

## Q2 2024: Agency Update

### Strategic Initiatives

#### 1. Regional Economic Development Strategy & Tourism Master Plan

- Following Q1 stakeholders interviews and roundtables, visioning workshops were held in April to help inform the strategic framework of the final plans.
- The Tourism Master Plan strategic framework was developed and vetted by the steering committee. A draft action plan is in development.
- The Economic Development strategic framework will be presented to the steering committee in July.
- Final strategies and action plans will be delivered in Q3 2024.

#### 2. Multi-modal Transportation & Distribution Park

- Deloitte has completed Phase 1 of the feasibility study: Market Assessment & Opportunity Articulation. Phase 1 has been presented to the steering committee.
- Phase 2: Site & Infrastructure Assessment is underway.
- A [press release](#) announcing the federal (ACOA) and provincial (RDC) funding for the study was distributed on June 24.

#### 3. Regional Immigration Strategy

- O Strategies & Engage Matters were selected as consultants for the Regional Immigration Strategy and the process is kicking off in Q3 2024.

### Strategic Communications

#### 1. Stakeholder Updates

- Tourism Stakeholder Update was held in April 2024 with approximately 100 attendees engaged in the rollout of the Regional Destination Marketing & Sales program for 2024.
- 2023 Agency Year in Review: The Region's elected officials and media attended a review of the agency's work in 2024 presented by department team leads. This was a pilot for a broader public update in 2025.
- CEO Andrew Beckett spoke at the Saint John Chamber of Commerce luncheon on June 13 to provide an overview of Agency activities and growth opportunities in the Region.

## 2. Q2 Growth Stories

- [New Housing Development Breaks Ground in Hampton](#)
- [Indigenous-Owned Healing Sanctuary Continues to Grow & Offer Unique Experience](#)
- [From Business Park to Bustling Community: The Vistas Transform Technology Drive](#)
- [Couple Expands Food Market to Bring Ukrainian Cuisine to the Saint John Region](#)
- [Groundbreaking Research in the Saint John Region: Dr. Thomas Pulinilkunnil's Story](#)
- [Saint John Region Headquartered AI Security Company Continues to Expand](#)

## Administration

### 1. Staffing Updates

- In Q2, the following team member's joined the Agency:
  - Nick Cameron joined as a Project Manager and is managing several files for the agency including workforce, strategic initiatives, and internal process improvements.
  - Kalynn McCavour is the agency's Tourism Growth Coordinator, creating a stronger link to industry.
  - Walter Fuerniss joined the team as Investment Attraction & Data Coordinator to support the increased volume of investment attraction opportunities.
- Craig Wilkins, Director of Entrepreneurship & Business Growth and Daniel Rito, Director of Population Growth & Workforce Development participated in the University of Waterloo's Certificate in Economic Development (Year One). This course allows economic development professionals from across the country to connect and develop new tools and strategies for handling diverse tasks in economic development. The course continues throughout 2024 and into 2025.
- Staff had an opportunity to attend Cultural Competency Training delivered by the YMCA of Southwestern New Brunswick as well as an Inclusivity & Allyship Workshop delivered by Chroma NB.

### 2. 2025 Budget

- The 2025 Budget has been approved by the Board of Directors.

### **3. Truth & Reconciliation**

- Agency staff and any interested board members are completing “The Path” - an online cultural awareness training course.
- The agency continues to play an active role in planning for the first Powwow to be held in the Saint John Region on October 26-27, 2024.

### **4. Atlantic Immigration Program**

- The agency obtained the Atlantic Immigration Program Designation.

## **Tourism Promotion & Marketing**

### **1. Destination Campaign**

- 2024 campaign launched in market on April 2, 2024, this is one month earlier than previous years.
- Ran a highly successful guerilla marketing activation in the Toronto market with Matty’s Patty’s - providing a temporary offering of the “Bay-cation Fish Sandwich”, and a chance to win a trip to the Saint John Region for AREA 506 Festival.
  - Activation was in market from May 15 - June 14, through the Mattys Pattys Burger Club Instagram and TikTok channels.
  - Mid-point campaign results have been collected and showcase over 1 million TikTok impressions - top performing post for Matty’s Patty’s ever on that channel.
  - More than 400,000 Instagram impressions, ranked among their top performing reels of the year.
- Two TikTok influencers were selected and will be in market Q2 and Q3. Marie-Li Roy has a focus on the urban bay-cation and Ashley MacDonald will be sharing the rural bay-cation experience.

### **2. Tourism New Brunswick (TNB) - Co-Advertising Investment**

- A New England based influencer, JQ Louise was in market at the end of June.
- Campaign creative direction was approved and will go to market in the US for 10 weeks in Q3/Q4. The campaign has co-branded messaging between Tourism New Brunswick and Envision Saint John - using Bay-cation video assets, images of the Saint John Region and pushing to the destination website, [sjtownsbythebay.com](http://sjtownsbythebay.com).

### **3. Welcome Centres**

- Staff were hired and completed a 10-day in-person training program in advance of their May 17 start date.
- Mystery shops are scheduled for Q3.
- 2024 Welcome Ambassador Training Course was launched at the beginning of June.

### **4. The Eddy (Welcome Centre for Uptown Saint John)**

- Pre-design work has been completed, and schematic design has started.
- Envision Saint John has been actively participating in schematic design meetings.
- Schematic sign off took place mid-May, proceeding to design development.

### **5. Social Media Campaigns**

- Various event-based ads in market, as well as specific promotion on Farmers Markets.
- Work with local operators and enthusiasts on a series of niche blogs: Thrifting, Rock Climbing, Mountain Biking, Beachcombing, Fishing, and more.

### **6. Meetings & Conventions Sales**

- Saint John has won the bid to host TIANB 2024 Tourism Summit & Awards Gala, which will be held from November 12-14 at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Saint John.

### **7. Business Events Partnership**

- We have officially launched our joint website, [meetconnectexplorenb.ca/](https://meetconnectexplorenb.ca/) promoting hosting meetings and events in New Brunswick.

## **Sport & Major Events**

### **2029 Canada Games**

- A [press release](#) officially announcing that the Saint John Region and Moncton are partnering on a joint bid was distributed on May 8, 2024.
- Technical forms and estimates specific to venues were submitted in early June followed by a technical site visit.
- The bid committee is being formed.

## **Population Growth & Workforce Development**

### **1. Population Growth**

- Completed an update on the [New Resident Service Portal](#) - working with organizations to ensure up-to-date information.

- Results from the Q1 New Resident Portal marketing campaign were collected. The tool ranked as the number one webpage on [envisionsaintjohn.com](https://envisionsaintjohn.com) while advertising was in market - driving more than 8,000 people to the site.
- Worked closely with Local Immigration Partnership for the summer and fall influx of new residents and students.

## **2. Workforce Development**

- Launch of Port Saint John Workforce Partnership 2.0 committee.
- Providing project management support for two initiatives identified by the committee: Labour Dispatch Technology & Labour Forecasting
- Our Youth Talent campaign was in market for May and June, focusing on two streams - attraction and retention. Attraction messaging reached youth aged 16-30 in New Brunswick and Halifax, and retention messaging focused on youth within the Saint John Region. A Relocation campaign also started in Ontario in June, targeting the working population. To view a full-length campaign videos, click the links below:
  - [Youth Attraction](#)
  - [Youth Retention](#)
  - [Relocation](#)
- Supported the Saint John Regional Job Developers Network (JDN) and the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership in hosting a newcomer job fair on May 16. A total of 34 employers and 12 community partners participated and connected with approximately 550 job seekers.
- Hosted the spring meeting for the Job Developers Network. More than 25 professionals from the workforce development ecosystem convened for knowledge sharing and meaningful discussion.
- Hosted tech sector employers in partnership with WorkingNB and TechImpact to discuss their challenges in attracting and retaining talent in the region.
- Sponsored the JEDI Indigenous Workforce Summit that took place at Port Saint John on June 6-7, 2024.
- Ongoing work with ONB on workforce development initiatives and investment attraction presentations.

## **Economic Intelligence, Investment Attraction & Real Estate Development**

### **1. Economic Intelligence**

- Formalized a relationship with the Atlantic Economic Council to secure a chief Economic Advisor for the agency.
- Initiated the work to prepare a state of the regional economy presentation planned for the fall of 2024.

- Piloting an initiative with a commercial shopping centre to enhance their work in attracting new brands and tenants to the region.
- Completed an analysis of Visitor Data for 2023.
- Provided up-to-date information for partner organizations, such as Uptown Saint John and Brunswick Brokers to support the market reports.

## **2. Investment Attraction**

- Worked with Opportunities New Brunswick (ONB), Invest Canada, and the City of Saint John to support various medium to large scale industrial investment attraction files.
- Public and private owned sites inventory to support industrial investment attraction.
- Worked with ONB and Saint John Industrial to scope out an industrial attraction and expansion platform.
- Prepared the scope for an industrial foreign direct investment program, which will build out the regional value proposition and industrial land supply strategy.

## **3. Real Estate Development**

- Actively supporting a project funnel of more than 70 projects, 7,200 units and \$1.7B in potential property tax base.
- External market sales with leads progressing toward potential project proposals.
- Partnered with municipalities to identify priority sites. Actively working to identify opportunities to encourage development.
- Site activation program is active - 64 sites being explored for potential future development.
- Completed an analysis of faith-based properties to identify excess land holdings with potential for future development.
- Worked with the City of Saint John and NB Housing on a number of private sector projects with the potential for inclusion of affordable housing.
- Supported our municipal partners on a range of strategic opportunities, including major developments, strategies for developing strategic sites, and developing municipal incentive programs.

## Entrepreneurship & Business Growth

### 1. Impact Loan

- Assisted nine businesses through the Impact Loan application process including business plan creation and cash flow projections.
- Three have been approved by the Impact Loan Committee in Q2 for funding to start or expand their business totaling \$150,000.

### 2. Entrepreneurship

- Supported multiple entrepreneurship programs through our partner ConnexionWorks including:
  - Business Immigrant Essentials Program: Designed to provide newcomers connections to local entrepreneurial expertise and business supports in the Saint John Region.
  - Knowledge, Process, Impact Program: Designed to assist youth entrepreneurs through their entrepreneurial journey.
  - Business Essentials Workshops: Workshops aimed at providing useful skills to small and mid-size businesses.
- Participated in Canada's Ocean Supercluster's 'Ambition 2035' conference at Port Saint John. Discussed various challenges and opportunities for future growth in Canada's ocean-based economy.
- Provided navigation and support to 71 potential entrepreneurs in the Saint John Region. This is an increase of 115% year-over-year.

### 3. Health Care Recruitment & Retention

- Sponsored and participated in hosting the Saint John Region Chamber's State of Healthcare event on April 17. The session brought together the healthcare sector together and the business community to discuss the importance of collaboration and future opportunities.
- Launched the new [Physician Recruitment video and website landing page](#), as a tool to attract medical professionals to the Saint John Region.
- Launched [two new 4-year renewable bursaries](#) (\$2,500/year) to support students on their family medicine educational journey with return to service agreements for the Saint John Region.