

OFFICE OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

# Listening to you

Discussing New Brunswick's priority issues through a series of roundtables



# INTRODUCTION

As the Official Opposition, our team strives to be constructive in providing ideas and solutions while holding the government to account. On top of bringing the voices and concerns of our constituents to the attention of government, we meet with experts on the most pressing issues for all New Brunswickers. In those meetings and at the doors of our constituents, we consistently hear about healthcare, education, housing, the environment, energy development, and economic development.

My team and I believe in getting out of our offices and into communities, listening and being transparent with what we hear. Throughout the Summer and Fall of 2023, we embarked on a journey to dive deeper into these 6 priority areas to better inform our work in the Legislature. When we better understand the issues and what it's like on the front lines, we can scrutinize government legislation using the evidence we collect from experts, with the care New Brunswickers deserve. It also means that the motions, bills, and questions that we bring forward in the House are a reflection of your voices and your experience. They tackle the challenges that you face every day with the solutions you inspired.

Over the past year, we have pushed for change that puts power back in the hands of your community, makes life more affordable and increases access to basic needs like healthcare, housing and education. Our goal is to create a province where everyone thrives no matter who they are, where they live, or what language they speak.

Our Roundtable Series was a listening exercise, the first of many. In the spirit of openness and transparency, we committed to reporting back on what we heard from the very beginning. This summary report is our accountability to New Brunswickers and to our roundtable participants, who graciously and kindly offered their time and insights.

We hear you and we thank you.



**Susan Holt**  
**Leader of the Official Opposition**



**Susan Holt**

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## METHODOLOGY

We rely heavily on the expertise of sector leaders and groups working in the field in order to ensure a fulsome and multifaceted debate in the Legislature. Throughout Summer and Fall 2023, the Office of the Official Opposition hosted roundtables to gain additional insight into key sector issues, inform our legislative agenda and support our efforts as we fulfill our mandate to hold government to account and advocate on behalf of New Brunswickers at the Legislative Assembly.

### Selecting Priorities:

The six sectors were chosen based on recent polling of the top concerns of New Brunswickers and input from our caucus members on the prevalent issues they encounter in their constituencies. The problems plaguing Primary Care (Health), Housing, Education, Energy, Economic Development and Environment were of particular urgency and thus were confirmed as the priorities for the first set of engagements.

### Outreach:

The Office of the Official Opposition put a particular emphasis on having a diverse set of perspectives at each of the roundtables in order to as representative of the provincial landscape as possible. This led to a broad group of stakeholders being invited including First Nation representatives, local government representatives, not-for-profit organizations (NFPs), academics, advocacy groups, settlement sector representatives, professional umbrella organizations, etc. A total of 202 individual invitations were sent (see Appendix for the list of invitees).

### Hosting the Conversations:

The roundtables were chaired by the corresponding Opposition Critic and the Leader of the Official Opposition. The discussions took place over 2.5 hours beginning with welcoming remarks and roundtable introductions, recognition of the missing perspectives around the table, a quick overview of the challenges the Opposition has been made aware of already, what we anticipate for the next legislative session and finally, opening up the floor for reflections and feedback from the attendees.

Discussions were facilitated using the following guiding questions:

- What is currently taking place within your organizations?



Left to right: Chuck Chiasson, Susan Holt

- Are we missing any gaps or barriers in the list of identified challenges?
- How are you being engaged by government?
- How can we be a more constructive Opposition in the Legislative Assembly?
- What should we be on the lookout for?
- What are your main concerns going into the next legislative session?
- What should we proactively and pre-emptively bring forward?

Participants shared their perspectives on current challenges facing each sector and provided recommendations on a path forward.

### Reporting:

Transparency and collaboration are the foundations of all Opposition engagements. Keeping with those themes, and in an effort to create a safe space for in-depth discussion around difficult and sometimes contentious topics, the Opposition clarified that any statements made by the chairs (elected officials) were open to public reporting and reactions, otherwise, no comments shared by others during the meeting would be associated publicly with a specific group or individual. Social media posts made by the Leader of the Opposition were sent to participants ahead of time for feedback and approval. Finally, roundtable summaries were developed following the discretion principles explained above and sent to participants for comments prior to publication.



## THE CHALLENGES

Education has been a big discussion topic across the province over the past two years. At the Opposition, we have consistently heard of five issues within the sector that pose significant barriers to the future of New Brunswick's public education system including the politicization of education, the lack of resources, the absence of meaningful consultation, the instability within the system, an outdated structure that no longer answers the current needs. Participants all agreed with the highlighted challenges and provided their own insights into the obstacles facing the sector.

### Politics in Education

Educators and education sector workers believe that politicking in the sector, notably the introduction of initiatives that experts believe are fundamentally harmful for students (such as the attempts to change the French immersion program and the damaging changes to Policy 713), distract from the real difficulties that educators and students face in the classroom. During the Summer 2023 Education Roundtable, the government's approach to making changes to the education sector was described as "Painting a house in the middle of a hurricane". Education experts flagged the reputational consequences of this level of interference and expressed their concerns about the external perception of the teaching profession in New Brunswick, not only across the country, but across the world.

### The impact of social issues

Participants explained that the education system does not exist in isolation, adding that many of the "problems" in education can only be solved by paying attention to the conditions within the community that prevent children (and, by extension, families) from arriving at school prepared to learn. Hunger, homelessness, poverty, mental health, and an overall lack of respect for authority are "adult-size" community issues that are significantly impacting students in school communities. Experts stressed that a multi-departmental approach to community-based services and resources that are readily available at the school on a regular and predictable routine is long overdue.

### Long-term vision and planning

According to participants, the public education system lack three fundamental elements necessary for its success:

1. Stability, clarity, and vision for the future of the education sector in New Brunswick. Participants at the roundtable identified the need for a new long-term plan for education and shared some concern around the timing of its development.
2. Resources (financial, physical, and human)—we heard that District Education Councils (DECs) lack the authority to invest in their own schools. As one participant lamented, "How is someone working with a spreadsheet with a faceless variable matrix in Fredericton supposed to know different community requirements across the province?" Participants were concerned that 60% of the public schools in New Brunswick are more than 50 years old, presenting serious health and safety challenges for teachers and students who continue to get sick because of poor air quality in these buildings. Students find themselves in outdated learning environments.



Participants at the Education Roundtable



3. Constructive and meaningful consultation throughout government-led change processes—this was particularly damaging for the education sector as it emerged from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Just as schools were stabilizing from the shock caused by the pandemic, the department introduced governance and policy changes without consultation thus increasing confusion and instability.

## The changing demographics in the classrooms

Another significant challenge to the education sector is the insufficient way that the current structure of the public education systems meets the current needs of students and classrooms. The composition of classrooms is evolving, as are the types of families that interact with and depend on the public education system. Participants were unconvinced that the system as currently structured can adequately implement the changes required to respond to the societal shifts. Educators and education sector workers can be key drivers of change, relieving stress on the systems, but we heard that teachers need to be empowered to be vehicles of that change through inclusive and innovative pedagogies.

## Teacher shortages

Participants underscored the importance of having not just the enough teachers in classrooms, but the right teachers in classrooms. Their concerns are grouped into three areas: first the substantial investment required to put enough teachers in classrooms. We heard that the public education systems had 500 vacancies that they could not fill in the 2022-23 school year. Participants were distressed that the number of vacancies would compound each year—if the sector could not fill 500 vacancies this year, how would it fill the expected 500 additional vacancies next year. With immigration rates increasing across the province—the equivalent of 10,000 new students in the public education system over the next two years—participants expect that an anticipated investment of \$120 million would be necessary just to maintain existing staffing levels to match that growth.

Teacher shortages are part of a broader global problem: the world needs 70 million teachers to meet demand in growth in public education systems and governments appear to be responding by de-professionalising the teaching trade. They are hiring teachers with lower qualifications and teachers with lower qualifications are also paid less; New Brunswick's teachers are already the lowest paid in Atlantic Canada and the second lowest paid in the country.

Participants also noted that non-teacher personnel were integral to the success of the sector: guidance and school counsellors, behavioural intervention mentors, and administrative resources and resource teachers are desperately needed. Participants stressed that under-resourcing New Brunswick's public education system was, “not how you position New Brunswick as a ‘top’ province that produces ‘top’ students”.

## Governance

Finally, on the anticipation of a new education bill in the fall, participants highlighted that the Minister had written to the DEC to indicate his willingness to engage in meaningful consultation on the Education Act's revision, such that students would be more engaged, and family and community voices would be better represented in decision-making. Understandably, we heard concerns about the proposed changes to governance models. Participants stressed that DEC should continue to be at the table as substantial partners in any discussion about changes to the governance model for the education sector because they are “student trustees and community trustees”.



Francine Landry, Education Critic



## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Evaluate the current long-term education development and its roll-out, bringing together parents, teachers, DEC's, students and other relevant interests before any changes are proposed to ensure stability in the sector.
- Invest significantly in the human resourcing and ongoing support of education personnel including ongoing training, retention and recruitment and considering a plan that specifically weighs the opportunities and challenges for the education sector related to immigration.
- Update the sector's funding model to facilitate inclusion and innovation and leverage experts as drivers of change.
- Give communities the tools to implement the changes that are specific to their needs such as the power to assess, identify and rectify infrastructure needs.
- Include the needs and resources required by the early childhood sector in the long-term educational plan, given the importance of early childhood education to the continuum of public education in N.B.
- Convening further roundtables to build trust within the sector and enhance the vision.
- Develop and implement a robust strategy to recruit and mentor future principals and vice-principals and consider school-by-school succession planning.
- Further support school communities with Community and School Resource Coordinators who can bring together multi-departmental and not-for-profit community resources to improve quality of life and support for children, youth and their families.



## THE CHALLENGES

The main concerns we have heard on the energy portfolio can be grouped into three main buckets: energy generation, the utility, and public awareness and buy-in. The experts who were present at our Energy Roundtable took the opportunity to dive into specific challenges that are slowing New Brunswick's journey to clean, affordable and reliable energy.

### Lack of a long-term energy plan

The biggest and most urgent need around this file is the development and implementation of a long-term energy plan. Participants noted that governments often lose sight of the long-term vision when drafting policy and regulations. The concept of time should be re-examined in the context of big projects, with one attendee saying: "five-year plans cover only one cycle of project development and implementation." Participants also highlighted political pendulum swings as a challenge for organizations in the sector. Attendees expressed that "it's tough to develop and plan projects and transitions when the goal posts keep changing", however, they indicated that overall, the sector is moving in the right direction despite taking steps back operationally due to the disconnect between government policies and project implementation standards. Attendees also agreed that the province needs to keep all options on the table when developing the new energy plan, prioritizing moving to low-cost clean technology to start while remaining flexible to adapt to greater changes and adopt newer technology. This should include microgrids and decentralization as part of increasing energy security and resilience, creating incubation spaces for research and innovation within the sector.

### Setting the province apart

On the future of the energy sector and the transition to clean energy, including the federal regulations to move past net-zero by 2035, experts stressed the necessity of New Brunswick to set itself apart amongst provinces by maximizing the use of its renewable sources (wind, solar, hydro, biomass) and to take advantage of the changes ahead. They noted that a very carefully set transition pace will need to be established by government, allowing for the appropriate workforce and expertise shifts to occur to be able to meet the new sector demands. Attendees added that "there is a lot of capital around the world looking to find green energy homes" and that "when looking at policy changes, consideration must be given to what can make New Brunswick a magnet for investments".

### Strained relations with First Nations

Mending relations with First Nations and working in partnership with Indigenous leaders and communities across the province is a cornerstone of the foundation upon which all the work needs to be built. Participants recognized the current negative public-facing dialogue and the tensions that have risen following recent government actions towards First Nations. The group also noted that the state of these relations presents a serious risk to the sector, both on the progress as well as New Brunswick's investment attraction potential. Attendees underlined the need to have frank, open-minded discussions, and to make the space for First Nations to express their views and the ways in which they would like to collaborate.



Participants at the Energy Roundtable



## Implications for SMEs

Participants agreed that every change and decision related to energy policy and rates will have an impact on New Brunswickers, especially for small/medium enterprises (SMEs), who make up 98% of businesses in the province and account for 53% of total employment. Attendees flagged that SMEs will soon need to comply with federal policies, albeit indirectly, seeing as big businesses they supply are and will be directly subjected to them.

## Infrastructure and labour shortage

Energy transmission, distribution and storage had a particularly important place in the discussion given their critical role in the clean energy transition. The group highlighted New Brunswick's potential with its ports and upcoming rail line projects, and noted the need for the electrification of transportation which gives these systems both environmental and cost advantages. Participants also urged government to give greater consideration to transmission in order to successfully connect the system regionally (between the Maritime provinces) and globally. Greater connectivity would allow clean energy resource diversification and reliability. However, the workforce shortage is and will continue to be a major challenge.

Currently, NB Power employs 140 linemen which is not enough. This is leading to challenging work conditions and pressures, making retention difficult. Attendees added that this is opening the door to "storm chasers": crews coming from the US and other provinces and territories to fill the gaps. They stressed that it is not a sustainable solution considering the added costs of contracting them and the lack of stability within the sector.

The group also identified the current electricity grid infrastructure as an obstacle, not only for the transition to clean energy and for the changes needed to supply the growing demand for energy, but also in terms of reliability and affordability. Climate change impacts are leading to more severe storms that necessitate a hardened infrastructure. Putting that into place will increase the cost of energy.

## Misalignment between NB Power and the EUB

On NB Power, the group agreed that the organization faces serious financial and governance problems. There was also consensus that government must stop using the organization as a political football and that the utility should be supported as it tries to solve its issues. All experts around the table also pointed to the Energy and Utilities Board's (EUB) misplaced focus on keeping consumer rates low (as opposed to the total bill), in addition to what they perceive as a complete disregard for the need for decarbonization. Energy rates are currently kept artificially low, leaving utilities operating under deficits and the population with no incentive to change or to accept alternatives.



Participants at the Energy Roundtable



## Lack of energy education and awareness

Finally, participants indicated that recent polling shows clean energy as priority #3 for New Brunswickers, behind affordability and reliability, a result that could have been predicted given the cost-of-living concerns across the province. New Brunswickers are losing the willingness to pay for clean energy, which is exacerbated by an increased lack of trust in government. The group also explained that communication efforts regarding the need for a clean energy transition and the short-term cost increase and long-term cost savings have not been successful. However, the group highlighted that across the province, individuals and communities are interested in understanding the system and are looking for ways to get involved, especially in projects that can be mutually beneficial.

## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Rebuild trust with First Nation leaders and communities, making the space for open and frank discussions, and collaboration.
- Establish a new proactive energy strategy with short-term, medium-term, and long-term action plans and targets, following a newly defined north star and all-party approved priorities that maximize the use of renewable energy, while considering public affordability, efficiency.
- Explore centralized and decentralized (microgrids) system options as well as community-owned projects as part of incentivizing communities and increasing energy security and resilience.
- Create incubation spaces for research and innovation within the sector.
- Review and amend the Electricity Act and the EUB Act to facilitate the development and implementation of clean energy solutions.
- Re-examine EUB regulations and ensure their alignment with the new energy strategy and priorities.
- Develop nimble but consistent regulations and policies under the new energy strategy that make the province attractive to prospective investments in the sector and that support those investments and transitions, leveraging public and private dollars.
- Create a governance body that ensures accountability around green energy across all departments involved, including Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL; workforce), Public Safety and NB Power, and ensures that all government policy be supportive of the province's carbon reduction goals.
- Review clean projects funding and grant processes with the goal of simplifying them and improving timelines.
- Ensure Requests for Proposals (RFPs) have clear guidelines around "net zero" or "net-zero ready".
- Consider Input Tax Credits (ITCs) to support the development of clean energy projects.
- Review best practices and potential areas for collaborations with centres of excellence in other provinces, such as the Clean Tech Innovation Centre in Prince Edward Island.
- Invest in workforce attraction, recruitment and retention, in partnership with post-secondary education institutions, colleges, and sector employers.
- Support SMEs and incentivize their transition alongside big business.
- Modernize transmission and the electricity grid of the province and invest in infrastructure adaptation to ensure energy reliability.
- Develop an energy awareness raising strategy that increases the public's energy literacy especially around the tie between efficiency and price, and the difference between energy and electricity.





## THE CHALLENGES

New Brunswick's healthcare system is in crisis and New Brunswickers are worried they won't be able to access the services they need when they need them. The Official Opposition has heard many concerns related to healthcare over the past months around access to primary care, Emergency Room (ER) and surgery wait times, access to mental health supports, upgrades to hospital infrastructure and the need for the digitization of records. We have also heard about the lack of trauma-informed training and cultural competency training in the sector, the urgent need to introduce more collaborative community-based care teams across the province, the need for additional retention and recruitment efforts, concern over the lack of government consultation with healthcare professionals prior to bringing new programs and the need for a better process to integrate innovations in virtual care and monitor primary care needs (e.g. E-Visit and NB Health Link). The participants in our Health Roundtable echoed all the above concerns and challenges and provided their expertise and guidance around access to primary care specifically.

### The lack of long-term planning and implementation

Participants all agreed that the healthcare system needs a massive change management effort, adding that up until this point "only half measures and pilots have been implemented, with no full investment in sustainable and long-term solutions and decision makers going for short-term wins." Attendees flagged that much like other sectors, healthcare has suffered from successive government changes, noting that "we never ran a program to fruition to see if it works" and that the current state of New Brunswick's ERs is a result of unrectified shortcomings across the entire system including Long-Term Care (LTC) and support services for seniors, underlining that while programs such as E-Visit and Health Link have their place, they are only components to integrating digital health, administrative efficiencies, automation and quality improvement. Attendees emphasized that not all standards of care are deliverable by virtual care and that it is critical to properly integrate virtual care into medicine. They also expressed serious concern over the ballooning of the Health Link program, with ~45,000 patients onboarded, only ~1200 having been seen by a physician and no offloading at the time of the roundtable.

### The increased social pressures

The healthcare sector is affected directly by social issues such as poverty, housing challenges, a lack of stability at home, etc., as well as the failings of the long-term care system and other systemic barriers to optimal success and access. The experts present at the roundtable underlined the need to invest in solving those issues and invest in prevention such as community wellness initiatives.



Participants at the Health Roundtable



## Primary care disincentives

Experts flagged major challenges with recruitment, a growing number of retirement age physicians, and a lack of serious attention to attraction, and retention. Disincentives ranged from the credential recognition processes, to the tax rate, to overhead costs, hours of administrative unbillable work, and to frustration with the existing system and infrastructure. Participants described that “government is trying to throw money at the problem without any accountability structure”. Attendees added that not enough family doctors, psychologists and other medical professionals are being trained in the province. They stated that “health education has not been taken in account when looking at system reform”. Participants shared that doctors and nurses are currently not compensated for professorships, which disincentivizes them from teaching, also noting a lack of provincial investment in equipment or space for training. One attendee sounded the alarm around the lack of placements, specifying that there are currently 70 Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and 110 physicians seeking placements, with no opportunities opening up.

## Scope of practice limitations

Participants unanimously shared their outrage towards NPs not receiving the “right to bill” that they merit which leaves them unable to help, despite being ready to pull up their sleeves and provide New Brunswickers the care they need and deserve. Moreover, the group expressed frustrations regarding legislative limitations to their scope of practice and that of other nurses and healthcare professionals, including paramedics, advanced care paramedics, and pharmacists. Attendees unanimously agreed that ER visits are often due to the mismanagement of chronic diseases and that while a first visit and confirmed diagnosis can come from a family physician or specialist, the management of those can be done, in most cases, by NPs, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Registered Nurses (RNs), and Personal Support Workers (PSWs).

## Digital infrastructure

From a health infrastructure point of view, the roundtable participants placed an emphasis on New Brunswick’s current clinical information system, describing it as “from the 80s”, and stressed the need to focus on the digitization and integration of medical records. The current system is not only a challenge for healthcare workers, who find themselves needing to start from scratch with every new patient they have, but also for patients who are being forced to re-describe their needs and symptoms and retell their stories, which in some cases can be contributing to their trauma.



Participants at the Health Roundtable



## Inclusion

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is seriously lacking across the system, from the services for people with disabilities, care for newcomers, to the integration of healthcare workers with a diverse background. Inclusive care for people with disabilities has been a barrier for a long time. Attendees highlighted that professionals across the healthcare spectrum do not have the proper training to work with people with disabilities or their equipment (wheelchairs, etc.). Participants added that people with disabilities face enormous transportation barriers keeping them from reaching specialized care units. Newcomers in the province also face barriers to healthcare access aside from access to a family physician, including language challenges and a lack of cultural sensitivity training within the sector which seriously impair communication between the healthcare worker and the patient, contribute to a sense of insecurity and helplessness on the side of the patient, and in some instances retraumatize the patient. The lack of cultural competency also provides an inhospitable working environment for newly recruited healthcare professionals and directly impacts retention.

## Strained relationships with First Nations

Last but not least, experts spoke up regarding the right of First Nations to have ownership over their own healthcare, in their own communities and the necessity to co-develop a system that answers their particular needs, and respects and incorporates their culture and teachings.

## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review and bring improvements to the current provincial health plan, informed by data, needs projections for up to 30 years, and people's lived experience (people with disabilities, seniors, newcomers, etc.), including clear goals, action items and an accountability system.
- Ensure the health plan priorities are agreed upon by all parties in order to minimize instability.
- Create and invest in integrated community care centers such as those available in Nova Scotia and other provinces, providing the expertise of physicians, physician assistants, medical scribes, NPs, RNs, LPNs, PSWs, paramedics, advanced care paramedics, social workers, physiotherapist, psychologists, and dieticians, all under one roof, managed by process coordinators, for ease of access, referrals and follow-ups.
- Reexamine the sector's finance and compensation models.
- Amend legislation and bring forward new legislation that allows all healthcare professionals to work within their full scope of practice thereby removing pressures across the system with a better management of chronic conditions and proper assessments of emergency care needs.
- Establish a digital transformation and healthcare innovation legislation/policy to promote, refine, and expand more impactful and efficient healthcare delivery.
- Examine credential recognition processes, identify key obstacles, gaps and inefficiencies and streamline pathways.
- Refrain from closing community clinics due to a lack of family physicians and instead equip them with NPs and advanced care paramedics providing round-the-clock care.
- Invest in standardized and complementary digital records management systems.
- Recognize the importance of prevention and invest in initiatives that encourage and facilitate it.
- Increase social disabilities rates so that persons with disabilities are not living below the deep poverty line which in turn improves overall physical and mental health of those individuals and therefore lowers the number of ER visits.
- Provide appropriate patient-informed solutions to transportation barriers for people with disabilities needing to reach care units across the province.
- Invest in community integration initiatives for healthcare professionals in order to increase retention, including engaging students early in their careers.
- Implement DEI principles and initiatives across the system.
- Work and invest towards getting more training seats and residency programs.



Rob McKee, Health Critic



## THE CHALLENGES

Business leaders and experts across the province have been calling for government investments that create an environment that fosters economic growth, attracts investment, that allows businesses to be successful wherever they are in the province. Economic development experts joined us for a discussion regarding the challenges facing the local business community and impairments to New Brunswick's economic growth. Many of the attendees underlined that the existing gaps are due to the unprecedented population increase that the province is experiencing and while they would rather face these challenges (as opposed to the challenges of decline), they stressed the urgency of allocating appropriate investments in the appropriate spaces across the entire system. Experts lamented government's fragmented and incremental spending approach and stressed the need for big and bold action.

### Lack of long-term planning

Participants all agreed that the province's current economy is not sustainable for the long term, especially in rural regions. Northern and rural communities are experiencing a mass exodus of industry and entrepreneurs as the government focuses on urban-centric strategies. Experts noted the importance of New Brunswick's economic bilingualism and the significant contributions it has made to the province: it opens the doors toward a diversity of markets and attracted families, entrepreneurs, and businesses from francophone countries. The participants expressed concern over this government's recent attempt to cancel French Immersion and the implications of that policy move on economic development.

### Increased costs and labour shortages

Participants flagged electricity bill increases as a major pain point for small business and labeled recent changes that give municipalities the ability to increase taxation on businesses as unjust. Labour shortages remains a big obstacle to businesses who are trying to supply the demand for their services and products, and plan for succession. The trade deficit is important across all sectors and is leading to outside contracting, which costs significantly more than local employment.

### Overlooked industries

Participants also pointed out that the agriculture sector remains overlooked despite its significant contributions to the province through employment, production, and export. They noted the gaps in the public's perception and awareness of the industry, its people, and its work culture. Skill development for the sector is also a need given the current workforce realities; the industry is looking for ways to arm itself with tools in order to overcome the labour shortage.

Participants raised the alarm around artists leaving New Brunswick at high rates. Writers, translators, filmmakers, actors, musicians, dancers, etc., reflect the diversity our province and contribute to social cohesion throughout the province. They noted that the arts and culture sector, contributes more to New Brunswick's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than agriculture, pulp and paper manufacturing, Information and Technology (IT), seafood, manufacturing and mining, and that despite consistent advocacy and effort, it remains disregarded as an economic contributor by the government.





## Lack of natural resources strategy

In addition, participants expressed disappointment over the province's investment and use of its natural resources, noting a flagrant lack of strategy. New Brunswick is constantly exporting raw materials and importing the value-added products. Participants also sounded the alarm around more products coming through Vancouver as opposed to the Maritimes, which has significant impact on cost, trucking jobs, and local distribution centers.

## Increased social challenges and pressures

Aside from the traditional challenges facing businesses such as inflation, labour shortages, regulations and red tape, experts highlighted the significant impact that social issues are having on the sector now. Healthcare, housing, childcare, crime, and addictions and mental health issues have reached a critical level. The group cited these challenges as contributing factors to recruitment and retention struggles, as well as more and more responsibilities being downloaded onto communities, employers, and business owners.

Retail, which is considered a barometer of the system's health due to its link to the supply chain as well as business and people's abilities to consume goods and services, has been suffering over the past few months. Retail crime has increased according to experts due to the deep social needs and the recent introduction of organized, large-scale crime to the Maritimes. Some expressed serious gaps related to justice and public safety including lack of responsiveness of police officers to calls related to retail crime.

Business experts also brought forward concerns regarding the level of people without homes in their cities and towns, calling it an epidemic. Beside genuine empathy and concern regarding the wellbeing of their fellow community members, the group underlined the impacts on the perceptions of their communities and their ability to attract new people and businesses. Similar concerns were voiced around childcare with space shortages impacting the ability of New Brunswick parents to work and for new families to penetrate to job market.

## Lacking infrastructure

Participants could not overstate the importance of connection to the sector. They emphasized the need for internet and phone signal across the province, as well as significant infrastructure investments through roads, railways, ports and public transportation, touching specifically on the state of the Chignecto Isthmus and Route 11. Access to high-speed internet everywhere was cited as a way to help "spread the wealth" across rural and urban areas.

## Impacts of Local Governance Reform

Regarding local jurisdictions business experts mentioned the recent local governance reform which brought forward a number of changes. The most notable was the lack of clarity around the roles and responsibilities of municipalities, Regional Service Commissions (RSCs), and chambers of commerce when it comes to economic development. Participants also discussed the role of Opportunities New Brunswick and its search for a mandate over the past years.



Participants at the Economic Development Roundtable



## Lack of innovation investment

Finally, innovation was highlighted as a major gap for New Brunswick. Local innovators find themselves, and the advice they give, often overlooked or ignored. Participants were clear, “when we don’t encourage innovation, we don’t advance. Innovation creates jobs and solves problems.” Experts shared that only approximately 1% of New Brunswick’s GDP is invested in innovation, while other jurisdictions invest on average 2.5%. An investment of \$25 million to \$30 million would bring New Brunswick closer to the national average and make it competitive. According to our participants, every dollar spent towards innovation generates \$4. Experts stressed the need to leverage universities and colleges in this space, to benefit not only their local communities, but the entire province. Participants also flagged Artificial Intelligence (AI), noting the landscape changes it will bring forward and the necessity to take it into consideration.



Jean-Claude (JC) D'Amours, Economic Development Critic

## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve relations with First Nations across the province by rebuilding trust, respect and understanding and establishing a mutually beneficial partnership around common or aligned economic development priorities.
- Leverage New Brunswick’s size and develop a flexible and agile two-pronged economic development strategy including urban-specific and rural-specific actions and goals.
- Re-examine regulations with the goal of rendering New Brunswick more attractive to investors, manufacturers and entrepreneurs
- Explore housing solutions to decrease rents across the province such as adopting tax policies for multi-residence units similar to Nova Scotia and removing the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) on multi-unit residences.
- Invest in attraction, training and retention initiatives and explore incentives to re-engage retirees to answer labour needs across the province.
- Develop a comprehensive clean energy strategy that maximizes local economic development opportunities in that space.
- Invest in infrastructure across the province including transportation (railroads, ports, roads) and technology (access to reliable high-speed internet everywhere)
- Examine departmental intersectionality and foster cross-departmental collaboration throughout strategy and policy development and implementation.
- Explore the establishment of a Small Business Advocate
- Increase the threshold for the Small Business Tax rate from \$500,000 to \$700,000.
- Advocate on behalf of business to postpone the federal deadline for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) repayment.
- Review the Procurement Act with the goal to increase investment and promotion of local talent.
- Bring back down the municipal taxation down to 1.5%.
- Engage post-secondary education institutions and colleges in order to align their priorities with provincial economic development needs and goals and leverage the innovation potential.
- Change the rule prohibiting childcare providers to change their age designations more than once per year to help centres respond to local needs.
- Consider a small business intervenor to the EUB
- Prompt payment legislation, regulations with dates and times
- Extend deadline on Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) payments
- Continue workers compensation savings
- Importance of automation and its adoption, assess tech readiness level of small businesses
- Skilled trades training
- Adopt a New Brunswick Status of the Artist Act, as well as a series of provincial and federal measures aimed at fully recognizing the multiple contributions of artists to society, and improving their socio-economic conditions.



## THE CHALLENGES

New Brunswickers deserve a sustainable and clean environment. The environment file intersects with several different government departments' priorities and policies. That is reflected in the wide range of challenges facing the province under this portfolio including the impacts of climate change (erosions, flooding, water quality, forest fires, forest health deterioration, air quality, etc.), affordability (sources and price of energy, green building, transportation, etc.), recycling and the use of herbicides. During our environment roundtable, experts weighed in on the existing gaps that prevent the province from overcoming existing challenges and tackling those that lay ahead.

### Strained Indigenous relations

All participants agreed that a critical part of moving on environmental objectives is rectifying relations with First Nations across the province by establishing trust, understanding, respect, and priority alignment for the development of mutually beneficial partnerships.

### Lack of capacity

Local governments and NFPs are overextended and suffering from a lack of human and financial resources as they try to do their part in actioning environmental priorities. Experts highlighted the significant impacts that Local Governance Reform has had on clarity pertaining to roles and responsibilities in the sector and flagged the drastic capacity differences between urban and rural regions. In the case of NFPs, having to reapply yearly for the same funding, under the same programs, despite strong track records taxes their limited resources.

Participants stressed the importance of the Environmental Trust Fund (ETF) and expressed concern over the government's political willingness to keep it going and to put in place additional funding that increases the capacity of municipal and community partners to make green changes like as updates to existing infrastructure.

### Gaps in engagement

Municipalities, NFPs, businesses and community members all signaled a gap in consultation and engagement from the government over environmental priorities, policy, and strategy. Experts flagged the many silos within government and across levels of government, between communities and NFPs operating in this space, adding that decisions around priorities are not being informed by local communities. Stakeholders noted that often there has been either money left on the table or wasted due to lack of collaboration or duplication.



Participants at the Environment Roundtable



## The growing disparity between industry, advocacy groups and New Brunswickers

Participants reflected on reporting and transparency concerns, particularly around the progress being made towards achieving the climate action plan targets as well as the management of Crown lands. Experts indicated that this is likely fueled by the inaccessibility of data, policies, regulations and revenues related to herbicide use, fracking, mining and forestry projects to the general public. Stakeholders stated that New Brunswickers are looking for a government that is more forthcoming about how the province's forests are being used and treated by the forestry industry and warned that the current lack of clarity around herbicide spraying in the province, its benefits and its risks, and the government's decision-making on the matter, is creating a well of anger and distrust across the province, adding that "without knowing where we are, we can't know where we can go together." Public awareness raising and education, and the willingness to have open and constructive dialogue on the topic, are key to bridging the gap between industry, advocacy groups and the general population. While full consensus is unlikely to occur, it is possible to decrease the level of misinformation and disagreement in this space.

Related to funding, our participants noted that funding refusals are not accompanied with constructive feedback that brings clarity to organizations regarding what the needs are, what their shortcomings are in terms of proposal writing and project development, and avenues for progress for the right projects to be developed to answer the needs, as identified by the provincial government.

## Lack of long-term planning

Experts highlighted the lack of a comprehensive Climate Change Action Plan, Water Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy, noting that the existing climate actions and targets are too high level and therefore do not give proper guidance to local stakeholders and communities. Participants added that nature protection can be part of the solution to climate crises. Experts added that protection needs to be accompanied by appropriate management and risk mitigation, otherwise, it fails to achieve long-term conservation and biodiversity goals. The province needs more ambitious targets that at the very least match national and international targets, flagging the current lack of environmental standards and strategies at the government level, adding that the province has missed significant opportunities as a result. Participants also indicated that vague regulation makes it difficult for municipalities to comply and support environmental policies and initiatives laid out by the government.



Participants at the Environment Roundtable



## Lack of provincial-federal alignment

Experts agreed unanimously that federal financial support is necessary to solve the problems in the sector but indicated that the federal government is looking to see significant provincial initiative and investment in solutions as well. Participants flagged that a number of projects that are approved for partial funding by the federal government do not get past New Brunswick's Regional Development Corporation (RDC) and stall as a consequence. One example mentioned was the federal government funding electric charging stations which has the interest of a number of communities, however, there is no provincial political will to support the same initiatives. Participants also took time to reflect on the missed financial opportunity that would have significantly raised local capacity under the federal government's 30 by 30 nature conservation goals due to a lack of serious planning.

## Affordability concerns

Public awareness and understanding around environmental priorities are limited amid continuously increasing inflation, housing costs, electricity costs, etc. This is concerning to experts given the need for a whole of society approach to climate change actions and environmental planning. New Brunswickers are focused on making ends meet and are naturally resistant to any changes that bring about more cost increases.

Experts stressed the importance of educating the public around environmental imperatives and making sure New Brunswickers understand the nested nature of the problem and that should nothing change now, costs would even be greater later and that ultimately, environmental issues will affect them on a personal level due to health consequences, job opportunities, quality of life, etc. In addition, stakeholders reflected on the role of legislation in cost mitigation and encouraged the consideration of legislative ways to decrease the cost of going green, flagging the amendments to the Beverage Act.

Costs are not only a concern for individual households but also for industries and small/medium employers across the province, including farmers, with some struggling with metering tariffs. Moving to net zero emissions will bring about significant cost increases which will necessitate energy efficiency upgrades for mitigation. Participants strongly recommended the government provide additional funding to that end and to include energy education and awareness raising in their plans, specifically getting the focus off rates (\$/KWatts) and on final bills (\$/month) and demonstrating the effects of climate change on the electric infrastructure across the province. The province is facing more serious storms than ever before which requires a more hardened infrastructure and that in turn increases cost. Participants unanimously called for a more unified debate regarding clean energy and the necessity to take environmental goals into consideration when reviewing the Electricity Act and the EUB Act.

Participants took some time to discuss the Chignecto Isthmus, flagging concerns regarding the cost of infrastructure needs, especially given the safety concerns for the neighbouring community of Tantramare in the face of flooding and erosions. This led to a greater discussion regarding the provinces' willingness to fund infrastructure that protects communities from the environmental impacts of climate change and supports them in the event of forest fires, erosions, flooding, etc., noting that communities do not feel supported by the government on this front and underlining the deep feelings of loss, helplessness and abandonment that communities feel in the face of natural disasters.





## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Rectify relations with First Nations by building trust, understanding, respect and ensure alignment in priorities.
- Launch a provincial asset mapping and environmental planning exercise.
- Open lines of communications with municipalities and NFPs and ensure a coordinated effort across the province.
- Develop, in collaboration with subject matter experts and stakeholders, a modern Biodiversity Strategy and an ambitious Climate Change Action Plan that details actions and targets down to the community level and that includes a management plan for Crown lands.
- Ensure transparency around the management of Crown lands by making the data, policies, regulations, results, and revenues related to herbicide use, fracking, mining and forestry projects more accessible and understandable to the broader public.
- Facilitate an open and constructive dialogue between the forestry industry, advocacy groups and community representatives regarding forest management.
- Review the report and recommendations developed in 2022 by the Standing Committee on the Environment and Climate Change on the use of herbicides, examine the level of implementation of the recommendations to date and determine next steps. That can include implementing the recommendations and establishing a reporting structure around the action items or, if necessary, leading a new public review of the forestry industry's herbicide use.
- Provide regular updates on progress relating to the Biodiversity Strategy and Climate Action Plan as well as the work being done by the Climate Secretariat.
- Encourage more direct collaboration between the Climate Secretariat and local communities and NFPs.
- Provide multi-year funding to local governments and NFPs on environmentally related projects.
- Allow local government and NFPs better access to funding by reviewing eligibility criteria and reviewing funding promotion strategies.
- Ensure transparency around funding including constructive feedback to organizations that have been refused funding under certain programs.
- Consult with local communities, municipal representatives and NFPs on local environmentally related problems, what would be considered as reasonable goals and allow them to take ownership over the solutions.
- Shift from competition to collaboration by examining different models of distributing funding to NFPs such as those implemented by the federal government like attributing the funds to one organization that then disperses it as needed.
- Collaborate with the forest industry on initiatives such as mass timber.
- Invest in climate-smart, net-zero, green infrastructure that protects communities from the environmental impacts of climate change, such as mass timber.
- Provide funding to support communities in the event of forest fires, erosions, flooding, etc.
- Urge Horizon Health Network and Vitalité Health Network to provide updated community health assessments to allow experts to correlate the results to environmental factors and their impacts on human health.
- Explore Nudge Theory when exploring ways to incentivize societal change.
- Explore core-based funding models for the ETF such as those implemented by Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Incorporate climate considerations across legislation and the legislative process.
- Create a program that provides financial support for municipal partners to retrofit and update existing buildings.
- Reinststate an annual funding guarantee for the Environmental Trust Fund so that these funds can be redistributed to eligible municipalities and organizations.
- Improve watershed management through land-use planning and better coordination between levels of government and RSCs.



## THE CHALLENGES

New Brunswickers have expressed loud and clear the need for a safe, suitable and affordable home for all. The housing gap is being felt more than ever before with the increased price of homes, escalating rents, the long social housing waitlist, and a record high number of unhoused people. This is in the wake of an underutilized not-for-profit housing sector, a lack of development incentives and systematic and cultural barriers to modular housing. The barriers extend to basic water and waste infrastructure, disincentives for land assessments, outdated zoning laws and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) inefficiencies, and the overlooked role of non-profits, cooperatives and municipalities in building and implementing solutions. The Housing Roundtable brought housing experts and stakeholders together to discuss the gaps and gather recommendations.

### Lack of affordability

With the increased cost of living, participants sounded the alarm regarding housing affordability across the entire housing spectrum. On one hand, buying a home is more costly than ever before, on the other hand, rents continue to climb with the absence of a rent cap. Private developers are spending more than ever before on supplies and labour costs and NFPs are not provided enough tools and support to provide affordable options for New Brunswickers.

Experts stressed the need to ask the question “affordable for who?”, noting that renters account for 20% of the total number of households but make up 57% of unaffordable housing. They concluded, “this is a rent issue” with most renters being one paycheck away from homelessness and vulnerable to renovations. Participants added that seniors on fixed incomes are finding themselves in uncomfortable situations. Some of those seniors in apartments are unable to heat in the wintertime.

“Ultimately,” one participant said, “the province is currently relying on the private sector to solve a social problem”. Adding to the frustration and anger of the general public is the misconception that the private sector is making more money than ever before when in reality interest rates have increased, building supply costs have gone up by 70-80% in the last 3 to 4 years, building requirements and codes have become more stringent, and property tax has increased, New Brunswick’s tax being 1.4 times higher than the rest of the Maritime provinces and 2 times higher compared to the Canada as a whole.

### Lack of capacity

Participants shed light on the deep disregard and disrespect experienced by NFPs in the housing sector when they provide a straightforward solution to affordable housing challenges both in their ability to stretch funding and the de facto rent control they provide. NFPs with a proven track record are treated like unproven private developers. Experts also underlined the lack of pre-development supports for NFPs is also impairing the sector’s ability to do their part in providing housing solutions to New Brunswickers.



Participants at the Housing Roundtable



## Lack of provincial investment and long-term planning

Experts indicated that the federal government continues to make housing investments, but that to move the needle, federal efforts must be met with provincial supports. Participants also pointed to the need for local partnerships surrounding housing between the provincial government, social services, and harm reduction organizations that can provide a supportive housing ecosystem with the goal to decrease the number of unhoused people in the province and create re-integration opportunities for previously incarcerated people, and mental health and addictions supports for New Brunswick's most vulnerable. "People are leaving incarceration and going into homelessness. This should not happen" said one participant.

Policy experts flagged that current policies lack an anti-segregation lens and highlighted the risks of ghettoization and the creation of poverty, health, and mental health and addiction pockets. The participants explained that housing inclusivity means bringing safe, affordable, accessible and integration-favorable housing close to services. Over the years, there has been consistent downloading of responsibility on that front from the provincial government to municipalities who lack the tools or funding to manage it properly and safely. Experts also shared that significant blind spots exist throughout the province, especially in small communities due to a lack of data aggregation and analysis. This is an area that can be tackled through the Tenants and Landlords Relations Office.

Attendees also flagged the pressures put on local housing from post-secondary students. For regions with colleges, student housing is presenting a major challenge both for students, colleges, and for the community. In some cases, new students have been unable to come to the area and begin their term due to a lack of housing; in other cases, they've been required to couch surf. In addition, international student graduates that would usually leave New Brunswick post-graduation are now applying for a Post-Graduate Workers Permit (PGWP) and entering the local employment market. While this speaks to the success of the recruitment and local retention efforts, the growth is still unmet with the proper support infrastructure including housing, among other needs. Participants emphasized the need for the provincial government to seek partnerships with post-secondary education institutions and explore solutions.

## Workforce challenges

The workforce gaps are seen across the majority of sectors in the province and throughout the country, however, participants indicated that the housing workforce needs are those that present the greatest challenge seeing as they present a catch-22 scenario - you need more trades people to build more, but those people need their own housing - and impact workforce recruitment for other sectors and population growth in general.

Experts explained that workforce recruitment in the trades face specific challenges including:

- Trades in other countries being often passed down from generation to generation, resulting in a lack diplomas or certification that demonstrates individuals' level of expertise which in turn impairs skill recognition in Canada,
- The seasonality of the sector leading to instability with a 20% unemployment rate, and a technical barrier for those seeking to get Permanent Residency (PR),
- Apprenticeship programs currently having low completion rates due to job instability, financial constraints, and the attraction of other sectors,
- The lack of recruitment of under-represented groups - at this time 90% of those in the trades are men,
- Wage competition from across the country.



Richard Losier, Housing Critic



## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engage in a full property tax reform and explore the exemption of NFPs from property taxation.
- Re-examine and adjust the disability shelter allowance and other social benefits to meet cost of living increases.
- Reassess and streamline funding allocation processes when it comes to NFPs with a proven track record.
- Invest in pre-development funding for NFPs.
- Make acquisitions available to NFPs to renew the mid-life housing stock.
- Establish a provincial equivalent to the Rapid Housing Initiative.
- Develop local partnerships on housing between the provincial government, social services, and harm reduction organizations that can provide a supportive housing ecosystem.
- Present opportunities for consultation outputs to be put back on the table for a deeper and more meaningful discussion regarding implementation.
- Break silos between all levels of government, communities and sector experts.
- Put the onus back on the provincial government to provide affordable, suitable and safe housing for New Brunswickers, as opposed to the private sector.
- Shift the risk aversion culture within the provincial government.
- Establish a long-term housing strategy based on data and projections leaning on an iterative analysis process, research and innovation.
- Seek partnerships with colleges and Post-Secondary Education Institutions and collaborative avenues for affordable and suitable student housing solutions, including a review of funding eligibility criteria to include colleges.
- Re-examine property taxation and explore opportunities to decrease property tax.
- Establish a reasonable rent cap accompanied by an annual review and adjustment.
- Cap expenses on building materials.
- Strengthen the Residential Tenancies Act to protect all tenants.
- Add trades to middle school and high school curriculums.
- Explore avenues to eliminate taxation on housing considering its basic human right status.
- Consult builders on the bottlenecks, seeing as they encounter them on a regular basis and have the ability to point to specific problems and inform solutions.
- Establish a Provincial Housing Development Guarantee Fund that provides capital for housing development projects and de-risks projects for financial institutions.
- Provide a tax credit system for housing development in order to incentivize investors.
- Develop a Neighborhood Supports Program that includes community navigators, mental health and addictions specialists and inclusion supports.
- Explore the idea of social impact bonds that incentivises public-private partnerships, monitors social impact and rewards it back to the public.

# APPENDIX A: ABBREVIATIONS

AI: Artificial Intelligence  
CEBA: Canada Emergency Business Account  
CERB: Canada Emergency Response Benefit  
DEC(s): District Education Council(s)  
DEI: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion  
ER(s): Emergency Room(s)  
ETF: Environmental Trust Fund  
EUB: Energy and Utilities Board  
GDP: Gross Domestic Product  
HST: Harmonized Tax Credit  
IT: Information and Technology  
ITC(s): Input Tax Credit(s)  
LPN(s): Licensed Practical Nurse(s)  
LTC: Long-Term Care  
NFP(s): Not-for-profit organization(s)  
NP(s): Nurse Practitioner(s)  
PETL: Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour  
PGWP(s): Post-Graduate Workers Permit(s)  
PR: Permanent Residence  
PSW(s): Personal Support Worker(s)  
RFP(s): Request(s) For Proposals  
RDC: Regional Development Corporation  
RN(s): Registered Nurse(s)  
RSC(s): Regional Service Commission(s)  
SME(s): Small/Medium Enterprise(s)

# APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANTS

AN \* DENOTES THAT THEY WERE IN ATTENDANCE

## Education

Association des enseignantes et enseignants du Nouveau-Brunswick\*  
District Education Councils\*  
Fédération des conseils d'éducation du Nouveau-Brunswick\*  
Inclusion NB\*  
Mawiw Council  
New Brunswick African Association\*  
New Brunswick Multicultural Council\*  
New Brunswick Teachers Association\*  
New Brunswick Teachers' Federation\*  
Pride In Education\*

## Energy

Atlantica Centre for Energy\*  
Biomass Solution  
Brunswick Pipeline/Emera NB  
Coalition for Responsible Energy Development\*  
Conservation Council of New Brunswick\*  
EcoAdvisors  
Fundy Engineering\*  
Gaia Project  
Hatch  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers\*  
Irving Oil\*  
Kinetrics\*  
Liberty Utilities  
Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Inc.  
Natural Forces  
NB Power – Énergie N.-B.\*  
New Brunswick Community College\*  
New Brunswick Energy & Utilities Board  
North Shore Micmac Tribal Council\*  
Port of Belledune – Port de Belledune\*  
Port of Saint John\*  
Saint John Energy\*  
Smart Energy Company\*  
Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick

## Health

Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick\*  
Centre for Research and Integrated Care  
Collège communautaire du N.-B.  
College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick  
Médavie\*  
NB Nurses Association\*  
NB Social Pediatrics  
New Brunswick College of Family Physicians\*  
New Brunswick Community College

New Brunswick Health Council\*  
New Brunswick Medical Education Foundation Inc.\*  
New Brunswick Medical Society\*  
New Brunswick Multicultural Council\*  
New Brunswick Nurses Union  
New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association  
Nurse Practitioners of New Brunswick\*  
Nutsihpiluwewicik Indigenous Nursing  
Paramedic Association of New Brunswick\*  
Riverstone Recovery Centre\*  
Vitalité Health Network\*

## Economic Development

Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.le.s du Nouveau-Brunswick\*  
Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick\*  
Albert County Chamber of Commerce  
Arts Link New Brunswick\*  
Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists New Brunswick\*  
Atlantic Canada Aerospace and Defense Association  
Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association  
Black Business and Professional Network Inc.  
Campbellton Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Canadian Federation of Independent Business\*  
Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum  
Cap-Acadie Chamber of Commerce\*  
Carleton North Chamber of Commerce  
Carrefour Beausoleil\*  
Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick  
Central Carleton Chamber of Commerce  
Chaleur Region Chamber of Commerce\*  
Chambre de commerce de Kent Centre  
Chambre de commerce de Kent Sud  
Chamber of Commerce of Edmundston Region  
Chambre de commerce de Rogersville  
Chambre de commerce de Saint-Quentin  
Chambre de commerce de Shippagan  
Chambre de commerce des Îles Lamèque et Miscou  
Chambre de commerce du Grand Caraquet  
Chambre de commerce de Grand Tracadie-Sheila  
Chambre de commerce du Rivière-de-Portage  
Chambre de commerce Haut Madawaska  
Chambre de commerce Kent Nord  
Chambre de commerce régionale de Kedwick  
Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters\*  
Deer Island Chamber of Commerce  
Eastern Charlotte Chamber of Commerce  
Forest NB\*  
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce\*

# APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANTS

AN \* DENOTES THAT THEY WERE IN ATTENDANCE

Grand Manan Economic Development Committee\*  
Greater Miramichi Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Moncton Chamber of Commerce\*  
Greater Woodstock Chamber of Commerce  
Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce  
Joint Economic Development Initiative  
Mactaquac County Chamber of Commerce\*  
Memramcook Chamber of Commerce  
Music NB  
New Brunswick Business Council  
New Brunswick Business Immigrant Association  
Oromocto & Area Chamber of Commerce  
Retail Council of Canada\*  
Saint John Chamber of Commerce  
St. Andrews Chamber of Commerce  
St. Martin and District Chamber of Commerce  
St. Stephen Area Chamber of Commerce  
Sussex and District Chamber of Commerce  
TechImpact  
Tourism Industry Association New Brunswick  
Valley Chamber of commerce  
Wallace McCain Institute

## Environment

8 Cities  
Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick\*  
Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick\*  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society New Brunswick\*  
Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick  
Conservation Council of New Brunswick\*  
Eastern Charlotte Waterways\*  
NB Power\*  
Forest NB\*  
Gaia Project  
Lung NB\*  
Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Inc.  
Nashwaak Watershed Association  
Nature Conservancy Atlantic  
Nature NB\*  
Nature Trust NB\*  
NB Environmental Network  
New Brunswick Business Council  
New Brunswick Medical Society  
Peskotomuhkati Nation at Skutik  
Recycle NB  
Stop Spraying New Brunswick  
Saint Thomas University Sustainability Committee  
Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick\*  
Valorès

Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick

## Housing

8 Cities\*  
Ability New Brunswick  
Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick  
APHL Inc.  
Business Owners Managers Association New Brunswick\*  
Canadian Home Builders' Association New Brunswick\*  
Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick\*  
First Steps Housing Project Inc.  
Habitat for Humanity New Brunswick  
Housing Alternatives Inc.\*  
Housing Hub of New Brunswick\*  
Housing, Mobilization, Engagement and Resiliency Lab\*  
Human Development Council  
Inclusion NB.\*  
John Howard Society of New Brunswick Fundy Region\*  
Kaleidoscope Social Impact\*  
Mi'gmawe'l Tplu'taqnn Inc.  
Miramichi Housing Solutions Inc.  
Miramichi Regional Housing Authority  
Mount Allison Student Union  
New Brunswick Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now\*  
New Brunswick Community College\*  
New Brunswick Multicultural Council\*  
New Brunswick Non-Profit Housing Association\*  
NBSGC  
New Brunswick Apartment Owners Association\*  
New Brunswick Real Estate Association\*  
New Brunswick Student Alliance  
Peskotomuhkati Nation at Skutik  
Project Village Housing\*  
Résidences Habitat Soleil Inc.\*  
Rising Tide Community Initiatives\*  
Saint John Non Profit Housing Inc.  
Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission\*  
Saint Thomas University Student Union  
Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick\*  
University of New Brunswick Student Union  
Wolastoqey Nation New Brunswick