

Information and Activity Report

*Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network
Richmond County and Port Hawkesbury*

Q3 – FY 2024/25
(October - December 2024)

Subject:CBREN Information and Activity Report

To: Municipality of the County of Richmond and the Town of Port Hawkesbury

Date Prepared:January 31, 2025

Prepared by:Rachelle Samson, Economic Development Officer, Richmond County and Port Hawkesbury

Background:

The Cape Breton Partnership provides economic development support to the Municipality of the County of Richmond and the Town of Port Hawkesbury under the Regional Enterprise Network (REN) model in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia.



The Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network (CBREN) includes the Municipalities of the Counties of Inverness, Richmond, and Victoria, the Town of Port Hawkesbury, as well as the First Nations communities of We'koqma'q, Wagmatcook, Eskasoni and Membertou. The CBREN is part of a larger network of Regional Enterprise Networks across Nova Scotia. The Cape Breton Partnership maximizes the value of the CBREN's funding partners, 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 and to benefit the Municipality of the County of Richmond and the Town of Port Hawkesbury.

2024/2025 CB REN Board

- **Co-Chair** - Jen Ryan, Quincy Street Market
- **Co-Chair** - Adam Bateman, Business Development Bank of Canada
- Geoffrey Clarke, Port Hawkesbury Paper
- Pearlene Cormier, East Coast Credit Union
- Capt. Vivek Saxena, NSCC Strait Area Campus
- Kelsea MacNeil, Membertou Corporate
- Storm Gould, We'koqma'q Corporate

2024/25 CB REN Liaison Oversight Committee:

- **Chair** - Keith MacDonald, CAO, Municipality of the County of Inverness
- Warden Bonny MacIsaac, Municipality of the County of Inverness
- Warden Lois Landry, Municipality of the County of Richmond
- Troy MacCulloch, CAO, Municipality of the County of Richmond
- Mayor Brenda Chisholm-Beaton, Town of Port Hawkesbury
- Terry Doyle, CAO, Town of Port Hawkesbury
- Chief Terry Paul, Membertou First Nation
- Jennifer Deleskie, Membertou First Nation
- Warden Jackie Organ, Municipality of the County of Victoria
- Leanne MacEachen, CAO, Municipality of the County of Victoria
- Donald Hanson, CEO, Wagmatcook First Nation
- Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook First Nation
- Chief John Leonard Bernard, We'koqma'q First Nation
- Gioia Usher, CEO, We'koqma'q First Nation
- Chief Leroy Denny, Eskasoni First Nation
- Steve Parsons, General Manager Corporate, Eskasoni First Nation
- Even Williams, Nova Scotia Department of Growth and Development
- Donald Ferguson, Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills & Immigration

Reporting Period:

Your CBREN team and the Cape Breton Partnership are pleased to share highlights, milestones achieved, and metrics from **October 1 to December 31, 2024**.

Highlights & Events

- **Investor Summit 2024** – This year’s sold-out event brought together over 230 business leaders for a day focused on collaboration and connection. Marking the Cape Breton Partnership’s 20th Anniversary, current and former leaders Tyler Mattheis, Carla Arsenault, and Keith MacDonald shared insights on the organization’s evolution and impact. Inverness County was well represented on the *Big Things, Small Places* panel by Kendall Clancy, General Manager of Cabot Cape Breton. In addition, recipients of this year’s *Economic Impact Awards* included Ben Cowan-Dewar of Cabot Cape Breton and Port Hastings-based Celtic Air Services.
- **Invest in Cape Breton Podcast** – Episode six in the podcast series, *An Under Saturated Market for Tourism Investment*, was released on October 1. In this episode, Andre Bourgeois shared details about an investor who recognized the untapped tourism potential in the community of Chéticamp. Kirk Hoppner, the founder of Nautical Lands Group, now has multiple projects on multiple properties in development, including a museum, gastropub, hotel, and housing projects. Robert Bernard also shared details about the work of the Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network (NSITEN) on projects such as the Skye River Trail in We’koqma’q, which provides visitors with an immersive experience in Mi’kmaq history and culture. Adam Langley, President and CEO of Superyacht East Coast, rounded out the episode speaking about the potential for Cape Breton to become a marine tourism destination. The podcast series can be found here - [Invest in Cape Breton Podcast Series](#).
- **Welcoming Spirit Awards** – The Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership (CBLIP) presented the inaugural *Welcoming Spirit Awards* at the annual CBLIP Partner Update Event in November. The awards recognize organizations and individuals across Unama’ki – Cape Breton who have made significant contributions in fostering welcoming and inclusive communities for newcomers to Canada. L’Arche Cape Breton received the *2024 Welcoming Spirit Award for an Organization*.
- **Safety in the Strait Lunch & Learn** – This year’s event took place in Port Hawkesbury on December 2 and featured updates from event partners NS Labour, Skills and Immigration and the Workers Compensation Board of Nova Scotia, as well as a keynote address from safety leader Calum MacPhee. Attendees also had the opportunity to hear from training providers Construction Safety Nova Scotia, St. John’s Ambulance and Maritime Environmental Training Institute (METI).
- **Strait Area Chamber of Commerce Fall Awards** – Attended the SACOC Fall Dinner & Awards Gala hosted on November 14 at the Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre. I had the honor of presenting the Outstanding Customer Service Award to Lloyd Pidduck, Owner/Florist of Maple & Jack Florist.
- **Offshore Wind Community Engagement Sessions:** A second round of offshore wind community engagement sessions, co-hosted by the Cape Breton Partnership and Net Zero Atlantic, were hosted around the Island. Local sessions were held in Arichat, Port Hawkesbury and St. Peters.

Project Updates – Economic Development:

- **Strait of Canso Website Working Group** – Reorganized website navigation on [the Strait of Canso website](#) to separate “Updates” and “Opportunities” sections. Preparing for phase II of the website development.
- **ACTivate Program**
 - Collaboration between St.Fx Coady Institute and Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism
 - Attended in-person session in Gros Morne, November 2–8 where we explored the core principles and practices of Asset Based Community-Led Development (ABCD) through a variety of immersive experiences and learning sessions.
 - Delivered "What Did We Learn?" presentation on December 5 to the employers of the cohort.
 - Preparing for next steps into the community
- **Ocean Innovation Centre, Town of Port Hawkesbury** – Advancing the development of a Vision and Management Strategy. Added a storage unit to increase privacy for the washroom facilities.
- **Aquaculture Development Area (Provincial & Municipal Collaboration)** - Held discussions with Nova Scotia’s Fisheries & Aquaculture Department to explore opportunities for the Aquaculture Development in Richmond County.
- **Developer Packages** – Progressing the creation of Municipal surplus land websites in partnership with the Eastern Planning District Committee and developing a comprehensive developer package to support this initiative.
- **Business Support** – Assisted clients with succession planning, land inquiries, expansion processes, and networking opportunities. Facilitated connections between potential buyers and sellers.
- **CanExport Community Initiative Application** – Completed the CanExport Community Initiative application for a 3-phase project beginning with the development of a Foreign Direct investment Strategy.
- **Investment Readiness Training** – Participated in *Empowering Communities for Investment Readiness* training in early December. The session looked at foreign direct investment and the importance of communities and regions being “investment ready” to capitalize on opportunities and to prepare for sustainable growth through smart investments.
- **Sustainable Tourism Plan** – Participated in a Community Engagement Session in Port Hawkesbury regarding the development of a sustainable tourism plan for the island. The plan will focus on three goals: preserving and celebrating cultural heritage, protecting the natural environment, and supporting a strong, resilient tourism workforce.

Project Updates – Green Energy Engagement Program:

- **Electricity Sector Climate Change Adaptation Implementation Team** - Ongoing participation in the province-wide initiative; panelist at the OSW R&D Forum in Halifax to share best practices in social acceptance and community education; developed directory of businesses and organizations across Unama'ki - Cape Breton connected to a future OSW supply chain to share with the Canadian German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (CGCIC); attended knowledge exchange in Halifax with the CGCIC and German delegates;
- **Offshore Wind Sessions** – Co-hosted offshore wind information sessions in partnership with Net Zero Atlantic held in Port Hawkesbury, St. Peter's and Arichat.

Project Updates – Creative Economy Development Officer:

- **Hollywood Executives Tour** – The Cape Breton Partnership's Creative Economy Development Officer, Bill Culp, worked with Screen Nova Scotia to coordinate a visit from Hollywood Executives to Cape Breton in October. This year's visit included a helicopter tour along the coastline of the Cabot Trail, golf at Cabot Links, and a hike around Egypt Falls. Familiarization tours such as this promote the island as an attractive location for film and television productions.
- **Cape Breton Reads** – The Creative Economy Development Officer is producing a new TV series, *Cape Breton Reads*, which airs on Telile TV and features authors from around the island. Episode One featured Richard Eagles Sr. author of *Terror in the Highlands*.
- **Other projects include**
 - NSCC Micro Credential Programs to develop local film workforce
 - "Doors Open" Annual Museum/Gallery Event Meeting Launch
 - "Perch Mosaics" Artisan Workshop
 - local cafe "Farmer's Pantry" featured on "Cape Breton Creates" TV show on Telile
 - Theatre Program for Youth

Project Updates – People and Labour Force Attraction:

- **Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership** - In Q3, the Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership (CBLIP) continued its collaborative work to foster welcoming and inclusive communities for newcomers. The CBLIP's annual partner update event was held in Eskasoni on November 8th, bringing together partners engaged in welcoming newcomers across the island. Visit the event webpage for full details and recording at: <https://welcometocapebreton.ca/new-beginnings/>. Several new members were welcomed to CBLIP working groups, Immigrant Advisory Table, and Council, including new representatives for YMCA NS Works, Immigration Francophone Nouvelle-Écosse (IFNÉ), and the Filipino Association of Cape Breton.
- **Cape Breton Job Board** - During Q3, there were four new job posts from Richmond County and fourteen for Port Hawkesbury. The Cape Breton Job Board currently has 27 organizations registered for Richmond County and 15 from Port Hawkesbury with, in total, approximately 7200 users.

Recent and Upcoming Events:

- **January 29th - Information Session for Businesses: GST/HST Holiday Tax Break** – the CB REN along with all other 6 Regional Enterprise Networks and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia hosted a GST/HST Holiday tax break webinar to help businesses prepare to remit GST/HST to the Canada Revenue Agency. **Details and the recording are available** under “Past Events” on our [Events Page](#).



- **April 29/30, 2025 – Annual Nova Scotia RENs Conference** – The Cumberland County Connector will be hosting the 2024/2025 Annual Conference at Fox Harb'r this year. Details will be coming soon both on the Cape Breton Partnership website and the NS RENs Website - <https://nsrens.ca/>

Additional Information:



CB REN Website: Additional Information on the CBREN can be found on the [CB REN Website](#).

News and Updates – Elevate Magazine, and articles from Pulse Newsletter, new podcasts, news releases and more can be found on our website here: <https://capebretonpartnership.com/cbp-news/>



Welcome to Cape Breton Website: Additional Information on Living, Working, community profiles and economic data - can be found on the Welcome to Cape Breton website: <https://welcometocapebreton.ca/invest/invest-in-cape-breton-unamaki/cape-breton-unamaki-community-profiles/>



TheStraitofCanso.ca Website: www.theStraitofcanso.ca website managed by the Cape Breton Partnership, content to be built in collaboration with the Cape Breton Partnership, the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce, InvestNS, ACOA, and the Guysborough District Business Partnership.



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Respectfully submitted by:

Rachelle Samson

Rachelle Samson (Feb 3, 2025 22:29 AST)

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CB REN / Cape Breton Partnership

Tyler Mattheis (Feb 3, 2025 21:54 AST)

Tyler Mattheis
President and CEO
CB REN / Cape Breton Partnership

Addendum(s):

- **CB REN Richmond County and Town of Port Hawkesbury Metrics (October 1 – December 31, 2024)**
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Addendum 1 - Richmond County/Port Hawkesbury – CBREN Metrics

(October 1 – December 31, 2024)

	Richmond/Town of PH Metrics (October 1 – December 31)			Year-To-Date
Activities	Total Started	Total In Progress (as of December 31)	Total Completed	YTD Total Completed
Business Support, Sustainability, & Growth	Total – 6	Total – 4	Total - 2	Total - 10
Business Planning	0	1	0	1
Business Productivity & Growth Services	2	2	1	1
Business Quick Support	0	0	2	7
Continuous Improvement & Business Advisory	1	1	0	2
Continuous Improvement & Business Advisory	1	1	0	2
Succession Planning	1	5	0	0
Micro-Lending	0	0	0	1
Creative Economy	4	2	2	7
Economic Development Projects & Strategic Sector Support	Total – 5	Total – 3	Total - 0	Total - 2
Economic Development Projects	4	4	0	2
Sector Analysis (Strengths & Weaknesses)	0	0	0	0
Addressing Talent Needs (Labour & Population)	Total – 4	Total – 2	Total - 3	Total - 6
Human Resources Advisory Services	0	0	0	0
Immigration Advisory	4	2	3	6
Business Immigration Consultancy	0	0	0	0
Retention Activities	Total – 0	Total – 0	Total - 0	Total - 2
New Connectors	-	-	-	0
New Connectees	-	4	1	1
Welcome Network - Newcomers Welcomed	-	-	1	1
Welcome Network - Welcomers/Volunteers	-	-	-	0

Note on Addendum 1: The data provided is sourced from our Insightly CRM software and, at times, CB REN metrics may not be complete due to data availability from all programs and projects at the time of report preparation. Year-to-date data will be adjusted accordingly in subsequent quarterly reports to ensure accuracy.









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Final Audit Report

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