



We Go Further Together



WESTERN
REGIONAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK
INFORM • CONNECT • ACCELERATE



2017-2018 Business Plan

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Message from Board Chair


The Regional Enterprise Network model focuses on networks and the innovations arising from them. We identify the need, then we bring together those with the ways and the means to fill that need.

An example of this focus in action: cross-sectoral labour challenges identified in our *BusinessNow* work and clarified in our Investment Readiness engagement led to the Productivity Pilot project. In partnership with industry groups and government agencies, businesses are learning and implementing ways to do more with their existing labour force. Sign-ups for the next intake have already started because of the direct benefit of this work.

We know that collaboration is about the ideas that never existed until the right people were in the room – and so do our neighbours. We are excited that the Municipality of Barrington is joining our REN. Barrington will bring more traction to our work with the seafood sector, providing more comprehensive coverage in our work with Southwest Nova’s crucial fishing industry.

The second year of our three-year strategy will build on our previous success, and continue our mission of informing connecting, and accelerating.




Warner Comeau, Western REN Board Chair
Managing Partner WAC Investco, Retired Insurance Executive

Message from CEO


The Western REN has had a busy and exciting first year of implementing our three-year strategy.

We have laid some solid groundwork and are now squarely in execution mode. Within this plan, you will see examples of how our work is building momentum.

The Western REN is now firmly anchored and is growing. We are very pleased to welcome our neighbours in the Municipality of Barrington into the Western fold.

This new model of collaborative regional economic development is gaining ground and making a difference for businesses in the region. We are proud to be a part of that difference.




Angélique LeBlanc, Western REN CEO

Who We Are

Western Nova Scotia's Economic Development Organization

A public organization governed by a private sector Board of Directors, the Western REN (Regional Enterprise Network) constantly networks, develops new relationships, and innovates solutions to challenges in the regional business climate.

Our **mandate** means guiding and navigating regional economic development while supporting businesses; we fulfill our mandate through three Strategic Themes (see p. 9). Our **BusinessNow** work directly supports enterprises at a range of life-cycle stages. Our work with municipal partners focuses on **Investment Readiness**, ensuring the region can respond effectively to investment inquiries. Finally, recognizing that economic development work happens in a system, not in isolation, the Western REN focuses on **Innovative Partnerships & Communications**.

WHAT WE DO

WE INFORM

We are the hub for regional economic information, which we share with all partners and the business community.

WE CONNECT

We create opportunities for businesses, entrepreneurs, innovators, and policy makers to work together towards overcoming regional economic challenges.

WE ACCELERATE

We identify trending patterns of barriers and successes for the business community, and we bring that information to sector groups, economic development partners and government to work towards solutions.

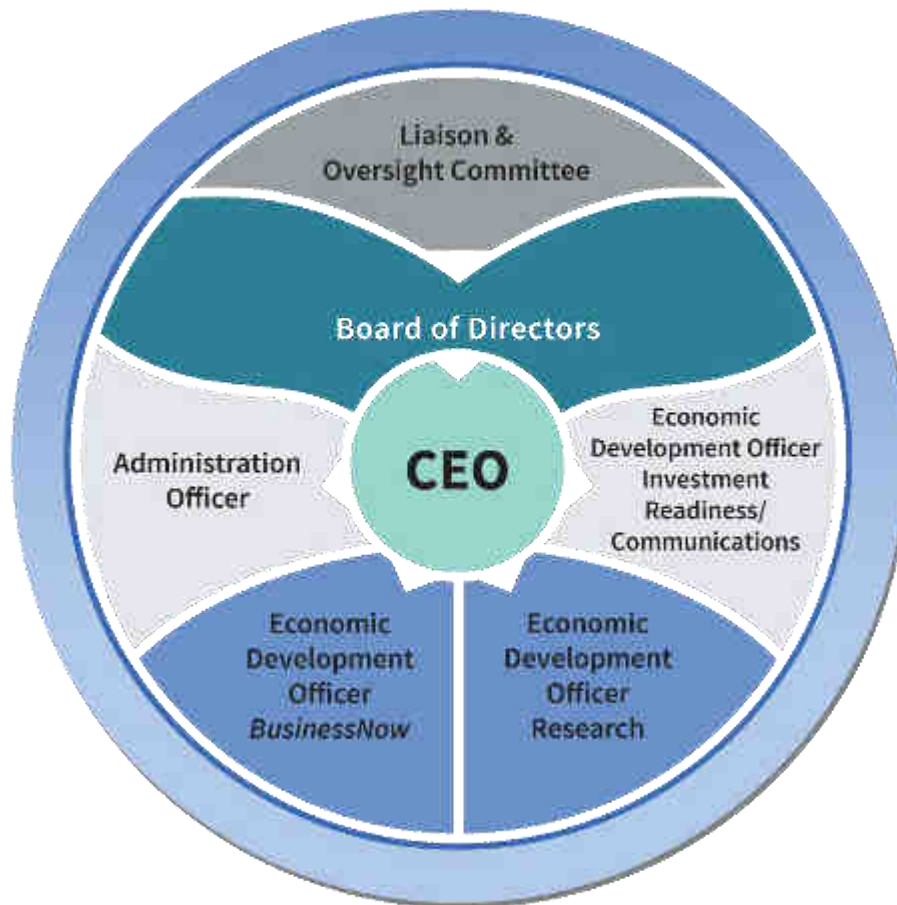
Organizational Structure

All RENs have the same basic organizational structure. Municipalities determine boundaries and basic mandate, adopt a funding formula determined by the Province, then create an *Inter-Municipal Agreement* to incorporate. The organization then enters a matching funding arrangement with the municipal membership and the Province. Each funding partner appoints a representative to the Liaison and Oversight Committee (LOC), which then appoints a Board of Directors recruited from the private sector. See Appendix A for Board of Directors and Liaison and Oversight Committee membership.

In addition to appointing the Board, the Western REN LOC participates in strategic planning, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of those plans, and for ensuring that each funding partner is informed about Western REN work.

The Western REN has a Policy Governance Board of Directors, meaning they set clear operating parameters for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to allow for organizational operations that can respond quickly to changing conditions. The CEO is responsible for all hiring and staff management.

Organizational Chart



We Believe In

People: Success requires partnerships and a positive, friendly, productive business environment. People are the heart and soul of the region.

Diversity: The Western REN focuses on understanding the needs and issues of our business community and uses diverse and innovative approaches to sustainable solutions, through partnerships.

Entrepreneurship & Innovation: The Western REN applies an attitude of collectively accepting responsibility for learning from failures *and* successes, then using lessons for innovative solutions.

Embracing the Rural Lifestyle: The Western REN respects rural roots. Many solutions, programs and initiatives offered by the Western REN will be sensitive to the rural nature of community partners.

Partnerships: A core strategic theme, partnering taps into the authenticity and resiliency of the region's businesses and people, ensuring a lasting impact from the Western REN's activities.

Staff Team



Left to Right: Barb Muise, Erika Rolston, Evan Nemeth, Angélique LeBlanc, Victoria Brooks.

Angélique LeBlanc, Chief Executive Officer, has over 15 years' experience in economic and business development in Nova Scotia. She is equipped with an acute understanding of the challenges faced by local business communities, and living abroad has given her a global perspective. She is currently completing her MBA through Université de Moncton.

Victoria Brooks leads the *BusinessNow* program and is the organization's main contact with businesses in the region. She is a certified Business Retention & Expansion Coordinator and is working towards her professional designation. Twenty years' experience in municipal administration and private sector operations make her an effective support for business clients.

Barb Muise holds the organization together as **Administration Officer**. Her 30 years of experience providing exemplary supportive and administrative functions are what keep the team and mandate on track.

Evan Nemeth is the Western REN's **Research Lead**, providing the organization and its partners with the data and analyses required to make informed decisions. His varied experience and proven ability in research and analysis of complex issues supports the evidence-based work of the Western REN. Evan is completing his Masters in Applied Science at Saint Mary's University.

Erika Rolston is the **Communications Lead**, which includes ensuring information flow between many public and private sector partners, the Board, and the staff. She also provides **Investment Readiness** support, working with municipal partners to create effective regional responses to potential investment opportunities.

Western Region's Situational Analysis

In 2015 there were an estimated 51,000+ people living within the Western Region, 30% of whom identified themselves as bilingual. The mean age of individuals within the region is 48.4 years.

An estimated 45,000 residents are aged 15 and over. From that number, 26,643 are active members of the labour force, giving a participation rate of 59.6%. There are 18,095 individuals that are not in the labour force. The Western REN's *Business Retention and Expansion* program, along with stakeholder consultations, has revealed that the hiring and retention of workers are major issues affecting businesses in the area.

Seasonal industries in the Western Region - mink, tourism, and fish harvesting/processing – create fluctuations in the number of EI recipients in the area. Province wide, the end of tourism season seems concurrent with peak EI numbers. In the Western Region, however, the lobster fishing/processing season corresponds to lower unemployment numbers in winter. Lobster season ends in May, coinciding with a second peak of EI recipients in the summer months. The mink industry and groundfish fishery become fairly busy in the summer months, lessening the blow of the end of lobster season.

The fishing, hunting and trapping sector is particularly concentrated in the Western Region as compared to the rest of Nova Scotia. In 2015, the estimated 1,600 jobs in this sector in the Western Region accounted for approximately 38.25% of the province's jobs in the sector. Fishing, hunting and trapping had a provincial GDP in 2015 of \$484.7 million, up 5.6% over the previous year.

The food manufacturing sector is closely linked to fishing, hunting and trapping through food packaging, and the creation of value added products. It too is particularly concentrated in the Western Region as compared to the rest of Nova Scotia, with its estimated 1,800 jobs accounting for approximately 20.96% of the province's jobs in the sector. Food Manufacturing had a provincial GDP of \$511.8 million in 2015, up 3.37% over the previous year.

Université Sainte-Anne has experienced a slight drop in full-time students in the 2016-17 academic year, down 2.7% from 2015-16. Nova Scotia Community College BurrIDGE Campus, combined with its satellite Digby Learning Centre, experienced an increase of 9.7% enrolments over the same timeframe.

WHAT'S HAPPENING RIGHT NOW?

Lobster

- 2015-16 landings in SW Nova of approx. 40,000 tonnes, worth \$500 million
- Shore prices started at \$5.25/lb and have averaged around \$6.40/lb this season
- Exports to US and China are up
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada claim high abundance levels, with warmer temperatures and a decrease in ground fish predators

Mink

- Average pelt prices are up 5-20%, depending on type
- 100% inventory clearance in early auctions
- Several mink farm closures within the last 18 months

Economic Challenges & Opportunities

Opportunity: Local Research Capacity

Université Sainte-Anne has launched the *Laboratory for Innovation and Science in Industry*, a non-profit laboratory dedicated to research, development and innovation. The laboratory is equipped with research facilities in biochemistry, microbiology, genomics and a greenhouse complex.

Uncertain: Oil prices

Oil prices have been slowly climbing due to OPEC's decision to choke back on production as of January 2017. While lower fuel prices have been a benefit at the pump, especially for residents and freight businesses, the impact on Nova Scotia's mobile labour force has been negative.

Uncertain: Canadian dollar

Impacts from oil prices and the protectionist measures being discussed in the USA are creating a rollercoaster for the Canadian dollar. The value of the Canadian dollar also depends heavily on the strength of commodity prices, including oil, lumber, mining ores, and more.

Uncertain: International Trade Agreements

The new American administration has a stated intention to renegotiate the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**; the extent of the impact of such a renegotiation remains to be seen.

The **Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)** was signed by Canada and 11 other countries, but was not ratified. Canada is exploring deeper trading links with several Asian countries, since America's withdrawal.

The **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** has been passed by the European Parliament and now needs to be ratified by each of the EU members. CETA would be provincially enforced as early as Spring 2017, removing tariffs on 98-99% of tariff lines.

Challenge: Commodity Prices

Much of the harvesting of natural resource requires work at economies of scale that cannot be realized until the commodity prices reach a certain price point. This results in inconsistency in direct industry activity, employment rates, and secondary/tertiary industries. These inconsistencies represent barriers to regional sectors such as fisheries, forestry, agriculture, mink, and mining.

Opportunity: Yarmouth Ferry

Estimates of the shortened 2016 season indicate 35,551 passengers on the vessel. Bay Ferries is committed to increasing ridership on the Yarmouth-Portland run and recently announced they want to add an extra month of service in 2017.

A stable, long-term ferry operation in Yarmouth is great news for tourism operators all across Nova Scotia

Graham Hudson
General Manager, Keltic Lodge and
Highland Links Golf Course

Challenge: Transportation Infrastructure

Highways 101 and 103 are incomplete 100-series highways; neither of them are completely controlled access. Portions of 101 between Digby and Marshalltown will be completed by December 2018. Likewise, air travel is limited in the region. One regional and one international airport have infrastructure, but no scheduled services for either freight or passengers.

Challenge: Energy Infrastructure

The energy infrastructure of Southwestern Nova Scotia remains separated from the North American grid. This means that energy generation within the region can only serve domestic markets. The currently maximized capacity is a barrier to investments in energy generation projects in the region.

Opportunity: Renewable Energy (Tidal, Wind, Biomass)

The Bay of Fundy tides, Atlantic winds, and the region's 'wood basket' provide ample renewable energy opportunities, and the technology exists to take full advantage of them. Infrastructure represents a valuable, long-term investment opportunity in these industries. In the short term, energy efficiency programs on an industrial scale can help increase local grid capacity. Some Nova Scotia municipalities offer Clean Energy Financing to help with the costs of residential upgrades.

Opportunity: Mining

One company is seeking financing, in addition to their \$1.3 million investment, to jumpstart a processing operation at the tin-indium mine in East Kemptonville. Other companies have marked many claims, covering over 15,000 hectares in the area of Brazil Lake, in their search for lithium deposits.

Uncertain: Offshore Development

Shell Canada has two exploratory drilling sites in the Shelburne Basin. Both sites have now been permanently sealed off after the company claimed the site did not have commercial quantities of hydrocarbon. Shell has the option to drill up to 7 wells in the region. Future wells will require new authorization and approval.

Uncertain: Communications Infrastructure

Internet access and reliability in rural South West Nova remains the poorest in the province. On December 15th, *Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada* launched the *Connect to Innovate (CTI)* program. The program will invest up to \$500 million by 2021 toward bringing high-speed internet infrastructure to rural and remote communities across Canada. An effort is being made towards having some of the program money be invested into the Western Region.

Challenge: Population

The most recent data estimates suggest a continued population decline in the Western Region in all demographics other than 65+, raising concerns for the regional workforce. This decline also has an impact on the school systems. Outmigration in the area may result in a higher supply of property for sale resulting in lower property prices, which could attract new families to the area.

Opportunity: Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Innovative opportunities in natural resource sectors include value-adding existing harvests and developing new products for as-yet-untapped markets. With the aging demographic, entrepreneurs can capture succession opportunities. Economic and business development organizations within the region help individuals and businesses make opportunities out of challenges. The Province has several incentive programs to support youth recruitment and retention in the workforce. Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) has an overarching entrepreneurship strategy built into much of its programming; both NSCC and Université Sainte-Anne have active Enactus Clubs.

Operating Environment

| When | Who | What | Why |
|-------------|--|--|---|
| Early 2012 | RDA (Regional Development Agency) Review Panel | Recommended | REN (Regional Enterprise Network) model for rural economic development |
| Late 2012 | ERDT (Economic & Rural Development) | Announced REN model | For delivering economic development needs outside the HRM |
| Early 2014 | Six municipal units in Western Nova Scotia | Incorporate the Western REN | For business and economic development supports in Yarmouth and Digby Counties |
| | NS Commission on Building Our New Economy | Released <i>Now or Never</i> Report | To increase understanding of economic challenges and advise on new directions |
| Early 2015 | DMA (Department of Municipal Affairs) | Integrates RENs in their mandate | After ERDT dismantled |
| Late 2015 | Federal government | Election | New majority government with infrastructure commitments |
| | ONE Nova Scotia Coalition | Released <i>We Choose Now</i> Playbook | Applies an action plan approach for the <i>Now or Never</i> goals |
| Early 2016 | New DoB (Department of Business) | Releases budget announcement | Including resources for rural internet infrastructure work |
| Early 2017 | Western REN municipal members | Approve Municipality of Barrington's request to join Western REN | As a full partner in regional economic development |

Rural Nova Scotia is comprised of natural resource-based communities in transition, lacking the population and economic base to provide the political or business cases for large-scale commitments to infrastructure and investment. Nova Scotia's regional economies are heavily influenced by commodity and global markets which leave the regions vulnerable to forces beyond local control.

Rebuilding Nova Scotia's economy is, and will continue to be, a truly collaborative, action-based effort. The Western REN continues to develop and support innovative partnerships throughout its region and province for a greater collective impact.

Strategic Themes

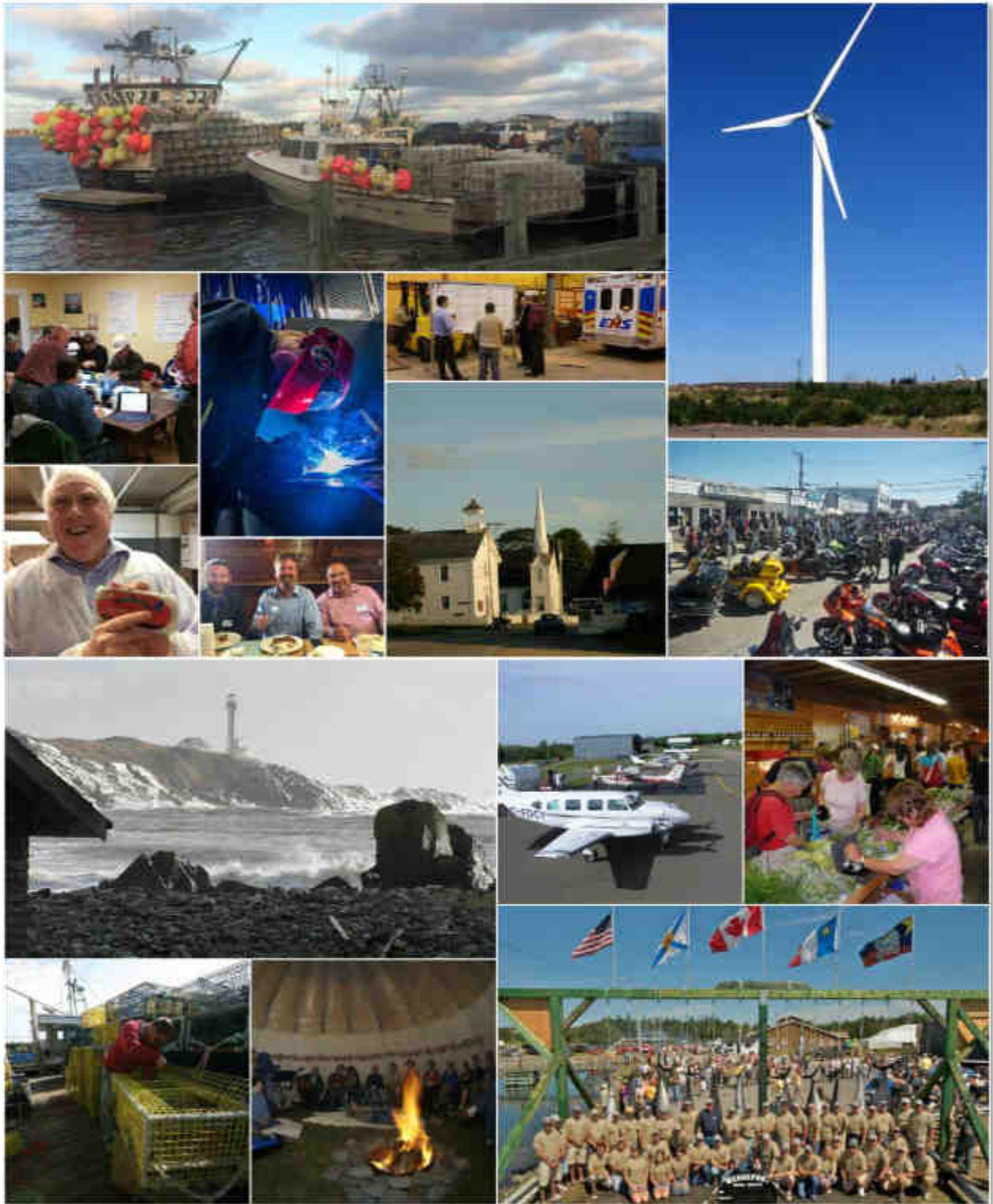
| <i>BusinessNow</i> | Investment Readiness | Innovative Partnerships & Communications |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Many investment and business development opportunities come from businesses already operating within the region. The Western REN engages with its business community to understand the needs, issues, and opportunities.</p> <p>The Western REN focuses on those industries, businesses, institutions and individuals who thrive as a result of their innovative, entrepreneurial nature. These are models of success.</p> | <p>Successfully capturing investments involves provision of timely and accurate information about business requirements, economic climate, and infrastructure needed by existing and potential investors.</p> <p>The Western REN works with municipal units and economic development partners to empower them to capture and retain investment opportunities.</p> | <p>A viable, sustainable regional economy requires informed and engaged people. Residents of the Western Region are committed to the area and have the innovative thinking and entrepreneurial spirit to capture the many opportunities here.</p> <p>The Western REN is the regional hub for communications, networking and partnerships in support of a strong cohesive economic development regional community that is driven through entrepreneurship and innovation.</p> |



Implementation

The Western REN, as a regional economic development organization in a *post-Ivany* era, operates under the following basic tenets:

- ***There is no silver bullet:*** Its efforts help shift the economy towards wealth-generation. Entrepreneurship and innovation will be key to creating sustainable opportunities.
- ***The Rising Tide Floats All Ships:*** It challenges the ‘silo’ mentality and fosters relationship building in support of a healthier business climate. It aims for shared successes.
- ***Goal Alignment Builds Momentum:*** It actively seeks *Collective Impact* initiatives, thus harnessing more effective partnerships. It monitors its impacts against the *Now or Never* report and the *We Choose Now Playbook* (Appendix B) and supports its partners to do the same.



Action Plan

Strategic Theme #1: *BusinessNow*

BusinessNow is the Western REN’s client-facing theme and represents its **direct business engagement**.

The major core activity in this theme is the **Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)** program in all of its aspects including: face-to-face interviews for discovering opportunities to strengthen or expand business operations, referrals and follow up with Action Team partners for delivery of their business support programs, and action plans designed to address matters uncovered during visitation.

| Western REN Strategic Actions YEAR TWO | Measuring Western REN Progress | Monitoring Regional Impact |
|--|--|---|
| Maintain and update the regional business directory; use to set strategic BRE targets. | Directory live and in use. | Balanced distribution of BRE services across geography and sectors. |
| Develop tool for tracking the continuum of “who does what” in regional economic development services and supports. | Tool activated and being updated. | Economic development referrals are reciprocal among local and provincial action teams. |
| Continuous Improvement Project to increase productivity. Assess interest in second cohort. | Complete Pilot and launch second cohort. | Competitiveness and production capacity of participants improved. Increased export value. |
| Guide businesses to succession planning and implementation. | Succession opportunities identified and tracked. | Continuity for both business and clients. Attract entrepreneurs to existing business opportunities. |



Strategic Theme #2: Investment Readiness

Working at the speed of business is crucial to make the most of investment opportunities, whether they are from across the road or across the ocean. In this context, readiness means being able to set the hook when an investment inquiry nibbles.

The Western REN’s **roundtable work** is at the heart of ground-truthing the needs and barriers facing regional businesses. By working directly with experts within sectors on issues, priorities can be clearly identified. Another core activity of investment readiness is **ensuring relevant information** in the regional profile and asset inventory remains accurate and up to date.

| Western REN Strategic Actions YEAR TWO | Measuring Western REN Progress | Monitoring Regional Impact |
|--|--|--|
| Continue investment readiness work, including familiarization tours and training for new municipal councils and staff. | Second round of IR training for municipalities. | Municipal understanding and preparedness improved. Increased response capacity. |
| Maintain an industrial and commercial land inventory, housed online and available for site selectors and investors. | Continually updated. Clear process for contributors. | Regular input from business community and partners. |
| Develop investment lead handling protocol with both provincial and municipal partners. | Investment Opportunities Action Team established and protocol developed. | Efficient use of protocol leads to Foreign Direct Investment, start-up, expansion and venture capital opportunities. |
| Continue infrastructure working group with focus on rural internet. | Follow-up work from Connect to Innovate proposal. | Coordinated efforts underway, building solutions to internet infrastructure needs. |



Strategic Theme #3: Innovative Partnerships & Communications

Innovating and partnering is something already happening in the Western region; our Strategic Plan reflects our stakeholders’ interest in **taking regional partnership to a whole new level**. Building new and stronger partnerships takes communication, transparency and – above all – trust.

The Western REN aligns its work with its partners’, celebrates successes and lessons learned, and is the hub for information sharing, contributing to the conditions required to take bold steps towards truly **innovative, region-wide relationship development**.

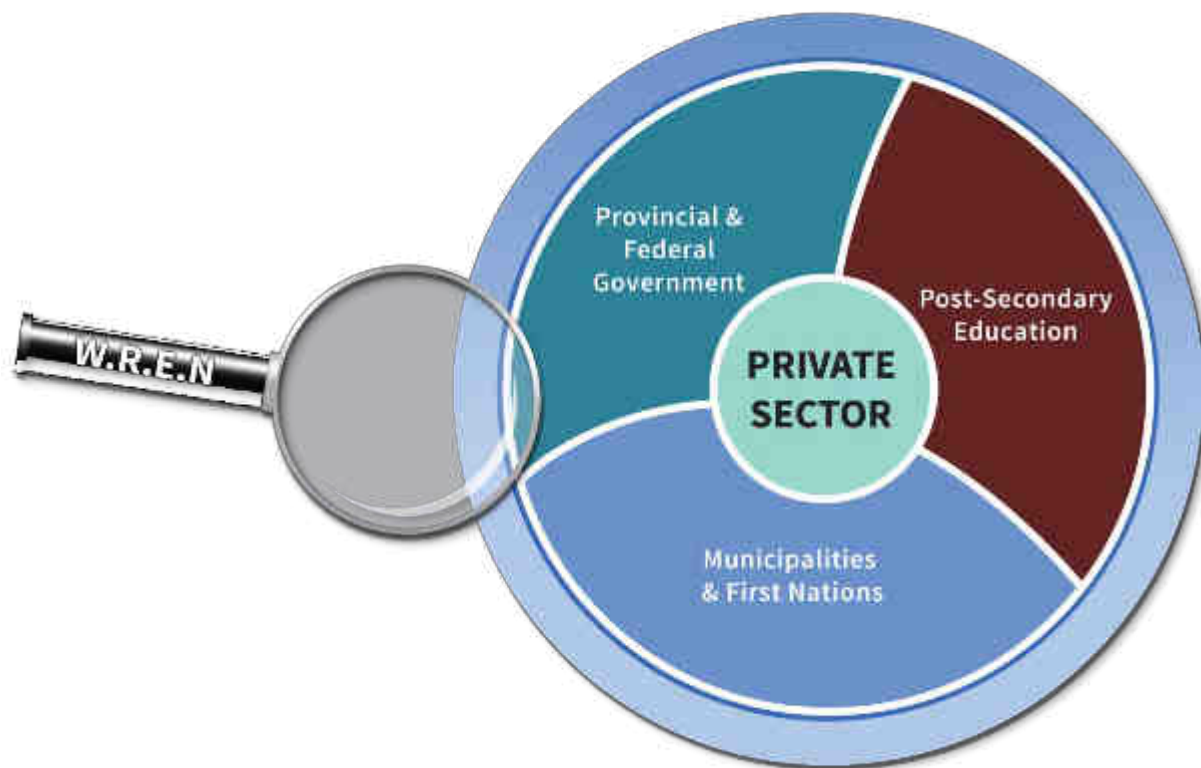
| Western REN Strategic Actions YEAR TWO | Measuring Western REN Progress | Monitoring Regional Impact |
|---|---|--|
| Use outcomes of supply chain mapping and develop investment profiles, attraction tools, and implementation strategies for identified opportunities. | Profiles, tools, and strategies developed and in use. | Partners’ increased awareness of opportunities identified, leading to investments. |
| As requested, offer support to NS Office of Immigration for implementing pilot project addressing workforce challenges in region. | Clients connected to NSOI programming. | Workforce gaps being backfilled through pilot program. |
| Continue to work with partners and private sector organizing familiarization tours and site visits to showcase successes. | Familiarization tours and site visits on regular basis. | Requests to participate. |
| Establish Connector pilot program with regional mentorship networks | Connector Pilot launched. | Increased youth and immigration attachment to regional labour market. |



Partnering – within the region and beyond

Each of the strategic themes in the Western REN's Plan represents opportunities to engage and partner – in fact, **networking is the main tool of the Western REN and its key contribution** to economic development in the region.

All levels of government and post-secondary education institutions have programs and tools in support of the private sector. Each agency has its own approach to interacting with and marketing to the private sector; however, the private sector may not realize the full extent of offerings available. The Western REN brings a '**no wrong door**' approach to working with each of the public and private sector partners in its region – through partnerships and systems navigation.



Guiding and navigating regional economic development while supporting businesses is the mandated purpose of all RENs. This means ensuring that the private sector has ready access to all required supports, programs, and policy information they require for planning and executing their business plans. This also means ensuring that governments, policy-makers, and training institutions have access to comprehensive insights into the business community's needs in support of a prosperous business climate.

The **Western REN focuses** attention and efforts where partnerships and shared mandates would lead to a **greater collaborative impact**.

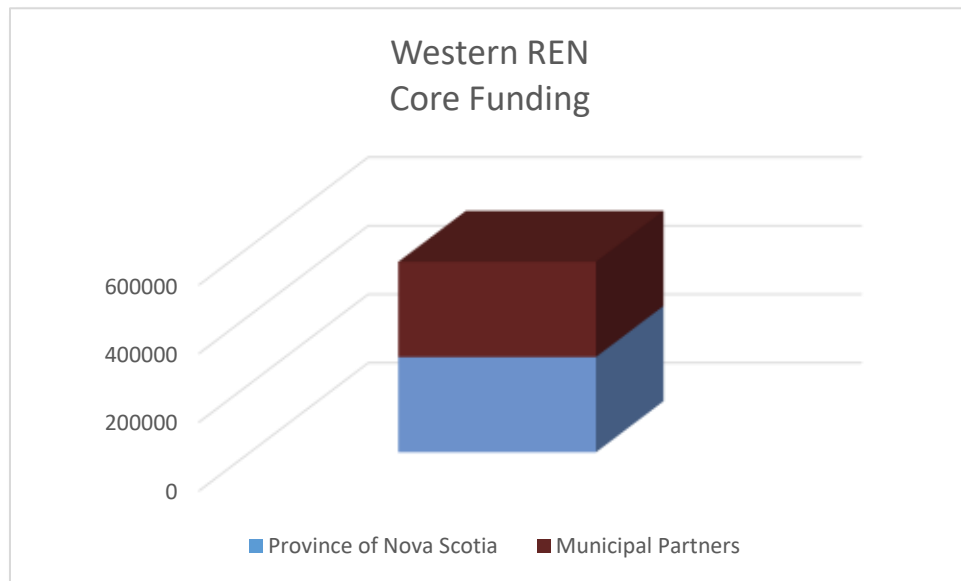
Argyle Clare ACOA
CBDC NSBI
Industry Associations
Université Sainte-Anne
LAEC DENEDOB
NSCC BDCC Digby NSOI
Private Sector
DMA Barrington
BRE Clients Yarmouth

Western REN Funding

As with all Regional Enterprise Networks in the province, the Western REN's operating budget is provided through membership municipalities and the Province of Nova Scotia, using formulae determined through formal agreements with both partners.

Now in its second year of a three-year Strategic Plan, the Western REN is gaining momentum on its strategic initiatives. Network and partnership strengths continue to be used to leverage project funding for initiatives of regional significance.

Currently, the total operational budget of the Western REN totals just over \$550,000, with funds from municipal partners being matched by the Province of Nova Scotia.



The Municipal Partners of the Western REN are as follows:

- Municipality of the District of Argyle
- Municipality of the District of Barrington
- Municipality of the District of Clare
- Municipality of the District of Digby
- Municipality of the District of Yarmouth
- Town of Digby
- Town of Yarmouth

Budget Overview

Revenues

Operating Budget April 2017-March 2018

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Province of Nova Scotia | 277,500 |
| Municipalities | 277,500 |
| Total Revenues | \$555,000 |

Expenses

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Wages and benefits | 323,600 |
| Travel, meals and lodging | 26,000 |
| Conferences | 8,000 |
| Training, governance and risk management | 11,400 |
| Consulting support | 60,500 |
| Office space, supplies & IT needs | 38,200 |
| Professional and Corporate Services | 31,700 |
| Communication and recruitment | 31,000 |
| Strategic Planning Initiatives | 24,600 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$555,000 |

Appendix A

Liaison and Oversight Committee - Membership

| | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Municipality of the District of Argyle | Municipality of the District of Barrington | Municipality of the District of Clare | Municipality of the District of Digby | Municipality of the District of Yarmouth |
| Department of Municipal Affairs | Nova Scotia Business Inc. | | Town of Digby | Town of Yarmouth |

Board of Directors

The Western REN is led by a private-sector, volunteer Board of Directors. Our nine-member board of directors has three standing committees: Executive, Finance, and Audit.

Full biographies and board terms for all board members are available online at www.westernren.ca.



Warner Comeau, Chair



Allister Surette, Vice-Chair



Dave Saxton, Finance Chair



Craig LeBlanc, Audit Chair



Angela Thurber



Clark Sigfridson



Dr. Michel Comeau



David Arenburg



Ron Smith

Appendix B

Now or Never Report: Game Changers and Goals

ATTITUDE GAME CHANGERS

1. A new politics
2. Attitude shift: a shared commitment to growing Nova Scotia's one economy

DEMOGRAPHIC GAME CHANGERS

3. Become a more inclusive and welcoming province

ECONOMIC GROWTH GAME CHANGERS

4. Place strategic priority on business start-ups and growth-oriented enterprises
5. Renew rural industries
6. A shared commitment to sustainable development and regulatory excellence
7. Rebuild our trade economy
8. Excellence in education and training
9. Promote entrepreneurship

UNDER GOVERNMENT PURVIEW

10. Integrate economic development services
11. Better management of economic development investment funds
12. Find a committed federal partner

DEMOGRAPHIC GOALS

1. Inter-provincial Migration: a net gain of 1,000 working age persons per year.
2. International Immigration: triple the average number of new international immigrants annually to 7,000.
3. Retention of International Students: retain 10 percent of foreign students.

ECONOMIC GROWTH GOALS

4. Business Start-ups: increase the number of new business starts to 4,200 annually.
5. Value of Exports: increase value of international and inter-provincial to \$20 billion.
6. Export Trade: increase the number of Nova Scotia firms participating in export trade by 50%.
7. Labour Force: raise participation to Canadian rate or higher.
8. First Nations and African Nova Scotians Employment Rates: raise to parity with provincial average.
9. Youth Unemployment: lower rate to national average.
10. Post-Secondary Education and Training: increase population of adults who complete a certificate, diploma, degree, and/or apprenticeship from 55 to 65 percent.
11. Universities R&D: double research funding to \$360M annually.
12. R&D Partnerships: double number of R&D partnerships between industry and post-secondary institutions.
13. Venture Capital: increase per capita investment to national average.
14. Tourism Expansion: revenues from Nova Scotia's leading service sector export will reach \$4 billion.
15. Fisheries and Agriculture Exports: double export value of both on a sustainable basis.
16. Domestic Markets for Agricultural Products: double the value of products produced and consumed in Nova Scotia.

UNDER GOVERNMENT PURVIEW

17. Lead Long-Term Planning Process: the province and municipalities will create a plan to meet these goals.
18. Administration: provincial review of municipal government and regional service structures.
19. Fiscal Health: decrease Nova Scotia's net debt to GDP ratio to 30 percent or less.

We Choose Now Priorities

1. The Early Years: Starting Strong
2. Our Future is Young
3. Universities and NSCC as Innovation Hubs
4. Immigration and Welcoming Communities
5. Our ICT Momentum
6. Going Global: Innovation and Competitiveness
7. Nova Scotia's Ocean Advantage

WESTERN
REGIONAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK

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