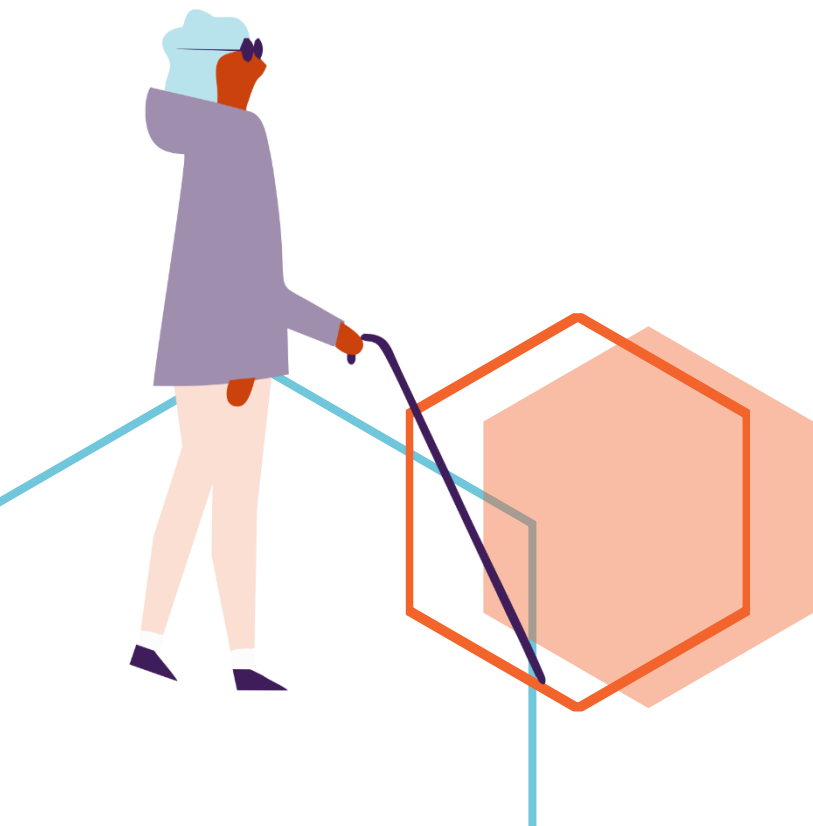




Physical Activity Strategic Plan 2020-2025



TRURO
make the connection





Physical Activity Strategic Plan 2020-2025

January 2021

Table of Contents

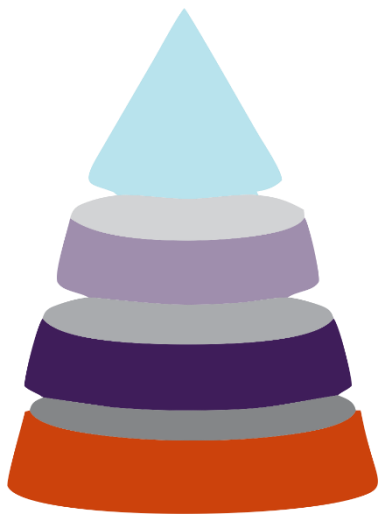
I.	Introduction	2
	The Framework.....	2
	Strategy Development Process.....	2
	The Need for a Physical Activity Strategy	3
	Equity and Inclusion	4
	Community Survey	5
II.	Vision, Mission and Values	7
	Vision	7
	Mission.....	7
	Values	7
III.	Strategic Directions	8
	Strategic Direction: Communication and Promotion.....	8
	Strategic Direction: Natural and Built Environment.....	9
	Strategic Direction: Accessibility and Inclusivity	10
	Strategic Direction: Engagement and Partnerships	11
	Strategic Direction: Workplace Setting	12
IV.	Moving Forward	Error! Bookmark not defined.





Introduction

The Framework



Directions: Truro's priorities for physical activity

Goals: The desired results related to each strategic direction

Objectives: Strategies to achieve the goal

Actions: High level activities to transform the objectives into outcomes and achieve the goal

Strategy Development Process

The Town of Truro developed a physical activity strategy in 2012 after the Active Community Coordinator was hired through the Municipal/ Mi'kmaw Physical Activity Leadership (MPAL) program. MPAL is a cost sharing agreement between the Province and participating municipalities to increase the number of staff in local governments that are planning and implementing comprehensive plans to improve the participation in health enhancing physical activity at a community level.

Given that it has been over five years since the plan was developed, coupled with the fact that most of the strategies within the plan had been completed, the Town embarked on a second strategic planning process, supported through Communities, Culture and Heritage.

A working group consisting of representatives from the Town of Truro (Parks, Recreation and Culture), Communities Culture and Heritage, and Public Health - Nova Scotia Health was formed in early 2020 to lead the development of the updated physical activity strategic plan. The strategic plan development process consisted of the following:



- A review of the previous strategic plan to identify strategies completed and opportunities for continued development.
- A review of other relevant strategies including *Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia* (a provincial action plan for increasing physical activity in Nova Scotia); the *Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in Nova Scotia*; and other local plans to identify opportunities for alignment/synergy.
- A review of findings from a Physical Activity Community Survey (Citizen Survey) completed in 2016 for the Town of Truro.
- Development of draft strategic directions and associated objectives and actions for the physical activity strategy plan (2020 to 2025) by the working group based on the findings from the review of materials (bullets one to three).
- A consultation session with community organizations to obtain feedback into the draft strategic directions and associated objectives and actions.

The feedback from the consultation session was compiled and used to create a strategic plan report which was reviewed and finalized by the working group. This report provides a brief summary of the evidence for a physical activity strategy; findings from the citizen survey; the strategy vision, mission and values; and the strategic directions and associated goals, objectives and actions.

The Need for a Physical Activity Strategy

Physical activity, sport and recreation have significant benefits for both individuals and communities such as:

- Improves individual health through chronic disease prevention and management, enhanced growth and development, improved sleep, and improved mental health.
- Improves education outcomes and academic performance.
- Improves social connection by bringing people together and reducing isolation and encouraging civic engagement through volunteering.
- Supports the environment as there are fewer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions when more people walk or bike as a mode of transportation.
- Economic development by creating walkable and bikeable communities and indoor and outdoor infrastructure which supports tourism and attracts new residents.

Despite these well-known benefits, the majority of Nova Scotians do not meet the recommended 150 minutes of heart pumping physical activity a week (Colley, RC et al, Physical activity of Canadian adults: accelerometer results from the 2007 to 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey). Very few youth are meeting the recommended guidelines of 60 minutes a day of physical activity most days of the week, and as we age, we become less active (Thompson, A et al, Physical activity of children and youth in Nova Scotia from 2001-02 to 2005-06, Preventive Medicine, 2009 Nov;49(5): 407-9). Socially, volunteerism in Nova Scotia is declining, with fewer people carrying the load (2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating).

Challenges to physical activity are many including more sedentary work environments, community design focused around automobile use, changing family structures and busy lifestyles, and safety fears.



Despite these challenges, there is good news and opportunity! There are many assets in communities across Nova Scotia, including Truro. For example, there is a mature sport, recreation and physical activity sector with innovative leaders. We are a small province where communities can pool resources and learn from one another.

The time is right to renew Truro's strategic plan for physical activity by building on what we have accomplished over the last five years and identifying opportunities to help us achieve our vision ***Making the connection between physical activity and daily life.***

Equity and Inclusion

Equity is a notion that acknowledges equal treatment and opportunities do not lead to equal outcomes and recognizes that some populations have diverse needs. Health inequities are differences in health status between groups and populations that are socially and systemically produced by unequal distribution across the population, often linked to the social determinants of health- where we live, grown, learn, work, play and age.



Figure 1: Equality vs Equity (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

The unequal distribution of supports and resources make it more difficult for some individuals to participate in physical activity and recreation opportunities. For this reason, it is important to apply an equity and inclusion lens when planning, implementing and evaluating physical activity and recreation programs, resources and policies. In order to ensure that equitable programs and services are offered, the following considerations are important to apply as necessary:

- Fair and just distribution of resources needed to participate
- Fair and just access to opportunities to participate
- Fair and appropriate supports and services offered for those with diverse needs

Inclusive physical activity and recreation opportunities are a priority throughout Nova Scotia. The Shared Strategy for Advancing Recreation in NS and Let's Get Moving NS both have goals to address inclusion and access. All individuals deserve to have a fair chance to participate, regardless



of their physical abilities, socioeconomic status or ethnic background and municipalities can play a key leadership role to help break down barriers.

Community Survey

The purpose of the Physical Activity Community Survey was to inform the development, implementation, and continued evaluation of physical activity strategies in the Town of Truro. The full report is available through the Active Community Coordinator in the Town, with key findings and conclusions presented below.

The following graphic presents a summary of the top activities desired by respondents (wish list), most common challenges to participation in physical activity, potential opportunities, and motivators for active transportation (AT).



The following conclusions were presented within the report of the survey findings:

1. With walking as the most popular activity for future participation in general as well as for Active Transportation, there is a significant opportunity to increase activity in this community by prioritizing support for walking.
2. Swimming is also mentioned as a wish list item for increased participation, but to a far lesser degree than walking.
3. Infrastructure for walking and cycling is a clear need based on identified physical activity challenges in general and Active Transportation facilitators.
4. Interventions to support social connections are important. They address significant barriers and garner significant interest among programming concepts.
5. Time (availability of residents, scheduling of programs) is an important barrier to consider in planning interventions.
6. There may be a role for health care providers in supporting participation in physical activity given the proportion who perceive their current health status as a challenge.

More community members may be engaged by improving accessibility of community-based physical activity opportunities by offering flexible, non-competitive activities that incorporate social interactions.





Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Making the connection between physical activity and daily life.

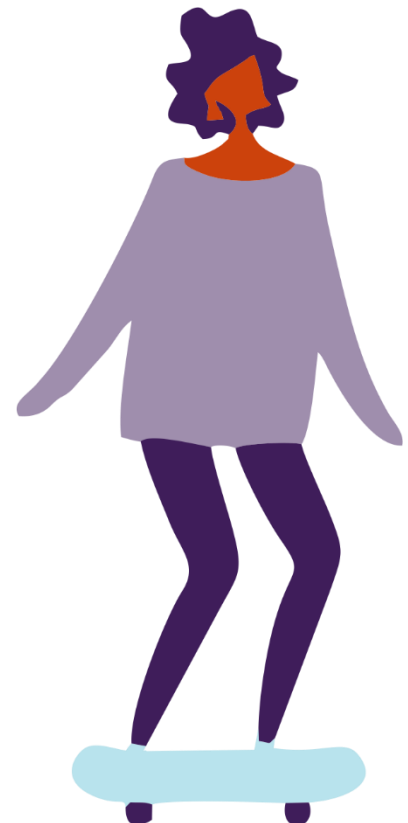
Mission

Truro Parks, Recreation and Culture Department's mission is to help Truro move more and sit less through innovative engagement initiatives and through leadership activities.

Values

The strategy will be guided by:

- What has worked elsewhere and locally;
- Collaborative approaches;
- Long term commitments;
- Equitable practices;
- Innovation;
- Needs of the community.





Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction: Communication and Promotion

Goal: Information on the opportunities and benefits of physical activity is readily available in the Town of Truro.

Objectives and High-Level Actions

Objectives	High Level Actions
<p>1.1 Develop messages and material to promote physical activity and encourage opportunities for movement across the life span</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to develop innovative communication strategies to promote existing spaces such as green spaces, outdoor play spaces, etc. to support physical activity and movement ▪ Review and update communication strategies using multiple platforms to help ensure that diverse populations are reached and visible in promotional materials ▪ Identify existing groups that support physical activity and connect people to these opportunities to facilitate social support networks for physical activity ▪ Partner to support messaging/promotion that encourages physical activity and movement in everyday activities and evaluate effectiveness ▪ Work with other associations and organizations to cross promote local facilities and green spaces
<p>1.2 Develop and implement messages/communications to encourage people to include small sessions of movement into their daily routines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote existing opportunities that encourage people to include small sessions of movement into their daily routines ▪ Leverage existing communication mechanisms to reposition physical activity messaging to opportunities that encourage people to include small sessions of movement into their daily routines ▪ Leverage community influencers to promote opportunities that encourage people to include small sessions of movement in their daily routines ▪ Support and build upon provincial and national work to reposition messaging about physical activity (i.e., opportunities that encourage people to include small sessions of movement into their daily routines) and leverage national and provincial work to promote this messaging



Strategic Direction: Natural and Built Environment

Goal: Truro has sustainable natural and built environments that support physical activity opportunities for all ages.

Objectives and High-Level Actions

Objectives	High Level Actions
2.1 Identify opportunities to improve connectivity within Truro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support connecting built environments such as connecting a school to a park or a facility to green spaces ▪ Create safe walking and wheeling routes within the community ▪ Link with other strategies/planning to ensure physical activity and movement is considered in planning and future development ▪ Partner with the municipal planning department to facilitate trail development, AT and supports for walking and wheeling ▪ Identify and implement opportunities within existing and future sport and recreation facilities for unstructured play and non-organized sport
2.2 Identify and implement opportunities for unstructured use of the built environment by all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote and support the use of green space for all ages throughout the year ▪ Assess and adapt/develop outdoor playgrounds to ensure they can be safely used by children under five years of age ▪ Identify safe routes to green spaces and develop these routes ▪ Promote safe AT routes and green spaces through school communities and workplaces ▪ Incorporate low-cost opportunities that support movement and physical activity within natural and built environments
2.3 Support the provision and maintenance of sustainable and quality recreation and physical activity infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor walking and wheeling routes and make improvements as required ▪ Work with other municipal departments to advocate for expanding existing trails or green spaces to support movement and physical activity ▪ Continue to support the implementation of The Railyard Master Plan



Strategic Direction: Accessibility and Inclusivity

Goal: The Town of Truro provides equitable physical activity opportunities for everyone.

Objectives and High-level Actions

Objectives	High Level Actions
3.1 Support opportunities for movement and physical activity to ensure equitable access by all populations and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify partners and champions from various cultures and collaborate to support opportunities for physical activity and movement ▪ Use an accessibility lens when planning and promoting municipal events ▪ Create policy and practice to help ensure diverse populations are visible in communication and promotional material ▪ Build capacity of frontline staff, community members and facilities to create equitable access and more welcoming environments for movement within facilities
3.2 Develop and implement opportunities for free or low cost initiatives to help individuals and families participate in physical activity and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and implement a policy to reduce financial barriers to physical activity and recreation ▪ Promote existing subsidy programs for physical activity and recreation ▪ Continue and expand programs that reduce barriers to participation such as Drop-in programs and the equipment loan program ▪ Promote no cost and no equipment activities such as walking and wheeling ▪ Work with the facility access program to ensure all groups have equitable ability to use facilities
3.3 Connect to the 2030 Accessibility Vision for the province when planning physical activity opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure universal design is considered with new physical activity and recreation infrastructure ▪ Ensure physical activity is considered and “part of” the Town’s accessibility plan ▪ Ensure that the municipal toolkits for accessibility are used in physical activity planning



Strategic Direction: Engagement and Partnerships

Goal: Internal and external partners are actively engaged in advancing the goals of the physical activity strategy.

Objectives and High-Level Actions

Objectives	High Level Actions
4.1 Identify and support partnerships to facilitate opportunities for movement, physical activity and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with economic development to further mutual objectives that support movement and physical activity ▪ Partner with police and others to incorporate physical activity, recreation and opportunities for movement within restorative justice ▪ Continue to support volunteer groups/organizations to promote and encourage opportunities for movement, physical activity and recreation ▪ Build partnerships with organizations and community groups that work with youth to facilitate opportunities for movement, physical activity and recreation within their programming ▪ Partner with other municipalities, First Nation communities, departments or agencies to develop initiatives/opportunities for physical activity and movement ▪ Work with health system partners to support opportunities for physical activity and movement ▪ Provide/support training for community leaders to increase capacity to deliver physical activity, recreation and opportunities for movement
4.2 Identify and implement opportunities to strengthen inter-departmental relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Position opportunities for movement, physical activity and recreation as economic drivers in the community ▪ Position opportunities for movement, physical activity and recreation as opportunities for social connection
4.3 Partner with local school communities to increase physical activity, movement and AT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to support and advocate for community use of schools ▪ Explore potential opportunities to increase physical activity and movement in schools ▪ Explore/support School Travel Planning ▪ Work with the school community to facilitate children and youth utilizing green spaces near schools ▪ Provide communication and promote resources within the school community, such as the equipment loan program



Strategic Direction: Workplace Setting

Goal: Strengthened alignment with community workplaces to support physical activity and movement in the workplace.

Objectives and High-Level Actions

Objectives	High Level Actions
5.1 Build capacity of local workplaces and networks to support physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote/provide education on how to support physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour in workplaces ▪ Support implementation of the provincial workplace toolkit and other resources that support physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour
5.2 Partner with businesses and the community to support AT to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with businesses and the community to support/encourage the bike friendly community initiative ▪ Partner with one or two large employers in the town to develop an AT plan that connects their workplace to downtown, residential areas and green spaces
5.3 Work with the Association of Municipal Administrators workplace health consultant to implement initiatives that support employee health and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the development of a wellness survey for municipal employees to assess needs ▪ Support development and implementation of recommendations from survey findings ▪ Role model and champion healthy workplace environments



Moving Forward

Moving forward, the Town of Truro will continue to work with the many partners who have contributed to the development of the strategic plan to support its implementation. A more detailed operational plan will be developed to identify timelines, accountability, responsibility and indicators of success for the objectives and actions.

To help ensure successful implementation of the strategic plan, key enablers have been identified including:

- **Leadership** from the Town of Truro and partner organizations. While the Active Community Coordinator has an important role to play in guiding the work, Council and partners need to champion the actions within the strategic plan. The strategic plan was developed through a collaborative process that engaged stakeholders from within the community and the actions reflect the shared work. Shared responsibility to support implementation of the strategic plan will help to ensure success.
- **Resources** including human, financial and physical are key enablers for the implementation of the strategic plan. Based on the actions and priorities identified, resources will be dedicated and sought to support implementation of the plan.
- **Accountability** is another key enabler to support implementation of the strategic plan. As noted above, an operational plan will identify indicators of success, which are the foundation for monitoring implementation of the actions and success of the strategic plan. Through ongoing tracking of the actions, adjustments can be made to continually improve the implementation process. Annual reports will be produced to track progress and share success.
- **Communication** with our partners and community will be critical as the strategic plan is implemented. Effective communication will help to build shared responsibility for the strategic plan and to celebrate and build on achievements.

Many people contributed to developing this strategic plan. The contributions made by partners in the community have been invaluable. The ongoing support and contributions of all these individuals will be essential in helping to move the strategic directions and associated objectives of the strategic plan forward and help to ensure the vision and goals are achieved.