

## Highlands East ? Business Retention and Expansion

Beginning soon Highlands East businesses will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions about the local economy as Highlands East starts an economic development project.

The Highlands East Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) project officially begins this week as trained volunteers meet with local businesses to identify their needs and concerns, ask their opinions about government, and determine in what ways the local business climate can be improved.

?The visits we are doing with local businesses have four purposes,? said Curtis Tighe, Economic Development and Business Coordinator for the Municipality of Highlands East. ?First we want to show our local businesses that we really appreciate the contributions they are making to our local community. Second, we want to see if they have any concerns, and, if so, if there are ways we can help. Third, we will be offering to help our local businesses take better advantage of business resources. Finally, we want the businesses to help us set priorities on future directions of local economic efforts.?

BR+E has been implemented in hundreds of rural and urban communities across the province. The results of BR+E projects in other communities have been impressive: development of a more business-friendly attitude, new local investment, more jobs, fewer barriers to development and easier access to financing, to name a few.

Submitted by Curtis Tighe