

Cumberland Urges Premier to Reconsider

By Darrell Cole

Cumberland municipal council is urging Premier Tim Houston to reconsider increasing the non-resident deed transfer tax if not for the whole province at least in Cumberland County.

"The recent announcement by your government to increase non-resident deed transfer tax from five per cent to 10 per cent increases, rather than reduces, barriers to inter-provincial and intra-regional relationships," Municipality of Cumberland Mayor Rod Gilroy said. "If it is implemented as scheduled it will depress real estate values and assessment, but more importantly, and of more concern, it will send a message to our neighbours that perhaps we're not all in this together."

Mayor Gilroy said council is supportive of efforts to facilitate inter-provincial trade and commerce and it's delighted to see the premier take a lead role in the national conversation amongst his colleagues to do this.

"In this environment of isolationist policy making on the part of the U.S. government and

the resulting global trade war, it's critical that our province does what it can to develop new markets and reduce the trade restrictions on existing domestic markets for our goods and services," the mayor said.

The mayor said with Cumberland County's geographic location next door to both New Brunswick and P.E.I., it also supports an unencumbered flow of goods, services and people between Nova Scotia and its closest neighbours.

"Everyday life in Cumberland County includes the integration of procurement of goods and services with our Maritime neighbors with many folks crossing provincial barriers daily to work, shop, play and attend appointments," the mayor said. "It shouldn't come as a surprise that this integration extends to families with many living in one province but owning, or seeking to acquire, seasonal residences in another to be able to vacation or spend time closer to their families."

Darrell Cole, Corporate Communications Officer, 902-297-1333, dcole@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca

Cumberland Taking a Case-By-Case Approach

By Darrell Cole

Cumberland municipal council is not saying yes to a proposal by the provincial government to remove barriers to resource development in Nova Scotia, but it's not saying no either.

In response to a letter from Municipal Affairs Minister John Lohr urging municipalities to signal their support for greater resource development, Mayor Rod Gilroy said it's not lost on the municipality that the Cumberland Basin is home is home to significant oil and gas potential and that exploration and extraction of these resources could potentially have a significant economic impact on the municipality, the province and even the region. (Letter printed else-

where in this issue - below.)

"While it is certainly true that the current global trade environment makes it more important than ever to explore and implement policies that make our province more self-reliant, and that resource development has the potential to contribute to that state of self-reliance, Cumberland Municipal Council is of the opinion that resource development cannot take an "at all costs" approach," the mayor said.

"To be fair, there are those in our region who say, 'go ahead', encourage all development of these resources. There are many in our region though who have expressed serious safety concerns and concerns around water supply impacts regarding fracking. There are

also concerns about impacts on nature and the natural beauty of our region."

With that potential and those concerns as a background, the mayor said council is not of the opinion that it should say an unqualified 'yes' to any, all and every project and opportunity for resource exploration and extraction.

"Rather, Council is of the view that, when specific potential projects are within its regulatory purview to render a decision, or to express favour or distain, it should do so on a case-by-case basis," the mayor said.


Darrell Cole, Corporate Communications Officer, 902-297-1333, dcole@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca



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March 26, 2025
 Honorable John Lohr
 Minister of Municipal Affairs
 BY EMAIL

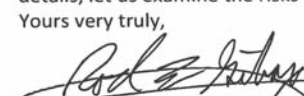
Dear Honorable Minister Lohr,
 Re: Resource Development

I write today in response to your letter of February 11, 2025, in which you solicited the support of Municipal Council regarding a reduction in inter-provincial trade barriers and in removing barriers to resource development in Nova Scotia. We will respond regarding inter-provincial trade barriers under separate cover. Today's response speaks to resource development. It is not lost on us that the Cumberland Basin, specifically, is home to significant oil and gas potential and that exploration and extraction of these resources could potentially have a significant economic impact on our municipality, the province and even the region. To that acknowledgement I would add that we also see the development of the well documented geothermal energy potential in the Springhill area being an important element of resource development.

While it is certainly true that the current global trade environment makes it more important than ever to explore and implement policies that make our province more self-reliant, and that resource development has the potential to contribute to that state of self-reliance, Cumberland Municipal Council is of the opinion that resource development cannot take an "at all costs" approach. To be fair, there are those in our region who say, "go ahead", encourage all development of these resources. There are many in our region though who have expressed serious safety concerns and concerns around water supply impacts regarding fracking. There are also concerns about impacts on nature and the natural beauty of our region. With that potential and those concerns as a background, Municipal Council is not of the opinion that it should say an unqualified "yes" to any, all and every project and opportunity for resource exploration and extraction. Rather, Council is of the view that, when specific potential projects are within its regulatory purview to render a decision, or to express favour or distain, it should do so on a case-by-case basis.

As you well know, the process for decision making on important community projects and regulatory applications at the municipal level includes the opportunity for robust community input. We are collectively of the opinion that support for each project should be contingent on its benefits and risks.

For these reasons, Cumberland Municipal Council is saying neither "yes" nor "no" in each and every case of resource development. Rather, we say "maybe - maybe not", we say "show us the details, let us examine the risks and benefits and consult on each project."

Yours very truly,

 Rod Gilroy
 Mayor

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