

Pre-Budget Consultation Submission 2015
Town of Grand Falls-Windsor

On behalf of the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor, I thank you for the opportunity to participate in the 2015/16 Pre-Budget Consultations. It is our hope that you give these recommendations serious consideration in the next provincial budget. We feel very strongly that addressing these issues will ensure the long-term sustainability of Grand Falls-Windsor and the central region allowing us to continue our contributions to make Newfoundland and Labrador the best province in Canada. We have identified a number of issues for your considerations as follows:

Utilization of Fiber Resources

We request that the province continue to explore possibilities for use of fiber so that this valuable resource can be utilized for betterment of the Central Region.

Fiscal Framework

In 2013, the province eliminated the Municipal Operation Grant for the 7 largest municipalities in the province. This was replaced with additional capital funding in 2013 which was greatly appreciated. In moving forward, we must deal with this loss of

revenue on an annual basis as well as continue to pay provincial payroll tax and provincial component of H.S.T. Our analysis calculates the cost to the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor is approximately \$1.4 million dollars annually. We ask that the province consider exempting Municipal government from taxation imposed by the province. Currently Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador is negotiating with the province for a new fiscal arrangement. We ask that you give priority to this so that we can continue the long-term planning that is critical to our long-term sustainability.

Business of Healthcare

The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor has identified the knowledge economy as a core driver for sustainable economic growth. More specifically, the identified sectors of healthcare, life sciences, and information technology and how they converge are a critical part of the strategic direction in the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor economic plan.

Goals for this are as follows:

Goal 1

1. In partnership with local, national and international stakeholders develop the knowledge innovation economy in Grand Falls-Windsor with a specific focus on healthcare, life sciences and information technology.

Goal 2

2. Through established partnerships develop investment/partnership opportunities in e-health, healthcare and life science sectors in Grand Falls-Windsor

- a. Develop commercial/noncommercial opportunities in healthcare by actively facilitating and supporting partnerships with:
 - i. Central Health
 - ii. College of the North Atlantic
 - iii. Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University
 - iv. Faculty of Nursing, Memorial University
 - v. Physician Community
 - vi. Community Based Groups
 - vii. Grand Falls-Windsor Age Friendly Steering Committee
 - viii. Private Sector

- b. Expand partnership opportunities focused on e-health to create employment with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information, ACOA, private sector and College of the North Atlantic.

- c. Support the development of the life science-biotechnology sector focused on value adding local resources.

Goal 3

3. In partnership with the College of the North Atlantic, Central Health, Memorial University and other stakeholders increase educational programming in Grand Falls-Windsor focused on healthcare/ life sciences

- a. Continue to advance the Satellite Campus of the School of Nursing project with stakeholders.
- b. Work actively with partners to assist the College of the North Atlantic in implementing infrastructure to offer new healthcare programming.
- c. Continue to develop opportunities with the Age Friending Steering Committee, Faculty of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine, College of the North Atlantic and Central Health to develop expertise in geriatric care.

We request the government of Newfoundland and Labrador to consider Grand Falls-Windsor as a key delivery center for electronic health information to support the National Electronic Health Records (E.H.R).

We also request that the provincial government actively take a lead role in constructing additional laboratory space at the College of the North Atlantic campus in Grand Falls-Windsor to offer new healthcare programs critical to supporting our long-term provincial health needs. We also request funding to be provided to advance a Satellite Campus of the School of Nursing for Grand Falls-Windsor.

Data Centre

Grand Falls-Windsor has been identified as a top rated North American data centre site by independent studies. We encourage the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to actively consider Grand Falls-Windsor as the site to set up a disaster recovery data centre for provincial government information storage and access. We look forward to government's continued support in establishing Grand Falls-Windsor as a data centre location for national and international companies.

Policing

In reviewing the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Annual Report, we have determined the level of policing in Corner Brook and Labrador West to be much greater than presently in Grand Falls-Windsor. Corner Brook has 45 people serving a population of 20,260 and Labrador West has 21 officers serving a population of 10,361.

In Grand Falls-Windsor, we have 24 officers serving a population of 25,000 people spread out to cover a large geographical area (Buchans to Leading Tickles). On a capita basis this amounts to one (1) officer per 1042 people compared to one (1) per 500 people in Corner Brook and Labrador West. This is totally unacceptable and attention to this matter is crucial. We should be receiving the same level of service as other centers in Newfoundland and Labrador.