

## A Successful Prospecting Mission to New York

Economic development executives with the Aroostook Partnership for Progress (APP) are energized after a successful business-prospecting mission to New York City in late June.

"The trip resulted in ten high quality meetings with site location specialists, investment bankers and private businesses with relocation and/or expansion plans," said Walt Elish, Executive Director of APP.

The team also attended a one-day CORENET conference. "We used the time to network with key individuals in charge of making or recommending real estate investment decisions for businesses," said Elish.

Prospecting missions are a critical tactic that APP will use to accomplish its goal of creating 1,500 net new jobs in Aroostook County by 2007. "We feel that there is no substitute for doing business face-to-face," said Elish. "It's important to deal with individuals directly and show a real interest in making sure their investment in Aroostook County will be a successful one."

A testament to the effectiveness of this approach is that one of the companies the APP team met with became strongly interested in doing business in the area. "We have already hosted one company on a day-long site visit just weeks after meeting them in New York," said Elish.

Another prime audience is investment banking firms. "We presented the APP's economic development strategy, including purchasing and relocating viable businesses to banking firms," said Elish. "We also discussed an opportunity for an investor seeking vertical integration in the wood flooring industry to invest in an existing Aroostook County business."

The Partnership plans to continue the prospecting mission strategy with numerous appointments in the Boston market scheduled in the immediate future. They also have similar plans for Montreal and Portland.

**"The trip resulted in high quality meetings..."**

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APP is an outgrowth of the Rural Empowerment Summit, hosted by NMDC in January 2003. The Summit began the process of promoting the creation of a private-sector-led regional economic development collaborative effort to reverse the trends of out-migration by attracting new jobs and investment to the County. Maine Public Service Company accepted this challenge and worked with NMDC to form the Aroostook Partnership for Progress, becoming the Partnership's first "private-sector champion."

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**Progress@APPme.org**

## Corporate Communications Limited Selected as Marketing and Communications Partner

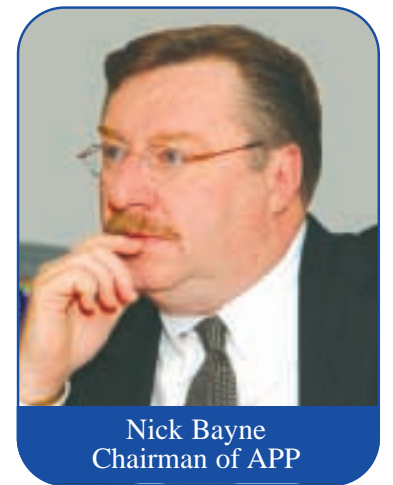
The Aroostook Partnership for Progress (APP) selected Corporate Communications Limited to provide strategic marketing and communications expertise to the four-year economic development initiative. "CCL is a fully integrated communications company headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia," said Nick Bayne, Chairman of APP. "They will provide the Partnership with a wide range of communications services."

Services to be provided include: strategic planning, branding and image development, creative design, public and media relations, web site development, web cast production, call center support, development of promotional materials, including CD-ROM presentations and topical videos, and other related activities.

The APP's business development strategy is heavily dependent on effective communication with businesses. "CCL will help us hone our communications strategy to achieve the greatest results," said Bayne.

CCL offers a strong background in the economic development process, having worked with such groups as the Maine State Planning Office, Coastal Enterprises Inc. and Nova Scotia Tourism. "The Partnership expects to benefit from this background and use CCL's knowledge of Atlantic Canada to increase partnerships and business opportunities in the entire Maine & Maritimes corridor," said Bayne.

CCL was selected after an extensive search through an RFP process. A number of highly qualified firms were considered, but it was felt that CCL was the best match for the Partnership initiative.



Nick Bayne  
Chairman of APP

## Resort Development Possible in Aroostook

In early June, the Aroostook Partnership for Progress hosted an international resort developer to the area to provide a preliminary assessment of the region's potential.

Roger Brooks of Destination Development indicated in a resulting opinion paper that a world-class resort development is indeed feasible in Aroostook County.

"I'm impressed with the amenities already available here in the County, including the Maine Winter Sports Center biathlon facilities in Presque Isle and Fort Kent," said Brooks.

Brooks presented a preliminary vision for a year-round resort that could be based around existing winter season tourism assets. "Such a resort could add to the existing winter tourism

season and complement the growing snowmobile industry," he said. The resort could also include additional golf courses, time-share condos, a pedestrian retail mall, and a full service conference center.

Other options could include a number of smaller resorts that could be located at major intersections of the existing snowmobile trail network. Such resorts would allow visitors to enjoy the area's excellent snowmobile trail system in the winter months and could substantially increase the fledgling ATV industry.

The most important conclusion of this analysis is that no matter what an eventual resort might look like, such a development is feasible in Aroostook County and can be brought to completion with persistent oversight.

### Recent Announcements...

**VALLEY TRAILERS** will be adding 10 to 20 jobs in the Saint John Valley and hopes to double the size of their business. They were certified as a Pine Tree Zone Business. The Pine Tree Development Zone Program is designed to stimulate economic growth through targeted tax incentives to qualifying businesses.

**PATTISON SIGN GROUP INC.** opened a new manufacturing and assembly plant at the Loring Commerce Centre in Limestone. The plant now employs more than 50 people.

**STAINLESS FOOD EQUIPMENT**, a Caribou-based manufacturer of stainless steel and carbon-fiber equipment, recently announced plans to expand their operation. SFE currently employs 20 people and is certified as a Pine Tree Zone Business.

**MAINE MUTUAL GROUP**, a Presque Isle-based insurance company announced expansion plans for the Aroostook County Pine Tree Development Zone. The project has the potential to create 10 to 15 new jobs.

## Aroostook Partnership for Progress Holds First Annual Meeting

The Aroostook Partnership for Progress held the first Annual Meeting of Investors on June 25, 2004. This meeting marked the official kick-off of the regional economic development initiative spearheaded by Maine Public Service Company and the Northern Maine Development Commission, and marked the beginning of the four-year strategic plan.

Much of the meeting was dedicated to forming the structure of the organization, including nomination and approval of directors, election of officers and the creation of committees.

The Nominating Committee of the Aroostook Partnership for Progress met in June to make recommendations on forming the Board of Directors. Also completed at the meeting was the nomination and election of officers. The Nominating Committee made the following recommendations which were approved by the Investors' Council:

- Chairperson** - J. Nicholas Bayne, MPSCo
- Vice-Chairperson** - Robert P. Clark, NMDC
- Secretary** - Larry Shaw, MMG
- Treasurer** - Jon Prescott, Katahdin Trust

The officers will serve the Partnership for a one-year term ending June 30, 2005.

## Thank You to the Aroostook Partnership for Progress Investors' Council

### The Aroostook Partnership for Progress

### Investors' Council

Maine Public Service Company\*

Northern Maine Development Commission\*

Katahdin Trust Company\*

Maine Mutual Group\*

Dead River Company\*

The Aroostook Medical Center\*

Cary Medical Center\*

Aroostook Newspapers\*

United Insurance Group\*

F. A. Peabody\*

Daigle Oil Company\*

KeyBank N.A.\*

Harry's Honda Mitsubishi and Motor Sports

Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development

Peoples, a division of Banknorth, N.A.

Fleet Bank

Margaret Burnham Trust

**\*Board of Directors for 2004-2005**

Thanks to the Partnership's private sector partners, for your willingness to invest in the economy of Aroostook County. Your support has made the early stages of this important effort extremely successful. In a few short months, the Partnership has received over \$1 million dollars in private sector commitments to the four-year initiative. These funds will be used to leverage the efforts of the public sector to create a true partnership.

**Thank you for your continued support.**

## Film Production in Aroostook County

In the past two months, the APP has forged ahead with plans to produce films and television content in Aroostook County. APP representatives met with the Maine Film Office to discover ways in which they can work with the Film Office to increase the region's visibility in the film industry.

"We will utilize area photographers and artists to put together an inventory of film locations," said Walt Elish, Executive Director of APP. "This inventory of locations will be promoted through a marketing plan and the Maine Film Office web site."

Other assets to film production, including the wide variety of services required will be inventoried as well.

"Film production in Aroostook County is an attainable goal that can increase investment in the region, provide jobs in the creative economy and promote the region to the rest of the world," said Elish. "We know how beautiful northern Maine is. Let's make sure the world knows, too!"

## Contact Us...

For more information about the Partnership and/or doing business in northern Maine, please contact:

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