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**HISTORY OF SUSTAINABILITY IN COLCHESTER:**

The following is a timeline of Municipal decisions and projects relating to energy and sustainability over the last 25 years:

**1995** Several small wastewater treatment facilities were decommissioned and replaced by one, large wastewater treatment plant in Lower Truro (Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility). The new facility provided a higher level of treatment for the communities of Bible Hill, Valley, Salmon River, Hilden, Truro Heights, and North River. The new plant also picked up untreated effluent from the Town of Truro.

**1999** The Municipality invested in the province's first Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and adopted a new curbside collection system, significantly improving the community's recycling and composting capacity.

**2008** Colchester acquired the Debert Air Industrial Park from the Province of Nova Scotia and the Canadian Forces Station Debert from the Government of Canada. Colchester invested significant time and resources to upgrade ageing sewer and water infrastructure for the 'new' Debert Business Park. Located in a rural setting, attention is being paid to redevelop Debert Business Park with eco-industrial principles. Colchester signed a twinning agreement with the community of Devens, Massachusetts to collaborate in creating an eco-industrial park in each location.

**2009** Council authorized staff to begin the process of completing a Municipal Energy Audit, with funding from EcoNova Scotia and the federal Gas Tax fund. The audit was completed in 2010 by Nova Dynamics Ltd and includes a detailed summary of energy use, assets, equipment, and recommendations to improve efficiency for municipal buildings, fleet, streetlights, wastewater and water facilities, and solid waste facilities.

**2010** The Municipality released Sustainable Colchester 2029, an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) intended to integrate principles of sustainability into the decision-making process of Council. The vision of the ICSP was "To create a sustainable Colchester that is prosperous, vibrant, healthy, and caring, where decisions that are made today do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

**2013** Colchester and Truro collaborated on a research project to study a risk assessment strategy that could be used for creating a Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP), which resulted in a document called "Using an EMO-based hazard risk vulnerability assessment process for municipal climate change action plan development".

**2013** Truro and Colchester created a joint Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP), as an amendment to each municipality's respective ICSP, titled "Keeping the Heart and Hub of Nova Scotia Strong: Regional Plan for Climate Resilience for the County of Colchester & the Town of Truro". This document is still used to guide climate adaptation measures in Truro and Colchester.

**2013** Colchester adopted a Wind Turbine Development By-law to provide a procedure to encourage the installation of wind turbine projects, primarily under the provincial COMFIT program. Today Colchester has 38 turbines, in 7 projects generating 70.6MW of electricity. This is enough electricity to power 90% of the homes in Colchester.

**2014** Colchester experimented with green stormwater management infrastructure, particularly in the Debert Business Park. The Municipality re-paved a parking lot with porous asphalt to reduce stormwater runoff and test the material for other sites. A demonstration rain garden was also constructed in cooperation with Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, and Colchester has researched the effectiveness of a gravel-bed marsh for stormwater management with the intention of including larger stormwater management as part of the redevelopment of the entrance to Debert.

**2015** The newly constructed composting facility can process up to 10,000 tonnes of organic waste in a year, five times more than the old facility, which was ineffective and consumed a large amount of energy. The new facility is a simplified system that allows natural aerobic decomposition to create a high-quality soil product, while nearly eliminating methane emissions.

**2016** The Municipality installed two 0.10 MW wind turbines at the Balefill facility in Kemptown. The turbines were funded through the province's COMFIT program. The two turbines generate about 300,000 kWh of electricity a year, which feeds into the Nova Scotia Power grid system, generates income for the Municipality, and contributes to the 14% of the province's electricity use generated by wind.

**2016** Colchester joined the FCM's Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) to help guide the sustainable actions in the municipality. PCP is a network of Canadian municipalities working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**2017** Colchester completed Milestone 1 of the PCP program: Create a GHG emissions inventory and forecast.

**2018** Extension of the Public Works Garage in Lower Truro by 18 metres included a new heating system for the entire

building. The original furnace (traditional furnace oil and waste oil) was replaced by a high efficiency propane furnace.

**2018** Colchester hired a Sustainability Planning Intern to help complete the various "Milestones" of the PCP program and implement some programs of action.

**2019** Colchester adopted the Solar Colchester program. The program provides residents with technical support for the design and installation of solar PV panels and financial support through a municipal PACE program. Over 60 applications were received in the first few weeks of the program launch, and 18 projects were completed in 2019/20 year.

**2019** Community Solar projects at Brookfield Sportsplex and the RECC will generate 150kW of electricity.

**2019** The saltmarsh restoration project in Onslow was created to reduce the provincial cost of dike maintenance and improvement to compensate for sea level rise. The project also provided the rivers with greater flood control capacity. An unintended benefit is that saltmarshes are recognised as a large carbon sink, at a time when other carbon is being released due to the melting of icecaps and rising ocean temperatures.

**2020** Installation of solar streetlights at the Fundy Discovery Site.

**2020** Plans are in place to install variable frequency drives on all process blowers at the CCWWTF (regional sewage plant). Air will be provided based on demand. The blowers currently represent 53% of the total electrical load. This project would reduce energy consumption of blowers by 50% and have a 4-year payback.

**2020** Staff are seeking authority from NS Environment to only operate the UV disinfection system at the CCWWTF from April to November, rather than year-round, which will save energy. Disinfection is not required when recreational water uses are not occurring.

**2020** The Municipality hired a full-time Sustainability Planner to lead emissions reduction initiatives and other "green" projects.

**2020** The Municipal is a primary funder for an affordable housing needs and supply study, which will provide data on gaps in housing, transportation, and services that affect the affordability of life in Truro and Colchester. The study will also examine the extent of energy poverty in the region. Two municipal staff members sit on the project team.

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