



MP Alana Hirtle, "Maritime Pride Eggs in Amherst has kicked off a construction project in support of expanding operations here in Atlantic Canada. That means jobs. That means investment in our local economy. That means someone looked at Cumberland County and said, "This is where we want to grow." I cannot overstate how much that matters for a community that has fought hard for every bit of economic momentum it has earned." (see Alana's column on page 5) L-R: Minister of Agriculture Heath MacDonald, MP Alana Hirtle, Maritime Pride CEO Mark Beal, Town of Amherst Mayor Rob Small.

Tatamagouche Centre future?

The future of the Tatamagouche Centre is up in the air. In a recent release the board of directors wrote all supporters of the Tatamagouche Centre to update you on the status of the Centre as of February 2026. Community consultations were held on December 22, January 6 and 10. Seventy-two people attended those events and many more have been in touch by telephone and email since the public consultations.

No final decisions have been made concerning the future of the Centre at this time. What did become clear

during the consultations was the overwhelming support for the Repatriation process to turn over stewardship of the lands and properties of the Centre to Women of First Light (WoFL) in a good way. People reiterated the commitment outlined in the MOU signed in May 2025 and expressed great hope and support for the heal-

ing space that WoFL intend to create on the lands.

The board of directors has articulated a number of scenarios for the short-and-medium term future, of the Centre and has begun discussing these with WoFL and the United Church of Canada. These discussions and process of collective discernment will continue over the next couple of months.

Salmon River Bridge, Truro

The Salmon River Truss Bridge connecting Walker and Main streets will have alternating lane closures for roadwork from Friday, March 6, until Wednesday, September 30. Work takes place daily from sunrise to sunset; signs and traffic lights are in place.

Bates Development to Include 2,790 Units

By Maurice Rees

A housing development comprising 2,790 units, which would take 20-25 years to completion is being proposed by 4432357 Nova Scotia Limited and Andrew Blackburn on the Bates property and three adjoining PIDS on Pictou Road and Vimy Road in Bible Hill. The massive project. Colchester council held a public meeting on February 26 regarding a development agreement. If the Development Agreement is approved by Municipal Council, a 14 day appeal period follows as per the Municipal Government Act.

The project includes a wide variety of residential housing forms from low density single unit dwellings to high density multiuse dwellings along with mixed commercial/ residential, commercial, recreation, institutional uses as well as open spaces and environmental protection areas.

Approval from Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change is required for dispersion of stormwater into Farnham Brook.

Comprehensive Development Districts provide a flexible approach to developing large tracts of land within existing communities, particularly where there is a high degree of planning required for the design of service infrastructure, roads and recreation amenities and where careful integration is needed to ensure a proper fit of the development with its surroundings to mitigate impacts.

In 2023, Council approved amendments to the former Central Colchester Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw (2002) that created polices to enable the rezoning of the

lands as a Comprehensive Development District. The property was previously designated as "Low Density Residential" and zoned "R-2, Double Dwelling Residential."

The Municipality of Colchester Municipal Planning Strategy (2025) provides policy for Council to consider a development agreement on Lands designated Comprehensive Development District and zoned Comprehensive Development District, which these properties are.

Site Characteristics: The land subject to this application includes PIDs; 20067658, owned by 4432357 Nova Scotia Limited (former Bates property) comprising 157 acres; 20408456, owned by 4432357 Nova Scotia Limited consisting of 0.06 acres; and 20069027, owned by Andrew Blackburn consisting of 2.72 acres. It should be noted there is currently a Memorandum of Understanding to purchase this parcel of land between the owner, Andrew Blackburn and 4432357 Nova Scotia Limited; It is assumed this parcel of land will be conveyed to 4432357 Nova Scotia Limited and the risk of this not occurring is minimal. The total area of the subject properties included in the Development Agreement is 159.78 acres.

Parkland: The proposal provides for the provision of open space and amenities as outlined on Schedule G, Master Plan, dated November 7, 2025. The parkland dedication will include identified parkland, and site development including but not limited to neighbourhood park facilities, and trails. All site preparation and development shall meet the requirements as set out by the Municipality.

Colchester Clean Starts April 22 For Two Weeks

Submitted by Phillip Redden, B.Eng.

(Phillip Redden, B.Eng. Director of Solid Waste presented his 8-page report at council's committee meeting on March 12. This section deals with Colchester Clean 2026.)

Colchester Clean 2026: Colchester Clean Early Bird registration was March 16, 2026. The program is set to start on April 22 and will run for two weeks. Same as the years before, we will have bins strategically placed at some locations namely: Valley-Kemptown Firehall, Bible Hill Firehall, Debert Admin Building and Salmon River Firehall.

Gold coloured cards have been made which give residents the option to take it out



to the Balfill Facility for disposal free of charge and Rudy litter stickers for those who decide to put the collected litter curbside for collection, so they aren't deemed over the limit. For the distribution of litter kits, there is a partnership with the Municipality's Finance Department and Scale house as well as Village of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche Library.

Even though there have been many cancellations and service interruptions staff have still been able to put out some social media education

across all social media platforms. Posting consists of Tip Tuesdays, What Goes Where? Wednesdays and Fact Fridays. With EPR in full effect, staff spent time going through our ReCollect communication program and making changes to materials, adding new materials and adding depot drop off locations. Thank you to our IT department who managed to get our EPR webpage done and launched on December 1st.

Phillip Redden, B.Eng. is Director of Solid Waste at MRF in Kemptown.

Community Trail Funding Program Funding Report

Three applications, Tatamagouche Area Trails Association (TATA); Dalhousie University and Ashton's Garden Centre, were received for the January 2026 deadline for the Community Trail Funding Program. In 2005, Council approved the Municipal Funding for Community Trails Policy and will receive annual applications in January for announcement in February.

This matter was presented to council at kits February 26th monthly meeting, as an information item of actions taken and not for discussion to award.

The policy states the following: "Prior to the issuance of cheques or notification of applicants, Council will receive an information item summarizing the program for the year including number of applications, who applied, the amount requested and the successful applicants."

Two of three applicants were approved, while one was denied included:

Tatamagouche Area Trails Association (TATA) requested \$30,150.00 (50% of project cost of \$60,300.00) for regular annual maintenance of the 26-km Short Line Trail in 2026, including trail surface repair and maintenance, bridge maintenance, vegetation management, ditching, culvert repair, trailhead snow removal, washroom maintenance, and signage replacement and maintenance. Staff has approved a grant of \$30,150.00 pending confirma-

tion of matching funding.

Dalhousie University requested \$4,297.00 (33% of project cost of \$13,196.00) for construction of a new, 200 m walking trail connecting the DalAC section of the Cobequid Trail and an underused riparian landscape on campus to enhance public access to the Salmon River, as well as two community refuge/rest spaces along the route. The trail project is part of a two-year, freshwater habitat restoration project in partnership with Cobequid Salmon Association that includes riparian planting design and installation, instream habitat restoration, and student fieldwork and research. Staff has approved a grant of \$4,297.00 pending confirmation of matching funding.

Ashton's Garden Centre requested \$2,000.00 (6% of project cost of \$34,884.00) to upgrade the surface of 150 m of the garden centre's main walking path to make it more accessible and install a temporary accessible washroom. The path would be free to use and open to the public during the centre's open season (April 1 - mid June), however this request has been denied because the applicant is a business and therefore does not meet the Community Trail Funding Program eligibility criteria.

The total amount approved is \$34,447.00 and is available in the 2025-2026 Community Trails budget.

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