

The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

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How to Hire Foreign Talent

How to Hire Foreign Talent Information Session will be held February 6, 2024 at Truro Fire Hall. Hosted by the Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with IRCC, Nova Scotia's Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration, along with other partners. Gain insights into how employers can effectively utilize the immigration system to fulfill labor requirements while receiving support from both federal and provincial governments. Explore information booths set up for personalized business guidance from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at Truro Fire Hall, 165 Victoria Street, Truro. Information Session is free of charge; however, registration is required. Following the session, join us for a panel discussion and luncheon hosted by the Chamber from Noon to 1:00 pm.

Nova Scotians Support Local Food

Nova Scotians are supporting the province's farmers and enjoying local food, using about a third of their food budget on locally grown or produced agri-food and dairy products. A new survey, developed by the Province and the Canadian Agri-Food Foresight Institute, found between 27 and 34 per cent of Nova Scotians' total food spending went to locally produced products.

The first-of-its-kind survey model allows researchers to determine with greater precision the share of a population's total food budget spent on local products. The survey was developed as part of the Department's mandate to support and encourage local food consumption, with the goal of 20 per cent of the money spent on food by Nova Scotians being spent on locally produced food by 2030. It asks participants to estimate how much they spend on local food products in 15 food categories. Participants from across the province reflect a range of ages and socioeconomic levels. The survey can be run multiple times a year, allowing for the collection of timely data that accounts for the seasonality of local foods. For greater accuracy, the results are weighted using Statistics Canada food expenditure data.

Minimum Wage Increasing on April 1

Nova Scotia's minimum wage will increase to \$15.20 per hour on April 1. The increase follows the formula previously recommended by the Minimum Wage Review Committee and accepted by the government. Starting this year, the rate is to be adjusted by the national consumer price index plus one percentage point from the minimum wage rate set the preceding April. That means an increase this year of 4.7 per cent from the April 2023 rate. "This year has been very difficult for many Nova Scotians - business owners and workers alike," said Minister Balser. "I am grateful to the Minimum Wage Review Committee for putting forward the perspective of both employers and employees so we can ensure a balanced approach to increasing the minimum wage." The committee, which has equal employee and employer representation, filed its 2023 report with the Minister on December 11.

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News from our Provincial Capital - Tom Taggart

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Recently Government has announced some new cancer care improvements including more funding for community oncology clinics, better Communications between oncology providers intended to improving care and shortening wait times. A first in the world, Ethos radiotherapy system with Hyper Sight imaging will decrease the average number of treatments from 20 to five and a new 10 year partnership with Varian which will make Nova Scotians among the first in the world to access new oncology technology and innovative programs

Just last week the Minister of Health announced a new Lung Screening Program will target people at a high risk of developing Lung Cancer. This program includes Clinical assessment as well as CT scans. This has just being rolled out and is currently only available in the Central Zone. However, it will be rolled out to the rest of Nova Scotia over the next 2 years. I will be advocating for the Northern Region to be the next region that rolls this out.

The Department of Public Works will soon be going to tender for a new Bridge in Bass River. There has been much discussion debate and opinion on the placement. There were 3 original options presented to me and at community meetings 2 other were suggested and reviewed by Public Works Engineers. One of the 2 was to build a new road down to behind the old Service Station and cross there. This was considered too costly. I could have attempted to debate this with Public Works but for me to go to the minister and ask to double the cost at a time when all tenders are coming in very high and projects are being delayed or simply not being awarded was not something I felt was responsible.

The second option was pretty close to the original option 1 which was to expropriate and demolish the old feed store and the Elliott house (which has been my preferred choice). However, it also would have caused the expropriation and demolition of the General Store. I fully understand this is hard to visualize. I do have drawings at my office to confirm this!

The challenge all along has been new design standards for all new infrastructure require they meet new climate change specifications. In this case it is basically the increase in height or distance from the streambed and the lowest part of the bridge. Additionally, the requirement Maple Avenue must intersect trunk 2 at 90 degrees.

I repeat what I have said from the very beginning. The two things not acceptable, by me, were demolishing the general store or impacting the trees that were planted in remembrance of the fallen Soldiers. That eliminated both option 1 and option 2 which was replace at same location as current Bridge.

Option 3 is the one Public Works will tender does not come without its challenges. First the easy one. There will be a STOP sign on Trunk 2. If you knew how many times I get complaints about speed, in particular trucks traveling west on Hwy 2 towards and onto the current bridge you would have a better understanding as to why I have no problem with this. A stop sign will fix that.

Another concern was the entrance onto the bridge traveling east. This is designed to allow a B-train trailer to turn right and not in any way interact with traffic coming down the hill. I am satisfied with that. I do expect the new intersection will make it unsafe for parking in front of the store and folks will have to park across trunk 2 or the southwest parking lot at the end of the store.

There was concern expressed about pedestrian traffic, particularly about school children. This has been studied by traffic division and there will be things in place to address this. With respect to foot traffic, I have been advised, there will be sidewalks on both sides of the new bridge.

Now the hard part!! The new bridge will require the loggers park will have to be re-located. Public Works staff will work with the Heritage Society to determine what that will look like. The costs will be covered by Public Works.

The original bridge design was not very kind to the Veterans Memorial Park and understandably they were unhappy. Again because of the height requirement and the required slopes it definitely encroached and a significant portion of parking, it was close, probably too close to the Memorial trees. Public Works staff including the Director of Construction met twice with park leadership and we really could not find any common ground. I asked the director to go back and try and find a new design.

Eventually they came back with the wooden arch bridge, similar to one constructed in Napan S, named "Roger Bacon Bridge". The wooden arch carries the weight and provides the strength which eliminates the girders. The original concrete structure required girders six feet below the bridge deck to carry the weight. We gained 6 feet which reduced the slope and as a result SOME of the encroachment on the park. We then met with the park leadership and they had their engineer with them.

There is no question there will still be some impact. The flower garden and sign will need to be relocated and a new entrance constructed at no cost to the park. I believe it is safe to say the folks at the park would prefer no impact. I understand that, but I believe they recognized Public Works had worked hard to manage the impact.

In mid December I spoke with Public Works and they advised that as soon as they incorporated the second sidewalk on the bridge design it would be ready for tender. With tight quarters and new design standards, it has been a journey that impacted and concerned many.

Regardless we need a new bridge, there is a long list of bridges on the Capitol Construction list. I do not want to risk the chance we lose our place in that list.

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Truro Chamber of Commerce AGM February 29TH

Truro Colchester Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting, set to take place on Thursday, February 29th at 11 am, at the Best Western Glengarry, located at 150 Willow Street, Truro. Stay tuned for further details, including additional information about the event and registration details.

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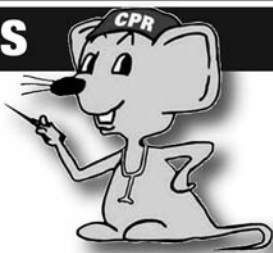
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The building beside Masstown Petrocan

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