

Supporting infrastructure and a countrywide vision

The dual approach of serving local communities and at the same time connecting them in a nation-building endeavour is at the heart of The Great Trail initiative – it was also a key motivation behind Sobeys’ growth from a small meat delivery business in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, to more than 1,500 stores across the country. From this common ground emerged a 20-year engagement of the family business with the Trail.

“One of the reasons the Sobey Foundation chose to support the Trail comes from the desire to see our community and region connected to a great national initiative,” says Bernard Doucet, director of Corporate Affairs with Sobeys Inc. and secretary of the Sobey Foundation.

The Sobey Foundation has a longstanding commitment to support the Trail. Last year, a donation of \$500,000 helped to connect Atlantic Canada – the funding supported trail-building efforts for the section from Pictou to Springville, Nova Scotia.

The Sobey family’s connection to Nova Scotia runs deep. When William Sobey and his wife Janet settled there with their son John William (JW) in 1876, they returned to Janet’s family roots. JW started a meat delivery business in 1907 in Stellarton and expanded the family business from meat and a few local vegetables to a full line of groceries with his brother Frank in 1925. Shortly after, Frank opened the first Sobeys supermarket, now a familiar sight across the country.

“The Trail is envisioned as a great uniting force for all Canadians no matter where they live,” says Mr. Doucet. “We see it as a terrific equal access opportunity to build and enjoy something together.”

Source: The Globe and Mail <https://globeandmail.thegreattrail.ca/2017/supporting-community-infrastructure-and-a-country-wide-vision>