



PRESS RELEASE

Town of Gander concerned by potential impact on local aerospace industry

May 14, 2019

The Town Council of Gander is expressing concern over Gander's future as the designated hub for the provincial aerospace industry.

Concerns first arose after the release of a report by McKinsey and Company suggesting and encouraging expansion of the provincial aerospace sector in and around the City of St. John's. The "Economic Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador", which identifies aerospace as one of ten areas of economic growth, was completed at the request of the Provincial Government. The report makes only a passing reference to industry members in Gander while focusing on a single company in St. John's.

Council has since learned of a proposed collaboration between the College of the North Atlantic and a private sector aerospace company based in St. John's to establish a "Centre for Advanced Manufacturing in Aerospace" that would require an investment of over eight million dollars for an initiative that essentially duplicates training services and some advanced manufacturing technologies currently offered in Gander through the College of the North Atlantic and private industry there.

This recent news is contrary to the Provincial Government's strategic plan and road map for economic growth and diversification, "The Way Forward", which called for the implementation of a Regional Innovation System pilot program supporting Gander in its role as the hub for the provincial aerospace and defense industry.

Council fully supports investment within the provincial aerospace sector, but strongly feels that investment should be directed where a solid foundation already exists, with activity clustered around that foundation, constituting a true "Centre of Excellence".

"While Council understands that, at this point, no decision has been made by government to implement the recommendations of the McKinsey report or to support the proposed collaboration initiative, we are extremely concerned with the absence, in both documents, of any recognition of a future role for Gander in aerospace industry growth. Wherever this role is threatened, we will defend it vigorously."

Mayor Percy Farwell

Council is respectfully requesting that the Provincial Government continue to support Gander as the recognized aerospace hub of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For more information, please contact:

Mayor Percy Farwell

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