

**Government Renewal Initiative
Gander
February 4, 2016**

Q1. Thinking of all of the thing government spends your money on to provide residents of the province with services, what are the three things that could be stopped in order to save money?
Hospital housing for physicians/locums
A lot of money is spent maintaining houses and rental units for physicians and locums. Question was raised "Is this necessary?" Can reducing or getting rid of these units realize savings?
Research the root causes of illness
Government needs to address a solution to the root problem of acute and chronic illness this would reduce the amount of health service required per capita
How much money is being spent on front line personnel vs replacement relief workers? [Look at costs of relief workers]
How necessary are two [health] facilities in the central region?
Argument made that travel to outside facilities may increase the risk to health [important to treat patients within province]
Fee per service structure vs salary for doctors
Possibility of a fee for all Newfoundlanders to go toward health care
Would like to see more information on what money is being spent on. What was the rationale behind some of the spending decisions? [Provide more information about spending]
Stop sending tires to Quebec for re-cycled tires; instead recycle/utilize tires in NL
We need to revisit re-settlement of small communities – services are very expensive for these smaller communities; ferry services, etc.
Even rural communities should be considered to receive reduced services due to cost; in some cases elsewhere PEI, have communities that are shut down in wintertime
Use technology for medical services; this would reduce transportation. Telehealth can be used more so – but it requires training and support to make it work/i.e. people use it.
Government departments should be used for most cases to connect decision makers; administrative work etc.
In health care; health care authorities should be mitigated to Department of Health – similar to education. Combining the healthcare authorities has not shown to reduce cost
Reduction of middle managers – through combining amalgamation the authorities
Having one authority doesn't mean it [has to be] in St. John's – it can be dispersed across the province e.g. – health in western NL, education In St. John's and something else in central
Regional offices creates higher amount of transportation and reduces each work day rather than having managers on site – e.g. in health
Stop paying overtime; better scheduling and allotment of staffing so overtime is reduced
Stop offering as many services in as many places; smaller communities cannot have all the services larger centers receive
Reduction of ambulance usage – often patients need only a taxi
Government [should] stop paying rent in places and utilize infrastructure that they own to house departments / offices
Complete management assessment of the size of government. What different employees do. Audit
Review and reduction in departments and agencies and possibly combine with other departments
Discontinue the 1000 per child subsidy to encourage people to have kids
Reduce Duplication of services /e.g. crown lands in gander has to go to St John's for some items and decisions

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Not enough communication and collaboration between all levels of government. We look at everything in silos – look at a more inclusive model where core skills and services are shared. Better to look at them collectively among different departments/look into how to adapt in smaller communities to resolve issues. Collective services closer to home for home care etc., deliver services that draw on everyone and provides in a collective format. Keep people at home longer
Home care. People in hospitals waiting to get into home care. Can we save money by increasing home care sites or home care in home workers
Snow clearing using municipal and provincial service together more effectively
Review done on managers/i.e. minimum number of staff requirements
Fiscal restraint of travel for staff. Can't access departmental expertise
More regionalization – every municipality has to get audits done. If in a region reduce this need. Same for water testing. Review models. Depends on region
Crown lands – every piece of land it should be taxed and should be worth the same. Then municipalities can do add ons
Own engineering departments – Should use it - why go to tender? Ex., Town of Gander
Double dipping
Tendering - Provincial Government lean towards certain vendors exclusively. Specific jobs to lean towards a certain company. Polymer as an example: one supplier only. Careful how to specifications have to go to this supplier.
support of local economy should trump lowest tender
Should have office/presence here if getting awarded contract
New standing offer Federal Government [and] province piggy backing off federal tenders won't need Government Purchasing Agency. Cost Government a fortune going out for Request for Proposals.
Timing of approvals: project going through so many levels for review before approval
Gouging off the tendering
More public work to private industries. Healthcare a major issue. Especially on operational side
Take a sample of certain areas that are now public but might work better as a private operation
30 per cent cuts should start at Confederation Building
More studies may be needed to see if savings can be found
Government should never enter into trying to be a business
Gas tax given to town. Municipal leaders should have proper background, business, etc., to spend this money
Little emphasis on generating revenue, all about cuts
A lot of out of province consulting, expensive. Review use of consultants in general
Use non-profit sector to deliver programs, not for profit public private partnerships
Focus on preventive healthcare and early treatment. This will greatly reduce/end costs for health care
Reorganize regional health care structures. Very inefficient currently. Keep seniors in better care before they get sick
Increase use of nurse practitioners
Reduce duplication of services within a region
Reduce communications management and other non-essential management
Regionalization of many local services
Merit based hiring and promotion
Invest in infrastructure to prevent end of life maintenance getting excessive

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A lot of efficiencies come from modern technology in infrastructure, less energy
Review programs to test for the value, example tidy towns, really worth it?
Minimize higher level management
Stop building new school on Raynham – bad location, bad design, will cost money in the future
All day kindergarten
Productivity, think outside the box, stop waste
Sick leave should not be pensionable service to help cut down and abusive of sick leave
Stop encouraging people to live in communities that are not financially viable
Stop giving municipal money if they won't amalgamate stop raises for government employees and stop paying their portion of pension
Stop the present process of waste management
Medical transportation in separate taxis
Stop supporting smaller hospital; pan provincial comparison
Stop supporting separate administrative departments for all health boards or only have one health board like we did with the school boards
Stop the present assessment process of the funding program for people with disabilities to go to post-secondary and make it needs based like student aid
Look at higher level administrative and executive positions

Q2. Given the financial challenges facing our province, what three things do you think government could do to raise money (increase revenue)?
Foster entrepreneurial endeavors
Attract business from other provinces and foster local business
Small investments to secure long term gain. Provide education to help in the understanding of how these systems/processes work
Find ways to bring people home, and keep the children we have
Tourism: Make it more lucrative. Leap frog the vision 2020
More money into entrepreneurial endeavors
Taxes/HST: Reinstate the 2% HST
Gas tax increase, user pay services
Tax increase has to be coupled with decrease spending. Not going to pay more so that the government can continue with wasteful spending
Sugar tax/tax on unhealthy food, subsidize healthy food. Increased revenues for healthcare and reduce the demand for it
Commercialize government services. Government services need to be operated using commercial practices. Ex. Government departments operated as non-profit
Look at how government departments were being operated pre-regionalization, pre-gas and oil days (2004). Can we analyze spending then vs now? Were changes made since then truly beneficial and cost saving?
Are there government infrastructures that can be sold to make money, reduce maintenance costs?
Increase levy on tires

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Increase agriculture activity across the province; increase this industry so all revenue/ profit can stay within the province in addition to the spin –off employment
Expand professional medical associations that charge fees and some of the revenue could be given to government.
Increase the HST back to 15%
Luxury tax on junk food; use the revenue to subsidize the healthy food alternatives and educate people on how best to use/cook healthy food.
Diversification on other economic industries – strategic investment e.g. gov't is doing it now in tourism and in the arts – keep it up
Trinity should be used as a model for tourism; other regions of the province should do likewise.
Increase user fees – quad, ATV, snowmobile – register them – a nominal fee; provincial parks and other services.
Lease our seasonal equipment e.g. water bombers elsewhere – to other countries
Private – public partnerships need to be considered – snow clearing or long term care
Increase user fees in emergency rooms for services that aren't really emergencies
Tying the EI benefits to volunteer work in the community – help seniors etc.
Build niche markets that can go to market competitively
Build a fixed link for Labrador and charge a fee – may be built by an external contractor
Government must consider reducing the public sector but there should be some form of evaluation
Consider more contractual work for government services
Crown lands review and land taxed equally
Options for municipalities to purchasing crown land as opposed to paying up front
Increase HST/if going to do it now is the time
personal income tax and Corp tax should be reviewed to better balance that
Selling provincial parks that had been previously identified. Get them off the books and get private operators involved
More private and public partnerships that promote growth in an area
Collecting tax on lottery winnings.
Registration fee for ATV and snowmobiles / starting with new purchases from this point forward. Put back into trail system.
Zero interest rate loans to encourage more business investment.
Look at AirBnB model/options for rural areas to address seasonal challenges to house visitors.
Identify and tax unlicensed accommodations
Increase tourism activity through NL
Don't need rigid standards to provide some of the tourism products that is typically the case. Find new way or less rigid ways.
Royalty review on natural resources.
Revisit the fishery policy and determine how best to move forward. New regulations to get best fish per lb. And young people into the fishery
Unincorporated communities not paying tax. 50000 people in this province not paying property tax.
Encourage immigration – increase our tax base. Pace the immigration. Could lower average in province
Develop skills of our own people first before bringing in those with same or less skills.
Immigrant doctors may stay and go to hard to fill areas

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Higher taxes on non- essential items. Example, cigarettes
Local employers have cheaper labour. Maybe Muskrat Falls should hire these cheaper labour employers. Using expensive labour from other provinces too
Implement rules locally to support local farmers instead of importing/eating product from Mexico, etc. Explore using local more
New vehicle tax – pay up-front for 3 years – pay \$500 as an example - 3 year plate. Inspection should be done
Less red tape for businesses
Sell more Crown land and reduce red tape so easier to sell the land. Low Crown Land lease fees – maybe rise a bit. Long term lease titles – similar to what is happening between GIAA and Castle. Maybe rental of land instead of leasing
County system – every place is taxed the same
Cut – too much management and Motor Vehicle Registration should just go. Maybe privatize some of the jobs
Ferry subsidies – Local ferries – maybe increase rates for visitors. They can afford it more than local residents. More validation of people – coming and going
Reduce corporate fiscal support, increase taxes, reduce grants handouts, and tax breaks. Only 5.8% corporate tax in NL vs 16% in NS. Raising taxes to match nova scotia would triple corporate tax income. No more grants to businesses. No more equity investment. If they are good businesses they should not need government money
Crown Corporations generate a lot of revenue
Increase personal income tax as well
Increase luxury taxes e.g. tobacco and alcohol maybe junk food maybe reinvest in subsidy for healthy food
Promote smaller areas for tourism, take advantage of the coastal culture instead of resettling everyone. Take advantage of the low Canadian dollar. Promote of the actual NL experience, takes time to see the province
Promote new sources of development, diversification. Growing medical marijuana for example, industry plus tax revenue. Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation for marijuana
Reinstate HST rate increase, 2%
Focus on manufacturing, take advantage of geography. High value products and technology
Not oil boom, make a rainy day fund. Keep spending in check. Long-term investments
Raise the HST, put it back to 15%
Keep Muskrat Falls going and ensure it is managed efficiently (new revenue, cheap power)
Frozen salaries
Increase money spent on tourism signs to make sure government signage looks good – make sure signage regulations are tourism friendly
Educate the public more about the financial responsibilities and fiscal prudence
Toll the highway
Increase ferry fees
Marketing and selling our own fish, manufacture our own products
Charge a fee for recreational fishing – tags maybe
Charge for MCP cards
Charge for library cards

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Some would rather see increase in provincial income tax than add all the fees for service that will increase admin and processing costs
Shut down Churchill falls and say we can't afford to run it, renegotiate a new contract to get a better share
Ask Atlantic provinces to share and invest in Muskrat Falls

Q3. How can government be more innovative or efficient to provide quality services at lower costs?
Commercialize government services. Government services need to be operated using commercial practices. Ex. Government departments operated as non-profit
Look at how government departments were being operated pre-gas and oil days (2004). Can we analyze spending then vs now? Were changes made since then truly beneficial and cost saving?
Are there government infrastructures that can be sold to make money, reduce maintenance costs?
Allow electricity to be sold back to the grid. This would allow the development of alternative energy business and infrastructure
Educate and create a new culture, one of self-sustenance and proactive business
Believe in ourselves, sustainability
Develop a vision going forward 20 years
Bring back the railway; reduce road costs and have more efficient transportation system – take the big trucks off the road, good for safety. Save infrastructure money – increase tourism
Look at technology and software to offer government services; e.g., telemedicine. Make sure software is the most appropriate/newest version – keep current
Increase private – public partnerships to offer services
Public sector needs an incentive/ bonus system to motivate employees to do more/ better
Advocate to the Federal Government a revamping the EI system to fill the gap that volunteers provide. As volunteers are getting older, there's fewer people volunteering – this would fill the gap
What does volunteering mean? We need to be more strategic/ more specific on what is required for the volunteer task
Have annual fees collected on a longer period, say every two or five years
Invest in the physical and mental health of its residents; e.g. Have a running track. Needs to invest in cross running association.
Government needs to evaluate all programs and if it's not working, then why and are they worth being salvageable – if it's not working, modify to fix – see if it's not working
Have one for all government services e.g. for licenses, MCP, identification cards
Government should not take a slash and burn approach, but be strategic
Reward effectiveness – departments had to end at end of year or they lose it. Reward departments who are able to save money
Morale problem in civil service. People finding every reason not to go to work. How to improve morale?
Sick leave policy – carrying over sick days into following year [shouldn't be allowed]
Use more public private partnerships
Regionalization of municipal services
Shared provincial and municipal services. Is there a better way to partner (utilize joint infrastructure)?
Resettlement of small islands. Strongly encourage resettlement
Restructure community colleges and reduce as needed.

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Revamp income support program. Increase the thresholds people can make to encourage people to go to work
Contracting out
Too many MHA's
Some politicians getting full pensions too early
Providing more online services due to large land mass. Using webcams and online resources
Privatization of some services
Invest in new technology, wind technology
Cut off methadone program
Maybe we are being too generous with some of our health care with those who do not want to help themselves, costing us a lot
Too many layers of management and health care
Also wastage in Information Technology and media personnel – maybe contract out
Information Technology staff should be able to do more instead of having to go through so many to get something fixed
Some people on income assistance need to demonstrate more proof that they are not able bodied. Work on adding skills to the unskilled. Get something in return [provide incentives]
Better utilize the way they pay out social services. Give him/her more incentive/meaning to obtain some work and still receive benefits
Reduce to one school district. Much more efficient. Do we need board structures at all? Make education a traditional line department
Examine leasing space – Newfoundland and Labrador English School District is leasing space from Atlantic Place, downtown St. John's. Use vacant government building, move away from high cost commercial and retail space
Cutting jobs will not create efficiency. Reallocate not reduce. Look for new revenue instead
Efficient regional structure. Technological tools to reduce travel, allow onsite decision making, accountable person at each site
Work with non-profits to increase efficiency and take advantage on their ability to innovate
Focus on population health, early screening, self-management. Preventative health care. Keep people out of hospital. Promote active lifestyle
Maintain high end skill sets, support talented staff. Focus on Human Resources to fix problems no replacing infrastructure. Hire the right people
Take advantage of economies of scale for supplies and services. Get bargains. Reduce administrative redundancy
Collaborate Government services more for front end service; co-locate departments
Government buildings empty at night, is there a way to do some work at night
Use assets on off time rather than only 40 hours a week. There are people in NL leaving the province and going away for private MRIs etc. Someone would pay for health services that there are long wait lists for
The two tier health care system talked about a lot and there was disagreement
There's a guy doing blood tests now privately and it's great
Ways to use colleges and schools in the summer to get revenue – rent to private groups or summer/tourism businesses
Do we need all the public colleges we presently have
Amalgamate school libraries, college libraries, public libraries

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Find a way to make the colleges more 'community' buildings and centres
Government needs to have more due diligence and ensure they aren't wasting money on bad contracts – we spend too much on royal commissions and enquiries trying to figure out while we shagged up
More evidence based decisions
Review local service district process – force amalgamation or regional government for municipal services

Q 4. Is there anything else that you would like to suggest/add to the discussion?
Renewal resources/fishery needs to be revisited in a sustainable manner to provide new employment
Agriculture policy needs to be revisited to encourage new development
Too many legs (departments). One department does not know what the other is doing. More collaboration between departments
Mediators put in place to resolve conflict with councils, etc. Maybe more training required for Councilors and Managers. Financial training, etc. Engineering/planning expertise, project management skills, also so many specs. – should have one spec to govern for all
Last time were in fiscal trouble, support for physical activity and sports programs cut. Very large impact on health and a much larger cost now
Can you really cut services to children any further?
How much is this consultation process costing? Don't procrastinate we are ready for you to bite the bullet
Keep attrition only, no reduction in staff
Unions need to be brought in; they need to feel part of the process
Larger salary reviewed – CEO, Deputy Ministers etc.