



RENEW PEI:

The Premier's Council
for Recovery and Growth

Summary Report of
The Council's June 1st Roundtable

June 2020

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Leadership and Optimism for a Stronger, Sustainable PEI	2
3. Lessons Learned from the COVID Experience	3
4. Bold Initiatives for a Stronger, Sustainable PEI	4
4.1 Foster a Culture of Competitiveness Where Businesses Thrive	5
4.2 Create a Future Where Every Sector Succeeds.....	6
4.3 Offer World-Class Education and Training Where People Excel.....	7
4.4 Become a Sustainability Leader Where All of PEI Benefits	8
4.5 Build Connected Communities Where People Want to Be	9
Appendix: Premier's Council for Recovery and Growth.....	11



The Premier's Council for Recovery and Growth is tasked with developing a framework to guide PEI over the next 5-10 years that reflects the Island and is action-oriented.

1. Introduction

The Premier's Council for Recovery and Growth includes 31 Islanders from various backgrounds and organizations who will work with Islanders and organizations of Prince Edward Island to create a plan to harness growth and build opportunity.

Council members, along with ex-officio members representing the University of Prince Edward Island, Holland College and the Province of PEI, met by video conference on June 1, 2020, to discuss the following agenda:

1. **Welcome from Premier King.** Premier King set out the vision for the work of the Council, asking members to share their ideas, noting that there is no idea that is too big or too small that can contribute to the overall success of Prince Edward Island.
2. **Outlining the Council Process.** The Clerk explained the process foreseen for the Council and supports that will be provided for the work of the Council.
3. **Roundtable discussion.** Council members were asked to share the following:
 - a. A short introduction about themselves and their work.
 - b. An indication of the single most significant lesson or insight each of them have learned from the current COVID experience.
 - c. One bold idea each of them would like to champion to make PEI the best place to live, work and grow.
4. **Conclusion and Next Steps.** In addition to the continued work of the Council, there will be engagement of sector champions to receive input and ideas from sectors across the province.

MRSB and O'Neill Strategic Economics were engaged to capture key points of discussion during the Council meeting and to prepare this report that summarizes key findings. Comments have been combined and paraphrased throughout this document. Any errors or omissions are not intentional.

2. Leadership and Optimism for a Stronger, Sustainable PEI

The Premier's Council members were invited to share open feedback on the current situation as a result of the COVID experience and bold ideas for the future of Prince Edward Island to champion recovery and growth.

During the Roundtable, members shared impactful messages that will guide the work of the Council. The most significant of which are as follows:

Recognition of the Premier's leadership on behalf of all Islanders in establishing this Council made up of diverse expertise, experience, and representation

A recognition of the heartache and devastation that the COVID pandemic has brought to Islanders, families, communities, and businesses

A sense of pride in the way Islanders and businesses have adapted and pivoted during this experience that has impacted all of us locally and globally

A desire to maintain, grow and accelerate the innovation and leadership within private, not-for-profit, and public sectors demonstrated during COVID

A strong sense of optimism for the future of Prince Edward Island because of who we are: small, adaptive, resilient, and collaborative

Forward-thinking and bold ideas about the strengthening of Prince Edward Island as a widely-recognized leader in many areas that leverage our strengths and assets

A thankfulness to be part of this effort and to work together, on behalf of Islanders, to define the path forward for a stronger Prince Edward Island

*"Go forward to better,
rather than back to normal"*

~ Council Member

*"There will be no moving
back to 'normal' – as there will
be a 'new normal'."*

~ Council Member

*"Change is sometimes out of
our control and we have to be
ready for it. We can turn [the
situation] into opportunities
and be in a much more
prepared state next time."*

~ Council Member

*"Islanders of Tomorrow!
The overall wisdom [by all of
us] will help us move forward."*

~ Council Member

*"It takes a village to
raise an Island."*

~ Council Member

**Let's Work Together:
Islanders
Helping Islanders**

3. Lessons Learned from the COVID Experience

Every Council member shared the following:

“An indication of the single most significant lesson or insight you have learned from the current COVID experience.”

Overarching messages:

- **The size of our Island** which has enabled Islanders, businesses, communities, and government to adapt, innovate, and grow strong connections
- **Ability of businesses to adapt, pivot, innovate, and plan** (e.g., new strategies and approaches, products, delivery models, supply chains)
- **Resiliency of Islanders**, adapting to change that has impacted the way we live, learn, and connect
- **Overall desire and momentum to move forward to the ‘new normal’** and not return to the pre-COVID situation. There is a sense of optimism by many to be able to make a positive impact on PEI’s future

Other comments and observations are as follows:

- Ability of government to quickly respond to issues and to deliver simplified programs that allow for broad-based use and are easily accessed. Comments were made that these actions are very important, particularly because of the fragility of people’s income
- Ability of K-12 system and post-secondary institutions to adapt new delivery models
- The rapid pace of the spread of the virus, demonstrating a shared vulnerability locally and globally and the strong connections between industries within PEI and PEI to the world
- Level of emotional and financial impact of COVID within a short timeframe and the importance of supporting the health and well-being of Islanders and communities
- The way that sectors have been impacted differently and some sectors will lag behind others in the recovery process (e.g., music versus recreational activities)
- The fact that PEI’s industries are made up (in large part) of small and diverse businesses, making the industry less reliant on one business for survival (e.g., potato packing)
- With the use of internet, more, than would have been anticipated, can be done efficiently and from home

4. Bold Initiatives for a Stronger, Sustainable PEI

Every Council member shared the following:

**“One bold idea you would like to champion to make PEI
the best place to live, work and grow”**

The feedback shared by the members of the Premier’s Council has been compiled and is presented in **five key themes**:

- Foster a culture of competitiveness where businesses thrive
- Create a future where every sector succeeds
- Offer world-class education and training where people excel
- Become a sustainability leader where all of PEI benefits
- Build connected communities where people want to be

Each theme includes potential opportunities for Prince Edward Island as outlined below.

A STRONGER, SUSTAINABLE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Foster a Culture of Competitiveness Where Businesses Thrive	Create a Future Where Every Sector Succeeds	Offer World-Class Education and Training Where People Excel	Become a Sustainability Leader Where All of PEI Benefits	Build Connected Communities Where People Want to Be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage private sector investment in innovation, diversification (e.g., product, service and market) and automation • Establish PEI as a hub for automation and efficiency in food manufacturing • Promote and encourage the transformation to a digital economy • Review government programs with a goal to work towards increasing business competitiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new approach to prospecting for businesses and talent (e.g., succession planning) • Rethink our tourism strategy (e.g., ‘Fair Service’, free bridge and ferry access) • Embrace the vibrancy of our Island through arts and culture • Support sustainable and diversified sectors and business clusters (e.g., diagnostic testing, social enterprises, collaboration and shared resources) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and education for people to take advantage of opportunities in technology and innovation • Fully link K-12 system and post-secondary education with the evolving skills needs of PEI sectors • Re-imagine approaches to lifelong education/learning to more effectively meet the needs of learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a collaborative and action-oriented path forward • Grow a cluster of clean technology businesses • Leverage expertise in PEI including the Canadian Centre for Climate Change and Adaptation at UPEI and Holland College • Make strategic infrastructure investments that ensure long-term sustainability • Support and promote purpose-driven businesses that seek to benefit the society and environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With urgency, ensure high-speed internet access across the province • Provide sustainable funding to NGOs and social enterprises that support our health and well-being • Improve efficiencies within healthcare and government service delivery • Revisit supports for Islanders (e.g., review of minimum wage, social programs) • Strengthen Atlantic Canadian partnerships to raise our national and international profile

Summary feedback provided by the Council members is presented in more detail, by theme, in the following sections.

4.1 Foster a Culture of Competitiveness Where Businesses Thrive

- Move forward with innovation, technology, and new ways of doing things. PEI is small, nimble and capable of taking this direction, which will support entrepreneurs, innovative leaders, and good companies that provide great jobs
- Focus on innovation, product and process development, automation, and ways to maximize resource utilization and profitability, including within primary sectors – agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries
- Establish PEI as a hub for automation and efficiency in food manufacturing within North America, focusing on productivity improvement, quality jobs, and global leadership
- Develop a digital strategy to better connect PEI's world-class products, services and content globally that will benefit all sectors (including healthcare)
- Support the continual adaptation by businesses to innovate and harness new revenue generation opportunities (e.g., digital platform)

A FOCUS ON INNOVATION, DIVERSIFICATION, AUTOMATION AND DIGITIZATION



Image Source: Steve Sutherland, flickr.com/photos/96510847@N06/10662212774

4.2 Create a Future Where Every Sector Succeeds

- Support succession planning, including to address complicated tax, legal and financing issues, so local businesses can flourish
- Attract talent to PEI based on the quality of life in PEI and the ability to work remotely
- Encourage Islanders to experience PEI and support local tourism and businesses (e.g., marketing packages, promotion of affordable vacations, testing low carbon alternative rural transportation)
- Provide free access to and from Prince Edward Island by the Confederation Bridge and Northumberland Ferries
- Support a thriving retail and service industry (e.g., review of minimum wage to better reflect work and life experience, an emphasis on “Fair Service” in the restaurant industry)
- Invest collectively in Prince Edward Island, building our brand in arts and culture (e.g., mastering of music cities uniquely adapted to PEI, engagement of culture sector)
- Build strong, resilient, sustainable and diversified sectors that lead growth (jobs, skills, infrastructure and investment), adapting lessons learned from national sector strategies
- Continue to diversify PEI’s economy in areas such as IT and cyber security
- Build local capacity in diagnostic testing for infectious diseases to support healthy and sustainable communities across the province and to attract visitors and new Islanders
- Grow small, sustainable clusters of like-minded companies that can foster growth in PEI and that are resilient against economic decline; smaller companies are agile, have the ability to quickly adapt their business models, and have a vested interest in the community
- Support business-to-business collaboration (e.g., shared facilities/costs, business-to-business networking)

A FOCUS ON STRONG AND DIVERSIFIED COMPANIES AND SECTORS



4.3 Offer World-Class Education and Training Where People Excel

- Provide training and education for people to take advantage of opportunities in technology and innovation
- Fully link the K-12 system and post-secondary education with the skill and labour needs of PEI's sectors
- Be at the forefront of innovation as a province and use education to provide opportunity for all Islanders, developing highly skilled workers, interesting jobs and entrepreneurship
- Re-imagine education and lifelong-learning (as well as the accompanying systems and supports), including a formal K-12 education system designed to assist learners based on their needs
- Incorporate an understanding and promotion of financial literacy and how to contribute to society within the K-12 system and post-secondary education

A FOCUS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING THAT MEET EVOLVING NEEDS



Image Source: Nicolas Raymond, flickr.com/photos/82955120@N05/48801819911/

4.4 Become a Sustainability Leader Where All of PEI Benefits

- Become an internationally recognized leader in sustainability, including:
 - Focus on a sustainable “Island” model (e.g., Samsø: The Green Island)
 - Develop policy and legislation and provide financial support to incentivize and de-risk private sector investment (e.g., recycling technology, electric vehicles)
 - Build a strong, coordinated, collaborative model, similar to the BioAlliance/bioscience cluster, to develop and grow PEI’s clean technology sector
 - Leverage this leadership to strengthen tourism and other sectors
- Focus on ‘clean, natural and smart’ such as less reliance on fossil fuels (e.g., fewer vehicles, electric vehicles and buses), renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and so forth
- Leverage the Canadian Centre for Climate Change and Adaptation through the University of Prince Edward Island to support innovative and sustainable industries, such as agriculture
- Make strategic infrastructure investments that ensure long-term sustainability; a review of government programs and services is needed
- Support and promote building purpose-driven businesses and social enterprises that seek to benefit our society and the environment

A FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION IN SUSTAINABILITY AS AN ISLAND

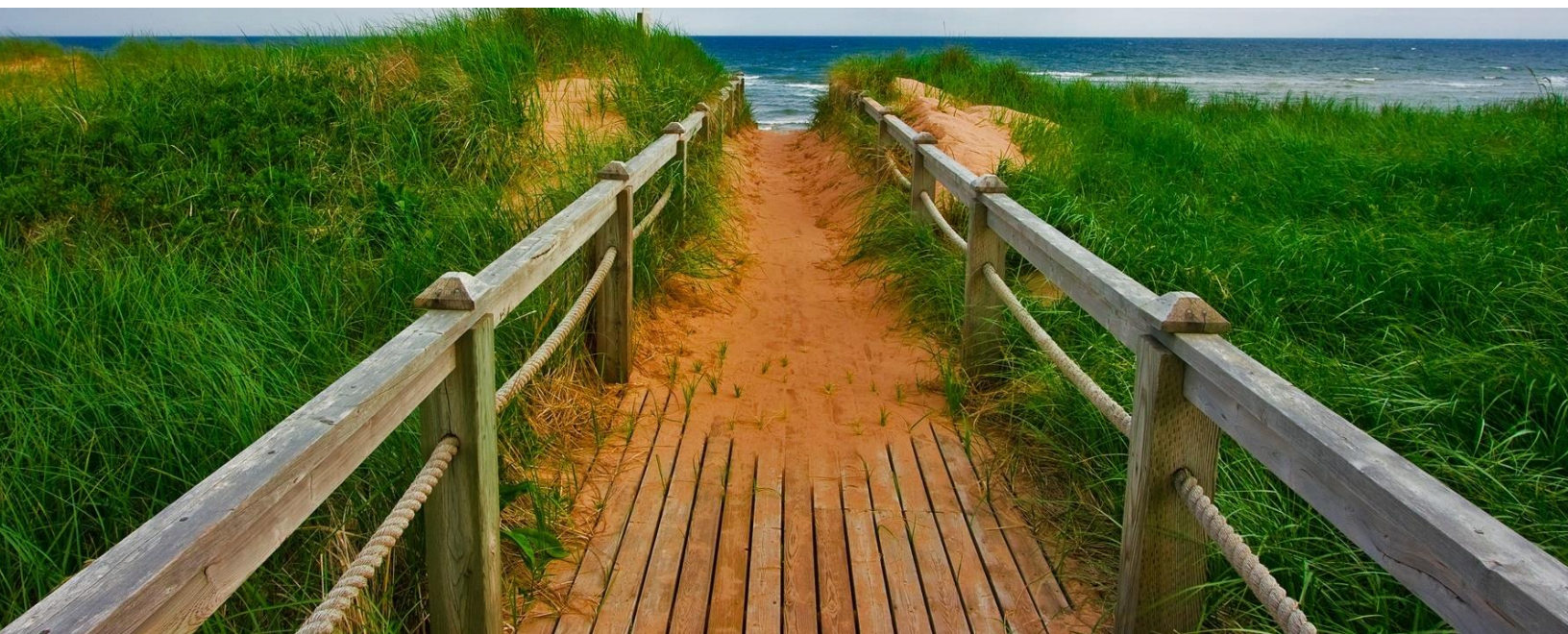
Image Source: Government of Prince Edward Island, flickr.com/photos/peigov/28723038583/



4.5 Build Connected Communities Where People Want to Be

- Accelerate high-speed internet access across the province, including to support working remotely and to attract people to rural and urban living in PEI
- Continue to improve efficiencies within government and healthcare service delivery, building on the efforts to accelerate improvements that took place during the pandemic. A comment was made for PEI to establish a healthcare system that rivals any healthcare system in the world
- Provide sustainable funding to non-government organizations (NGOs) that play a very important role in supporting the health and well-being of Islanders and communities including strengthening the capacity of the formal healthcare system
- Support the growth and development of social enterprises which play a vital role in our communities
- Provide supports to Islanders (e.g., universal healthcare, access to childcare, programs and supports for the most vulnerable populations, food bank donations, 4-day work week)
- Support the stability and sustainability of communities, with a focus on health and well-being, including the self-sufficiency and resilience of First Nation communities in PEI
- Celebrate and recognize Islanders, breaking down silos and building community within PEI (e.g., PEI local award)
- Strengthen Atlantic Canadian partnerships to raise the region's profile nationally and internationally, building on and leveraging each other's strengths (e.g., remove interprovincial trade barriers)

A FOCUS ON BUILDING STRONGER CONNECTIONS AND COLLABORATION





“With such visionary Islanders coming together, it is no surprise that so many good ideas, for us to build on, have been identified.”

~ Premier King

Appendix:

Premier's Council for Recovery and Growth

Honourable Dennis King,
Premier of Prince Edward Island

PREMIER'S COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jason Aspin, Aspin Kemp & Associates

Steve Bellamy, Confederation Centre
of the Arts

Adam Binkley, Summerside Boys & Girls Club

Dawn Binns, Insight Brand & Marketing Studio

Julia Campbell, North Shore Group

Mike Cassidy, T3 Transit

Mitch Cobb, Upstreet Brewing

Mark Coffin, Tronosjet Maintenance Inc.

Stefanie Corbett, Island Capital Partners

Isabelle Dasylyva-Gill, Société Saint-Thomas-
D'Aquin

Esther Dockendorff, PEI Mussel King

Adam Fenech, University of Prince Edward
Island, School of Climate Change & Adaptation

Chad Herron, Cows Inc.

Amy Hsiao, University of Prince Edward Island

Karen Jackson, PEI Union of Public Sector
Employees

Amber Jadis, Bricks 4 Kidz

Ray Keenan, Rollo Bay Holdings

Cynthia MacLeod, Musical Artist

Moyna Matheson, Samuel's Coffee House

Chris Matters, Llink Consulting

Darrin Mitchell, Trout River Industries

Mohammad Moin, Somru Bioscience

Terry Nabuurs, The Wheelhouse and
Terry's Berries

Michele Oliver, Holland College,
West Prince Campus

Debbie Plouffe, Centre for Aquaculture
Technologies Canada

Sydney Seggie, Fellow Earthlings

Chef Michael Smith, Restaurateur, Innkeeper,
Author, Food Network Host, Sustainability
Advocate, Nutritional Activist

Treena Smith, Canadian Mental Health
Association-PEI

Oliver Technow, BioVectra

Joanne Thompson, Thinking Big

Jenene Wooldridge, L'nuey

EX-OFFICIO COUNCIL MEMBERS

Honourable Darlene Compton,
Minister of Finance/Deputy Premier

Cheryl Paynter, Workers Compensation Board
of Prince Edward Island

Alaa Abd-El-Aziz, University of Prince Edward
Island

Alexander (Sandy) MacDonald, Holland College