



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### “Working Together for Members”

**August 6, 2013**

**Saint John, NB.** In a renewed spirit of regional collaboration, four of the Saint John region’s most dynamic business networks are working together to explore how they can enhance the value offered to their business members.

Representatives from the volunteer Boards of Directors from of the KV Chamber of Commerce, the River Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Saint John Board of Trade and the Saint John West Business Association have begun the process of exploring formalized partnership opportunities. The vision is to enhance the value provided to members by becoming a stronger unified voice for business in the Saint John region.

“There is opportunity for our region’s business associations to more naturally reflect how our members live, work and grow their businesses. They are not confined by municipal boundaries, so why should we?” says Eric Poirier, Chair of the Saint John Board of Trade. “Our vision is for Greater Saint John to be recognized as the best place in Canada to set up, run and grow a business... period. Working more closely with our sister chambers is an important step in making that vision a reality.”

Together, the four associations serve the needs of around 1,000 member businesses employing 35,000 people across Southern New Brunswick. “The new regional approach has the potential to harnesses the power, expertise and creativity of this expanded membership network,” explains Jennifer Higgins, the President of the KV Chamber of Commerce. “We acknowledge that we need a strong urban economy for the entire region to be successful. Together, we are stronger!”

A Task Force to examine the opportunity was formed. Made up of executive committee members from each of the organizations, their mandate was to explore how collaboration can further strengthen business opportunities and the influence of the network. Danny Harrigan, President of the River Valley Chamber of Commerce says he’s been pleased with the collaborative spirit exhibited, “It’s been a good, frank process. While each of us have continued to advocate on behalf of our members, we’re increasingly realizing that our members’ interests are best served through one stronger, bigger association.”

In addition to looking at such things as partnering on events, pooling resources, enhancing marketing exposure, streamlining memberships, aligning key member priorities and overall strengthening of the network, the Task Force will explore how membership value could be enhanced by:

1. Expanding the networking opportunities to 1,000 strong while dramatically improving promotional exposure through an integrated, mobile, online member directory;



2. Further reducing business risk for members by enhancing advocacy efforts as one of the largest and most powerful member-based business associations across New Brunswick, while at the same time increasing educational opportunities for all members; and
3. Providing members with more opportunities to save money through group insurance and an expanded and better promoted member-to-member benefits program.

Bill Shannon, President of the Saint John West Business Association says, “Right now we’re focused on hearing from our members and what’s important to them. Through the process, we will continue to get input from our members and other key stakeholders. This vital consultation process will help guide any final recommendations.”

Members have been invited to provide their thoughts and ideas by Monday, August 26.

- 30 -

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