



## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2019092

DATE: 19 Decemberx 2019

**RE: Atlantic Windows, Town of Amherst sign a Commercial Phase-In Assessment Agreement**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – Atlantic Windows has become the first local business to take advantage of the Town of Amherst's Commercial Development Support Program Bylaw.

The firm recently signed a Commercial Phase-In Assessment Agreement with the town that will see them receive a break of about \$130,000 on their commercial property taxes over the next decade following a major expansion to their plant on Chandler Road.

The bylaw was put in place by Amherst town council in September 2017 as a way to stimulate commercial investment within the community. It enables the town to rebate up to 50 per cent of the tax revenue generated by an investment of \$25,000 or more over a period of 10 years.



**Atlantic Windows employees work on a door assembly line in their newly expanded Amherst plant. The firm is the first to take advantage of the Town of Amherst's Commercial Development Support Program Bylaw, which provides a tax rebate to the company over the next decade. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst.)**

"We learned about the incentive through the town's economic development department. Andrew Fisher and Rebecca Taylor told us about it," Bruce Burdock, Atlantic Windows' controller, said.



“We were very interested. We were planning an expansion, so the timing was perfect.”

Fisher is the town’s manager of planning and strategic initiatives; Taylor is the town’s economic development officer.

Company president Greg Dickie, noting the business also has a manufacturing facility in Port Elgin, N.B., agreed the timing of the firm’s introduction to the bylaw was excellent.

“We were debating between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia,” he said, of the plans to expand. “The program nudged us in the direction of Nova Scotia.”

Construction of the 22,500-square-foot expansion, which was added onto their 44,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, took place during 2018. It enabled Atlantic Windows to add two entrance system production lines – PVC sliding and swinging doors – to the plant’s manufacturing capabilities.



**Being able to take advantage of the Town of Amherst's Commercial Development Support Program Bylaw has enabled Atlantic Windows to make additional investments in their Amherst plant. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)**

Under the agreement, the company will receive a rebate of 90 per cent of the commercial property taxes that would have been assessed as a result of the expansion. The rebate decreases by 10 per cent each year until the agreement expires.

In this first year of the agreement, the company received a rebate of \$23,718. Over the 10 years of the agreement, it is anticipated the company will receive a total rebate of about \$131,766, assuming the property assessment does not change over that period.

“I’m very impressed with the Town of Amherst,” Burdock said. ““They brought a whole group of people to help support this idea. The development group led us this way.”

As a result of the expansion, the company saw its employment level increase to 75 from 50, including management, supervisor and lead-hand positions as well as line workers.

The rebate has also had other benefits for the company.

“Having more available capital monies makes us a little more self-sufficient in this plant,” Burdock said.



“It’s hard to look in a crystal ball and know what will happen three years down the road,” Dickie added. “To have something that is stable for 10 years is great. We know what our taxes will be here over the next decade. That’s one less thing to worry about, and it allows us to invest in other areas. We’re already looking at expanding operations after Year 1.”

The investments included adding more equipment to allow for insulated glass production in the Amherst facility. In turn, this will create more jobs.

Dickie said he’d highly recommend other companies examine the possibility of taking advantage of the Commercial Development Support Program Bylaw.

“Amherst is really strategic with this initiative,” he said. “Amherst isn’t just hoping businesses will show up, it is actively seeking businesses, and they have great programs to assist firms set up shop.”



**An Atlantic Windows employee works in the newly expanded section of the Amherst plant. The firm will be receiving a commercial tax break over the next decade after becoming the first local firm to take advantage of the Town of Amherst’s Commercial Development Support Program Bylaw. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)**

The town is assisting the company in other ways as well.

“They bring representatives from ACOA, the provincial government, the Cumberland business agency to us so we can learn about the programs that could help us,” Dickie said. “Help that we did not know was there.

“It’s great the town is out promoting these programs and bringing them to the forefront. To have that kind of support from the town and the community shows their willingness to be a partner.”

Mayor David Kogon welcomed the company’s comments on the Commercial Development Support Program Bylaw.

“When council approved the bylaw in 2017, council’s goal was to provide an incentive to businesses that would in turn lead to improvements to the town’s economy,” Kogon said. “To hear there is a direct link between the bylaw and Amherst Windows’ ability to increase employment levels and investment in their plant shows the incentive we placed in the bylaw works.

“The town would encourage other businesses to take similar advantage of the bylaw.”



Direct Inquiries to:  
Tom McCoag  
Corporate Communications Officer  
902-694-6265  
[tmccoag@amherst.ca](mailto:tmccoag@amherst.ca)

