



NEWS

NEW BRUNSWICK'S ECONOMIC GROWTH EXPECTED TO REBOUND: RBC

TORONTO, October 8, 2008 — Bucking the weakening trend among most provinces, New Brunswick's economic growth is expected to rebound to two per cent this year, up from 1.6 per cent in 2007, according to the latest provincial forecast released today by RBC.

"Despite ongoing weakness in the forest products sector due to a strong Canadian dollar and distressed U.S. housing sector, economic growth will accelerate on the strength of capital investment spending and the trickle-down effect of higher petroleum product prices," said Craig Wright, senior vice-president and chief economist, RBC.

RBC noted that work on the refurbishment of the Point Lepreau nuclear facility, the development of a potash mine near Sussex, and construction of the Canaport liquid natural gas terminal and associated Brunswick pipeline are generating significant activity in the province.

A surge in the value of manufacturing shipments since late last year resulting from a spike in sales of refined oil products has also been positive. This has helped boost incomes within New Brunswick and fuel the demand for housing.

Looking forward to next year, the report noted that although oil prices are expected to stay below recent peak levels, revenue will continue to flow from the energy sector and stimulate New Brunswick's economic growth through its effect on incomes.

The completion by next year of most big capital projects that boosted growth in 2008, will have a restraining impact on provincial growth. However, it is assumed that some spending on one of two other upcoming mega-projects – a second nuclear facility and a new oil refinery in Saint John – will commence and fill the void. This activity will help keep the province's growth rate steady at around two per cent for 2009.

The outlook for provinces has generally darkened as a result of the recent dramatic turn in the year-long financial market crisis. The U.S. economy now appears to be in recession with Europe, the U.K. and Japan also sinking fast. While Canada is in better position with its financial sector less heavily impaired, overall growth will be substantially weaker than previously anticipated.

Among the provinces, Saskatchewan will lead the way this year and next in terms of economic growth, with Manitoba closely behind. The Atlantic region is expected to display continued resilience and should sustain a moderate pace of expansion for the most part. Conditions in the most western part of the country are on a deteriorating path. Eroding housing situations and rapidly slowing growth in consumer spending have prompted downward revisions to the forecasts for British Columbia and Alberta. With weak external trade continuing to exert a toll, cracks have appeared in the domestic foundations of Ontario and Quebec. Ontario will likely see its growth evaporate.

The RBC Economics Provincial Outlook assesses the provinces according to economic growth, employment growth, unemployment rates, personal income growth, retail sales, housing starts, and the Consumer Price Index.

According to the report (available online as of 8 a.m. E.D.T., at www.rbc.com/economics/market/pdf/provfcst.pdf), provincial forecast details are as follows:

	Real GDP			Housing starts			Retail sales			Employment			CPI		
	Thousands														
	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>	<u>07</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>09</u>
NFLD.	9.1	0.2	1.3	2.6	2.8	3.0	9.0	8.0	4.0	0.7	2.0	0.6	1.4	3.1	2.1
P.E.I	2.0	1.9	1.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	7.7	5.5	3.5	1.1	1.7	0.5	1.8	3.8	2.4
N.S.	1.6	2.0	2.0	4.8	4.2	3.2	4.2	5.5	4.0	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.9	3.6	2.3
N.B.	1.6	2.0	2.5	4.2	4.1	3.3	5.7	5.5	4.0	2.1	0.9	0.9	1.9	2.2	2.1
QUE.	2.4	0.7	1.2	48.6	45.7	39.0	4.6	5.5	3.5	2.3	0.8	1.1	1.6	2.5	2.0
ONT.	2.1	0.0	0.4	68.1	75.0	66.5	3.9	5.0	2.8	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.8	2.6	2.0
MAN.	3.3	3.1	2.3	5.7	5.4	5.4	8.8	8.0	5.5	1.6	1.8	1.5	2.1	2.5	2.6
SASK.	2.8	3.9	3.5	6.0	6.8	5.3	13.0	12.0	7.5	2.1	1.6	2.0	2.9	3.4	2.7
ALTA.	3.3	2.2	3.0	48.3	30.2	31.3	9.3	1.5	6.5	4.7	2.6	2.1	4.9	3.7	2.9
B.C.	3.1	1.2	2.1	39.2	34.8	26.0	6.7	3.0	6.5	3.2	2.4	1.4	1.7	2.5	2.0
CANADA	2.7	0.9	1.5	228	209	183	5.8	4.7	4.3	2.3	1.6	1.3	2.1	2.7	2.2

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