

# **Growing Colchester 2005 - 2010**



**Regional Economic Plan**

**Prepared by the Board and Staff of the Colchester Regional Development Agency**

## Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
<i>Executive Summary</i>	3
<i>Building the Plan</i>	
<i>Economic Planning Partnerships</i>	5
<i>The Planning Process</i>	6
<i>Updating and Reviewing Our Progress</i>	6
<i>Our Vision</i>	7
<i>Our Values</i>	7
<i>Regional Position</i>	8
<i>Sector Opportunities</i>	8
<i>Economic Development Pyramid</i>	10
<i>Strategic Deliverables</i>	11
<i>Four Imperatives</i>	11
<i>Five Drivers of Success</i>	12
<i>Strategies</i>	13
<i>Developing our Human Resources</i>	13
<i>Selling Colchester</i>	14
<i>Building infrastructure</i>	15
<i>Developing Strong Partnerships</i>	16
<i>Effective leadership, policies and planning and business support</i>	18
<i>Conclusion</i>	18
<i>Appendices</i>	20
<i>Regional planning partners</i>	21
<i>Mission of Partners</i>	22
<i>Communities in Colchester</i>	23
<i>Key Performance Indicator table (sample)</i>	24
<i>Reference Material</i>	25

## Executive Summary

The following Regional Economic plan is the creation of the key stakeholders and influencers of economic growth in the Colchester region. The intent is to carve out a competitive position in the global economy that reflects the strengths and needs of our communities.

Early in 2003, municipal leaders in our community called for a change in the way we develop the economy of our region. There was interest in becoming better aligned and more accountable to the communities we serve. By November of 2003, three economic development organizations merged, the Colchester Regional Development Agency, the Colchester Park Development Society, and the Colchester Micro Enterprise Network. One board of directors governs two organizations. We believe there is still room to improve, room to better align growth initiatives in the region, room to work with one vision, room to realize an improvement in the quality of life of all citizens in Colchester. This belief is the underpin of this plan – commitment to one strategy, one vision among all players in economic development.

The economic environment in which we work and live is changing. We cannot afford to be complacent... to assume that our past successes will see us through. There are opportunities available to us everyday but they are perishable. We need to know which ones to consider, which ones to leave and which ones to seize and run with. Regional strategic planning provides the framework for making these decisions.

Leadership representatives of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, The Nova Scotia Community College (Truro Campus), The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, The Town of Truro, The Town of Stewiacke, the County of Colchester, Millbrook Band Council, CoRDA, The Truro and District Chamber of Commerce, The Nova Scotia Department of Education, Human Resource Skills Development Canada and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, to name but a few (a full list follows in the appendix), have all shared their ideas regarding Colchester's place in the global economy, the opportunities that we should embrace and the issues that need to be addressed. Collectively, they have contributed to the development of a vision for growth for the region. The goals and strategies contained in this document are those of this leadership who have stepped up to the challenge to develop this **Regional** plan. They have taken on the responsibility to ensure that the goals and strategies are vigorously pursued; that progress towards their achievement is monitored and that the goals/projects/actions are updated so that economic growth is strategic, relevant and focused and that the plan is a living, high impact tool.

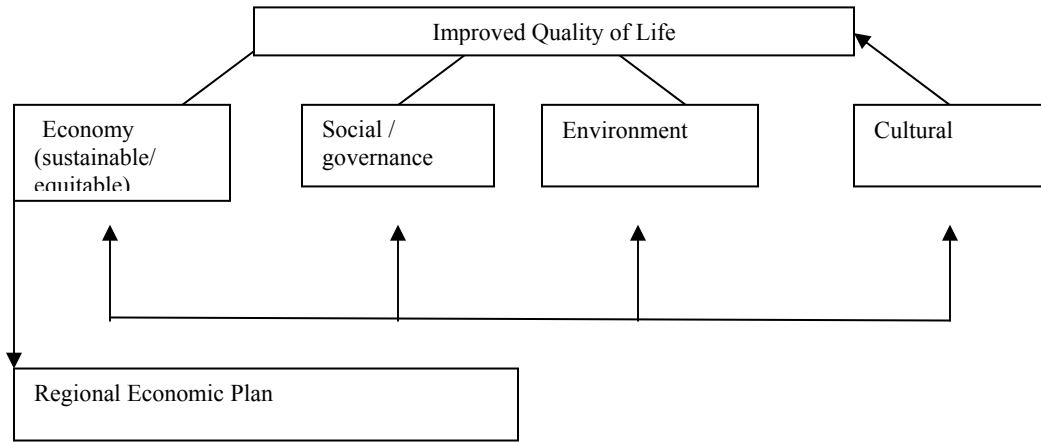
### Our Economic Model

The overriding purpose of Regional economic planning is to thoughtfully influence to the greatest extent possible, the direction and speed of economic development in order to support economic independence and facilitate the lifestyle goals of the people who live and work here. We believe our quality of life in Colchester will be improved by increasing the population while reducing the percentage of people unemployed and under-employed and by increasing the disposable income for the people who live or work in Colchester. We therefore need to focus on our economic foundation of 1) supporting existing businesses to survive and grow, 2) attracting new enterprise to Colchester, 3) creating new enterprises through innovation and entrepreneurial activity and 4) by creating a vibrant and welcoming community in which to live and work.

## Building the Plan

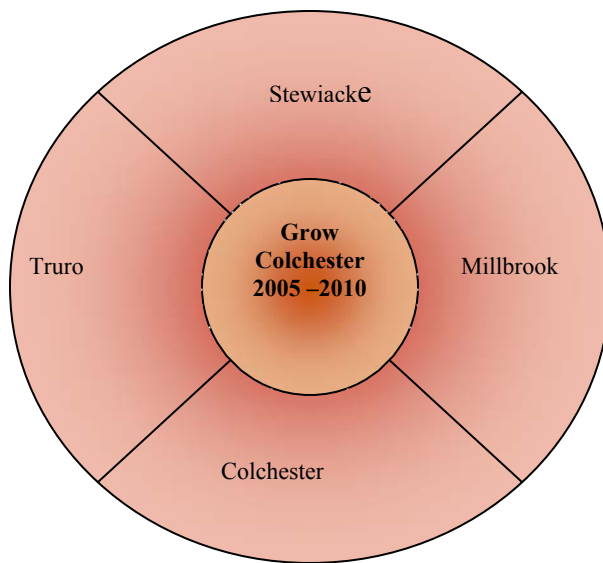
In 2004, an economic development planning process began for the Region of Colchester. The overriding purpose of the planning was to bring together regional leadership to create an appropriate, exciting and achievable economic growth strategy for Colchester that will deliver an improved quality of life for its citizens.

Although the focus of the planning is on our economy, it was appreciated that the economy is intricately linked to the social, environmental and cultural aspects of our society. In this plan goals and strategies relating to these areas are included as they relate to, or impact our economy.



## The Owners of the Plan

Many partners contribute to the economic well-being of our community. The private sector drives the economy. Four significant local governments contribute to creating a positive business climate to allow for growth to occur. They are: The Municipality of the County of Colchester, the Town of Truro, the Town of Stewiacke and the Millbrook Band Council.



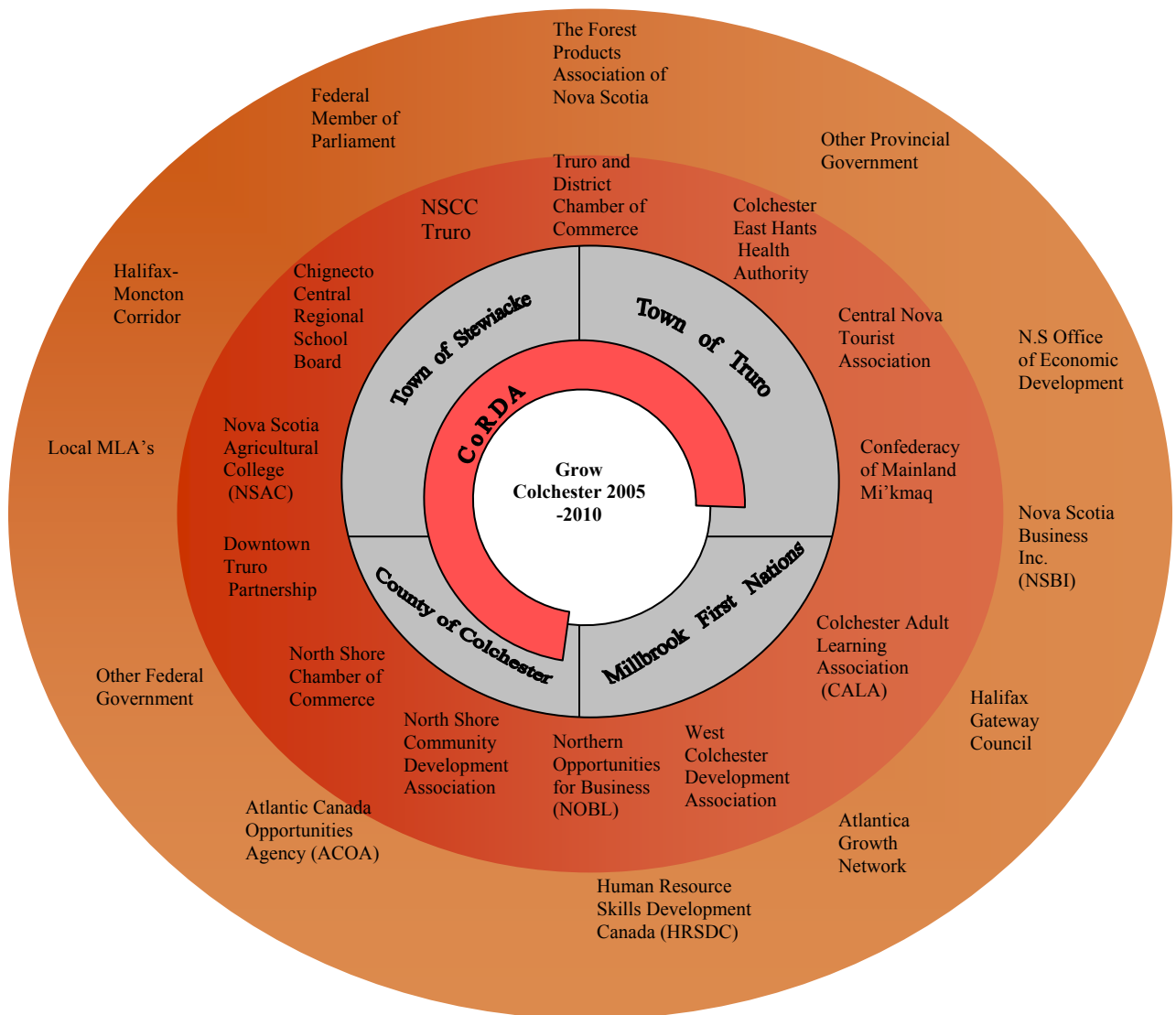
The Colchester Regional Development Agency (CoRDA) is the organization that has been given the mandate for economic development by the Town of Truro, the Town of Stewiacke and the Municipality of the County of Colchester. CoRDA is cost shared by the federal government through ACOA and the provincial government through the Office of Economic Development. Millbrook Band Council has their own department of economic development.

Other organizations play a significant role in growing the economy. They are listed in the partnership wheel pictured below.

In 2004, the new Board of CoRDA created as their mission “to drive sustainable economic growth creating healthy communities, prosperous business and opportunity for our citizens.” In mid 2004, CoRDA spearheaded and funded this economic planning process.

The power of this economic plan comes from the involvement of the people and organizations that have strong leadership roles in our region. There are numerous institutions, businesses, associations, and individuals who have shaped our current environment and will continue to strongly influence our regions livelihood into the future.

### Economic Planning Partnerships



## **The Planning Process**

Under the direction of the Board of CoRDA and the leadership of the CoRDA Executive Director, the development of the 2005-2010 regional economic plan began earnestly in October 2004.

The first workshop with the CoRDA Board was held in late October to discuss the issues affecting economic development and to identify and prioritize opportunities for improvement and growth. The next few months involved researching strategies to address the opportunities. Concurrently, a series of 'one to one' meetings with municipal leadership, regional and provincial 'partners' were held to further identify issues, opportunities and strategies.

The second workshop involving the CoRDA Board, Municipal leaders and councilors was held in February 2005. Input from this session was used to refine the vision and mission, and to prioritize and clarify strategies.

A CoRDA Board Regional Economic plan steering committee was established mid March. This steering committee was chaired by Jon Stanfield. Other members included Bill Hay, Bob White, Jonathan Woolfitt, Jo Ann Fewer (Executive Director) and Fonda Smyth (Resource). The process of cementing the framework for the plan, and completing the format and presentation of the planning document was undertaken. The draft plan was presented to the May meeting of the CoRDA Board. The 'one to one' regional partnership meetings were also concluded in early May.

The final workshop involving the leadership of the Municipalities, CoRDA and regional partners was conducted at the end of May 2005. Regional leaders have agreed on a direction for the economic growth of Colchester and have identified regional priority strategies and initiatives for the next five years.

## **Reviewing Our Progress**

Now that we have a regional economic plan (2005 – 2010), it is essential that regional leadership review our progress regularly. We may need to collectively deal with issues, problem solve, communicate and update our priorities and actions as our environment and situation changes.

An economic development committee will meet 'quarterly' to review our progress. To assist the committee, a professional, concise performance tracking report will be generated that contains key performance indicators, variance analysis, project reports and strategic issues..

This plan is to be a living tool. Economic planning for our Region needs to be a continuous process.

## Our Vision

It is 2020. Colchester is a dynamic, growing, innovative, and welcoming region. We are known for our 'small town' values (honouring our word and harbouring a sense of responsibility for the welfare of our friends and neighbours). We are a vibrant, diverse and inclusive society. Creativity is celebrated. There is pride of the heritage of our all of our people, an increasing respect for our natural environment, and numerous opportunities for our citizens to pursue their learning and employment goals.

Our economy is also diverse. Lucrative life science, cultural and tourism businesses complement our transportation, distribution, light- manufacturing and retail firms who have embraced technology, evolved and remain strong. Our region is known for it's healthy export business and global reach. We are the heart of Atlantica. Evidence of successful entrepreneurial activity is everywhere.

Colchester's villages and communities are thriving. No one is left out. We are the preferred place to live and work in Atlantic Canada.

## Our Values

Our Values reflect who we are – our Regional personality. They tell the world what we stand for and are they are the aspects of our standards/collective behavior that are non-negotiable. All decisions must have congruence with our cultural values. They also act as filters for decisions. Our desired culture includes:

### ***Business Ethics (handshake)***

Acting with integrity – honoring our word, knowing that commitments will be kept.

### ***Youth Leadership***

Offering the region's young people every opportunity to develop and practice leadership skills.

### ***Community Responsibility***

Caring deeply for the welfare of our immediate and extended families, our neighborhoods, our province and our country. Harboring a sense of responsibility to contribute to visitor enjoyment of our area.

### ***Diversity***

Learning to accept, promote and celebrate diversity in the people (and businesses) that reside or work in our region.

### ***Environmental Stewardship***

Looking after the region's natural resources to ensure that we, and the future citizens of Colchester, enjoy healthy air, clean water and a beautiful environment.

### ***Education/ lifelong learning***

Inspiring our residents to improve the quality of their lives through education and lifelong learning.

### ***Entrepreneurial/ 'can do'/risk taking***

Encouraging, teaching and rewarding behaviors that demonstrate the following: an eagerness to take risks, to persevere and to create opportunities.

## Our Regional Position

Colchester is strategically located as the geographic hub of Nova Scotia and has a history of innovative and very successful light manufacturing and transport businesses that have provided a solid foundation for our economy. We also enjoy the enviable reputation as a center of excellence in agriculture research and education for Atlantic Canada. Our people are some of the brightest and most dedicated of any people in the world.

The leaders of Colchester intend to build on these unique competitive strengths. We are committed to building an economy that is the innovative hub of Atlantic Canada in the areas of life sciences (agriculture, health), tourism, light manufacturing and distribution.

We understand that the key to success lies solely in our people; in the culture that we develop as well as in the skills and knowledge that we acquire. Our devotion to becoming a region supportive and proud of our diversity (citizens of different race, color, gender, age, country of birth, religious preference, etc.) will only serve to enhance our reputation as a friendly and caring community. We accept the challenge to reach out to all of our people to encourage and enable them to meet their personal development goals. We need to assist our youth to develop the confidence and skills to be our region's leaders. Lifelong learning will be promoted as a treasured value. Equally important is our intention to become known as an innovative, resourceful region. Accordingly, as leaders we must teach, model and nurture the attitudes and behaviors necessary to make this happen.

Finally, there is a pressing need for more of our citizens to value, protect and preserve the natural environment in which we live. Continuing to deplete our resources is no longer an option. We aim to find ways to live within our means and we will strive to restore and enhance the quality of our air, water, forests and other ecosystems for the benefit of our children and for the other creatures that share this earth with us.

This mission will be achieved by the commitment of regional leadership to work together as one. We will keep the end in mind and strive to perform as a cohesive team, dedicated to improving our economy for the betterment of us all.

## Sector Opportunities

The Colchester Regional Development Agency conducted an economic sector study in 2003 aimed at determining key growth sectors in the region. This analysis determined sectors that would grow naturally, with or without support and sectors that could grow, given support. Natural growth sectors included **light manufacturing, distribution and transportation and retail**. These sectors showed consistent growth over the past three census periods.

Discussions during the regional planning sessions determined that, due to global competition in the manufacturing sector, mainly from China, focus on growth in light manufacturing should be through assisting existing business to grow and become stronger. Strategies should assist companies to explore and develop new markets, maintain and attract a healthy labour pool, and remain competitive.

Growth in the distribution and transportation sectors is dependent on a healthy economy in Atlantic Canada. The region is naturally positioned as a central distribution centre. Colchester's proximity to all provinces, the Port of Halifax, two 100 series highways and rail make it a natural central point for serving the Atlantic market. Growth in this sector should be expedited through direct contact with companies wishing to expand into this market. Future growth is dependent on a shift in global trading patterns. The Port of Halifax is well positioned to serve shipments from Asia



through the so- called Suez Express route. “As a result, the east coast of North America is now on the Pacific Rim and is a destination for the industrial output of fast-growing China, India and Southeast Asia”. (Ideas Matter – AIMS pg 4)

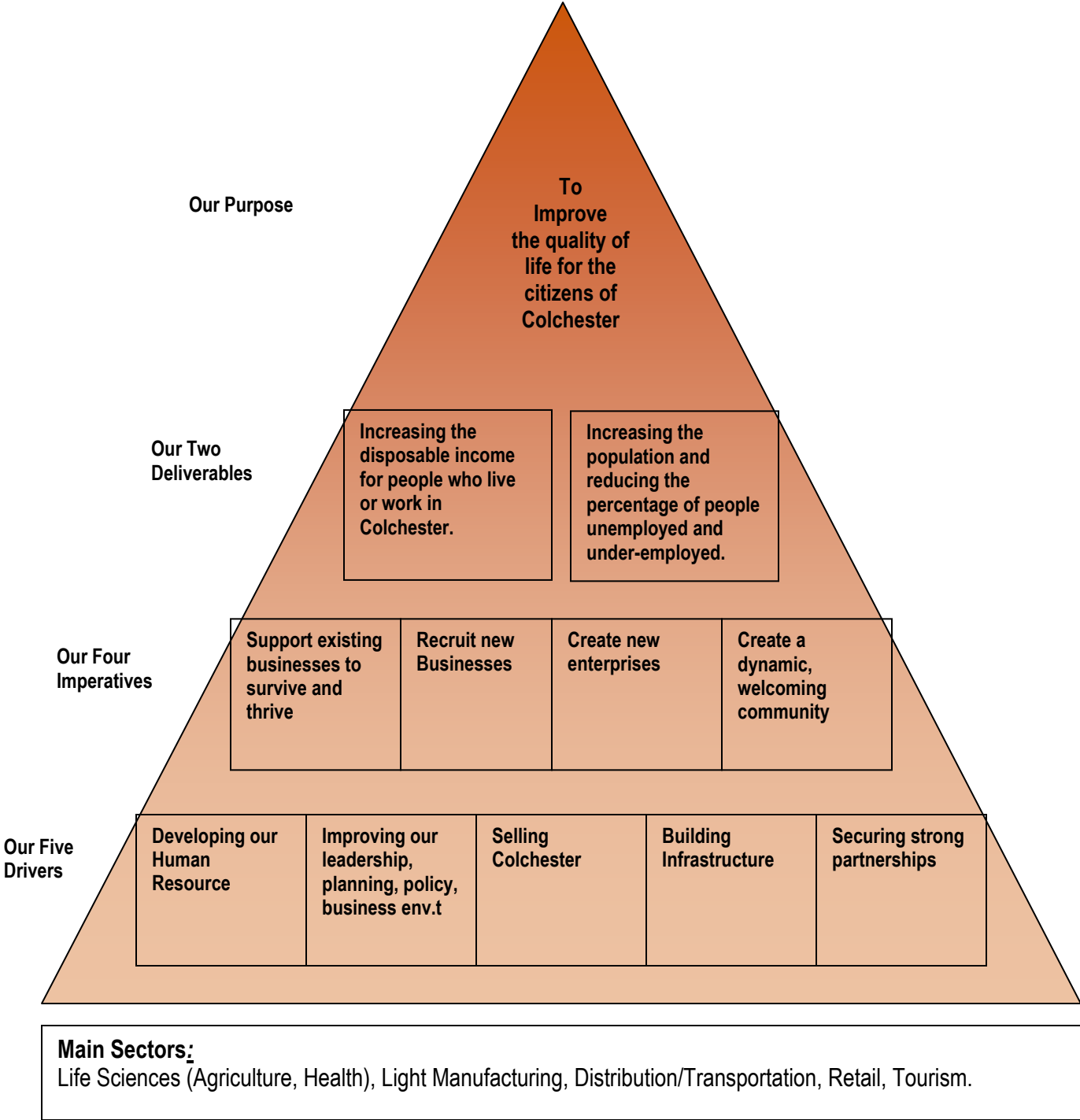
Rapid growth at the Truro Power Centre is creating clusters of activity in the **retail sector**. Approximately 200 jobs have been created to date, with another 600 scheduled over the next 5 years. Plans for development in downtown Truro will create new niche opportunities. Growth continues to expand from Halifax, creating new retail demand.

The strategy recommended that leaders in economic development focus on both agricultural and health **life sciences** because of the tremendous research capacity of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) and the facility on site – Agri -Tech Park. The Agricultural College is now home to the national centers for both Organics and Fur Research. The University has strong research capacity in the areas of food and genomics. The NSAC is currently looking at the possibility of developing health related programs such as nursing given the strength of their science program. Agri-Tech Park will soon be home to a bio-research centre.

All communities could benefit from increased business in the **tourism** sector. Small business opportunities exist in rural areas. Opportunities for better cooperation / coordination exist throughout the region. Continuing to develop cultural facilities, such as the Marigold Centre and the Tatamagouche Creamery, add to the draw and increase occupancy and visitation among small operators. Possibilities to increase the level of events would also increase economic impact in the community.

Focusing on the development of the above sectors (clusters) does not mean that those are the only areas in which we see economic opportunities. The potential of communications technology, adult living services and the education sectors to generate wealth are also significant. The difference is that we do not see that we have a competitive advantage in those areas and thus do not expect them to be the main thrust of our progress.

# Our Economic Development Pyramid



## Strategic Deliverables

To increase the disposable income for people who live or work in Colchester.

To increase the population and reduce the percentage of people unemployed and under-employed.

### Measured by:

- 1) Change in Disposable Income
- 2) Change in Total Population
- 3) Employment Rate
- 4) Number of People in Workforce
- 5) Breakdown of job types - professional vs labour jobs

## Four Imperatives

Support existing businesses to survive and thrive	Recruit new Businesses	Create new enterprises	Create a dynamic, welcoming community
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### Measured by:

Expansion measured by : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• job growth</li> <li>• % sales growth</li> <li>• % profit growth</li> </ul>	# of relocated businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- jobs created</li> <li>- \$\$ tax revenue</li> </ul>	# of new businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jobs created</li> <li>- Business in existence after 3 years</li> </ul>	% increase in population % participants in provincial nominee program Diversity measure (mix of race/gender/etc)
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### Current needs

Assistance to develop export markets	Development and marketing plan for parks	Literacy to develop skills and confidence	Cultural and social infrastructure/ programs in centers (downtowns)
Supply of skilled labour	Investment in infrastructure – sewage, water, roads, buildings	Entrepreneurial attitude –	Social infrastructure intact in rural areas (schools, health centres, etc)
Competitive local services	Cohesive marketing strategy locally and with partners	Ongoing support to improve and develop business skills	Youth activity/ engagement
Marketing expertise/assistance	Available labour pool	Seed funding/venture capital	Knowledge based businesses
Assistance to develop and market 'value added' products	Competitive incentives taxes, no or low 'red tape'	Better understanding of the critical factors/components of an enterprising culture	Inclusion apparent everywhere!
Alliances/partnerships			Mixed housing available

## Five Drivers of Success:

### 1. Developing our Human Resource

The Developing our Human resource section focuses on improving the quality and quantity of our greatest most creative resource - our people.

### 2. Selling Colchester

Selling Colchester is about being smart and creative in marketing our region. It is about promoting our attributes and selling the benefits of Colchester as a place to live, work and invest.

### 3. Building infrastructure

Infrastructure includes all the physical assets that support needs of our society, from business infrastructure to community and cultural infrastructure.

### 4. Building strong partnerships (Regional, National, Global)

The effectiveness and speed of our economic success will be driven in large part by our ability to form strong relationships and partnerships/alliances at the local, regional and global level. Access to people, ideas, and other resources outside of our immediate environment will allow us to share ideas and create efficiencies.

### 5. Effective leadership, policies and planning and business support.

The scope of this section includes the need for effective long-term Regional planning, effective tracking, seeking our and building strong leaders, inspired community driven development and effective business support policies and services.

## Strategies

### Develop our Human Resources

The last census revealed that a staggering 30% of Colchester's adult population have not completed high school. The Economic Sector strategy completed by Canmac Economics in 2003 indicates that there will be a total new demand for labour force of approximately 30% in most sectors due to retirements and declining population. Our population did not grow but remained stagnant between 1996 and 2001, yet the population continued to age with out migration occurring in the 15 – 29 age range. Across Nova Scotia, approximately 25% of our population is either unemployed or underemployed. People are our most valuable resource! We need to ensure that whoever wants to contribute to our economy in this region can, despite barriers like lack of education. We need to ensure our population experiences growth to fill the expected labour force demand.

Action	Indicator of Performance	Lead
Determine local labour force issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey complete – year 1</li> <li>• Program in place to address shortages</li> </ul>	CoRDA
Increase basic literacy levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase # of CALA level 1,2,&amp;3 graduates by 20% year 1, 40% year 5</li> <li>• Track year 1 students in year 5 to determine transition to labour force</li> </ul>	CALA / Dept of Ed/ Chignecto Central School Board Local Financial Support
Increase # of Citizens with High School completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of people registered in Adult Education programs increases in by 5% in year 1 to 15% in year 5</li> <li>• % citizens without high school decreases by 5% between '06 – '11</li> </ul>	NSCC / Dept of Ed/ School Board CoRDA / CALA
Create Community Learning Networks in Workplaces and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint workplace networks established by sector (1 per year)</li> <li>• 1 network per community per year</li> </ul>	EMC, CoRDA, CALA
Retain, Attract and Employ Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # recruits by profession determined by annual survey</li> <li>• # youth returned through Come Home to Colchester event</li> </ul>	CoRDA
Aggressively Recruit Newcomers / Immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # new immigrants through provincial nominee program &amp; federal program</li> <li>• increase in # exploratory visits by 5% per year</li> <li>• # returnees through Come Home to Colchester</li> </ul>	CoRDA, province, feds Immigration Partnership
Track and Recognize Citizens for Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase in new patents, trademarks between '01-'06-'11 census</li> </ul>	Chamber / CoRDA

#### Other Initiatives:

- Promote trades careers in high schools
- Develop youth leadership program (possibly Junior Chamber International)
- Develop customized trades training – partnership between industry and colleges
- Recruit private training institutions to meet needs
- NSCC and NSAC determine feasibility of offering nursing / lab programs
- Enhance communication of employment opportunities
- Recruit through programs like Come Home to Colchester '06

## Sell Colchester

The Colchester Region is strategically positioned to grow due to its location on two one-hundred series highways, next to the Port of Halifax, adjacent to a national rail system. Located in central Nova Scotia near the Bay of Fundy and the Northumberland Strait, this area is pristine and attractive to newcomers. The proximity to Halifax is a strength – residents can enjoy rural living, one hour from the fastest growing city in Atlantic Canada.

The action items here are aimed to recruit business, new residents and tourists. The aim is to grow our population and our tax base – both residential and commercial.

Action	Indicator of Performance	Lead
Develop integrated branding strategy – “Where Business Moves” / “Where People Live”. Target current citizens & business, future citizens and business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive change in migration patterns between '01 – '06 - '11 census</li> </ul>	CoRDA Municipalities Chambers
Continue to Enhance Cooperation and Coordination among Business Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total average and land sold in all business parks</li> </ul>	CoRDA Truro Power Centre AgriTech Park
Develop and Implement a Marketing Program Targeting Immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of New Immigrants through various programs – PNP / Skilled Worker / International Students / Federal Programs</li> </ul>	CoRDA Immigration Partnership Committee
Develop and Implements an Ex-Patriot Marketing Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of returnees to visit during Come Home to Colchester '04</li> <li># new housing sales (through realtors)</li> </ul>	CoRDA
Develop Joint Sales Initiatives – ie: Colchester Trade Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of New Contracts acquired as a Result</li> </ul>	CoRDA Manufacturing Consortium
Better Coordination of Travel / Promotion Opportunities – Share Marketing Opps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in at least 1 Joint Marketing Program targeted at tourists per year</li> </ul>	CoRDA CNTA / DTP
Implement CNTA Marketing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapt CNTA indicators</li> </ul>	CNTA / Partners
Determine Feasibility of “Destination Colchester” program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feasibility study complete – year 1</li> <li>Plans underway – year 2 – 5</li> </ul>	DTP / CNTA/ Chambers / CoRDA
Assist ICT / Life Sciences students with job placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of annual job placements among graduates</li> </ul>	NSCC / NSAC
Create Research Centre at Agri-Tech Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of businesses supported</li> </ul>	NSAC
Create Effective Marketing Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of joint projects</li> </ul>	CoRDA Truro Power Centre AgriTech Park NSBI / ACOA / OED

### Other Initiatives:

- Create market strategy for each business park
- Design a program to assist small tourism operators to better market their business
- Create better tourism signage
- Increase our web presence
- Assist NSAC / NSCC to develop new markets

## Build Infrastructure

All trends indicate that, in order to attract people and business, we need to provide outstanding opportunities for them. This includes vibrant downtowns. Three strategies currently exist for the downtowns of Truro, Tatamagouche and Stewiacke. The leaders of this plan must support each strategy and the groups involved to ensure their implementation.

Rural communities and villages are facing out migration and declining youth populations. We must do everything we can to reverse the trend of declining population to reduce the risk of loss of schools and essential services. High speed internet and cellular service, while available in many parts of our region, is still unavailable in outlying areas. We must work with existing and pending programs available through the communications technology industry to ensure all areas are covered.

The Colchester Regional Development Agency has created a business parks division to develop, promote and sell properties in business parks. Other parks not under that division include the Truro Power Centre and the AgriTech Park. These partnerships must continuously be improved upon to ensure the customer receives the full menu of options available to them.

Current vacancy rates for rental housing in this community are around 1.9%, the lowest outside of metro. Community leaders must work with developers to encourage continuous development.

All infrastructure development must consider the implications on the environment. All development must meet or exceed Kyoto protocol.

Action	Indicator of Performance	Lead
Completion and Implementation of Downtown Truro Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% construction / implementation by year 5</li> </ul>	Downtown Truro Partnership Town of Truro
Implementation of Stewiacke Downtown Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% construction / implementation by year 5</li> </ul>	Town of Stewiacke Business / Tourism Association
Implementation of Tatamagouche Four Square Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% construction / implementation by year 5</li> </ul>	Creamery Square Society North Shore Community Development Association Municipality of Colchester
Completion of one Business Park Management Structure in Debert, include plans for Mi'kmawey Debert and archeological assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer complete – April '06</li> <li>Park plan complete – April '06</li> <li>Implementation underway – Immediate</li> <li>3% increase in employment every year after year 2</li> </ul>	Nova Scotia Business Inc Municipality of Colchester CoRDA Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
Regional Parks Management Structure designed / approved by all municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan complete and approved – September-'06, including management structure / development plan. Includes Debert Parks, Truro Industrial Park, Stewiacke Business Park, AgriTech Park, Truro Power Centre</li> </ul>	CoRDA Town of Stewiacke Town of Truro County of Colchester Millbrook First Nation NSAC (AgriTech Park)
New Colchester Regional Hospital New Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction begins '06</li> <li>No data for Lillian Fraser to date</li> </ul>	Colchester – East Hants Health Authority
Have high speed internet available in every community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One community per year – dependant on new federal BRAND program</li> </ul>	CoRDA Local Development Associations

Examine alternative energy sources – Truro Co-generation project, Wind Energy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study deemed feasible – implementation of co-generation project by '07</li> <li>Wind energy project announcements by '07-'08</li> </ul>	Town of Truro Colchester Wind Energy Co-op CoRDA
Complete and implement affordable housing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1% increase in number of available rental units every year for 5 years</li> </ul>	CoRDA (plan) Developers CMHC / DCS
Fulfill requirements of 2011 Canada Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secure bid</li> <li>determine facilities and costs required – develop and implement plan</li> </ul>	DTP Canada Games Team Municipalities / Millbrook
Build and Market Goosecap Interpretation Centre at Power Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction Complete – Facility open '06</li> </ul>	Millbrook First Nation CNTA

Other Initiatives:

- Cobequid Interpretation Centre
- Bass River Museum
- Upper Stewiacke Farmers Market
- Study to determine appropriate transportation sectors to focus on – develop partnerships with (as a result of Atlantic Transportation Forum – Nov '05)
- Implementation of Truro Heritage Strategy
- Public Transportation Study and implementation, building on results of HRM plan
- Develop a system of parks / green spaces, (including Ducks Unlimited Centre at Wildlife Park)
- Retail mall construction at Power Centre
- CNTA to determine Tourism Destination Areas
- NSAC – new construction to include residence upgrades, compost handling centre, poultry centre
- NSCC – residence upgrades

### Build Strong Partnerships

Partnerships, if effective, allow for:

- Better customer service
- More efficient spending
- The elimination of the potential for duplication of service
- Increased knowledge

Community leaders in Colchester have focused on creating efficiencies through integration of many economic development services locally. There is still room to improve on this local effort, through defined partnerships. There is also opportunity to partner with our neighbors in Atlantica to access greater markets and work on greater initiatives.

We must be responsive the local business needs and issues. There is opportunity for more business to business communication. We need our marketing and business climate improvements to be in line with other service providers. Local councils must know of each others priorities and plans. We must maintain a positive partnership with our media contacts. The following chart defines priority partnerships over the next half decade:

Action	Indicator of Performance	Lead
All Partners approve and endorse the regional plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motions at council to accept the regional plan</li> </ul>	CoRDA Plan Monitoring



		Committee
Develop Relationships with Business through a Local Business Retention & Expansion Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short term - # of Businesses visited / surveyed</li> <li>• Long Term - # business issues addressed / business growth (# employees)</li> </ul>	CoRDA NS Association of Regional Development Authorities
Business Services Agencies work together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # joint loans / # joint projects completed each year</li> </ul>	CoRDA NOBL, ACOA, NSBI
Develop Relationships with Priority Partners (external): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halifax Gateway Council</li> <li>• Atlantic Provinces Chamber – Atlantica Committee</li> <li>• NS RDA Association</li> <li>• Greater Halifax Partnership</li> <li>• Provincial Nominee Program / Cornwallis Group</li> <li>• Manufacturing Consortium</li> <li>• Trade Team Nova Scotia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of joint projects / events per year</li> <li>• # of business referrals</li> <li>• new policies created</li> </ul>	CoRDA
Expand on relationships with local priority partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality</li> <li>• Millbrook First Nation</li> <li>• Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq</li> <li>• Downtown Truro Partnership</li> <li>• North Shore Community Development Assoc.</li> <li>• Chambers of Commerce</li> <li>• West Colchester Community Development Assoc.</li> <li>• Upper Stewiacke Development Assoc.</li> <li>• NSAC / NSCC</li> <li>• CNTA / NOBL</li> <li>• CALA</li> <li>• School Board / Health Authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan implementation</li> <li>• Participation of Millbrook on CoRDA board / in regional plan</li> <li>• # joint projects / events per year</li> <li>• # business referrals</li> </ul>	CoRDA

Other Initiatives:

- Facilitate annual meeting of municipal partners and Millbrook First Nation to discuss economic opportunities / monitor plan implementation
- Investigate and determine what other partners contribute to economic growth. Involve them in plan discussions
- Use the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium model to develop other sector consortiums
- Create youth committee to investigate growth opportunities
- Create “Media Committee” for plan implementation. Encourage media to regularly report “good news” stories

## Effective Leadership, Planning and Policies

The scope of this section includes the need for effective long-term regional planning and appropriate tracking. It necessitates the need for all governments involved in community economic development to come together to think as a region.

Effective leadership means nurturing and developing the leaders of tomorrow. It means creating youth leadership opportunities and trusting our youth to make appropriate decisions for the community.

Effective leadership means not being afraid to sacrifice short-term popularity for long-term change. It means making decisions today that encourage sustainable growth into the future. All participants must come together and develop common policies that create a positive business climate and encourage new people to move to our community.

Action	Indicator of Performance	Lead
Develop a long-term regional economic planning team that updates goals and strategies and monitors progress against targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual report card</li> </ul>	CoRDA
Inventory policies that have a negative influence on establishing a positive business climate – recommend changes where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># changes made collectively</li> </ul>	Municipalities
Actively recruit young participants to our boards Initiate Leadership Training Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 youth participant on each partner board by end of year 1</li> <li>Training program complete by year 2</li> </ul>	All partners CoRDA / Chamber
Encourage small communities to initiate planning process (Model – Upper Stewiacke)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 community plan complete per year</li> </ul>	CoRDA / local development groups
Recruit Millbrook First Nation to CoRDA board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>member after 1<sup>st</sup> year</li> </ul>	CoRDA

### Other Initiatives:

- Encourage greater participation of residents in leadership
- Ensure boards have a great mix of skills, experience and competence
- Provide education and training for board members
- Establish community learning networks in work places and communities to encourage innovation and leadership

## Conclusion

The easy part of this process is behind us. Planning is a somewhat simple exercise where citizens develop their dream for a community and put it on paper. This plan is different. The intent is for all stakeholders in the region to own it and use it to their advantage. The plans of all agencies with an economic development mandate in this region are reflected here. It must be endorsed by all parties, adopted and merged with existing strategies. We must support each other in the realization of the vision at the beginning of the document. Influencing change is not easy. We hope to literally change the face of this community by welcoming new and diverse residents, encouraging youth to step into leadership positions, growing new sectors – basically building trust that we can indeed become the greatest place on earth to live and do business. To accomplish this – we must live the dream, talk the talk and walk the talk. Change is not easy –

we must monitor our progress on an regular basis and be willing to change the strategy if it makes sense to do so. We must be accountable to our partners and our citizens. We must share the good stories and the bad and use both as learning experiences. We must capitalize on partnership opportunities. We must nurture our most valuable resource – our people. We must improve the quality of life for citizens in Colchester.

## Appendices

## Colchester Leadership

Nova Scotia Agricultural College	Nova Scotia Teachers College – Truro Campus	The Colchester Adult Learning Association
The Town of Truro	The Town of Stewiacke	The County of Colchester
The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq – Community	Millbrook First Nations Economic Development Council	The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq – Debert Cultural Centre
The Chignecto Central Regional School Board	The N.S. Department of Education	The District Health Board
Truro & District Chamber of Commerce	The Atlantic Chamber of Commerce	The North Shore Chamber of Commerce
MLA – Bill Langille	MLA – Jamie Muir	MLA – Brooke Taylor
West Colchester Community Development Association	The North Shore Community Development Association	Central Nova Tourist Association
Downtown Truro Partnership	Agritech Park	Atlantica
MP – Bill Casey	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Human Resources Skills Development Canada
Colchester Regional Development Agency	Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development	Northern Opportunities for Business Limited.
Nova Scotia Business Inc.	Central Nova Tourist Association	Nova Scotia Dept. of Natural resources and
Truro Chamber of Commerce - Business Retention and Expansion Committee	Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium – Colchester Branch	The Forest Products Association of Nova Scotia

***The Visions and Missions of some of our partners:***

Partner	Vision	Mission
Town of Truro	We envision Truro as a vibrant community that values its past and is confident of its future. Truro will be noted as an exciting destination; as having a strong spirit of place; for providing a valued quality of life; and as a center where people cooperate to build a thriving, welcoming and green community	The Town of Truro will provide visionary, responsible, community driven and open minded leadership to ensure the best quality of life for all.
Town of Stewiacke	Realizing Stewiacke's potential as a great place to live by protecting, developing and communicating our identity as a growing viable community.	.
NSAC	(Vision components); education, research, Internationalization, Community Service.	The Nova Scotia agricultural College excels in education and the provision of new knowledge in agriculture, food and the environment for the benefit of society.
NSCC	Our approach to education will be one that engages Nova Scotians in new ways to apply knowledge and skill. We will integrate our education with community building and economic development. The College experience will inspire confidence, reflection, and self-reliance, challenging people to make use of what they learn, for their own benefit and for the benefit of us all.	Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation
CoRDA		The Colchester Regional Development Agency will drive sustainable economic growth, creating healthy communities, prosperous business and opportunity for our citizens
Chignecto Central Regional School Board		The Chignecto-Central Regional School Board is a diverse, progressive, student-centered learning community. We are committed to developing creative, confident and responsible global citizens who take pride in their community, culture and heritage. We will inspire our learning community by enriching the quality of our educational opportunities in a safe and supportive learning environment with high expectations for all.
Colchester East Hants Health Authority	Healthy people, Healthy communities, Quality health services.	To improve the health of the people we serve.
Downtown Truro Partnership	Downtown Truro Partnership will play a central role in facilitating the ongoing development of Downtown Truro as a vibrant business and cultural community.	To facilitate and promote the market-driven transformation of Downtown Truro with a focus on increased residential development, specialty retailing and high-impact community based anchor projects which have positive economic spin-offs and enhance the downtown's heritage.
Truro and District Chamber of Commerce		The principal voice for business in the Colchester region, promoting matters of economic, social and political importance

Communities in Colchester

<b>Alton</b>	<b>Lower Onslow</b>
<b>Balfron</b>	<b>Lower Truro</b>
<b>Bass River</b>	<b>Masstown</b>
<b>Bayhead</b>	<b>Middle Stewiacke</b>
<b>Beaver Brook</b>	<b>Murray Siding</b>
<b>Belmont</b>	<b>New Annan</b>
<b>Bible Hill</b>	<b>Newton Mills</b>
<b>Brookfield</b>	<b>North River</b>
<b>Brookside</b>	<b>Nuttby</b>
<b>Brule</b>	<b>Old Barns</b>
<b>Burnside</b>	<b>Onslow Mountain</b>
<b>Camden</b>	<b>OtterBrook</b>
<b>Central Onslow</b>	<b>Pembroke</b>
<b>Crowes Mills</b>	<b>Pleasant Valley</b>
<b>Earlton</b>	<b>Portipique</b>
<b>East Mountain</b>	<b>Princeport</b>
<b>Economy</b>	<b>Riversdale</b>
<b>Five Islands</b>	<b>Salmon River</b>
<b>Folly Lake</b>	<b>Shortts Lake</b>
<b>Fort Belcher</b>	<b>Staples Brook</b>
<b>Fort Ellis</b>	<b>Stewiacke</b>
<b>Glenholme</b>	<b>Tatamagouche</b>
<b>Great Village</b>	<b>The Falls</b>
<b>Greenfield</b>	<b>Truro</b>
<b>Harmony</b>	<b>Truro Heights</b>
<b>Hilden</b>	<b>Upper Onslow</b>
<b>Kempton</b>	<b>Upper Stewiacke</b>
<b>Londonderry</b>	<b>Valley</b>
	<b>Wittenburg</b>

## Regional Strengths

- History of business, economic success
- Reputation as clean/green
- 'Hub' – strategic geographic location
- NSAC great reputation
- NSCC Truro Campus
- Millbrook First Nation - entrepreneurial
- New infrastructure
- Caring/competent leadership
- Beautiful natural assets – North shore, Fundy shore, historic towns
- Business park assets
- Great people

## Challenges

- Developing a new economy while supporting existing base.
- Strategic development of our assets (e.g. NSAC, NSCC, Business parks, natural resources)
- Recruiting/developing the skills/knowledge required for labour market
- Improving literacy (particularly at the lowest levels)
- Influencing an inclusive, diverse, learning, 'creative culture'.
- Saving our rural culture/heritage/communities
- Sourcing funding/investment for infrastructure
- Intra-region communication, collaboration and cooperation
- Developing our downtowns to be great places to live and socialize
- Improving our global links
- Meaningful marketing – integrated branding, coordinated targeted marketing
- Strategic, integrated planning; ensuring all leadership are working towards same high level goals and understand the implications of their decisions on the rest of the region



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**Key Result Indicator Report (Sample) -  
(To be developed in Phase two of Colchester Regional Economic Plan 2005-2010)**

Indicator	2001 or 2003	Target 2006	Actual	Variance	Target 2010
Average disposable income					
Total Population					
Average income per citizen					
Average income per employee					
Unemployment rate					
Colchester GDP					
# of new businesses					
# of business closures					
Total business income					
Total Business profit					
% profit growth					
Performance on Global Entrepreneurship Monitor					
<b>Driver: Growing our Human Resource</b>					
Literacy score for Colchester					
# Adult enrollments in learning					
# of people in trades training					
Productivity index					
# of international immigrants					
# of inter-provincial immigrants					
# of Colchester people returned					
# of immigrants leaving					
# of Colchester outmigrating					
Innovation 'index'					
# of patents/trademarks					
<b>Driver: Selling Colchester</b>					
# of businesses relocating to Colchester					
# of international students					
Enrollment # at NSAC					
Enrollment # at NSCC					
International investment \$ in Colchester					
<b>Driver: Building Infrastructure</b>					
\$ Capital works in progress					
% of business parks occupied					
<b>Driver: Building strong partnerships</b>					
Export/import growth					
Joint venture projects					
<b>Driver: Influencing our Culture</b>					
Performance on survey factors					
- Diversity measure					
- Equity measure					
<b>Driver: Effective leadership, policies and planning</b>					
Business satisfaction 'index' – red tape, cost of doing business, etc					
Leadership skill 'index'					