



NEW BRUNSWICK TOMORROW

Community Development Case Study

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INTRODUCTION

New Brunswick Tomorrow was founded in 1975 with a mission to save the city; A large order by any means. With a unique structure and a focus on the entire city community, not just a neighborhood, NBT was able to turn New Brunswick into one of New Jersey's major urban revitalization success stories. This success is due in large measure to the dedication of its staff and board and its ability to bring in institutional partners from the city across the public, private and nonprofit sectors. The following is a look at its history, structure, priorities, and successes.

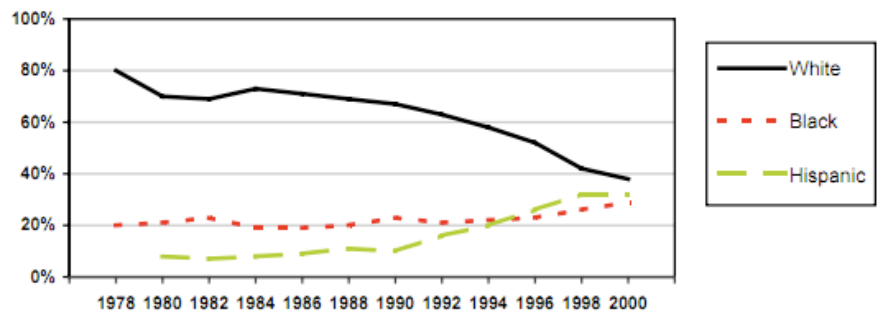
HUB CITY

Looking Towards the Future

Hub City is one of the nicknames given to New Brunswick. On the banks of the Raritan River at a transportation crossroads in central New Jersey, it is strategically placed on the Northeast Corridor railroad line and minutes from major highways such as Routes 18, 1287, and the New Jersey Turnpike. A fairly small city with about 40,000 permanent residents and an additional 10,000 students, it is home to Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and major employers in the health care field such as Johnson & Johnson and Robert Wood Johnson Hospital.

The city, as many urban areas during the mid-twentieth century, fell on hard economic times and experienced a large drop in white middle-class residents. The New York Times in 2005 wrote that the city "like so many before, bore the scars of riot and flight."¹ Jeffrey Vega, President of New Brunswick Tomorrow, referred to the time as one of "urban decay and turmoil."² "Moving from a city whose adult population was approximately 70 percent non-Hispanic white, 20 percent African-American, and 10 percent Hispanic to a more racially diverse city whose adult population is now approximately 40 percent non-Hispanic white, 30 percent African-American, and 30 percent Hispanic."³

**Figure 1: NEW BRUNSWICK RACIAL COMPOSITION
Adult Permanent Residents only**



1(Residents' Views on 25 years of Revitalization in New Brunswick)

In 1975, Johnson & Johnson was considering moving their global headquarters to a site in suburban Somerset County⁴. Richard Sellers, Chairman and CEO at the time, commissioned a report by The American City Corporation to determine whether or not New Brunswick could be saved. This decision to examine the potential for revitalization was driven by the company's credo which prioritizes customers, employees, community and then shareholders in that order.⁵ The American City Corporation determined that there existed not only willingness on the part of community stakeholders but a sense of urgency.⁶ It was decided that strong potential for successful revitalization of the city and the report urged a public private partnership to achieve success but only if there would exist meaningful coordination between the public and private sectors.

¹ *The New York Times*. "How One Man Helped Revive New Brunswick." Nov 13, 2005.

² Interview with Jeffrey Vega. Nov 29, 2010.

³ Eagleton Institute of Politics. *Residents' Views on 25 years of Revitalization in New Brunswick*. 2000. http://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/NBT_25YEAR_RETROSPECTIVE.pdf

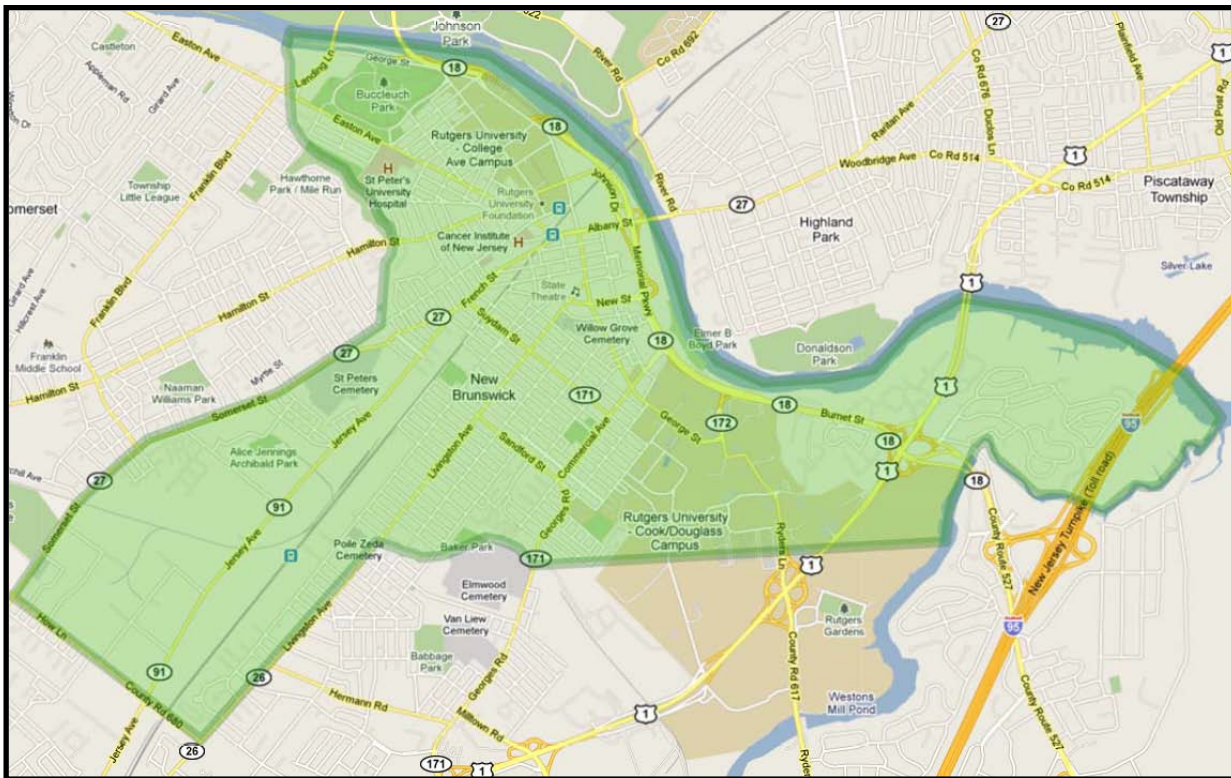
⁴ Interview with Jeffrey Vega. Nov 29, 2010.

⁵ *The Home News Tribune*. "Johnson & Johnson to be honored at Regional Chamber of Commerce gala." Oct 13, 2010.

⁶ Interview with Jeffrey Vega. Nov 29, 2010.

July 1975 saw the incorporation of New Brunswick Tomorrow as the planning organization for the city as the city had no official planning department at the time⁷. John J. Heldrich of Johnson & Johnson is selected Chairman of the Board. In 1990, he would be named by a local business group as “the man who saved New Brunswick.”⁸ The New Brunswick Development Corporation (DevCo) was created to be the implementation engine of NBT’s decisions. Later, these two groups settled into slightly more distinct roles with DevCo focusing on the physical planning and redevelopment of the city and NBT focusing on quality of life issues that affect residents.

While the physical redevelopment is visually striking and has produced the most obvious effects of the revitalization effort, the long-term residents are served by NBT and its mission to “serve as a catalyst in developing and supporting programs that improve the quality of life” in New Brunswick via “public/private revitalization dedicated to assuring that human and social issues are addressed that complement the economic, physical and cultural revival of New Brunswick.”⁹ The two organizations can be seen as different sides of the same coin and sometimes work very closely as when the Heldrich center agreed to hire 30 to 40 percent of its employees from New Brunswick’s residents. Another example is the proposed Robert Wood Johnson Wellness Center with its mission to serve the community’s health concerns.



2 City of New Brunswick (Google Maps)

⁷ Ibid.

⁸DevCo. *John J. Heldrich* . <http://www.devco.org/johnheldrich.shtml>

⁹ New Brunswick Tomorrow 2007 Annual Report.

STRUCTURE

A Unique Role

New Brunswick Tomorrow is fairly unique as a community development corporation in that it is not a direct service provider. Instead, it sees itself as a broker or facilitator between residents and institutional service providers.¹⁰ NBT was founded with the mission to identify community needs and tap into local resources and partners to meet them. Many times, residents will know the organization or institution providing the service but not the role NBT is playing in facilitating it. While this may have had a detrimental effect on name recognition and branding efforts, the goal for NBT has always been the well-being of the residents. This was acceptable since all the operating costs of NBT are taken care of by certain long standing institutional funders and name recognition to further fundraising was less vital.

Originally, the organization was program focused and it took on issues one at a time. After 1989, NBT determined that a “more comprehensive type of planning” was required. This comprehensive planning would take the form of task forces where any individual, organization, business or institution in the community is invited to come together.¹¹ New Brunswick Tomorrow has several task forces that identify the issues affecting New Brunswick residents and come up with strategies to manage them. Task force sizes range from about a dozen to more than thirty.

NBT’s role evolved to one in which it identifies the problems affecting New Brunswick residents and develops strategies to improve those situations. After a task force identifies an area of concern and develops a strategy – sometimes with expert advice, especially professors at Rutgers University – for addressing it, it then looks for partners in the community with experience in that field needed to run such a program. NBT then finds funds to run these programs and aids the partner organization in implementation. It also attempts to find another funding stream for the implementing organization so that the newly founded program can become self-sustaining. This then allows NBT to use its resources in new areas.

The following recent example illustrates the beginnings of a program.

An email was sent from someone from the local library to several organizations including New Brunswick Tomorrow stating that the demand of literary services for new English speakers was “overwhelming.” NBT hosted a meeting of all organizations involved in literacy. The group learned that the Adult Learning Center had three hundred people on the waiting list for English as a second language courses with another one hundred waiting for basic services where they would grow their literacy in Spanish first. NBT then wrote a paper for short-term and long-term solutions. One of the short-term solutions includes a proposal for \$20,000 to help fund increased classes to lower the backlog. Some members of the immigrant community are uncomfortable with the formal nature of the Learning Center so they propose partnering with Christ Church which serves the community with a food pantry and their own ESL classes. The ultimate goal is to help these residents to receive their GED and perhaps even an Associate’s Degree after that.

Another example begins in 2000 with in-depth interviews performed by the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy. Interviews were conducted over the phone and in person in order to reach people who did not have land lines. The studies showed that access to healthcare, including local clinics, was not meeting the residents’ needs. NBT went into motion and worked with its partners. The Eric B. Chandler Health Center then opened another satellite office in downtown and cut down the wait time for new patients from eight weeks to two.¹²



3 Jeffrey Vega (NBT Annual Report, 2005)

¹⁰ Interview with Jeffrey Vega.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

TASK FORCES

Below is a sampling of task forces listed in the 2007 Annual Report and a selection of their programs. (Note: NBT has stopped producing an annual report due to cost constraints. They are in the process of rebranding themselves and producing new public materials.)

Infant/Child Task Force

Positive Behavior Improvement Plan Initiative

\$40,000 invested by NBT and New Brunswick Board of Education to support teachers in their response to manage difficult student behavior. A one third decrease over the previous year in students referred for further assessment by child study teams.

New Brunswick Childcare Consortium

1,000 children and their families participated in a week long program to inform them about nutrition, fitness and available social services.

Parent/Infant Care Center

Teen mothers and infants are provided with counseling, parenting skills and day care services at New Brunswick High School through a partnership of the local Board of Education, Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission, Supreme Consultants and Behavior Therapy Associates.

Youth/Teen Task Force

Speak Up! New Brunswick

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided a grant of over \$200,000 via NBT and PAX, a non-profit fighting gun violence, to work with the police department and local schools to provide health classes and create a hotline to report weapon threats.

Project Connect

With financial support from the Regional Synod of the Mid-Atlantic Foundation and NBT, Project Connect identifies at-risk youth and connects them to community youth programs with help from law enforcement, educators and youth service providers.

Play It Smart Extracurricular Fund

The National Football Foundation and local schools collaborate to provide SAT prep, college planning and community service activities to football and now other young athletes. In 2007, 150 players graduated the program with 96% matriculating into two and four-year colleges.

Summer Youth Employment Program

In 2007, 118 teens participated in professional development classes covering resume writing, interviewing skills, corporate environment, professional decorum and sexual harassment. Of those, 81 were placed into summer employment. NBT worked with the City of New Brunswick as well as the NJ Department of Children and Families to make this happen.

Adult/Family Task Force

Heldrich Hospitality Initiative at the Adult Learning Center

Though a public/private partnership, roughly 30 to 40 percent of the employees at the newly constructed Heldrich Plaza Hotel are to be residents of New Brunswick.

Boaz Community Corporation's Immigration Counseling and Education Program

NBT provided support for Boaz to develop informational sessions for 113 individuals who work with immigrant communities educating them in how to evaluate eligibility for immigration benefits.

Senior Task Force

Club You Belong

More than 100 isolated senior citizens a month were provided socialization opportunities and access to services such as transportation, safe housing, recreation and nutrition programs through the Suydam Street Reformed Community Development Corporation with support by NBT.

Greater New Brunswick Meals on Wheels

Over 24,000 meals were delivered in 2007 to homebound aged residents of New Brunswick with financial support by NBT.

Education Task Force

Johnson & Johnson Bridge to Employment Program

This program offered students a four-year high school intensive academic program with mentoring experiences with Johnson & Johnson employees. Twenty students matriculated to two and four-year higher education institutes.

Academic Support for Advancement Via Individual Determination Program (AVID)

AVID is another intensive academic program for New Brunswick High School students. With support from Johnson & Johnson, local schools and the Rutgers Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences, fifty-three students had higher passing percentages in language arts and math than the general population.

Special Initiatives

Domestic Violence Collaborative

Aimed at raising awareness of domestic violence services and resources for health care professional and community residents, new protocols were developed focused on the needs of a targeted population. The project included:

- Examining women survivors for their perceptions of community resources and of the roles of health care providers
- Identifying community-based and faith-based organizations and related networks for awareness of domestic violence and existing community resources
- Raising awareness among health care professionals of domestic violence as a health issue

MEASURING SUCCESS...SCIENTIFICALLY

The early years of New Brunswick Tomorrow's operation saw some initial resistance by community activists. NBT decided it was more important to hear directly from the residents rather than the loudest voices and so they began polling their community to identify issues and measure success. Tapping into a local resource, the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, they conduct a biennial poll (soon to be quadrennial) to gauge the level of satisfaction residents have with the city and the services provided. The report discusses perceptions of quality of life, attitudes about crime and safety, ratings of the school system, employment patterns, views on revitalization, and opinions on institutions such as New Brunswick Tomorrow, Johnson & Johnson and Rutgers University. (Links to the 2008 report and a 25 year retrospective covering 1975 to 2000 are found at the end of this section.)

The latest survey was conducted in March and April of 2008. It polls "permanent residents" defined as "all non-Rutgers students (with the exception of those students who have been living in the city for ten or more years)," who are 18 years old via phone. Some of these results follow.

In 2008, sixty-one percent of New Brunswick residents rated it as either an “excellent” or “good” place to live with majorities among whites, Hispanics and African-Americans. This is a substantial increase from the forty percent who rated it as such in 1978. Fifty-nine percent of residents felt that it had improved since 2003. Of long-term residents (twenty-five years or more), sixty-seven percent felt it a better place than before revitalization efforts began. A slight plurality of residents – thirty-seven percent – feel that revitalization may hurt low-income families due to housing costs but thirty-three percent feel it will result in increased job opportunities. A sizeable majority of sixty-two percent of residents would choose to stay in the city rather than move if given the option.

The issue of housing has declined in the city with sixty percent of residents naming housing issues as a top concern in 1978 as compared to only twenty-percent in 2008. While only twenty percent felt that schools were either “excellent” or “good,” 2008 saw that number increase to forty-five percent. Finally, of the fifty-one percent of New Brunswick residents who are familiar with New Brunswick Tomorrow, seventy-two percent approve of it and sixty-five percent say it is succeeding.

2008 Report:

<http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu/programs/ecpip/documents/NBT2008FinalReport.pdf>

25 Year Retrospective:

http://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/NBT_25YEAR_RETROSPECTIVE.pdf

NBT is currently working on their 2012 poll with Eagleton and also working with the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy for a more in-depth questionnaire as seen in the next section.



4NBT Annual Report, 2005

THE PATH AHEAD¹³

Refocusing on the Future

The President of NBT, Jeffrey Vega, identified four areas of change while New Brunswick Tomorrow moves forward.

Governance

NBT recently restructured its board. It previously had thirty-six members that met monthly. Logistically, this proved difficult. The new board is down to twenty-one members that meet quarterly. An active executive board committee meets four times a year and a finance committee meets nine times a year. Also, the members of the board are measured against a more clearly defined role. If a board member does not meet a certain standard, the nominating committee, meeting annually, may ask that member to step down. This was done to shift the board from an operating to a strategic role to ensure a more active and committed board.

Branding

One of the problems of NBT's role as a facilitator of programs and not as a direct service provider is a lower awareness level among the community than is possible. NBT has retained a communications consultant that is revamping their website and the way they interact with the community. While their physical annual report has been discontinued, they've begun an annual quarterly newsletter. It is hoped that this will help with its fundraising efforts and make the community more aware of all the programs NBT has helped to implement in New Brunswick as well as increase resident participation in task forces and community programs.

¹³ New Brunswick Tomorrow. *Strategic Operational Goals & Objectives*. 2010.

Deepening Impact

NBT is working with the Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy to better analyze New Brunswick and the state of the city and its residents. The first part of this project has been to gather as much available data on the variables that affect quality of life in the city as possible. The next phase is being worked on by the Initiative for Regional and Community Transformation at the Bloustein school is a questionnaire that focuses on various issues including Education, The State of Children and Families, Health Issues and Health Care, Disabled Population, Immigration, Housing, Homelessness, Land Use and Economic Development, Employment, Transportation, and Crime¹⁴. The goal is to reach one thousand residents, identify their needs, develop programs and perform the process again every three years.

Development

NBT runs on an annual budget of about \$2.5 million per year. Program costs make up approximately 90% of total expenses. NBT receives the bulk of its funds from a state grant and also through foundations and corporate dollars. A new development director has been hired to rework their fundraising efforts in order to garner a larger share from individual donors. Currently, sixty-four percent of its budget comes from corporate donations. It is also implementing a “Give or Get” policy for their board where each board member is asked to raise funds or donate themselves.

ANALYSIS

New Brunswick Tomorrow is a unique organization. The fact that it doesn't provide any services itself surprised me at first. It would seem at first glance that this makes the implementation of their policy goals difficult at least in regards to keeping true to a policy's original purpose. However, this doesn't seem to be the case and the issue didn't come up when I spoke with Mr. Vega. I asked him if there was ever a time when an institutional partner was unable to continue a program due to funding constraints and he couldn't think of any. I would prefer that there be a running list, online and accessible, of all programs begun by New Brunswick Tomorrow. Many seem to be designed to be temporary due to the nature of the fundraising. A repository of all available programs would do them well to exhibit the impact their having on the city as well as provide another measure of success.

The use of the Eagleton Poll to measure the residents' views seems quite valuable and tremendously useful. A scientifically conducted poll, with care to contact residents that don't have access to land lines, can show policy makers and institutional partners hard data regarding exactly what issues are affecting which segments of the population. This should obviously supplement other data sources and NBT has been doing that in conjunction with Bloustein. I believe their new in-depth questionnaire approach will yield even more valuable data.

However, I can see at least one problem with the poll. I'm unsure of its utility as a measure of the effectiveness of New Brunswick Tomorrow itself. It would be difficult to divorce the effects of physical redevelopment from the issues with which NBT concerns itself. When people say New Brunswick is a better place to live now than it was 10 years ago, how do you know they're referring to the availability of social services or to a new mixed use tower? Also, as newer residents move into the city, they will be polled and asked the same questions. Should they count towards the “community” that NBT is charged with aiding? (While long-term residents are separated, the issue still exists when the top line is reported in newspapers.) What happens when poor residents are forced to move out of the city due to housing concerns? They won't show up in the poll at all.

I do enjoy the task force model. Bringing as many partners from the public, private and nonprofit sector together to take a critical look at the city and its residents needs is valuable not only for the programs that are developed but for deepening the sense of community among “elites.” Without New Brunswick Tomorrow, many businesses, Johnson & Johnson being the most obvious, may have left the city and further added to an environment of desperation causing other partners to choose not to invest in the city. The more private sector and institutional leaders involved in developing programs through New Brunswick Tomorrow, the more these groups will feel tied to the

¹⁴ Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy, Initiative for Regional and Community Transformation. Web. <http://policy.rutgers.edu/IRCT/projects/tomorrow.php>

city and to its residents. The increased emphasis on an active board that is more committed to the goals of NBT also play a role in this. Hopefully, this will help to give them pause when discussing a new physical redevelopment projects that may disrupt part of the existing community.

This does play into some of the issues we discussed in class regarding the “professionalization” of CDCs. Being dependent on J&J and other corporate donors reduces the ability of NBT from tackling the city administration. Whether or not they even feel they have to is almost irrelevant as they must maintain friendly relations to accomplish their goals. It seems that their recent drive to increase fundraising among private donors will help to alleviate this dependence though it appears to be driven more by budgetary concerns rather than thoughts towards greater independence.

One other issue is that they have a large geographic area to cover: the entire city. While DevCo chose to focus their efforts on a ten block radius downtown, NBT must consider all the residents in the city. This is a tall order but they seem to be managing it well.

Altogether, I feel that New Brunswick Tomorrow is working well and achieving the goals for which it was designed. Their emphasis on the future and the changes they're getting ready to implement all seem great and in keeping with their mission statement. It might even be the case that its role as a type of intermediary as opposed to service provider helps to keep them nimble and always looking to innovate rather than get bogged down in providing existing services.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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New Brunswick Tomorrow has a staff of five. The current president, Jeffrey Vega, has been with the organization for eighteen years and has served as president since 2000.

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NBT TIMELINE: 1975 - 2005¹

1975

The American City Corporation report in January finds strong potential for revitalization in New Brunswick and recommends a partnership of the private and public sectors.

New Brunswick Tomorrow is officially organized July 1 with a Board of Directors representing all segments of the community. John J. Heldrich is elected Chairman.

1976

The New Brunswick Development Corporation (DevCo) is created in January as a private, non-profit organization to serve as NBT's implementation partner for economic development. Richard B. Sellars is elected chairman. A conceptual blueprint by renowned architect and planner, I.M. Pei, for downtown revitalization is announced in May. A series of eight community meetings is held to get input on Pei's plans.

Results are announced in August of the first citywide poll of New Brunswick residents by the Eagleton Institute of Rutgers University commissioned by NBT. The survey reveals a generally supportive and optimistic view of revitalization by residents.

1977

After decades of delay, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers gives final approval for the Route 18 extension and bridge and the State Transportation Department accepts construction bids. The project is the key to relieving downtown New Brunswick of strangling traffic congestion and opening the way for development.

DevCo begins construction of the \$6.5 million Plaza II office building designed by Pei on a George Street urban renewal site that had been vacant for over a decade.

The closing of the Family Health Center at Middlesex General Hospital because of a financial crisis is averted through the action of a NBT ad hoc committee headed by Chairman Heldrich.

1978

Johnson & Johnson announces in April that it will remain in New Brunswick and will construct a new corporate worldwide headquarters in the heart of the downtown area. Governor Brendan Byrne hails the decision as "one of the most significant corporate investments in the revitalization of a city in New Jersey history."

1979

Johnson & Johnson announces in April that it will break ground in February for its new worldwide headquarters.

Arts Development Associates, a Minneapolis based consulting firm, recommends development of a major downtown cultural center, with a new George Street Playhouse and renovation of the State Theatre as the top initial priorities.

¹ "New Brunswick Tomorrow: History." *New Brunswick Tomorrow*. N.p., 2008. Web. 12 Dec 2010. <<http://www.nbtomorrow.org/information/history.asp>>.

The new Plaza II office building on George Street is opened. This is the first new commercial development in over a decade in downtown New Brunswick.

1980

NBT announces that it will focus on social and human services issues in the new decade of the 1980s to translate the economic benefits of revitalization into an improved quality of life for city residents.

New Brunswick celebrates the 300th anniversary of its founding with a River Festival and Tercentennial Day parade in September.

The new \$12 million Route 18 bridge across the Raritan River is opened in October and dedicated to the late State Senator John A. Lynch.

1981

Ground is broken in May for the \$5 million Paul Robeson Community School made possible by additional tax revenues generated by revitalization.

The City of New Brunswick begins improvements to the George Street retail district, with separation of sanitary and storm sewer systems as the initial phase.

Construction begins on the \$12 million Ferren Parking Deck and Mall by the New Brunswick Parking Authority across from the railroad station.

1982

NBT Education Task Force announces a leadership development program for New Brunswick school administrators, funded by a \$30,000 grant from Johnson & Johnson. NBT also creates a Human Services Task Force.

The new Hyatt Regency Hotel is dedicated in September at ceremonies attended by Governor Thomas Kean.

NBT launches an innovative Education Investment Contract program to provide jobs and training for non-college bound high school seniors.

The New Brunswick Cultural Center Corporation is organized in December, with Richard B. Sellars as Chair.

1983

NBT Board approves a \$30,000 grant to help initiate a Family Day Care Network.

The Cultural Center Corporation announces plans to renovate and recycle four buildings on lower Livingston Avenue, including the State Theatre.

A major news conference announces the second phase of downtown public / private redevelopment, featuring projects for the Golden Triangle, lower and upper Church Streets and Hiram Market area.

New Johnson & Johnson worldwide headquarters opens in April.

Ferren Mall opens to its first retail tenants, including a new Rutgers Book Store relocated from its campus site.

United Auto Workers Union opens new 214-unit building to house senior citizens.

1984

Eagleton Poll shows that, for the first time, a majority of city residents now believe New Brunswick is an excellent or good place to live.

The increase in positive attitudes spurred by revitalization is found throughout all demographic groups.

In a major sign of increasing confidence by private investors in New Brunswick, the DKM Realty Corporation purchases the Plaza I and II complex from DevCo for \$12.3 million.

NBT forms new task forces on Employment and Training and Health services.

1985

The George Street Playhouse presents its first production in its new home in the former YMCA building on Livingston Avenue, "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Mayor John A. Lynch announces an innovative New Brunswick Youth Services System to expand recreational, cultural and counseling services to young people. NBT contributes a grant of \$25,000 to help start the system.

The Parents' Advisory Committee of NBT's Education Task Force produces a "Know Your Schools" brochure which is distributed to 14,000 homes.

State of New Jersey provides \$50,000 to expand NBT's pilot Family Day Care program throughout Middlesex County.

New Brunswick's long-neglected railroad station begins undergoing a \$2 million renovation by the State Department of Transportation.

1986

More than 700 attended a June community salute at the Hyatt Regency honoring Richard B. Sellars as the "guiding spirit of revitalization."

St. Peter's Medical Center announces a five-year, \$38 million plan to construct new medical-surgical units, an ambulatory care center and new parking deck.

Construction begins on the \$11.5 million Albany Street Plaza commercial-retail project.

NBT's Health Task Force publishes a comprehensive New Brunswick Health Care Services Directory for the community.

Renovation work begins on the historic State Theater.

1987

The Eric B. Chandler Community Health Center, operated by UMDNJ, opens in pre-fab modular facilities adjacent to the Redshaw School.

NBT facilitates creation of the New Brunswick Child Care Consortium.

U.S. Conference of Mayors selects New Brunswick for an Outstanding Achievement Award in the City Livability Awards Program.

Ground is broken for the \$34 million Golden Triangle Plaza office building.

1988

Governor Thomas Kean announces that New Brunswick is one of the cities selected to develop a School Based Youth Services program at New Brunswick High School.

NBT creates an Incentive Scholars Program to encourage high-achieving graduates of the city's elementary schools to attend New Brunswick High School.

The State Theater opens in April after \$3 million in renovations with a sold-out performance by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Albany Street Plaza opens.

The City Council creates a downtown Special Improvement District and establishes City Market, Inc., to administer it.

1989

NBT adopts a new mission statement organizing its human services activities in a holistic model around the human life cycle -- Infant/Child, Youth/Teen, Adult/Family, and Seniors, plus continuing its Education and Health Task Forces. Chairman Heldrich says this will enable NBT to expand "into a new and broader mission of addressing the lifetime needs of the people and families of the community."

Golden Triangle Plaza opens.

The New Brunswick Parking Authority opens its new \$3.5 million lower Church Street Parking Deck, adding 420 downtown spaces.

The new \$4.1 million Hungarian Heritage Center is dedicated.

1990

NBT begins the New Brunswick Community Teacher Excellence Awards with a \$20,000 grant from the James E. Burke Family Foundation.

Mr. Burke is the former Chairman of Johnson & Johnson.

The City announces a major plan to improve the riverfront area of Boyd Park and make it more accessible to the public. This project is to be funded primarily by State Green Acres money.

Construction begins on the New Brunswick Cultural Center's new \$3 million home for the Crossroads Theatre after impressive ground breaking ceremonies.

1991

The NBT-facilitated Parent Infant Care Center (PIC-C) begins providing services to young parents at the Greater New Brunswick Day Care Council.

Through NBT, the State Department of Human Services provides a \$290,000 grant to expand the School Based Youth Services program from the high school to the City's elementary schools.

The City dedicates a \$1.1 million addition to the Senior Resource Center.

The new 264-seat Crossroads Theatre opens in late October, with comedian Bill Cosby featured in a special show during a week of festivities.

1992

NBT begins the most comprehensive study ever in the city of the needs of seniors, with grants from NBT and The Fund for New Jersey and in cooperation with the Rutgers Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research.

Ground is broken for University Center at Easton Avenue, a \$50 million mixed use project to provide housing for Rutgers students, parking and retail space. It is a joint project of Rutgers, the City of New Brunswick and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital.

Construction begins on the first phase of the Hiram Square Riverwatch condominium project.

City Market sponsors the largest book fair in the state, in downtown New Brunswick, attracting 15,000 people.

1993

The Agenda 2000 report commissioned by NBT is issued by Leo Molinaro & Associates, recommending priorities and directions for revitalization for the balance of the 1990s and into the 21st Century.

The Renaissance 2000 initiative to revitalize the Route 27 corridor area is announced at an August news conference. The partners are the First Baptist Community Development Corporation, the City of New Brunswick and NBT. The partnership engages the Molinaro firm to begin planning.

The new PIC-C opens at New Brunswick High School.

The study of seniors' needs, begun in 1992, is completed and issued.

Plans are unveiled for a \$42 million Civic Square Project featuring two new facilities for Rutgers – the Edward J. Bloustein School of Public Policy and the Mason Gross School for the Visual Arts.

1994

The 10th biennial Eagleton Poll reports dramatically improved positive perceptions in the opinions of residents about New Brunswick.

A-STEP, the Alliance for Successful Teen Employment Program, is launched as a public/ private employment and training partnership among NBT, the City and the New Brunswick Center of Middlesex County College.

Major openings include the University Center at Easton Avenue, the Puerto Rican Action Board Mario Gonzalez Child Care and Education Center and the Salvation Army Community Center.

The \$10.7 million Providence Square senior citizens residential facility opens in the renovated cigar factory on Somerset Street with 98 units.

DevCo reorganizes under the chairmanship of George R. Zoffinger, Chairman of CoreStates-NJ National Bank and former State Commissioner of Commerce and Economic Development.

The Molinaro consulting firm presents its initial conceptual plan for Renaissance 2000 at a community meeting attended by over 400 persons.

1995

New Brunswick Tomorrow was awarded a \$1 million state grant for five years to develop the school-to-careers opportunity system. New Brunswick Public Schools System Planning Study commissioned by the NBT Education Task Force is completed by Eagleton Institute as a guide toward systematic reforms and academic excellence.

Renaissance 2000 program to revitalize Route 27 corridor presented by Molinaro Associates to First Baptist Community Development Corporation and the City.

New Eric B. Chandler Health Center opens on George Street.

UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School dedicates the \$44 million Clinical Academic Building.

New \$42 million home on Livingston Avenue opens for The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and Mason Gross School of The Arts at Rutgers, The State University.

New Brunswick Cultural Center receives Governor's Award on Tourism for Community Development.

Cancer Institute breaks ground for \$26.3 million facility.

Mr. Chris Kjeldsen, Vice President of Community & Workplace Programs, Johnson & Johnson, succeeds Mr. John J. Heldrich, Founding Chairman of New Brunswick Tomorrow.

1996

Eagleton poll finds some of the most positive high points since 1976 in perceptions of New Brunswick residents including 72 percent awareness and 81 percent approval of NBT.

Ground broken by Applied Companies for 117-unit luxury rental apartment complex in downtown New Brunswick. Livingston Manor opens as new residential resource for seniors.

Evaluation and Assessment Task Force chaired by C. Roy Epps is established to evaluate NBT-funded programs.

New Brunswick's pre-eminence as Health Care City reaffirmed as St. Peter's Medical Center, and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital maintained rankings among the nation's top hospitals. They receive Accreditation with Commendation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations.

1997

Info Line of Middlesex County completes four month pilot project prior to opening for service.

Comprehensive Community Health Needs Assessment completed by Eagleton Institute.

Riverwatch Commons with 117 apartments fully rented.

New Brunswick Child Care Consortium organizes "Stand for Children" parade and rally which attracts 300 participants.

1998

Eagleton Poll finds 57 percent of residents rate New Brunswick as excellent or good place to live, with the 20 percent negative response the lowest in 20 years.

United States Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo awards 7.5 million HOPE VI grant to New Brunswick to replace high-rise New Brunswick Homes, provide new and more family-friendly housing, and assist low-income residents to gain self-sufficiency. Consortium led by NBT wins state planning grant of \$30,000 to develop a two-year demonstration project to move welfare recipients to gain self-sufficiency.

Governor Whitman, State Labor Commissioner Mel Gelade and Education Commissioner Leo Klagholz visit and praise New Brunswick's Alliance for Successful Teen Employment Program (A-STEP).

Ground broken for \$25 million Civic Square III program to be developed by partnership of DevCo and Keating Development Corporation.

New \$6 million Boyd Park dedicated at Raritan River Festival.

New Brunswick Hub Teen Center on Morris Street reopened by the City to replace center destroyed by fire.

1999

State grant of \$2 million for Project ACCESS (ACHieving Complete Economic Self Sufficiency), a two-year welfare to work demonstration project, is announced by Human Services Commissioner Michele Guhl on a visit to New Brunswick.

Plans to construct Heldrich Plaza, a \$100 million, 550,000-square foot downtown development, announced by DevCo and the Advance Group private developers. Will include conference center, hotel, luxury apartments and retail space.

Matrix Development Group announced plans for nearby downtown \$100 million privately financed office and luxury apartments.

The Millennium Schools Project launched to provide planning documents to meet State Supreme Court mandates on urban schools reform. It is a collaboration among NBT, New Brunswick Public Schools, Johnson & Johnson and Rutgers, The Graduate School of Education.

Civic Square II completed with New Middlesex County Administrative Building and Public Safety Complex.

NBT awards grant to Aspira, Inc. of New Jersey to implement its nationally renowned leadership program in New Brunswick.

Plans announced for DevCo to construct new Lord Stirling School in agreement with Board of Education. It will be a model statewide for school construction to be part of community development.

Puerto Rican Action Board opens a \$2.1 million daycare center on Drift Street.

Liberty Plaza opens as new home for The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey administrative staff relocated from Newark and Piscataway.

Richmond Court completed by Applied Companies with 82 new apartments and 15 townhouses as final phase of Riverwatch.

2000

New Brunswick Tomorrow celebrated its 25th birthday with a reception in October at Johnson & Johnson's world headquarters attended by 300 people. Highlights were recognition of NBT founding members, a presentation to Johnson & Johnson for its contributions and the first showing of a video, "Twenty-five Years of Partnership and Progress."

Jeffrey M. Vega was named NBT President, succeeding Stephen O'Connor who resigned. Mr. Vega joined NBT in 1993 and had been Vice President.

The National Football Foundation/College Football Hall of Fame designated New Brunswick High School as one of the only 28 sites nationally for its "Play It Smart" program.

With a grant from Johnson & Johnson the Community Interpreters Program was initiated to assist people seeking health care who speak only Spanish.

2001

Preparations began for the Healthier New Brunswick 2010 program with community – based roots. The first phase was a health needs assessment based on key informant interviews and focus groups. The "Get Fit! Coalition" was established to promote healthy lifestyles of nutrition, education and physical activity.

The Parent/Infant Care Center (PIC-C) at New Brunswick High School celebrated its first decade of service.

New Brunswick Senior Care (Community Advocacy and Resource Exchange) started to reach out to the city's elderly population, particularly those most isolated and vulnerable.

2002

Healthier New Brunswick 2010 was officially announced on October 1 to a meeting of 100 community leaders. Johnson & Johnson provided funding in collaboration with principal partners, New Brunswick Tomorrow, the City, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Rutgers University. Dr. Denise Rodgers was named project director and a Community Health Advisory Group (CHAG) was created. The New Brunswick Faith-Based Collaboration was organized with Rev. Vicente Martinez as chairman.

Programs for before and after school care for Kindergarten and elementary pupils were initiated to provide safe havens for children whose parents work early and non-traditional hours.

The Eagleton Poll reported that opinions of New Brunswick residents of the city as a place to live were at their highest levels since the surveys began.

C. Roy Epps, President of the Civic League of Greater New Brunswick, was the recipient of NBT's Lifetime Community Service Award.

2003

Chris Kjeldsen, who had been chairman of the New Brunswick Tomorrow Board of Directors since 1995, died in October. He was extolled

by the Home News Tribune editorially as “one man who truly made a difference.” Dr. Nancy Winterbauer was named acting chairman. The Johnson & Johnson Bridge to Employment Program in New Brunswick was kicked off in October with a \$42,500 grant from the company to prepare students for careers in the health sciences.

A new community coalition was established with eight banks to address financial issues affecting the city’s immigrant community.

Herbert K. Feist, a community, civic and philanthropic leader for five decades, received NBT’s Lifetime Community Service Award.

2004

The 15th biennial poll of New Brunswick residents by Rutgers University’s Eagleton Institute found that a clear majority of 56 percent rate the city favorably as a place to live and 62 percent believe it will be even better in five years. Rosie Saez was elected NBT Board chair to succeed the late Chris Kjeldsen. Elected as vice chairs were Christopher M. Cimarusti and Dr. Denise V. Rodgers. The New Brunswick Tomorrow Lifetime Community Service Award was presented to Malcolm Busch, who has served as legal advisor without compensation to NBT during its entire history. A truancy and delinquency intervention program was initiated, with Middlesex County Family Court as an active participant. The Rutgers Center for State Health Policy presented findings of the first phase of its Community Health Assessment.

2005

New Brunswick Tomorrow celebrated its 30th anniversary at its holiday party in December and announced the John J. Heldrich Institute for Leadership Development to honor its founding chairman. NBT’s Public/Private Partnership Award was presented to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Christopher Cimarusti was elected NBT Board Chair to succeed Rosie Saez, who resigned because of her business pressures but remained a board member. Rev. Vicente Martinez was elected Vice Chair. Two students in Johnson & Johnson’s Bridge to Employment Program received honorable mention awards in a nationwide competition on health literacy. Nineteen high-risk students in NBT’s truancy and delinquency intervention program were promoted to the next grade in school. Anthony Marano, an NBT founding member, died in February. Dr. Denise Rodgers resigned as NBT Vice Chair to accept a position as University Chief of Staff for UMDNJ.