



A letter to the Premier, the Honourable Blaine Higgs:
Reimagining a Better, Stronger New Brunswick: How might we help?

Office of the Premier
Chancery Place 6th Floor
P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1
Canada

Re: Reimagining a Better, Stronger New Brunswick – How might we help?

Dear Premier Higgs,

Let us begin by first offering our sincere thanks for your strong leadership throughout the current Covid-19 crisis that we are collectively faced with as Canadians.

We are grateful and inspired by the commitment and collaboration shown across governments and throughout our communities. Everyone is doing their part and going above and beyond to ensure that New Brunswick comes through this in a way that strengthens us as people and a province.

There have been many articles, theories and roadmaps for recovery from Covid-19 and, at times, it is overwhelming. There is no playbook to draw from and the task ahead daunting.

Over the past four weeks, a number of leaders representing businesses, not-for-profit and the immigration sector have been meeting weekly to share information, support each other and think about:

How can we collaborate to best contribute in a meaningful way that is helpful to government?

Through our learning and discovery as a group, we looked at the way forward as having three phases:

1. **Response** – The government and communities' response has been nothing short of amazing! We are so encouraged and grateful for the leadership and rapid response that has led New Brunswick's risk level to be minimal. This has set us up to deal with the crisis effectively and to minimize the impact on New Brunswickers.
2. **Reopen** – How we approach recovery will certainly be led by our Public Health experts and their global counterparts for how to best "re-open" our communities.
3. **Reimagine** – Our group of leaders found solace in taking an hour a week to lift our hearts and minds from the day to day crisis and begin to think about how NB could emerge stronger and better. The economic and financial fallout for government and

communities will be like none that New Brunswick has likely ever experienced. New Brunswick will have to operate differently and this time provides an opportunity for deep change in our province.

Reimagining NB: Prioritize and coordinate for swift action and delivery

Our group does not have all of the answers and, in fact, we do not have all of the right questions.

What we **do** have is a strong desire to participate in a **reimagining** of New Brunswick, along with our government, academic, business and community leaders.

Although there are many unknowns, we do know that we will have to prioritize for swift action and ensure that we have a provincially coordinated plan that clearly defines roles and ownership of key action plans.

In your view, how could a small group of cross sector leaders work on a short term basis, shoulder-to- shoulder with government to examine questions like:

- How do we set public expectations for what the government can do post-pandemic, realizing the negative impact on government finances during the State of Emergency?
- How to invest limited resources in high potential industries where NB can win on a regional, national and global scale?
- How to get the private sector investing in the go forward plan?
- How to invest strategically in infrastructure to stimulate the economy while addressing social needs such as limited affordable housing and the digital divide?
- How can we build on the success of Future Ready NB to connect young people to employment opportunities right here in New Brunswick to build leading organizations?
- How do we advance the use of technology and automation to ensure our improved productivity and global reach enables us to be competitive?

Premier Higgs, please know that you have a network of partners that are keen to engage and bring our individual and collective strengths to an effort that supports your government.

We strongly believe that partnership and collaboration with the private sector, community sector, academia, and public sector will lay the groundwork for a faster recovery and a stronger long-term future for our province. We recognize there are tough choices ahead, but there are also big opportunities. Let us work together for a better New Brunswick.

We look forward to exploring opportunities to contribute with you and your team at the Government of New Brunswick.

Respectfully and with gratitude,

Adrienne O'Pray adrienne.opray@nbbc-cenb.ca
New Brunswick Business Council

Ron Marcolin Ron.Marcolin@cme-mec.ca
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters

Krista Ross kristar@frederictonchamber.ca
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

Sheri Somerville sheri@atlanticchamber.ca
Atlantic Chamber of Commerce

Thomas Raffy thomas@cenb.com
Conseil économique du Nouveau Brunswick

John Wishart jwishart@ccgm.nb.ca
Chamber of Commerce for Greater Moncton

David Duplisea dduplisea@thechambersj.com
Saint John Region Chamber of Commerce

Cathy Simpson cathy.simpson@techimpact.it
TechImpact

Karina LeBlanc Karina.LebLANC@unb.ca
Pond Deshpande Centre

Alex LeBlanc alex.leblanc@nbmc-cmnb.ca
New Brunswick Multicultural Council

Cc:

Hon. Mary Wilson, Minister of Economic Development and Small Business

Hon. Ernie Steeves, Minister of Finance

Hon. Trevor Holder, Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training & Labour

Cheryl Hansen, Clerk of the Executive Council

Sadie Perron, Deputy Minister, ONB

Dan Mills, Deputy Minister, PETL

Charline McCoy, Executive Director, Cities of New Brunswick Association

Eugénie Boudreau, Directrice des Association francophone des municipalités du
Nouveau-Brunswick