

THE ANTIGONISH AREA
PARTNERSHIP
Launch Plan
September, 2003

The Antigonish Area Partnership

Launch Plan

“Making Antigonish the best community of its size in Canada”

FORWARD

This Launch Plan is the result of work mandated by the first Antigonish Economic Summit, May 6, 2003. This plan serves as a roadmap for the creation and start-up of the **Antigonish Area Partnership (AAP)**. The AAP is the response to the overwhelming consensus achieved by the delegates at the Summit.

During the Summit, as evidenced by delegates’ resolutions and comments in the evaluation forms, the community clearly stated that it wants a new approach to the **furtherance** of economic growth in the Antigonish area. The Summit participants urged both new solutions to old problems, and new opportunities discovered and nurtured through innovative, proactive and aggressive strategies. The goals are clear – **prosperity, smart economic growth, and a sound future for our community**.

This plan responds to instructions from the Summit. The Launch Plan has been tailor-made for our community, reflecting the delegates’ wish for a private-public partnership that is appropriate for a community of our size and character. This Launch Plan is an evolving document, just as the launch of the **Partnership** is an evolving process.

Antigonish is well poised to take this initiative. Antigonish is a knowledge centre, a regional health centre, an area rich in resource and agriculture based industries, a business centre and an area with a thriving cultural community. The area has a well-developed infrastructure. It is one of the most wired small communities in Canada, with a high density of internet users, and it has a diverse and secure economic base.

The challenges and opportunities of the community demand innovative, even daring solutions. Above all, they require a strong community consensus on common goals.

PART 1. LAUNCHING THE PARTNERSHIP

1) The Antigonish Area Partnership

- 1a) **The Antigonish Area Partnership (AAP)** is a partnership rooted in the values of the community, and created to invigorate and strengthen the economy of the Antigonish area. It is a partnership of the private and the public sectors. **Its role is to be a leader in promoting and facilitating sustainable economic growth across all sectors of the Antigonish area economy comprising the municipal units of the Town and County of Antigonish.**
- 1b) **The aim of the AAP is to make Antigonish the best community of its size in Canada.** It will market the Antigonish area as a prime location to do business. The AAP will raise the profile of the area's many assets and will work with the business community and other organizations to achieve this goal.
- 1c) The **Partnership** will build upon the public consultation of the First Antigonish Economic Summit. The AAP will continuously gather updated input from the community.
- 1d) The AAP is an action-based organization whose performance will be measured annually through the employment of reliable baseline data.

2) The Antigonish Area Partnership has three strategies for community economic growth:

2a) Take care of what we have (**retention**)

- i) Our existing assets represent many years of successful economic activity, driven by dedicated and skilled individuals with a proven track record of achievement. The **Partnership** will employ resources to maintain and nurture our existing assets. This will strengthen and stabilize the economic base of the community.

2b) Grow what we have (**expansion**)

- i) Studies show that 80% – 90% of community economic growth comes from within. The development and expansion of existing businesses, and the creation of new ventures by resident interests will be the engine that drives the local economy. The **Partnership** will focus on growing what we have through aggressive marketing and promotion, partnering and gathering of vital data.

2c) Attract new business and investment (**recruit**)

- i) Bringing new business and investment into the community is the most challenging and expensive of the three strategies. This strategy will require more resources, greater investments in effort and expenses, the ability to form and maintain multi-level and multi-lateral partnerships, and a broad vision. The **Partnership** will work to assure that new investment brings sustainable, smart growth.

3) Deliverables to the Community:

3a) More opportunities for growth

- i) The **Partnership** will identify opportunities for economic growth and develop strategies to help realize this growth.

3b) More investment leading to more jobs

- i) Job creation results from investment in our local economy. A true partnership between the private and public sectors will assist in creating an environment that welcomes and nurtures new investment leading to more jobs in an expanded employment base.

3c) More prosperity

- i) Increased opportunity and investment leads to more prosperity through smart growth.

3d) Measurable performance indicators

- i) The **Partnership** will develop and distribute key performance indicators for the local economy in order to assist investors and to track economic growth. The **Partnership** will assist the community in measuring its progress in both absolute and relative terms through creation of baseline data and comparison with similar communities in Canada.

4) The Antigonish Area Partnership operates under five basic principles:

4a) The **Partnership** is a not-for-profit, private-public enterprise, accountable directly to its Board of Directors and its Investors, and, through them, to the Community;

- i) The **Partnership** is a business. It works with its partners and clients to grow the local economy and fulfill its business plan.

4b) The **Partnership** has an independent Board of Directors drawn from investors from the public and private sectors;

- i) The Board of Directors reflects the **Partnership's** objectives and it is made up of leaders dedicated and capable of addressing the **Partnership's** priorities. Maintaining a strong and talented Board of Directors is essential.

4c) The **Partnership** has responsibility for economic growth, marketing and promotion;

- i) The **Partnership** will work both within and outside of the community to foster economic growth through the fulfillment of its business plan.

4d) The **Partnership** practices direct partnering with business;

- i) Focused on its business plan, the **Partnership** works directly with the business community in a flexible and responsive manner to achieve growth in the Antigonish Area.

4e) The **Partnership** is financed through investment by the business community, by public institutions and governments. Normally the business community will provide the highest aggregate share.

- i) The **Partnership** is a marriage between private and public sectors. It is a true partnership because it represents a pooling of resources to achieve common goals and address common issues. Both sectors share the risk, the work, and both are accountable to the investors and, through them, to the community.

5) Priorities

5a) Build confidence within the Community

- i) Market to the Community
- ii) Market the Antigonish Area to Nova Scotia and Canada
- iii) Market the Antigonish Area to the Global Economy

5b) Build business relationships and partner with others

- i) Partnerships which contribute to the community's growth and prosperity
- ii) Partnerships with business organizations
- iii) Partnerships with government departments and agencies
- iv) Business alliances with other communities, markets and public institutions

5c) Be the advocate for growth

5d) Develop and publish sound and accurate data on the community's economic progress as the basis for building confidence and attracting new investment

5e) Try to influence public policy where and when appropriate

6) The Antigonish Area Partnership Launch Plan is a "work in progress."

6a) The objective of this document is to launch the **Partnership**.

6b) The Board of Directors, in consultation with investors, will refine and refocus strategies and priorities for action.

6c) The President and staff, working closely with the Board and investors will implement priorities.

6d) The Launch of the **Antigonish Area Partnership** will send a signal that the Antigonish area has embarked on a bold initiative to carry forward the objectives of the First Antigonish Economic Summit.

PART 2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

1) Legal Structure

1a) Private corporation

- i) The **Antigonish Area Partnership** is registered as a private, not-for-profit corporation under the laws of Nova Scotia.

2) Investors

2a) The AAP is financed by private and public investors. Investment is tiered to reflect the diversity within the public and private sectors. Investment is both in cash and in kind.

2b) Investment tier levels will be approved by the Board, in consultation with the investors.

2c) Investment in the AAP will be governed by an Investor Agreement, which clearly defines the obligations and rights of both parties. The purpose of the Agreement is to ensure a transparent process, a fully understood commitment from both parties, and a mechanism to accommodate change.

- i) Investors have sustained input through annual meetings of the **Partnership** and through **ongoing investor-relations** which will be central to the Partnership's communications strategy.
- ii) The Investor Agreement will be developed by the Board of the AAP in consultation with investors and legal counsel.

3) Board of Directors

3a) General

- i) The Antigonish community, through the first Antigonish Economic Summit, has expressed its desire for increased prosperity through the creation of a dynamic organization focused on sustainable and intelligent economic growth.
- ii) The organization of the AAP will reflect the Partnership's objectives. It will be designed to deliver on those objectives in a dynamic and changing environment. The **Partnership** will be able to respond to change. It will be an engine of prosperity and smart growth.
- iii) The **Partnership** is made up of investors. In this case investors are not shareholders. They are making an investment in the **prosperity** of their community, and, thus, in themselves, their businesses and their institutions.
- iv) Under the direction of the Board, the President will be responsible for the management of the **Partnership**, and thus the investment by the public and private sectors, which is the AAP's working capital.
- v) The Board of Directors will be made up of **Partnership** investors who are community leaders dedicated and able to address the Partnership's priorities.

- vi) As in any business, the Board of Directors will be nominated from the pool of investors. They will be people with talent, experience and with useful networks. This guarantees that directors have a vital stake in the **Partnership** and in the growth and prosperity of the community. Other factors like gender balance, sector representation, race and ethnicity may also be considered.

3b) The Board – Structure

- i) The AAP is governed by a Board of 16 (sixteen) directors. The Board sets policy, priorities for the AAP.
- ii) There will be an Executive Committee of the Board to assist the President and CEO in carrying out the policies set by the Board. The Executive Committee will consist of the Chair, the President and CEO, the Mayor, the County Warden, and three others.
- iii) The Board hires the President and CEO, and provides oversight.
- iv) The Board will Appoint its Chair and Executive Committee
- v) The Board of Directors will have a majority of members from the private sector.
- vi) The Board includes a single representative each of the Town and County municipal governments, The Chamber of Commerce, StFX University, Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority, and the President and CEO. Other members will be elected from the community at large.
- vii) Election to the Board will take place annually at the Annual General Meeting of the AAP. Only investors from the public and private sectors will be eligible to sit on the board.
- viii) The Board may grant Observer status to other interested parties and government representatives who can aid the AAP in its mission.

(1) Permanent board positions (6)

- (a) Mayor, Town of Antigonish
- (b) Warden, Municipality of the County of Antigonish
- (c) President, Antigonish Chamber of Commerce
- (d) President, StFX University
- (e) CEO of Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority
- (f) President and CEO, AAP

(2) Investor board members (10)

(3) Observers to the Board (3)

- (a) CAO, Town of Antigonish
- (b) CAO, Municipality of the County of Antigonish
- (c) Executive Director, Antigonish Chamber of Commerce

4) Governance

4a) The AAP will be structured to ensure efficient management and investor participation

- i) The AAP will be legally structured as a society with a 16 member Board of Directors all of whom are members of the Society.
- ii) A minority of directorships will be filled through standing appointments based on institutional representation (i.e., Mayor, Warden, etc). The balance will be filled from the investors at large.
- iii) Board membership will be fulfilled through a nomination and election process.
- iv) The Board will select its Chair and Officers (Executive Committee).
- v) Accountability to the investors is a self-regulating process. Retention will depend on fulfillment.
- vi) Accountability to the community will be guaranteed through public partners as well as the investors.

4b) The AAP is a balanced, dynamic organization.

- i) The AAP seeks to maintain a representative balance on its Board of Directors.
- ii) The AAP is focused on the growth and prosperity of the community and on delivering value to its public and private sector investors.
- iii) The AAP seeks to lead through action, and governance must be efficient, responsive and focused. Like any successful business it must be able to focus on opportunities as they arise.

4c) Directors will be appointed as follows:

- i) All candidates for directorships, including Permanent Positions, **must** be investors in good standing in the AAP.
- ii) A Nomination Committee of the Board of Directors will identify and qualify potential directors from the investor pool and recommend appointments to the Board based on the AAP priorities and governance policies.
- iii) The Board of Directors will elect all Directors at its Annual Meeting.

4d) Policies

- i) Governance policies will be created by the Board to address various issues including:
 - (1) Terms of office
 - (2) Responsibilities of Directors
 - (3) Responsibilities, duties and powers of the President and CEO
 - (4) Executive Committee
 - (5) Staffing and management
 - (6) Investor relations

PART 3. OPERATIONS

1) Staffing

- 1a) President and CEO hired directly by the Board of Directors
 - i) Office Manager
 - ii) Administrative Assistant
 - iii) Contractors hired as the need may arise, subject to budgetary approval.

2) Infrastructure

- 2a) The AAP will seek an appropriate location for its main office.
 - i) Space, equipment and sundry supply requirements will be detailed in the first business plan of the Partnership.

3) Budget

- 3a) The AAP will develop a budget based on the priorities set by the Board. The Board will approve the budget at the beginning of each fiscal year. The President and CEO will report quarterly to the Board on budget performance.
- 3b) In order to provide a sense of the resources required to start up the partnership, we present the estimate below. This estimate is a realistic expectation of income that intends to help the Board set goals and build a detailed business plan and budget. Allocation of funds to various categories will result from the business plan.
- 3c) Preliminary overall estimates as follows:
 - i) Revenue
 - (1) Income from all sources: \$450,000
 - ii) Expenditures:
 - (1) Personnel \$190,000
 - (2) Operations \$260,000
 - (3) Total expenditures \$450,000

4) Operational priorities

- 4a) The **Partnership** will set forth operational priorities in its initial business plan. Initially, the Partnership will focus on three vital areas of development: Marketing and Promotion, Partnering and Networking, and Data Development.
 - i) **Marketing and Promotional Priorities**
 - (1) **Partnership** corporate identity and collateral marketing materials
 - (a) Creation of basic corporate stationery and associated materials

- (b) Creation of materials and processes for ongoing promotion of the Partnership employing such collateral as brochures, information packages, kit folders, web presence, etc.
- (c) Creation of an “**AAP ambassador’s kit**” for investors traveling outside the area.
- (2) Conceive and develop local campaigns to promote the Antigonish Area to itself
 - (a) Raise confidence
 - (b) Create awareness of new opportunities
 - (c) Promote participation in and value of the AAP
- (3) Develop marketing strategy for the Antigonish Area addressing the following:
 - (a) Sustaining what we have
 - (b) Growing our existing assets
 - (c) Attracting new investment

ii) Partnering Priorities

- (1) Develop relationships for strategic purposes:
 - (a) Local partnering
 - (i) Help our investors find areas of mutual opportunity within the local area.
 - (b) External partnering
 - (i) Develop a network that will help our investors find and develop new opportunities.
 - (ii) Seek out site selectors and others engaged in locating businesses in new communities in order to attract new investment to the area.

iii) Data Development Priorities

- (1) Develop and/or procure reliable baseline data to measure economic growth and provide comparative statistics. Data will be developed in partnership with the business community, the university and various consultants and suppliers. Developing, maintaining and distributing reliable data are among the most important ongoing functions of the AAP. Data will focus on:
 - (a) Consumer and business confidence
 - (b) Transportation
 - (c) Economic strength
 - (d) Quality of business
 - (e) Quality of life
- (2) Based on the data, develop an ongoing program to measure progress over time and to keep track of important indicators. Results to be released at regular intervals.
- (3) Identify and track comparable communities to provide a relative measure of growth. Statistics to be released at regular intervals.

PART 4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

- 1) The unique qualities and configuration of the Antigonish area offer a number of areas of opportunity for economic growth. The **Partnership** will work with the investor group to set priorities and develop action plans for each area of opportunity. Below are some examples of sectors that offer opportunities for enhancing the prosperity of the Antigonish area.

1a) Tourism and Hospitality

- i) Tourism and hospitality are well-established industries and key components of the area's economy. The AAP will work cooperatively with the various operators, associations and public sector institutions promoting tourism and hospitality. The **Partnership** can play a key role in such services as broad-based marketing, data development and market intelligence, and networking.

1b) Education and the Knowledge Economy

- i) Education is one of the strongest areas of economic activity in the Antigonish area. The AAP is well poised to work with StFX University in such areas as the commercialization of research, marketing educational products, promoting the local facilities (i.e. Millennium Centre), entrepreneurial development and training (i.e. the St.FX Enterprise Development Centre) and facilitating the university-community relationship. In addition, the AAP is well positioned to build relationships between the community college system, the university and industry.

1c) Health Care

- i) Antigonish is fortunate to host an important regional hospital as well as a number of related and/or satellite institutions. The area is also headquarters of the regional health authority (GASHA) serving approximately 50,000 residents of four counties of Eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. Consequently the Antigonish area is home base for a significant number of health care professionals providing excellent care at both primary and secondary levels, as well as many skilled practitioners in related health disciplines. The hospital also provides a number of specialized clinics for outpatients. In addition Antigonish is a centre for extended care facilities.
- ii) As the demands on the provincial health care system grow, regional centres like Antigonish will be called upon to provide more services to larger client groups, and opportunities will expand for economic activity including public, private and joint public-private situations.

1d) Primary and Secondary Industries

- i) Antigonish hosts a number of industrial activities in such sectors as steel fabrication, construction, building material supplies, mining, road building, light manufacturing, forest products, agriculture and fishing. With a mix of both primary and secondary industries, as well as post-industrial knowledge-based industries, the area has a fairly well diversified industrial mix, which enhances economic stability and opens up opportunities for creative partnering.

1e) Retail, Services, etc.

- i) Antigonish is also a robust centre of retail trade and a variety of services including direct to consumer and business-to-business. These businesses are a vital part of the Antigonish area economy. The **Partnership** will work with the Chamber of Commerce and others in furthering the growth and development of this sector.

1f) International Opportunities

- i) Due to the presence of StFX University and the related Coady International Institute, Antigonish has a long history of international relationships. With the continued growth of communications technology, Antigonish enjoys opportunities for developing enhanced international relationships. The AAP will participate in, and help provide leadership in, the effort to further expand international relationships with a focus on attracting talented people, expanding markets for our products, and attracting investment.

PART 5. LAUNCH SEQUENCE

- 1) The process leading to the formal launch of the **Antigonish Area Partnership** is in progress and will continue until the **Partnership** is operational. The process will proceed as follows:
 - 1a) Completion and review of Launch Plan (this Document) (August, 2003)
 - 1b) Recall of Antigonish Economic Summit delegates for a follow-up session to present the Launch Plan to the community. (early September, 2003)
 - i) Session to be chaired by Dr. Michael J. MacDonald in his original capacity as Summit Chair.
 - 1c) Establishment of the **Antigonish Area Partnership** “Team of Founders” to work with Dr. MacDonald, as consultant, to establish the **Partnership** and conduct a hiring process for the President and CEO of the **Partnership**. (mid-September, 2003)
 - 1d) The **Antigonish Area Partnership** is launched (October, 2003).

CLOSING THOUGHTS

The bold initiative taken by the Antigonish community in May of 2003 sets Antigonish apart as a leader in community action and economic growth in Canada. This kind of extraordinary leadership is typical of a community that has been an integral part of such innovative actions as the early development of credit unions, the cooperative movement, international educational initiatives, and many significant local projects.

The combination of our extraordinary pool of talent and our many and varied assets makes Antigonish a prime candidate for a successful private-public partnership as proposed for the AAP. It is a challenging project, requiring a new approach, a lot of dedication, energy and good will. The instructions from the Summit delegates were clear, “Get together, get organized, and get on with it!” Through the **Antigonish Area Partnership** our community can become the “**best community of its size in Canada.**”

The time for action is now!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Launch Plan was created by a committee of Antigonish community leaders representing a broad range of interests. Working on behalf of our community were:

Chair

Brian G Segal, President, Redgull Incorporated

Committee Members

Dr. Minoli Amit, Paediatrician, St. Martha's Hospital, Antigonish

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Special Thanks

We make special note of the extraordinary contribution by the StFX Enterprise Development Centre throughout this process.