

BUSINESS PLAN

2022-23



Economic Development



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Table of Contents

- Message from the Minister 2
- Department Mandate 4
- Statutory Responsibilities 4
 - Develop Nova Scotia 5
 - Innovacorp 5
 - Nova Scotia Business Inc. 5
 - Events East Group 5
- Strategic Direction for 2022-2023 6
 - Priority Initiatives for 2022-2023 6
 - Nova Scotia Loyal 6
 - Connecting Nova Scotians 6
 - Sustainable Prosperity 6
 - Regional Approaches and Comparative Advantage 7
 - Key Department Activities 7
- 2022 -2023 Budget Expenses Summary 9

Message from the Minister

As we begin to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, our province has many exciting opportunities ahead. For the past two years, Nova Scotians have come together, and their strength, perseverance and kindness has shone through. As we look to our economic recovery, I know those same principals will continue to guide us.

Nova Scotia businesses have faced substantial challenges and made many sacrifices for the public good. They pivoted, found new and innovative ways of doing business and did their very best to ensure Nova Scotians still had access to the products and services we need and desire. Going forward, we will continue to work with our business community to overcome obstacles and seize opportunities for growth.

As we look to the future, Nova Scotia has much to feel optimistic about. Our population is on the rise, surpassing the one million mark this past December, and we saw positive interprovincial migration to all counties across the province.

As more people choose to call Nova Scotia home, we want more businesses to grow and thrive here, too. We know that the best solutions come from the grassroots level. That's why a key part of our success will be working with communities to identify their unique advantages and capitalize on them. And as more people start and scale their businesses in all parts of the province, this approach will help generate a dynamic environment for them to succeed.

In 2022-23, the Department of Economic Development will focus on our economic recovery. We will help enable our entrepreneurs to build their ideas and grow their businesses, encourage and support innovative, sustainable and green businesses, and continue to collaborate with local businesses and other partners to enhance environmental and economic sustainability.

Over the next year, work on the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative will also continue. Access to reliable, high-speed internet for the remaining households and business in Nova Scotia is a priority, as it will ultimately help connect our communities and make it easier for businesses across the province to operate.

This year we will launch Nova Scotia Loyal - a comprehensive initiative designed to inspire Nova Scotians while promoting greater awareness, pride and purchasing of products that

are made, manufactured or substantially produced in our province. The ultimate goal is to grow our economy and keep more money here at home.

Nova Scotia has many distinct advantages and valuable assets, including a competitive economy, plentiful resources, our beautiful coastlines, and a strong commitment to community well-being. Perhaps our most important asset, however, is the people who call Nova Scotia home. We have a clear vision for the future of our province, and together, we will design an economy that all Nova Scotians can participate in and benefit from.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Susan Corkum-Greek

Department Mandate

The mandate of the department is clear in its name. Recognizing development is an ongoing and collaborative process, the department will align government efforts toward economic growth and advancement to improve the well-being of Nova Scotians.

To achieve this mandate, the department will:

Take an action-oriented approach focused on practical responses and initiatives that encourage Nova Scotia's innovation, competitiveness, entrepreneurship, and regional development based on comparative advantages.

Collaborate with its Crown corporations and leverage established networks to convene and catalyze action across provincial departments; municipal and federal government partners; and post-secondary institutions to create a dynamic environment for businesses to succeed.

Continue to foster relationships and engagement with entrepreneurs and small business owners; large businesses; and venture capital investors recognizing the contributions of businesses in all regions and sectors to realize the province's economic objectives.

Work within all the Province's distinct regions; each with their own unique advantages, to enable communities to participate in solutions that positively impact regional economic success.

Statutory Responsibilities

The department supports the Minister of Economic Development in the statutory mandate to oversee a portfolio of three Crown corporations; the provincial interest in Events East Group; the Invest Nova Scotia Board, and Peggy's Cove Commission.

The department provides strategic direction and policy support to align the portfolio behind a common agenda to meet government's commitment to Nova Scotians, economic equality, and sustainable prosperity.

Develop Nova Scotia

Develop Nova Scotia is responsible for investing in strategic economic infrastructure, properties and programs that enhance our quality of place. Develop Nova Scotia works with partners and communities to make Nova Scotia an attractive place to live, work, invest, and visit.

Innovacorp

Innovacorp is Nova Scotia's early-stage venture capital organization. Innovacorp finds, funds, and fosters innovative Nova Scotia start-ups. Target industries include information technology, clean technology, life sciences and ocean technology. Early-stage investment is at the core of Innovacorp's business model. It also provides entrepreneurs with access to world-class incubation facilities, expert advice and other supports to help accelerate start-up companies.

Nova Scotia Business Inc.

Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) helps Nova Scotia businesses grow exports through access to business advisory services, skills development, and training. NSBI attracts foreign direct investment to Nova Scotia to grow the economy and strengthen its ecosystems and export capacity, market intelligence, financing, and support in accessing global markets.

Events East Group

Events East Group manages and operates the Halifax Convention Centre, Scotiabank Centre and Ticket Atlantic. Events East Group was created through legislation as a government partnership between the Province of Nova Scotia and Halifax Regional Municipality, to act as a catalyst for new opportunities and connections between Nova Scotia and the world.

The department is responsible for the Invest Nova Scotia Board Act with the purpose to foster an economic environment which encourages sustained development and growth through incentives that have broad benefits across sectors, innovations systems, and regions.

In addition, the department is responsible for the Peggy's Cove Commission Act with the purpose to preserve the unique scenic beauty, character, and atmosphere of the area for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors.

Strategic Direction for 2022-2023

Working across government and with our federal, provincial, and municipal partners we will continue to focus on meeting strategic economic objectives across all regions of the province. The Department of Economic Development will direct its efforts to achieve our mandate commitments, manage department activities, and align Crown corporation activities in the coming year.

Priority Initiatives for 2022-2023

Nova Scotia Loyal

The department will lead implementation of Nova Scotia Loyal, an incentive program focused on Nova Scotia products. This year's efforts will include a marketing campaign and seal and developing a program to support local consumption.

Connecting Nova Scotians

The department will continue to work toward supporting the technological infrastructure to enable reliable, high-speed internet and/or satellite service to households and business in the province. It is planned to have infrastructure available to at least 94% of the population this year.

Sustainable Prosperity

The Department will work with the Departments of Environment and Climate Change to meet its commitments to support business under the *Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act* and the planned Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth. The department will work with small businesses and sector representatives to collect feedback on ways to reduce emissions, administer rebates, and target investments. In addition, the department will continue discussions with major industry leaders to determine what steps they can take to ensure more environmentally conscious progress is made while actively pursuing federal funding programs that enhance environmental and economic sustainability and partnerships that position Nova Scotia as a world leader in sustainable development.

The department will continue its role as a secretariat for the Forestry Innovation Transition Trust which is focussed on accelerating new opportunities within the provincial forestry sector to enhance environmental, social, and economic values. Projects may include the development of high-value products; enhanced business models, processes, or services; and new forestry practices that improve the ecological sustainability of forestry and biological resources in Nova Scotia.

The department will work on strengthening Nova Scotia's blue economy through collaboration with the Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship (COVE), to provide high quality marine infrastructure and a collaborative space for ocean businesses to start, grow and prosper. COVE helps ocean sector firms develop, test, and commercialize new marine sensor technologies more quickly and cost-effectively. It will also foster collaboration and facilitate data sharing to support product research, development, and demonstration.

Regional Approaches and Comparative Advantage

The department also works with the Regional Enterprise Networks (RENS) who lead a collaborative approach to economic development by supporting business growth in all regions of Nova Scotia. RENS support sustainable economic growth by concentrating on business retention, expansion, and investment, and creating better conditions for business operations.

The department will provide tools to support economic development across Nova Scotia and partner with municipalities, private sector enterprises, and equity finance to enable entrepreneurs to start and scale their business. New business will be encouraged to re-locate to the province through access to financing; quality connectivity and digital access; and investment attraction resources dedicated to innovation, clean technology, life sciences, manufacturing, and IT.

The department will encourage innovative, sustainable, and green business to establish or relocate to the Province; and continue work with the Nova Scotia Community College and the labour sector to modernize our apprenticeship programs. The department will continue to strengthen the provincial marine industry through efforts that include working with Irving Shipyard Inc. to maximize investment through value proposition spending under the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

Key Department Activities

The department is responsible for strategic direction, planning, and evidence-based policy decisions that support the economic agenda of the province. As part of ongoing operations, the department will:

Ensure the most efficient and accountable approach for economic development. This will include implementing recommended actions from a government-wide review of agencies, offices, and Crown corporations as well as undertaking a targeted review of

investment and attraction mechanisms and structures to ensure they support various communities across the province.

Ensure the innovation ecosystem continues to flourish in Nova Scotia by maximizing partnerships with innovation hubs and incubators and make certain funding aligns with economic objectives.

Continue to work across departments to facilitate regulatory coordination on major projects to ensure collaboration and efficient delivery of service.

Maintain stewardship of previously approved commitments under the *Jobs Fund Act* until 2042.

Build on learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic and work with sectors and communities to inform economic policy over the coming years.

2022 -2023 Budget Expenses Summary (\$ thousands)

<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>2021-22 Estimate</u>	<u>2021-22 Forecast</u>	<u>2022-23 Estimate</u>
Senior Management	1,075	1,000	1,039
Policy and Operations	10,350	72,845	10,227
Halifax Convention Centre Amortization	7,720	7,720	7,720
Nova Scotia Jobs Fund	13,198	-350	11,874
Invest Nova Scotia	3,000	2,323	3,000
Crown Corporations	69,580	68,894	62,669
Total - Departmental Expenses	104,923	152,432	96,529
Ordinary Recoveries	536	629	526
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u>			
Total - Funded Staff	28.7	23.9	28.5
Less: Staff Funded by External Agencies	(0.2)	0.0	0.0
Total - Departmentally Funded Staff	28.5	23.9	28.5