

Truro & Colchester *Partnership* for Economic Prosperity

Colchester | Millbrook | Stewiacke | Truro

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

The Truro & Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity is a Regional Enterprise Network supported by the local business community (through the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce), the Towns of Truro and Stewiacke, the Municipality of the County of Colchester, Millbrook First Nation and the Province of Nova Scotia.

Our mandate: Increase economic prosperity throughout the Colchester region by supporting and encouraging business development.





Promote the Colchester Region as an excellent place to work, live and do business

The Truro & Colchester region has many important assets and advantages.

We hold an enviable geographic location with many transportation and distribution assets including the intersection of major highway systems, national and regional rail networks, one of Canada's busiest airports (Robert L. Stanfield International), and a major international port nearby in Halifax.

We have a strong and diverse economy, a growing reputation hosting major events in music, culture, sports and the arts, and natural environments (Victoria Park + Bay of Fundy) that rank among the finest in the world.

New infrastructure like the Public Library, the Colchester East Hants Health Centre and the Rath Eastlink Community Centre have gained national attention. We offer quality education advantages with Dalhousie University, NSCC Truro Campus, and excellent high schools, including Cobequid Educational Centre - the largest high school in Nova Scotia.

The Partnership will promote our region and raise the profile of our value proposition and key assets. We will develop and execute a regional marketing plan supported by key partner organizations and develop marketing tools for businesses, community groups and residents.

Developing a regional "identity" is important for messaging our value. Having businesses and residents support a regional identity will help increase business activity, create opportunities for youth, attract residents/immigrants and demonstrate that our region is welcoming and open for business.

"As a community and a region we must be able to respectfully challenge conventional thinking and the idea that we must always agree, especially when we don't. If we avoid disagreement we will never know when true change is required."

-Mike Dolter, CPA | Town of Truro

Strategic Priorities

- Develop an inclusive regional identity to better market the Colchester region.
- Promote the benefits of doing business within the region (location, cost of business, lifestyle).
- Increase awareness of businesses who are succeeding in Colchester, highlighting our strategic advantages.
- Better leverage daily traffic travelling through the hub of Nova Scotia - more people stopping and experiencing our communities and best assets.
- Coordinate and/or develop a regional website and promotional materials that draw people to the region.
- Help the region host more events; build on the success of recent major sporting events (Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling, World Junior A Challenge, etc.) and explore more event opportunities in arts, culture and business.

Increase Business Start-ups, Support Business Growth & Innovation

The Colchester Region can play a key role in the economic future of Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. While opportunities exist in a variety of areas and are not confined to a sector or segment of the regional economy, logical advantages exist in areas of Agriculture, Logistics and the Silver Economy.

Improving and better connecting the business development and start-up ecosystem represents a major opportunity.

Leveraging the research and knowledge within Dalhousie Agriculture, the Nova Scotia Community College and our local entrepreneurs, we can further position Colchester as a growth region for emerging agricultural and agri-technology industries including food, and health applications.

The Partnership will establish physical spaces for coworking and business innovation; aligning resources, partners and access to capital. The locations will be culturally vibrant, providing business and social enterprise development services, and have a strong philosophy for innovation, maintaining business strengths by shared problem solving, feedback and decision making.

This initiative will also increase community awareness and access to regional start-up programming and business support services. BusinessNOW is an internationally-renowned business retention and expansion program. It engages local business owner/operators and encourages the retention and expansion of existing businesses by removing barriers to growth in the region. Through BusinessNOW, the Partnership will meet with businesses one-on-one to discuss challenges and opportunities.

"For our region to truly move forward we need to move away from the competitive individualistic mindset. A popular adage is "a high tide floats all boats." For a long time, we have worked in silos in this region, each player worried about their piece of the pie. We need to champion EVERY win, regardless of who was responsible, in order to drive the economic development of this region."

- Stephanie Jones,

TCPEP Board, Owner/Operator, McDonald's Restaurant

Strategic Priorities

- Establish physical spaces for coworking and business innovation; aligning resources, partners and access to capital.
- Develop a local business investment capital pool. Create criteria and a new fund to support 1-2 highly innovative youth entrepreneurship projects per year.
- Implement BusinessNOW to improve community awareness & access to regional start-up programming and business support services.
- Create a business mentorship system within Colchester, linking dynamic business leaders (here and abroad) with local businesses seeking mentorship and guidance.
- Streamline site selector protocols and consolidate local business park information (Host a website and create promotional packages).
- Support key clusters and sectors that differentiate the region (Agriculture, Manufacturing, Distribution).
- Establish a regional confidential customer service / product feedback process to support a commitment to high standards of excellence – to strengthen the connection between clients and business leaders.
- Improve entrepreneurship awareness in schools.
- Cultivate entrepreneurship development opportunities at Dalhousie University and NSCC Truro. Support more business start-ups (and existing business) affiliated with Dalhousie and NSCC.

Workforce Development, Attraction & Retention

While the Colchester region continues to experience economic growth, it is critical to invest more to create a welcoming, inclusive and connected community to ensure increased population growth and a strong stable workforce.

Our region will model an environment that allows businesses to address workforce opportunities and challenges. We will further develop a business environment that creates trust in youth, opportunities for newcomers, immigrants and seniors and understands varying perspective and ideas to propel our economy forward.

We will assist employers with recruitment support to provide resources, tools and networks that will help them recruit and retain talent in the region. Our goal is to ensure that regional employers have access to a sustainable pipeline of trained talent and that we are well positioned for future growth and new business opportunities. The Partnership will engage with the business community and local stakeholders to identify education and training opportunities to strengthen the capacity of our workforce.

"There is a new vibe in our community.... A sense that we can create a better more dynamic future for Colchester County. It will require us to set priorities, have vision, work together and have confidence in each other to embrace change. Together we can build a community open for business and a great place to work and play."

- Stephen Johnston
TCPEP Board, Counsel to Patterson Law

Strategic Priorities

- Support businesses with development opportunities and help them navigate immigration and newcomer programs.
- Develop formal welcoming services for new employees and their families who move to the region.
- Leverage current events to create positive experiences that allow local people and the immigrant community to connect, feel welcome and build relationships.
- Increase the number of international students working in/with Colchester businesses.
- Encourage businesses to make a proclamation to hire graduate students on an annual basis from local educational institutions.
- Research the existing pay equity gap (male/female) and explore steps to eliminate it – positioning our business community as a pay equity community.
- Explore asset mapping options to service the local workforce needs. The asset maps will include senior, youth, immigrant and underemployed/unemployed information.
- Host quarterly youth focus groups to assess local youth work opinions and perceptions of local workforce issues.



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