

Solar Farm Will Save \$85,000 Annually



The following is an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since November 2024, which was presented by Paul Smith, Director, Community Services at the Colchester Council committee meeting on April 10th.

Sustainable Colchester Solar PV on Municipal & Community Buildings:

The solar farm at the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Plant is nearing completion, with its final NS Power inspection taking place in early April. The solar PV system is projected to produce 599,600 kWh of electricity and save the facility \$85,500 in energy costs annually.

The ground-mounted installation at the West Colchester United Arena began this winter. Installation of the rooftop system planned for the North Shore Recreation Centre has been slightly delayed, as a structural assessment determined that the roof is not suitable for solar.

Municipal staff and the solar contractor are presently exploring alternative options.

CEEP Implementation Workshop:

On February 4th, Council members, staff from across departments, and members of the Carbon-Free Colchester Implementation Committee attended a Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP) Implementation Workshop facilitated by QUEST. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to learn about and discuss Colchester's emission reduction objectives and develop strategies for implementation. A report from QUEST with a workshop summary and recommendations is forthcoming.

Regional Transit Study:

The Municipality of Colchester and the Town of Truro have partnered to conduct a Regional Public Transit Feasibility Study. The consulting firm Arcadis was contracted to complete the study, along with subconsultant Colliers Project Leaders, who will conduct community engagement activities for the project. The staff working group and the consultants launched the project in late January, and the stakeholder advisory committee met for the first time in February. The study is 80% funded by a grant from the NS Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund.

On March 25th, the project team and staff volunteers hosted a stakeholder World Café that brought together organizations

that serves community members who may experience challenges accessing transportation, including citizens from equity-deserving and historically marginalized groups, job seekers, newcomers, students, and seniors. Other key stakeholders also took part, such as organizations that offer transportation services, the Chamber of Commerce and TCPEP, post-secondary institutions, and other local governments in the region.

The event was highly successful—almost 40 people attended the session with a diverse range of perspectives to share.

Community Solar Garden Feasibility Study:

The Municipality was awarded \$75,000 in December 2024 from the Low Carbon Communities program to commission a feasibility and design study for a community solar garden in Colchester. Council approved \$75,000 in matching funds in January 2025, and a Request for Proposals for consulting services will be posted in early April. Staff are actively seek-

ing partnerships for the project to achieve economies of scale and improve eligibility for future capital funding. The feasibility and design study is a critical first step in this project and will enable Colchester to apply to the Province of Nova Scotia's "Community Solar" program and secure a 25-year Power Purchase Agreement with Nova Scotia Power. If the solar garden gets built, residents will have the opportunity to be subscribers and receive a financial benefit on their Nova Scotia Power bills.

Wildfire Resilience Working Group:

Staff from across departments have formed a Wildfire Resilience Working Group after a well attended initial roundtable discussion about wildfire risk and prevention measures in early February. The Working Group will meet every two months and will be supported by Regional Emergency Management Coordinator Dave Westlake, DNR Wildfire Prevention Officer Ken Cox, and Colchester's Climate Lead from the Clean Foundation, Teal Burns.



The solar farm at the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Plant is nearing completion, with its final NS Power inspection taking place in early April. The solar PV system is projected to produce 599,600 kWh of electricity and save the facility \$85,500 in energy costs annually. (Contributed)



Pictured above are Council members, staff from across departments, and members of the Carbon-Free Colchester Implementation Committee during a Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP) Implementation Workshop facilitated by QUEST. (Contributed)

Planning Strategy & Land-Use By-Law Completed



The following is an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since November 2024, which was presented by Paul Smith, Director, Community Services at the Colchester Council committee meeting on April 10th.

COMMUNITY PLANNING Plan It Colchester - County-wide planning:

Upland Planning Studio and Colchester staff have completed work on the draft planning strategy and land use

by-law for the County. A Public Hearing was held on March 27, 2025, where comments were received from the public which mostly focused on wind turbines, supportive housing, pits and quarries and some mapping questions. With Council's approval of the draft documents, they will be sent to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for provincial approval which is likely to take 4 to 8 weeks. The documents can be found on the Municipality's website at <https://www.colchester.ca/plan-it-colchester>.



The Plan it Colchester study conducted by Upland Planning Studio and Colchester staff has been completed and accepted by council. Undertaken at the same time was the comprehensive Land-Use By-Law. (Contributed)

[ester.ca/plan-it-colchester](https://www.colchester.ca/plan-it-colchester).

The Province introduced new requirements for wind turbine developments on March 7 which reduced setbacks from dwellings being the greater of four times the height of the turbine or such a distance where noise levels do not exceed 40 dBA. Changes to the draft county-wide planning documents have been made to comply with the new standards.

Planning Activity:

Staff continue to work through a draft development agreement and meet with stakeholders for the 5 Corners housing and mixed-use project in Bible Hill. There are several active and/or new planning applications currently under review including two in Bible Hill as well as Hilden and Lower Truro.

Staff continue to meet regularly with prospective developers about a variety of locations across the County. Most discussions are about proposed housing developments. The Municipality received a grant of \$125,000.00 from the Department of Municipal Affairs to oversee a project on 3D Visualization for Flood Hazard Communication. An RFP will be going out soon. Colchester staff will manage

the project with input from the Project Team, which will be comprised of representatives from both Colchester County, the Town of Truro and if appropriate, representatives from First Nations communities, and provincial and federal government departments.

A summer student will be hired to assist in the front office with permit applications, answering phones and general

administrative duties. An application was made to the Province's Connect2 Program to complete a comprehensive active transportation plan which could result in a \$95,000 contribution from the Province. The Village of Bible Hill will also be a partner in this project if approved. One element of the project will involve the development of an evaluation rubric to be used when assessing new sidewalks.



Mothers Day Event

Sunday May 11th
10am till 4pm
Daffodil Walk, Live Music, Food Truck, Perennials, Shrubs, hanging Baskets and Summer Bedding Plants

125 Upper River John Road, Tatamagouche





Each office independently owned & operated.

902 956-3158
 Ted.Taggart@remax.net




Ted-Taggart.remaxtruro.ca
 Office: 902-893-7500
 791 Prince St, Truro NS B2N 1G7

Ted Taggart
REALTOR®



MAGNOLIA

CLASSIC CABINETRY

www.magnoliaclassiccabinetry.ca or email: info@magnoliaclassiccabinetry.ca or call us: 1-902-843-4140