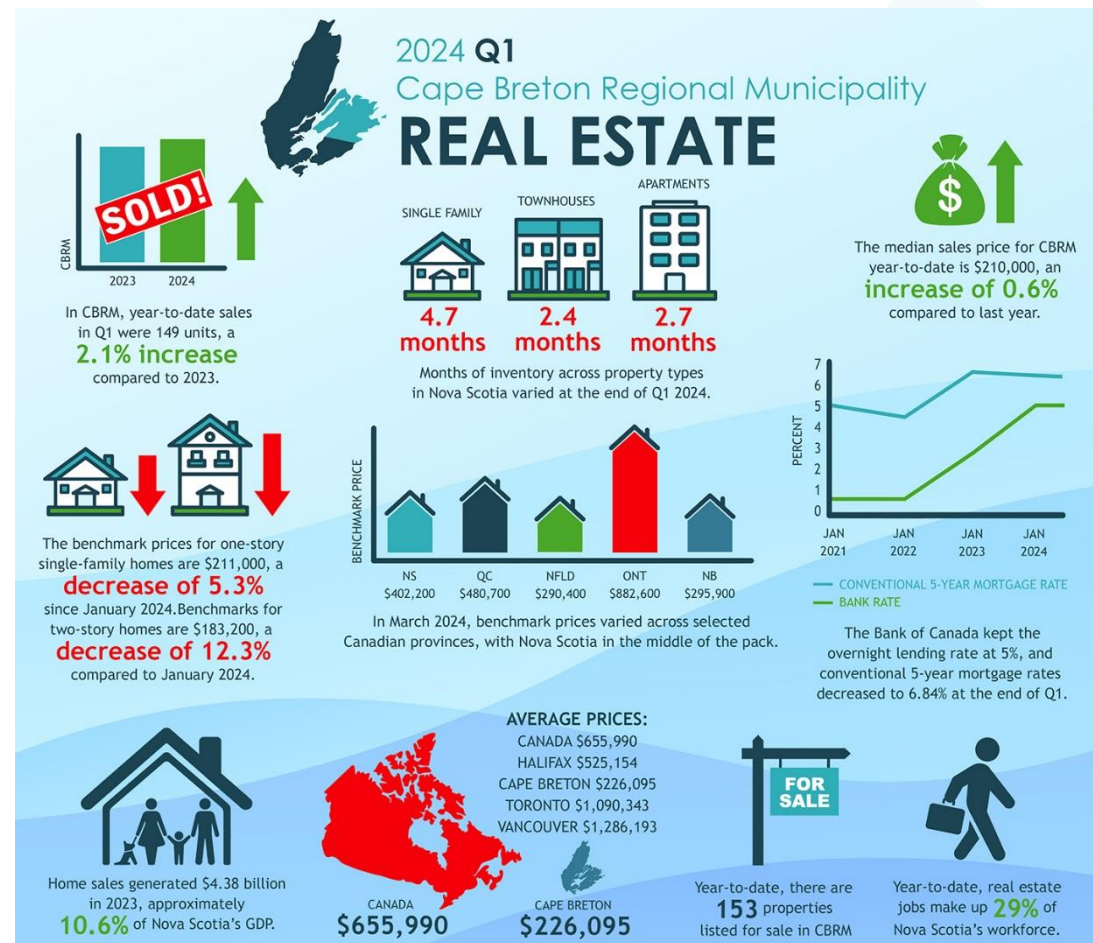
Table 4: Population growth required to expand the workforce

	2020	2040	Cumulative percent change	Avg. annual percent change	# change
Population	100,700	125,600	24.7%	1.2%	+24,800
Workforce	48,900	53,800	10.1%	0.50%	+4,900

See Appendix A for sources and methodology.

CBRM Economic Development Landscape - Spring 2024

Real Estate and Residential and Non-Residential Development

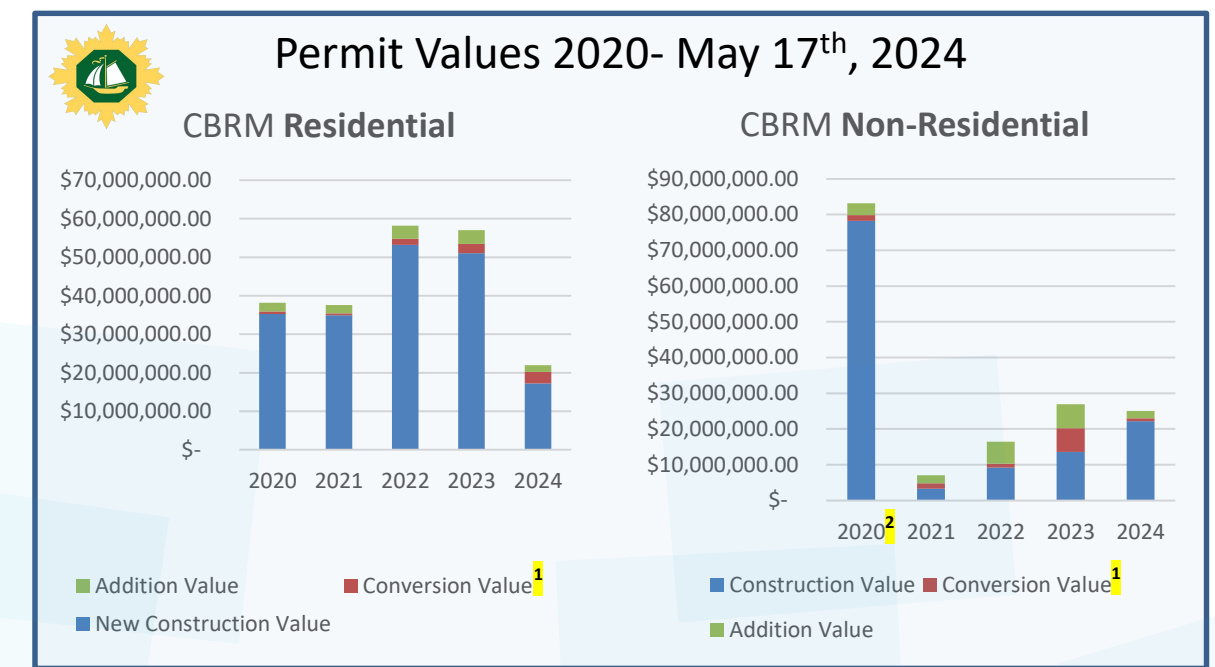
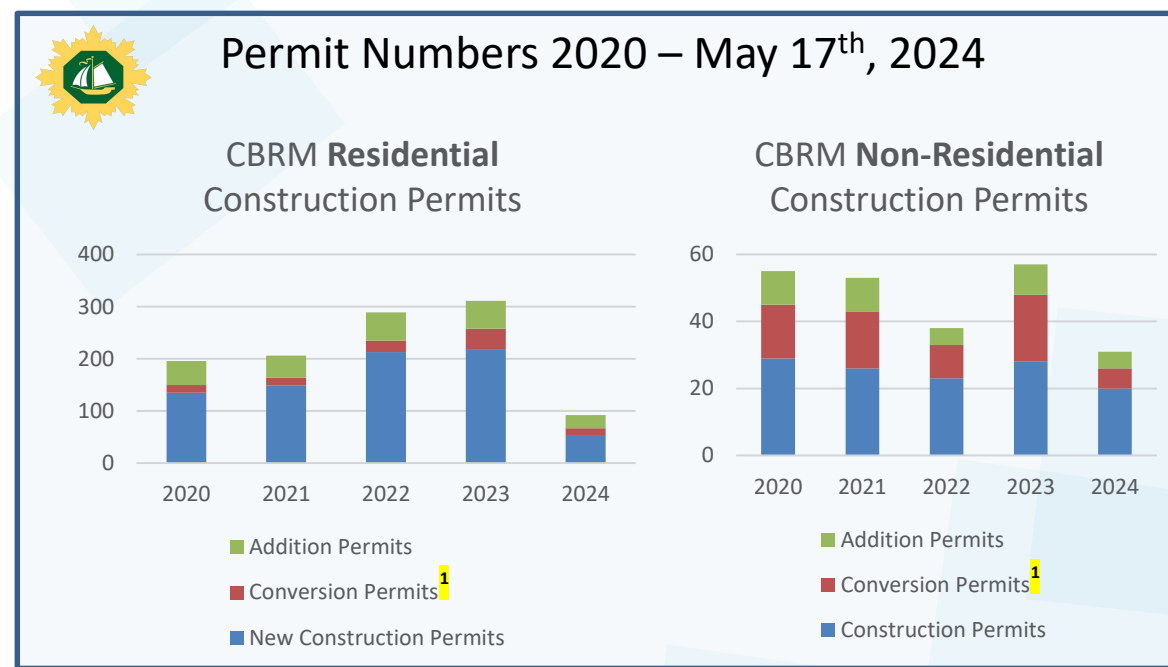


**Disclaimer – Statistics are for Quarter 1 2024 and year-to-date unless otherwise indicated. Statistics reflect Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) data.



↑ Infographic provided by the Nova Scotia Association of Realtors® (NSAR), May 2024.

NSAR is one of over 150 investors in the Cape Breton Partnership



In 2023, residential permit numbers and values continued to increase. So far in 2024, residential construction values are extremely strong driven largely by apartment building construction and conversion.

Last year, Dr. Levitan Reid from CBU reminded Council (May 10th 2023) that the CBRM's vacancy rate remains critically low, at 1.5%, and that 10% of homeowners and 32% of renters are spending more than 30% of their income on shelter (6,815 households in CBRM). Since that time, vacancy rates have remained stubbornly low here and in all major Atlantic Canadian Centre, as the Atlantic Economic Council noted in the 2024 Atlantic Investment Outlook (details on page 16).

Non-residential construction has continued on a steep incline from 2021 to 2024 to date, with values in 2024 already approaching the final 2023 values. The Construction Association of Nova Scotia recognized at its 2024 Spring Fling event held at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre that activity in the CBRM is on an upward trend. Strong representation from the local and regional industry is indicative of a strengthening construction sector in the CBRM.

Invest in Cape Breton
 An initiative of...

How to Build More Housing in Cape Breton

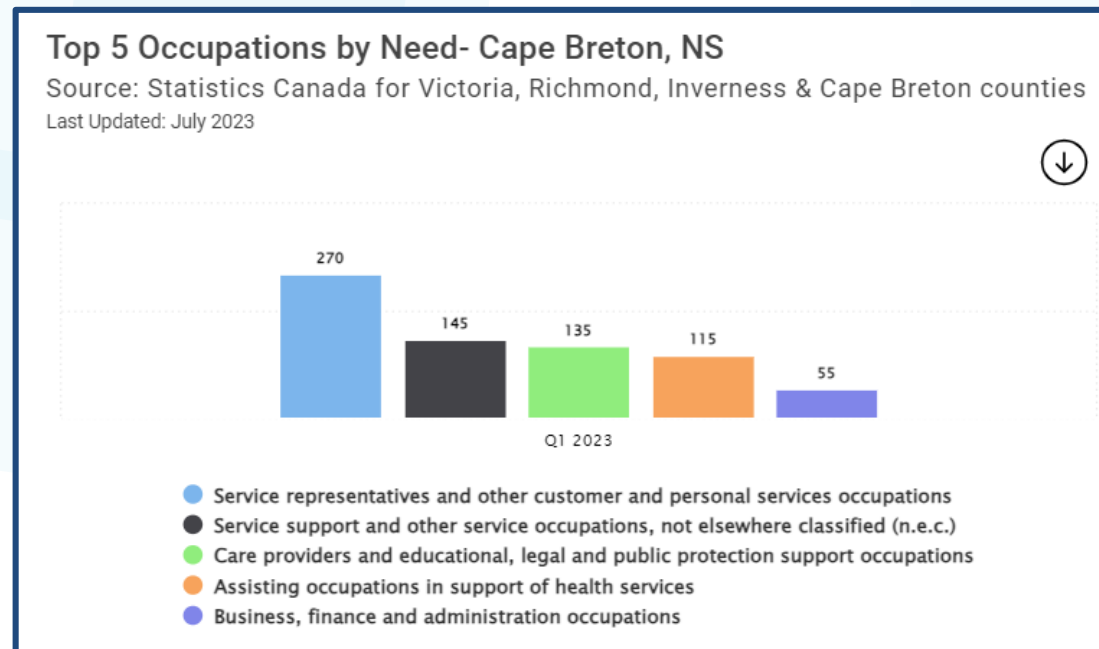
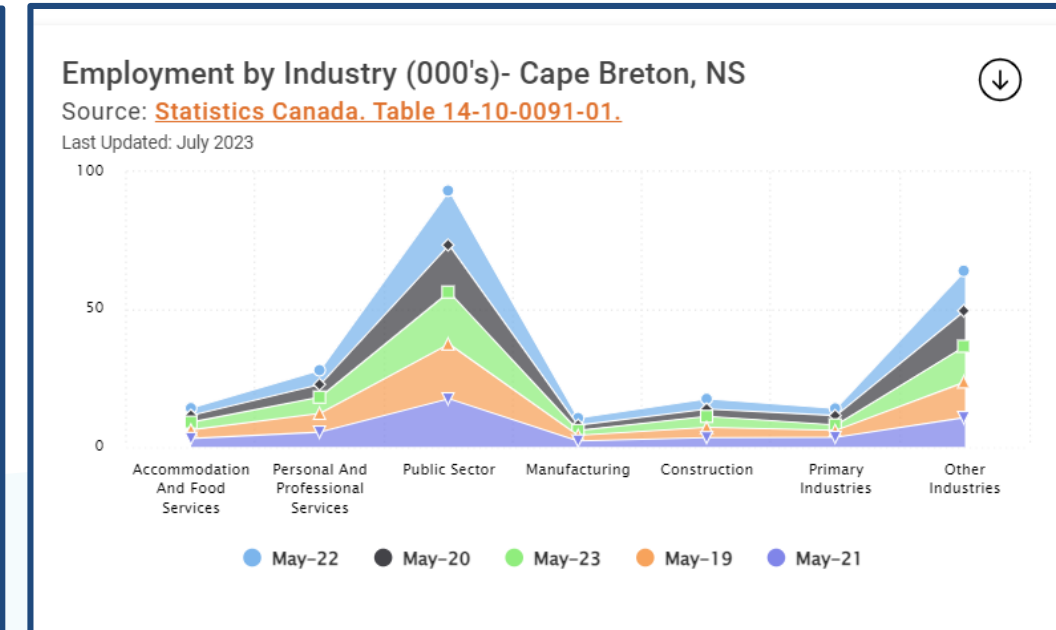
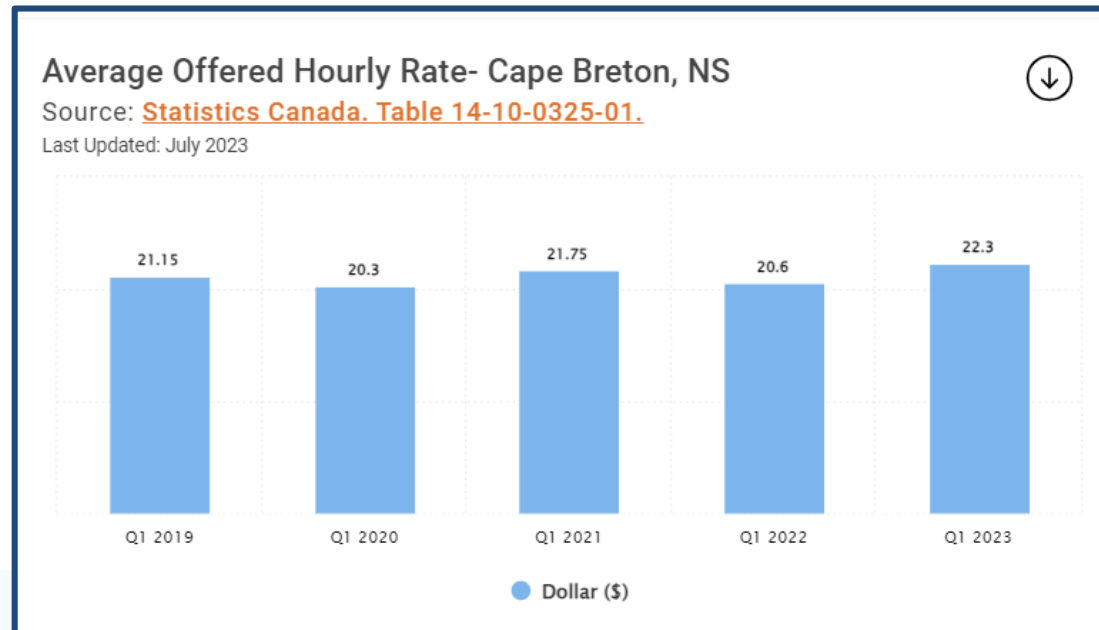
Listen to podcast episode #4 for inspiring stories from innovative developers in the CBRM!

CBRM Economic Development Landscape - Spring 2024

Invest
In Cape Breton

Labour Market Indicators Dashboard
Q3 2023 Update (most recent available
as of May, 2024)

- The size of the workforce in May 2023 was down 9% from May 2022.
- Employment was down 5% year over year (-2,600).
- The unemployment rate dropped again to 11.5%.
- Tourism-related employment in May was still not back to pre-pandemic levels.
- Public sector employment is up 11% year-over-year in May (+2,200).
- Manufacturing employment continued to be weak (-800 in May versus last year).
- Construction employment was up 8% (+300 in May).
- Personal and professional services employment was up 13% (not back to pre-pandemic).
- The number of EI claimants dropped 18% in April vs. April 2022.
- Immigration is off to a strong start in 2023 (290 PR admissions between Jan-April).
- The number of job vacancies was 13% lower in Q1 2023 compared to a year earlier) – still double the pre-pandemic level.
- Sales and service jobs and health-related jobs are the most in-demand.



Full Labour Market Indicators are updated in the **Local Economic Data** section of the “Invest Tab” of WelcomeToCapeBreton.com.

WELCOME TO
Cape Breton

Invest in Cape Breton

Invest
In Cape Breton

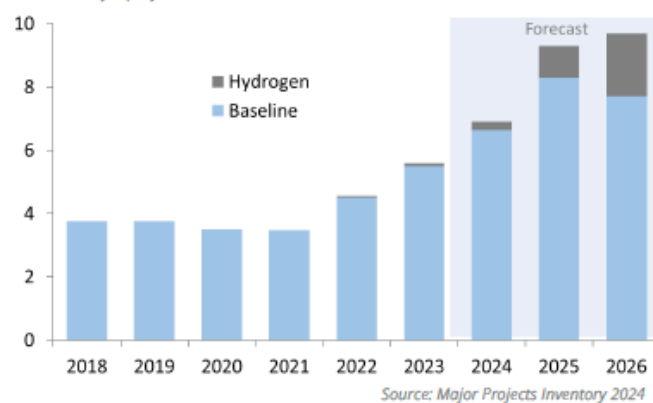
CBRM Economic Development Landscape - Spring 2024



Atlantic Investment Outlook (May 14, 2024)

- There are 566 major capital projects in Atlantic Canada with a potential investment value of \$264 billion.
 - *Nova Scotia has budgeted over \$300 million on the **Cape Breton** and **Halifax** hospital programs in 2024*
- Investment in Atlantic Canada is expected to increase by 11% this year to a record \$16.5 billion.
 - *Nova Scotia investment in areas outside of Halifax is up 28% to 2.8 billion in 2024 and could exceed \$4B in 2025*
- Nova Scotia has become the regional leader in investment activity.
- Population growth will continue to support investment but at a slower rate.
 - *The apartment vacancy rate remains very low across the region, especially in **Charlottetown**, **Cape Breton** and **Halifax** where it is below 1%.*
 - *Construction labour shortages and high costs to build are impediments to growth.*
- Green infrastructure investment will be a key driver over the next several years.

Housing and green energy projects supporting rapid growth
Annual major project investment, Nova Scotia (\$ billions)



Nova Scotia major project investment by industry (\$ millions)

	2024	2025 onwards
Housing	1,604	29,248
Manufacturing/other primary	1,432	59,207
Transportation	820	9,367
Health	775	3,955
Other public infrastructure	771	4,229
Electricity	644	10,162
Education and research	394	1,363
Other services	314	4,460
Mining	71	1,112
Environmental infrastructure	53	835
Recreation/tourism	19	679
Total	6,897	124,617

Source: Major Projects Inventory 2024

.Full Article: <https://atlanticeconomiccouncil.ca/page/ATLInvestmentOLMay24>



BDC 2024 Economic Outlook

Pierre Cl roux, Vice President, Research and Chief Economist: “The Atlantic provinces benefited from the strong population increase experienced at the national level in 2023. However, slower forecasted growth in the U.S. and China could weaken the region’s exports in 2024.”

Full Article: <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/blog/2023-economic-outlook-cause-caution-not-alarm>



Atlantic Momentum Newsletter

The 2023 Atlantic Canada Momentum Index showed convincing indicators of robust opportunity in Atlantic Canada. Indicators in Population? Up. Immigration? Up. GDP per capita? Up. Education, employment rate, productivity, housing starts, life satisfaction? Up.

Atlantic Momentum Initiative: <https://ppforum.ca/project/the-atlantic-initiative/>

As a follow-on to that report, the [Atlantic Momentum Newsletter](#) reviews policy news, issues, and events that are driving change in Atlantic Canada. Here are some select points relevant to Unama’ki – Cape Breton.

- **May 8th, 2024** - AlterBiota, a biotech in Sydney, N.S., has pulled in \$4-million in seed financing to help commercialize an additive it’s developing to make concrete more environmentally friendly.
- **May 1st, 2024** - Nova Scotia has a pilot project underway to serve health care workers in Sydney in which the provincial government covers a quarter of the operating costs, subsidizes half the fees for parents and pays wages when extra staff are needed.
- **April 24th, 2024** - Evidence of Atlantic Canada’s green energy transition could be seen last week when the Sea Installer, a Belgian-owned ship carrying wind turbine blades, tied up in Sydney Harbour.
- **April 24th, 2024** - Novaport has ... struck a deal with a Danish company to develop a marshalling yard.

CBRM Economic Development Landscape - Spring 2024

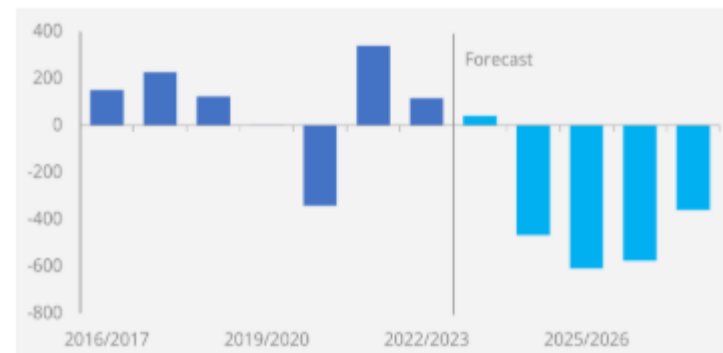


Select Stats from the ATLANTIC Fiscal Monitor - NS Budget (Mar 8, 2024)

Full Publication available here: <https://atlanticeconomiccouncil.ca/page/ATLFiscalMonitorNSMar2024>

Province borrowing to fund social spending priorities

Fiscal balance, Nova Scotia (\$ millions)



Source: Nova Scotia Budget and Public Accounts

Rapid spending growth outpacing own-source revenue

Nova Scotia budget expenditures (\$ millions, unless noted)

	2019/2020	2024/2025	\$ change	% change
Health care*	4,651	6,900	2,249	48
Education & early childhood	1,441	1,999	559	39
Community services	999	1,579	580	58
Other program spending	3,546	5,218	1,672	47
Debt servicing	818	823	5	1
Total expenditures	11,454	16,519	5,064	44

*Combines health & wellness with seniors & long-term care
 Source: Nova Scotia Budget and Public Accounts

Growing population boosts taxes and federal transfers gain

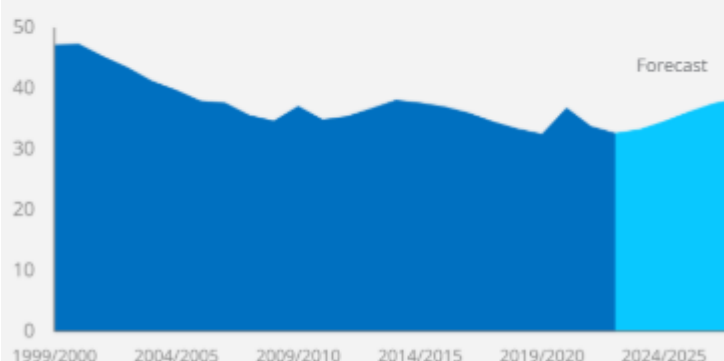
Nova Scotia revenue sources, (\$ millions, unless noted)

	2019/2020	2024/2025	\$ change	% change
Personal income tax	2,890	4,174	1,284	44
Harmonized sales tax	1,937	2,756	819	42
Corporate income tax	538	749	211	39
Gasoline tax	267	278	12	4
Other own source revenues	1,494	1,371	-123	-8
Federal transfers	3,867	6,042	2,175	56
Total revenues*	10,992	15,370	4,378	40

*Excludes net income from government business enterprises
 Source: Nova Scotia Budget and Public Accounts

Debt to increase to highest level in two decades

Net debt-to-GDP ratio (%)



Source: Nova Scotia Budget, Nova Scotia Public Accounts and Statistics Canada



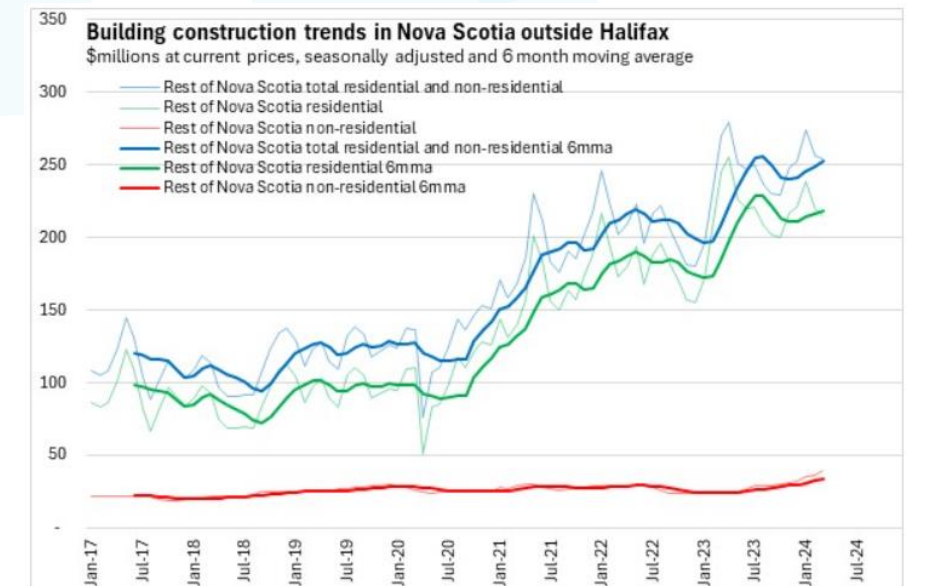
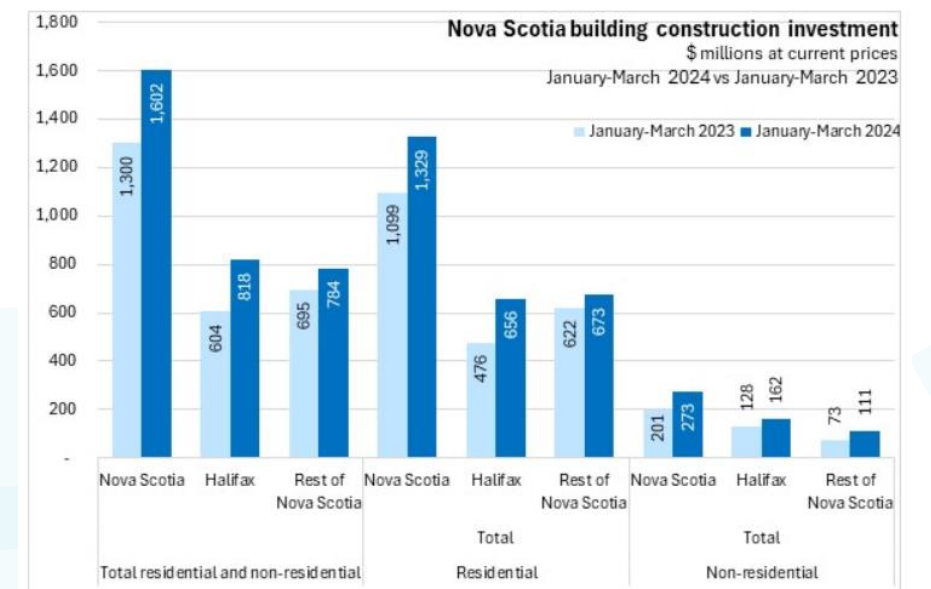
Building Construction - March 2024

Thomas Storing,
 Director – Economics and Statistics:

Year to Date investment in Nova Scotia building construction outside of Halifax from 2023 to 2024

- Nova Scotia's total building construction investment increased from \$1.30 billion in January-March 2023 to \$1.60 billion in January-March 2024. Residential investment as well as non-residential investment were up across the province.
 - Overall – up 12.8% from 2023 to 2024.
 - Residential construction – up 8.2%
 - Non-residential construction up 52.3%

Full Publication available here:
<https://www.novascotia.ca/finance/statistics/news.asp?id=19926>



Economic Development Capacity

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
Establish a 'no wrong door' approach where all prospective investors and existing businesses are directed to the Cape Breton Partnership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM Process to refer business inquiries to CBP.* Weblinks from CBRM to CBP. NEW in 2024/25 – Electronic Screen in the Customer Service Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of referrals from CBRM and other partners to CBP. Higher customer satisfaction. 	CBP, CBRM , Chamber, BIA (SDDA, Bay it Forward, Downtown North Sydney)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM Deputy CAO CBRM REN EDOs CBP CEO
Establish a minimum three-year agreement for CBRM REN. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-year agreement between CBRM and CBP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased ability to attract and retain quality staff. Increased ability to leverage multi-year funding from other sources. 	CBRM, CBP , Province of NS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBP CEO LOC Co-Chairs CAO Mayor
Establish a business visitation (BR&E) program to proactively identify and address businesses challenges and opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded economic development data. NEW in 2024/25 – Goal of 36 interviews this first year of operating BR&E program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More efficient use of staff resources. Alignment of programming with other RENs. Higher customer satisfaction. 	CBP, CBRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM REN EDOs
Compile and promote an inventory of available sites and buildings for new business investment and expansion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory of available properties/buildings created and maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher rates of commercial real estate transactions. Higher customer satisfaction (developers, investors, etc..). 	CBP, CBRM , developers, property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM REN EDOs CBRM Planning Dept
Adopt a Province-wide REN Metrics protocol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of the REN metrics protocol to provincial agreements and reporting requirements. (continued from creation of the protocol in last fiscal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater ability to see and respond to province-wide trends. Standardization of common programs (like BRE). 	CBP, NS RENS, DED, LSI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBP CEO

* Having a more common practice to refer to the REN will enable better client tracking and the processes will also seek to refer clients to the experts whether they be Municipal staff, partner organizations or provincial agencies.

Economic Development Capacity (continued)

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
Update, augment and promote EntrepreneurCB as the primary directory of funding and business resources for CBRM businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New collaborative management framework in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased ability to collaborate amongst entrepreneurial serving partners in the CBRM 	CBP, ACOA, CEED, Navigate,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs - CBP CEO - CEED Cape Breton
Continue and expand existing marketing programs to create awareness and attract investment to the CBRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New CBRM Focused Podcasts Produced, with high download / performance rates Expanded Travel for specific opportunities for the CBRM Applications to funding opportunities for larger marketing initiatives Creation of a CBRM specific investment / community page on WelcomeToCapeBreton.com 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater local, regional, national and international awareness of investment opportunities in the CBRM Stronger relationships between proponents of local investment opportunities and the CBRM REN 	CBP, ACOA, CBRM, NSDED, Investors in the Cape Breton Partnership, Cape Breton Capital Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs - CBRM REN Director of Communications
Economic Development Training for CBRM Council and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive Training Workshop on progress towards CBRM Forward, and other economic development initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater local, regional, national and international awareness of investment opportunities in the CBRM 	CBP, CBRM, CBRM REN Board, Entrepreneurial Agency Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEO - CBRM REN EDOs - Strategic Relations Advisor

Leveraging Local Strengths

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
URBAN HUB: Support major infrastructure projects in CBRM’s urban core leveraging the local population density. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesigned Building Tomorrow Campaign. Support for Developers. Support for BIA initiatives such as Downtown Sydney Attend strategic events such as MPIM and ICSC to attract new investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater density, more development, and more investment in CBRM’s urban core areas. 	NSLSI, CBRM, SDDA, CBP, Province, ACOA,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM REN EDOs CBRM REN Director of Communication
ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Provide annual updates on the state of entrepreneurship and the efforts to grow the share of small businesses in the CBRM. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Update with Entrepreneurial Support Partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Partner Day, Small Business Week collaborations, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater support for entrepreneurs. Greater awareness among partners of support for entrepreneurs. 	CBP, CBDC, Navigate, CEED, BDC, Chamber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM REN EDOs Strategic Relations Advisor CBRM REN Director of Communications
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION (PSE): Support workforce development efforts to retain local PSE graduates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support employers to hire and retain PSE graduates (international and local). Host 4 job fairs per year to connect graduates to careers in Cape Breton. Promote Provincial entrepreneurship pathways to international students as an option to stay in CBRM (2 sessions/events per year). Ensure local settlement services are available to assist the international student community (and spouses/children). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher retention rates of new PSE graduates. 	CBU, NSCC, CBP, CBRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Market & Immigration Advisor Human Resources Advisor CBRM REN Director of Communications CBLIP Manager

Leveraging Local Strengths (continued)

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
<p>BIO-ECONOMY & MARINE: Develop a harbour strategy to maximize the economic development potential of the ports and harbour communities of CBRM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sydney Harbour Strategy Successful launch of the Louisbourg VEES. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater collaborative effort to maximize the economic potential of our harbours for current and future industries. 	<p>Port of Sydney, CBRM, CBP, ACOA, First Nations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM REN EDOs Port of Sydney CEO LOC Co-Chairs CAO
<p>BIO-ECONOMY & MARINE: Prepare a detailed strategy to develop the potential of its marine/ocean industries including aquaculture, offshore energy, value-added fisheries products, and services, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complementary strategy to the Sydney Harbour Strategy Application to funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater collaborative effort to maximize the economic potential of our harbours for current and future industries. 	<p>CBP, CBP Investors, Port of Sydney, JA Douglas McCurdy Airport InvestNS, CBU, ACOA, First Nations, NSSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBRM REN EDOs NSSA Executive Director
<p>ARTS & CULTURE: Continue to implement the CBRM Creative Economy Growth Plan and invest in the creative economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tactical support for specific initiatives Targeted support for creative sector entrepreneurs Ongoing support for the Culture Sector Team Ongoing support for the Unama’ki Motion Picture Cooperative Progress made towards the goals and outcomes of the CBRM Creative Economy Growth Plan Progress made towards the Cape Breton Island Culture Sector Strategy Increased web presence for both Investment Opportunities in Arts and Culture, and the Culture Sector Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and more sustainable Creative Businesses New private sector investment in the creative sector Stronger creative sector organizations and institutions A more empowered and organized Culture Sector Team 	<p>CBP, Culture Sector Team, CBRM, NSITEN, First Nations</p>	<p>Creative Economy Development Officer</p>

Population Growth

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
<p>Consult with local businesses on local workforce development needs in collaboration with local and provincial workforce development organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile workforce demand by sector within CBRM. Integration of workforce demand questions within BRE questionnaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More efficient use of CBP and partner resources to minimize forecasted labour challenges. 	<p>CBP, Chamber, trade & professional associations, CBU, NSCC, InvestNS, NSDLSI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Market & Immigration Advisor Human Resources Advisor CBRM REN EDOs
<p>Develop a population retention and attraction plan to attract the workers and residents needed to support the local economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for funding to complete a population retention and attraction plan Population retention and attraction plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual population growth (1.2%). Annual workforce growth (0.5%). The goal of the CBRM REN is to help the region achieve annual population growth of 1.2% which is calculated to in turn enable annual workforce growth of 0.5%.* 	<p>CBP, CBRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Market & Immigration Advisor CBRM REN EDOs
<p>Build on the CBRM’s tourist appeal by encouraging visitors to consider moving to the CBRM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing plan as part of the population retention and attraction strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan in place with appropriate success metrics. 	<p>CBP, DCB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Market & Immigration Advisor CBRM REN EDOs CBRM REN Director of Communications

* Because of an aged population, accelerated population growth is required for only modest workforce growth. Details are in the document “CBRM: The Growth Imperative” located here: <https://capebretonpartnership.com/research-report/cbrm-forward-economic-development-strategy/>

Strategic Partnerships

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
<p>Identify key provincial initiatives where CBRM can benefit from greater collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key provincial initiatives Identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater provincial collaboration on various projects. 	<p>CBP, CBRM, InvestNS, DED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Relations Advisor - CBRM REN EDOs - CEO
<p>Engage and inform key provincial stakeholders of all CBRM economic development initiatives with a focus on those with the potential for provincial collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More effective communication lines between CBRM and key provincial stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful municipal-provincial initiatives that lead to greater community prosperity. 	<p>CBP, CBRM, NSI, NSLSI, NSFA, NSCCTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Relations Advisor - CBRM REN EDOs - CEO
<p>Explore opportunities to share resources with Eskasoni and Membertou Mi'kmaw Nations for entrepreneurship development and other economic development programming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborations with Eskasoni and Membertou. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More specific project collaboration between CBRM, Eskasoni and Membertou. 	<p>Eskasoni, Membertou, CBP, NSBI, NSITEN, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Relations Advisor - CBRM REN EDOs - CEO
<p>Explore opportunities to create additional tourism offerings, experiences, and excursions in consultation with private sector and industry groups, Destination Cape Breton and other tourism stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborations with Destination Cape Breton Collaboration with the Port of Sydney Collaboration with CBU World Tourism Institute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More tourism offerings in the CBRM 	<p>CBP, DCB, TIANS, CBRM businesses, Port of Sydney</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs

Optimizing Regional Projects

2024/25 CBRM REN Actions	Outputs	Anticipated Outcomes	Key Partners	Key Persons
Support the development of larger regional projects through economic impact analyses, inputs to the business case, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of larger projects with CBRM participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More investment and development activity in CBRM. 	CBRM, CBP , Port of Sydney, COVE, CBU, NSCC, DCB, developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs - CEO
Advocate for regional projects with other levels of government and other stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of meetings with provincial, federal decision makers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More investment and development activity in CBRM. 	CBP, CBRM , ACOA, Province, Federal Government, partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Relations Advisor - CBRM REN EDOs - CEO
Identify opportunities for local businesses to benefit from large projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional project opportunities analysis/ workshops completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of local supplier involvement. 	CPB , ACOA, Chamber, NSBI, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs
Work with post-secondary education providers to address workforce needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills needs assessment completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced workforce challenges. 	CBP, NSCC, CBU, Dalhousie , business community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs
Provide support to large projects in CBRM and across Cape Breton. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work from 2023/24 Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement in regional projects outside CBRM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional collaboration to enable successful large projects to have wide benefits across the region. 	CBRM, CBP, NSNRR, NSNRR, NSEM, NSED, NSA, NSFA , Port of Sydney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBRM REN EDOs

REN Investment and Leveraging

Municipal
Investment in
CBRM REN
(\$300k)

+

Provincial
Investment in
CBRM REN
(\$300k)

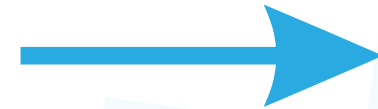


CBRM REN Core Services:

- Sector Development
- Investment Attraction
- Business Planning & Advising
- Business Growth
- Succession Planning
- Immigration Consultation & Engagement
- Human Resources Advisory
- Creative Economy Development
- Marketing & Communications

REN Investment and Leveraging

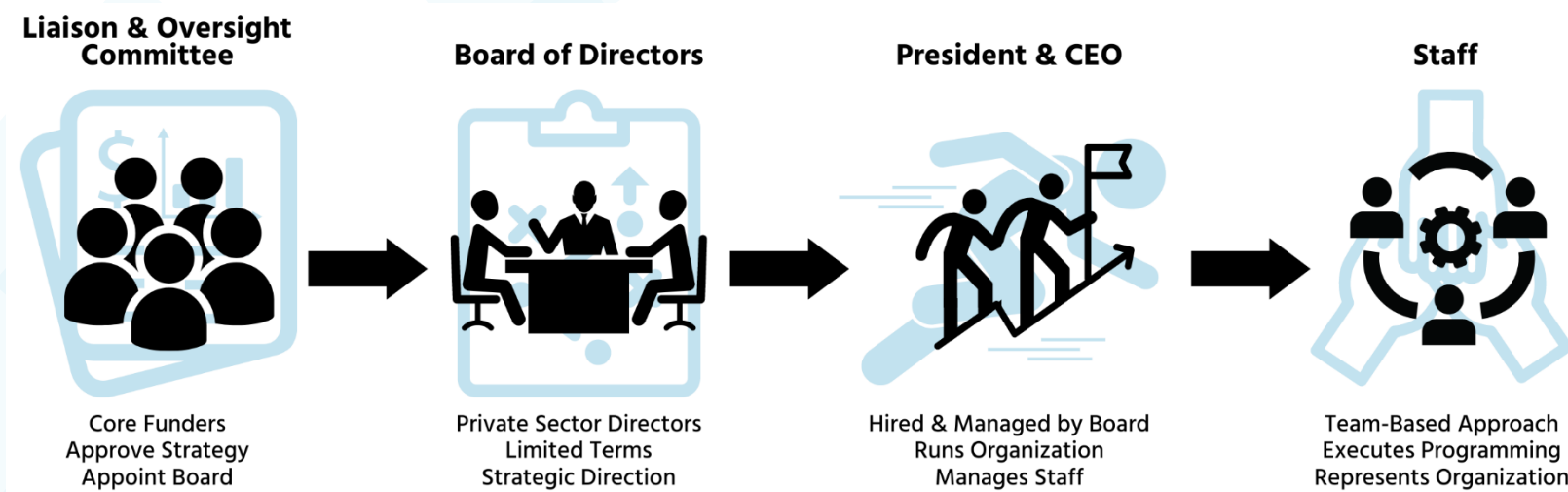
Leveraged CBRM REN
Funding to provide
Additional Services &
Initiatives to CBRM



Example Additional Services and Initiatives:

- Rail Study
- Atlantic Immigration Program
- Nova Scotia Nominee Program
- SMED / 5S Training
- Louisbourg Project with Build NS
- CBU Transportation Pilot
- CanExport Projects
- Connector Program
- LMI Dashboard
- Mitacs Accelerate Program
- Destination Canada
- Creative Sector Supporting funding
- Green Energy Engagement Initiative

Governance and Reporting



Meetings and Reporting

The CBRM REN reports in a number of ways:

- 1) Quarterly Information and Activity reports to CBRM REN Board, LOC and CBRM Council
- 2) Quarterly CBRM REN Board of Directors Meetings
- 3) At least 2 LOC Meetings Annually
- 4) Annual Reporting with Audited Financial Statements
 - 1) Submitted to the Board, LOC, and Province of Nova Scotia

Latest reports are available on the CBRM REN Webpage here: <https://capebretonpartnership.com/initiative/cape-breton-regional-municipality-regional-enterprise-network/>

CBRM REN activities are delivered by the Cape Breton Partnership with oversight from a private-sector Board of Directors approved by the Liaison Oversight Committee (LOC). The LOC consists of funding representatives from the Province of Nova Scotia and the CBRM.

CBRM REN Board of Directors

- Tracey Boutilier, Vibe Creative Group
- Brad Jacobs, Colbourne Auto Group
- Shaowei Xu, SW East International
- Howie Doiron, Lindsay Construction
- Darrell Gallant, Marine Atlantic
- Ron Blinkhorn, Casino Nova Scotia
- Nicole Morrison, Mabel Systems

CBRM REN Liaison Oversight Committee (LOC)

- Co-Chair Steve Gillespie
 CBRM Councillor, District 4
- Steve Parsons, CBRM Councillor, District 7
- Karen Neville, CBRM Acting Director of Planning
- Co-Chair Jennifer Campbell,
 CBRM Chief Financial Officer
- Vacant, Province of Nova Scotia
- Ross MacDonald, Province of Nova Scotia



Employee Team

Dedicated CBRM Economic Development Officers (EDOs)



Lan Zheng
CBRM EDO



Tyler Cole
CBRM EDO

Primary CBRM Staff Collaborators



Marie Walsh
CAO



John MacKinnon
Deputy CAO



Karen Neville
Acting Director
of Planning



Jennifer Campbell
CFO



Wayne MacDonald
Director of
Engineering &
Public Works



John Crane
Manager of Building,
Planning and
Licensing Laws



William Roy
Community
Development Officer

REN Shared Staff

(Cost Shared positions between the CBRM REN and the CB REN and other partners)



Tyler Mattheis
President and
CEO



Blayr Billard
Chief Operating
Officer



Colleen Wheeliker
Strategic
Relations
Advisor



Kelly MacKinnon
Labour Market &
Immigration Advisor



Jeremy Martell
Director of
Communications



Carly Appleton
Communications
Coordinator



Jessica MacDonald
Human Resources
Advisor



Bill Culp
Creative Economy
Development Officer



Garrett Whittle
Finance and Payroll
Coordinator



Jennifer MacNeil
Green Energy
Engagement
Coordinator



Kate Collinet
Digital Marketing
Specialist

Additional Cape Breton Partnership Coordinated Support

(Not funded by the CB REN but whose roles benefit the REN)



Lynn MacLennan
EDO, Inverness
County



Michaela Epifano
Communications
& Investor Relations
Coordinator



Kailea Pedley
CB LIP
Program
Manager



Dani
Mombourquette
Immigration
Engagement
Coordinator



Ocean Le
Connector
Program
Coordinator



Kris Kolanko
NS LSI
Community Navigator



Parker Horton
EDO, Victoria
County



[vacant]
EDO, Richmond
County & Town of
Port Hawkesbury



Danielle
Casagrande
Welcome Network
Coordinator



Ashish Joy
Administrative
Assistant



Student
Researchers and
Interns



Student
Researchers and
Interns



Mitacs Accelerate
Program Researchers



Works for You
Program
Coordinators

CBRM REN Board Approval

CBRM REN Board Approval

This CBRM REN Business Plan was approved at the CBRM REN Board of Directors Meeting of May 24th, 2024



Regional
Enterprise
Network



cbpartnership



cbpartnership



cbpartnership



cape-breton-partnership



CapeBretonPartnership.com/CBRMREN