



Canadian Trade Successes 01-06

PUTTING SUMMERSIDE ON THE MAP

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Key Quotation: Mike Thususka said the Community Investment Support Program (CISP) not only helped the city create the web tool, but also helped it focus its marketing efforts. "I think CISP allows you to perfect your investment readiness. It helped us narrow in on what we should be doing. Without CISP, we wouldn't have thought about the marketing tools we might develop, and certainly wouldn't have had the financial resources."	
Story details: Thanks to an innovative online marketing approach, business people from any country can now roam the streets of Summerside, Prince Edward Island, without leaving their desk. Summerside has created a website that includes a mapping tool that lets people browse the city on their computer screen, as if combing over a map. The mapping tool has helped the city land a major hotel investment from a Chinese businessman. Recently, a local real estate agency used the mapping tool to show the location of the hotel to the investor, who decided he liked it as a place to attract tourists from the Asian market. He purchased the property and has made a commitment to spend \$7.5 million turning it into a resort. Once it is open, by late 2006 or early 2007, the hotel is expected to create 100 full-time jobs. The city was able to develop the mapping tool, and the website itself, largely because of financial support from the federal government. In 2002, Summerside received \$10,000 from the Community Investment Support Program	

(CISP), a program run by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) to help municipalities attract foreign direct investment.

Typically, the CISP offers a contribution of 50 percent of a project's value. The rest of the funds must come from the private sector and local communities.

After the mapping tool was completed, local realtors began to use the service to better market investment opportunities in Summerside. The tool enables them to visually display for clients the investment location, demographics, adjacent land uses, and other site selection variables.

"The mapping tool is a key component of our effort to promote Summerside to foreign investors," said Mike Thususka, the city's Director of Economic Development. "It's a user-friendly system that lets people get a graphical sense of the community."

The mapping tool has many unique features. It allows people to call up different types of information—like zoning information, amenities and services, and the basic system of roads and buildings—in order to learn about the geography and layout of the city. You can search for a specific location by municipal address, by a point of interest (park, recreational facility, school, fire, police stations, etc.), or simply by street intersections.

The website also includes a profile of the community, information on real estate and the economy, and a business directory.

The Chinese investor wants to turn the hotel into a high-end resort and training centre. The hotel is right on the water, with a beach directly in front of it and a golf course nearby. A boardwalk will also be completed from the hotel to the city's yacht club and then to downtown, a 10-minute walk away.

To impart an Asian flair, the investor is importing furniture and marble from China.

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