

Information and Activity Report

*Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network – Victoria
County*

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

Subject: CBREN Information and Activity Report

To: Municipality of the County of Victoria

Date Prepared: February 10th, 2025

Prepared by: Parker Horton, Economic Development Officer, Victoria County

Background:

The Cape Breton Partnership provides economic development support to the Municipality of the County of Victoria 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 Victoria.

2024/25 CB REN Board

- **Co-Chair** - Jen Ryan, Quincy Street Market
- **Co-Chair** - Adam Bateman, Business Development Bank of Canada
- Geoff 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 Victoria County
- Leanne MacEachen, CAO, Municipality of Victoria County
- Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook First Nation
- Donald Hanson, CEO, 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, CEO Eskasoni Corporate, Eskasoni First Nation
- Evan Williams, Nova Scotia Department of Growth and Development

- Donald Ferguson, Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills & Immigration

Reporting Period:

Your CB REN team and the Cape Breton Partnership are pleased to share highlights, milestones achieved, and metrics from **October 1 – 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.
- **Municipal EV Charging Feasibility Study** - The EV Charging Feasibility Study has been successfully completed, with a full business plan and final report submitted. The study provides a comprehensive framework for the municipality's EV infrastructure planning, incorporating stakeholder feedback and actionable recommendations. We are currently awaiting feedback on the report and anticipate a funding decision early in the new year.
- **Liliannah Technologies Update** - Liliannah Technologies has made significant progress in establishing its base of operations in Iona, focusing on advancing decarbonization technology. Since World Ocean's Day, efforts have been underway to support this initiative, which recently gained positive attention during a presentation at the CEPI meeting. This project also provides direct support to Arnos na Mara as they work towards expanding into an estuary research center. The collaboration between Liliannah Technologies and Arnos na Mara aims to enhance environmental and research capabilities in the region.
- **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).
- **Unama'ki – Cape Breton Tourism Summit** – Your Victoria County EDO also attended the 2024 Tourism Summit on November 12 in Membertou. The day included industry updates on partnerships and investments shaping the future of tourism on the island.
- **Business and Entrepreneur Supports** – Your EDO and CB REN team members continue to provide one on one, individualized support for small and medium sized businesses and exploring entrepreneurs across Victoria County.

Creative Economy

- **Hollywood Executives Tour** – The Cape Breton Partnership's Creative Economy Development Officer, Bill Culp, collaborated 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. Familiarization tours like this highlight Cape Breton as a prime location for film and television productions.

- **Supporting Local Film Production** – The Cape Breton Partnership’s Creative Economy Officer assisted and connected the Bell Fibe TV series *Forest Guide* with their upcoming episode filming in Victoria County.
- **Film Project:** Assisted and connected the Bell Fibe TV series “Forest Guide” with their upcoming episode filming in Victoria County.
- **Events:**
 - **Cape Breton Creative Awards:** coordinated the first-annual “Cape Breton Creative Awards”, on November 4, 2024 at CBU, with future events being held around the island.
 - **Cape Breton Museum Weekender 2025:** Working with all municipalities on an event “Cape Breton Museum Weekender 2025” designed to promote attendance at local museums, to become an annual event.
 - **Celtic Colours:** Providing support to the annual Celtic Colours Festival, and have joined their team of Site Managers and Stage Managers for the upcoming 2024 season
- **Unama’ki – Cape Breton Culture Team:** Held regular quarterly meeting of the Unama’ki – Cape Breton Culture Team including the Cape Breton Centre for Craft & Design, Celtic Colours, Cape Breton Music Industry Cooperative, the Miner’s Museum, and La Société Saint-Pierre.
- **Unama’ki Motion Picture Cooperative** Providing support to the Unama’ki Motion Picture Cooperative, an Indigenous-lead organization focused on establishing the motion picture / TV industry on the island. Their main projects involve community outreach and workforce development in conjunction with NSCC for their existing programs, and developing new programs with Unama’ki College.
- **Theatre Baddeck:** Providing support to Theatre Baddeck as they prepare to transition into a new performance centre for the 2025 season.

Project Updates – Green Energy Engagement Program:

- **Offshore Wind Community Information Sessions** – A series of information sessions, hosted in partnership with Net Zero Atlantic, took place across the island in November. Unfortunately, the session scheduled for Ingonish was cancelled due to weather. Information gathered at these sessions is being compiled by the Green Energy Engagement Coordinator, Jennifer MacNeil, and will be shared with decision makers in a second *What We Heard* document. Green Energy Engagement Program details are available on our website here: <https://capebretonpartnership.com/geep>
- **Offshore Wind Research & Development** - The Green Energy Engagement Coordinator was a panelist at a recent Research & Development Forum in Halifax, sharing best practices in social acceptance and community education. The Engagement Coordinator has also developed a directory of businesses and organizations across Unama'ki - Cape Breton that could be connected to a future Offshore Wind supply chain.
- **Electricity Sector Climate Change Adaptation Implementation Team** – The Green Energy Engagement Coordinator continues to participate on this province-wide initiative.

People and Labour Market Team:

- **Supporting Newcomers, Employers & Community** – The Cape Breton Welcome Network and Cape Breton Connector Program have been actively building strong relationships throughout Victoria County. Most recently, they hosted Coffee and Connect pop-up sessions at Being There Café, providing a

welcoming space for community members to gather, share experiences, and learn about available programs and services. These casual meetups help foster connections between newcomers and longtime residents while promoting valuable resources to support community integration.

- **Welcoming Communities** - 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 took place in Eskasoni on November 8, bringing together partners engaged in welcoming newcomers across the island.

Upcoming Events:

- **Information Session for Businesses: GST/HST Holiday Tax Break** – Nova Scotia's Regional Enterprise Networks and the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia are hosting a webinar on January 29 to share details on what businesses should know about the GST/HST tax break and what to do next as businesses prepare to remit GST/HST to the Canada Revenue Agency.
Register today at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UO0gc0w6Shq6LkA8vJPQjA

Additional Information:



CB REN Website: Additional Information on the CB REN can be found on the CB REN webpage: <https://capebretonpartnership.com/initiative/cape-breton-regional-enterprise-network/>



Welcome to Cape Breton Website: Additional Information on Living, Working, Investing, Studying and Moving to Victoria County - including 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/>



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/>

Want news in your inbox? Subscribe to Pulse! <https://capebretonpartnership.us14.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5a27bb58874a3faa869009652&id=aaae9f5ca0>

Respectfully submitted by:

Parker Horton
Economic Development Officer - Victoria County
Cape Breton Partnership


Tyler Mattheis
President and CEO
Cape Breton Partnership

Addendum(s):

- **CB REN Victoria County Metrics (October 1 – December 31, 2024)**

---end report---

Addendum I – CB REN Victoria County Metrics (Oct – Dec, 2024)

Victoria County Metrics Oct – Dec 2024			
Activities	Total Started (as of Oct 24)	Total In Progress (as of Dec 24)	Total Completed
Business Support, Sustainability, & Growth	Total - 8	Total - 47	Total- 8
Continuous Improvement & Business Advisory	3	19	2
Business Planning & Startup/Entrepreneurship	2	22	2
Succession Planning	0	4	1
Creative Economy	3	2	3
Economic Development Projects & Strategic Sector Support	Total - 0	Total - 6	Total - 2
Sector Analysis (Strength & Weaknesses)	0	0	0
Other Economic Development Projects	0	4	2
Addressing Talent Needs (Labour & Population)	Total - 42	Total - 48	Total - 27
Human Resources Advisory Services	0	0	0
Business Immigration Consultancy	38	36	5
Immigration Advisory Services	4	12	22
Retention Activities	Total - 6	Total -0	Total - 7
New Connectors	4	0	6
Welcome Network	2	0	1

Metrics Overview

- Your Economic Development Officer, and CB REN team members continue to provide business support and advisory services to entrepreneurs, business clients, and individuals throughout Victoria County, with 83 client files and economic development projects currently open and in progress.

Notes on Addendum 1:

- The data provided is sourced from our Insightly CRM software, representing each business advisory with a file. However, our actual engagement is broader, encompassing various supports like brief consultations and connections not always recorded in routine work.
- At times, CB REN Victory County Metrics may be less complete than normal due to the schedule of data availability not matching the schedule of council meeting calendars, and CB REN Staff's ability to input data prior to quarterly report production. If this is the case, year to date data in following quarterly reports will be adjusted to ensure accuracy.