

Truro: 2022 Construction \$55,705,516 up 155.6% - Mills

Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce hosted the Mayors & Chief Breakfast on April 24th at Inn on Prince. which included: Mayor Bill Mills, Mayor Christine Blair, Chief Bob Gloade and Mayor George Lloy.

The following contains the highlights of Truro Mayor Bill Mills message as follows:

Good morning everyone. President Tanton, Mayor Blair, Chief Gloade, Mayor Lloy, guests: Thank you to the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce for coordinating this event and for the invitation to speak with you again this year.

I'd like to provide you an overview of the economic health of the Town of Truro and where the Town is focusing strategic growth efforts moving forward. Truro has experienced significant growth since 2016, much like other urban areas in Nova Scotia. From 2011 to 2016 the Town of Truro experienced 1.67% increase in population, however from 2016 to 2022, the Town experienced an increase of 6.85%, and the population of the Town of Truro, which includes Millbrook First Nation sits at an estimated 14,020 people as of July, 2022.

Population Growth in Truro and Colchester is summarized as follows: 2011: Truro, 12,906; Colchester, 50,968. 2016: Truro, 13,121; Colchester, 50,585. During the period 2011-2016 Truro experienced 1.67% growth, while Colchester grew 0.75%. For 2022 to July 1st, Truro's population is estimated to be 14,020 while Colchester as a whole is 53,178.

Institutional and Government based permits (public funds) have been excluded to show private market driven construction. Truro experienced significant 2022 growth driven by: \$32.7 million in four new large apartment projects beginning in Truro; Approx \$10 million in projects at The Hub-Truro Mall and approximately \$5 million in other commercial projects (Truro Business Park and Downtown).

Over a five year period Total Private Construction totals are as follows: 2018, \$16,710,264; 2019, \$18,700,838, 11.9% increase; 2020, \$20,312,747, 8.6% increase; 2021, \$21,798,272, 7.3% increase and 2022, \$55,705,516. A whopping 155.6% increase.

There are several Significant Projects in the housing sector in Truro.

Currently Under Construction:
• **219 Queen Street (former Jail facility)** - Completed construction of a 35 unit build-



ing in Fall 2021. Construction for a second 30 unit building with ground floor commercial is currently under construction. **185 Kaulback Street** - Under Construction. Three, 50-unit residential buildings. **118 Lyman Street** - Development agreement permit a multi-unit residential development of 60 units. **35 Esplanade Street (former TJHS and Basin Basics)** - Development Agreement approved for a 5 storey, 63 unit building.

This totals 338 New Units currently under construction.

We are not done. There are several Approved Development Agreements in Place: **5-7 Charles Street** - Development agreement approved for a four-storey multi-unit residential development containing 27 units. **34-38 Curtis Drive** - Development Agreement approved for a 3 storey, 18 unit apartment building. **225 William Barnhill Drive** - Development agreement approved for a multiple unit residential development consisting of 10 townhouse units, one 4-storey, 56-unit building and one 4-storey, 55-unit building. **85 Young Street** - Development agreement approved for a 5 storey, 53 unit building, with ground floor commercial and **573-575 Prince Street (former Patillo Building)** - Development Agreement approved for an 88 unit apartment building, with ground floor commercial.

Many of these, especially the projects located downtown, are of increasing sizes and heights, and Town Council has made approvals of up to 88 units in one building and up to 8 stories in height. This is helping to add density to the downtown, which will further support the businesses located there.

Right now, about 30% of the total units expected in Truro are under construction. We expect additional projects to start construction in 2023 based on building permits we have issued. We're happy to see work starting on the five storey building on the Esplanade,

which has been excavated now for a few years. This will help to enhance this area of Downtown.

Housing in Truro will continue at a fast pace with several additional significant projects already approved including: **64 Ford Street** - Development agreement for one 3-storey building containing 18 dwelling units. **54-58 Walker Street** - Development agreement approved for an 8-storey multi-residential building with 56 units. **306 James Street** - Development agreement for one 8-storey building containing 79 dwelling units and 176 m2 (1890 ft2) of commercial space. **60 Golf Street** - Development agreement for one 5-storey building containing 68 dwelling units. **536 Young Street** - Development Agreement for three 4-story 50 unit buildings and 17 townhouses containing a total of 167 units. **125/135 Willow Street** - development to permit two, 3-storey townhouse buildings each containing 12 dwelling units for a total of 24 units. **74 Lorne Street** - Development agreement for a 6-storey building containing 78 dwelling units and 1681 sq. ft. of commercial space. This totals up to an additional 797 units approved. If all units are Constructed, this will add over 1,100 new units to the Town of Truro!

I think the most exciting information is that if all of these units are approved and constructed, over 1100 new units will be added in the Town of Truro. This will undoubtedly help the housing shortage and help to attract even more new people to Truro.

Truro Business Park: Home to over 70 businesses - built up area comprises 230 acres. Through 2021 and 2022 the Town completed a Master Plan for the Truro Business Park Expansion. May see the expansion of approximately 6 new lots within the next 5 years.

Approximately 30 acres being considered under the new Community Plan for mixed use (Commercial/Tourism/Resi-

dential mix - top of Young Street). Remainder +300 acres available for new residential growth (South of William Barnhill Drive).

Truro Business Park - Recent Growth. Significant Construction Projects over the last 5 years: **Truro Cannabis Company** - Completed construction of a building on Industrial Avenue. The building is

just over 27,000 Sq. Ft and cost \$4.2 million to construct. Truro Cannabis Company also purchased 559 Willow Street completing renovations at a cost of \$1.2-Million.

Clarences Farm Services - Completed a \$10 million expansion on Industrial Avenue.

John Ross & Sons - Completed construction of a \$2.4 million, 15,675 Sq.Ft. facility at 85 Glassey Avenue. **Northeast Nutrition** - In late 2019, announced expansion at the Truro feed mill location. This was part of it's 2018-2022 capital investment plan which would see \$112 million being spent to increase mill capacity in Truro and covert to seafood distribution and retail in Dartmouth.

Sollio Agriculture Feed Mill - Expansion of the feed mill, located at 349 Willow Street, at a value of \$1 million. **Coldstream Clear Distillery** - Expansion of distillery at 241 Crossley Avenue. Expansion of 15,000 sf at a value of \$1.2 million in 2021. Additional expansion in 2022/2023 of nearly 40,000 sf at a value of \$2.5 million. Coldstream has undergone these two major expansion to increase the size of their space from about 6,000 Sf in 2019 to almost 55,000 Sf in 2023.

Fundy Textiles - In 2023, permit issued to add 6,800 Sf at the existing facility on Industrial Avenue at a cost of \$833,800.

Generally, Truro Business Park is now made up of smaller sites (less than 10 acres). Businesses locating in the business park want exposure, easy access to highways, and in close proximity to workforce. Much of future growth will come from business expansions on their existing sites.

Businesses that require larger sites, proximity to raw goods, less employee intensive are locating outside of the urban area in business parks such as Debert, Truro Heights, Onslow, etc. The Truro Business Park won't be adding significant inventory of land to the Truro Business Park as we shift our focus to residential in the lands south of William Barnhill Drive.

I mentioned that the Hub-Truro Mall had over \$10 million in building permits in 2022. This made up almost one fifth of the total building permits in the Town of Truro and has really enhanced the Mall and the Robie Street area, and the community. Doug Doucet of RCS Construction and Arnold Hagen, owner of

Home Hardware, purchased the Truro Mall in 2021. They have had community vision for making the Truro Mall a real gathering space for the community and the Town. Thanks to them included in their growth is the new Petsmart store, the Pur and Simple restaurant, the new Mary Brown's restaurant, the relocation and expansion of Home Hardware - 40,000 SF store plus 15,000 Sf warehouse, the new Food Hall, which includes local eateries and will soon include a marketplace and Brewpub, with access and a patio to the rear of the property. Also, under construction is a new Professional Centre at the corner of the property along Marshland Drive and Robie Street.

The Town has been interested in supporting the new business growth, especially with the shift to more local owners in the Robie Street area, and drawing more residents and visitors to that area. Over the past few years, along with the growth at the Hub - Truro Mall we've seen growth at: Belly Up - largest outdoor patio in NS, support for events outdoor during summer months; Sun kissed Energy; Coffee Barn; Opening of Long and McQuade. Robie Street will soon be the entrance to the new baseball fields on Argus Drive.

The Town has worked with businesses in that area to develop and brand a unique destination along Robie Street called **Uptown Truro**. This will help to enhance the uniqueness and vibrancy of the area. We've developed street banners, street signs, branded bike racks, etc which will be installed and marketed starting this spring.

The Town of Truro has made considerable investments in infrastructure projects that really helped to appeal and attract residents over the past 10 years. We're just about to start the redevelopment of the TAAC Grounds to include a synthetic 8 lane track with throwing areas. This \$8 million project will bring the facility up to date and be more competitive on the Provincial levels. We're moving the Senior Baseball fields from TAAC to a new location off of Robie Street and when finished will be a senior sized championship quality field. Some preliminary work is currently taking place, but we expect construction to ramp up at both sites this summer and be ready for use in 2024.

In 2022, the Town received over \$400,000 in funding from ACOA for an \$850,000 project at the Railyard Mountain Bike Park. This project will focus on attracting multi-day visitors to the area through enhanced facilities, trails, and marketing.

Council has spent the last few years developing numerous plans for the Town. This includes: new Active

Transportation Plan, Accessibility Plan, and were currently in the final stages of our new Community Plan which will include a new Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use Bylaw, and Community Sustainability Plan to set the stage for the next 10 years.

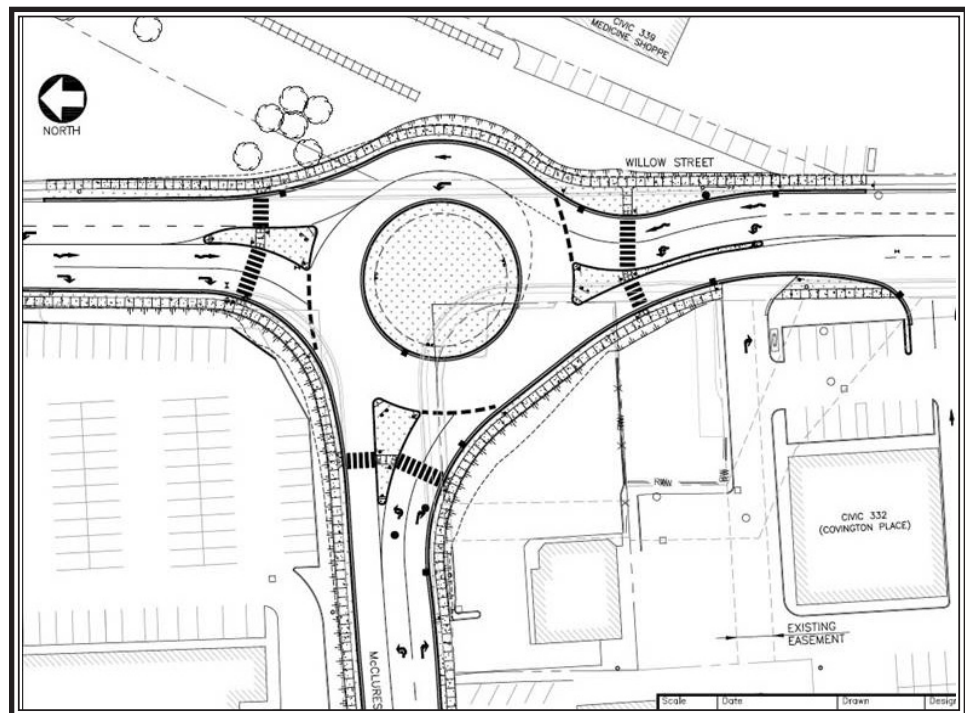
We hope to make progress on the McClures Mills Roundabout over the next two years. We're currently in talks with the Province to begin construction on this project after their work on the Salmon River Bridge on Highway 102 is complete. We also are working with our insurance provider to complete the work to reopen the Colchester Legion Stadium before the end of 2023. We are very thankful to the Province for their contribution of \$1 million to assist with repairs.

We're excited to work alongside the Province to develop to former Colchester Hospital site. That site has enormous potential in Truro and as a catalyst for future growth along Willow Street.

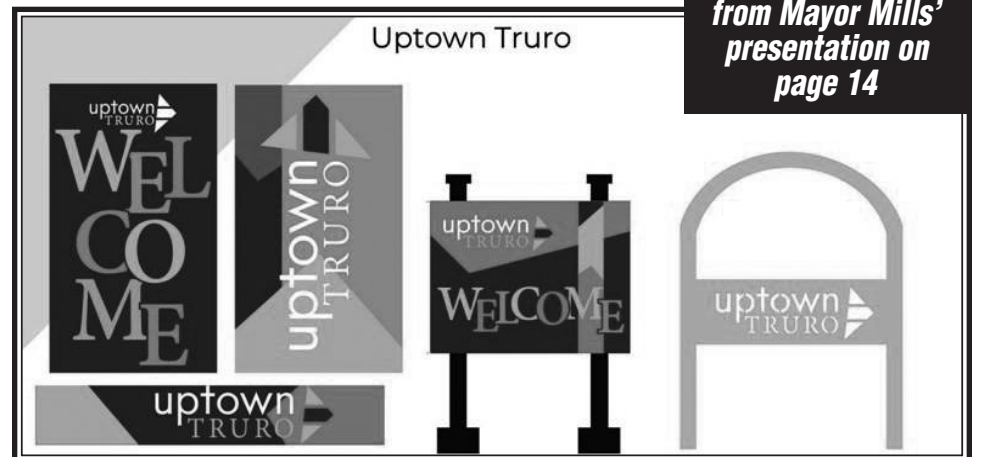
In the Fall 2022, the Province of Nova Scotia made amendments to the Municipal Government Act (through Bill No. 24) to give municipalities in Nova Scotia a greater ability to generate revenue to attract events, people and tourists to their communities. With input from a regional stakeholder group working to support tourism in the Truro-Colchester region, which includes the Town of Truro, Municipality of the County of Colchester, the Town of Stewiacke, Millbrook First Nation, the Chamber of Commerce, Rath Eastlink Community Centre and many accommodations providers. We have put forward a draft Marketing Levy Bylaw to Council, with First Reading happening in April, 2023. Working with this stakeholder group, we hope to develop a strategy to introduce a Marketing Levy and Destination Marketing Organization in the Truro-Colchester region.

The Marketing Levy Bylaw will apply to any facility that is required to register under the Tourist Accommodations Registration Act. This includes hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, rental cottages, Air BnB's, and post-secondary educational institutions that provide non-student lodging.

The levy will require all facilities to charge a levy fee equal to 3% of the accommodation purchase price. Long-term accommodations (over 30 days) and family lodging related to medical reasons, are exempt from paying the 3% levy fee. This will allow creation of a Destination Marketing Organization to be created and will allow the area to generate revenue to attract events, people and tourists with a regional focus to better highlight this area as a tourism destination.



An artistic rendering of the proposed Roundabout on Willow Street, which will ease congestion on traffic coming from the hospital and RECC area heading to Willow Street and downtown Truro. A second roundabout at the end of Robie Street is expected to start once NSTIR has completed repairs to the Salmon River bridge on Hwy 102. (Town of Truro Photo)



The Town has worked with businesses in Hub-Truro Mall, Robie Street area to develop and brand a unique destination along Robie Street called Uptown Truro. (Town of Truro Photo)

See more images from Mayor Mills' presentation on page 14