THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND
LA MUNICIPALITÉ DU COMTÉ DE RICHMOND

Good afternoon, everyone.

Premier Houston, MPs Blois and Kelloway, Chief Paul, representatives of EverWind and everyone joining us today — welcome to Richmond County.

It's a pleasure to be here as we learn more about what could be a significant opportunity for our municipality and the Strait Region.

Point Tupper has been part of Nova Scotia's industrial history for more than half a century. Generations of families have built their livelihoods around industries that created jobs, supported local businesses, and strengthened our communities.

While industries have changed, the skills, determination, and experience of the people of this region remain. Today, we're learning about another potential chapter in that history.

The scale of the proposed investment is remarkable. More than $10 billion in planned private investment across the data centre and renewable energy developments represents a remarkable opportunity, particularly for rural communities like ours.

As Warden, though, I look at this through a local lens.

What could it mean for our residents? What opportunities might it create? And how do we ensure our communities and resources are protected while sharing in the benefits?

These are important considerations for Richmond County Council, and today's information gives us reasons to be encouraged.

We're hearing about potential construction and long-term employment, opportunities for local businesses, and infrastructure investment that could support future growth.

For a rural municipality, these possibilities matter. We want young people to see a future here, skilled workers to find opportunities close to home, and local businesses to succeed.

I'm particularly encouraged by the proposed commitment to direct community benefits.

We're hearing about tens of millions of dollars in dedicated community benefits for the first phase alone, with more proposed should the development expand.

For a municipality our size, that is significant. Such an investment could help address priorities like infrastructure, housing, recreation, health, and workforce development.

Equally fundamental to our consideration of this proposal is responsible development.

Richmond County has been clear that a project of this scale must address questions about electricity, water, the environment, and existing infrastructure, with clear answers supported by sound technical evidence.

Today, we've received encouraging information about proposed technology to minimize water consumption, arrangements intended to protect electricity ratepayers, and commitments concerning infrastructure costs and renewable energy generation.

It's encouraging to see federal and provincial expectations reflected in these commitments. Protecting resources, protecting ratepayers, and ensuring meaningful local benefits - align closely with Council's priorities.

Community engagement is also essential.

Residents deserve good information and opportunities to ask questions, express concerns, and understand what this proposal could mean for their communities.

I'm pleased EverWind is planning public information and engagement sessions, and I encourage residents to participate.

Ask questions. Learn about the proposal. Share your concerns and ideas.

Today's announcement should begin a more informed public conversation, not conclude one. Meaningful engagement can identify challenges, strengthen commitments, and ensure local concerns are understood.

I want to acknowledge the federal, provincial, and Mi'kmaw leadership here today, and thank EverWind and its partners for the discussions to date and their recognition of the importance of community benefits.

Richmond County has much to offer — industrial infrastructure, an experienced workforce, and people who care deeply about their communities.

We are open to opportunities that build on those strengths, provided they are developed responsibly, protect the interests of our residents, and deliver meaningful, lasting benefits.

There is still much to learn and important work ahead, but I welcome the opportunity for our community to be part of that conversation.

Thank you, and welcome once again to Richmond County.