



COLCHESTER COMMUNITIES
VitalSigns[®]



Taking the pulse of our community 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PARTNERS

We are excited to present the Colchester Communities *Vital Signs*[®], the outcome of collaboration between the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia (CFNS) and the United Way of Colchester County.

This was a collaborative process with input and direction from caring citizens including individuals and municipal, business and non-profit leaders throughout Colchester. Colchester is a great community with engaged citizens and we couldn't have completed this report without their support – thank you to everyone!

Vital Signs[®] reports pull together secondary information from Statistics Canada, as well as from sources of local information, to capture and present the realities, challenges and opportunities in our communities. The report is a community checkup that leverages community knowledge to measure the vitality of our communities, identify significant trends and support action that improves our quality of life.

We encourage you to read the report and to consider the issues and opportunities presented. Share the report with friends, family and colleagues. Use this report to start conversations, learn how organizations and individuals are working to improve things and think about how you can help. Consider this report as a starting point for action.

The report was supported by funds donated to the Colchester Community Fund, a community fund established for the people of Colchester and for the purpose of producing this *Vital Signs*[®] report. These funds were matched through local contributions from the United Way of Colchester County, Municipality of Colchester County, the Town of Stewiacke, the Town of Truro and the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre.

We hope this report gives you insight into who is living here and how well their needs are being met, from basic human needs such as food, housing and safety to those that increase quality of life such as places to play, learn and create.



Terry Hearn,
*United Way of Colchester County
and Part of the Leadership Team*



Robert Orr,
*Chair, Community Foundation
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*Dalhousie University/United Way
of Colchester County*



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VitalSigns®

Community foundations taking the pulse of Canadian communities.



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA
all for community.

WELCOME TO VITAL SIGNS®

Vital Signs® is a community checkup conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life.

Vital Signs® is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada and with special thanks to the Toronto Foundation for developing and sharing the *Vital Signs*® concept. For more information visit: www.vitalsignscanada.ca

The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia (CFNS) is an action centre for philanthropy. We provide the knowledge and support for communities, charities, and citizens to realize their individual potential and collective possibilities. Through our work, we inspire Nova Scotians to Gather, Give, and Grow.

GATHER

We act as a convener and facilitator, bringing people & communities together in many different and exciting ways, such as our annual Inspired Conversations Series, various funds, *Vital Signs*® initiatives, and much more. We work with private donors, businesses, communities, and charitable organizations to build the financial and social capital our communities need, both today and tomorrow.

GIVE

We support more than 60 funds that together support people, projects, and progress in communities across the province. We promote charitable giving and facilitate effective philanthropy for strategic impact on the issues and causes that matter to our communities.

GROW

We build the financial assets that make things possible. We pool gifts, large and small, for greater growth to provide a sustainable source of funding for charities, scholarships, and grants to other community priorities.



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
FONDATION COMMUNAUTAIRE
OF NOVA SCOTIA
DE LA NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

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THE PROCESS

LOCAL DATA

Vital Signs® reports employ a community-based research strategy in order to determine community priorities and highlight community strengths. Wherever possible, this report has drawn information from local data, such as strategies and action plans from municipalities and data from local business and non-profit organizations. The report also draws extensively from the most recently available data from national sources, such as Statistics Canada, to provide a high-level snapshot of community vitality on a wide variety of indicators.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Vital Signs® is a community-based initiative that inspires local action from community members. The goal of *Vital Signs*® is to encourage dialogue and action from all segments of a community, including citizens, non-profit organizations, institutions, and political leaders. Making use of public meetings, sounding boards, and even simple walkabouts around the municipality, the researchers connected with community members to seek their perspectives on identifying priority areas, to collecting data, to editing the final draft of the report.

Representatives from the United Way of Colchester County, the Town of Truro, the Municipality of Colchester County, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre played key roles in providing high level recommendations and advice to ensure this report addressed the priorities and needs of the community, and were instrumental in achieving the community outreach and engagement goals of *Vital Signs*®.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

This report uses secondary data from multiple sources and from various years. In many cases different survey methods were used and focused on different geographic catchment areas. The researchers made an effort to be explicit in defining the geographic area covered by the research used in this *Vital Signs*®. The reader should keep in mind the following:

- Throughout the process, members of the communities of Colchester identified issues they would like to see addressed in the report. Unfortunately, not all these issues have been addressed due to limited or no data availability and/or limited space.
- There are three municipalities within Colchester County: The Town of Truro, The Town of Stewiacke, and The Municipality of the County of Colchester. For this report, the term Colchester County represents the geographic boundaries of the County. When data is separate for municipalities in the County it is identified.
- Some of the information in the Health and Wellness section is based on information from Health Zone 2, a jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Health Authority which includes Pictou County, Colchester County, and East Hants. Nova Scotia has 4 Health Zones.

2017 POINTS TO PONDER

POPULATION

Since 2001, the overall population of Colchester County has grown by 3.4% to reach 50,585.

ECONOMY AND WORK

Colchester County has a diverse economy with no sector employing more than 15% of the total labour force. Colchester's 2015 unemployment rate was 0.5% lower than Nova Scotia's overall rate. In 2012, Truro ranked first among Canadian cities and towns as the most cost competitive business location.

SHARED PROSPERITY

Eighteen percent of Colchester County residents were considered low-income in 2010. The average after-tax income was \$27,785. On average, females made \$10,000 less than males that year. In 2015, the average amount of charitable donations was \$290 per tax filer in Truro, the provincial average was \$300.

FOOD

Colchester County is a food and farming hub with numerous farmers' markets, farmgate sellers, and agri-food businesses and institutions. Despite this, only 28% of residents in the Health Authority zone that includes Colchester eat the recommended daily amount of fruit and vegetables. In 2015, the Colchester Food Bank in Truro dispensed 9,791 food boxes.

HOUSING

Apartment and home construction is rising, even though the population is stable in Colchester County. In 2011, 21% of households had housing affordability problems, slightly lower than the provincial (22%) and national rates (25%).

GETTING AROUND

There are limited public transportation services in Colchester County. Ninety three per cent of residents rely on cars and 5% walk as a mode of transport. Colchester Transportation Cooperative Ltd. (CTCL) offers pre-arranged (on demand) weekday daytime accessible bus service with its 5 vehicle fleet.

SAFETY

Truro and Colchester County combined had a 36% decrease in the crime rate between 2010 and 2016. Truro's Crime Severity Index (CSI) also decreased over that period, but was the second highest of Nova Scotian jurisdictions in 2016 at 99. The CSI for Colchester County

(excluding Truro) was 52, which was 9 points below the Nova Scotian rate (61) and 18 below the Canadian rate (70).

BELONGING

Seventy-two percent of residents of Health Zone 2, a jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Health Authority that includes Colchester County, report a positive sense of community belonging. This rate equals the provincial level and surpasses the 65% national rate.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

In 2014, 65% of Colchester County residents reported having very good or excellent mental health. Health Zone 2 was the second highest in Canada for self-reported obesity in 2011.

LEARNING

Colchester County is home to two post-secondary campuses (Dalhousie Agricultural and NSCC Truro). Chignecto Central Regional School Board students rank near the provincial average on assessments of reading, writing, and math skills. Eighty-two percent of Colchester County residents aged 25 – 64 have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

ENVIRONMENT

Colchester County's waste diversion facility serves 14 Nova Scotian municipalities. Colchester residents are diverting 63% of materials from landfill through reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting. Thirty-eight wind turbines in Colchester County generate enough electricity to serve 91% of its residential demand.

ARTS & CULTURE

Colchester County has become a centre of music and cultural events hosted outdoors or in such venues as the Rath Eastlink Community Centre, the Marigold Centre, and the Creamery Square in Tatamagouche. It is home to 19 cultural heritage societies and the Colchester-East Hants Public Library has 19,301 active cardholders.

RECREATION

There are 144 kms of active transport trails in Colchester County and another 500 kms for snowmobile and off-road vehicles. There are an additional 47 kms of trails in Truro's Victoria Park. Youth participation in sports is assisted by financial programs administered by Colchester, Truro, and Millbrook First Nation.



AT A GLANCE

THE MUNICIPALITIES

Colchester County is a combination of more than 100 communities, including: the Town of Truro; the Town of Stewiacke; the Village of Bible Hill; the Village of Tatamagouche; and Millbrook First Nation community.

The land area of Colchester County is 3,628.12 square kilometres and the population density is 14 people per square kilometre.

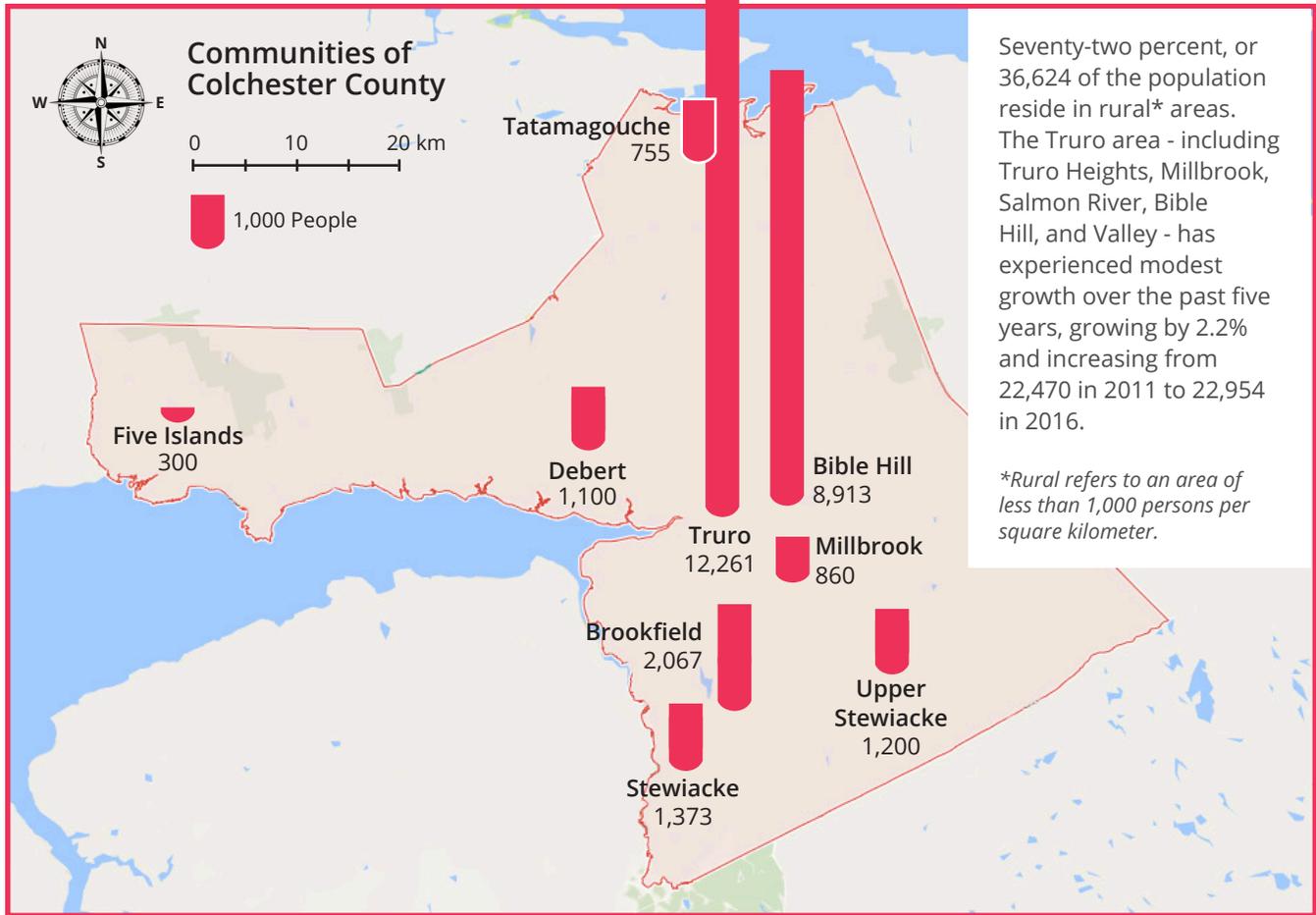
2001-2016 POPULATION TREND FOR COLCHESTER COUNTY



Including all jurisdictions and communities, since 2001 the population has increased by 3.4%, to a total population of 50,585. However, between 2006 and 2016, there was a 0.7% decrease.

In Nova Scotia, the population has grown 0.2% between 2006 and 2016.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY COMMUNITY



MIGRATION

Between 2001 and 2016, due to a combination of migration within Nova Scotia and internationally, the population of Colchester County increased by 738 people.



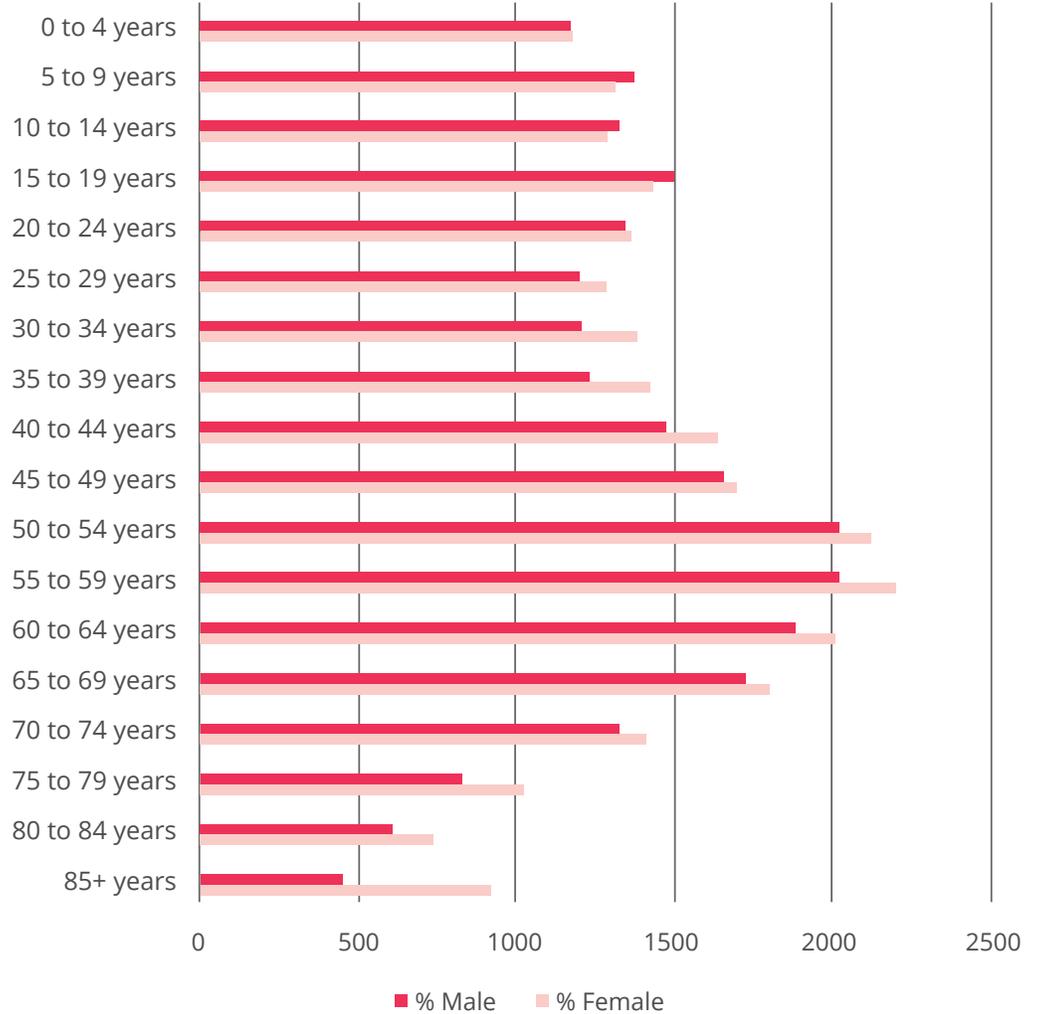
Between 2001 and 2016, other than Halifax, Colchester County was the only county in Nova Scotia to see a population increase. The next closest, Hants County, experienced a decrease of 320 people. In the same years, 796 people immigrated to Colchester County from other countries.

AGE BREAKDOWN 2016

AGE BREAKDOWN

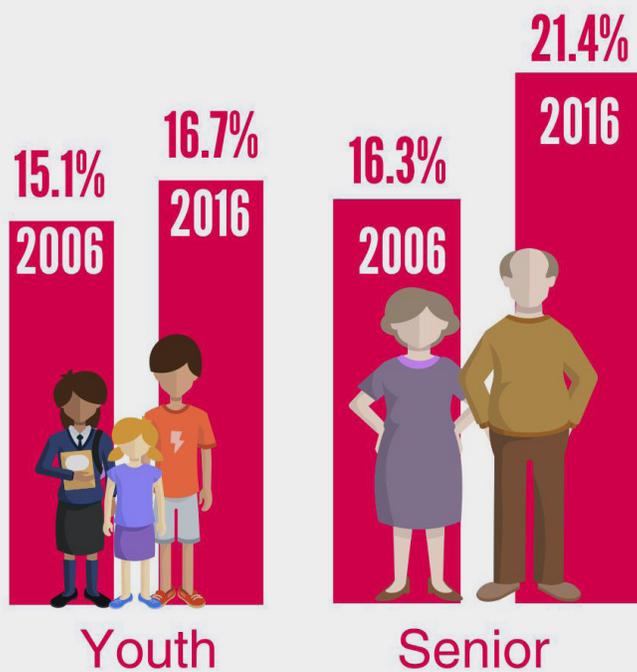
With the exception of ages 5-19, there are more females in all age brackets. Provincially, there are more females (52%) than males.

Forty-four percent of residents are between the ages of 40 and 69, the same as the provincial rate (44%).



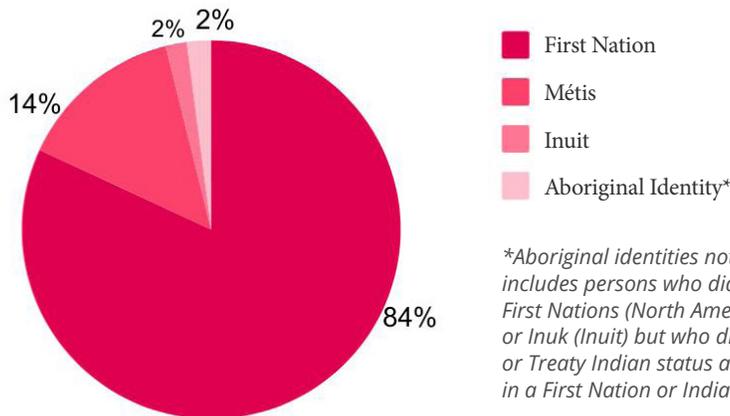
The population is aging. Senior residents (65 years and over) represent 21.4% of the population which is an increase of 5.1% since 2006. This is higher than the provincial rate (20%), and higher than the national rate (17%).

Youth (under 14 years) represent 16.7% of the population which is a slight increase of 1.6% since 2006. This is higher than the provincial rate (14%), and equal to the national rate (16%).



ABORIGINAL POPULATION

In 2011 1,953 residents identified as Aboriginal. The majority, 84%, identified as First Nations. Fourteen per cent identified as Métis and 2% identified as Inuit. Aboriginal identities not included elsewhere* made up 2% of residents.



**Aboriginal identities not included elsewhere includes persons who did not report being First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit) but who did report Registered or Treaty Indian status and/or membership in a First Nation or Indian band.*

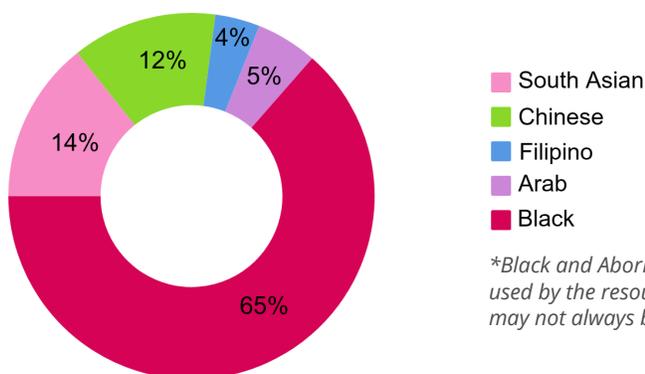
MILLBROOK POPULATION 2017

Band Memberships of
Millbrook First Nation: 1,780
On Reserve: 900
Off Reserve: 880

Millbrook Mi'kmaq First Nation reserve is located within the Town of Truro. Millbrook is home to less than half of the Aboriginal population in the county.

VISIBLE MINORITIES POPULATION

In 2011, 2% (1,050) of Colchester County residents identified as a visible minority with the majority (65%) identifying as Black*.



**Black and Aboriginal are terms used by the resource. These terms may not always be preferred.*

LANGUAGES

In 2011, 99% of residents spoke English and/or French (official Canadian languages) most often at home.



DID YOU KNOW

In 2006 the Aboriginal youth (0-19 years) population was 480. In 2011 it increased by 37.5% to 660 youth.

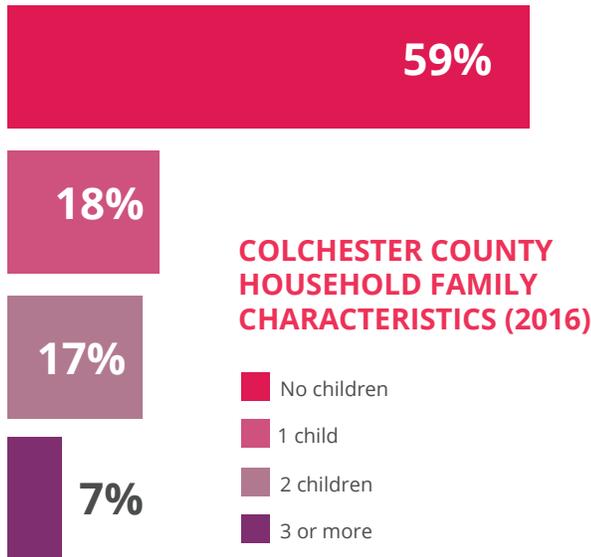


DID YOU KNOW

The African United Baptist Association of Nova Scotia (AUBA) was founded by Reverend Richard Preston in 1854. Reverend Preston was a slave from Virginia, who arrived in Nova Scotia a free man after purchasing his freedom in Virginia in 1818. This Association is the mother organization of 19 Black Baptist Churches in Nova Scotia. The Zion United Baptist Church, Truro, Colchester County, is one of these AUBA churches.

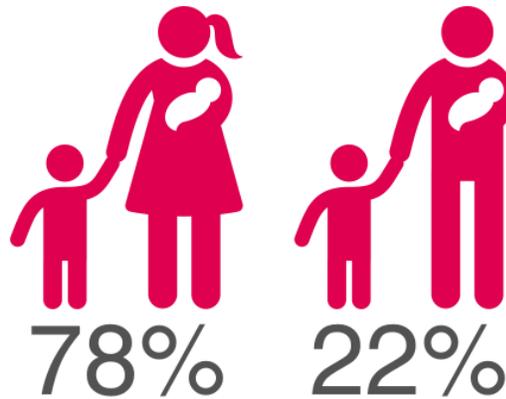
FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS (2016)

Twenty-five percent of Colchester County residents identified as part of a couple family. Fifty-nine percent of these couples did not have children, or do not have children living in the household, similar to the provincial rate of 57%.



SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

In 2016, 17% of parents were in lone-parent families; of these, 78% were female and 22% male.



MARITAL STATUS (2016)

Fifty-nine percent of residents over 15 years of age identified as married or living with a common-law partner. Forty-one percent identified as not married and not living with a common-law partner. This was similar to the provincial rates (58% and 42%) respectively.

PERSONAL STORY

The Kasey family is proud to call Denmark, Colchester County, their Canadian home. It's about 9,060 km from their former home in Iraq. On a Friday evening early in September, as the Kasey family host friends and neighbours for an Eid al-Adha feast, it's clear that they have been embraced by this primarily farming community.

Arriving in Montreal as refugees, the Kasey family's journey has been one of perseverance. In just under a decade, facing challenges of language, cultural differences,

and finances, they have gone from job seekers to job makers.

The Kaseys found Montreal and then Vancouver difficult places to match earnings with costs. Eventually, they brought their three children to Bedford, NS, where father Ramy found employment in a bakery. Within a few years, they partnered in a retail outlet. Only a small percentage of new Canadians settle in rural areas, but in 2014, the Kaseys purchased Colchester County property that is

now home to their sheep and beef farm, soon supplying several retail outlets with halal meat.

It wasn't long before the Kasey family once again turned hardship into opportunity. In 2015, their main barn burned to the ground. Rather than just rebuilding, the Kaseys are also developing plans for an abattoir that will provide as many as a dozen new jobs. Colchester County is fortunate to be home to this hard-working and visionary family.

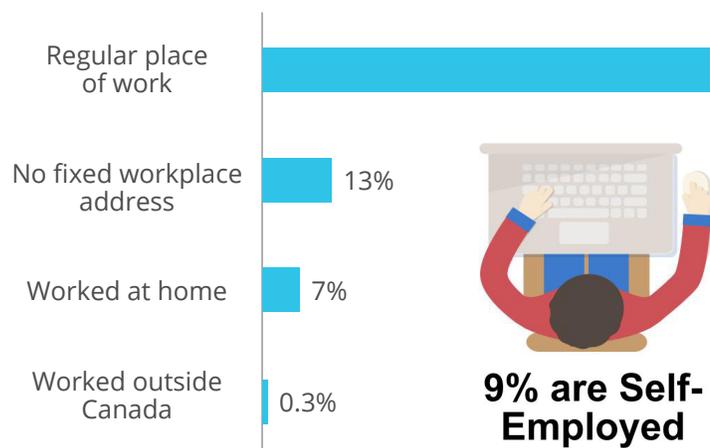
A vibrant economy provides residents and businesses with the opportunity to thrive. A diverse economy is resilient, and serves as the foundation for growth and prosperity.



ECONOMY & WORK

PLACE OF WORK 2011

Thirteen percent of Colchester County residents did not work at a fixed address; this could mean they worked in trades like construction or travelled for work.



211 PROVINCIAL HELPLINE

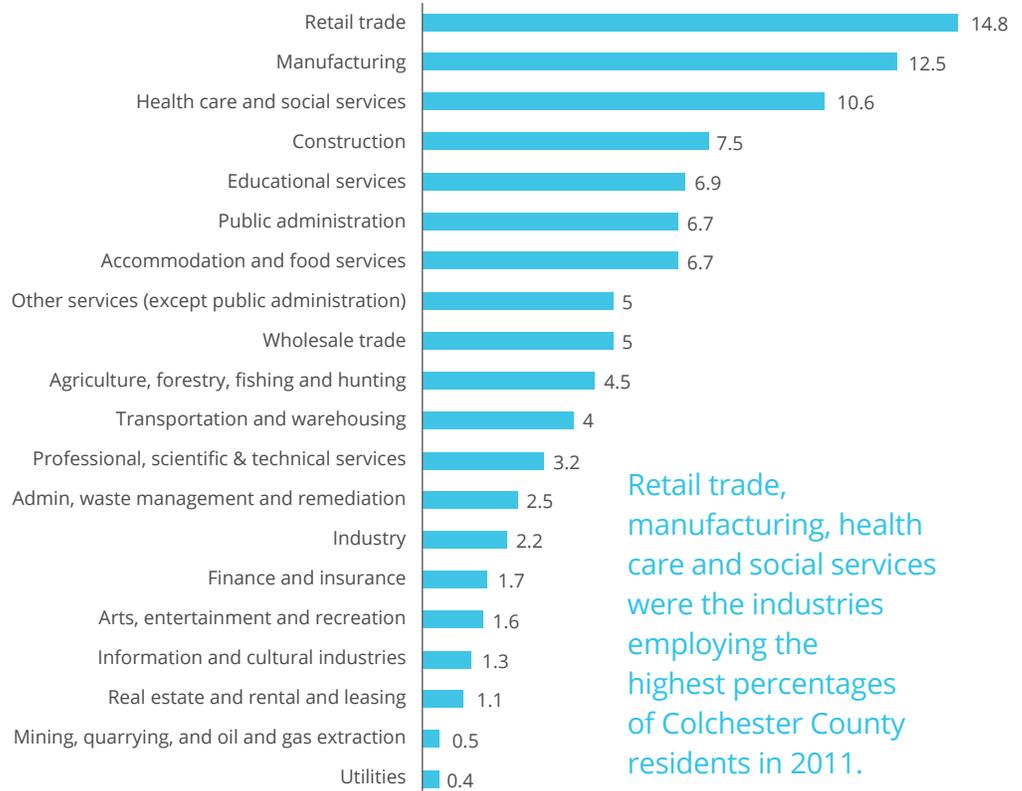
In 2016, 211 received 19 requests* associated with employment concerns. These included job training, disability related employment concerns, vocational rehabilitation and other work issues.



211 is a free, confidential information and referral service for thousands of community and social services in Nova Scotia. When you dial 2-1-1 you reach a friendly and knowledgeable information and referral specialist who can help you find non-profit, community and government programs. You can reach 211 24/7 by dialing 2-1-1, by email at help@ns.211.ca or search the online database. Interpretation services are available for over 100 languages and 211 offers TTY for the hearing impaired.

*All 211 data in this report is from Colchester County (2015-2016).

COLCHESTER COUNTY PERCENTAGE OF LABOUR FORCE EMPLOYED BY INDUSTRY OR SERVICE



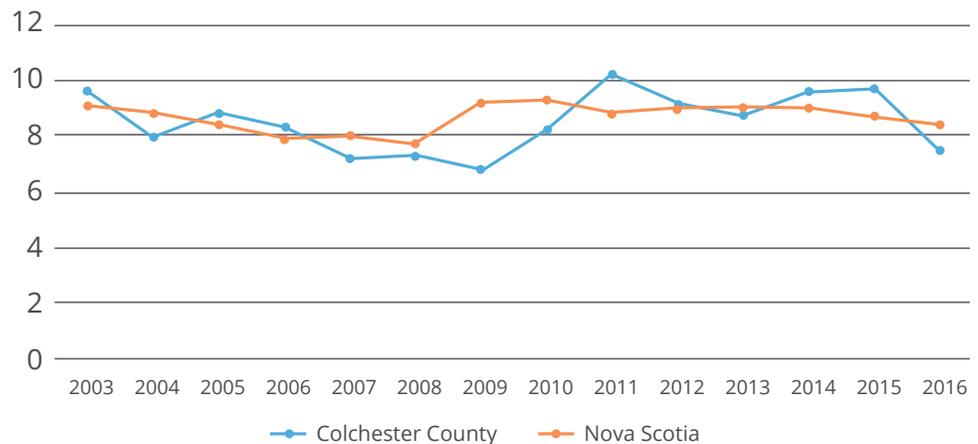
Retail trade, manufacturing, health care and social services were the industries employing the highest percentages of Colchester County residents in 2011.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

The 2016 unemployment rate in Colchester County was 7.5%, which is below the 10% rate in 2015. The unemployment rate has decreased by 12% since 2003. In most years the percentage compared closely to the provincial average. In 2016, the provincial unemployment rate was 8% and the national rate was 7%.

The rate of unemployment of African Nova Scotians was 14.5%, which was higher than the rest of Nova Scotia at 10% and African Canadians at 12.9% across Canada (2011). This gap is greater amongst males, with a rate of 17.2% for African Nova Scotians when compared to 10.7% for other Nova Scotians.

UNEMPLOYMENT 2016



211 PROVINCIAL HELPLINE

211 received 11 requests associated with employment insurance (2016).

CO-OPERATIVES

In 2012, there were 347 provincially registered co-operatives in the province, 35 of which were in Colchester County. This was the second highest number of co-operatives in the province; Halifax had 94.

Colchester County co-operatives had 73 employees. Twenty-nine (40%) of the employees were full-time, and 44 (60%) were part-time.

CHILDCARE

In Nova Scotia in 2012, the median daily fee for full-time centre-based care was \$36 for infants (0 -17 mos), \$32 for toddlers (18 - 35 mos), \$31 for preschoolers (36 mos - 5 yrs), and \$26 for school-aged children (5 -12 yrs). In Colchester County, there are 23 registered childcare facilities.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE RATE

In 2016, the number of employment insurance beneficiaries in Colchester County was 1,268 residents (3%)*. This was the same as the provincial rate. Truro residents made up 84% of the total Colchester County employment insurance beneficiaries. Truro residents make up 24% of the Colchester County population.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE 2003-2016

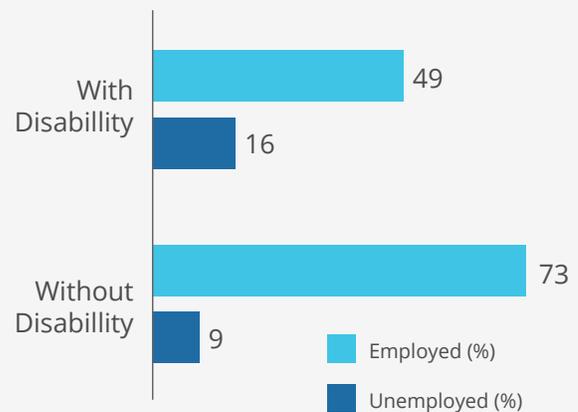


*Based on number of those in labour force.

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT RATES

The unemployment rate for an individual with a disability in the workforce in Nova Scotia was 16%, which was almost twice as high as the 9% for individuals without a disability. In 2011, the probability of a person aged 25-64 with a disability being employed in Nova Scotia was 49%.

EMPLOYMENT & UNEMPLOYMENT 2012

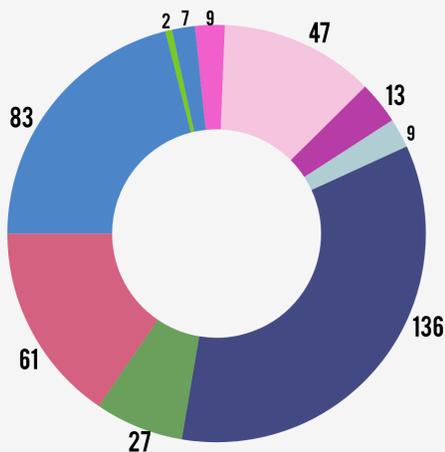


In 2016, the North Shore (which includes Colchester County) rate of youth (15 to 24 years of age) unemployment was 14%. This is slightly less than the provincial rate 15%, but twice the

unemployment rate for people aged 25+ (7%). It was also higher than the national youth unemployment rate (13%). Male youth in the North Shore had a higher rate of unemployment

(17%) compared to females (10%). Nova Scotia had a lower rate of youth unemployment when compared to other Maritime provinces.

2016 FARMING TYPES IN COLCHESTER COUNTY



- Cattle ranch
- Hog and pig
- Poultry and egg
- Sheep and goat
- Other animal production
- Oilseed and grain
- Vegetable and melon
- Fruit and tree nut*
- Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture
- Other crop



ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MILLBROOK FIRST NATION

Over \$20 million annually is spent on goods and services. This includes salaries, suppliers, education and contributions to Band Members, including Treaty Credits. Eighty per cent of these expenditures, a value of around \$16 million, are made in the Colchester County and Truro area.

FARMING

The total number of farms in Colchester County has decreased 13.5% from 455 farms in 2011 to 394 in 2016. Colchester County has 11% of the 3,478 farms in Nova Scotia.

The most common type of farm is the fruit and tree nut* production at 35%. This type of farm has seen a 17% decrease since 2011 from 163 farms to 136 farms in 2016.

In 2016, Colchester County reported around \$85.5 million in revenue from farm business, an increase of 36% (\$60.8 million) from 2011.

**tree nuts are a category used for national farm census purposes. For Colchester County, only fruit production is in the category.*

COST OF DOING BUSINESS

In 2012, according to the KPMG study on International Business Location Costs, Truro ranked first among all studied major cities and towns in Canada and the United States for the most cost competitive business location. The study factors in more than 100 cities, in 10 countries - Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States - and measures the combined impact of 26 key cost components that vary by location.

TRURO POWER CENTRE

The Truro Power Centre is a business complex development initiative owned, developed and managed by Millbrook First Nation. The Centre is the product of an historic deal between Millbrook First Nation and three other levels of government.

The Centre has 68 acres of commercial land for long term lease. With more than 22,000 vehicles passing per day on Highway 102, it is well located for commercial purposes. Currently the site has over \$30 million worth of investments.

LARGE EMPLOYERS

Public: Nova Scotia Health Authority, Department of Agriculture, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, Town of Truro, Municipality of the County of Colchester, Nova Scotia Community College, Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (CCRSB).

Private: Stanfield's, Scotsburn Dairy, Intertape Polymer, Tandus Centiva, Home Hardware, Rothsay Rendering, Masstown Market, Sobey's Distribution Centre, Kohltech.

When there is a large gap in levels of wealth in a community, all are affected. It can lead to social problems, like health disparities and crime. It can also diminish economic growth because it means that we are not fully using the skills and capabilities of all our citizens.



SHARED PROSPERITY

INCOME

In 2010, the overall average after-tax income in Colchester County was \$27,785. Females made on average \$10,000 less per year than males. The average after-tax income of an Aboriginal person was \$24,765.

211 PROVINCIAL HELPLINE

211 received almost 280 requests for assistance with income support and employment and over 40 requests were for government and tax services support.

DONATIONS

Between 2008 and 2015 the percentage of tax filers who claimed charitable donations on their tax return has decreased in Canada from 24.1% to 21%, in Nova Scotia from 23.3% to 19.7% and in the Truro metropolitan area from 23.1% to 19.4%. At the same time the number of tax filers has increased by 8.9% in Canada, 3.6% in Nova Scotia and 3.6% in the Truro metropolitan area and the average total of charitable donations of individual tax filers has increased from \$1413 to \$1661 in Canada, \$1173 to \$1284 in Nova Scotia and from \$1138 to \$1498 in the Truro metropolitan area.

LONE-PARENT FAMILIES

In 2014, 38% of lone-parent families in Truro were considered low-income. This is higher than the provincial (36%) and national (32%) rates.

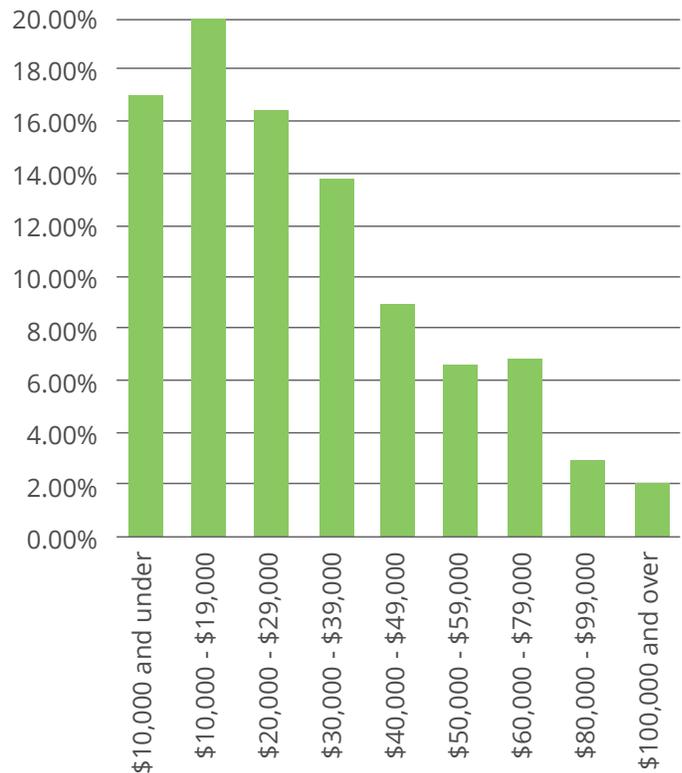
The median income* for a lone-parent family in Colchester County was \$37,145. This was lower than the provincial rate of \$40,780 and closer to the national rate of \$37,900 (2011).

**A median household income refers to the income level earned by a given household where half of the homes in the area earn more and half earn less.*

COMMUNITY GENEROSITY PROFILE

Founded in 1974, the Apex Invitational Golf Tournament has become an annual 4-day homecoming event for the African Nova Scotian community in Truro. Apex, as it is more commonly referred to, is built around a golf tournament that has grown to welcome over 120 golfer participants from all over Canada and the U.S. In addition to contributing significant revenue to the community, the event raises funds for scholarships for African Nova Scotian students, as well as grants to support educational or sports activities. Since 2000, they have provided over 90 scholarships totaling over \$60,000.

INCOME DISTRIBUTION COLCHESTER COUNTY 2011



29%

In 2013, 29% of children (under 6 years old) in the Truro Census Area lived in poverty.

23%

of Children aged 0-17 in Truro lived in poverty (2014).

The average (before taxes) income for African Nova Scotians in 2011 was \$29,837 for males and \$24,929 for females, which was lower than the average income in Nova Scotia (\$42,545 and \$29,460). In 2011, 35% of African Nova Scotians were considered low income, which is higher than the rest of Nova Scotia (17%).

LOW INCOME*

**Low-income measures a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted household income, where "adjusted" indicates that household needs are taken into account.*

In 2010, 18% of Colchester County residents were considered low-income. This was higher for females (19%) than males (17%).

In 2014, 19% of Truro's families and individuals were considered low-income, after-tax. This was slightly higher than the provincial rate (18%) and the national rate (17%).

Twenty-three percent of Truro's children were living in low-income families after-tax, which was the second highest rate in the province after Cape Breton (33%). This rate was higher than the provincial rate (22%) and the national rate (19%). Seven percent of seniors (65 and older) in Truro were considered low-income, after-tax.

This was the same rate for provincial and national seniors considered low-income.

In 2010, twenty-three percent of Stewiacke residents were considered low-income. Of those 27% were children and 22% were seniors.



Food insecurity is one of the most serious public health concerns facing Nova Scotians.

FOOD

Despite being a province rich in food resources, Nova Scotia has the highest rate of food insecurity of all Canadian provinces.

Food security is defined as people being able to get the food they need to be healthy and active. This means there is nutritious food available close to where they live and they have enough money to buy it.

COMMUNITY GARDENS



The King Street Community Garden in Truro has up to 70 plots available to the public, 15 of which are accessible plots, and 5 that are maintained by a local daycare group. The plots cost \$20 for the season. For this season 57 individuals or families are using 65 plots and 5 plots are rented by groups. Some groups in the community use the plots for therapy or life skill training. The King Street Community Garden includes plots maintained by NS Department of Correctional Services, Colchester Adult Learning Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Mental Health & Addiction Services Department of the Colchester East Hants Health Centre. For the 2017 gardening season there are also two recently arrived Syrian refugee families tending plots in their new community.

The John Calvin Christian Reformed Church hosts the Glenwood Drive Community Garden. In 2014, 28 families gardened over 40 plots. Dalhousie University has a community garden with 40 available plots in Bible Hill.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION

In 2014, only 28% of Health Zone 2 residents, a jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Health Authority (which includes Colchester County) ate the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables. This is lower than the provincial rate (30%) and the national rate (39%).

Nationally (43%) and provincially (32%) seniors rated somewhat better on recommended fruit and vegetable consumption. However, only 28% of Health Zone 2 (including Colchester County) seniors ate the recommended amount.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a program that allows community members to buy food directly from local farmers. This allows communities to support local farmers, and customers can receive fresh food delivered to central pick-up locations. More than 5 CSA options deliver produce, meat, herbs and flowers to locations in Colchester County and elsewhere in Nova Scotia.

Colchester County has 4 farmers' markets – Masstown, Stewiacke Valley, Tatamagouche and Truro – as well as the Glooscap County Bazaar in Central Economy.

FOOD BANKS

Shumilacke Food Bank Society serving Stewiacke, Shubenacadie, and Milford residents has 36 volunteers. In 2016 this food bank served 2,264 individuals (666 families). More than 60% of the people they support use the food bank at least 6 times annually.

In 2015, the Colchester Food Bank in Truro joined with 73 others in the Good Food Organizations program to strengthen community food programs based on principles of health, empowerment, and respect. A community food centre is a welcoming space where people come together to grow, cook, share and advocate for good food. In recent years, Colchester Food Bank expanded its gardening program and has 12 new planters. Some planters are grown for individual family needs and others to share their harvest with the Food Bank.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors is the Tatamagouche Food Bank located in the Gospel Hall Church. Sixty to 70 individuals a month report using the service.

In 2015, the Colchester Food Bank served 361 new clients. In the same year 21,763 people (including repeat visitors) received food, 6,634 of whom were children. The staff and volunteers prepared 9,791 food boxes, representing 529,395 pounds of food.

In 2016, the number of people serviced by Feed Nova Scotia (Colchester, West Hants and Cumberland sector) increased by 30% (833 individuals). This was higher than the provincial average which increased by 21%.



The food bank model was started in the United States in the 1960s in Arizona. Food banks were created during an economic recession and were designed to be a temporary solution to food insecurity.

THE NATIONAL NUTRITIOUS FOOD BASKET

The National Nutritious Food Basket (NNFB) contains 67 food items. It can be used to determine the cost of a basic and nutritious diet for people of different ages and gender, including during pregnancy and lactation. Foods in the NNFB are minimally processed, easily found in grocery stores, and eaten by most Canadians in amounts that make up a balanced diet.

Colchester County food costs are on par with the province of Nova Scotia.



COST OF NNFB MONTHLY (COLCHESTER COUNTY)

Two adults and 2 children:	\$935.11
Lone mother with 2 children:	\$679.47
Lone man without disability receiving Income Assistance (attending education program):	\$370.13
One senior with disability receiving Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement:	\$321.92

The NNFB typically costs more in rural areas than in urban centres. The average monthly cost of the NNFB for a family of 4 living in rural Colchester County is \$34.81 more per month than the cost of a basic nutritious diet in grocery stores in urban areas.

MEAL SERVICES

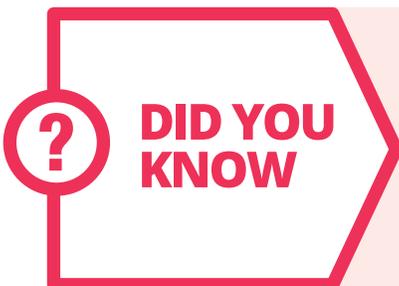
In Colchester County, numerous organizations and churches provide food and meal services:

- Slate
- Maggie's Place
- YMCA-Outreach
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- The Salvation Army

The Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (CCRSB) provided an estimated 654,345 breakfasts to children at their schools in 2014-15. Nourish NS contributed \$127,396 to the school breakfast program at CCRSB in 2016.

The following table lists churches in the area that also provide various food and meal services.

CHURCH	INFORMATION
First United Church (Truro)	Food Bank Box weekly. Breakfast and lunch once a week, and a lunch for high school students (during school year)
St. John's Anglican Church (Truro)	Offers supper once a month
Kane's Kitchen, Immaculate Conception Church (Truro)	Hot meals (weekly), over 8,000 meals annually
St. James Presbyterian (Truro)	Offers supper once a month
The People's Church (Truro)	Offers supper once a month (Oct. - May)
Brookfield Baptist Church	Hot meals (weekly) for South Colchester Academy students
Knox United Church (Brookfield)	Offers hot meal delivery once a month (Brookfield-Middle Stewiacke area)



DID YOU KNOW

According to FoodARC's 2016 Nova Scotia Food Costing Report, a household with 2 adults and 2 children relying on provincial Income Assistance, tax credits and various other allowances, would fall short \$986.44 per month if they spent only on essentials, including basic food items that make up a nutritious diet. The same household earning minimum wage, with one adult working full-time hours and one working part-time hours, would have a potential deficit of \$418.07 per month. This puts both types of household at high risk of food insecurity.



Shelter is a basic human right. Accommodation for everyone needs to be available, affordable, and adequate.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

Affordable housing refers to housing that costs less than 30% of a household's income. In Colchester County, 1 in 5 (21%) households spend more than 30% on housing. This was higher than the provincial rate (22%) and the national rate (25%).



The proportion of private dwellings in Colchester County requiring major repairs was 11% in 2011, unchanged since 2006. This is higher than the provincial rate (7%).

From 2015 to 2016 986 seniors and persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia received government services for home repairs and adaptations.

Almost 70% of residents in public housing are over 58 years of age. Colchester County has 7 nursing homes with a total of 446 beds and 3 respite beds. There are 4 residential care facilities with a total of 85 beds.

The current wait time for a nursing home placement in Colchester County is approximately 304 days. This is higher than the provincial wait time of 222 days. The longest wait time in Colchester County was in July 2015, a 510-day wait.

The current wait time for a residential care facility placement in Colchester County is approximately 52 days. This is less than the provincial wait time of approximately 91 days.

Housing Nova Scotia aims to ensure all Nova Scotians can find affordable housing in a vibrant community that offers the services, supports and opportunities they need. Currently, 11 programs are in place to assist individuals with a variety of housing needs. These programs provide assistance for persons with disabilities, people with affordability issues, seniors, victims of violence, and many others.

RENTAL

In 2016, 4% of rental units in Truro were vacant. Since 2013 the vacancy rate has decreased 57%, the largest decrease in the province. The provincial rate of rental vacancies was 3%.

In Truro in 2015, the average monthly rent of a two-bedroom apartment was \$805, a decrease of \$3 from the previous year. In 2016, the provincial average cost was \$992.

In 2016, 15 apartment permits in the Town of Truro resulted in 78 new living units valued at over \$7.3 million. The number of permits has fluctuated over the years. In 2010, 11 apartment permits resulted in 96 new living units valued at over \$7.6 million.

HOMELESSNESS

The Community Navigator with Truro Homeless Outreach Society Shelter supported 90 individuals and helped 42 shelter guests find housing.

Homelessness in rural areas is often less visible than in urban centres. It may involve makeshift shelter or transience that is hard to detect because of a lack of other services.

211 PROVINCIAL HELPLINE

211 had 321 requests for assistance for housing in Colchester County. They also received 39 requests for assistance related to low income and subsidized rental housing issues. Seventy-one percent of callers were female. Seniors (65 and over) made up 34% of the callers.

DID YOU KNOW

Mental illness and addiction are two of the leading factors in homelessness.



DID YOU KNOW

NOVA SCOTIA HOUSING - THE HOUSING FIRST INITIATIVE

The Housing First Initiative is an approach based on addressing shelter problems before other issues that have led people to homelessness arise. This is achieved by helping people find secure, stable housing. The Housing First Initiative builds on the successful Housing Support Worker program launched by the province in 2011 as a pilot project. So far in Halifax Regional Municipality, this innovative model has helped 1,200 people exit homelessness with 90 per cent of participants still housed and not on the streets.

PERSONAL STORY

A 70-year-old survivor of a severe car accident that left him widowed was brought to the Truro Shelter by police. After being financially abused by a relative, he was left with no belongings. During his stay at the shelter, the Community Navigator assisted the man to secure an apartment, gather some furniture, and attend medical appointments.

The man is now doing well and has been involved with the shelter in other roles, helping others.

The prosperity of the economy, the health of the environment, and the productivity of citizens depends upon the availability of strong transportation systems.



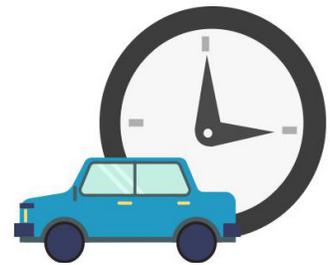
GETTING AROUND

COMMUTING

Colchester County residents spent slightly less time commuting to work than other Nova Scotians, with a difference of 1 minute on average. A more noticeable difference in commuting time is with Halifax, where the average time is 24 minutes.



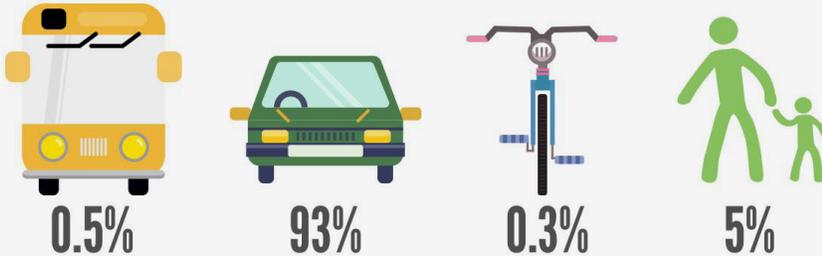
Colchester County
15 minutes



Halifax
24 minutes

MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Only 0.5% of people made use of public transportation. A scheduled fixed-rate public transportation service is not currently available in Colchester communities. Only 0.3% of residents bike regularly. The Municipality of Colchester has initiated the development of a Bikeway Plan to provide a variety of safe cycling routes and increase active transportation.



"I can't afford to get the taxi to see my grandchildren, so I just can't go, unless I get a ride from a friend or family."

- Truro resident, during Vital Signs® consultations

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation includes all non-motorized, human-based forms of transportation such as cycling and walking. The County has introduced active transportation by adding sidewalk networks and bike paths. The County identifies three primary reasons for addressing active transportation needs: safety for those who walk, run, or bike; to encourage a healthy and active lifestyle; and environmental concerns, by reducing fuel usage.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Schools in Colchester County are part of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (CCRSB). Student transportation services represented 6% of the 2015-16 CCRSB financial budget. In that year, 225 school buses transported 16,445 students to schools throughout the CCRSB district.

TRANSPORTATION SPENDING

Transportation budgets support road repair, maintenance and operations, equipment, salt and sand, and salaries.

The Municipality of the County of Colchester's 2016-17 operating budget allocated \$2,085,035 or 7% to transportation services.

The Town of Truro's budget for transportation services in 2016-17 was \$2,566,329, representing 7% of the total municipal spending.

The Town of Stewiacke 2016-17 budget allocated \$379,474, or 16%, to Transportation and Public Works.



DID YOU KNOW

In 2011 Colchester County and the Town of Truro completed a Regional Transit Feasibility Study that identified the need for a sustainable, regular transit route. Currently Colchester County does not have a scheduled fixed-route public transportation option.



DID YOU KNOW

Colchester Transit Cooperative Limited (CTCL) did initiate a public transit service in 2000-2001 within the Town of Truro and communities in the County. However, the public transit service was poorly used and was discontinued within one year. The reasons identified for the failure of the service were: limited advertising and promotion, and inconvenient routes and services (only 3 or 4 trips per day were offered within Truro). CTCL continues to service Colchester County residents on a demand basis.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

SERVICE	AREA OF SERVICE	DETAILS
Colchester Transit Cooperative Limited (CTCL)	Based in Truro and provides trips in Colchester County and beyond.	Non-profit organization running on demand basis.
ABLE-Transit Wheel Chair Bus	Based in Truro. Also services immediate communities near Truro.	Fully-accessible, door-to-door service for seniors and persons with disabilities. No fare is associated.
Maritime Bus	A major terminal is located in Truro and provides connecting services within Nova Scotia including Halifax. Also connects with national lines.	Fares are based on distance.
Markie Bus Tours	Millbrook Community	Charter and school bus service within the County and Town.
Perry Rand Transportation	Nova Scotia	Provides student transportation services in various communities across Nova Scotia, including Truro.
Taxis	Colchester County	Three taxi firms, regulated by town and provincial by-laws.
Via Rail	Montreal-Halifax train	Runs 3 days a week with a station stop in Truro

211 SERVICES FOR TRANSPORTATION

REQUEST	NUMBER OF REQUESTS
Local Automobile Transportation	4
Local Bicycle Transportation	1
Disability Related Transportation	12
General Related Paratransit/Community Ride Programs	10
Medical Appointment	18
Expense Assistance	8
Organizations	1
Tourist Information	3



TATAMAGOUCHE ROAD TRAIN

The Road Train in Tatamagouche, operated by the Tatamagouche Road Train Society volunteers and owned by the community of Tatamagouche, started operating in July 2016. During a 3-month period the Society boasted 16,000 passengers, including residents and visitors to the area.

The train runs 7 days a week over July and August and weekends during other times. The hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. On Monday morning the train is reserved for seniors. The service runs by donation. Due to the popularity of the train, a ticket system was recently implemented.



A sense of security in Colchester County contributes to the ability of residents to enjoy life to its fullest. Personal safety affects how people socialize and participate in their communities.

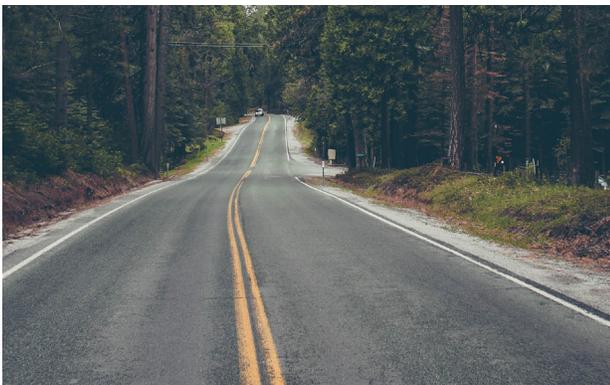
SAFETY

RCMP

The Colchester County RCMP police a population of 38,424 (excluding Truro). There are 4 RCMP detachments in Colchester County: Bible Hill, Stewiacke, Millbrook and Tatamagouche.

TRURO POLICE SERVICE

The Truro Police have 36 police officers (30 male and 6 female). There are 2 Aboriginal officers and 1 African Nova Scotian officer.



ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES

The Truro Police Road Safety Initiative has 1 full-time traffic member. The initiative resulted in 1507 summary offense tickets (e.g. speeding), 22 impaired driving charges, a 9% increase in check stops and responded to 374 traffic collisions.

FIRE



(Truro municipality and Colchester County are serviced separately.)

In Colchester County and the Town of Stewiacke (excluding Truro) there are 16 fire services and 1 hazardous material team. There is a total of 582 volunteers in these fire and emergency departments. In 2016, those agencies responded to 1,698 incidents, with 50 of those being structure fires. The agencies also responded to 808 medical calls and 251 motor vehicle incidents. In the first seven months of 2017 the fire services had responded to 1,091 incidents, including 547 medical emergencies and 128 motor vehicle accidents.

The Stewiacke and District Volunteer Fire Department has a total of 42 members.

Colchester County has an active Ground Search and Rescue team that has 25 volunteer members. They offer a multitude of services that include locating lost people, remote rescue and Project Lifesaver. Project Lifesaver is a program that provides electronic wrist receivers to track people of all ages who have a tendency to wander off and potentially get lost.

The Truro Fire Services has 15 paid firefighters, 1 fire chief, 1 fire inspector, and 29 volunteers. Twenty-four of the volunteers are male, 5 are female. One volunteer is Aboriginal.

In 2016, the Truro Fire Services responded to 499 incidents including 5 structural fires, 32 medical calls and 69 motor vehicle accidents.

TRURO

TYPE	2010 RATE	2016 RATE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE SINCE 2010
Violent Criminal Code Violations	3,423	2,100	-39%
Property Crime Violations	9,861	5,794	-41%
Motor Vehicle Theft	106	41	-61%

COLCHESTER RURAL

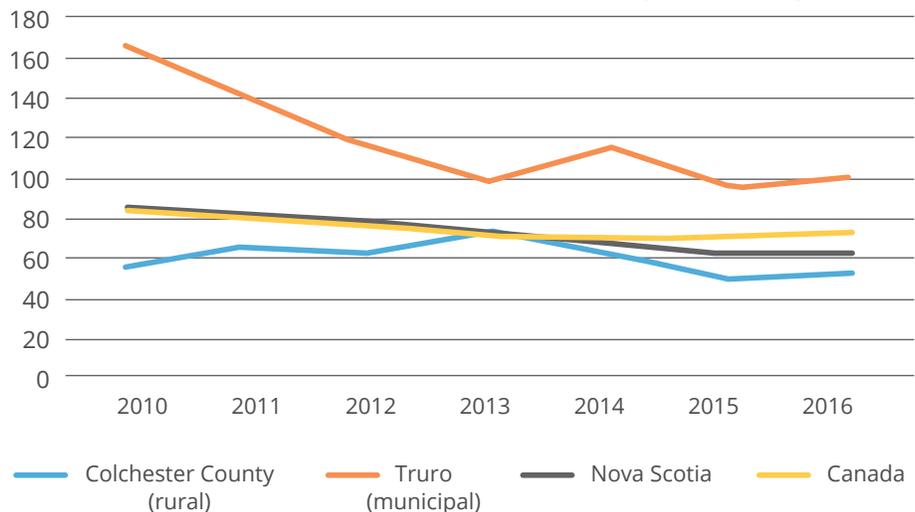
TYPE	2010 RATE	2016 RATE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE SINCE 2010
Violent Criminal Code Violations	827	906	+10%
Property Crime Violations	3,615	2,601	-28%
Motor Vehicle Theft	121	126	+4%

In 2016, Truro Police had reports of 495 thefts, 109 of which resulted in charges. This is higher than the previous year of 401 reports and 71 charges. Truro Police had 193 reports of damage to property, which resulted in 16 charges, and 48 reports of break and enter with 15 resulting in charges. In 2016, the Truro Police received 8,628 calls for services and 650 individuals were 'locked-up'*.

(*The term 'locked-up' was taken from the stats source.)

There were 81 sexual assaults reported in Colchester County in 2016. In 2016, the Truro Youth Crime rate (charges per 100,000 youth) was the third highest in Nova Scotia.

OVERALL CRIME SEVERITY RATE (2010-2016)



The Crime Severity Index weighs the severity of a crime by the rate of incarceration multiplied by the average incarceration period. The weights are then multiplied by the volume of such crimes committed. The overall Crime Severity Index in 2016 Truro was 99, which was a 3% increase from 2015. This was the second highest rate in Nova Scotia after Antigonish, but Truro has seen a decrease in crime severity since 2010. The overall Crime Severity Rating in 2016 for Colchester County rural was 52, a 7% increase from 2015.



Diversity is important to building vibrant, healthy communities. A strong sense of community belonging and a welcoming attitude can encourage newcomers to make Colchester County their home.

BELONGING

Seventy-two percent of Health Zone 2 (which includes Colchester County) residents reported having a somewhat or very strong sense of belonging in their local community. This was close to the provincial rate (71%) and higher than the national rate (65%).

COMMUNICATING

Colchester County is home to numerous community newspapers and social media sites, dedicated to issues and events in the area including: Shoreline Journal, Tatamagouche Light, Truro Daily News, Hub Now, Colchester Weekly, Truro Buzz, and What's Going on in Tatamagouche.

VOTING

In the 2016 provincial election, 54% of registered voters in Colchester North provincial constituency voted. The percentage was lower in Truro, Bible Hill, Millbrook and Salmon River with 47% voting, and 51% of those eligible voting in Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley. In the 2017 provincial election 54% voted overall.

LGBTQ+

In 2016, the first Truro Pride parade had more than 800 attendees representing more than 50 groups. The Millbrook First Nation performed a spiritual ceremony during the celebration. Several homes and 40 downtown businesses displayed the rainbow flag, or other rainbow representation.

Attendance significantly increased in 2017, with over 1,000 attendees and 65 groups registered. These numbers do not include non-registered individuals.

In 2016 Truro raised the pride flag in front of Town Hall for the first time.

Truro has an active chapter of PFLAG (a support group for parents/family/friends of LGBTQ+) that hosts events and panels throughout the year. The Chignecto-Central Regional School Board provides many supports for LGBTQ+ students, with increasing support for transgender students. The Cobequid Educational Centre has a very active Gender and Sexuality Alliance.

INTERNET ACCESS

In rural Colchester County an estimated 5% of the population has minimal or no access to the Internet in their homes, with impact on their ability to locate information related to education, healthcare, business services, and workforce training.



PETS

In 2014, 488 animals were adopted from the Colchester County SPCA. This was an increase of 11% from the previous year.

There is an off-leash dog park in Colchester County, located in the Nelson Memorial Park near Tatamagouche.

The Truro Dog Park regularly sees an average of 50 dogs a day. On the weekend there can be over 20 dogs at one time. The park is free and inclusive to all dog owners.

ElderDog Canada Inc. is a national registered charitable organization dedicated to aging people, aging dogs, and the important connection they enjoy. Currently, the Nova Pawd (which includes Colchester County) has 22 volunteers and 18 registered members (people). A total of 9 seniors are being supported in their homes caring for their dogs. The organization also helps rehome senior dogs. In Colchester County 8 dogs have been rehomed, and 11 dogs from outside Colchester County have been rehomed in the area.

Pet ownership provides companionship and can decrease loneliness.

Research published in the Applied Developmental Science journal reported that young adults with strong attachments to their pets feel more connected to other people and to their communities.



PROGRAM PROFILE

The Nova Institute for Women, located in Colchester County, offers programs for offenders, including the Pawsitive Directions Canine Program (PDCP). This program aims to teach offenders skills associated with canine care and training, promotes ties with the community, fosters responsibility and nurturing, makes dogs available for adoption and provides shelter for homeless dogs. To date, 87 women have participated in training and 58 dogs have been placed in the community. Thirty-two dogs are now trained and working in various service capacities. Twenty-five women have found full or part-time employment in the canine industry as a result of the program.

RELIGION

Christianity is the largest religious affiliation in Colchester County, with 72% of residents identifying as Christian. This 72% is made up of 9 denominations of Christianity.

Twenty-seven percent of Colchester County residents identified as having no affiliation to religious groups. This has increased over 70% since 2001.

Three hundred Colchester County residents identified with other religions, principally Hindu (30%), Buddhist (12%), Aboriginal Spirituality (14%), and Muslim (7%).

In 1944 a Syrian Muslim cemetery was established in Bible Hill. In 1971 a mosque was added to land purchased by the Islamic Association of the Maritime Provinces, now known as the Islamic Association of Nova Scotia.

VOLUNTEERING

Participation in voluntary activities in the community contributes to building a strong sense of belonging. As highlighted in the 2015 *Vital Signs*® on the Social Sector, Nova Scotia is a leader in this area.

In 2013, 51% of Nova Scotians volunteered, contributing an average of 181 volunteer hours, compared to a national rate of 44% with an average of 154 volunteer hours. Youth contributed 23% of all volunteer hours in the province.

PUBLIC SPACES

Colchester County has many public spaces that are regularly used by the community. These spaces include: markets, squares, parks, activity parks, churches, schools, community centres, libraries, and more.

There are 18 community parks that are owned and managed by community organizations located throughout Colchester County: Lower Truro, Five Islands, Bass River, Burnside, Brookfield, Middle Stewiacke, Upper Stewiacke, Alton, Wittenburg, North River, Tatamagouche, Kemptown, and Londonderry.

These parks include a wide variety of outdoor recreation facilities: greenspaces, playgrounds, ball fields, outdoor rinks, a veterans' memorial park, waterfalls, wetlands, a wharf, a rugby park, multi-purpose courts, a soccer field, and a running track.



Place identity comes from the multiple ways in which a place provides a sense of belonging, meaning, and feelings of attachment. The place identity of a person can inform their experiences, behaviours, and attitudes about other places.



Community vitality depends on the mental and physical health of community members. Lifestyle choices that facilitate wellness and prevention are as critical as the availability of services to people who need them.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Colchester County is part of the Northern Zone of the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA), previously known as District Health Authority 4. The Northern Zone encompasses Pictou County, Colchester County and Cumberland County.

COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD

Community Health Boards (CHBs) are composed of volunteers who work together to improve the wellness of their communities. There are 4 CHBs in Colchester County: Eastern Zone, Northern Zone, Central Zone and Western Zone.

Grants are available to community based groups to support short-term projects focused on selected topics in health promotion. Through surveys, meetings, and focus groups the CHBs identify wellness issues for attention over a three-year period.

The current plan for wellness improvement is for the term 2016 to 2019; attention is focused on mental wellness, living actively, and relationships in communities (inclusion, affordability, thriving).

There are two hospitals in Colchester County: the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital in Tatamagouche and the Colchester East Hants Health Centre in Truro.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS 2014-2015

Colchester East Hants Health Centre in Truro had 31,049 emergency room visits. Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital in Tatamagouche had 7,937. In 2015, the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital emergency department was closed for a total of 99 hours due to emergency department staff (doctors, nurses or paramedics) unavailability. This made up 7% of the 1,321 total hours of emergency room closures in the Northern Zone.

FAMILY PHYSICIANS

In 2014, 7% of the population of Northern Zone did not have a regular medical doctor. This is lower than the Nova Scotia average of 11%.

Pharmacies in Colchester County are located in Truro, Lower Truro, Bible Hill, Stewiacke, Brookfield, Bass River and Tatamagouche.

LIFE EXPECTANCY 2007-2009

In Colchester County, life expectancy is 82 years for women and 77 years for men. These are similar to the provincial expectancies (82 and 78) and slightly lower than the national expectancies (83 and 79).

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS PROJECT

The Strength in Numbers project has created the Nova Scotia First Nation Client Linkage Registry (NSFNCLR) – a unique registry of the First Nations population in Nova Scotia that is being linked with provincial health data sources to track First Nations health data.

WALKING WITH A DOC



This initiative began in 2016. It connects physicians with community members by walking together and getting active while giving them the opportunity to ask physicians and healthcare providers medical questions in a safe, friendly, inviting environment. It is held every Saturday at the Rath Eastlink Community Centre. The program started with 47 participants and has fluctuated over the last year. Five physicians attended per month on average. This program has increased the use of the centre's track by 30%.

“

I think it is an amazing program! I started off doing 5 laps and now I'm doing ten to fifteen. The Docs are great. I look forward to every Saturday morning.

- Participant testimonial

CHRONIC DISEASE

CONDITION	CUMBERLAND/ COLCHESTER	NOVA SCOTIA	CANADA
Arthritis	31%	25%	17%
Mood Disorder	10%	11%	9%
Diabetes	12%	8%	7%
High Blood Pressure	29%	21%	18%
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	6%	6%	4%

Men in Colchester County (Nova Scotia Health Authority – Northern Zone) had the lowest rate of prostate cancer (91) of any Health Authority in Nova Scotia.

Women in Colchester County had the second highest rate of breast cancer (115) of any Nova Scotia Health Authority.

CANCER (2008-2012, CASES PER 100,000 PEOPLE)

TYPE	COLCHESTER HEALTH AUTHORITY	NOVA SCOTIA
Breast (women only)	115	110
Colon/Rectal	Women-53 Men-67	Women-52 Men-72
Lung	Women-60 Men-72	Women-58 Men-76
Prostate (men only)	91	114

Only 37% of First Nations women go for initial breast screening, and only 25% continue regular checks. This number has been decreasing in recent years. The death rate from breast cancer in First Nations women is almost double the rate of other Nova Scotians.

OBESITY

Thirty-one percent of Northern Zone residents (from self-reporting) have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of over 30, which is considered obese. This was the second highest rate in Canada after Cape Breton District (Eastern Zone) at 34%.

211 – NOVA SCOTIA HELPLINE

In 2016, 211 received almost 300 requests for assistance regarding health services. These included: physician referrals, technology expenses, long term care, home health care, prescription expenses, disability, other medical expenses and many more.

SMOKING

In 2015, 21% of the population 12 years of age and over smoked. This rate is above the national average (18%) and below the provincial average (22%).



DID YOU KNOW

Obesity is a result of unhealthy food choices, lack of physical activity and other factors.



DID YOU KNOW

Tobacco smoking and smoke exposure is the largest preventable cause of disease.



MENTAL HEALTH

In 2014, 65% of Colchester County residents 12 and over reported having very good or excellent mental health. This was the lowest percentage in Nova Scotia and 5% below the provincial average.

Ninety-two percent of residents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with life. This was the same as the provincial and national average (92%).

Seventeen percent of residents reported feeling a lot of life stress. This is lower than both the provincial (19%) and national (23%) rates.

Anxiety is one of the 5 most common diagnoses among First Nations community members between the ages of 20-49 in Nova Scotia.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Seventy-two percent of youth (12 to 19 years) reported having very good or excellent mental health.

HEAVY DRINKING

In 2014, 20% of residents reported being heavy drinkers. Heavy drinking refers to males who report having 5 or more drinks, or females who report having 4 or more drinks, on one occasion, at least once a month in the past year.

211 - NOVA SCOTIA HELPLINE

In 2016, 211 had over 150 requests for assistance locating services for mental health and addiction issues. These include: crisis helpline services, community agencies, counselling, detox centres, and support groups.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In Colchester County, 52% of people were active or moderately active in their leisure time. This is equal to the provincial rate (52%) and slightly lower than the national rate (54%).

Eighty-eight percent of youth (12 to 19 years) reported very good or excellent physical health. This rate was the highest in the country, with a national rate of 69%.





Successful communities offer residents abundant, affordable and flexible opportunities to learn in formal school settings, at work or online.

LEARNING

In Colchester County 82% of residents (25 to 64 years) have a certificate, diploma or degree. Twenty-six percent had a high school diploma or equivalent as their highest level of formal education.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Fifty-six percent of Colchester County residents (25 to 64 years) had a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree as their highest level of formal education. Twenty-four percent had a college or non-university certificate or diploma and 28% had a university degree at bachelor's level or above.

Fifty-four percent of Aboriginal residents of the Millbrook First Nation community have a postsecondary education degree, diploma or certificate. This was similar to the provincial Aboriginal rate of 59%.

The Dalhousie Agricultural Campus is located in the Village of Bible Hill. The School of Agriculture was founded in 1885 and in 2012 became the Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture. In 2016-17, 875 students attended with 19% being international students. Over the past 5 years students from 37 different countries have attended the Agricultural Campus.

In the 2016-17 term Dalhousie University undergraduate students paid an average tuition of \$6,559 and international students paid an average tuition of \$16,164. These numbers have increased by 11% (\$5,816) and 9% (\$14,790) respectively since 2013-14. On average it takes 4 years to complete an undergraduate degree. At the current annual academic rate, it would cost an undergraduate \$26,236 in tuition alone. The Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) 2017-18 cost of a full-time certificate and diploma program was \$3,220. The cost of a full-time advanced diploma program was \$4,930. This was significantly higher for international students (\$10,390).

Seventy-eight percent of African Nova Scotians aged 25 to 64 years have some sort of certificate, diploma or degree compared to 84% of Colchester County residents and 85% of all Nova Scotians.

Eighteen percent of African Nova Scotians have a university degree compared to 22% of all Nova Scotians aged 25 to 64 years.

RESIDENT'S COMMENT

One African Nova Scotian Colchester County resident expressed concern about the lack of education related to Black history. Black studies are not available through any local adult education service in their area.

SCHOOL BOARDS

Colchester County is served by the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (CCRSB). It has 16 elementary schools, 5 middle schools and 3 high schools. The Colchester County Francophone population is served by one primary to grade 12 school, École Acadienne de Truro under the Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP).

2015-2016 average student to teacher ratio:

- Primary to 2 – 19:1
- Grade 3 to 6 – 25:1
- Grade 7 to 9 – 22:1
- Grade 10 to 12 – 22:1

ADULT LEARNING

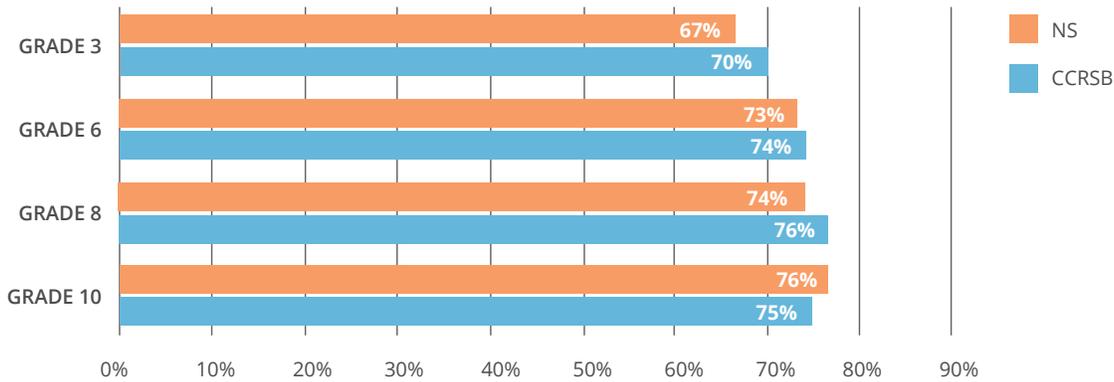
The Seniors' College Association of Nova Scotia (SCANS) is a non-profit organization that provides affordable non-credit academic courses to seniors (50 and over) in Nova Scotia. The Truro chapter is very socially active and has seen a fluctuation of membership over the last 5 years, with 79 current memberships. The cost of membership is \$155.

The Colchester Adult Learning Association (CALA) is a community-based literacy organization that offers adults the chance to return to learning. Programs include: preparation to enter the adult high school diploma program at the NSCC, study for the GED tests, and participation in family learning activities. CALA offers a variety of programs to suit interests and abilities, and programs to assist with learning opportunities that allow currently unemployed individuals to develop skills required to transition into entry level employment positions.

There are a number of other adult learning options in the area. The Jane Norman College, a non-profit, private college, delivers education for the human services field. The college has had over 4500 graduates of their various programs. The Tatamagouche Centre also offers many learning programs in leadership development and other areas. The centre had to close due to a financial crisis in 2015. In 2016 the centre was revived with support from the community, the Maritime Conference and the General Council of the United Church. In 2016, the centre offered 9 programs to approximately 200 attendees.

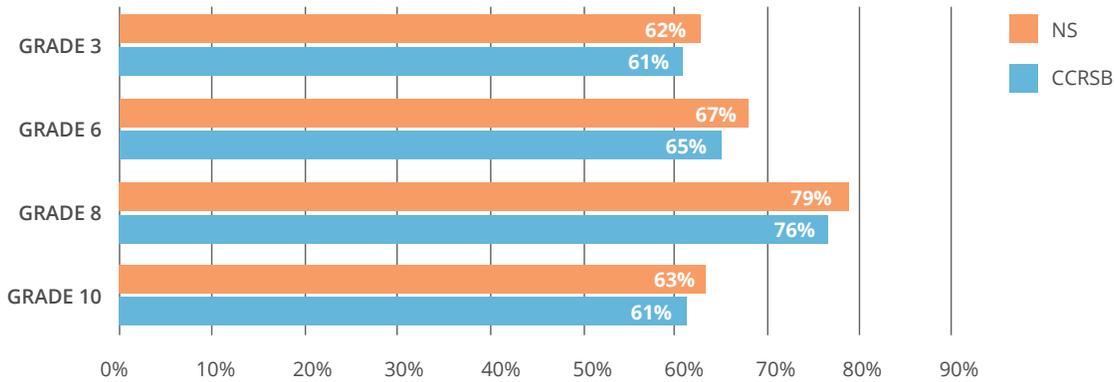
STUDENT PERFORMANCE 2015-16

READING



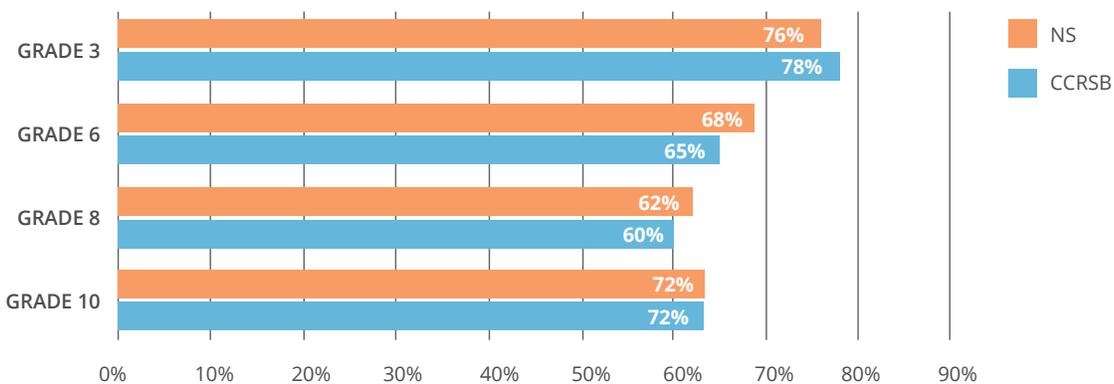
WRITING

Students in CCRSB scored slightly lower than the provincial average for meeting or exceeding expectations in writing.



MATH

Seventy-eight percent of grade 4 CCRSB students met or exceeded expectations in regional math assessments, which was higher than the provincial rate (76%).



The Career Exploration Program is offered to grade 10, 11 and 12 high school students at Cobequid Educational Centre. The program allows students the opportunity to develop workplace skills in food, property and retail services.



Clean air and water, uncontaminated soil, and green spaces are essential to healthy living. Colchester County relies on the great outdoors for health and economic opportunities alike. Preserving and protecting the local environment creates a strong foundation for the future of communities.

ENVIRONMENT

WATER

The Municipality of Colchester County owns five wastewater treatment plants that are operated and maintained by the Public Works Department. The Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility is located in Old Barns and serves Truro, Millbrook, Hilden, Bible Hill, Valley, Salmon River and adjoining areas.



Colchester County has five wastewater treatment plants

SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS

- Brookfield • Great Village • Tatamagouche
- Debert • Old Barns

WASTE

Since 2012, residents must use clear bags for garbage disposal. Each collection day, households are permitted to place one privacy (solid coloured) bag and up to five additional clear bags at the curb for collection. This program has helped keep thousands of tonnes of valuable resources out of the balefill. Residents of Colchester County had an average of 242 kilograms of curbside garbage per person annually.



CURBSIDE COLLECTION

Today, in excess of 20,000 green carts are in service providing curbside collection of source-separated organics.

The Town of Truro collects curbside garbage from 3,822 residential and 2 condominium properties, services that in 2016 cost \$316,858. The waste is delivered to the Colchester County Waste Facilities.

Colchester County collection of curbside garbage from 21,657 households costs \$1.9 million.

The cost of regular garbage (recyclables, organics and bulky waste) curbside collection in Colchester County was \$726,171.

In 2015-2016, Colchester County collected almost 50 metric tonnes of scrap metal (appliances, bikes, etc).

TYPE OF COLLECTION	WEIGHT IN METRIC TONNES	ANNUAL COST (2015-2016)
Recyclables	2,689	\$528,287
Organics	5,144	\$710,296
Garbage	3,112	\$741,971
Bulky Waste	1,490	\$15,800

In 1989, each person, on average, disposed of 908 kg of garbage annually. In 2015, each person disposed of 490 kg of garbage annually. Colchester residents are diverting 63% of materials from landfills through reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting.



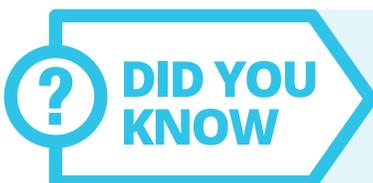
12,487 MT of waste collected



37% of waste disposed



63% recycled material diverted



Colchester started collecting polystyrene (Styrofoam®) in the curbside blue bag in 2016. Textiles (e.g. clothing) have also been added to the paper recycle.

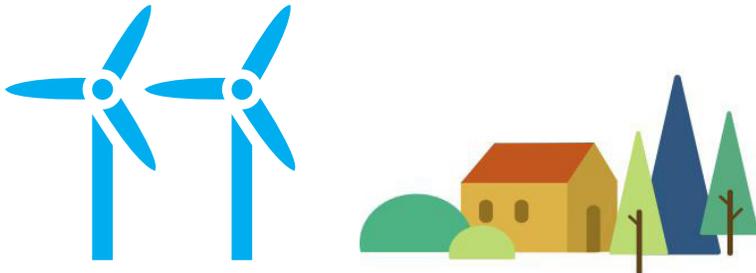
POWER

There are 39 wind turbines of various sizes and capacities located within the county with a total capacity of 70.6 MW. The turbines are able to produce approximately 185,640,000 kWh of electricity a year. The county's residential sector* uses approximately 204,330,000 kWh per year. The wind turbines therefore generate enough electricity to cover 91% of residential electricity usage in the county.

The two wind turbines on the Mingo Road Solid Waste Facility site in Kemptown generate electricity which offsets energy used at the Balefill site.

**The county electricity consumption does not include energy consumed by Millbrook First Nation, since that data was unavailable.*

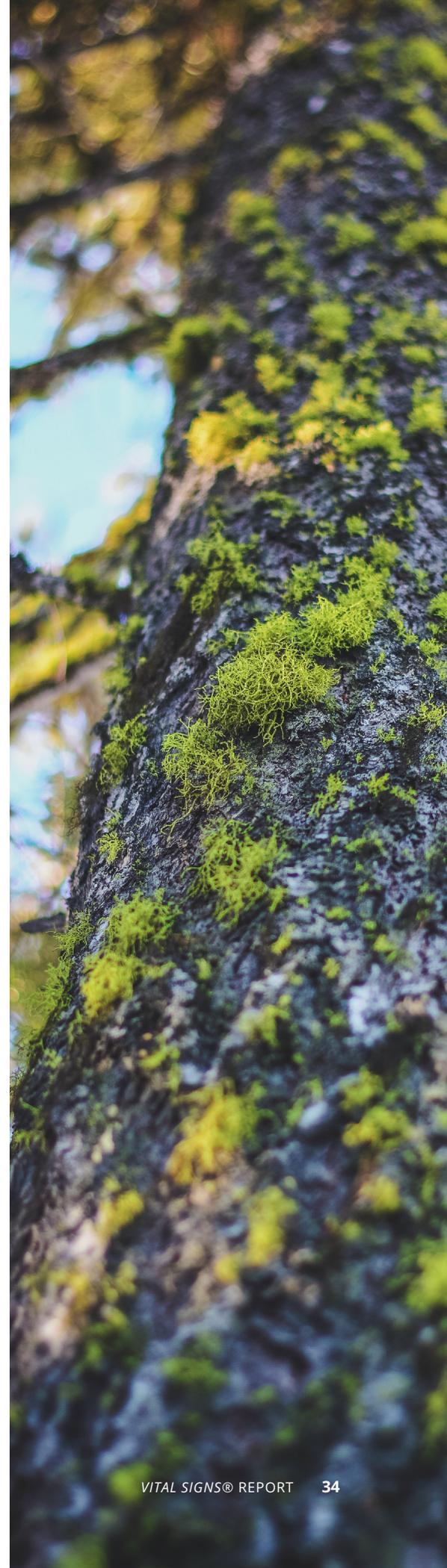
LOCATION	NUMBER OF TURBINES
Spiddle Hill	5
Truro Heights and Millbrook	5
Greenfield	2
Kemptown	3
Nuttby Mountain	22
Kemptown (Colchester Balefill Facility)	2



Clean Nova Scotia completed free environmental retrofits to 73 homes owned by low-income homeowners in Colchester County. The total annual energy savings are 409,172 kWh, which is enough to power 38 homes for a year.

The Government of Canada and the Government of Nova Scotia awarded funding to 3 Colchester County projects in 2016 through the *Clean Water and Wastewater Fund*. All projects are currently in progress.

NAME OF PROJECT	FUNDING AMOUNT
Debert pump station and forcemain replacement	\$1.1 million
Debert Gateway wastewater storm sewer separation	\$560,000
Tatamagouche sewage collection system replacement	\$375,000





Opportunities for recreation provide people with the choice to lead a healthy and happy life. Recreation sites are important to the local economy, and provide residents with the chance to connect with one another and build a strong sense of belonging.

RECREATION

Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development. Regular physical activity in childhood develops cardiovascular fitness, strength and bone density, and plays an important role in the health, well-being and quality of life for all Canadians.

Forty-eight percent of Health Zone 2 residents, a jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Health Authority which includes Colchester County, self-report as active or moderately active, which is the second lowest rate in Nova Scotia. This is lower than the national rate (54%).

The 2016 – 2019 Community Health Board’s Health Plan for the region reported that over two-thirds of community members said communities should promote natural outdoor play to increase physical activity for children and youth.

In 2016, a Physical Activity Community Survey was completed in Colchester County. The community identified two top activities on their wish list: walking (especially for seniors 60+) and swimming. The most common challenges to being active identified by the community were the conditions of the roads and sidewalks, a lack of someone to be active with and not having time in their busy schedules.

One-third stated they would bicycle more often if there were bicycle lanes and better road conditions.

Since 2008 Colchester County has offered an 8-week walking program called Step into Spring. An average of 200 Individuals register and receive pedometers to track their steps annually. The 2014 grand total of Step into Spring steps was 20,623,263.

Cobequid Lawn Bowls Club in Truro has 53 members who range in age from 55 to 93, with the ratio between men and women at 50%.

The Brookfield Elks team have celebrated achievements in baseball, softball, hockey and other sports. The association began in 1936 and have since been involved in numerous sporting events.



United Way of Colchester County’s Bikes for Kids program gives an average of 70 bikes a year to local children, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to own a bike. United Way collects gently used bikes from the community for volunteers to tune up and distribute to children in Colchester County.

YOUTH

KidSport® is a national non-profit organization that provides financial assistance for registration fees and equipment to kids aged 18 and under. In 2015, the Colchester/East Hants Chapter provided \$49,440 in registration and equipment costs to 188 youth. This increased in 2016 by 11% to \$55,715 in assistance. The number of youth supported increased to 205.

The Truro Bearcats Junior A hockey team is active in supporting the community. The team members are involved in many community programs to provide support for local organizations, youth and community events. In 10 seasons, the Truro Bearcats and the Bible Hill Kinsmen powerplay program raised \$47,200 for the community.

The Fun in the Sun day camp is a week-long summer camp for youth aged 5-15 in communities throughout Colchester County. The camp started in 2004 and has an average of 350 youth attend per summer. The Municipality of Colchester County hosts this event.

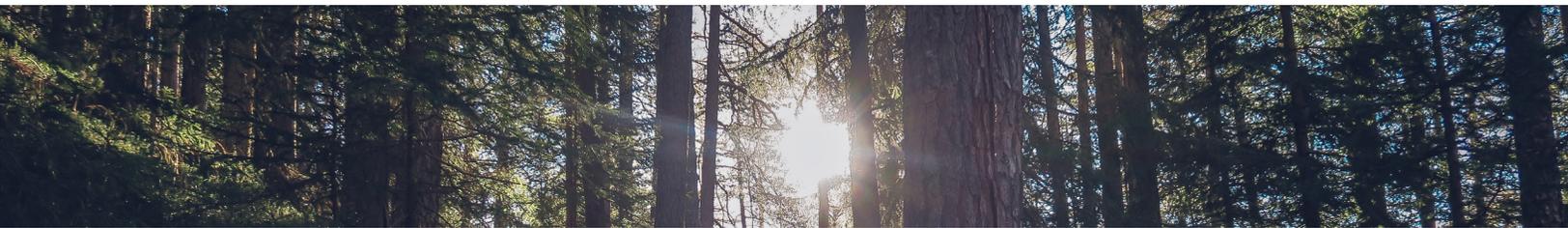
TRAILS

There are approximately 144 km of walking/hiking/bicycle trails in the Municipality of Colchester County. In addition, there are nearly 500 km of snowmobile trails and more than 200 km of all-terrain vehicle trails.

TRAIL MANAGER	LENGTH OF TRAIL	USE OF TRAIL
Municipality of Colchester	15 km	Walking and bicycling
Community trail groups	31 km	Walking, biking and off high-way vehicles (OHV)
Community trail groups	71 km	Wilderness hiking
First Nation Community	7 km	Walking and hiking
Province of NS (in provincial parks)	17 km	Walking and hiking

Victoria Park, located in Truro, is a 400-acre natural woodland park with approximately 47 km of trails. There are four waterfalls along the various trails. The park and trails are owned by the Town of Truro and are used daily for walking, hiking, jogging, cycling and seasonal recreation like cross country skiing.

In 2016, the Cobequid Trail Run hosted its 12th annual run with over 380 registered participants, a large increase since the first event in 2005 with 110 participants. The run includes a men's and women's 5k, 10k and half marathon.



CENTRES

Colchester County has numerous outdoor and indoor recreation facilities for the community members, three of them are: The Rath Eastlink Community Centre (RECC), The Douglas Street Recreation Centre and the North Shore Recreation Centre.

The RECC includes an NHL-sized ice surface arena with 2,500 seats, a 3-lane track, an aquatic centre with therapeutic leisure pool and competitive pools, a fitness and wellness centre, multiple rooms and community meeting spaces, and a rock climbing wall. The RECC has programs in place to support access for individuals with income barriers.

The Douglas Street Recreation Centre hosts many group recreation activities weekly, including a martial arts club, seniors' education, rug hookers, dance groups, Stroke Club, community service groups, and the Boys and Girls Club.

The North Shore Recreation Centre in Tatamagouche has a full-size hockey arena and fitness centre.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

In 2015 the RECC hosted the Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling 2015 Masters. This event generated an estimated \$1.25 million in economic activity within the Truro area. Similarly, the RECC hosted the 2014 Nova Scotia Senior Open Swim Meet and generated \$132,668 in spending in the Truro area.

Ice was installed for the Civic Square outdoor skating program in the winter of 2016-2017 and attracted 20-50 skaters each evening. Free skate rentals were offered.

Community organizations throughout Colchester County assist in the development and maintenance of trails and improvements to outdoor recreation facilities for public use. Colchester Municipality grants funding to support these efforts. The Municipality's contribution of \$740,000 has helped plan, build and maintain more than \$2,000,000 in community trail work. The County's \$991,000 contribution has helped build approximately \$2,000,000 in outdoor community recreation facilities.



Culture and the arts build the character of communities. The arts inspire innovation and creativity and contribute to a shared sense of identity.

ARTS & CULTURE

EVENTS & FESTIVALS

The Civic Square in Truro is an active community area for events. The space has multiple bookings each week for cultural festivals, demonstrations and concerts. Many of these events attract over 500 attendees.

The communities of Colchester hold more than 30 festivals and events annually, including: Tatamagouche Oktoberfest at the Recreation Centre, Bible Hill Canada Day, Christmas Dreams Fashion Show in Truro, the Cobequid Trail Run 10km and half marathons, Butter Trail Fun Run in Tatamagouche, Bike Week, Labour Day Fire Department parade and events in Tatamagouche, Mi'kmaq History Month, Wild Blueberry Harvest Festival, Embrace Festival and many more.



THEATRE

There are several active theatre groups in Colchester County, including: Truro Theatre Society, Dal AC Theatre Society, Village Follies, the Hubtown Theatre, and the North Shore Players.

The Hubtown Theatre is a non-profit community theatre group that operates within the Truro area. The theatre has been active for 30 years and members have performed more than 100 plays since 1981.

For 11 years the North Shore Players in Tatamagouche have staged plays. The amateur group offer opportunities for the young and older to participate, both on and behind the stage.

MUSIC

Truro Music Festival has been entertaining Truro and surrounding communities for over 95 years. They are believed to be the third oldest competitive music festival in North America.

The Truro Concert Band, originally known as the Citizens' Band, was formed around 1875. The band is comprised of mainly volunteer musicians from the Truro area.

The Cantabile Society was formed in 1981 for the purpose of supporting the activities of the Cantabile Singers of Truro. Since then, its activities have expanded to include the creation of the Cantabile Boys' Choir, the Spotlight Musical Theatre program and the annual Choirs for Comfort program.

For 25 years The Tatamagouche Area Singers (TAS) has produced a Christmas-themed program and a spring concert. The volunteer group has grown in size to over 40 participants in 2016-17. On occasion the TAS has performed with other groups, including exchange concerts across the province.



DID YOU KNOW

Truro will host Nova Scotia Music Week for the next three years (2017-19). Music Nova Scotia estimates the music festival will attract over 8,000 local and visiting music fans and result in over \$2 million in economic spin-offs for the province with an approximate \$1.5 million direct benefit to the host community.

ART

Colchester County has several art centres and programs available to the community: Attic Painters, Cobequid Arts Council, Fraser Cultural Centre, Grace Jollymore Joyce Arts Centre, Sugar Moon Eco-Museum and the Truro Art Society. Both Truro and the County have art acquisition programs.

In 2011, 440 people were employed in occupations related to arts, entertainment and recreation in Colchester County. This represented 2% of employed residents.

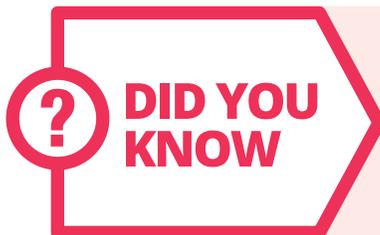
LIBRARY

Public libraries are community hubs where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds go for learning, culture, and fun. Public libraries support personal learning, literacy, culture and communities by providing access to print and electronic materials, information, technology, programs and community gathering spaces.

The Colchester-East Hants Public Library (CEHPL) has five branches: Elmsdale and Mount Uniacke in East Hants; Stewiacke, Tatamagouche, and Truro in Colchester County. The new libraries in Truro and Tatamagouche have become important community resources and gathering spaces.

CEHPL 2015-2016	NUMBER
Active cardholders*	19,301
Items borrowed	242,853
Public computer use (hours)	20,036
Wireless network use (connections)	11,504
Number of programs	1,616
Program attendance	17,989

**Some cardholders use their card as a family card to borrow material for multiple users in their circle. Library cards are not required for in-person, on-site use of many library services and resources.*



DID YOU KNOW

The CEHPL provides outreach services such as satellite libraries in Kennetcook (in East Hants) and Upper Stewiacke, programs at day care centres, deliveries to seniors' complexes, and a books by mail service. In addition, the library branches are able to fill requests for materials from other public libraries in Nova Scotia and across Canada.

CULTURE AND HERITAGE SOCIETIES

Colchester County has 19 cultural and heritage societies, 7 of them are museums located throughout the county.

The Millbrook Cultural & Heritage Centre is dedicated to celebrating Mi'kmaq heritage. Exhibits include: Early Creations, Speaking, Writing, Reading, Quill Work and Bead Work, Splint Basketry, a variety of woodwork, Mi'kmaq Petroglyphs, a Mi'kmaq Veterans Wall of Honour, and Contemporary Creations.

MARIGOLD CENTRE

The Marigold Centre is funded as a Community Economic Development Investment Fund (CEDIF). It houses a 208-seat theatre, a small art gallery, a workshop space for arts-in-education programming, a sport heritage hall, a boardroom, a concession area, and offices. The theatre hosts an African Nova Scotian show which includes: readings, singing, dancing and other performances with an Afrocentric theme. The theatre has 4 wheelchair accessible seats. Between January and March of 2017 the centre had 9 shows with almost 1,000 people in total attendance.

GRACE JOLLYMORE ARTS CENTRE

The Grace Jollymore Joyce Arts Centre holds local and regional concerts, theatre productions, trade shows, conferences, weddings, banquets, workshops, dramas, visual arts, festivals, rentals, and special events. The Grace Jollymore Joyce Arts Centre has been in operation for two years at Creamery Square in Tatamagouche. Creamery Square is a heritage, culture, entertainment, and community centre.



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA

SUPPORTING LOCAL ACTION

Since the first community foundation was established in the United States in 1914 and the local community based model of supporting philanthropy was brought to Canada in Winnipeg in 1921, foundations have continued to evolve and expand their role in building and sustaining vital communities. There are now over 1800 community foundations globally and 191 in Canada.

Community vitality is the unique spirit that flourishes when people believe their community holds possibilities for everyone.



In 2015, we granted more than

\$215 MILLION

and today, we have more than

\$200 MILLION

in responsible and impact investments



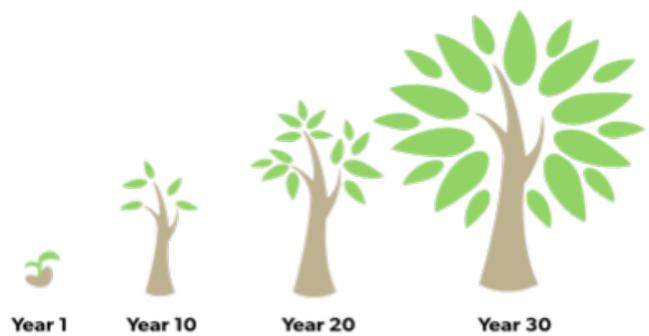
Collectively, Canada's community foundation network manages over \$4.8 billion dollars, and in 2015, granted over \$215 million to causes that matter to Canadians. As of 2016, the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia (CFNS) had facilitated well over \$3,000,000 in gifts.

The CFNS offers philanthropists a variety of ways to give to their community and to the causes that matter to them. We manage endowments that continually support the passions of individual donors/investors and our locally led community funds offer everyone in a community the opportunity to invest in their local community.

Community funds are one of the most important ways that the CFNS supports local community decision-making and action. Community funds are local, community driven investment and granting initiatives that empower local and regional philanthropy. CFNS provides community funds with administrative services such as issuing charitable receipts and reporting to Canada Revenue Agency.

This approach offers the following advantages:

- Local volunteers can focus on endowment building, fund raising, identifying priorities, and granting while the CFNS takes care of the administrative work that happens behind the scenes.
- Communities are able to act and adapt at a scale that will have a greater impact in their communities.
- Local funds can cultivate local leadership and maintain their own identity.
- Local philanthropy can play a leading role in local economic development.
- Pooled investment of endowments can achieve substantially higher return on investment which translates into more dollars available for granting.
- Collaboration on *Vital Signs*® can provide the information that communities need to make informed and strategic investments of time and financial resources.
- Networking opportunities among funds throughout Nova Scotia provide a forum for sharing ideas and resources, and facilitate a unified response to province-spanning issues.



	Year 1	Year 10	Year 20	Year 30
FUND BALANCE	\$10,000	\$12,300	\$15,300	\$19,200
TOTAL GRANTED TO COMMUNITY	\$430	\$5,100	\$11,500	\$19,400

* Based on 7.5% return.
 ** Minimum 3.5% disbursement annually.

Over the course of one short life time, an initial endowment of \$10,000 will almost double in 30 years, even with only a modest return on investment. At the end of those 30 years, the endowment will also have given more than \$19,000 to charitable causes. An endowment of \$1,000,000 would grant between \$35,000 and \$50,000 in its first year.



United Way
Colchester County

For over 60 years the United Way of Colchester County has been creating opportunities for a better life for people in our communities. We're working to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action right here where we live. Our decision to lead a *Vital Signs*® Project came out of discussions with donors, volunteers and stakeholders who identified a need for information, a "Colchester Snapshot". A *Vital Signs*® project would identify local issues and opportunities and serve as a resource to help citizens and municipal, business and non-profit leaders make decisions, take action and direct resources to where they have the most impact.

A *Vital Signs*® Project is a starting point, a catalyst for conversations with people in our community which will lead to creating possibilities that align with United Way's focus areas of building healthier, stronger communities, moving people out of poverty and helping kids be all they can be. Together, we are possibility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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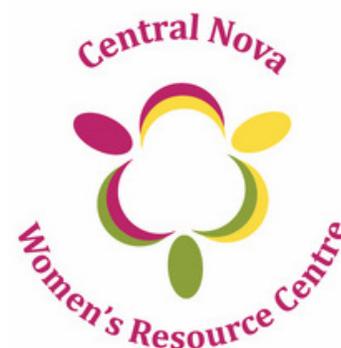
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Town of Stewiacke

Town of Truro

United Way of Colchester County

The Colchester Communities report is the 12th in the *Vital Signs®* series. The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia aims to build a collaborative network of *Vital Signs®* leadership teams in every region of the province. Information about participation in the program and all reports are available at communityfoundations.ca.



United Way
Colchester County