



Event One

Report

January 31st, 2018

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Introduction

Share your voice, shape our town.

On January 31st 2018 around 140 community members came together in the first of two events to begin the Engage Antigonish initiative.

Purpose

In partnership with the Town of Antigonish, Engage Nova Scotia has committed to designing and delivering two citizen engagement events. These gatherings will support the development of citizen-led priorities for the 2018+ Strategic Plan/Framework, and shape collective community objectives for the future. Throughout this project Engage and the Town of Antigonish will work as learning partners to achieve the following goals:

Primary:

- Surfacing Citizen Priorities
- Informing the development of a Strategic Plan/Framework

Secondary:

- Activating Citizens towards greater community collaboration and cohesion

Approach

Prior to the event Engage Nova Scotia and the Town of Antigonish worked with an Outreach Team comprised of local leaders who brought with them a diverse network to spread the word and inform the process. The first event was designed to take the temperature around ideas, perspectives identified by the community. The second event on April 5th will allow the citizens and the Town to explore the highest priorities and identify next steps collaboratively.



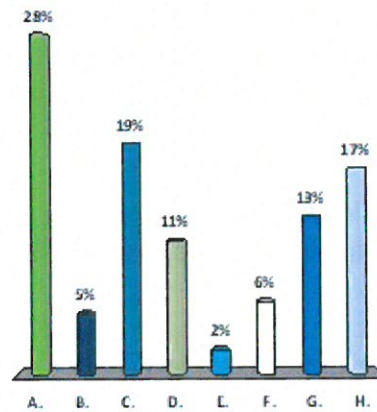
Audience Response System Voting Results

The gathering started off with an opportunity for everyone to participate in a poll that allowed them to anonymously share their thoughts and feelings on a number of themes. The following are the results from the session.



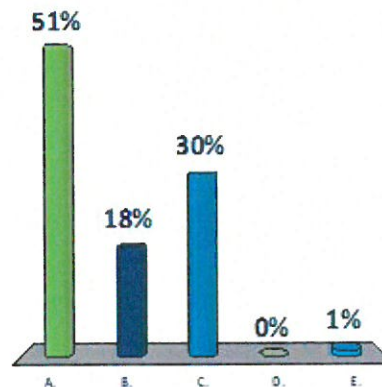
What's your favourite Highland Games event?

- A. Heavy Events
- B. Highland Dance
- C. Piping & Drumming
- D. Tug of War
- E. Farmer's Walk
- F. Cape George Bike Race
- G. 5 Mile Road Race
- H. Beer Tent



I live in

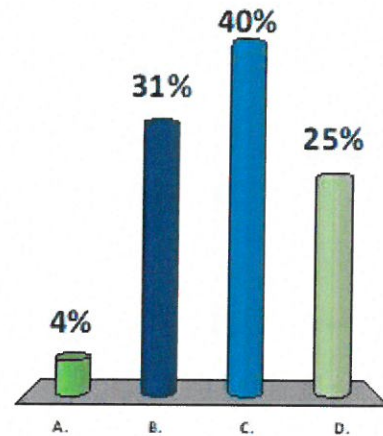
- A. The Town of Antigonish
- B. The Perimeter of Town
- C. Rural part of Antigonish County
- D. On Campus
- E. Elsewhere





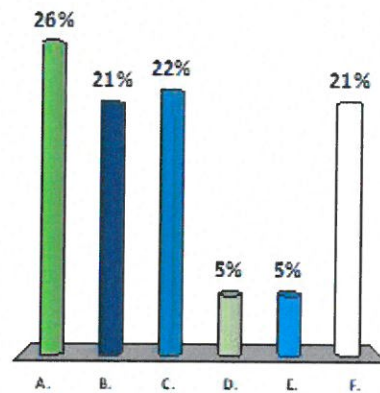
You're only as old as you feel

- A. A youth (15-34)
- B. Not as young as I used to be (35-50)
- C. Prime of my life (51-65)
- D. Wise (65-over)



Outside of family, work or school, how do you spend most of your free time?

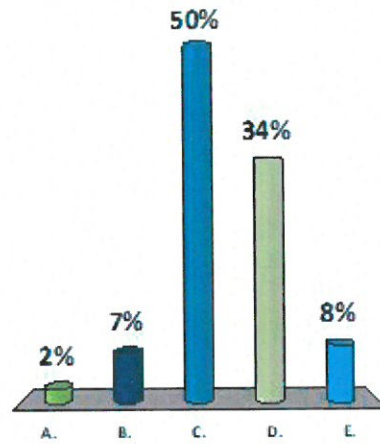
- A. Community groups
- B. Arts and culture events
- C. Sports
- D. Farmers' Market
- E. I don't have free time
- F. Other





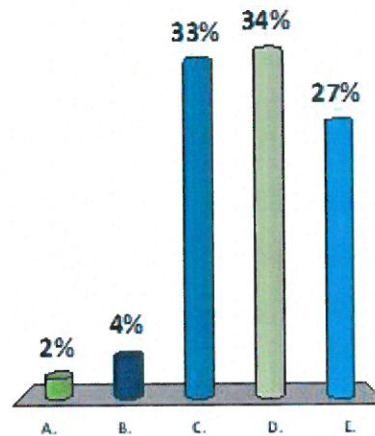
Our community is in need of

- A. 1- No change
- B. 2
- C. 3 - Moderate change
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Big change



Personally, I feel that I have a bright future in Antigonish

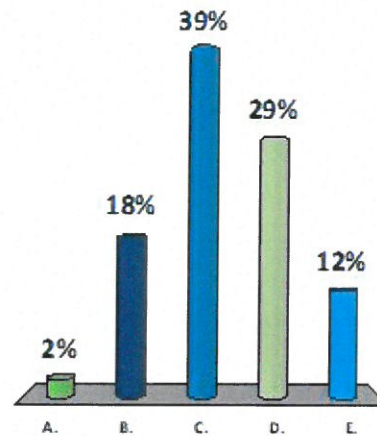
- A. 1 - Not very bright
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Very bright





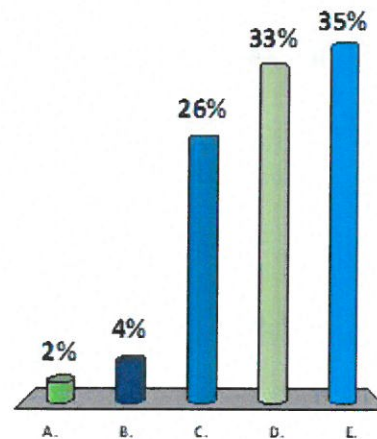
The Town of Antigonish is inclusive of diverse people and perspectives

- A. 1 - Disagree
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Agree



Are you **willing** to change your thoughts and behaviours for the good of Antigonish?

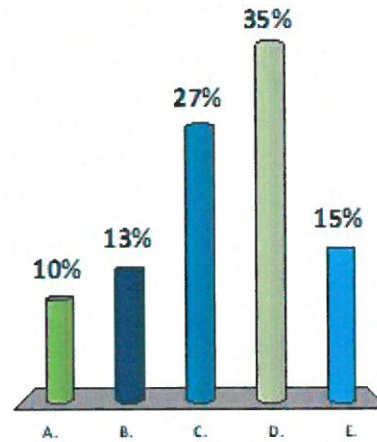
- A. 1 - No
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Yes





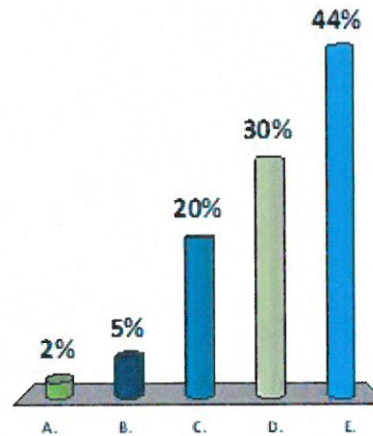
Do you believe you are well **informed** about our economic, social, cultural and environmental challenges?

- A. 1 - No
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Yes



Do you feel **able** to be a part of the solutions to our town's challenges?

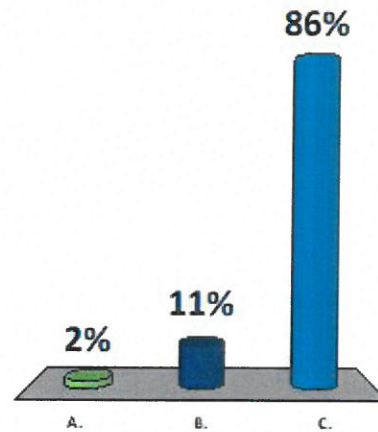
- A. 1 - No
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Yes





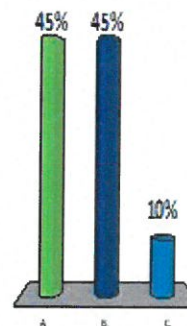
Municipalities are responsible for which of the following areas?

- A. Immigration
- B. Public Education
- C. Water



Which level of government is MOST responsible for addressing poverty?

- A. Federal
- B. Provincial
- C. Municipal



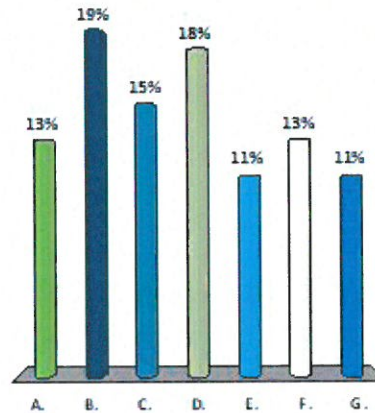
Collective Perspective Compiled Voting Results

The following results are from the closing session of the evening where participants ranked the topics/themes that they felt were most important. Votes were ranked and weighted based on their first, second and third vote. These results will help inform the design of Engage Antigonish 2, and the Town of Antigonish Strategic Plan.



What is most important to me? (pick up to 3)

- A. Town beautification, urban forest and accessibility
- B. Outdoor activity & accessibility
- C. Sustainable Housing needs
- D. Arts & Culture Infrastructure
- E. Making the town Bike friendly/Transit & Mobility
- F. Mental Health
- G. Climate Change



What is most important to me? (pick up to 3)

- A. Senior-friendly
- B. Youth retention
- C. Promoting town as a region (National Special Olympics 2018)
- D. Providing services & spaces for marginalized youth
- E. Attract new businesses
- F. Support people with disabilities to be entrepreneurial
- G. Town, county, St FX relationships

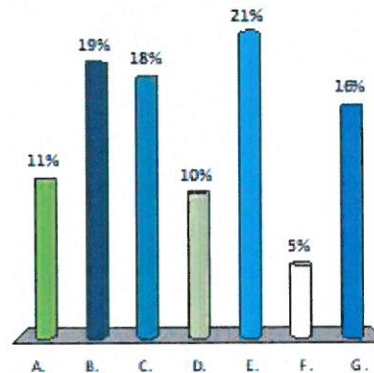


Table		1ST		2ND		3RD			Final Placing
1	Town beautification, urban forest and accessibility	14	140	14	98	10	40	278	9
2	Outdoor activity & accessibility	25	250	16	112	15	60	422	3
3	Sustainable Housing needs	18	180	15	105	10	40	325	7
4	Arts & Culture Infrastructure	24	240	14	98	16	64	402	5
5	Making the town Bike friendly/Transit & Mobility	9	90	15	105	15	60	255	11
6	Mental Health	14	140	13	91	14	56	287	8
7	Climate Change	12	120	15	105	7	28	253	12
8	Senior-friendly	14	140	12	84	9	36	260	10
9	Youth retention	23	230	22	154	12	48	432	2
10	Promoting town as a region (National Special Olympics 2018)	26	260	15	105	10	40	405	4
11	Providing services & spaces for marginalized youth	11	110	14	98	3	12	220	13
12	Attract new businesses	22	220	26	182	20	80	482	1
13	Support people with disabilities to be entrepreneurial	5	50	5	35	9	36	121	14
14	Town, county, St FX relationships	17	170	15	105	26	104	379	6
	Most points overall		Most points in choice						
	2nd most points overall		2nd most points in choice						
	3rd most points overall		3rd most points in choice						

Table Conversation Capture

After the Audience Response Technology was used, we invited anyone who wanted to start a conversation about their ideas and perspectives to call a topic by answering “How can we work on _____ together?” The following reflects the topics and conversations held at each table around the following topics:

1. What are the key insights?
2. What are the possibilities?
3. Who could be involved?
4. What are you unanswered questions?

Town Beautification and Urban Forest

Key insights

- Garbage and Litter
 - Litter in the town is a large issue (broken glass, bottles, fast food etc.)
 - there is a lack of cleaning
 - lack of signage to encourage clean up
 - give the sense that it is everyone's responsibility
- **The Three Rivers** (West River, Brierly, Wrights)
The three rivers play a major part of our community
 - could have a clean walkway to promote the river
- There are currently no regulations for residents filling up the rivers with debris from their properties from their properties only bylaws
- Main street flower boxes
 - partnership with CACL
- Merchants of James St. have done their own work

What are the possibilities?

- Town campaign with the James St. Merchants
- Ban plastic bags
- Town cleanup 3 to 4 times a year
- More awareness campaigns to change behaviour
- A beautification committee
- Employ youth
- A community school cleanup

The Three Rivers

- There should be a flood plan with regulations not to build on certain properties
- Development of a trail system

Who could be involved?

- Citizen driven meetings
- Community volunteers
- Private businesses/ companies
- Town Council
- Ongoing planning phase by town
- Advertisement and media coverage
- Contract w/ CACL (dedicated to this work)
- Invite students to be involved
- Hire a full time coordinator

Unanswered questions

- Urban Forest:- concern to enhance the trees we have and plant trees on their property. The Town needs to have an urban forest plan. How is the Town going to address parking in the Town vs. Green area?
- How do we get around Piper's pub? We need cooperation by the pub ... still in discussion
- How do we improve snow removal on Mainstreet?

Outdoor Activity and Accessibility

Key insights

- Keppoch has been a good improvement to the culture of outdoor and its health benefits
- Lots of people walking dogs but need more guidelines about dogs on leashes
- There are many connections between outdoor activities and overall/mental health
- We have an aging population who have mobility issues, but enjoying the outdoors is still important
- There needs to be youth considerations, they are safe at the library but they need places play free*
- Teens and tweens are lacking non-organized sports
- Parental/ family role modeling
- Barriers to enjoying outdoor activities is cars and money

What are the possibilities?

1. A group that drives
2. A group that promotes
 - A "Biking" culture in town, get a repair kit at the library for bikes
 - Create an intentional outdoor rink
 - A walking trail at Brierly Brook
 - Accessibility for people living with mental illness
 - Incorporate photography

- Create a trail around town that is a walk/bike combo
- More free skates
- Challenger baseball space expansion
- *Transport to Keppoch*
- Promote the landing in Winter
- Parking lot at Fairmont in Winter
- Accessibility should be 100% happening to regional fields
- dog park
- Local leaders
- Transport to different areas (including rural)
- Advertising trails by promoting on website, trails maps, and a rating system.
- Inner town walking trails

Who could be involved?

- Bike shop (Matthew)
- Highlandconnect.ca
- Country parent (good for locals)
- Rec- a Town and County combined approach
- StFX rec school reps
- Arenas (free skates)
- Keppoch
- Accessibility (towns/schools)
- Town (help with the awareness of rec opportunities)
- Town Planners

Unanswered questions

- Winter maintenance of trails/parking @ outdoor sites (is that the town or county)
- Are there any off leash areas for dogs?
- Why do we still not have a skate park?
- Are there any community groups driving outdoor activities?

Sustainable Housing Needs

Key insights

- There is a lack of subsidized housing units → should there be a committee on council?
- Housing for seniors is expensive and there is a lack of options
- Housing is key or survival and many are on the brink
- Average % of renters spend 30% of their income on housing
- Quality of life is compromised
- Affordable energy costs (town has own utility)
- Voice of citizen to participate and plan RTE
- State of housing v. poor
- Slum and absentee landlords adds to depression

What are the possibilities?

- Build on the success to build on with the Town and Council
- More co-operative housing
- An electricity fund
- A capital fund with revenue streams in collaboration with town and citizens
- New bylaws/policies to support
- Make use of solar energy program
- Consider other models
 - co-housing
 - Shared spaces
 - tiny homes
 - Rehab/ Reno old homes
- Reduced tax rates and more tax credits/incentives
- Start a social finance community fund
- Investing in crowdsourcing and social enterprise

Who could be involved?

- Town Council
- Other government involvement (Provincial, Federal CMHC)
- Chamber of Commerce
- Credit Unions

Unanswered questions

- Where is there funding for housing?
- Why don't we have a higher level of collaboration

Arts & Culture Infrastructure

Key insights

- Arts and culture groups of which there are many working in isolation
- Culture is a pillar of sustainability and perceived as necessary to sustain this community
- There has been exponential growth in the sector in the past 15-20 years
- Used by many groups including seniors/ people living with disabilities/ youth
- It is a huge economic opportunity
- There's no reason to separate out a recreation lense
- Recognize the multi-cultural history of Town Acadian - Gaelic - Mi'kmaq

What are the possibilities?

- Multi-functional Arts Centre (Physical Infrastructure)
- Human Resource Capacity to coordinate various needs

- Creating a brand with representation of all groups
- Festivals
- Make Antigonish a centre for Arts and Culture in our Region

Who should be involved?

- Municipalities Antigonish Town and County
- StFX
- Arts Groups
- Artists

Unanswered questions

- Can we look at best practices for other areas?
- How do we work together while we wait?
- How do we get buy in?

Making the Town Bike friendly/Transit & Improved Mobility

Key insights

- Active Transportation plan does exist and has been endorsed by the Town and County
- We need more focus on 'non motorized' mode of transportation like bike lanes
- Infrastructure is important (maintenance of roads and sidewalks)
- We need more access to transit on weekends
- Ask the town and County to release the Transport plan and ask for input and action

What are the possibilities?

- Bike stalls in front of building to leave bikes
- Encourage using biking a transportation means rather than recreation
- Look at the Netherlands infrastructure where there are separate bike and car roads. You can avoid hills so that more people will bike and be safer
- Would pedestradize downtown (like European cities) so that the town is a people space
- Specific bike paths to locations
- Accessibility bussing on maine and church
- Implement a car share program, it's cheaper than a car rental cooperative (volume may be a challenge, 3 cars to start)
- Main street Town Hall turned into a town square (no vehicles). It can condition people to think communally.
- Campaign to get everyone to try to use the transit system at least once
- Have transit work with biking (how do you get to Keppoch if you don't have a car)
- Have a bike clinic and giveaway as a spring event

Who could be involved?

- REA and the Active Transport Project

- Service Learning
- Accessibility Committee
- Schools
- Town Council
- RCMP (traffic control)
- Town planners /County planners
- Car Share, 'Jack' knows the guy in Halifax (Derek)

Unanswered questions

- How to discourage jaywalking?
- Where is the plan on active transportation?

Mental Health

Key Insights

- There is a lot of stigma
- "Mental Health is a bad word"
- Mental health is directly linked to social determinants of health like employment
- We need to view that mental health is a part of life
- "The fear of being judged is real"
- Community supports are necessary
- Antigonish already has a lot to offer those who are suffering with mental health
- Shouldn't separate mind and body from a health perspective

What are the possibilities?

- Education about the differences and different people and the impact on our community
- Mental Health workshops
- Link with universities is important
- Community based programming and training
- An emergency response team
- Walk in mental health clinic (similar to PEI and New Glasgow)
- Connection between mental health and diet/physical health etc.
- Mental health connector!

Who could be involved?

- Community groups
- Provincial health
- Schools
- Youth
- First Nations

Climate Change

Key insights

- The conversation is mostly about energy consumption
- Town owned utility is a unique asset
- Spring thaw is a flood threat
- Town does not depend on smokestack industries

What are the possibilities?

- Think green on all assets of the town and conduct energy audits
- Divest investments from fossil fuels
- Renewable energy alternatives
- Lead by example and work with all levels of government
- Smart grids
- Battery Storage
- Heat pump financing
- Move toward a more carbon neutral town

Who could be involved?

- Antigonish Community Energy Society
- StFX

Unanswered questions

- We have three converging rivers through town. What is the flood mitigation strategy?

Senior-friendly Antigonish

Key Insights

- Seniors must be seen as an asset, they are a hidden treasure and they have a lot of wisdom!
- We already have a lot of supports and great structures to learn from (CAACL, L'Arche)
- More of a need to understand what we believe seniors need vs. what they actually want.
- Connection matters

What are the possibilities

- Make Antigonish a 'go to' place for seniors
- Jobs for seniors -Some seniors want to work but they need motivation. A&W and Walmart have
- Seniors who work for them and they are a fantastic addition
- Better accessibility on sidewalks that encourage those who use wheelchairs

- Senior and youth mentoring opportunities to improve connection and cross generational learning
- Business opportunities for seniors
- Transportation
- A seniors seminar for services
- Student/ Senior living

Who could be involved?

- High School and StFX for mentorship possibilities
- Volunteer opportunities
- Recreation

Youth Retention

Key insights

- There's three main groups. Teens (need space and mentors) → Young Adults (need jobs) → University
- We need to keep students after Jobs and work to find out what they value
- Young people to run businesses
- We have a lot of non youth speaking about how to retain youth*
- How do you get youth together? How do you hear their voice?... you need to make them feel like they belong. Not everyone's into sports
- This needs to be seen as a place for young people to live
- *There is a bad attitude toward youth.
- To get them here they would need to come in a group and be invited individually
- Youth leaderships opportunities including clubs, organizations and community boards that give a voice.
- There's no jobs here
- We need to keep university students after they graduate
- Transit is a large deterrent as well as the cost of activities
- If a young person isn't going to work in university or the hospital, what else do we have here?
- Support Entrepreneurship and buying local
- Networking groups/ Incubators
- Meet youth where they are (Schools, tall and small etc.)

What are the possibilities?

- Art/Culture centre building on library or a YMCA
 - will attract young families
 - Intergenerational
 - Bring everyone together and build a more inclusive community
 - Online component

- A youth mentorship program (chefs, sports, trade) look at Chicago and NSCC
- An elected youth council to work w/ Town Council w/ influence, not tokenism
- Someone should actually be on town council, county too.
- Integrate education into community
- Skatepark? (May be a drinking spot)
- Youth and Seniors mentoring (a two way relationship)
- Visit NSCC explore trades, job shadow.
- Create an entrepreneurship climate for young people

Who could be involved?

- University/Campus/Students
- Schools/Admin
- County
- Business mentorship for young people
- Business incubators "Launch Pad"

Unanswered Questions

- How would you know if its a youthful town?
- How do we create something youth will be proud of?
- How do we make youth invested in the community?
- How to leverage community support (for peace by chocolate) for our own kids? Help them get on their feet?
- What needs to be in place for young ppl to come back as young adults (w/ families)
- How can we provide what young people value like Quality of Life?

Promoting the Town as a Region

Key Insights

- What is the area we are defining?
- Requires collaboration
- Needs to attract bus tours on the way to Cape Breton
- Used to be a 'Welcome Wagon' approach welcoming newcomers
- It's hard to break into the community as a newcomer
- We have natural advantages of location that we should use

Coordinate and Communicate

- Sport tourism is growing i.e Special Olympics
- Promote as a great place to live to drive people to the area
- There's so much to do. The town can get hands on showcases and promoting the area
- There's always a lot going on at StFX
- *Should be part of a strategic plan and have paid projects to promote continuity

What are the possibilities?

- Have more events that draw people to the Town
- Better signage and packaging
- Support local businesses
- Good videos for beaches and attractions for surrounding areas
- Better signage that includes First Nations
- Take advantage of surrounding areas
- How do we get individual groups to work together to create a cohesive impression
- Create an internship to gather information and best practices of communication
- Use the events calendar better, Fill it more often and promote it
- Year Round Visitor Information Centre
- Empower community members to promote

Who could get involved?

- Joint Town and County Councils
- Tourism agencies
- Chamber of Commerce
- Businesses and Mall
- Coady Institution
- The Arts and Culture Community

Unanswered questions

- What is the how?
- How do you turn these good ideas into action?
- What is the scope of the 'region'?

Providing Services & Spaces for Marginalized Youth

Key Insights

Build Respect and focus on inclusion

- youth programs need to be mixed/integrated and inclusive services and programs
- There is a huge unmet need and we need to hear the youth voice first hand
- Need for diverse services for youth
→ the library provides a space but not enough to meet their needs
- Kids are bored
- There has been lots of work with the skatepark but lots of frustration with the town
- There are a lot of programs for seniors like friendship corner but not the same youth focus
- Engage, respected and fed youth become healthy adults and and leaders in their community
- Attitudes toward youth and towards diversity much change

What are the possibilities?

- Skatepark
- YMCA
- Nutritional services
- Access to youth oriented, inclusive and accessible spaces
- Provide services outside of the school system

Who could be involved

- The Women's Centre
- The Town
- Community Programming (Kids First)
- Learn from Glace Bay (Bay it forward) and Guysborough
- Service Learning

Unanswered questions

- How to address fear of behaviour problems
- How to bridge town/county access gap?
- How to address socio-economic divide?
- How to deal w/ discrimination against youth?
- How to fight stigma against youth activities like skateboarding?

Attracting New Business

Key Insights

- We need more businesses and encouragement to shop local
- It's hard to find customers
- Intermediate incubation business
- We need to sustain businesses we already have
- There's no one to buy businesses from retirees, need better succession planning
- There needs to be more shopping downtown to keep people shopping
- There's a lack of internet connection in the rural area
- Need a startup business community
- Mainstreet is important to maintain a vibrant community
- *everything is connected to youth retention (affordable housing, mentorship)
- Maintaining the character of the town is important
- Maintaining business is different from growing the population

What are the possibilities?

- Green economy
- Festivals and music, weekend hockey tournaments
- Bring in more specialized dental and healthcare

- Incubator properties
- A vigorous campaign to shop local**
- Better network to know what is in the community
- A 'Discover Antigonish' campaign with StFX

Unanswered Questions

- Who do small businesses serve?
- What direction do we want to go? Maintaining businesses or growing businesses

Supporting People with Disabilities to be Entrepreneurial

Key Insights

- Healthy, active mind, keeping people occupied is good for the whole community
- Need a community where all can contribute to the best of their abilities

What are the Possibilities

- Access to capital to get started
- Meeting with people who have similar interests and experience
- Creating stronger networks in local community with existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs
- Sharing business models/ knowledge on how to compete
- Trade show to showcase ideas/businesses
- Help in identifying niche opportunities
- Needs assessment to identify opportunities

Who could be Involved?

- XEDC
- CACL Workshop
- Local Businesses
- NS Works
- Community College
- Non-profit agencies/ Gov't
- Agencies who many have funding
- University-Business Students

Town, County, St FX relationships

Key Insights

- We need to clarify how to best support people living on the fringes of Town and County re serving and supports.

- "the topsoil is thick". Resources below
- We spend a lot of time focussing on what doesn't work, not what does
- There is an assumption that the Town and County don't work well together
- No flow between Town and University
- Feels siloed
- Used to have a Town and Gown Committee that worked
- When living on the Fringe it is hard to feel counted, make connections or be heard

What are the possibilities

- A highways sign that thanks people who came to university, Mi'kmaq, English, French
- Committee day
- Use storytelling
- A joint meeting is a solid place to start (two per year)
- Explore the idea of a regional government
- Casket feature "What's New at StFX"
- Town should introduce themselves to students, host an event
- Connect with COADY
- Need more concrete activities that show collaboration together
- Skate Park could show important collaboration opportunity
- BBQ

Who Could be involved?

- Representative from Council
- President of the Students Union, of the University and the Mayor
- Students, StFX staff, Town and County staff

Unanswered Questions?

- Is there anyone for Town and Council at the University Welcome Day?

The Parking Lot

The Parking Lots was a physical space on the walls where participants had the opportunity to include any thoughts, ideas, or perspectives that were not reflected in table conversations.

- There should be a buy local policy for town functions. Not corporations or franchises
- There needs to be more litter baskets around town and someone to empty them regularly
- Street Cleaners
- Renewable Energy is a very unique opportunity for the Town of Antigonish to support infrastructure

- Skate Park and Youth Centre
- A good skatepark for skaters, bikes and scooter
- Youth Entrepreneurship Incubator (develop businesses locally and for global markets)
- Services for sexual assault victims need to be supported and funded by a full partnership of Town and County staff
- Bigger permanent farmers market
- 3 full lanes marked by Columbus Field Road
- Money is not the only answer to end poverty *Education is a big part*
- We have the best library ever!
- Youth weekends at the Keppoch
- Could the Town of Antigonish serve as an umbrella for volunteer organizations?
- Promote co-operatives! (i.e when businesses close reopen as a co-op!)
- Protect our 3 beautiful rivers!
- Appoint a “clean” commissioner who needs to address signage about waste and media awareness. Every “litter bit helps”. Encourage everyone to take part/ pride in cleaning the town
- Earth Day Community Garbage pickup
- Green Spaces! → Get rid of fencing along arena/ farmers market
- Trail accessibility to connect community areas
- Arts and Culture Center as a central gathering place for youth Artists. This also addresses the need for youth having activities to do. It would create a common place for people of all ages and abilities to come together
- Get going on new Farmers Market Now!
- Beautification. The summary had no mention of signage or billboards. The community is unsightly and it needs regulation.
- Encourage support of a discovery based + arts based education, young families would flock here!
- Clean and beautiful town.
 - More public art- more ‘organic’ and not solely 8x 12 ‘murals’
 - development of small, shaded, pleasant, gathering spaces, in a shaded garden on old site of St Ninian
 - Sculptural garden
 - Return the benches, build artistic/ creative bike stands and shaded benches
- Accessibility legislation has passed provincially
 - Antigonish is a town of older building that are not accessible
 - What is the Town’s plan to support business/groups to meet the accessibility legislation
- The credit Union parking lot would make a beautiful open air park with raised beds and it would be accessible
- Create incentives for commercial properties owners to let arts group make cultural use of empty spaces
- Car-free Sundays on Mainstreet

- Antigonish Town and County is friend on the outside but not genuinely welcome to outsiders
- that for next time, we might engage/invite directly university and community leaders involved in bridging the divide,



Youth Session
Report

March 23, 2018

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Introduction

On March 23rd, 2018, Engage Nova Scotia and the Town of Antigonish partnered with Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School and two StFX Service Learning Students to gather approximately 40 young people together to ask “*How can we make Antigonish a place that you are proud to call home?*”

Purpose

The youth session was part of a broad citizen-engagement initiative called *Engage Antigonish*. The goal of the process as a whole is to identify citizen-led priorities that will inform the Town’s 2018 + Strategic Plan.

The first *Engage Antigonish* public engagement exercise – held at the St.Ninian’s on the evening of January 31st – identified 14 topics of interest including *Youth Retention* and *Spaces for Marginalized Youth*. In the discussions on those topics that ensued, the lack of youth perspective in the room was felt poignantly by both facilitators and participants. Subsequently, in an attempt to at least partially address that concern, Engage Nova Scotia designed a hands-on and interactive session for students that created a space for honest, fun and meaningful conversation.

The secondary purpose of this youth session was to make a personal invitation to the participants and their peers to attend the final Engage Antigonish community event on April 12th. We welcomed them to get involved as volunteers or participants to share their perspective with their fellow community members.

Approach

Building trust through deep listening and conversation was fundamental to the approach. The session started with some open ended questions about what students in the room like about living in Antigonish, and what they thought could be improved. Right away students were enthusiastic and open about sharing their ideas. We then welcomed Mayor Laurie Boucher to lead a conversation about the roles and responsibilities of municipal governments. This was intended as a point of education, as well as a context-setter for the discussion to follow.

Following the Mayors session, the group discussed a series of framing questions that ranged from themes surrounding how involved they feel in the Antigonish community, to what extent they believe that community needs change. The variety of responses surfaced the diverse lived experiences of the students who were present. Some in the room thought they were actively involved in community groups, but the majority of students were looking for more opportunity to actively make their community better.

Before the lunch break, students were asked: “How can we make Antigonish a place that you are proud to call home?” They captured any thoughts, ideas or questions they had on sticky notes. From there, facilitators grouped six common themes for the discussion for the remaining of the gathering:

1. Recreation, Entertainment and Events
2. Inclusive and Diverse Community
3. Youthful Business and Shopping
4. Healthy Living
5. Youth and Adult Mentorship
6. Youth Friendly Space

Groups then reported back on the content of those conversations, followed by an opportunity for the whole group to discuss what they heard and add any additional thoughts. As the session came to a close, students were asked to use a process known as “Dotmocracy” where they, in effect, voted on the topics of highest priority to the group.

For all of those involved, this session was a reminder of the wisdom, energy and distinct insights that flow when you gather a group of young people together. As such, it was a vivid reminder about how important it is to actively seek out youth perspectives when setting priorities for a community. In this case, those inputs will form a vital contribution to the Engage Antigonish initiative.



Important Perspectives

For the opening activity students were asked to break the ice by answering 'What are some things you like about Antigonish? and what things that could be improved?'

Some of the answers were as follows...

Like

- It's a small, quiet town with friendly people
- The beauty
- Everyone here is really close
- It's a cozy Town
- Less crime
- Access to beaches just outside of Town
- Good grocery stores
- StFX
- The Town Library!
- It's small
- "I like the people, we have a nice tight-knit community and culture"

Improve

- Inform us about events
- More cool, youth friendly infrastructure
- There is mindset with the older people who are afraid of change
- Improved shopping centres
- There is a bad drinking and drug culture in the community and on campus "we need better support systems"
- More lively restaurants and stores
- More community youth events
- Publicity on volunteer events for young people
- The feeling of detachment between youth and the community
- "We have to go to Halifax to shop"
- More social event
- More opportunities for people in Arts programs (learning and performing)
- More opportunities to learn about the diverse cultures in Antigonish (Mi'kmaq, Celtic, Acadian etc.)
- It's boring
- Too small, there's no personal space
- Awful Mental Health support
- There's lots of gossip
- Nobody is focussing on teens
- There needs to be more accepting and embracing of everyone's culture
- More services for decision making like sex, alcohol and drugs
- More Jobs that aren't minimum wage

Table Conversation Capture

Students were asked to pick a topic that was important to them and participated in two breakout rounds where they worked together to answer.

1. What do you think about this?
2. What are the possibilities?
3. Who should be involved?
4. What are some question you have?

Adult and Youth Mentorship

What do you think about this?

- There has to be a connection between the youth and adults
- It would help to understand one another and take away some of the harmful stereotypes
- Learn from one another and may help with job opportunities
- We need more opportunities to interact with older members of the community
- Older people in the community are out of touch with young people. They have mindsets that are holding back change,

What are the possibilities?

- More connection between High School students and Junior High/Elementary
- Shadowing opportunities, StFX students helping gr. 12's
- Better communication to new students about the different opportunities

Who should be involved?

- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Businesses
- Women's Resource Centre
- Kids First
- Library
- Schools
- RCMP
- CACL
- Nursing Homes

Youthful Business & Shopping

What do you think about this?

- We need more stores, less food stops.
- Businesses in Antigonish are not Youth based- it drives youth from staying in the town

- Along with new businesses would come job opportunities, especially for youth

What are the possibilities?

- We need more stores (selections), more youth based businesses, town should organize a survey for youth input into business opportunities (youth should be involved)
- More youth oriented shops (trendy with reasonable pricing)
- Diversity in what is being sold
- Create opportunities for new/smaller businesses

Who should be involved?

- Youth
- Chain companies
- The people with the money
- Sports Check!
- Up-and-coming businesses
- Value Village/Giant Tiger

What are some questions you have?

- Why are we expanding stores like dollarama but new bringing in new businesses?

Inclusive and Diverse Community

What do you think about this?

- It's very important
- Antigonish is diverse... but not inclusive

What are the possibilities?

- Unified play, with a buddies program open to the community
- Creation of a place in the community where everyone can come together
- A celebration of other cultures (a culture fair)
- More Pow Wows and Indigenous celebrations!!!
- Better wheelchair accessibility (ex. Farmers Market)
- Make it mandatory to teach about other cultures
- The Town can put on cultural events
- More support groups and group meetings
- Better affordable housing

Who should be involved?

- Everyone
- CACL
- R.K MacDonald
- L'Arche

- Green Meadows

What are some questions you have?

- How can we attract people to Antigonish to make it more diverse and inclusive?

Recreation and Events

What do you think about this?

- There's not enough specifically tailored towards youth our age
- Need more throughout the year (not just in the summer)

What are the possibilities?

- More dances
- More festival options for youth
- Updates Mall
- Stuff like the discovery centre that also has science and art
- Basketball court that's more accessible
- Updates movie theatre
- Lazer tag

Who should be involved?

- High School Students
- The Public

Healthy Living

What do you think about this?

- We need more information about how to live a healthy life
- Mental health is just as important as physical health
- Should be spoken of more in schools

What are the possibilities?

- Fins ways to promote a healthier lifestyles (ex. In schools)
- Access to healthy foods like community gardens
- Eliminate food waste
- Create an outdoor gym
- More trending activities for Town and Community rec. (ex. Mud run, colour run, skate park, climbing wall, aquatic centre)

Who should be involved?

- Youth
- StFX
- The Town and County
- Our Parents
- Resource Centres
- All schools

What are some questions you have?

- How can we actually achieve this?
- How can we make physical activity more available to low income families? (sport equipment etc.)
- How can we make sure that families/people have access to healthy foods?

Youth Friendly Space

What do you think about this?

- There is only three spaces to hangout in the Town (MacDonalds, the Library)
- It may just be the reality of living in a small town
- There is nothing to do in the winter so students are forced into unhealthy habits
- Young people don't have the money to pay for things, and everything costs money!

What are the possibilities?

- There should be more free programming
- A Skate Park!
- A sports dome that can be used all year round (like in Stellarton)
- Make the Keating Centre more accessible for young people
- An area on James St or Main St. with tables for a social area

Who should be involved?

- The Town
- StFX
- Local businesses

Dotmocracy Results

Student participation was light on the Dotmocracy session as youth were meant to place their dots on the preferred subjects as they left class, but for consideration here are the weighted results. Green (10pts) Yellow (7pts) Blue (5pts)

Topic	Dots	Points
Youth Friendly Space	Green Yellow 1 (7) Blue 6 (30)	37
Recreation, Entertainment and Events	Green 11 (110) Yellow 3 (21) Blue	131
Healthy Living	Green 1 (10) Yellow 3 (21) Blue 5 (25)	56
Youthful Business and Shopping	Green 2 (20) Yellow 6 (42) Blue 5 (25)	87
Youth and Adult Mentorship	Green 1(10) Yellow 5 (35) Blue	45
Inclusive and Diverse Community	Green 4 (40) Yellow 2 (49) Blue 3 (15)	104
All of them (created by a student)	Blue	20

1.Recreation, Entertainment and Events
2. Inclusive and Diverse Community
3. Youthful Business and Shopping

4.Healthy Living
5. Youth and Adult Mentorship
6. Youth Friendly Space



Summary Report

By Engage Nova Scotia

April 12th, 2018



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Introduction

Share your voice, shape our town.

Purpose

The Town of Antigonish has a rich history of having engaged and informed community members. The spirit continues on today in many avenues where people are working together to address challenges to build a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable future. With this foundation in place, we knew it was time to go further, together.

In the Fall of 2017, Engage Nova Scotia and the Town of Antigonish began to explore this initiative. Through a series of meetings with Mayor Laurie Boucher, CAO Jeffrey Lawrence, Special Project Coordinator Steve Scannell and elected officials we examined the opportunity to co-lead an initiative that would focus on strategic planning for 2018+ and citizen mobilisation.

We decided that through community conversations we would be able to meet the following three main goals:

Primary:

1. Surfacing Citizen Priorities
2. Informing the development of a Strategic Plan/Framework

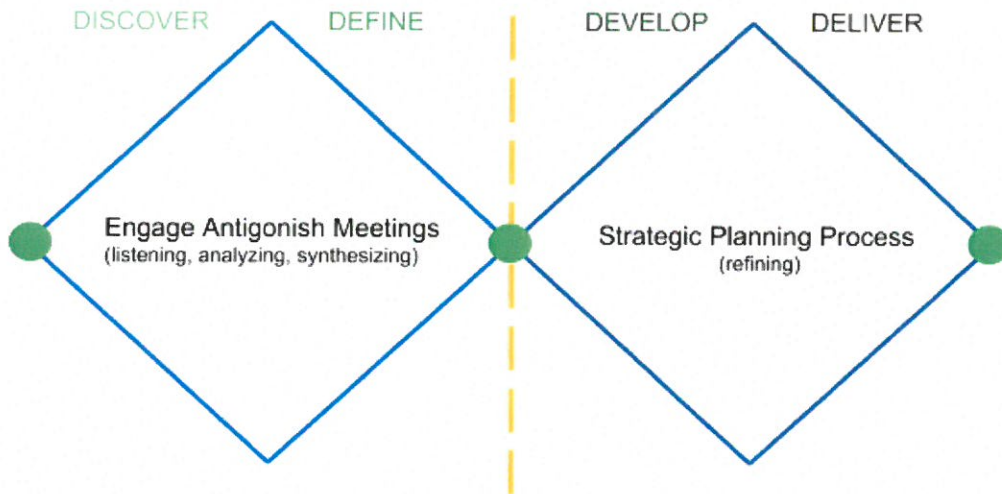
Secondary:

3. Activating Citizens towards greater community collaboration and cohesion

Approach

Diverge, Converge Model

The Engage Antigonish process was designed using a framework referred to as the 'Diverge, Converge Model.' This approach informed two events that would build on each other by first opening up the space to think big, and surface key insights and possibilities, moving towards synthesizing and clarifying the priorities, and finally digging deeper and moving toward action in second event. *The yellow line on the below diagram represents the end of the public meetings, and the beginning of the development and delivery of the 2018 Strategic Plan.*



Outreach Team and Finding Local Champions

Before Event One we put together an 'Outreach Team' that was comprised of a group of local leaders and community members who are well positioned within the community to mobilize support for the project amongst peers and to ensure a wide diversity of perspectives became part of the overall process. This group also shared a variety of perspectives to provide feedback on the design of the events.

Over the three sessions, volunteers from StFX, the Coady International School, the Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network, and others stepped up to guide

conversations and draw out key ideas. Their support and contribution were important to the overall success of the initiative.

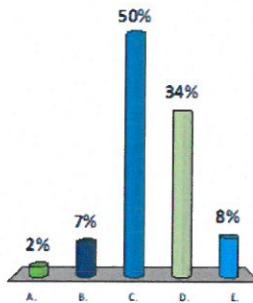
Event Summary

Event One

At the first event, which took place on January 31, 2018, over 140 participants convened at St. Ninian's Place. The gathering created an opportunity for everyone to participate in a poll that allowed them to share their thoughts and feelings on some themes anonymously. This session explored issues related to culture and attitudes in the room. Some notable results are shared below. They reveal a preference for change over no change and a healthy amount of optimism about the current state of the Town of Antigonish.

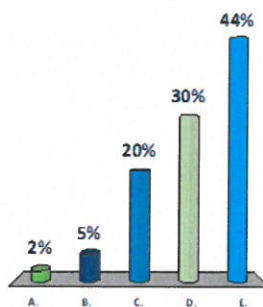
Our community is in need of

- A. 1- No change
- B. 2
- C. 3 - Moderate change
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Big change



Do you feel **able** to be a part of the solutions to our town's challenges?

- A. 1 - No
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 - Yes



Participants were then invited to start individual conversations about their highest priorities by answering “How can we work on _____ together?”. Fourteen topics were called and participants self organized into breakout groups where facilitators lead them through a series of the following questions:

1. What are the key insights?
2. What are the possibilities?
3. Who could be involved?
4. What are the unanswered questions?

The first event concluded with participants voting on which of the 14 priorities identified seem to be most important. While not scientific, these results provided insight into priorities that required more attention in the subsequent community meeting.

Youth Session

Between the first event in January and the second event on April 12, a day-long session was hosted on March 23, 2018 at Dr. J.H. Gillis Regional High School. The event was lead by Engage’s Hailey Vidler, Steve Scannell, Mayor Boucher and two StFX Service Learning Students, Matthew Trnkus and Julia Jansman. Approximately 40 students gathered for a hands-on and interactive session that created a space for honest, fun and meaningful conversation. The practical and insightful thoughts and ideas harvested from the student and youth discussions were helped to inform priorities, reinforcing the perspectives of residents who attended the first event.

In order of students priorities:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1.Recreation, Entertainment and Events | 4.Healthy Living |
| 2. Inclusive and Diverse Community | 5. Youth and Adult Mentorship |
| 3. Youthful Business and Shopping | 6. Youth Friendly Space |

Event Two

On April 12, 2018 close to 70 residents of the Town and surrounding area attended. Some attended the first meeting and others were joining for the first time. Mayor Boucher welcomed residents and set the context for the whole initiative and the evening.

Five discussion themes were identified through a combination of weighted voting, youth feedback and integrating past public consultation exercises such as the ‘Integrated Community Sustainability Plan.’

The five themes selected for a deeper exploration were:

1. Create an Age Friendly Community
2. Recreation, Leisure and Outdoor Space
3. Support Economic Development
4. Pursue Environmental Sustainability
5. Arts and Culture

The break-out conversations were set up for each topic., Councillors and staff participated in discussions with residents about what mattered most to them, what the Town was doing well already, and clarifying roles both the town and residents can play.

The questions asked were:

1. Is there something big missing from this theme?
2. What have we done well in this theme area?
3. Why has it worked? What are the reasons for success?
4. What are the roles the Town, citizens and others within this theme?

5. What is one essential action item you can leave us with?

The evening ended in a plenary discussion led by the Mayor and Engage Nova Scotia CEO, Danny Graham They emphasized the importance of coming together in community and the Town's next steps moving forward.

Conclusion

From these conversations, Engage Nova Scotia has been able to gather and organize an abundance of data, ideas and perspectives from community members that will be an important contribution to a citizen-informed strategic plan for the Town of Antigonish.

Lessons

1. Citizens appreciate genuine efforts to reach out and be heard
2. Before undertaking public engagement initiatives it is important to do some analyses on what has already happened and what has already been created
3. It is important to be clear about expectations and deliverables

4. Pay attention to the balance between being flexible and open, and being concrete, directive and action oriented
5. Expectations have been created about the frequency and quality of public engagement and planning

Resulting Ideas from the Engage Antigonish Process

In addition to this high-level synthesis, the Town of Antigonish has records of answers to Registration questions, facilitation notes from both events as well as additional documentation that perspectives, thoughts, ideas and actions.

1. Create an Age Friendly Community

1. Advancement of youth
 - Mentorship
 - Youth Council
 - Strategies for retaining StFX students and local youth
2. Seniors mobility
 - Transit and transportation
 - Accessibility and sidewalks
3. Culture and recreation facilities
 - Skateparks
 - Culture Centre
 - Outdoor parks
4. Mental Health and Accessibility as a lense for building and improving Antigonish

2. Pursue Environmental Sustainability

1. Solid Waste Disposal strategy
2. Sustainable energy options
 - Wind
 - Solar
 - Geothermal
3. Develop strategy for waterways
 - The Three Rivers
 - Flood plan
4. Carbon (friendly) Sustainable Transportation plan
 - Car Share
 - Biking
 - Transit
5. Increase public awareness about environmental issues
 - Litter/ garbage signage and enforcement
 - Recycling
 - Food Waste

<p>3. Recreation, Leisure and Outdoor Space</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parks 2. Walking trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase amount of trails 3. Biking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A group that promotes biking culture -Infrastructure (bike friendly roads/sidewalks) 4. Open public spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Green spaces 5. Year-round Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Equal access to more indoor space 6. Equality of Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs for underprivileged individuals -Promote to diverse interest groups -Transportation 	<p>4. Support Economic Development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong central commercial district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stronger business networks 2. Youth and business startup opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Incubator properties -Build youth entrepreneurship climate -Networking groups for young professionals 3. Campaign to buy local 4. Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attract tourists headed to Cape Breton -Coordinated and collaborative partnerships 5. Destination Antigonish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cross-sector approach to marketing -Empowering community members to also promote -Taking advantage of the Special Olympics
<p>5. Arts and Culture</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arts and Culture Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus of artistic and cultural activity -Raise awareness of artistic and cultural assets 2. Festivals and events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop and attract new markets -Youth oriented Festivals 3. Emphasis on multiculturalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mi'kmaw, Acadian, Gaelic and Newcomers 	

Consolidated Notes from Event 2

Create an Age Friendly Community

Note Capture

Part I What is missing?

- “I thought Mental Health was but then I realized it’s everywhere on the sheet, from transportation to youth spaces’

Part II a) What have we done well in this theme area?

1.L’Arche and CACL and Group homes have a good system.

- the success are creating acceptance and have respect. They play a strong role in helping us understand how they can live together and live together
- 70% are employed
- ” If we design for an inclusive community for differing abilities, it automatically becomes one that it an age friendly community”
- L’ Arche and CACL gives an opportunity for youth to and StFX students to volunteer and be active.
- First town out of the city that is hosting the National Special Olympics Games

2. The Town now has an accessibility committee, looking to get funding for sidewalks and ramps

3. Active Transportation is something that weaves through every themes and every group (youth, seniors, accessibility community)

- Lot’s of groups working together in Antigonish on transportation
- Beepers are on the crosswalks, new traffic lights in target areas and crossing flags are things we are doing well.
- The community transit service is a huge success and freedom for people live into poverty, aging, young etc.

4. Great parks around the town that are used by all ages

5.Strategies for retaining StFX students could be around having them participate in research projects specifically related to the town so that they feel invested (currently student doing on on Active Transportation)

6. The Peoples Place Library has been a huge asset to the community because it is a gathering place for everyone)

- Neutral spaces like the Library are great, but it's important to have specific spaces for youth for example.
- Literacy is an ongoing theme that is important.

7. The Keppoch is a really great success for all ages

13. Student love the Farmers Market

- Have asked for a bike rack available

Part II b) What Lessons can we take?

- We've created inclusive spaces, minimized barriers to access.
- Need to have compassion and understand how certain groups experience Antigonish
- Create awareness, promotion and education
- Universal design (includes access, usability, sustainability)
- Culture shifts are important, they create a sense of possibility

Part III What are the Roles?

- Consensus around the table that figuring out roles has a lot of complexity
 - Used transportation to the hospital for those who are low income or have mobility issues as an example
 - Decided it was no ones singular issue (Town, Taxi Companies, Hospital) but what is their role and responsibility to bring this to the board of the Hospital?
- We need champions throughout community, institutions like CACL, Recreation, StFX, and singular people to spark and help drive organization around certain issues
- -The role of the Town and Council is to listen to listen to the community. When we are making decisions have them part of it. Give the opportunity to the residence (like with the Engage Antigonish model)
- It's important for the Town to not emphasize the barriers.

Part IV- Actions ideas

- A hub model that emphasized the pockets of energy around people working to make an age friendly community
 - Hub Model Mapping → Map entry points to town and connect the main hubs with accessible routes, paths to the Farmers Market, Library, Legion, Shopping Centre etc.

- Think about how each person of different ages experiences these routes, how do we connect them more? Literally and figuratively
- Another Hub Space like the farmers market or library that is a neutral space
- Extend the Service Learning opportunities to the High school students (youth volunteer program)
- Increase youth opportunities to learn, train and gain experience.
 - Buddy systems, student or service learning
- Active Transportation
 - Improves accessibility for all ages
 - Emphasize connectors
 1. Schools → Universities
 2. StFX → Keppoch
 3. Hospitals
 4. Farmers Market
 5. Library
 6. CACL → L'Arche
- Skatepark! (x2)
- Put the accessibility lense on everything and add it to local governance activity
- Examine and promote community success. What are the ingredients of success. Citizen activation is of value
- Make the hospital more accessible!
- Continue to involve residents of all ages in decision making

Pursue Environmental Sustainability

- How can we encourage students to leave their cars parked, take your bikes to university

-

Jay Ross, think about sustainability as they plan all their

Ron Fraser – Antigonish has been shaped by our rivers, they have been polluted by mills, still suffering from these problems; we haven't done anything to improve the quality of these rivers.- when are we going to start doing something about these three rivers.

Logan

John? To Sheila's right... environment outweighs every other priority in the room, nothing is more important, we must do it in group cooperation ---

Jack says that he thinks the town is doing a fantastic job, possibly leading the province in waste management; Town council has done a lot about the rivers....

The river belongs to the province-

We can't clean up the river but how were we allowed to mess them up in the first place – why can't we remove what we put there?

We need to address how we deal with stormwater – not directing it into our waterways, rivers, etc.

Part I - What is missing ?

Transportation

- Think about vehicle purchasing – do I need a giant truck? Can something smaller do this job for the Town?
- Close down parking on one side of the street so that the space can be used for other purposes; cycling, additional retail space, etc...
- Partially sheltered bicycle storage/parking with solar panels on top to charge your ebike

Energy Efficient Homes

- Heat loss in single home dwellings

First Nations Advice and Consultation

- Education, also expert First Nations advice needs to be sought

Personal/Student Impact

- Students aren't the only guilty parties – they'll drive their cars to the gym
- How many people drove here today and how many people walked? How far did you have to drive?
- Some of these are personal choices and decisions
- Recycle sure – but reduce, and reuse need to be here
- Promote reuse options to include notices in Student Orientation packages
- Contact and communicate directly to the Antigonish Landlords Association about recycling for students, donations to Op Shop, etc. Rely on Landlords to help advance this goal.

Infrastructure

- there need to be more charging stations for electric cars

- Biomass as sustainable energy alternative
- Efficiency needs to be considered as a route to reducing waste
- Storage of energy, as a sustainability option; this is a limitation on the use of solar energy
- Electric cars can be used to draw down and store energy
- “We care to Share” curbside giveaway
- Shared Streetscapes

Climate Change

- resilience and adaptation need to be considered – storms, rain water will continue to increase – we must be resilient to these factors; these are adaptation issues.
 - Planning with an eye to decades from now. Flooding, sea level rise, public awareness about bigger environmental issues
 - Divesting from fossil fuel projects
 - Set a date for a time to be 100% renewable by, this sends a strong signal
 - Pass a formal resolution calling upon province and feds to set a renewables date, ban offshore fossil fuels extraction
-
- we shouldn't ignore incineration to divert from landfills, to create energy

Other

- “Nature” missing from the list;

Part II a) What are some of the things we are doing well in this area?

- Wind energy
- Town of Antigonish has tabled motion to ban plastic bags
- We must look to other jurisdictions to emulate best practices
- Active Transportation Plan that the Town and County developed years ago – should it be revisited? Implemented?
→ May 2 people are invited to start talking about the Active Transportation Plan
- The Antigonish Transit buses are running well – usage is increasing, dial-a-ride is now active in the county
- The Town – the first in Nova Scotia – allowing people to net meter solar energy generation

- Program where people can put a device on their water heaters to block heating during peak hours – reducing peak hour energy usage; most [people have hot water heat....
- The university is starting to reduce parking – that’s a good thing, it needs to continue – the Town is concerned though that this will push parking out into the town’s public parking spaces
- The Keppoch promoting active lifestyle outdoors. People who come to attractions like Keppoch for biking look for small towns nearby that are also bicycle friendly.,

Part II b) What Lessons can we take?

There’s so many things happening, a communication about it, collaboration – **what makes this successful here?**

- Positive reinforcement– focus on the positive this helps to make living sustainable more socially acceptable, less weird
- “people need to understand the SO WHAT? of not doing something”
- More and more people are receiving bills via email or online – reducing paper, saving \$\$
- We need to look at the rivers as a dynamic entity, what do the characteristics of a good rivers do FOR us?
- Maybe we have been thinking about this the wrong way
- Look at the river from a geological perspective – ask where it wants to go

Part III - What are the roles the Town, citizens and others within this theme?

- Is anyone teaching sustainability – or any of this – locally in the school curriculum?
→ Could we lobby to have this included in the school system?
→ “Listening to our neighbors” film about resilience in Antigonish
- A social enterprise?
- The less we send to the landfill the more we save

Part IV -Actions

- Establishment of a Three-Rivers committee, Jack asking Ron to Chair this
- How can we cooperate with our visual artists to create appealing advertising that will reach people on these important issues?
- It’s about a clear and cohesive narrative

- A picture series – Antigonish in 2050 – illustrate the image we are aspiring to
- People need to understand that by recycling they are putting money back into the coffers of the Town. Educate people about this...
- Diversion credits to help fund a full-time position and some of the initiatives to advance this goal

Recreation, Leisure and Outdoor Space

Part I Is there something big missing from this theme?

- Connection with mental health and physical activity
- Having a pet friendly community
- Encouraging physical activity as a lifestyle
- More free play areas (tennis/basketball courts)
- Green spaces like a garden or park to relax in
- Could we see sponsored places
- Could we have resource people that could lead hikes?
- There needs to be an education connection? Connect with schools to make it natural for children to want to be physically active
- Learn from the 'Park Bench Player' where mental health and physical activity are aligned

Part II . What have we done well in this theme area?

- Not working in silos with the County
 - Transit and accessibility could be improved to get to the Keppoch
- Consistent programs to engage with the outdoors
- Continue getting informed buy-in from users
- People really enjoy the landing as a place to walk in Town, they and want it kept open and well maintained (self accountability/ ownership)
- Sidewalk, walking and snow clearing can be good in Town
- VIC! ***
- Getting people on board
- Columbus Field is an asset, how do we make it better?
 - outdoor exercise equipment
- Spurt → multisupport program. (How do we continue to build on it?)

- We have the best individual sport community in the province. How do we best build on it to make sports better for all kids?)

-

2. Why has it worked? What are the reasons for success?

3. What lessons can we take?

- Though we do have good infrastructure for sports, you have to come to the town for everything.
-could be a good opportunity for collaboration with Town and County
- Open gym is one of the most popular rec program. By encouraging more 'free' 'unstructured' play it could break down the "athletic kid" mentality and encourage all children to be active and move.
- Schools must be part of the picture
- Non competitive aspect of sports and physical education are important.

Part III Roles

What are the roles the Town, citizens and others within this theme?

- The library is a good example of something that was a collaboration
- How do we get people in the community interested in creating something together with the Town without giving them a job, but also have ownership?
- It's important to find a way to maintain energy and to make sure that is inclusive of everyone
- It can't just be the town alone. We need to create a call to action, get volunteers, break into established groups.

Part IV

What is one key action item you can leave us with?

- Recreation focussed shuttle
- A sidewalk/trail along the river could go a long way
- Creating a trail system by linking; walking, biking, hiking and dog friendly trails
- Keep natural ecology in mind
- Create an app for the town
- 5 years asset management strategic plan for a river-walk and trail system (create an incremental strategy to address it)
- A community fair showcasing existing groups/opportunities including available resources (ex. Hike it Baby)
- Pop Up Play!
- Flow + connectivity between key locations
- Bike facilities near farmers market

- A YMCA facility (less intimidating and cost friendly for entire families)
- Approved dog park
- Laminated cards of walking trails, running routes on a lanyard that visitors can take to explore the community (at hotels, tourist areas etc.)
- More gatherings of children, youth and young adults for community exercise
- Take an opportunity to learn from other communities
- Tennis courts, Bike racks, Cooperation with county, StFX and Town on resource sharing for recreation (Collective action approach)

Support Economic Development (1)

Part I

Is there something big missing from this theme?

- There are gaps with supporting youth and entrepreneurs
- Attracting new businesses was at first businesses (was at first session but isn't reflected as strongly in notes)
- Working together to cooperate with current businesses and new businesses to integrate
- There is a lack of discussion around the table about trade-school and mentorship programs

Part II

1. What have we done well in this theme area?

- Students are starting their own businesses (ex. Showtime)
- There is an engaged populace/ supportive and vibrant business areas (Market, Main St. youth involvement, university service learning)
- Farmers Market growth and development

2. Why has it worked? What are the reasons for success?

- Youth from the University are staying and they are well educated and socially conscience people who are not afraid to volunteer and get involved (promotion of youth engagement through business development)
- Local businesses are being promoted by local populace that are supportive and vibrant
- Co-op programs with university have been successful
- We have had success with hiring locally

3. What lessons can we take?

- Right now there is not much opportunity for youth and there is a lack of knowledge about what Antigonish has to offer.

- The farmers market is a hub for for conversation and engagement
- There is a uniqueness of StFX and Town relationship for youth retention

Part III Roles What are the roles the Town, citizens and others within this theme?

- Town as a communicator/facilitator
- To engage ourselves beyond these sessions
- Shift to a mindset of the community
- Keeping the town as a pearl (Town-County-University) and they all have a role in shifting the mindset

Part IV

What is one key action item you can leave us with?

- Find more creative ways to promote our region
- Innovation Lab
- Attractions that invite people to stay, play or shop and find a facilitator to manage these attractions
- Have Rick Mercer open the Special Olympics
- Farmers Market "Goat on the Roof"
- Business Information Development Centre (a cooperative)
- Regular Meetings to support ideas to action
- Breakdown sild and barriers that prevent access to resources for new/growing businesses (ex ESREN, CBDC, NOBL, StFX ext, Awesome Foundation, StFX business students etc.)
- A business incubation network
- Using social media to target a broader audience
- Moving forward and continue to communicate with each other after Engage is done to self promote and thereby create a network
- Marketing/ promotion campaign to promote existing business that highlights the goods and services in community rather than online shopping
- Have a 'Business Navigators' desk at the Farmers Market

Support Economic Development (2)

Part I

Is there something big missing from this theme?

-

Part II

1. What have we done well in this theme area?

- The University's partnership on the Special Olympics
- Fish plants
- Regional planning and collaboration creating climate of possibility
- Joining the Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network w/ County
- Feel good social/economic development within the community
 - Arts Culture
 - Farmers Market
 - Buying local
- The Highland Games
 - Large amount of people who 'come from away'

2. Why has it worked? What are the reasons for success?

3. What lessons can we take?

- Small, safe 'niche'
- University activity bring people downtown
- Have different 'experiences' central
 - Art & Culture
 - Sports
 - Theatre
- Great local restaurants
- Town promotes family connection and clean, good living
- Quality of Life is a big driver

3. What lessons can we take?

- Succession planning is important to continue successes

Part III Roles

What are the roles the Town, citizens and others within this theme?

- A hub model that includes everyone
 - West St, economic development groups, incubator, business mentors
- StFX and students (over 400 students spend the summers in town)
- Must continue to engage youth
- There is a role of Anchored industries (Tourism, Fishery)
- Leadership from all... it cannot get lost in politics. The community needs to be the driver of decisions making
- Town leading the "sense of belonging", creating opportunities for everyone to have a place to plug into

Part IV

What is one key action item you can leave us with?

- 'Events Antigonish' a community map of events
- Medical 'tourism'. Study those who come to town
- Pay attention to the fast growing social enterprise sector
- Destination Antigonish marketing and communications can include Municipal gov. Together with business and citizen advisors
- Continue to make our community ready for investment
- Support for business succession planning
- Identification of potential prospects that could impact Antigonish
- Support the creation of the Antigonish Business Hub with ESREN
- Strike a Town and County Regional Planning Commission
- Better coordination of tourism groups
- A campaign to better support and get involved in local business (involve young people and seniors together)

Arts and Culture

Part I

Is there something big missing from this theme?

- multiculturalism: missed the African- Nova Scotian community
 - - if it could be a more inclusive term rather than so broad; how long is someone considered a newcomer? 6 months? A year?
 - heritage not on the list
 - - structures, architectural gems
 - - lack of a heritage community, used to have one but not anymore
 - - history should be considered art
 - - buildings attract tourism; they want to see houses, churches, courthouses, etc. that are important in heritage
 - - should make it a point to make it a historical destination
 - - relatives come to town to look for ancestors' and relatives' house; preservation of our heritage
 - - "built heritage"

- - story history of newcomers and immigrants to Antigonish - “we are all immigrants and newcomers other than Indigenous people” - Example: history of the Dutch immigrants and their stories, would provide inspiration to newcomers
- - remember cultural landscape; heritage of the land is as important as the buildings - Miqmaq Indigenous land
- use art for health, all connected
- - example: music therapy
- - embrace different forms of art
- - example: Park Bench Players; telling their story of their resiliency against mental health - why can't we use art to talk about mental health? This has resonated with this community and other communities they have visited
- - mental health awareness
- town budget does not have a lot of money to give to these arts and culture groups funding
- supported co-funding with the municipalities
- - volunteer groups are remarkable, but strained
- - you can only rely on volunteers to an extent
- - the community groups are aging, some might be non-existent without younger generation recruitment
- coordination aspect is critical in the success
- - communication, marketing, expertise, etc.
- - someone with the kind of skills could provide the volunteer base a central link
- - newsletters already going out on Antigonish Cultural Live, but we need more
- partnerships need to be built upon
- - “do an arts project with the sustainability group” as an example; become interconnected

need to have one common board somewhere in town dedicated to events and information regarding arts and culture, a physical space where people can stop to see it

Part II

1. What have we done well in this theme area?
2. Why has it worked? What are the reasons for success?
3. What lessons can we take?

- volunteer culture in Antigonish is remarkable
- - “phenomenal”
- Peoples Place Library
- - 1500-1800 people walk through the door every day

- - meeting place for organizations who can't afford a rental space for meetings
- - a place for kids to come, place for conversation
- - tremendous asset
- - funding for it from the province has been stagnant the last few years, makes some concerned about its future in the next few years; we must take this asset more seriously
- support for volunteers is never in short supply, that's a bonus
- lots of space/ buildings available for community groups
- - access is sometimes hard though; accessibility, availability, cost, etc.
- - finding affordable space for performers a challenge
- - Bauer Theatre is an important asset that new management has opened up better
- - parking for the Theatre is lacking
- Events Calendar that the Town of Antigonish has put together - very beneficial
- - trying to get University, Town, and the County to have an events calendar in one space
- - on the town's website - Antigonish cultural live puts out a print version every month and posts it at Scotia bank
- - lots of events that people didn't know about that they wish they did; need better marketing for it
- International Film Festival
- - promoting artists is not yet up to the mark
- - if they could do something better to promote the artists; at least once a year, perhaps an awards night or something
- - for the purpose of attracting tourists and getting publicity for the event
- - how can we expand our understanding of what art is to build our knowledge and capacity for different forms of art?
- importance of celebrating the arts and culture that our town has
- intercultural connection with food
- - can build upon this, provide more space for this
- Anything we can do to include people who don't identify as "artists" would be beneficial
- - how do we make things like the Highland Games more inclusive and relevant to other groups?
- - inter-generational: what do youth need to see to be engaged in these events?
- - same conversation for things like the theatre
- the new Farmer's Market will add to the community
- - more flexible space, more space for vendors which will attract young businesses that will have an opportunity to participate in town business

- the new Art Fair has a lot of youth participants
- - they could show their art around town?
- new venue that is starting up - the "Art's House" going to become an arts school starting in the summer at the old Antigonish visitors centre
- - hoping to be up and ready for the beginning of June to welcome students; enthusiasm from the arts teachers about this
- the Casket has done numerous pieces on different artists in the area, feature articles on artists participating in theatre or shows, different artists, etc.
- - this is a good trend worth continuing to expand knowledge of arts in town
- remarkable youth drumming group- African drumming group
- - perform at cultural events, but has become an important social group within the community
- - "these young people have a way to express themselves that is culturally relevant and also in a neat way"

Part III Roles

What are the roles the Town, citizens and others within this theme?

What Are The Roles That The Town Should be Playing? Citizens Roles? Shared Responsibilities? Action That Need to be Taken?

- some key action items to move these ideas forward
- long term and short term timelines
- Suggestions:
- - employ two-eyed seeing: every time we say we're going to do something, look at all of our actions from different perspectives
- - workshops in understanding what arts and culture is
- - all arts groups in one multi-purpose building
- - increase town budget for arts and culture
- - include the County more when considering Town benefits and events and opportunities
- - coordinate partnerships with groups that are "atypical"
- *The rest of the ideas are on the sticky notes that they wrote*

Part IV

What is one key action item you can leave us with?

- Town and County develop destination marketing with a focus on developing plan for festivals all year and co-ordinator to be hired for the project

- Develop plans with youth - youth related activities (collaborate with arts and youth groups)
- Use social media to celebrate successes, FB, Twitter and dedicated websites
- Cultivate partnerships with atypical cultural groups/venues eg. Art + Health activity in a local business + Keltic Ford
- Make an attempt to have representative from the County. There is a big population in the County that has a lot to contribute to the success of the Arts
- 'Arts Centre' which is an incubator/ studio space for the youth
 - culture/heritage centre
 - Have all arts groups in one large multi purpose building with perfect acoustics
 - "Arts Antigonish Centre"
- Hire a coordinator with expertise
 - coordinate festivals/events
 - advise groups
 - create a communications plan
- Use 'two-eyed seeing': any actions taken should be considered from multiple perspectives particularly from indigenous perspectives ask Who is this for? Who is this by? Why? How can we make it inclusive? Ask they questions of all actions

