

Renew PEI: Economic Recovery and Growth Submission

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The following is based on input from constituents and many other Islanders.

To be most effective, post COVID-19 measures should satisfy one or more of the following conditions:

1. Have an immediate effect on restarting our society/economy;
2. Increase equality/reduce poverty;
3. Be fiscally responsible and sustainable;
4. Move towards a low-carbon and environmentally better society.

Funds to Low Income Persons/Families

While Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) has been suggested by many, such a plan must be done through a Federal/Provincial agreement and will likely not be immediate like CERB. CERB was great for those who qualified, but many seniors and people on social assistance received little or no help.

What is needed is an immediate increase in support for those individuals and families, where additional funds will mean funds for necessities such as food, medicine and assistance. The Province recently raised payments by about \$100/month. This needs to happen again, with an even larger increase.

These types of payments are known to be used immediately for the provision of basic needs and constitute an instant stimulation of the economy, and they are a step towards GBI.

Targeted Carbon Grant

The above benefits can be increased, both in scope and size, by paying everyone earning less than the target GBI a carbon grant financed by a general carbon levy on carbon fuels. Aside from being fiscally responsible, such a measure would also be a first step towards reducing carbon emissions in the transportation and building sectors.

General Adoption of Net Zero Technology

Net Zero technology can be implemented immediately with all new government-financed buildings, without any effect on operating or capital budgets. The boost to the construction economy will be steady and long term. In the long run this measure will make all buildings carbon neutral as well as more comfortable to live in. Steps should be taken for the private sector to follow suit.

Better Housing

While we have seen a lot of housing built in the past year, the quality and long term planning related to housing has been questionable. Little thought has been given to active transportation and green spaces, and huge developments have been proposed without taking into account children and families. New housing should be better than old housing and where possible encourage home ownership or at least governance. Residents should ideally be involved in the planning of their residences.

Better Design

PEI is lucky to have inherited a landscape and buildings of unusual beauty which combine with our wealth of beaches to create a beautiful place to live and visit. With some initial investment and effort we can make sure that our new projects and developments add to this treasure, by insisting on well planned, well designed and well-built structures that will last for centuries and enrich the lives of everyone. The public should take control of the initial stages of development with measures such as design competitions and strong public input. Residents should be directly involved, as appropriate, by favoring co-ops and co-housing instead of the landlord-tenant model.

These efforts could be especially helpful in developing new and exciting tourist designations.

Door to Door Public Transportation

Even in countries with massive public transportation systems, many prefer to spend extra on cars, because they offer door to door and immediate service. PEI is not very densely populated and it will be impossible to service everyone with a bus based system. However an Island developed app that would enable car owners and potential passengers to connect instantly could provide transportation to sparsely populated areas at a lower cost and higher efficiencies than possible with busses. Conventional public transportation would of course still be the best solution on high traffic routes, and would benefit from an app that could feed passengers into such routes from outer areas.

The app should include user ratings so drivers and passengers can choose who to ride with, as well as a simple method for calculating and transferring funds and insurance coverage. Scope could also include taxi companies and Uber-type operations, carpooling and transporting those with special needs. Ultimately all profits could stay on PEI rather than sending them to off-shore billionaires.

COVID Safe and Sustainable Tourism

As it turns out cottagers and other long term visitors are by far the safest tourists to be let into PEI. No matter where they come from, our system of testing and self-isolation has proven 100%

effective in catching any infection, and once on PEI they are a steady support for our tourism and culture industry.

We should promote PEI as a safe place to come and to stay for a long time and make the application process for staying here with 2 weeks isolation less cumbersome.

Sustainable Tourism fits really well with an Island wide network of active transportation paths.