

Q3 2024: Agency Update

Strategic Initiatives

1. Regional Economic Development Strategy & Tourism Master Plan

- The Tourism Master Plan was finalized, and an Action Plan drafted internally.
- In July, the Economic Development Strategy Strategic Framework was presented to the steering committee. This feedback informed the draft Regional Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. The Regional Economic Development Strategy will be finalized following the final presentation to the steering committee in October.
- The team at Envision Saint John will be presenting the plans to stakeholders in Q4 2024.

2. Multi-modal Transportation & Distribution Park

- Phase 2: Site & Infrastructure Assessment was complete and presented to both the steering committee and funders (RDC and ACOA)
- Phase 3 & 4: Strategic Vision, Governance & Implementation, and Business Case were presented to both the steering committee and funders. A final business case summary will be delivered in early October.
- Additional engineering analysis is underway with a third-party.

3. Regional Immigration Strategy

- The Agency has started developing a Regional Immigration Strategy to attract and retain new residents. This exercise is designed to expand on the City of Saint John's efforts and elevate them to include all seven municipalities in the region. The strategy is expected to be delivered in January 2025.
- The initial engagement and research phase has been completed including a community survey with over 350 responses, interviews with municipal partners, and dialogue sessions with newcomers and ecosystem professionals.

4. Envision Saint John Strategic Plan

- An initial timeline for the development of an updated strategic plan for the Agency was developed with a targeted delivery date of June 2025.
- Engagement sessions with the team, board, and municipalities will begin in Q4 2024.

Strategic Communications

1. Q3 Growth Story

- [From global experiences to local impact: Acre Architects' bold vision and award-winning designs](#)

2. Media Relations

- [Public Input Sought for Regional Immigration Strategy](#)
 - [CHSJ News Coverage](#)

3. Integrated Health Initiative

- Supporting UNB with an updated content strategy and messaging to provide awareness of the Integrated Health Initiative.

Tourism Promotion, Sales & Marketing

1. Destination Campaign

- 2024 Spring/Summer campaign wrapped on September 15, 2024. The first two portions of the campaign, which represents 88%, generated +8.4M impressions in the Maritimes and +5.8M impressions in Ontario.
- Fall campaign launched the week of September 16, and will be in market until mid-December, targeting the Maritimes.

2. Tourism Activations and Social Media Campaigns

- In addition to our destination campaigns, we partnered on a number of smaller activations which have garnered results, including:
 - Hub City Foodies (Quest to find the best lobster roll and fried clams in New Brunswick)
 - Spinney's in Fundy-St. Martins finished first in the lobster roll list - with Grannan's also being featured in the Top 10. Spinney's and Billy's Seafood were included on the fried clams Top 10 list.
 - Beyond the coverage on the Hub City Foodies blog, the story was also featured on CTV's Live at 5.
 - Spinney's sent along a testimonial indicating that the feature in this activation led to an increase in business as well as the hiring of three additional staff.
- Various event-based ads in market.
- Launched "Backyard Bay-cation" content in early July.
 - A grass-roots initiative where we "popped-up" at regional events, asking locals trivia about the region, and rewarding those who answered correctly with local experiences, encouraging them to "bay-cation" in their own backyard. Pop-ups were held in each of the region's seven municipalities.
 - Running a second smaller scale version of the contest at the end of October 2024.

3. Welcome Centres

- Mystery shops results have been positive, with an average score of over 90%.

4. Meetings & Conventions Sales

- The Saint John Region won the bid to host the New Brunswick Real Estate Association AGM, in April 2025 and 2026. This is a 500-delegate meeting.

5. Business Events Partnership

- The ExploreNB team attended its first event as a provincial contingent - The Canadian Meeting & Events Expo. Feedback from hotel partners and clients was extremely positive.
- A provincial familiarization tour (FAM) was held at the end of September with potential clients visiting Saint John, Moncton, and Fredericton.

6. Travel Media

- We have hosted a number of media over the summer in collaboration with the province including Tim Johnson one of the most sought-after travel writers in Canada. [View his story here.](#)

7. Travel Trade

- We have hosted a number of FAM tours with the Province's North American and European market representatives, working to ensure the Saint John Region is part of Escorted Group Tour/Fully Independent Traveller (FIT) itineraries.

8. Delegate Welcome Program

- We have built a number of tools to support our Meetings & Conventions, and Sports sales programs on the Discover Saint John website, with the intention of putting more operator and local suppliers in front of conference/event planners and attendees, including:
 - Delegate Welcome Form: Streamlining requests for collateral (Visitor Guides, Maps, etc.)
 - Planning Resources: Providing links to local suppliers, Envision Saint John Media Hub, and the Delegate Welcome Form.
 - Delegate Welcome Badge: Card provided to attendees offering discounts at participating local operators. There are currently 40 operators participating for 2024 with plans to revisit in Q4 for 2025.

Sport & Major Events

1. 2029 Canada Games

- Several bid committee members have been identified from both regions.
- Work on the comprehensive bid is underway and due in January 2025.
- Technical bid was submitted and evaluated in June 2024.

2. 111th Canadian Women's Amateur Championship

- Riverside Golf & Country Club awarded the championship for 2025.

Population Growth & Workforce Development

1. Population Growth

- Launched the second phase of our New Resident Service Portal marketing campaign - with a targeted approach for the francophone community.
- Supported the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership's Welcome Week 2024 Initiative - attending all events and promoting our New Resident Service Portal, working to enhance our on-the-ground efforts for newcomer retention.
- Transition plans have been initiated to transfer the Local Immigration Partnership to Envision Saint John in 2025.
- Developed a marketing strategy for a Saint John Region Inclusivity Campaign in partnership with the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership and settlement agencies. Creative work will take place in Q4, with campaign launch in Q1 2025.
- Sponsored a series of events that promote the region as a great place to live and work, including:
 - Saint John Newcomers Centre International Culture Fest 2024
 - Saint John Local Immigration Partnership Welcome Week

2. Workforce Development

- Talent Attraction campaigns focused on relocation and targeting the working population in specific areas of Ontario launched in market at the end of Q2 and run until Q4. A local retention campaign for Saint John Residents also launched in Q3. To view a campaign videos, click the links below:
 - [Relocation](#)
 - [Retention](#)
- Actively engaging post-secondary graduates for long-term engagement and retention:
 - Summer Student Initiative in partnership with Fusion Saint John.
 - Partnered with the UNB MBA program to deliver entrepreneurship-focused sessions.

- Four Welcome Centre Pop-ups throughout the region during Welcome Week activities at various post-secondary institutions.
- Newcomer Job Fair: 35 employers and 10 community partners showcased career opportunities and support services to 300 jobseekers. A Net Promoter Score of 100 was received, which speaks to the need and effectiveness of this collaborative job fair.
- Convened IRCC and Immigration NB to host roundtable discussions with employers about how immigration can support their workforce needs.
- Partnered with TechImpact on an Intro to Tech Initiative that included the YMCA, WorkingNB and Envision Saint John. The program includes three main tactics that promote the harmonization of supply and demand in the tech sector.
- Atlantic Immigration Program Regional Engagement Research Project: Engaged an MBA Student to conduct a research project to understand the engagement of employers in the region with the Atlantic Immigration Program. The project's main objective was to understand the barriers that local employers are experiencing to receive the designation and utilizing the AIP program, as well as how the Agency can support them through this process. The project involved desk research, a survey, and interviews with service providers and employers. Through these activities, the researcher engaged with more than 80 different individuals to provide insights that will inform the Agency's Business Retention and Expansion program.

3. Port Saint John Workforce Partnership 2.0

- The Committee continues to host regular meetings for information sharing of strategic and operational matters between all port partners.
- The Labour Dispatch Project was launched. A process specialist was contracted to document the current dispatch process and identify requirements for a new modern system. Investigation and options analysis are underway by the project team.

Economic Intelligence, Investment Attraction & Real Estate Development

1. Economic Intelligence

- Preliminary draft of an inaugural state-of-the-economy presentation prepared.
- Data support for the regional immigration strategy.
- Provided Economic Impact Assessments for two partner projects.
- Completed detailed data requests for more than 10 external partner organizations and businesses.
- Maintenance of the Regional Growth Dashboard.

2. Industrial Investment Attraction

- Working with ONB, Invest Canada, and Saint John Industrial on more than 10 active industrial investment attraction opportunities.
- Preparing for the launch of an industrial investment attraction and site readiness strategy to support investment attraction.
- Completed an inventory of privately held industrial land within the region's industrial parks.
- Preparing funding applications to enhance the region's investment attraction service.
- Initiative to update the region's industrial investment attraction package is underway.
- Completed an analysis of airport industrial parks across Atlantic Canada to support future development of airport land.
- Investment Attraction process improvements implemented.
- New investment attraction mapping system implemented.

3. Real Estate Development

- New construction activity:
 - 99 King Street breaks ground & crane on site (150 units).
 - 1429 Loch Lomond Road breaks ground (48 units).
 - Fundy Quay Phase 1 foundation advances and crane now on site.
- Recent approval milestones:
 - Belyea Arena EOI awarded to Belyea Village Ltd. For a proposed 200 units.
 - 1750 Sandy Point Road apartment building (76 units)
- Initiative launched to work with religious institutions on surplus property to spur development. Beginning exploration of several promising leads.
- Undertaking land ownership and development potential of key commercial corridors in the region, with a strategic focus on mixed-use opportunities.
- In discussions with multiple out-of-market developers on the development of several sites in the region.
- Providing support to municipal partners for Housing Accelerator Funding programs, municipal incentives and strategy properties.
- Development project portfolio pipeline:
 - We are engaged with more than 50 developers on 75+ projects
 - Estimated construction value \$2.1B
 - Estimated Tax Base \$1.8B
 - Residential Units 7,870
- Exploring the viability of more than 50 sites through the site activation program.

Entrepreneurship & Business Growth

1. Impact Loan

- Assisted 12 businesses through the Impact Loan application process including business plan developments and cash flow projections.
- Five have been approved by the Impact Loan Committee in Q3 for funding to start or expand their business totaling, \$230,000.

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.
- Provided navigation & business assistance to 70 potential entrepreneurs in the Saint John Region in Q3. This is an increase of 79% year-over-year.
- Co-hosted an Entrepreneurship Mastermind session with UNB's Axis Accelerator and ConnexionWorks. Guest speaker Tracy Bell delivered a presentation to 25+ local entrepreneurs on "Delivering an innovative value proposition, landing your first customers, raising your first \$1M."
- Participated in the Start-Up Canada Tour held in Moncton, an event focused on promoting supports for start-up entrepreneurs. A selection of Impact Loan recipients was in attendance.
- Presented at UNB MBA's Launch & Lead: Networking for Future Entrepreneurs with ConnexionWorks & Black Business Initiative.
- Sponsored and participated in the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce and The Saint John Region Chamber's annual golf tournaments. We met with more than 200 members of the business community to discuss our services.
- Hosted a summer workshop for 15 students (Grade 8-10). This interactive workshop focused on how to start a business.
- Co-hosted an event with Saint John Region Chamber in Grand Bay-Westfield to showcase the various resources available to assist in business growth.
- Craig Wilkins, Director of Entrepreneurship & Business Growth participated in a two-day course by the International Economic Development Council on creating a Business Retention & Expansion program. Work on developing this program for the Saint John Region is underway with an estimated public launch in Q1-2025.

3. Health Care Recruitment & Retention

- Sponsored and participated in Heart & Stroke New Brunswick's 2024 Heart Failure Symposium with the goal of drawing attention to the the Saint John Region for living and working in the health care industry.
- Hosted more than 50 first year/second year Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick students for a welcome event and familiarization tour.
- Attended the 2024 Dalhousie Family Medicine Weekend in Halifax where we connected with 100+ medical residents who are all at the end of their programs and looking for locations to settle/set up their practices. Provided a two-night stay in the Saint John Region for one winner.
- The Department of Health also featured the Saint John Region by provided an additional two-night stay, which was used as a recruitment draw.
- Hosted the 2023 Dalhousie Family Medicine weekend prize winner in the region during Moonlight Bazaar weekend.
- Provided welcome bags with various local gifts to 16 year-one Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick Family Medicine Residents.
- Hosted a lunch at the Saint John Regional Hospital welcoming a potential physician recruit in partnership with Horizon Health Network.

4. Investment Attraction

- Hosted a meeting with Sobirovs Law Firm who represents many international clients looking to purchase businesses in Canada. Showcased the various opportunities in the Saint John Region.

Administration

1. Human Resources

- The Agency engaged the Chapman Group to review existing HR policies and procedures. Updated policies (as required) and a new Employee Handbook will be finalized in Q4.
- A new, more comprehensive employee survey is in development for Q4.

2. Truth & Reconciliation

- 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.
- We continue to build our connections with the local Indigenous community - hosting several meetings in relation to development, tourism, and sport.

3. Customer Relationship Management

- Presently evaluating CRM tools to allow the Agency to better serve clients with a whole-system view.

4. Budget & Workplans

- Evaluating new tools to streamline budget and work planning processes.