

Fulfilling the Community's Vision

Antigonish Area Partnership Launch Committee

On May 6, 2003, a group of local citizens, forming the most productive and representative community consultation in the Antigonish area since the days of Moses Coady and Jimmy Tompkins, came together to discuss and to make recommendations about the means to ensure future economic growth for our community.

More than 130 official delegates representing over 30 local stakeholder groups gathered at the Keating Millennium Centre for the Antigonish Economic Summit. The delegation was a very diverse group with a broad range of interests, and talents – a true gathering of the community.

The Antigonish Economic Summit was a success. We know this because we have excellent documentation of what was said and what was resolved by the delegation. There was a remarkable consensus.

The delegation instructed the community to become unified, proactive, and energetic through the establishment of an appropriately designed private-public partnership. The evaluation forms returned by the delegates contained clear and nearly unanimous instructions to “get on with it” and “form a partnership” as soon as possible. The Summit agreed that as a community, we must strive to find ways to enhance the growth of our economy while not adversely affecting the quality of life offered in the Antigonish area.

The Antigonish tradition of leadership in socio-economic action, with roots deep in the Co-op Movement, provides a natural springboard for this innovative and challenging project. This tradition is one of the many treasures of our community. The citizens of the Antigonish area agreed to move boldly ahead with an innovative solution to the challenges and opportunities faced by our community.

The Antigonish Area Partnership Launch Committee is now working for the community and carrying out the instructions of the Summit delegation. The Committee consists of 15 volunteers, all of whom indicated a strong willingness to work on behalf of the community. The committee members have a specific task – to fulfill the resolution of the Summit calling for the creation a private-public partnership that is appropriate to our community and that is capable of fulfilling the mandate to work with community partners to help our economy achieve meaningful, sustained and desirable economic growth.

Once formed, the Antigonish Area Partnership will be just that – a partnership. It will be inclusive, accessible, responsive and accountable. It will be designed to address the particular profile of our community. It will be a unique organization. The new private-public partnership will put Antigonish into the forefront of innovative communities in Canada.

One of the great strengths of this project is that it is the fulfillment of the wishes of the community expressed at the most fundamental, grass roots level. Our work in creating the

proposed private-public partnership is performed with the authority of, and for the benefit of, our community. This is a wonderful example of true democracy in action. May 6, 2003 was an historic day for the Antigonish Area.

A full report of the Summit proceedings and resolutions is being prepared, and will be available on the Internet to the general public by the end of June. Watch this space for an announcement.

Please join us in thanking all of the wonderful people who so generously gave of their time and talent at the Summit. What a gift to our community!