



Fredericton Airport Expansion Receives Support from Canadian Chamber of Commerce

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FREDERICTON, NB – At their recent annual general meeting and conference, delegates of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce passed a policy resolution supporting a policy change that would facilitate federal funding for the proposed expansion at the Fredericton International Airport. The resolution, sponsored by the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce, Fredericton Chamber of Commerce and chambers in the other five affected communities calls on the government to include small “national airport system” airports, such as Fredericton’s, to be eligible to receive funding under the Airport Capital Assistance Program.

The Fredericton airport is one of 26 airports that form the national airport system. These airports have been identified as being strategically important to the country’s air travel system. However, NAS airports are excluded from ACAP funding - which was established to help airports with fewer than 525,000 annual passengers with capital project funding. Fredericton is one of six such airports that are small enough to otherwise need and receive ACAP funding but for this policy.

“The policy resolution received support of 97.3% of delegates at the conference, which demonstrates broad support across the country for this policy change,” said Paul Simmonds, Fredericton chamber President. “It is a recognition by business leaders that effective air access is critical to compete in the global economy.”

In its most recent survey, Fredericton Chamber of Commerce members placed the airport expansion as the region’s top infrastructure priority for economic growth by a clear margin.

“Our members have been very clear that the Fredericton airport must be expanded,” added Krista Ross, Fredericton chamber CEO. “This is a shovel-ready project, with the airport authority having secured a total of ⅓ of the expected cost. The airport authority has calculated that government can expect to receive a full payback through taxes and growth in just six years - this is a good investment.”

Currently operating at 75% over capacity for which it was designed and continuing to grow passenger numbers year-over-year, the need for an expanded airport in Fredericton is clear. New Brunswick is already the most export dependent province in the country and success in sectors such as biosciences, information and communications technology, engineering and many others means that the Fredericton Region is creating a hub of expertise that we can bring to the world.

“Easy air access is central to continuing to develop these areas as well as growing our economy and population through immigration,” added Simmonds. “We are trying to attract and retain entrepreneurial newcomers and other outside investors who have a global outlook and expect to



have an airport that works for them. The same is true for local businesses - many of our high-growth industries with well-paying jobs do most or all of their work in other jurisdictions. Our current terminal is a drag on their growth and our region's prosperity."

The region's tourism, conference and other businesses will also be enhanced by an expanded airport.

"As an example - the Canadian Chamber of Commerce awarded Fredericton hosting duties for its annual conference in 2017 - bringing in hundreds of business leaders and chamber executives from across the country," added Ross. "This is a major opportunity for the community to showcase what we have to offer to a wide audience of investors and industry leaders - our current airport terminal does not get that showcase started off on the right foot."

The 2017 Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada conferences are being hosted in Fredericton from September 21st to 25th 2017.

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*With more than 950 members, the **Fredericton Chamber of Commerce** is one of Atlantic Canada's largest chambers of commerce. A dynamic business organization, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is actively engaged in policy development that affects the competitiveness of our members and of the Canadian business environment. The Chamber's vision is 'Community Prosperity Through Business'.*

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