

N.S. BUSINESS INC.-- Colchester County and Mi'kmaq have common vision for Debert lands.

Richard Hurlburt, Minister of Economic Development, was joined by Chief Lawrence Paul on behalf of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs and Mayor Mike Smith of the Municipality of Colchester County, today, March 30, at the Debert Air Industrial Park to provide a progress report on the vision and land transfer plans for the park.

One of the first elements of the plan is the transfer of two sewage treatment plants on the property to the Municipality. This will enable the Municipality to manage and operate the utilities in accordance with the overall vision for the Park.

"Today I am announcing the transfer of the Debert Air Industrial Park's two sewage treatment plants to the Municipality of Colchester County," said Minister Hurlburt. "This is consistent with a broader plan that will protect the outstanding archaeological resources of the Debert area for the Mi'kmaq and provide for a locally-owned industrial business park."

The province, through Nova Scotia Business Inc. Will be contributing \$1.635 M to support future upgrades to the utilities.

The Debert Air Industrial Park is an area that is rich in archaeological and cultural importance and is also home to a thriving business park. This agreement is an important first step in recognizing that the parties can work hand in hand to protect a significant archaeological and cultural area while allowing for improved economic development activity in the park.

"We see the Debert Air Industrial Park as a critical component to economic development in our Municipality," said Mayor Smith. "This is an important first step towards the transition of the industrial park to local ownership. We applaud the efforts of the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq on behalf of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs to develop a cultural facility in Debert and look forward to a long and cooperative working relationship."

Over the past 18 months, the parties have discussed how best to achieve the objective of creating a strong, sustainable business community and to recognize and preserve the rich cultural history of the area.

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"The Debert area includes some of the most significant archaeological sites in North America," said Chief Paul. "The Mi'kmaq have been working with the province to ensure that these sites remain intact. With this in mind, we are planning a major cultural centre that celebrates our heritage."

Discussions will continue regarding the future of the Park.

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FOR BROADCAST USE:

Two sewage treatment plants in Debert will be transferred to the Municipality of Colchester County from the Province of Nova Scotia. It is part of a larger plan to develop Debert as an eco-industrial park, and build on the rich cultural heritage of the Mi'kmaq in the region.

Economic Development Minister Richard Hurlburt says the proposed transfer will stimulate economic development in Colchester County and allow the preservation of important Mi'kmaq archaeological sites.

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