

New Brunswick: a province of opportunity

While the province boasts a strong infrastructure for businesses looking to locate in New Brunswick, having the right people to do all kinds of jobs is an important part of maintaining that infrastructure.

There are many opportunities for health-care professionals, information technology specialists, financial sector employees and skilled trades people.

"Infrastructure and a strong labour pool have to grow together," says Business New Brunswick Minister Greg Byrne. "We recognize the potential challenges that can arise because of a declining population. However, there are a lot of good job opportunities in New Brunswick available to the skilled workers living in our province, and former residents who are looking to move back home."

In order to lessen the effects of changing demographics in New Brunswick, the provincial government will establish a Population Growth Secretariat. The Secretariat will develop a comprehensive strategy to retain New Brunswick residents, repatriate former residents, and expand immigration and settlement activities.

"The government's ability to attract former New Brunswickers will be greatly assisted by other planned initiatives that are intended to build a strong provincial economy with stable high-paying job opportunities," said Byrne. "Through economic and job creation strategies, such as turning New Brunswick into an energy hub, the government will help to create an environment for the kinds of jobs that will bring our skilled workers back."

One of the most exciting opportunities New Brunswick is facing is the possible construction of a second Irving Oil refinery in Saint John.

Recently the company announced a new refinery could supply up to 300,000 barrels per day of refined product to the U.S. Northeast and would cost approximately \$5-\$7 billion to build. It would employ about 5,000 people during the construction phase and create 1,000 permanent jobs.

A project of this magnitude would result in significant additional employment and business opportunities during construction and operation, including billions of dollars in spin-off activity and the creation of thousands of additional permanent jobs.

"Such a large investment would have a positive impact on many of the region's priorities, most notably stemming the tide of Atlantic Canada's declining population," said Kevin Scott, Director of Refining Growth for Irving Oil. "An important part of our research will be to understand how all aspects of our community would benefit from this project. This includes education, affordable housing, and immigration, just to name a few."

"The economic potential of an investment like this is exciting, but knowing it would have a positive influence on the standard of living in the region is truly motivating."



Fireworks light up the Saint John harbour. A proposed second oil refinery for the Port City would solidify Saint John's position as the energy hub of the Maritimes.

A second refinery would solidify Saint John's position as the energy hub of the Northeast and represent a major boost to the future of the region. In addition to the existing refinery, the Saint John area is already home to Atlantic Canada's only nuclear-generating station and more than 1,100 megawatts of thermal power generation.

Irving Oil expects to make a decision on whether to move forward with a permit application for a new refinery by early 2007.

Irving Oil is also leading the way with proposed projects with its planned \$750-million liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in east Saint John, in partnership with Spanish energy giant Repsol YPF SA. The terminal's initial capacity would be one billion cubic feet of natural gas per day.

Along with the Irving projects, NB Power's Point Lepreau nuclear power station, located west of Saint John, is a hotspot for employment with its \$1.4-billion upgrade under way.

The new provincial government has also

talked about exploring the feasibility of an expansion at the power station.

The concept of an energy hub is also gaining momentum from the presence of Repsol. Halifax-based Emera Inc. plans to build a 145-kilometre natural gas pipeline to connect the LNG terminal in Saint John to the state of Maine, carrying the gas into the U.S. Northeast and beyond.

In other parts of New Brunswick, job opportunities are plentiful, especially in the information technology fields and e-business. Moncton, for example, is one of the region's most rapidly growing centres for economic growth.

Byrne says with so many exciting things happening in New Brunswick, he believes Atlantic Canadians living in Alberta will consider opportunities in New Brunswick.

"There are great things happening in our province," Byrne says. "There are job prospects now and even more to come. I am confident that these opportunities will be attractive to former residents who would like to come back home."