Urban Growth Engine for New Brunswick

Enterprise Greater Moncton Strategic Plan 2007-2010

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The Strategic Plan: Summary

⇨ **To be a leading urban centre for New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces.**

⇨ 7,000 net new jobs from 2007-2010
⇨ Grow the population adequate to supply the labour force
⇨ Significantly increase the educational attainment of the workforce
⇨ Raise the average income level
⇨ Renew focus on quality of life
⇨ Innovative economic development

⇨ Take control of our economic development
⇨ Attract significant external business investments
⇨ Foster local business retention and growth
⇨ Foster local entrepreneurship
⇨ Foster increased in-migration & immigration
⇨ Enhance our post-secondary education infrastructure
⇨ Invest in growth supporting infrastructure
⇨ Foster a way of life second to none in Canada

⇨ Workplan for Enterprise Greater Moncton
⇨ Specific action items for stakeholders & partners

1. Introduction

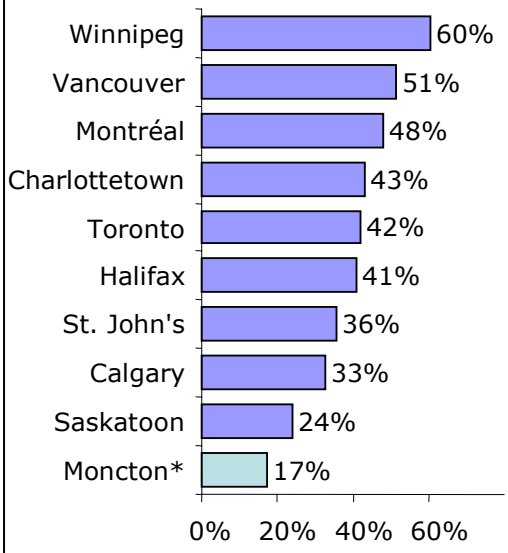
New Brunswick has the distinction of being the only province in Canada without a dominant urban centre. In fact, the two largest urban regions in New Brunswick[1], Greater Saint John and Greater Moncton each represent only about 17% of the total provincial population far behind the next closest province, Saskatchewan, which has Saskatoon at 24% of its population.

The majority of Canada's provinces have a dominant urban centre of at least 40% of the total provincial population – more than double that of New Brunswick's largest urban centre.

Why does this matter? It matters because real economic and population growth in Canada over the past 40 years has been concentrated in large urban centres. Some have speculated that much of New Brunswick's economic malaise in recent decades can be linked to a lack of a dominant urban region (s).

The Conference Board of Canada recently published a report on the state of urban Canada. It concluded that the only true urban centre in all of the Atlantic Provinces was the Halifax CMA. While this report generated considerable controversy, it did underscore the point that New Brunswick does not have a true urban centre – at least in the definition of the credible Conference Board of Canada (see Section 7 below for the definition of a 'dominant' urban centre for the purposes of this strategic plan).

Dominant Urban Centres
% of total provincial population



Source: 2006 Census for CMA areas (except Census Agglomerations area in Charlottetown).
**Includes Moncton, Riverview, Dieppe and several outlying communities.*

Greater Moncton has undergone considerable transformation in the past 20 years. In many ways this has been a remarkable transition from a community dominated by one, blue collar industry – the CN Shops – in the 1980s to one that is diversified, dynamic and expanding its role as a regional economy for New Brunswick and also northwestern Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

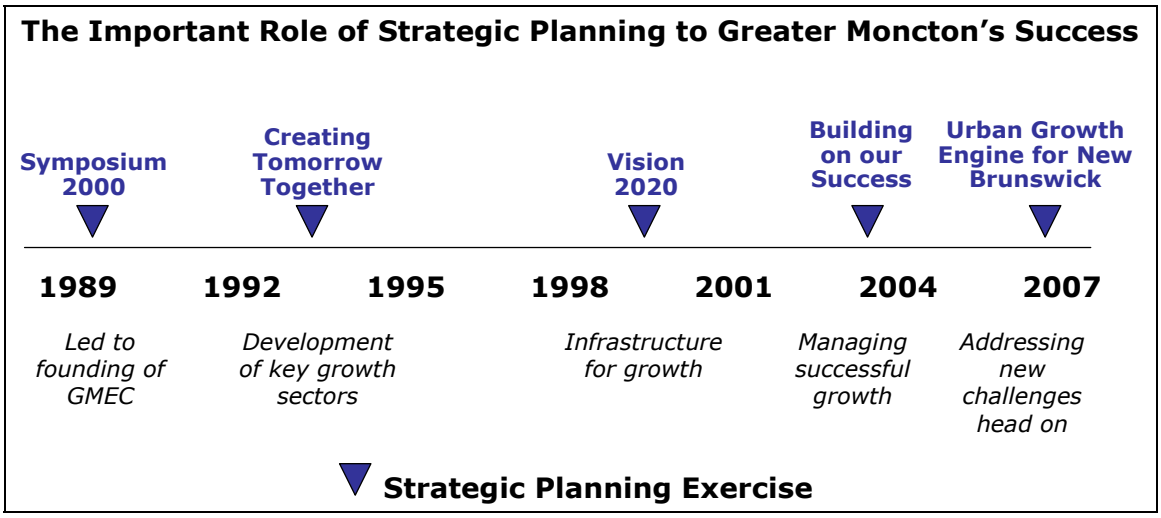
This is why the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan for Enterprise Greater Moncton is entitled *Urban Growth Engine for New Brunswick*. It is a deliberate recognition of the emerging role that Greater Moncton has in the regional economy and a call to action to the community to recognize its new role and embrace it. If New Brunswick is to turn itself around and shift from population decline to population growth, it will need the urban region of Greater Moncton to lead the way. If New Brunswick is to transition from an economy dominated by 19th and 20th century industries to one of leading 21st century industries, Greater Moncton must lead the way. If New Brunswick is to become, in the words of the new government, 'self-sufficient', Greater Moncton must lead the way.

However, this strategic plan is for Enterprise Greater Moncton. The success of Greater Moncton will be based on a much wider set of factors than just this regional economic development agency. But Enterprise Greater Moncton is the regional economic development agency and as such, its efforts will be key to the sustained growth and emerging leadership role of the community.

[1] As measured by metropolitan area population.

2. The Strategic Planning Process

In late 2003/early 2004, Enterprise Greater Moncton undertook a large scale strategic planning process. This effort included broad community consultations, detailed research and background analysis and a carefully crafted and articulated strategic plan for the 2004 to 2008 timeframe. In the opinion of the leadership of EGM, much of that framework still holds in 2007. Therefore, the purpose of the 2007-2010 strategic plan is to update that framework with any new realities and priorities facing the community and the organization since 2004.



There were a number of components that went into the development of the 2007-2010 strategic plan including:

- Background research into local, regional and national trends that could influence Greater Moncton's economic growth.
- A review of the research conducted by Enterprise Greater Moncton and its partners in recent years including:
    - Economic development strategies of the three municipalities
    - The customer contact centre industry study
    - The inland port study
    - The workforce survey
    - The arts/cultural industry review
    - The retail sector strategy
    - The downtown development study
    - The ICT industry study
- Consultations with key stakeholders including:
    - EGM staff and board of directors
    - The three municipalities
    - The Junior Chamber of Commerce
    - Representatives of the manufacturing, health, education and insurance sectors
    - Interviews with specific industry leaders in the community

In total, over 90 of the region's key community and industry leaders were consulted in the preparation of the 2007-2010 strategic plan.

3. The Context: 2007 and beyond

There are a number of emerging trends and major influences that impact Enterprise Greater Moncton and its 2007-2010 strategic plan*: Urban Growth Engine for New Brunswick*.

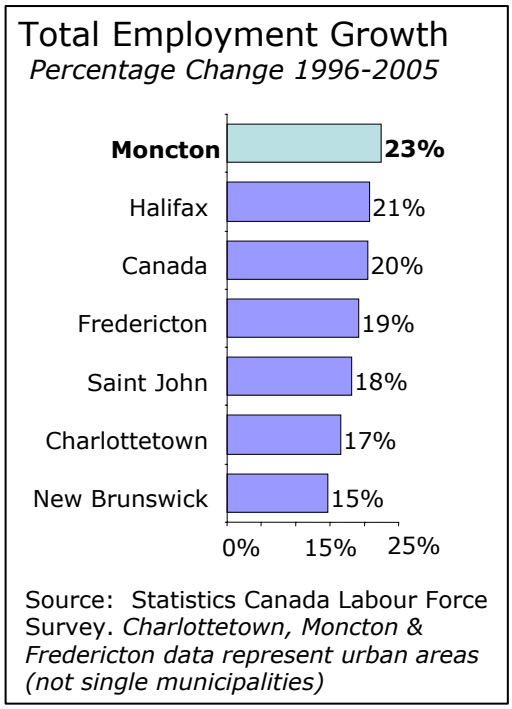
2.1 Sustained growth in Greater Moncton

Greater Moncton has sustained its strong rate of employment and population growth over the past decade. Since 1996, no urban centre in Atlantic Canada has exhibited a stronger rate of employment growth. Population growth has remained strong as well with only the Halifax CMA growing at a faster rate.

However, employment growth is out stripping population growth which has led to reduced unemployment rates, increased workforce participation and emerging labour shortages in certain industry sectors.

As of February 2006, the unemployment rate in urban Moncton had dropped to 5.1% - one of the lowest rates of urban unemployment in eastern Canada.

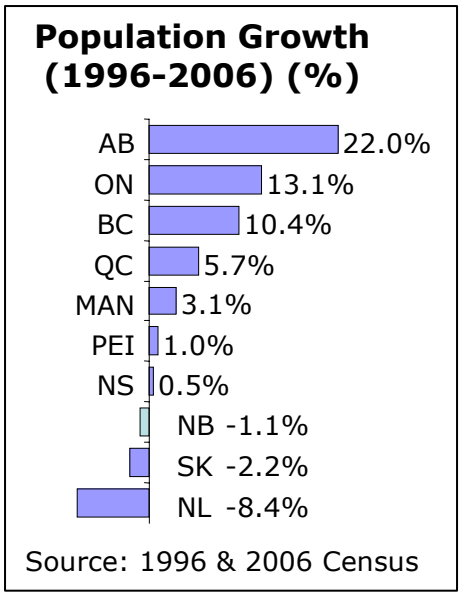
The workforce survey conducted by Enterprise Greater Moncton in 2006 and the contact industry study provided strong indications that this growth is expected to continue. From the workforce survey, 54% of the 700 firms in the survey indicated they would be expanding their workforce over the next three years. The companies included in the workforce survey and the customer contact industry survey are forecasting a collective expansion of over 5,200 workers in the next three years. This represents only a subset of all the firms in Greater Moncton and does not take into account any new firms moving in to the region.



2.2 The provincial context

In 2006, a new government took control of the Legislature in Fredericton promising to move New Brunswick towards 'self-sufficiency'. The reports issued by the self-sufficiency task force call for the population of New Brunswick to increase by 100,000 people in the next two decades (it declined over the past 10 years). It also calls for an increase to the workforce of 70,000 people in that timeframe.

The path to achieving this never before seen economic and population has not been fully articulated by the new government as of the time of the issuance of this report. However, one thing is clear. For New Brunswick to achieve a period of unprecedented population and economic growth, Greater Moncton will have to be a vital catalyst.



2.3 The shift towards workforce

According to research by major economic development publications such as *Site Selection* magazine, *Expansion Management* and *Area Development*, access to a qualified workforce has become the dominant issue in business investment attraction across North America.

In the early 1990s, when unemployment rates in many communities were 10% and up, company surveys placed other criteria such as cost environment and government incentives ahead of workforce. Now, the ability to generate a strong local workforce and attract people into the community is by far the most important differentiator for economic development.

How does Greater Moncton compete in this area? It must compete by:

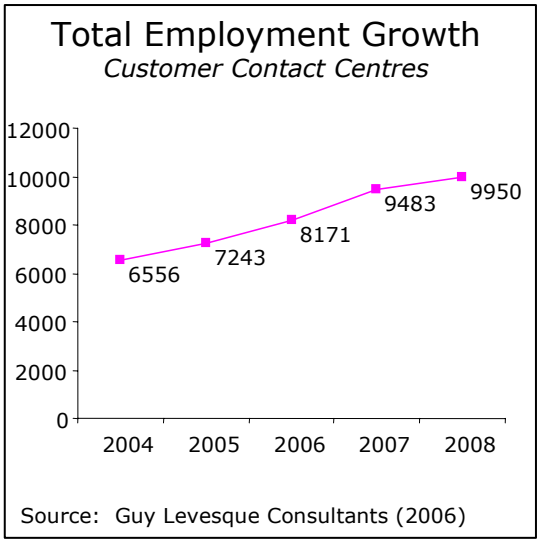
- Having a local post secondary education system that is turning out highly qualified workers for Greater Moncton's key growth sectors. According to recent studies, upwards of 40% of university graduates from Atlantic Canadian universities are leaving the region upon graduation for jobs elsewhere. It is imperative to keep them here by aligning graduates with good job opportunities at both the community college and university levels.
- Educating young people at the high school level about the opportunities in Greater Moncton. Greater Moncton is losing too many of its high school graduates to post-secondary and work opportunities in other provinces. These young people need to be made aware of the opportunities and hopefully many of them will align their post-secondary education to careers that will keep them here.
- Greater Moncton employers must be more deliberate about attracting workers from across the Atlantic Provinces. According to the Workforce Survey, over 90% of applicants for jobs in Greater Moncton come from either urban Moncton or New Brunswick. Only 7% come from elsewhere in Atlantic Canada.
- Greater Moncton employers must be more deliberate about attracting workers from across Canada, where appropriate. Both the migration data and anecdotal evidence confirms that people will move to Greater Moncton for a good job opportunity. However, only 1% of applications for jobs in Greater Moncton come from provinces outside Atlantic Canada. In order for Greater Moncton to be able to support its local workforce needs and attract new industry into strategic sectors, it will have to show a demonstrated ability to attract workers from outside New Brunswick.
- Greater Moncton employers must be more deliberate about attracting immigrants to work in key industries. The workforce survey confirmed that the vast majority of companies in Greater Moncton would gladly hire immigrant workers. It is incumbent on the key stakeholders involved in immigration to play a leadership role in linking immigrants to real job opportunities in Greater Moncton.

It was clear from the consultations with industry and labour groups that the ability for Greater Moncton to attract workers from outside New Brunswick will be critical to its success not in 10 or 20 years but now.

As such, this issue will take on increasing importance in Enterprise Greater Moncton's strategic plan.

2.4 The customer contact centre sector

The customer contact centre sector in Greater Moncton is one of the most impressive economic development stories in the past 30 years in Atlantic Canada. From an industry with 2-3 companies in the late 1980s to one with 32 firms employing over 8,000 workers and generating an estimated $421 million to the local economy[2], the contact centre sector is truly one of the most important economic drivers in the region.



The industry is estimated to generate over $39 million in tax revenues to the three levels of government.

And the growth is expected to continue. A recent report[2] forecasted that an addition 1,800 new jobs will be created in the sector from 2006 to 2008 increasing the direct economic benefit to the community to over $540 million per year.

However, the industry is facing considerable challenges including high labour turnover (25% or more), increasing challenges finding qualified workers and operating cost appreciation.

Many of Greater Moncton's contact centre companies are addressing these challenges by increasing wage rates, adding more fringe benefits, providing better work conditions, adding innovative models such as home agents and offering more training.

It is clear that the continuing success of the contact centre sector is important to Greater Moncton's economy. A large scale retrenchment in this sector could have wide ranging negative implications on the growth of Greater Moncton.

2.5 The rise of the 'nearshore'

A major trend impacting North American industry in the past decade has been the rise of offshore outsourcing to countries such as India, China and the Philippines. In fact, a number of Greater Moncton firms have felt this impact as jobs have been transferred offshore.

However, a variety of factors ranging from increasing security concerns to the need for data privacy has led to the emergence of the 'nearshore' model for a variety of industries. Canada, in general, and Atlantic Canada in particular is a good nearshore location because of its competitive cost environment. For example, Indian IT firms are setting up in Canada to provide nearshore IT services to the US market.

Greater Moncton needs to be positioned as an ideal nearshore destination for IT, high customer contact centres and manufacturing activity.

[2] Greater Moncton Area's Contact Centres, Guy Levesque Consultants (2006)

2.6 Increasing local economic development capacity

Another key trend in the past few years within Greater Moncton has been the effort of the three municipalities to ramp up their internal economic development capacity. All three municipalities have dedicated economic development resources, budgets and plans. This increasing capacity is synergistic to the mandate Enterprise Greater Moncton and helps build the overall economic development environment in the tri-community area.

However, it also means there is a need for alignment, where it makes sense, between the regional efforts of EGM and the local efforts of each of the three municipalities.

2.7 Regional cooperation

Greater Moncton is positioned at the geographic centre of the Maritime Provinces. This unique geographic advantage has helped the community build strong retail, warehousing and transportation sectors. In addition, it is a major reason why the Greater Moncton International Airport has been growing strongly.

In a broader context, there is considerable interest in more regional cooperation between communities and provinces. The three regional Enterprise agencies (Kent, Southeast and Greater Moncton) have been working on a number of collaborative initiatives in recent years. The Atlantica initiative, although it's early in the process, could be an important initiative and there are also efforts underway for more community to community collaboration where there is potential for mutual benefit.

Enterprise Greater Moncton should take a leadership role, where it makes sense, on inter-community collaboration. Once again, Greater Moncton needs to take on its role as a dominant urban region in New Brunswick and that will mean having a strong voice on community to community and regional collaboration.

5. 2007-2010 Updates to the Strategic Plan

Based on the changing context elaborated above and the extensive consultations with community and industry stakeholders, this section will summarize some of the important changes from the 2004 strategic plan that will be integrated into the 2007-2010 plan and the rationale for their inclusion.

Sections 6 through 9 below will show how these updates are integrated into the existing strategic plan template.

5.1 Critical role of research

More than at any time in its 18 year history, Enterprise Greater Moncton has become the window for information on the local economy. It has considerably increased its ability to generate high quality research on industry sectors, feasibility studies for new opportunities and development plans for critical industries or infrastructure.

The consultations confirm that EGM's partners and stakeholders appreciate and fully support this new role that EGM has crafted for itself in the past few years.

A sample of the research work conducted in the past couple of years includes:

- Customer contact centre industry study
- Inland port study
- Workforce survey
- Arts/cultural industry review
- Retail sector strategy
- Downtown development study
- ICT industry study
- Chinese Village feasibility study
- France investment attraction study

It is important that the majority of these studies are completed by leveraging funding from other partners.

In an ever changing environment, Enterprise Greater Moncton should continue to expand its role as the research agency for the Greater Moncton region.

5.2 Business Retention & Expansion

One of the most important new trends within the economic development community across North America has been a renewed focus on supporting the growth and success of local business. This does not diminish the importance of attracting new industry to a community. Rather, it enhances by doing things to strengthen local industry and the environment for sustained economic development.

A business retention and expansion (BR&E) program is a deliberate effort to analyze key growth sectors in the local economy and address challenges or barriers to the sector's growth. The action items coming out of a well-designed BR&E program can range from simple business environment impediments such as addressing a gap in public transportation to highly complex issues such as regulatory or tax reform.

Much of the research conducted by EGM can be used inside BR&E efforts but it was clear during the consultations with staff, industry and community leaders that a BR&E program is a good idea and needs to be led by Enterprise Greater Moncton.

5.3 Advocacy

In recent years, Enterprise Greater Moncton has focused more effort on playing an advocacy role for important economic development-related projects in the Greater Moncton region. This involves working with provincial and federal government partners on important infrastructure projects or securing funding support for critical research activities. It also involves supporting key partners in the community such as the Greater Moncton International Airport.

An advocacy role is strategically aligned with EGM's focus as a regional economic development agency *and* as an agency playing a leadership role on regional initiatives.

5.4 Building EGM's internal capacity

Enterprise Greater Moncton has always understood the importance of having a well-trained and competent team in place to support the strategic plan and the annual work plan of the organization.

It is vitally important for the organization to continue to make this a priority. Having the right people in the right positions, properly trained and properly resourced to achieve the objectives needs to be a top priority of Enterprise Greater Moncton.

This message was reinforced through the consultation process.

6. Growth Sectors

There were eight targeted industry sectors in the 2004 plan. The methodology for selecting these sectors was based on three elements:

1. Greater Moncton must have some differentiatable advantage in the sector, or;
2. Building the capacity to compete in the sector is achievable in a short time frame, and/or;
3. Must be a sector in strong growth mode

The eight growth sectors from the 2004 plan were:

- Business process outsourcing
- Niche manufacturing
- Aerospace
- Life sciences/regional health industries
- Transportation/distribution
- Information technologies
- Language industries
- Creative & cultural industries

In the 2007-2010 strategic plan, based on input from industry and key stakeholders, several changes to the industry targeting process have been made. The most significant change is to have a list of growth sectors where Enterprise Greater Moncton *can play a direct role in its growth and success.* This does not minimize the importance of other sectors to the local economy. Rather it is a realization that Enterprise Greater Moncton operates with limited financial and human resources and needs to be as targeted as possible in its activities.

6.1 Customer contact centre industry

As mentioned above, this sector is one of the most important to the Greater Moncton economy and one with considerable growth potential in the short term.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Help with workforce attraction activities: regional recruitment, immigration, etc.
- Support innovative HR techniques such as home based agents
- Advocacy role with provincial and regional sector strategies
- Attract new companies in niche markets where it will not put additional strain on the local industry
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.2 Retail trade

The retail trade sector is an important one to the local economy as it is key to Greater Moncton's role as a regional economy. Tens of thousands of people from outside the urban area come here to shop and spend money in the local economy. In addition, there are upwards of 10,000 people working in this sector.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Help with workforce development activities such as the retail training initiative.
- Support workforce attraction activities
- Attract niche retailers that will add to the attractiveness of the local retail market
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.3 Health/Life sciences

Greater Moncton has a large, local health sector. The two main health corporations employ some 4,000 people in the local region and the economic impact of the sector is considerable. There are emerging research organizations such as Atlantic Institute for Cancer Research and there are private sector firms offering related services outside the Greater Moncton region such as Clinidata and DDX Health Strategies The Université de Moncton wants to play a larger role in this sector.

In addition, the provincial government has made this sector central to its growth strategy which should bode well for the industry here in Greater Moncton.

The challenge for Greater Moncton is to leverage the significant existing industry into further growth opportunities – beyond the borders of Greater Moncton.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Attract and support the growth of health/life sciences firms into the community
- Work with UdeM to attract research and companies to the Parc Scientifique
- Work with the two health authorities to attract research, education and industry development activities
- Play an advocacy role to attract research dollars into the community and to ensure that provincial and local strategies are in alignment
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.4 Insurance/financial services

The financial services sector in Greater Moncton has been growing strongly in recent years. There are contact centres such as RBC doing financial services activity and also the local banking sector has been in growth mode to address the growing consumer and business banking needs in the local market. However, the growth of the insurance sector may be the community's best kept secret. In addition to the head offices of Medavie Blue Cross, Blue Cross Life and Assumption Vie, there are a number of regional offices in the community including: Economical Insurance (75 employees), Cooperators Insurance (200 employees), Wawanessa (100 employees) and ING (40 employees). There are also several large insurance brokerages in the community.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Attract and support the growth of insurance/financial services firms into the community
- Work with the industry and the education sector to address labour market challenges
- Play an advocacy role to ensure the provincial government and ACOA understand the importance of this sector and its growth potential
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.5 Education

There are considerable challenges and opportunities related to the education sector in Greater Moncton. Post-secondary educational opportunities for Anglophone high school graduates are limited. Community college programs in French are not aligned with the needs of the local community. A number of private colleges have closed their doors.

However, having a strong education sector that is aligned to the requirements of the workforce is critical to the ongoing success and economic health of Greater Moncton.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Work with the educational sector to build additional capacity – particularly for Anglophone students on the university front and Francophone students at the college level
- Play a strong advocacy role to ensure that the provincial government understands the challenges and needs of the education sector in Greater Moncton as it goes through the first major realignment of post-secondary education in New Brunswick in decades.
- Research function

6.6 Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector in Greater Moncton is in a period of turbulent times. The rise of the value of the Canadian dollar has squeezed margins on U.S. business opportunities. Increasing border security challenges are considered to be too onerous. China and offshore outsourcing is competing more directly with Greater Moncton's manufacturers. And perhaps the most important challenge going forward will be access to skilled labour. Alberta is attracting many of the people that have the profile for working in manufacturing. Upward pressure on wage rates is making it more challenging to be competitive.

However, our consultations with the sector indicate there are still considerable opportunities for the manufacturing sector. The influences that are making nearshore opportunities more attractive in the services sector also bear out in the manufacturing sector. Many U.S. companies are reluctant to move certain types of manufacturing offshore. Certain products (particularly in the defence sector) are less and less likely to be fabricated offshore. Therefore, there are opportunities.

The key to the industry will be its ability to be cost competitive while at the same time able to attract and retain qualified workers.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Attract niche manufacturers into the market – particularly those where there is a strategic fit with existing industry (i.e. suppliers)
- Work with local manufacturers on a long term HR strategy that includes promoting the career potential in manufacturing, attracting skilled workers into technical positions and immigrants – where it makes sense – into assembly line positions.
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.7 Information & communications technologies (ICT)

The information and communications technologies sector (ICT) sector is an important one to the growth of the Greater Moncton economy. A recent report sponsored by the City of Moncton and supported by EGM, *Accelerating Technology-Based Economic Growth and Entrepreneurship in Greater Moncton*, published by the IC^2 Institute out of Texas put forward a roadmap for the development of this sector going forward. The report's five recommendations were:

1. Accelerate technology-based business development in established and emerging industry clusters with the greatest growth potential.
2. Develop Greater Moncton as an emerging center of technology-based entrepreneurship.
3. Foster academic and research excellence that is specifically linked to regional economic development.
4. Foster and leverage regional, national, and global value-added partnerships and alliances.
5. Promote a common vision and coordinated action initiatives targeted to brand Greater Moncton as an important emerging center of technology-based entrepreneurship and business development.

There are five sectors determined to offer the most potential for growth:

- Gaming technologies
- Animation sector
- Information and communications technologies
- Software development
- E-learning

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Supporting the attraction of firms into the community in these five sectors
- Support the attraction of high skilled workers into the community (expats and immigrants)
- Work with the educational sector to ensure their programs are aligned with industry needs
- Play a support role in helping UdeM ramp up its capacity to support the growth of this sector
- Play an advocacy role with the provincial government and ACOA to achieve alignment with their efforts
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.8 Transportation/distribution

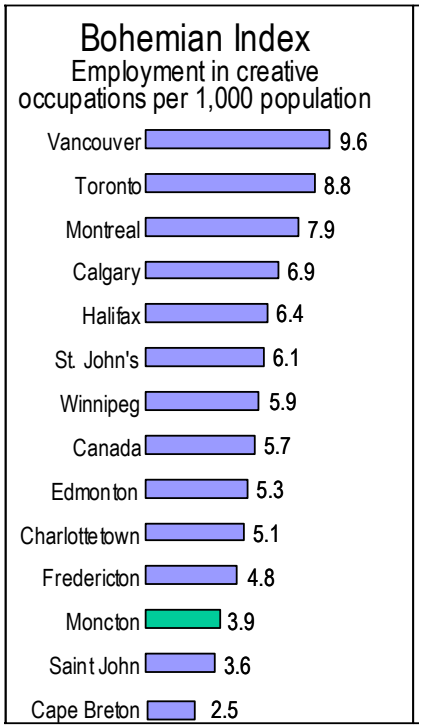
The transportation/distribution sector is one of the most important to Greater Moncton's success and prosperity. From the original settling of this region over 250 years ago, its geographic position has been central to its success.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Work with the sector to determine and address workforce needs going forward
- Work with the educational sector to ensure their programs are aligned with industry needs
- Work closely with the City of Dieppe on the Inland Port initiative
- Continue to support the Greater Moncton International Airport
- Support regional transportation infrastructure initiatives
- Research function/BR&E support program

6.9 Creative & cultural industries

While this sector has been traditionally under-represented in the Greater Moncton economy as a percentage of the workforce (as shown in the chart taken from the 2004 strategic plan), it has been growing in its influence and importance in recent years. There have been an increasing number of regional and even national festivals and events. The three municipalities understand the importance of this sector and are making investments in support of its growth.



As Greater Moncton looks to attract more immigrant workers, the strong synergies between immigration and the arts/cultural industry will be important.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Work with the industry to attract and grow key regional events such as the Northrop Frye Literary Festival
- Support more cultural/artistic activities downtown
- Work with the sector to address emerging workforce concerns
- Help elevate the brand of Greater Moncton as a creative/cultural hub in the Maritimes
- Research function/BR&E support program

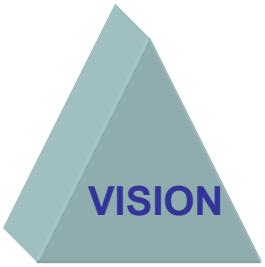
6.10 Aerospace

The aerospace sector in Greater Moncton is a small but growing part of the local economy. Several local manufacturing firms sub-contract on large aerospace projects and there are a number of infrastructure elements such as the international airport, the aerospace park in the City of Dieppe and the Moncton Flight College that support efforts to grow this sector.

Areas where EGM can play a direct support role:

- Assist partner organizations with specific initiatives within the scope of this strategic plan
- Work with the sector to address emerging workforce concerns

7. The Vision



To be a leading urban centre for New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces.

For New Brunswick to revitalize it's economy and grow its population, Greater Moncton must be a dominant and leading urban centre. A leading urban centre is defined as:

- **Being an economic engine for the whole province and the regional economy:**
  - Driving provincial economic and population growth
  - Providing a significant and increasing tax base to the municipal and provincial treasuries
  - Providing leadership to regional initiatives
  - Being a competitive business location and place to live within North America

- **Home to regional infrastructure used by a large segment of the provincial and Maritime Provinces' population:**
  - Health and education
  - Transportation
  - Business infrastructure (e.g. business associations, conventions/trade shows, etc.)
  - Arts and culture (e.g. home to the Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada)

- **Home to multinational firms using the community as a base to service regional, national and international markets**
  - Manufacturing
  - Aerospace
  - Customer contact centres
  - ICT
  - Others

- **Home to regional service industries used by a large segment of the provincial and Maritime Provinces' population:**
  - Retail/wholesale services
  - Regional financial services
  - Professional and personal services (legal, consulting, etc.)

- **Having the ability to attract and retain skilled workers from across Canada and beyond:**
  - Immigrants
  - Expatriates
  - Other Canadians looking for a dynamic, mid-sized, safe, low cost of living environment to work and raise their families (high quality of life)

8. The Objectives

There are six high level objectives for this strategic plan. The critical success factors summarized in Section 9 below provide the path to achieving these objectives and the work plan of Enterprise Greater Moncton provides specific actions that the organization will undertake to achieve them.

- 7,000 net new jobs from 2007-2010
- Grow the population adequate to supply the labour force
- Significantly increase the educational attainment of the workforce
- Raise the average income level through the fostering of higher end employment
- Renew the focus on quality of life
- Innovative economic development

9. Critical Success Factors

1. Take control of our economic development

Rationale:
Strong leadership, locally and provincially, has played a significant role in Greater Moncton's economic success over the past 15 years. With the new realization of the importance of urban growth to New Brunswick's economic renewal, this is a unique time for Greater Moncton to champion new ideas and models for urban development among Canada's mid sized urban regions.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Increase the level of local and regional collaboration**
    - Municipal-level cooperation and collaboration. Work toward a shared vision for Greater Moncton and the region.
    - Provide input and support to the provincial efforts towards economic self sufficiency. Stake out a clear Greater Moncton role in the province's economic renewal.
    - Regional economic development initiatives such the southeastern Enterprise agency collaboration.
    - Education sector. Increase collaboration within Greater Moncton and regionally on pan-Atlantic economic development issues.
  - **Be an innovative leader in local economic development practices**
    - Implement a leading edge business retention and expansion program to support local industry growth
    - Support the enhancing of municipal economic development capacity
    - Use EGM's position and reputation to lobby for important economic development projects
    - Be a catalyst for addressing labour market challenges. Promote alignment between industry need and immigration, repatriation, workforce training and post-secondary education
    - Be an innovator in the use of the Web to promote Greater Moncton and to facilitate relationships with external stakeholders.
    - Engage and support the local business community with innovative approaches to attracting new business investment and organic economic development.
    - Develop a research capacity that provides timely, accurate and comparative research that allows the community to make evidence-based decisions.

2. Continue to attract significant external business investments

Rationale:
Greater Moncton's economic growth during the 1990s and first half of the 2000s has been fuelled in large part by external business investment into the community. This investment primarily came in the form of setting up business establishments such as call centres, IT centres, warehousing facilities and retail stores. It is vitally important for Greater Moncton to continue a significant level of business investment attraction to sustain its growth. However, it has become more important for the community to focus on the quality of jobs and investment as well as the strategic fit with targeted growth sectors.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Aggressively promote the community nationally and internationally**
    - The latest ACOA research confirms that Atlantic Canada is at the bottom of the list among U.S. corporations for awareness as a region for site location.
    - Raise awareness among corporate decision makers in Canada, the U.S. and in key markets abroad. For example, the regional France Investment Attraction initiative is an important conduit for attracting business investment from France.
    - Leverage partnerships to gain access to a wider audience.
    - Position Greater Moncton as a 'ideal' location for 'nearshore' business activity in a variety of sectors.
    - Look for business investments that are aligned with the need to raise income levels.
  - **Develop a wide network of international stakeholders to enhance business investment attraction**
    - Work with its regional partners, governments and other stakeholders to promote Greater Moncton to key influencers.
    - Develop ongoing relationships with key influencers in the area of business investment (consultants, Canadian consulates, business networks). For example, the new French Chamber of Commerce office in Greater Moncton is an important link to that country and it's business community.
  - **Focus on specific industry sectors to attract companies and investment to the community**
    - Provides a focus to the message. Most research shows that general (non industry specific) messages are not as well received as industry specific promotion.
    - See Section 6 above for targeted sectors.
  - **Work closely with local, provincial and federal partners to leverage their activities into business investment into the community**
    - Support municipal government initiatives designed to attract investment that are within the scope of EGM's strategic plan.
    - The government of New Brunswick has said that foreign direct investment will be critical to the province's economic renewal. Greater Moncton's targeted growth industries should be aligned with provincial activity where ever possible.
    - The Federal government, through ACOA, has increased their foreign direct investment attraction activities and are also focusing on an 'urban agenda'.

3. Foster local business retention and growth

Rationale:
Greater Moncton has a vibrant local business community made up of regional offices, manufacturers and services companies. Much of the growth in the future will come from these companies. A recent EGM survey of 700 businesses forecasts over 5,000 addition jobs just from these companies alone. However, there are a number of emerging issues that could impede local industry growth such as labour market challenges and access to capital. It is vitally important for Greater Moncton to support its business community.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Engage local businesses in the economic development process (BR&E)**
    - Many of our businesses are HQed elsewhere. It is vitally important to have the local managers (and at the head office) involved in our economic development activities so they realize the impacts (positive or negative) of their decisions.
    - Support these businesses during times of transition (positive or negative).
  - **Look for early warning signals (Research and BR&E)**
    - Implement a rigorous media monitoring process to keep abreast of major impending decisions that affect local operations (e.g. national firm downsizing).
    - Be in continuous contact with major employers in the community and have them share in advance potential decisions (positive or negative).
  - **Support local businesses in transition (BR&E)**
    - Develop a list of ways that Enterprise Greater Moncton can assist local firms during transition (positive or negative).
    - Work with them on transition strategies (positive or negative). Provide support, data, information, attend meetings, etc. – at the request of the company.
    - Lobby, where appropriate, other levels of government to support the firm.
  - **Foster a culture of Research and Innovation (R&I) among SMEs**
    - Support research and innovation incubation.
    - Partner with UdeM and research institutes to foster more research generally and, specifically, with the hospital corporations to attract more medical/life sciences R&I activity.
    - Build linkages between the cultural and creative community and the business community to stimulate creative and innovation thinking.
    - Encourage partner organizations to increase support of R&I in the region.

4. Foster local entrepreneurship

Rationale:
Greater Moncton has benefited from a strong culture of entrepreneurship. For example the manufacturing sector, which is dominated by local entrepreneurs, saw its employment base grow by over 67% from 1991 to 2001 while declining in Canada as a whole. Since, 2001 a number of challenges have forced some restructuring in that sector. It is clear that the entrepreneurial climate in Greater Moncton must be fostered to achieve a balanced mix of external and locally generated economic growth.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Establish a formal process for ongoing dialogue with the community's entrepreneurs (BR&E)**
    - Keep on top of emerging issues of importance to local entrepreneurs.
    - Help address ongoing issues related to markets, supply of labour, etc.
    - Lobby on behalf of local entrepreneurs where appropriate.
  - **Support activities designed to encourage entrepreneurship (training, counseling, etc.)**
    - Support and lead initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship (e.g. Rising Stars program).
    - Provide innovative counselling and support services to entrepreneurs.
    - Foster a culture of R&I in the region and support potential spinoff companies.
  - **Work with provincial and federal partners to find ways to increase access to national and international capital sources for the community's entrepreneurs**

5. Develop programs to foster increased in-migration & immigration

Rationale:
Greater Moncton has been able to attract thousands of people to the community from across Canada to supply its growing labour market. However, the low unemployment rate in the community and the stagnant population growth in New Brunswick is putting even more strain on the labour market and may inhibit our ability to sustain economic growth into the future. Greater Moncton will have to continue to attract people from other parts of Canada and internationally to sustain its growth.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Closely monitor local labour market requirements and communicate these requirements to national and international sources of labour.**
  - **Collectively promote employment opportunities in Greater Moncton to the regional and national audiences.**
  - **Position Greater Moncton as a welcoming place for new residents and have appropriate mechanisms in place to support relocation into the community.**
  - **Integrate more tightly the business attraction and people attraction marketing activities.**
  - **Encourage Greater Moncton's university and post-secondary institutions to act as catalysts in support of attracting migrants from other Canadian provinces and immigrants.**

6. Significantly enhance our post-secondary education infrastructure

Rationale:
Greater Moncton is behind many of its peer communities for a number of education-related metrics including: percentage of the population with a university degree; percentage of students in the community; the percentage increase in the educational attainment of the workforce from 1991-2001. Skills and education are at the heart of the 21st century economy. Greater Moncton must foster a culture of education and skills development in order to sustain its economic growth.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Take deliberate steps to increase the level of post-secondary students and graduates in the community**
  - **Increase the range and capacity of post-secondary offerings in the community**
  - **Work with stakeholders to provide a unified Greater Moncton vision for post-secondary education to the provincial task force**
  - **Encourage the community colleges to work more closely with the business community to ensure a trained supply of workers for skilled trades and manufacturing positions**

7. Invest in growth supporting infrastructure

Rationale:
Greater Moncton's transportation and communication infrastructure has long been an integral part of the community's economic development. It's R&I infrastructure has led to the development of numerous successful entrepreneurs. It is critically important for the community to invest and support key infrastructure that can be leveraged for economic growth.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Continue to proactively support the growth strategy of the Greater Moncton International Airport.**
  - **Invest in specific 'anchor' assets (e.g. convention centre, Fundy Gateway, Inland Port, etc.)**
  - **Ensure that the community has ample business and industrial park space to accommodate strong economic growth**
  - **Be more proactive about a wider range of infrastructure**
    - In the 1990s, the focus on economic development infrastructure was around industrial/business parks, stadiums, etc.
    - While these continue to be important, the thinking now is more around a wider range of issues such as a community's livability (parks, recreational activities, cultural activities) as well as its tolerance, acceptance and support of migrants/immigrants.
    - Social & community infrastructure is a key differentiator in 21st century economic development.

8. Foster a way of life second to none in Canada

Rationale:
In the last century business investment occurred primarily where there was access to raw materials, proximity to markets or lower business costs. In the 21st century, business investment will occur in communities where there is access to an abundant supply of educated, skilled and creative workers. Greater Moncton must be a community that attracts these types of people.

- **Strategic Action Areas:**
  - **Foster a vibrant arts and cultural community**
    - Recent research confirms a strong correlation between economic growth and a healthy arts and cultural community
  - **Work to ensure a quality health care system**
    - Consistently, one of the top criteria for people moving to a new community is the access to and quality of the health care system
  - **Position Greater Moncton as a healthy lifestyle community**
    - Walking/biking trails, recreational facilities, etc.
  - **Work to ensure a quality education system – from kindergarten through to university**
    - Another key feature of communities that are growing strongly is the access to and quality of the education system
  - **Benchmark Greater Moncton against the best mid-sized cities in Canada for quality of life and work toward the best in class**

10. Implementation

Enterprise Greater Moncton's vision for our community is to solidify its position as a dominant urban growth engine for New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces. EGM's role within that vision is to coordinate and lead economic development activities.

While a detailed 'workplan' is not part of this strategic plan, there are a few items from the strategic plan that should be part of EGM's enhanced workplan going forward:

- **Research capacity**
  Ensure the workplan has adequate resources for this important role of being the window on the local economy.

- **Ongoing workforce survey**
  Workforce issues are emerging as the single largest barrier to industry growth in Greater Moncton. EGM should formalize an annual or bi-annual workforce survey to track changes over time and provide the information needed by stakeholders to react to emerging challenges.

- **BR&E**
  EGM should implement a BR&E program in 2007 and ongoing throughout the life of the strategic plan. This BR&E program should be about information collection and analysis of key growth sectors in Greater Moncton. It should also be about tangible support activities for the growth sectors rising from the information collection and analysis. This way EGM will more tightly align its local business growth efforts to the needs of the local industry.

- **Alignment of business attraction and people attraction**
  Most leading economic development organizations across North America are linking these two issues in their marketing activities. The reason is clear. Businesses will only locate in communities that can show an ability to attract people and people will only want to move to communities that have a growing and vibrant industrial base.

- **EGM as best in class economic development agency**
  EGM has always made staff development a key priority and this will be even more important going forward.