

Making WAVES

GREATER SUMMERSIDE
CHAMBER of COMMERCE



Welcome to ***Making Waves***, a special report from the GSCC to keep our chamber members informed and up-to-date on the latest chamber advocacy initiatives and government updates.

Keep reading for the latest policy and advocacy updates!

Chamber Initiatives

Property Purchasing Restrictions Amended

On Monday, Feb. 13th, the GSCC issued a press release regarding our concern over the recent legislation "Prohibition on the Purchase of Residential Property by Non-Canadians Act" that went into effect on January 1, 2023.

The GSCC is pleased to announce that the CMHC has since amended this legislation as requested by the GSCC. The amendment enables work permit holders with 183 days or more of validity remaining on their work permit or work authorization to purchase a residential property in Canada.

To read the full Press Release on this amendment, click [HERE](#).

GSCC's Pre-Election Survey Results

Prior to the recent provincial election, the GSCC surveyed its membership and used these survey results to seek party commitments on key topics of interest to our membership.

The survey revealed that 57% of respondents noted that they would like their MLA to support Summerside through economic development and increased investment.

Click [HERE](#) to read more about our advocacy initiatives, and see a video of Chamber President Blake Doyle discussing this on Compass.

GSCC in the News: Response to the Federal Budget & Labour Shortage

On March 29, GSCC President, Blake Doyle, spoke with Mitch Cormier on CBC Morning to share the Chamber's reaction to the federal budget. Click [HERE](#) to listen.

On March 31st, GSCC Executive Director Kaley O'Brien spoke with CBC Compass regarding the ongoing labour shortage - how it's effecting our members and what can be done about it. Click [HERE](#) to watch.

GSCC Responds to Member Requests

In response to the issues raised by our membership in our recent 2022 year-end survey, the GSCC is hosting a free 'Refresh HR' Seminar on April 20th from 1-4pm. The seminar will provide valuable insights and strategies to help organizations recruit, retain and revive their workforce. Registration is available [HERE](#).

In an effort to continue to better understand the challenges facing local businesses and help us identify ways to provide support, we are asking members to complete a short follow-up survey on the current business issues identified by our members as especially relevant. Click [HERE](#) to participate.

Government Updates

Provincial Election Results

The April 3rd Provincial Election had the lowest voter turnout (68.5%) on record, and resulted in big changes for Summerside.

All 3 Summerside Districts that were previously held by the Green Party are now being represented by PC MLA's.

- District 21, previously held by Lynne Lund is now represented by Tyler DesRoches.
- District 22, previously held by Steve Howard is now represented by former City Councillor Barb Ramsay.
- District 23, previously held by Trish Altass, is now represented by Hilton MacLennan.

A by-election will be held within the next six months to fill the spot on city council left vacant by Ramsay's win.

City of Summerside Budget Announced

Summerside City Council has approved it's [2023-2024 Budget](#). The spending plan includes \$5.5 million in funding for an east-west connector road project that would divert traffic away from the city's downtown.

Another \$1.4 million has been set aside for water and sewer utility upgrades. Water and sewer rates will be going up, while property taxes and electricity rates remain unchanged.

Proposed Extension of Employment Insurance Supports

The new Federal Budget for 2023 proposes to extend a [temporary support](#) that provides up to 5 additional weeks of Employment Insurance for seasonal workers in some regions, including PEI, until October 2024.

Introduced in 2018, this support is set to expire in October 2023.

New Employment Pathway

On March 27, Immigration Minister Sean Fraser [announced](#) that Canada will launch a new pathway this summer under the [Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot](#) (EMPP) to help employers hire skilled refugees and other displaced individuals.

Under this new pathway, employers would have more opportunities to fill a wide range of in-demand jobs including: nurse aids, personal support workers, software engineers, teachers, tourism and hospitality workers, truck and delivery service drivers, and more.

Funding Opportunities

Summer Student Wage Subsidies

Programs through the Employment Development Agency and Skills PEI. The application deadlines are April 15th. See more details [here](#).

Rural Enhancement Employment Program

Funding to stimulate economic activity and business development among PEI rural businesses. See more details [here](#).

Tourism Seasonal Extension Program

Funding to help tourism operators extend their season. Grants range from \$2,500 to \$50,000. See more details [here](#).

Canada Digital Adoption Program

Grants and access to advice to increase online sales, reduce costs, better manage inventory and more. See more details [here](#).

Develop West Prince Seed Fund

Support for innovative projects enhancing the economic growth potential of the West Prince region. See more details [here](#).

CanExport Funding and Support Programs:

Funding for exporters, innovators, associations and communities. See more details [here](#).



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