



Nova Scotia Remembers Legacy Society

West Colchester
Community Development Strategy
Project Plan

February 2021

Community Development
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Contents

Background.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Timelines and Activities.....	4
Phase 1: Stakeholder Engagement (April 2021).....	4
Phase 2: Community Strengths and Needs (May – June 2021)	4
Phase 3: Strategic Planning and Program Management Development (September - October 2021)	4
Phase 4: Program Implementation and Management (November 2021 - Ongoing) ...	5
Outputs.....	5
Outcomes.....	6

Background

On April 18/19, 2020, the people of West Colchester were devastated to learn that the most horrific of tragedies had taken place here in our quiet community. Over the last year there has been limited coordinated intervention in support of the community to help individuals, families, and groups in their healing and recovery. To say the least, the communities of West Colchester are shaken to their core, our identity is fractured, and there is a broad range of needs that continue to go unaddressed in the community.

As an emerging voice in the community, the Nova Scotia Remembers Legacy Society is uniquely positioned to engage West Colchester as a whole. Since we became established in the fall and prior to that as we lay the groundwork for our organization, we have been working hard to establish connections with families and organizations throughout West Colchester and beyond. Further, as an organization, one of our four primary mandates is Community Development, and we are eager to take a lead role in supporting the communities affected by these tragic events to move forward stronger and more united as we take back our community and write our own story of resilience and positivity in the face of our darkest days.

Organizations such as the various community health boards, the MacPhee Centre (youth programming), the Portapique Community Hall, and others have reached out looking for ways to support the communities through programming opportunities and supports. These are all wonderful opportunities to bring programming and supports to West Colchester, but it is vital that these activities be coordinated and aligned with the needs of the community.

It is also of the utmost importance that we recognize the deep trauma that has impacted every single aspect of these communities. All initiatives in support of these communities' recovery requires a trauma lens and the guidance of expertise in supporting individuals following events such as these.

Purpose

This project seeks to coordinate resources, determine needs, and provide programming and other services to the communities of West Colchester. Through stakeholder and public engagement, the Nova Scotia Remembers Legacy Society will create a strategic plan to coordinate community resources in support of identified needs throughout West Colchester from Five Islands to Onslow and points in between. In the final phase of the project, that plan will be implemented, and a coordinator will be hired to manage the community resources and programming put in place to support these communities ongoing.

Timelines and Activities

Phase 1: Stakeholder Engagement (April 2021)

Engaging interested organizations, community groups, and other supporters towards a collaborative and comprehensive program delivery strategy.

- Environmental Scan and Asset Mapping of program delivery organizations and individuals in West Colchester.
- Engaging service delivery organizations, non-profits, service non-profits in the community to determine interested parties, potential collaborators to work towards a comprehensive service/program delivery strategy and model that can be put into place to support the community of West Colchester (from Five Islands to Onslow)
- Development of website portals and social media materials dedicated to the consultation process that can be moved forward to phase 2.

Deliverables:

- Environmental Scan/Asset Map and Stakeholder Summary Report
- Website and social media materials for community engagement

Phase 2: Community Strengths and Needs (May – June 2021)

Taking the cumulative assets and interests garnered from the stakeholder engagement session and engaging the community to determine needs across sectors.

- Building off Phase 1 identify gaps in programs, services, resources.
- Determine service needs and community supports to regain a sense of identity and cohesive community in a trauma informed response to the shooting event in April 2021.
- Community focus group sessions

Deliverable:

- Summary Report of Community Needs

Phase 3: Strategic Planning and Program Management Development (September - October 2021)

Actioning research to create a comprehensive community development strategy for West Colchester.

- Developing a comprehensive program and service model to ensure needs within the capacities of the stakeholder group are met. Program plan to include financing and evaluation strategies for ongoing sustainability of program plan.
- Sharing information outward to other organizations as needed
- Develop action plans for the society to advocate for additional community needs from outside of the stakeholder group, that are grounded in the research.

Deliverables:

- Comprehensive strategic planning document
- Established partnerships with service providers to delivery programming to address identified needs.
- Programming development to meet additional identified needs.
- Establish channel for ongoing community engagement and feedback (i.e., Community Advisory Board - CAB).
- Funding proposals for broad-based public sector funding

Phase 4: Program Implementation and Management (November 2021 - Ongoing)

Delivering the long-term plan. Ongoing management and coordination to meet the needs of West Colchester.

- Ongoing management of general planning, activities, and outcomes (full time position – reporting to board and in consultation with the CAB).
- Ongoing advocacy for West Colchester across government, public, private sectors, and coordination of service delivery.
- Continuous needs assessment, and program development to meet emerging needs of West Colchester communities.
- Outreach and collaboration with other impacted communities such as Wentworth & Shubenacadie to support development of similar programming models.

Outputs

- Coordinated and sustainable community programming across West Colchester, meeting the various needs of citizen groups including but not limited to youth, older individuals, working age individuals, families, business etc.
- A strong, representative channel for ongoing feedback and data collection to inform programming delivery and advocacy requirements for the community.
- A unified voice at broader service deliveries tables to ensure the identified needs of West Colchester communities are met.

Outcomes

- Strengthened community networks across West Colchester.
- Strengthened community infrastructure (programming, services) to ensure continued sustainability (or growth) of West Colchester's rural population.
- Resiliency and the re-establishment of community identity considering the tragic events that took place in April 2020.