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## TOWARD PROSPERITY

Developing an Economic Growth Strategy for Nova Scotia

### CULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Consultation with Department of Economic Development  
Hosted by Nova Scotia Cultural Network  
Neptune Theatre Boardroom  
Halifax, NS

#### A. SUMMARY

##### SECTOR RECOGNITION

- \* Economic development strategy should identify province's most promising economic sectors and offer specific goals and objectives for each.
- \* Economic development strategy should recognize NS culture sector as major player in the provincial economy with excellent growth potential.
- \* Economic development strategy should outline specific goals for building NS culture sector in general and NS cultural industries (including new media) in particular.
- \* Department of Economic Development should collect cultural statistics in order to understand sector's economic impact and develop appropriate policies and programs.
- \* Culture sector should have strong formal contact with and representation within government.
- \* Need people in government who understand culture sector in general and economic/industrial side of sector in particular.
- \* Need wider understanding of the relation between NS cultural industries and other aspects of culture sector; there is a great deal of interdependence among arts, design, heritage, and cultural industries.

##### SECTOR REPRESENTATION

- \* Sector unity has to be developed; need a strong and unified voice for NS culture; sector must work together and support one another.
- \* Government will be more responsive if it hears a clear message from a united voice.
- \* NS leading other provinces in development of collective culture sector voice which brings together arts and business.

- \* Provincial government should work in partnership with sector to promote development of NS culture and cultural industries.

- \* Concept of sector councils (industry associations) strong at federal level; feds support and work with councils to develop economic policies and strategies.

- \* Sector council concept under consideration by new Department of Economic Development because neither sector nor government have resources to go it alone.

#### SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

- \* NS arts and culture service organizations must be well supported by government because they play a critical role in cultural development.

- \* Government gets an excellent return on its small investment in non-profit service organizations.

- \* Crucial that service organizations receive enough money to hire first-rate people.

#### RELATION TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS

- \* NS has to remain competitive with other jurisdictions in its support for arts, culture, and new media.

- \* NS can't fall too far behind other provinces in the area of tax credits and direct support without damaging the industry.

#### PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- \* Difficult for those working in culture sector to access government programs; programs and documents not well adapted for culture sector businesses.

- \* Cultural industries have large economic impact but are dependent on the creativity of an active arts community. Provincial government has to support all aspects of culture in order to develop strong and viable cultural industries.

- \* Provincial government lacks strategic approach to culture in general and cultural industries in particular. film and television production well supported, but other cultural industries (music, publishing) are not. Government should look at integrated programs in other jurisdictions (SODEC in Quebec, new Cultural Industries Fund in Alberta, etc.).

- \* Given the realities of financing, film and television production cannot survive in NS without government incentives.

- \* NS cultural industries need better access to outside investment and venture capital.

- \* Cultural tourism becoming increasingly important to provincial economy. Provincial government should look at TIANS cultural tourism strategy and integrate it into the economic development strategy.

- \* Festivals and events are an economic driver, a major tourist draw, and a important aspect of community development. Volunteer management no longer sufficient. Have to develop qualified professional management to make festivals a sustainable enterprise. Regional Development Authorities should be helping local festivals and events to improve their management expertise.

- \* Creators must be able to work or study with the best people in their field, regardless of where they live. Provincial funding should not prevent artists from travelling outside the province or the country to develop their professional skills.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

- \* All levels of government should work together in a coordinated manner to support and promote development of NS cultural industry, products, and exports.
- \* NS government should make it a priority to maximize provincial access to federal government programs and funding.
- \* Need for clearer delineation of roles and more cooperation within and between governments.

## EDUCATION

- \* Current emphasis on job training is counterproductive. Job training important, but broader education fundamental. Training is a short-term solution; education is a long-term investment.
- \* Should support development of creative thinkers, not just technocrats. Must invest in imagination. If we just invest in training, there will be lots of camera operators but no ideas for films.
- \* Have to include arts and culture when developing public school curriculum,.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- \* Infrastructure is key to cultural development. Very little infrastructure in communities.
- \* Severe lack of infrastructure in Halifax. Per capita performing arts seating in Halifax much lower than cities of comparable size.
- \* Need new capacity for new media productions. Need a venue that can provide for many different performance and new media forms.
- \* New community centres should include space for culture.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

- \* Human resources are fundamental for sector development.
- \* Cultural industries and businesses are built on creative work of individual artists, and these primary creators are neither adequately paid nor adequately supported.
- \* Have to adequately support NS creators and producers if we want more and better cultural products.
- \* Lack of human resource dollars for creation is a critical, recurring issue.

## CULTURE AND BUSINESS

- \* Culture is a business. Need to develop same things as other businesses: human resources, infrastructure, marketing, exports, etc.
- \* Cultural organizations need translators; they have to collect statistics and speak the language of business.
- \* Cultural business activity contributes to training and job creation, and these are not accounted for. Need to develop mechanisms to measure this kind of value.

## B. KEY POINTS

The Nova Scotia provincial government and the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development should:

- \* recognize the significant economic role of the NS culture sector and support it accordingly.
- \* recognize that individual creativity is the foundation of economic development in the culture sector.
- \* include goals and objectives specific to the NS culture sector in the provincial economic development strategy.
- \* substantially expand its collection of NS cultural statistics.
- \* ensure that government has adequate capacity and expertise to deal appropriately with the NS culture sector.
- \* strongly support the development of a single representative voice for the NS culture sector.
- \* work in partnership with the sector to promote development of NS culture and cultural industries.
- \* ensure adequate support for culture sector service organizations which provide essential developmental services and expertise at very low cost to government.
- \* work with the NS culture sector to improve its business capabilities.
- \* ensure that economic development programs are well suited to culture sector businesses.
- \* investigate other provincial models for broad and integrated culture sector and cultural industries development.
- \* work with other levels of government towards an integrated approach to cultural development while maximizing access to federal resources.
- \* investigate the costs and benefits of improved cultural infrastructure in NS communities.
- \* recognize that general education is just as important as job training for economic development.