



## Membertou's Letter to Cape Breton on Novaporte

Chief Terry Paul

True leadership is measured by a willingness to play the long game, making difficult decisions today, in service of a stronger tomorrow.

As elected Chief in Membertou for the last forty-two years, there are a few things I know for sure; leadership begins and ends with respect, and taking calculated risks can change everything.

Over the last three decades Membertou has focused on economic and community growth for the benefit of our people. Purpose-driven work that puts people at the center of everything we do.

The commercial investments we've made to grow Membertou are put to work supporting community infrastructure, housing, education, health, social programming and beyond. We're thoughtful about what we invest in, because with a goal of creating generational wealth for our community, there's a duty and responsibility to lead authentically and with integrity.

This week, CBRM Council voted on the future of the greenfield site and partnership with Novaporte. Six members of CBRM Council chose to reject the significant investment that our community of Membertou has made in Novaporte as 25% owners.

Membertou is a significant contributor to our region. We employ more than 600 people from communities across the CBRM. We're a major developer on the island, with decades of experience in large-scale projects and construction, and last year we infused \$84 million into the CBRM economy. Annually we pay more than \$3.7 million in tax dollars to the municipality for services and lands.

For members of the CBRM Council to ignore both the investment we've made on behalf of our community, and the impact we've made within the municipality is irresponsible.



With our partnership in Novaporte, we've been working to develop opportunities to bring industry to our shoreline. We've been pivoting to meet the needs and demands of the ever-changing geo-political landscape. Membertou partners with industry experts across various sectors, and along with our trusted partners SHIP, we are doing the same with Novaporte. On the greenfield site, we've created value. The rigorous consultation and permitting process is complete, and that work belongs to Novaporte. A new developer coming to the site would need to restart the entire process – which puts the development back at least 3 years. Novaporte is shovel-ready.

It's difficult to see the vision when construction hasn't started yet, but in my experience projects of this magnitude can take up to 20 years. The Membertou I grew up in had one road in, and for many of us, no road out. The progress and growth of our community was certainly not achieved in a day or a year.

So, I say, let's be leaders. True leaders.  
Let's work together, not create division.

Right now the road is winding, but that's because we've not reached the finish line. This is a marathon, not a sprint. Membertou is invested in Cape Breton for the long run. Let's take the time and energy necessary to do this right.

I welcome discussion on this from our partners at the CBRM, and hope that as a region we can align for the greater good of Sydney Harbour's future.

