

# 2

## Town of Truro Community Plan

# OUR COMMUNITY

### 2.1 COMMUNITY PROFILE

The 2010 Town of Truro Community Plan signalled Truro Council's aspirations for the Town with its Sustainability Charter: Truro is a just and vibrant community with a thriving economy and sustainable environment. These themes were prevalent again in the work of the community-based Town of Truro Branding Task Force that reported to Council in 2017. The brand message Truro...Make the Connection was supported by positive vision for Truro:

*Truro maintains a small town feel while offering residents an abundant lifestyle. Victoria Park lies in the heart of the community, surrounded by affordable housing within unique neighbourhoods. We have state-of-the-art healthcare and wellness services, and some of the best educational opportunities in Nova Scotia. Truro is a safe community which offers families a myriad of recreational and community activities. Truro is the 'perfect size' - small town ambience with a full range of quality amenities and services.*

*We are the ideal community: we are prosperous, growing, sustainable, diverse, and culturally rich, but through this we have maintained our laid back, accessible, and enriching lifestyle. We offer a community which allows each of us to have a say and make a difference. We are interwoven, and yet we are a community with a mix of personalities and characteristics. We work towards building a more inclusive but diverse community, one where there are opportunities for each of us to know each other and make meaningful connections. We have a sense of community pride, authenticity, and willingness to give back.*



The Community Profile section of this 2023 Town of Truro Community Plan illustrates achievement toward this vision as well as some areas needing continuing community effort.

## 2.2 GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

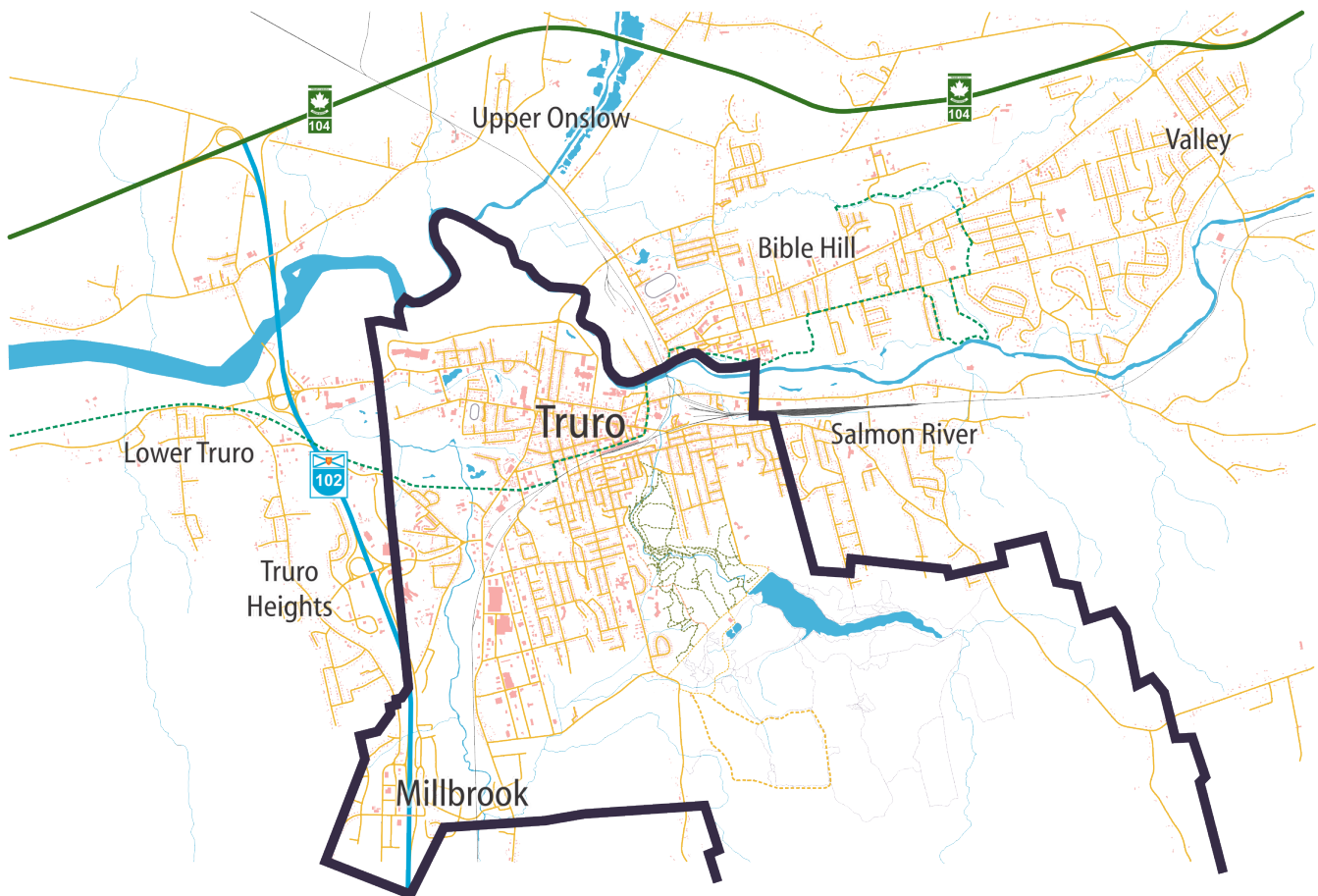
The Town of Truro is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw People, and is subject to the Treaties of Peace and Friendship.

Truro is situated centrally within Nova Scotia and the Maritime region of Canada. Major rail and road networks have developed with Truro as key node, benefitting the Town economically. Truro is also central within the Municipality of Colchester and has become an urban core for shopping, business, health care, education, housing, and recreation.

While no longer a transportation factor, Truro's location along the Salmon River and at the mouth of the Cobequid Basin contributes to its natural attractiveness. However, this asset of the Town's geographic setting has also proven to be a challenge in relation to flooding. Climate change is forecasted to make Truro even more prone to flood and storm surge events in the coming decades.

In 2021, Statistics Canada launched a Census of the Environment to provide baseline data and monitor environmental change in Canada in categories such as air quality and eco-systems. In 2022, it released comparative estimates of 'urban greenness' for population centres across Canada. Population centres in the Atlantic provinces had the highest proportion of land area qualifying as green. Within Nova Scotia, places categorized as Small Population Centres, including Truro, had the highest proportion of green cover within built up land areas as well as the least decline over time of that greenness. This is consistent with Truro's exemplary urban forestry efforts that include municipal programs to plant and protect trees. Victoria Park is the Town's natural woodland gem, with 3,000 acres of protected accessible nature.





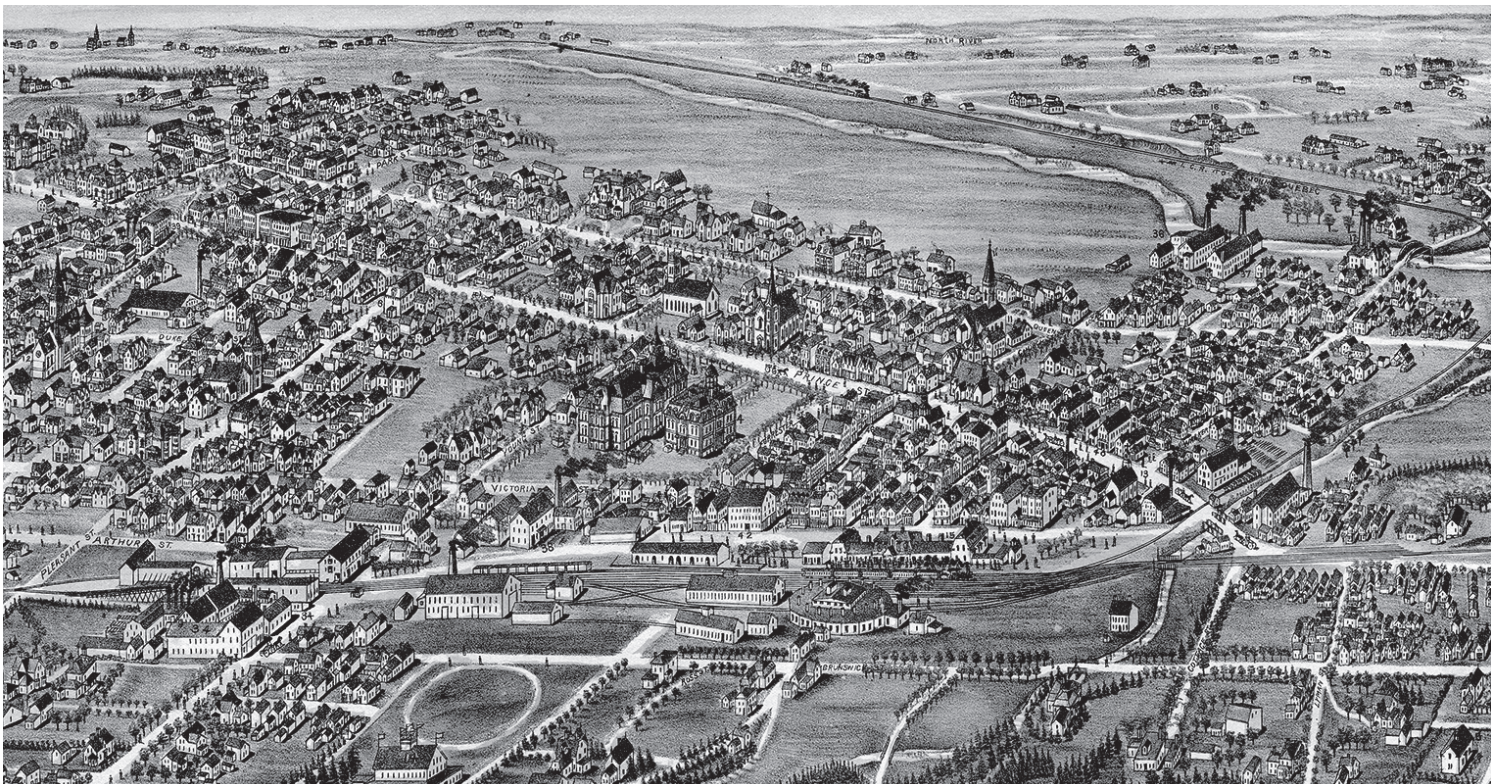
## 2.3 SOME HISTORY

The Town of Truro is situated in a region long inhabited by Indigenous Peoples. Their presence, continued today by Mi'kmaq citizens, is evident in archeological artifacts discovered near Debert dating back more than eleven thousand years. Accounts written in the 1700's indicate that Mi'kmaq settlements were concentrated along the banks of what was later named the Salmon River near where the Nova Scotia Agricultural College was later established.

In the late 1600's, French settlers and Roman Catholic Missionaries arrived in the area. A fur trade developed between Mi'kmaq and the French. By 1700 there were approximately twenty families residing near what is now known as Truro in the larger region they called Acadie. Hunting and fishing were undertaken in harmony with the Mi'kmaq and farms were established.

In 1713, England took over the governance of the territory, the title for which had gone back and forth among England, Scotland, and France during the 1600's, although it has never been ceded by the Mi'kmaq who knew (and continue to know) it as Mi'kma'ki. Much of the 1700's was characterized by battles between the British and French, including Acadians, and between the British and Wabanaki Confederacy, which included the Mi'kmaq, who had become allies of the Acadians. Conflicts were about empires, trade routes, land, resources, and borders, including where to draw the border between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Although the Truro area was not the direct site of conflict, all Mi'kmaq were threatened by Governor Edward Cornwallis' 1750 bounty for the death of any Mi'kmaq person. Hostilities were occasionally interrupted by treaties



between the British Crown and various representatives of the Wabanaki. These treaties did not involve land concessions, but rather, were about peace and friendship based on recognition of rights to pursue livelihoods without interference. The Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1760-61 continue to be in force and are now celebrated annually in Nova Scotia on the first of October.

The expulsion of the French Acadians from Nova Scotia was ordered by the British in 1755. Soon after, land grants were attracting settlers loyal to the British Crown, including recruits from the New England states and Ireland. The first 'Planters' were largely farmers of Irish-Scottish descent. Cobequid, derived from the Mi'kmaq word for 'end of the water's flow', We'kopekitk, was divided into three townships (sections of land consisting of 100,000 acres or 12 square miles). These were Londonderry, Onslow, and Truro.

Following the defeat of England in the American Revolutionary War, United Empire Loyalists found their way to Nova Scotia. It is likely that in one of two settlement events, Truro's first Black settlers arrived, many first settling in the Guysborough area, later making their way to Truro to work in railway construction. White Planter and Loyalist grantees received shares that included marshland, house lots, farmland, and wood lots. The granted lands included many areas traditionally used by Mi'kmaq. Lots were also put aside for a church, burial ground, school, and a common for public gatherings.

Victoria Square was the original common in Truro Township. The first meeting house was built in 1768 beside the burial ground which is now Robie Street Cemetery. In 1854 this original meeting house was abandoned, and a new

Presbyterian church was built on Lorne Street. This building was destroyed by fire in 1913 and what is now First United Church was constructed.

Early settlers in Truro cleared 100 acres of forested upland and farmed wheat, rye, oats, peas, barley, hemp, and flax. Homes were built from the abundant wood in and around Truro. Tradespeople included shoe and garment makers. As travel and trade increased, self-sufficiency activities such as baking and farming were joined by manufacturing. Transportation has always been central to Truro and Truro central to it. Shipbuilding thrived in the area prior to the dominance of rail and roads. By the mid to late 1800's, Truro was an important railway hub. This contributed to the development of a significant manufacturing sector that, at various times, has produced a diverse range of goods including footwear, hats, pianos, carpets, iron items, knitwear, clothes pegs, and horse carriages. Dairy, grain, and beverage processing also contributed to Truro's economy. Several companies located their headquarters in Truro.

Truro was incorporated as a Town in 1875, making it one of Nova Scotia's earliest incorporated towns. The Town developed a booming construction sector responsible for numerous civic, industrial, and religious buildings. Truro continues to be known for its many finely crafted private homes dating from the late 1800 and early 1900's.

Truro became a regional education centre, with a distinguished tradition of primary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions. The Provincial Normal School was established in 1855. It later became the Nova Scotia Teachers' College and operated until 1997. The Nova Scotia Agricultural College (next door



in the Village of Bible Hill), Cobequid Educational Centre, and Truro campus of the Nova Scotia Community College have also contributed to Truro's reputation for learning institutions.

The School of Agriculture, which became the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and is now Dalhousie University's Faculty of Agriculture, was established in 1885 on lands along the Salmon River that had always been used and lived on by the Mi'kmaq. Their community was displaced to allotted lands around King Street in Truro (near the former St. Mary's School) which they were licensed to occupy. As the Mi'kmaw community grew in numbers, now subject to a property ownership system that constrained their traditional seasonal livelihood pursuits, they were once again shifted to lands on the edge of town to the present-day Millbrook First Nation Reserve.

The African Nova Scotian community in Truro grew throughout the later half of the 1800s and early 1900s primarily in relation to labour required to establish Truro as a railway hub. As housing needs outgrew capacity in the central part of Truro, three areas that were then on the edges of Truro were developed. These areas became known as The Hill (Foundry Hill, Young Street), The Marsh, (Ford Street), and Smith's Island (West Prince Street).

The Town of Truro grew in enumerated population from 5,993 in 1901 to 11,457 in 2001. As a regional hub, its economy was and continues to be diverse, featuring manufacturing, retail, services, and governmental and educational institutions. Most factors relating to Truro's population flux are the same as those experienced by other small communities in Canada during the twentieth century: longer life-expectancy

through medical advancements, especially the development of antibiotics and vaccines, decline in family size (fertility rate), increased participation of women in higher education and the labour pool, and out-migration to large urban centres. Truro, like other Atlantic Canadian communities outside major cities, did not experience large growth and diversification through immigration throughout the 1900s.

## 2.4 RECENT CHANGE

In just over a decade between the publishing of the 2010 Town of Truro Community Plan and the release of the 2023 version, the Town has experienced population growth at a rate higher than the previous five decades combined:

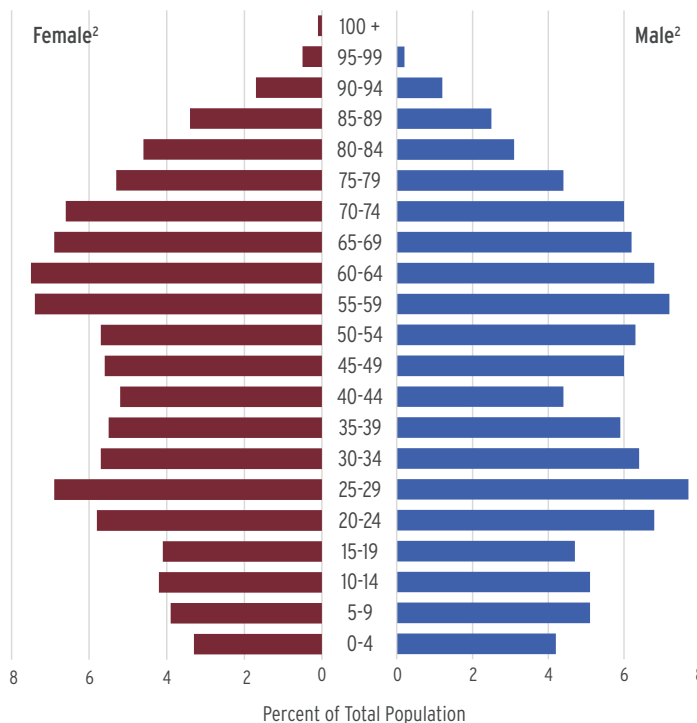
Development that has accompanied Truro's recent growth reflects both prosperity and an emphasis on community. Major projects featured Municipal and citizen leadership and were undertaken collaboratively with the Municipality of Colchester, Millbrook First Nation, financial assistance from community donors and the Federal and Provincial Governments. These include a new regional hospital, renewed Normal College building housing the regional library, the Rath Eastlink Community Centre (RECC). The facilities of the RECC provide fitness and recreation opportunities for area residents as well as enabling Truro-Colchester to host world-class sporting and entertainment events.

Truro's off-leash dog park, Riverfront Park, The Railyard Mountain Bike Park, Douglas Street School Community Centre, all developed since 2010, are amenities that enhance daily life for residents. Perhaps the most transformative change in Truro over the past decade has been

creation of a dynamic Civic Square. It's green space and winter skating oval have become a focal point for the Town. The Square connects a cluster of civic sites, including the Colchester-East Hants Public Library in the refreshed Nova Scotia Normal College, the Truro Cenotaph, Truro Farmers' Market in the renovated former Fire Hall, the Truro Police Service building, Truro Town Hall, the new Fire Station, and Colchester

Historium. The Civic Square green space has hosted popular festivals such as One Horse Town and Rock the Hub, as well as Rogers Hometown Hockey. Along with being a popular outdoor place to meet up with friends, the Civic Square has galvanized the community around social activism as evidenced by the student-led Fridays for Future climate change rallies, Embrace Truro, Truro Pride Parade, and large Black Lives Matter march and rally in June 2020.

TOWN OF TRURO<sup>1</sup>  
2021 Population by Age and Sex<sup>2</sup>



1. Millbrook First Nation is located within the boundaries of the Town of Truro and this figure includes Millbrook's population.

2. Note from Statistics Canada:  
Gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman, or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman).

Gender includes the following concepts:

- gender identity, which refers to the gender that a person feels internally and individually;
- gender expression, which refers to the way a person presents their gender, regardless of their gender identity, through body language, aesthetic choices, or accessories (e.g., clothes, hairstyle and makeup), which may have traditionally been associated with a specific gender.

A person's gender may differ from their sex at birth, and from what is indicated on their current identification or legal documents such as their birth certificate, passport, or driver's license. A person's gender may change over time. Some people may not identify with a specific gender.

## 2.5 DEMOGRAPHICS

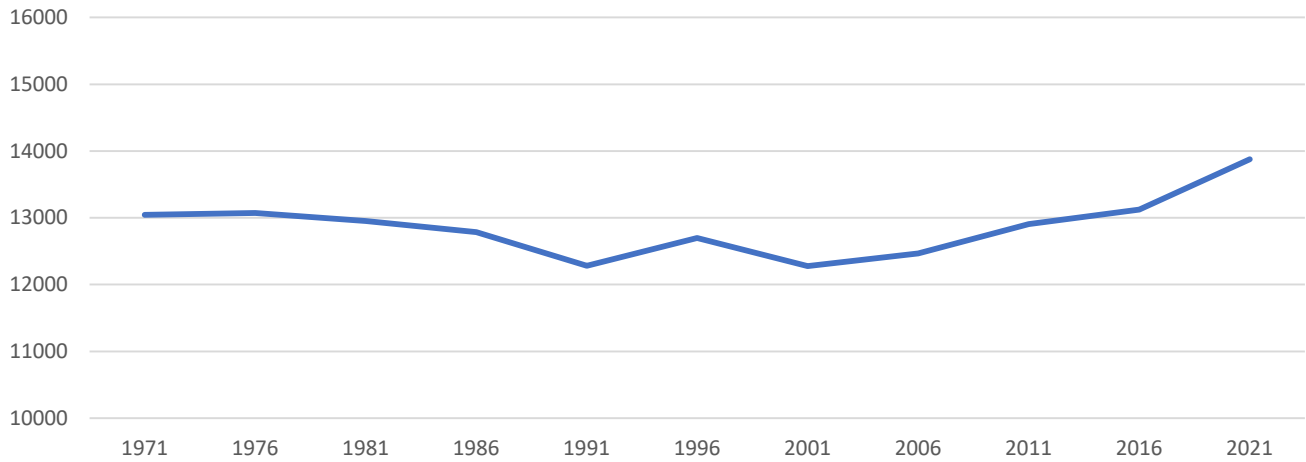
The 2021 Census shows that the Town of Truro (including Millbrook First Nation) has a total population of 13,875 while the Truro Census Agglomeration has a population of 46,157. Like many other urban centres within 100 kilometres of Halifax, the Town of Truro has been experiencing moderate growth. Between 2016 and 2021 the Town grew by 5.7% and the Truro-Colchester region grew by 0.9%. During this same period, the population of the Municipality of the County of Colchester did not change. These figures indicate that most of the growth in the Truro area has been concentrated in the urban core of Truro.

The following graphs highlight some key demographics for the Town of Truro and the Truro region.

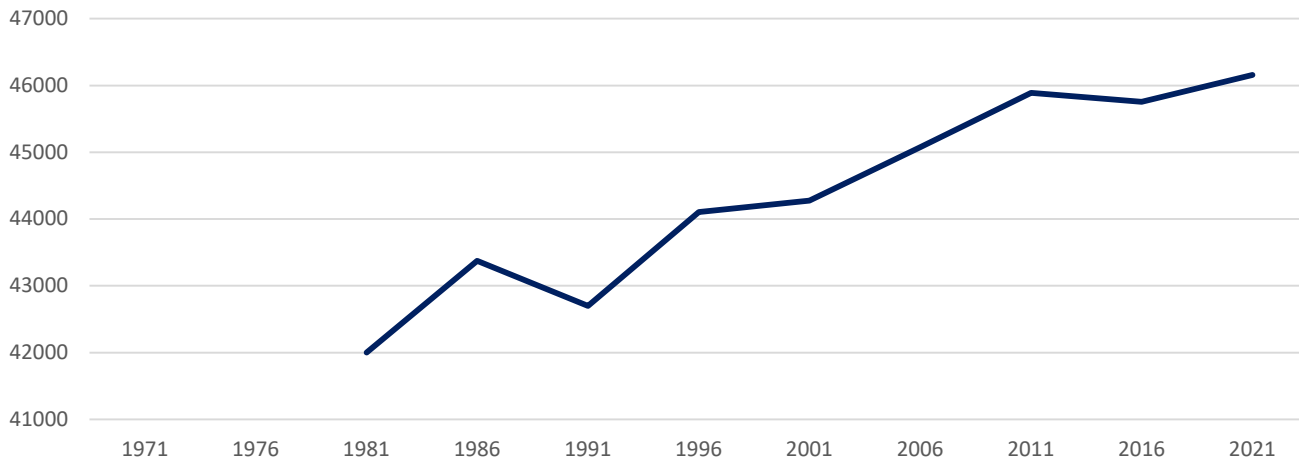
While new buildings and events are easily noticed, other change is more subtle. One way to assess differences in Truro over a period is to compare available statistical information. Data about population size, age, income, and diversity can help measure progress and continuing challenges.

On the following pages are selected data from Statistics Canada that compare Truro in 2010-2011 to 2020-2021

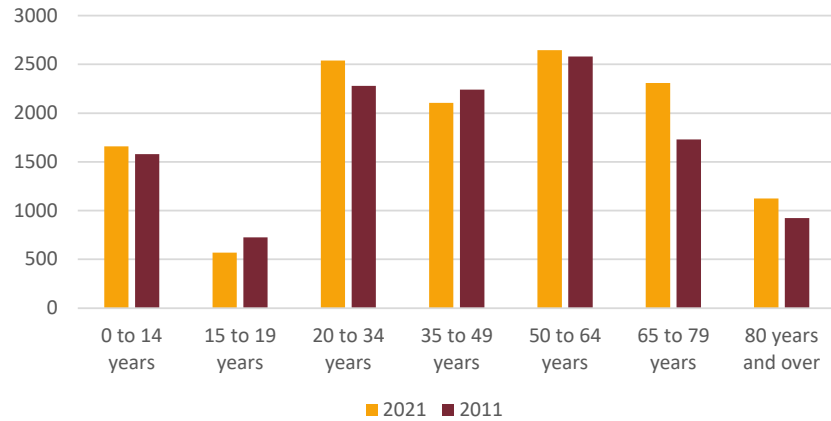
**TOWN OF TRURO<sup>1</sup>**  
Population (1971 - 2021)



**TRURO CENSUS AGGLOMERATION**  
Population (1971 - 2021)



TRURO CENSUS AGGLOMERATION  
Population (1971 - 2021)



## Town of Truro Population Change, 2011-2021

Population increase

895 people

Average annual population increase

95.6 people/year

Average annual population % increase

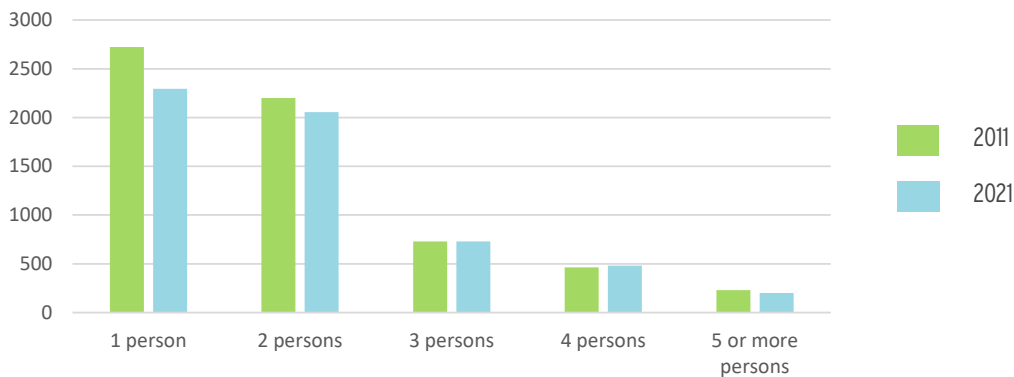
0.74%/ year

*The Town's median age increased from 45.6 years in 2011 to 47.6 years in 2021*

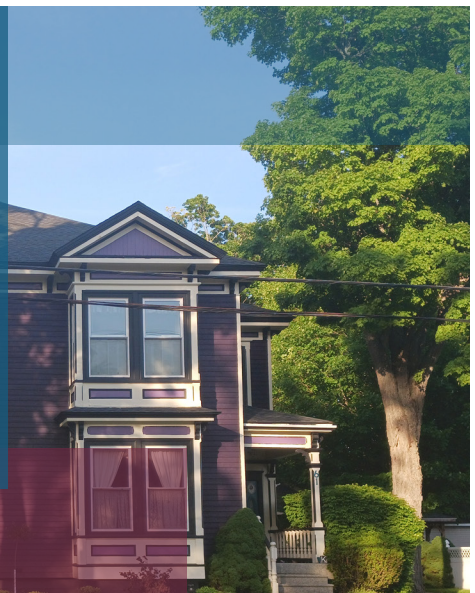
*The Town's average age increased from 44.1 years in 2011 to 46.2 years in 2021*

*The Town's efforts to increase residential densities appear to be working. From 2011-2021 the number of people per square kilometre increased from 320.5 to 345.3*

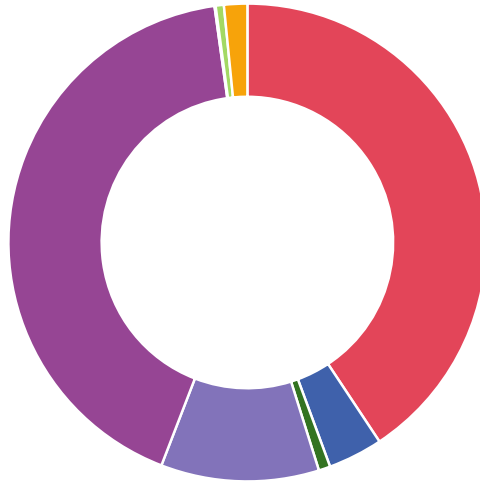
TOWN OF TRURO  
Private Households by Size 2011 & 2021






*The number of private dwellings in Truro increased by almost 400 units, or 6.3 % from 2011 to 2021, rising from 6,263 dwellings in 2011 to 6,658 dwellings in 2021*

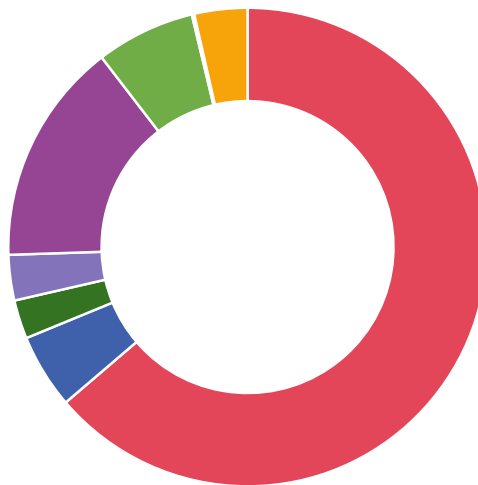


### TOWN OF TRURO Dwelling Types 2021



- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|    | Single Detached                               |    | Semi-Detached House                           |
|   | Row House                                     |   | Apartment or Flat in a Duplex                 |
|  | Apartment (Building with less than 5 storeys) |  | Apartment (Building with more than 5 storeys) |
|  | Other Single Detached House                   |  | Movable Dwelling                              |

### PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA Dwelling Types 2021



### TOWN OF TRURO Income for Individuals 15 and Over 2010 & 2020

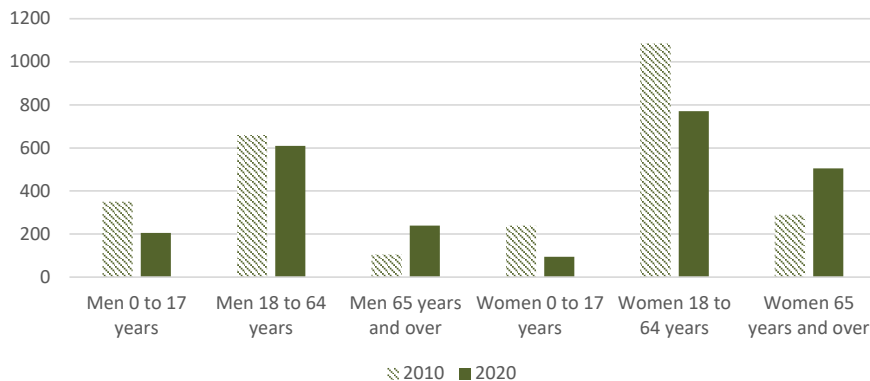


*The average household income in Truro increased from \$54,259 in 2010 to \$69,500 in 2021*

*The average total income of a household in 2020, adjusted for inflation, is \$58,380*

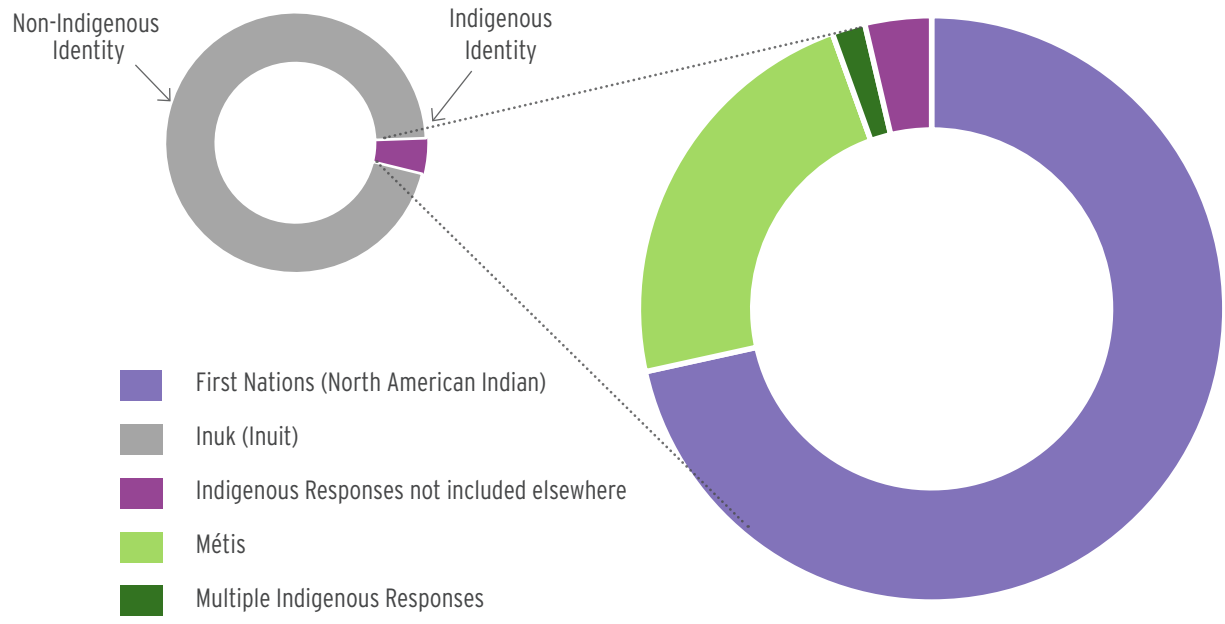
*The percentage of Truro's population with low income (based on the Low-income Measure) in 2011 was 19.5%, down from 22.6% in 2021*

### TOWN OF TRURO Persons with Low Household Income<sup>3</sup> 2010 & 2020

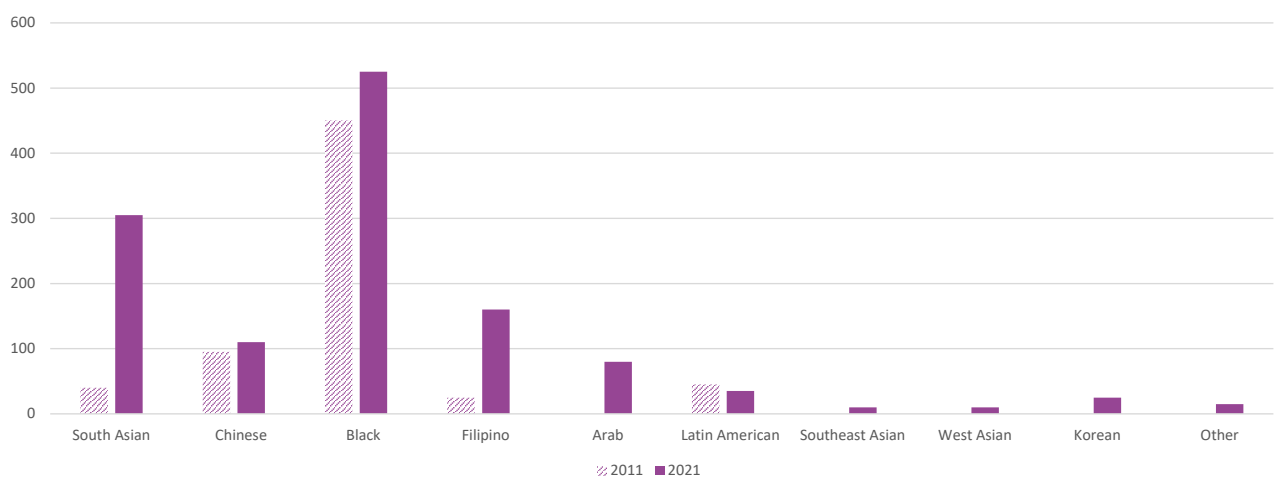


3. Based on the Low-Income Measure, after tax

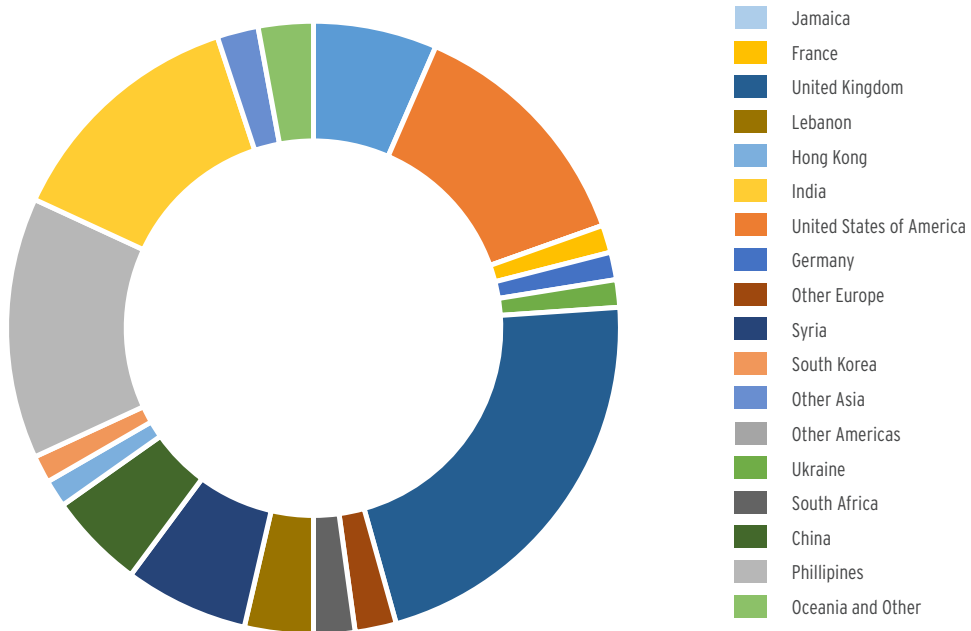
### TOWN OF TRURO Indigenous Identity



### TOWN OF TRURO Visible Minorities 2011 & 2021



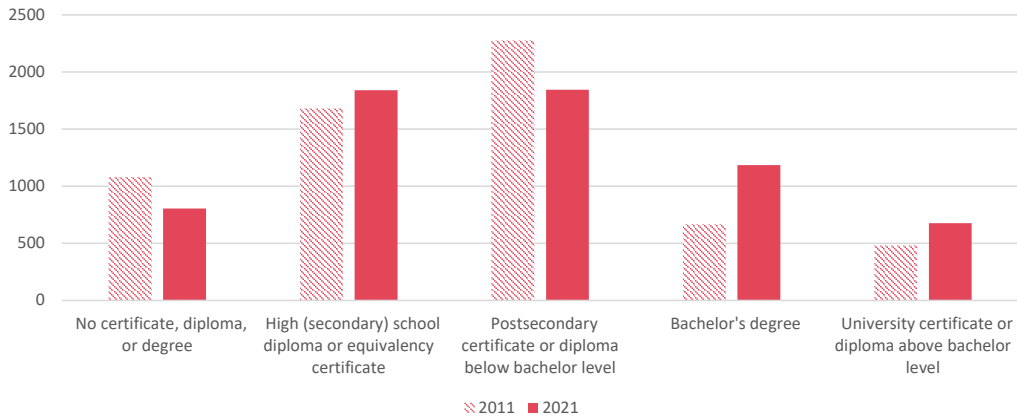
### TOWN OF TRURO Immigrant Places of Birth



### TOWN OF TRURO Immigration 1980 - 2021



### TOWN OF TRURO Level of Education (Ages 25-64) 2011 & 2021



### TOWN OF TRURO Labour Force by Occupation and Sex 2011 & 2021

