



# ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

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FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2007 – 2008

Province of Nova Scotia

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## Message from Premier Rodney MacDonald

In 2007–2008, our government introduced the vision of building a new Nova Scotia and a plan that will create a path to 2020.

The plan is about building on existing strengths to make Nova Scotia more self-sufficient. It recognizes that securing the province's future means making smart investments to grow the economy.

Building a new Nova Scotia is a challenge, especially in these uncertain economic times, but progress is being made.

The social prosperity framework, Weaving the Threads, has been introduced. The framework represents something that all Nova Scotians know and understand—that social and economic prosperity go hand in hand and are an important first step toward realizing sustainable prosperity.

I am also pleased to report that the Broadband for Rural Nova Scotians Initiative has made real progress towards making the province one of the most connected jurisdictions in North America.

By the end of 2009, 100 per cent of Nova Scotians will have high-speed access to the Internet.

Nova Scotia has had success in attracting some of the world's leading companies who will create up to 3,285 new job opportunities over the next five years. The financial services sector continues to grow with Citco Fund Services, OC Financial Services, Marsh Captive Solutions, and Butterfield Fund Services expected to create and maintain more than 1,000 new jobs.

The details of these and other accomplishments are found in the *Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2007–2008*.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Rodney MacDonald  
Premier of Nova Scotia





# Annual Accountability Report

for the fiscal year 2007–2008

Province of Nova Scotia

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# Introduction

The *Annual Accountability Report for the Fiscal Year 2007–2008* outlines the government's activities and achievements during the reporting period April 1, 2007, to March 31, 2008.

The 2007–2008 fiscal year introduced a new model of the Government Business Plan. It provided a more directional, higher-level discussion of the government's vision for a New Nova Scotia. The plan highlighted the steps the province would take in 2007–2008 to achieve the long-term vision for 2020. This type of discussion better reflected the government's move from simply setting an annual plan to ensuring that the steps we take each year advance us towards our long-term vision of a sustainable Nova Scotia.

The 2007–2008 Government Accountability Report will follow this directional, high-level approach and outline activities and achievements in the four New Nova Scotia priority areas.

## **THE NEW NOVA SCOTIA**

### ***Creating Winning Conditions***

Laying the foundation for economic growth

### ***Seizing New Economic Opportunities***

Preparing for good jobs and careers, here at home

### ***Building for Individuals, Families, and Communities***

Healthier children, safer communities

### ***A New Democracy for Nova Scotia***

Engaging youth and advancing democracy



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# Priorities for 2007–2008

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## 1. Creating Winning Conditions

*The government will create winning conditions of success for the province of Nova Scotia through a globally competitive business climate, a highly trained and skilled workforce, and strong global connections.*

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### **Globally Competitive Business Environment**

#### *Fiscal Responsibility*

Building a new Nova Scotia is highly dependent on a stable fiscal environment that will help attract business investment and support the delivery of public programs.

The province continues to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to fiscal responsibility with six consecutive balanced budgets. With the first payment under the Crown share agreement from the federal government, the 2007–2008 year-end saw a surplus of \$418.9 million and a \$242.4-million reduction in net direct debt.

These improvements in the province's management of finances were recognized by major credit rating agencies in 2007–2008. Progress in reducing the debt, transparency in financial reporting, and a forward approach to fiscal management are helping to improve Nova Scotia's credit rating and access to financial markets.

Tax relief for all Nova Scotians was also met in 2007–2008. Changes to personal income tax mean that the Basic Personal Allowance will increase by \$250 each year for four years. As of January 1, 2007, the basic personal amount increased by \$250 to \$7,481, and on January 1, 2008, the basic personal amount increased by another \$250 to \$7,731.

Nova Scotia can promote a more competitive corporate tax environment with continuous reductions in the Large Corporations Tax. This tax on a corporation's capital will continue to reduce each year until its elimination in 2012. Broadening the Film Tax Credit and introducing a new Digital Media Tax Credit will also enhance the competitiveness of Nova Scotia's film and digital media industries.



## ***Competitive Business Environment***

In 2007–2008, the province continued to make it easier to do business in Nova Scotia through the Better Regulation Initiative.

With a focus on simpler, more effective regulation, the Better Regulation Initiative has been recognized Canada-wide as a comprehensive approach to regulatory reform with the right elements.

Progress on the initiative's top priority to reduce paperwork for business by 20 per cent by 2010 continues to be made. Business operators now have 8.3 per cent less paper than they had two years ago. This reduction is the equivalent of almost \$1.2 million in savings in the past year alone.

The Better Regulation Initiative has also made progress on its commitment to make licence and permit applications more predictable for business. Last year's interim target of 50 per cent of provincial licences and permits processed within 10 business days was surpassed. Currently, 64 per cent are processed in 10 days or less.

## **Globally Competitive Business Climate and Workforce**

### ***Solid Education Foundation***

The province's public education system is an important component in building a well-educated population. The four-year plan Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together is providing the strategic direction for the public education system by addressing the fundamental needs of all students.

Providing more supports for students with special needs has been part of this focus, along with keeping students engaged in learning and finding meaningful work with an expanded Options and Opportunities program. Ensuring healthy and active students, supporting teacher professional development, and expanding testing to measure the progress of our students were also priority areas.

Improving access to post-secondary education and training continues the growth of a knowledge-based economy. The Nova Scotia Community College growth initiative has brought about a 6.2 per cent enrolment increase, and a new three-year memorandum of understanding with universities guarantees funding and freezes tuition. The Nova Scotia University Student

Bursary Trust was also established to provide assistance to students up to the 2010–2011 academic year.

### ***Workforce Investment***

A globally competitive workforce requires highly trained and skilled people. Being current on workforce trends and demands ensures that Nova Scotia reaches its full economic potential.

Part of building Nova Scotia's competitive workforce is negotiating a new Labour Market Agreement and decentralizing the Labour Market Development Agreement from the federal government. Nova Scotia's resulting workforce development strategy will

- identify those groups traditionally disadvantaged in the labour market and deliver targeted programming to them
- design and deliver preventative programs and services that will reach non-traditional clients
- expand support for people with barriers to entering/remaining in the workforce
- provide better support for employers to find the right employees and to adapt their workplaces to the new labour market realities
- provide consistency in programming offered to all Nova Scotians, throughout the province

Ensuring that the skills and knowledge possessed by the Nova Scotia workforce are current, responsive, and reflective of the changing nature of work is the goal of the Nova Scotia Workplace Education Initiative. This program is providing assistance to businesses, industry, and labour in providing essential skills programs to Nova Scotians.

The Apprenticeship Training System is addressing the increasing labour demand for skilled tradespersons. Through specific technical and on-the-job training programs, the apprenticeship system is providing a critical cornerstone of a stable provincial workforce.

The province also continues to fund initiatives delivered by industry sector councils to advance human resource practices and workforce development efforts with provincial small, medium, and large enterprises.

Training more health professionals will also help to address a workforce shortage in Nova Scotia. More doctors are being trained with the addition of nine residency seats at Dalhousie Medical School, and 226 more nurses are also being trained with the approval of \$3.4 million for 46 nursing seats at universities and 180 practical nursing seats at the Nova Scotia Community College. The province is also training medical laboratory technologists for the first time as a result of a \$1-million investment.



Funding to support and mentor international doctors was provided through the Clinical Assessment in Practice Program in 2007–2008. Since the inception of this program in 2005, 28 doctors have started practising in Nova Scotia. Programs that help internationally trained nurses prepare to work in Nova Scotia were also funded.

### ***Open to the World***

To explore solutions to the barriers of international labour mobility, consultations were held with business, professional associations, and immigrant organizations in each of the Atlantic provinces during the fall of 2007, and a report was compiled. Recommendations resulting from the consultations are being reviewed to determine how best to proceed.

In addition, an agreement to endorse and implement requirements outlined in Chapter 7 of the Agreement on Internal Trade by April 1, 2009, will assist the province in its commitment to reduce labour mobility barriers and further build the capacity of the provincial workforce through the engagement of workers from other provincial jurisdictions.

To facilitate a better understanding of occupational registration practices in Nova Scotia, the province will pursue the development and implementation of legislation that provides a framework

for the development of fair, transparent, and accountable processes.

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## **Globally Competitive Connections**

### ***Atlantic Gateway***

The number one priority for creating winning conditions in Nova Scotia is the Atlantic Gateway. Establishing an East Coast gateway to North America will create a lasting economic impact for the region.

Canada's East Coast gateway requires support from the federal government to enable the province to meet its full gateway potential. Initiating the formation of the Atlantic Gateway Federal/Provincial Officials Committee has helped to ensure that the Atlantic Gateway's transportation infrastructure is competitive, efficient, and able to accommodate international trade of national significance. A memorandum of understanding signed by the four provinces, Transport Canada, and ACOA will formally recognize the committee's work plan.

Another important step towards making the Atlantic Gateway a reality is having a separate federal gateway funding program. The province successfully lobbied to be part of the \$2.1-billion

National Gateways and Border Crossing Infrastructure Fund. The fund is dedicated to the development, competitiveness, and marketing of Canada's three designated gateways: the Asia-Pacific Gateway, the Ontario-Quebec Gateway and Trade Corridor, and the Atlantic Gateway.



## 2. Seizing New Economic Opportunities

*The government will seize new economic opportunities for Nova Scotia by keeping students in the province; attracting Nova Scotians back home; retraining older workers, the unemployed, and the underemployed; and developing an immigration process with the business community that attracts thousands of new Nova Scotians.*

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### Leader in Information Technology

#### *Wired to the World*

The barriers to attracting and retaining businesses and young people in rural areas are coming down. One hundred per cent broadband connectivity is required for rural Nova Scotia communities to reach their full economic and social potential. The Broadband for Rural Nova Scotians initiative is working to make the province one of the most connected jurisdictions in North America by the end of 2009.

The challenge of bringing broadband to remote areas of the province is being met through unprecedented co-operation of municipal, provincial, and federal

governments and the collaboration of every community in the province.

Seaside Wireless and EastLink won contracts to deliver broadband service across most of the province, while Montreal-based OmniGlobe Networks Inc. has been hired to bring the rural reaches of the Halifax Regional Municipality down that final mile to 100 per cent high-speed connectivity.

All three companies are using fixed wireless Internet technology, which is very well suited to Nova Scotia's rugged landscape and extensive coastline. A fixed wireless Internet service is cost efficient and can be expanded easily in the future to reach newly developed areas of the province.

High-speed Internet alone cannot create jobs, prosperity, equality, or improved quality of life in rural Nova Scotia. It is how high-speed access is applied to workplaces, schools, and community and health services that will determine its benefits to communities. To encourage public awareness and recognition of the endless opportunities the Internet presents, staff are working with communities to develop innovative, community-based workshops that encourage and support people and organizations in planning for their



high-speed future. Also, a new website at [www.gov.ns.ca/econ/broadband/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/broadband/) provides information and links developed for businesses, families, students, and communities using high-speed access.

### ***Business Attraction and Retention***

Establishing Nova Scotia as a world-class place to do business and positioning home-grown companies to compete globally have been priorities for the province, but in these uncertain economic times, keeping business here in Nova Scotia is also paramount.

In 2007–2008, the investment attraction team at Nova Scotia Business Inc. helped convince some of the world's leading companies in information technology, defence, security, and aerospace to come to the province. These businesses are projected to create up to 3,285 new job opportunities for Nova Scotians over the next five years. The financial services sector in Nova Scotia is growing too. Over the next five years, Citco Fund Services, OC Financial Services, Marsh Captive Solutions, and Butterfield Fund Services are expected to create and maintain more than 1,000 new jobs.

Nova Scotia has also been positioned as a destination for IT companies. Developing and implementing an IT labour program will ensure that Nova Scotia has a strong

and highly skilled labour pool to support the growth of the IT sector. The program educates high school students on IT career opportunities and also includes a web-based job portal targeted to expatriates.

Trade programs and investment partnerships have also been successful in attracting business. Nova Scotia Business Inc. held more than 1,800 selling and partnering meetings in international markets for Nova Scotia companies.

As a result, these companies have reported more than \$93 million in actual and projected export sales. By providing capital, strategic direction, and business and financial advice, the venture capital team at Nova Scotia Business Inc. has also added three new companies to its portfolio and invested \$3.5 million.

Business advisory services continue to support companies across the province by building strong partnerships and seeking out business opportunities. Nova Scotia Business Inc.'s advisory team has assisted more than 600 Nova Scotia companies in 2007–2008.

Finally, modifications to the payroll rebate have addressed concerns from business leaders across the province. For companies committed to using their funds for at least 20 per cent of project costs, the payroll rebate may be used as an additional investment to promote improvements in competitiveness through export markets

and the retention of employment. In 2007–2008, six term loans were completed and three companies assisted through the expanded use of the payroll rebate.

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## Leader in R&D and Innovation

### *Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity*

Nova Scotia's economic development path set out in the Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity (2006) framework means that the province needs to look to innovation, creativity, and resourcefulness to find new ways of doing business.

Research has helped attract and retain highly qualified people by creating knowledge that can be transferred to businesses and then back to the economy. The Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust has provided over \$42 million in funding to match research grants from the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

During 2007–2008, the province provided \$8 million, which leveraged federal funding to support research projects worth \$20 million.

The province has also intensified its role in driving the knowledge economy and innovation capital. InNOVAcorp received 121 submissions from across Nova Scotia to its I-3 Technology Start-Up

Competition, reflecting the high level of innovation happening in the province.

InNOVAcorp also supported more than 158 Nova Scotia early-stage companies and, through the Early Stage Commercialization Fund, helped to advance the efforts of 22 university research-level projects.

### *Agriculture Strategy*

The province also invested in targeted sectors to assist in retooling for a global economy.

In 2007–2008, four projects received funding under the Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund (SIIF) totaling \$2.36 million over four years.

The SIIF aims to help producers and processors strengthen their infrastructure and sustainability. Projects funded for the first year of this four-year fund included apple-processing technology and support for an organic grain storage facility.



## Leader in Clean and Green Economy

### *Thinking Green*

Nova Scotia's economy relies on the natural resources drawn from the earth, air, and water. Our quality of life is also directly affected by how well we manage the health of our environment assets and the economy. This interconnection is now set out in law, with proclamation of the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act in June 2007, during Environment Week.

With the passing of this historic act, government has sent a strong signal that sustainable prosperity is the way of our future. Ensuring that the majority of government decisions are screened to measure environmental impacts is the Deputy Ministers Forum on Sustainable Prosperity. The group provides direction for the act and the province's economic growth strategy, Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity, to help ensure a cleaner and greener environment, while achieving economic prosperity.

The Round Table on Environmental Sustainability was also established to advise the Minister of Environment on issues related to sustainability. This multi-stakeholder group, representing industry and non-government organizations,

meets regularly and provides valuable advice on the implementation of the act.

Hosting the first Power of Green Conference, with more than 250 participants, gave Nova Scotia the opportunity to share sustainable business approaches and best practices in 2007–2008. The province also consulted with Nova Scotians on the future management of our natural capital in preparation for a series of strategies on water, energy, climate change, and natural resources. This input will help map out the province's strategic approach to manage valuable resources in a sustainable way.

A new green vehicle procurement policy has also come into effect. With a fleet of over 2,300 vehicles, the province is choosing to reduce its contribution to global warming by purchasing fuel-efficient and environmentally responsible vehicles. These considerations will apply to leases and rentals as well. Only vehicles that score in the top 20 per cent of their class for fuel efficiency are eligible for consideration.

With \$42.5 million in funding from the federal government, the province is supporting projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollution. The EcoNova Scotia Trust for Clean Air and Climate Change aims to fund many different initiatives including

tidal power, natural gas conversion at Capital Health, and research into carbon sequestration.

Another important step in the protection of Nova Scotia's resources is the significant expansion of the protected areas network. Over 2007–2008, the province acquired several areas, including 10 000 hectares of land from Bowater Mersey to create 30 new protected areas designated as nature reserves, wilderness areas, and provincial park reserves.



### 3. Building for Individuals, Families, and Communities

*The government will create healthy Nova Scotians and communities by helping to ensure a more active, safer and more vibrant province.*

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#### Healthy Active Nova Scotians

##### *Public Health Renewal*

The comprehensive, long-range public health renewal plan will contribute to healthier Nova Scotians by preventing illness and injury and promoting and protecting health. A comprehensive public health system, in collaboration with many other departments and stakeholders, will contribute to reducing disparities in health status and support the sustainability of a broader health system.

In 2007–2008, much of the foundation and leadership work necessary to move the public health system forward was initiated.

Work is continuing on a Population Health Assessment and Surveillance Responsibility Centre that focuses on the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to inform public health decisions.

A multi-year approach has begun to identify the human resources and other requirements to undertake the work of the unit, which will have expertise in areas such as population health assessment, surveillance, evaluation, and informatics.

Initiating a Communicable Disease Case Management and Surveillance System (PANORAMA) with federal partners will also strengthen Nova Scotia's ability to respond to a public health emergency. PANORAMA will provide Canadian public health-care professionals with a real-time ability to manage such things as communicable disease outbreaks and immunization. The Nova Scotia project is under way and will allow more effective decision making around public health threats and issues.

A Public Health Laboratory is also an important element of the public health system, particularly in a disease outbreak. The Provincial Public Health Laboratory Network is a key aspect for the protection of the health of Nova Scotians.



## **Accessible Services in Vibrant Communities**

### ***Continuing Care***

The 10-year Continuing Care Strategy for Nova Scotia is helping to ensure that Nova Scotians can live well in a place they can call home. The focus of this strategy has been building services in homes and community.

The creation of new long-term care beds and the replacement of beds in aging facilities have been a priority. Awards have been announced for over 700 of the 800 long-term care beds to be opened by 2010.

Keeping Nova Scotians in their own homes is also an important component of the Continuing Care Strategy. Support for the Home Repair/Adaption program and the expansion of the Home Oxygen Program are just two initiatives that are helping to decrease reliance on facility care and providing independence for aging Nova Scotians who want to stay in their homes.

Supporting caregivers so they can continue to provide care has been another focus. Work has begun to develop a provincial approach to adult day services and on improving respite care access.

### ***Prescription Drug Coverage for Families***

The Nova Scotia Family Pharmacare Program was introduced in March 2008. The program is a provincial drug coverage plan that helps Nova Scotians with the cost of prescription drugs.

The program is available to all Nova Scotians and provides the greatest benefit to families with low incomes and/or high drug costs. Anyone with a valid Nova Scotia health card who is not enrolled in Seniors' Pharmacare or the Diabetes Assistance Program or is not receiving Pharmacare benefits through the Department of Community Services can enrol in the program. A pre-existing medical condition is not a barrier to joining the Family Pharmacare program.

There are no premiums or fees for individuals or families to enrol, and the program's co-payment and deductibles are based on a family's annual income.

### ***Health and Social Services for Nova Scotians***

2007–2008 was a significant year in moving closer to government's vision of a brighter future for individuals, families and communities.

Nova Scotia's new framework for social prosperity, called Weaving the Threads: A Lasting Social Framework, was released in November 2007. The message of the

framework is straightforward and something that all Nova Scotians know and understand—social and economic prosperity go hand in hand, and the way to achieve prosperity is by working together, whether it's within our own families or communities, in our own government or with other governments, or with our service partners, agencies, and stakeholders, success comes much easier by working together.

To reach this vision, we have identified five goals:

- Health, Well-Being
- Lifelong Learning
- Access, Inclusion
- Citizenship Development, Engagement
- Safety and Security

Weaving the Threads is an important first step toward realizing sustainable prosperity. Social and economic prosperity are not competing but are complementary goals, and one is not sustainable without the other. Cohesive social and economic policies developed collaboratively are the cornerstones of a bright and prosperous future for all Nova Scotians.

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## **Safe Communities and Workplaces**

### ***Youth Strategy***

With the tragic death of Theresa McEvoy in 2004, youth crime became an area of particular concern for Nova Scotians. The resulting public inquiry, known as the Nunn Commission, made 34 recommendations, which were all accepted by the province.

Many of those recommendations have been addressed, including reducing the time it takes for a child youth case to be processed.

Another response to the Nunn Commission, the comprehensive youth strategy *Our Kids Are Worth It*, has been developed to provide a range of services from prevention to intensive intervention. It is a combination of an expansion of existing services that work and an introduction of new services. The strategy also acts on a number of government's key priorities such as educating youth to compete, shortening wait lists, and keeping communities safe.

Several initiatives were rolled out in 2007–2008 including Youth Navigators, a partnership with Kids Help Phone, and a new website for youth information, and Parenting Journey, which provides in-home parenting support for families



who are challenged with the behaviour and needs of their children over the age of five. Schools Plus promotes a model of using schools as important hubs for a range of services delivered to children, youth, and families.

### ***Law Enforcement***

The province continued to build safer communities in 2007–2008 through the work of the Minister’s Task Force on Safer Streets and Communities.

The task force, which had consulted over 800 Nova Scotians on programs that would make a positive difference in communities, completed its final report in May 2007. The work of the task force was instrumental in the development of the province’s comprehensive crime prevention strategy launched in December 2007. The multi-year strategy, *Time to Fight Crime Together*, will help Nova Scotians be safe and feel safe in their communities by reducing and preventing crime in partnership with organizations, communities, and individuals.

In January 2008, 70 additional police officers were allocated—the second instalment of the government’s investment in enforcement, which will see 250 extra police officers put in place by 2010–2011. Officers were specifically assigned to intelligence-led law enforcement initiatives to address crimes involving organized illegal activity,

sexual exploitation or assault, and drugs, as well as safety in schools, property crimes, street crime initiatives, and family violence.

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## **Vibrant Communities**

### ***Volunteerism***

Volunteers are the backbone of many health, recreation, social, cultural, and spiritual organizations, but Nova Scotia’s volunteer base has been shrinking.

To support and grow volunteerism in Nova Scotia, staff have been hired and a committee of government has been formed representing 22 government departments and agencies. The Volunteer Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee (VICC) will investigate and recommend a provincial strategy and an action plan to government. The committee will work collaboratively within government and with sector stakeholders to identify priorities and opportunities for government action.

The Nova Scotia Volunteer Community Advisory Council has also been established and has begun its work with government. The council represents a new provincial structure designed to build capacity within the voluntary sector, support the promotion and growth of volunteerism, and provide a means for the province and the voluntary sector to collaborate on future action plans.

To further support the growth of volunteerism in Nova Scotia, real and virtual resource collections are being established in nine regional libraries across the province. The sites will act as volunteer resource centres where volunteers and organizations can access current resources and learn more about board governance, fund development, recruitment, and retention.

Work has also begun to help support the issues faced by volunteer organizations around liability insurance. An insurance program is being developed by government in partnership with the insurance industry to provide affordable, accessible, and sustainable insurance to protect volunteers and the voluntary sector.

### ***Strong Vibrant Communities***

The Nova Scotia Community Development Policy gives communities leadership of their own development and encourages development that integrates economic, social, cultural, and environmental considerations.

Activities supported through the Community Development Policy Initiative are strengthening social and human capital from within communities; connecting emerging community leaders across cultural, geographic, and generational divides; and creating new strategic networks.

Initiatives such as Collaborative Strategies for Community Development help build vital linkages with partners across government and communities and provide leadership development support.

Collaborative Strategies for Community Development is a public-sector community development training program that examines capacity within government to support community-led development. Workshops have been held from Yarmouth to Cape Breton with over 300 participants.

Other activities encourage development in marginalized communities. The Mi'kmaq Community Development Fund is dedicated to increasing Mi'kmaq communities' participation in the economy; while Aboriginal Economic Development and Labour Market Strategies will increase skills, employment, private-sector engagement, economic opportunity, and access to the labour market.

### ***Cultural Diversity***

Building vibrant communities is also about ensuring that Nova Scotia's cultural diversity is protected and celebrated.

In partnership with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, *Wabanaki: People of the Dawn* and *Meeting of Nations* resources were distributed to every school in the province. The materials aim to foster an appreciation of the rich history and



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culture of Mi'kmaq people as well as an understanding of the oral tradition and Mi'kmaw perspective on the world.

Thanks to the creation of an African Heritage Month information network, African Heritage Month activities were held in every region of the province in February. Partnerships with public and private sectors also helped bring world-renowned diversity educator and activist Jane Elliott to Halifax in recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Following the opening of the first African Nova Scotian Affairs satellite office in Cape Breton in April 2007, staff have established important relationships with the second-largest African Nova Scotian population in the province.

Support for Gaelic culture also continued with a focus on community language development, awareness, and appreciation. Funding was provided for immersion programs in Halifax, Pictou, and Antigonish Counties and throughout Cape Breton; and Gaelic language programming in the public school system was also increased. Currently, 12 schools in the province either have Gaelic language instruction as part of the curriculum or a Gaelic Studies component.

## 4. A New Democracy for Nova Scotia

*The government will create a new democracy for Nova Scotia through campaign and political party finance reforms, senate term limits and elections, and activities to encourage voter participation.*

The government will work towards a new democracy for Nova Scotia through campaign and political party finance reforms, encouraging senate term limits and elections, and activities to encourage voter participation.

Every citizen has an interest in exercising their right to vote. Yet we have seen voter turnout continue to decline with each election, be it federal, provincial, or municipal. This is a serious issue, as the concept of governments being chosen by the people through the ballot box is at the core of our democracy.

In order to make voting easier and for the voting system to keep pace with how Nova Scotians carry out their everyday activities, the Nova Scotia government will introduce amendments to the Municipal Elections Act to facilitate electronic voting systems, including voting through the Internet and by telephone. Halifax Regional Municipality plans to use e-voting in the 2008 municipal election in hopes of increasing voter turnout.

Declining turnout is especially acute among younger Nova Scotians. The Nova Scotia government was a major contributor to the Democracy 250 celebration, which marked the 250th anniversary of parliamentary democracy in Nova Scotia. D250 will make a special effort to appeal to young Nova Scotians about the importance of voting.

The year 2007–2008 marked the first full year of new political party financing rules designed to lessen political parties' dependence on large contributions from individuals, corporations, and unions.



## Appendix: Websites for Departmental Accountability Reports 2007–2008

The Provincial Finance Act requires the Government of Nova Scotia to publish an annual Government Accountability Report. By policy, government also requires departments, agencies and Crown corporations in the consolidated financial statements to produce accountability reports of their own.

Both the Government Accountability Report and the Crown Corporation Accountability Reports are available to the public in hard copy or can be downloaded from the Government of Nova Scotia website: [www.gov.ns.ca](http://www.gov.ns.ca).

Complete accountability reports for departments and public service vote entities are published online. Department and public service entity accountability reports can be found through their specific websites at the addresses listed here.

### Departments

Agriculture  
[www.gov.ns.ca/agri/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/)  
(Click on The Department)

Community Services  
[www.gov.ns.ca/coms/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/)  
(Click on Publications & Reports)

Economic Development  
[www.gov.ns.ca/econ/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/)  
(Click on Publications)

Education  
[www.ednet.ns.ca/](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/)  
(Click on Document Depot)

Energy  
[www.gov.ns.ca/energy/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/energy/)  
(Click About the Department)

Environment  
[www.gov.ns.ca/nse/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/)  
(Click on Publications)

Finance  
[www.gov.ns.ca/finance/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/)  
(Click on Publications & Reports)

Fisheries and Aquaculture  
[www.gov.ns.ca/fish/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/fish/)  
(Click on Statistics & Publications)



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### Health

[www.gov.ns.ca/health/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/)  
(Click on Reports)

### Health Promotion and Protection

[www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/index.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/index.asp)  
(Click on 2007–08 Accountability Report)

### Intergovernmental Affairs

[www.gov.ns.ca/iga/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/iga/)  
(Click on Publications)

### Justice

[www.gov.ns.ca/just/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/)  
(Click on Publications)

### Labour and Workforce Development

[www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/)  
(Click on Statistics and Publications)

### Natural Resources

[www.gov.ns.ca/natr/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/)  
(Click on 2007–08 Accountability Report)

### Public Service Commission

[www.gov.ns.ca/psc/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/)  
(Click on Reports & Publications)

### Seniors

[www.gov.ns.ca/scs/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/scs/)  
(Click on Publications)

### Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Affairs

[www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/)  
(Click on What We Do)

### Tourism, Culture and Heritage

[www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/)  
(Click on Accountability Report)

### Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal

[www.gov.ns.ca/tran/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/tran/)  
(Click on Publications)

### Public Service Entities

#### Aboriginal Affairs

[www.gov.ns.ca/abor/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/abor/)  
(Click on Office of Aboriginal Affairs–  
What We Do)

#### Acadian Affairs, Office of

[www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/f/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/acadian/f/)  
(Click on Publications)

#### African Nova Scotia Affairs, Office of

[www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ansa/)  
(Click on Accountability Report 2007–08)

#### Communications Nova Scotia

[www.gov.ns.ca/cmns/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/cmns/)  
(Click on Accountability Report 2007–08)

#### Conserve Nova Scotia

<http://www.conservens.ca/>

#### Emergency Management Office

[www.gov.ns.ca/emo/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/emo/)

#### Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Office

[www.foipop.ns.ca/](http://www.foipop.ns.ca/)  
(Click on Publications)

#### Human Rights Commission

[www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/)  
(Click on Publications)

#### Immigration, Office of

[www.novascotiaimmigration.com/](http://www.novascotiaimmigration.com/)  
(Click on Publications and Resources)

#### Ombudsman, Office of

[www.gov.ns.ca/ombu/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/ombu/)  
(Click on Publications)

## Appendix

Public Prosecution Service

[www.gov.ns.ca/pps/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/pps/)

(Click on Publications)

Status of Women, Advisory Council on

[www.women.gov.ns.ca/](http://www.women.gov.ns.ca/)

(Click on About Us – Plans and Reports)

Sydney Tar Ponds

[www.tarpondscleanup.ca/](http://www.tarpondscleanup.ca/)

(Click on Library)

Treasury and Policy Board

[www.gov.ns.ca/tpb/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/tpb/)

(Click on Publications)

Utility and Review Board

[www.nsuarb.ca/](http://www.nsuarb.ca/)

(Click on About Us)

Voluntary Planning

[www.gov.ns.ca/vp/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/vp/)

(Click on Publications)

### **Crown Corporations**

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

[www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/](http://www.artgalleryofnovascotia.ca/)

Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission

[www.hdbc.ca/index.asp](http://www.hdbc.ca/index.asp)

InNOVAcorp

[www.innovacorp.ca/](http://www.innovacorp.ca/)

Nova Scotia Business Incorporated

[www.novascotiabusiness.com/en/](http://www.novascotiabusiness.com/en/)

Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock

Insurance Commission

[www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/)

Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board

[www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/)

Nova Scotia Film Development  
Corporation

[film.ns.ca/corp\\_report.asp](http://film.ns.ca/corp_report.asp)

Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture  
Loan Board

[www.gov.ns.ca/fish/fishlb/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/fish/fishlb/)

Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation

[www.nsgc.ca/](http://www.nsgc.ca/)

Nova Scotia Housing Development  
Corporation

[www.gov.ns.ca/coms/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/)

Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation

[www.theNSLC.com](http://www.theNSLC.com)

Nova Scotia Municipal Finance  
Corporation

[www.gov.ns.ca/nsmfc/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsmfc/)

Trade Centre Limited

[www.tradecentrelimited.com](http://www.tradecentrelimited.com)

Waterfront Development Corporation  
Limited

[www.wdcl.ca](http://www.wdcl.ca)

