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## "I didn't know farming could be so fun."

Something extraordinary is sprouting at West Colchester Consolidated School! Students are rolling up their sleeves, digging into the earth, and discover

ing the magic of growing their own food—right in the heart of their rural community. Thanks to a boost from Plant a Seed & See What Grows Foundation and Farm to Cafeteria Canada (F2CC) the project was funded as part of a \$15,000 donation which distributed seed grants valued from \$1,000-\$3,000 each to six schools across Canada. Now, West Colchester Consolidated School Garden is more than just a patch of green—it's a vibrant hub of learning, laughter, and possibility, as they shared with F2CC in this story.

From the very first seedling, excitement has swept through the halls and playgrounds. Students from Primary to Grade 9 have transformed their schoolyard into a living classroom, planting everything from dazzling tulips and rhododendrons. They're not just learning how to garden—they're learning how to work together, care for the planet, and take pride in every sprout and blossom.



Ashley Fletcher, Learning Support Teacher with students, Connor, Summer & Victoria.



"This garden has brought our students closer to where their food comes from," said a staff member at West Colchester. "They've experienced the joy and pride of growing their own vegetables and preparing meals with them."

Throughout the growing season, students worked side-by-side with teachers and volunteers to plant, care for, and harvest a variety of crops. The garden has become an outdoor classroom, giving students the chance to gain hands-on experience in gardening, composting, and understanding food systems.

One student summed up the excitement: "I didn't know farming could be so fun. I liked digging for potatoes and watching everything grow!"

The students planted rhododendrons, tulips, and daffodils in the front garden and learned hands-on skills in environmental stewardship.

Beyond teaching food literacy, the project has also served as a safe and inclusive space for students to share their food stories and work together as a community. The school now plans to expand the garden and con-

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## Portapique Bridge to be Repaired

**By Maurice Rees**  
The three submitted photos (below and on page 12) accompanying this article shows why NS Public Works in April immediately closed the Portapique Bridge following a further Level 2 inspection causing motorists on Trunk 2 to take the East / West Montrose Road as a 10-minute detour.  
An inspection conducted in April revealed there was damage or deterioration to the piles on the Portapique side of the bridge. After extensive engineering analysis, the good news is the bridge will be repaired and the detour should be eliminated before the end of July.  
In his column appearing on Page 5, Tom Taggart MLA writes "The east end of the structure will be reinforced

and stable. It is my understanding that the bridge will now go into the que for replacement at which time the current bridge will remain open and the new bridge will be constructed beside it. Hopefully that will happen in the next year or two".  
For the replacement bridge, which may take up to two years before completion, geotechnical work is required to determine the amount and depth of the new piles; then design, followed by 6 week tendering period to award tender, then construction of the replacement.  
For the immediate repair process, it has been suggested, the plan is to drive piling on each side of the bridge and attach steel "I" beams that run under the

*continued on page 12*



## MacElmon Road Servicing Input Sought by County Council

**By Maurice Rees**  
At the June 12th Council Committee, Michelle Boudreau, Director Public Works, presented a series of options for council to consider for the potential servicing of MacElmon Road in Debert. Boudreau's recommendation stated, "That Council Committee recommends to Council that the extension of services on MacElmon Road to service 3 proposed new lots be referred to the capital budget process, with scope of work as described under Option 2."  
In their approved Five-year Capital Budget, Council included \$150,000 in fiscal 2024/25 for the construction of 100 meter section of watermain on MacElmon Road in Debert. The purpose of the project is to supply water for the development of a 17.6 acre lot beside Tim Horton's distribution facility. This lot was recently sold by the County.  
Staff prepared tender drawings for the 100 m of watermain in the Fall of 2024 and issued a public tender. The pricing came in above budget and staff elected to cancel the tender since development had not started on the 17.6 acre lot and the project was not deemed time sensitive. Staff plan to revisit the project in 2025 or 2026.  
In recent months, staff has obtained archaeological clearance for the creation of 3 new lots on MacElmon Road adjacent to Clean Harbours. The lots are currently unserviced and staff are seeking guidance on the decision to sell the lots as serviced vs unserviced.

There are 3 options to address the lack of services on MacElmon Road:  
**Option 1** is to extend a new waterline along the entirety of MacElmon Road, from Lancaster to Plains, and to extend a sewer line across the front of the 3 proposed new lots. This will fully service the area and provides the benefit of looping waterlines. **COST \$1,380,000**  
**Option 2** is to extend water services both ends only as needed, eliminating looping along the entirety of MacElmon Road. With this option, a new waterline would be extended north from Lysander to the 17.6 acre lot as planned, for 100 metres. Another section of waterline would be extended south from Plains Road to service the proposed 3 new lots, then dead ended. Sewer would also be extended along the frontage of the proposed 3 new lots. **COST \$1,100,000**  
**Option 3** is to still extend water to the 17.6 acre lot as budgeted, for 100 metres, and sell the proposed 3 new lots with no water service. Sewer would be extended along the frontage. of the proposed 3 new lots. **COST \$550,000**  
While Option 3 is least expensive, it may affect marketability of the proposed 3 new lots. Option 1 is most expensive and also eliminates dead ends on the water system which is preferred. The sale value of the 17.6 acre lot was \$450,000. The proposed 3 new lots could be sold at \$100,000 each for a total of \$300,000

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