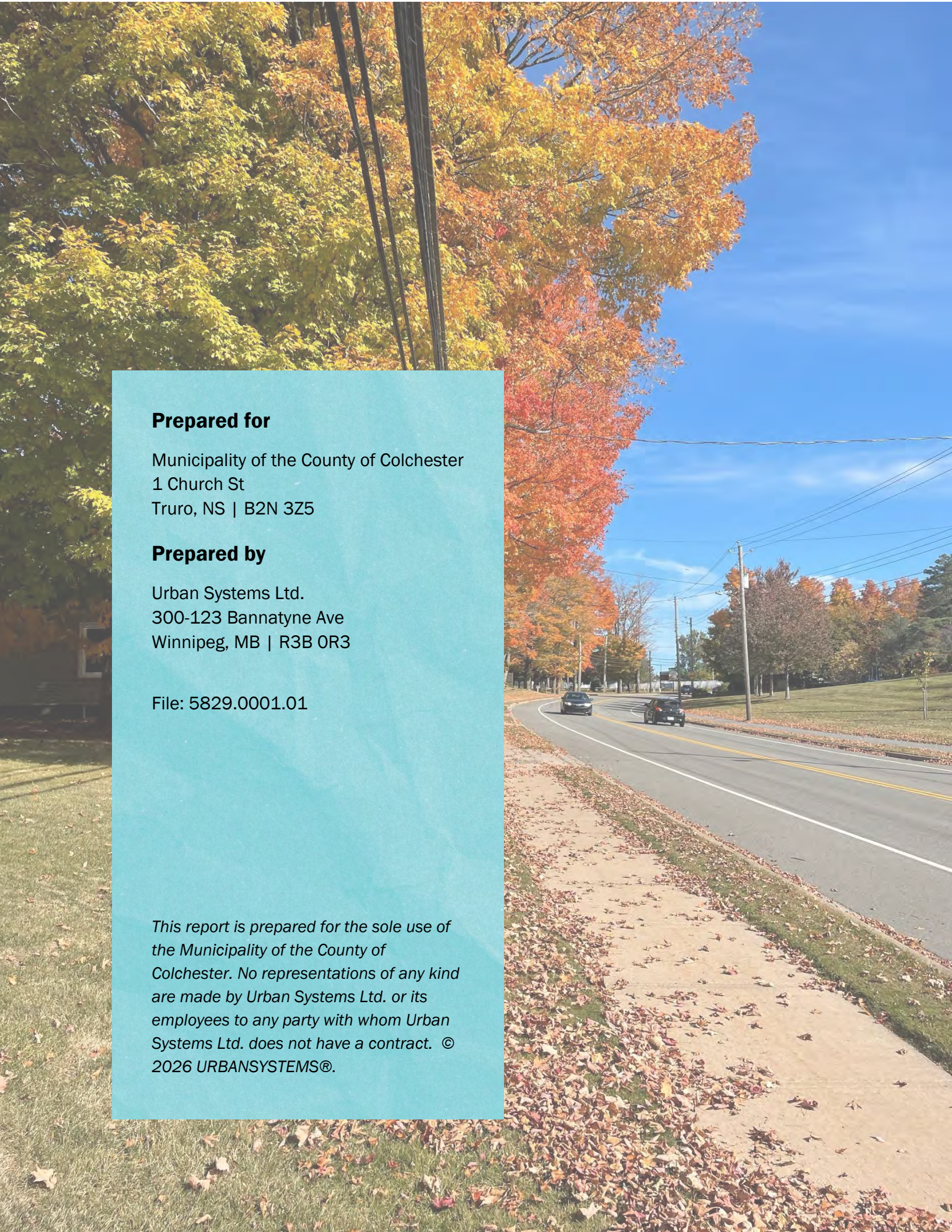
Active Transportation Strategy

Shaping Influences Report

January 2026

BIBLE HILL
Plant Your Roots

Colchester



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Contents

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1.0 Overview

The Municipality of Colchester (Colchester) and Village of Bible Hill's *Active Transportation Strategy* (ATS) will provide guidance and direction for active transportation improvements across our communities. The ATS will support walking, rolling, and cycling within the Municipality and Village, providing connections to neighbouring communities and regions, while also aligning with the policy goals, objectives, and targets that are most important to the community. The strategy will identify priority network improvements to support people using active transportation to improve safety, remove and prevent barriers, and promote positive active transportation experiences for residents and visitors alike.

The ATS will build on previous strategies developed in 2011 and 2017, bringing forward important information and context while addressing new priorities, best practices, opportunities, and challenges. The updated strategy includes the Village of Bible Hill to more comprehensively represent the needs and priorities of Colchester residents. Connections to the Village of Tatamagouche will also be considered in relation to the Village's own *Active Transportation Master Concept* that is currently being developed by a different project team. Colchester's ATS is being developed through engagement and collaboration with Colchester community members, elected officials, key interest groups, and other government agencies to ensure that the Strategy reflect the community's diverse perspectives and needs.

Strategy Process

The ATS is being prepared between September 2025 and Spring 2026. The process consists of five steps, including two separate community engagement phases. Community engagement activities and summary of input are described in **Section 4.0**.

Active Transportation 101

What is Active Transportation?

Active transportation includes any form of human-powered transportation. Walking, which includes travelling with the support of a mobility device, and cycling are the most popular and well-known forms of active transportation, however the definition extends much more than this. It can also include winter-based active modes, water-based active modes, and horseback riding, although these modes are typically more recreational in nature. Connections to public transit and other transportation modes are important in facilitating travel choice.

What is the Active Transportation Strategy?

The ATS is a strategic document providing a roadmap of the goals and objectives for improving active transportation in Colchester and Bible Hill. The Strategy will identify a vision and goals for active transportation, a long-term active transportation network, design guidelines for active transportation facilities, as well as priorities (and a prioritization matrix for future decision making) for implementation and investment in new facilities and programs.

How will the Active Transportation Strategy be used?

The ATS will prioritize infrastructure, support community education and involvement in active transportation, and guide land development toward providing desired active transportation facilities. The ATS will also support collaboration with neighbouring communities and transportation service providers, and to communicate priorities for active transportation infrastructure to the Provincial and Federal governments, helping to strengthen future partnerships and grant funding opportunities.

Who is the Active Transportation Strategy for?

The Active Transportation Strategy is for everyone living, working, and travelling in Colchester to improve active transportation options across the community. Being directly informed by input from community members and interest holders, the Active Transportation Strategy will guide municipal staff and elected officials in making transparent and readily understood decisions around active transportation.

Benefits of Active Transportation

Active transportation can support a variety of positive outcomes for communities when more people feel empowered and safe to walk, roll, or cycle. Investing in active transportation can create a more balanced, accessible, equitable, and safer transportation system that also helps to reduce costs. Some of the key benefits of active transportation are highlighted below:

Safety + Comfort

Investments in pedestrian, cycling and rolling infrastructure help people of all ages and abilities feel safer and more comfortable using active transportation without fear of collision or conflict with vehicles. By providing dedicated, visible spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, these facilities can reduce collision risks and encourage more people to choose active transportation, leading to fewer vehicles on the road, a corresponding reduction in risk, and less traffic congestion overall.

Accessibility

Investments in active transportation infrastructure help ensure that Colchester is connected by safe and barrier-free routes, providing spaces for people of all ages and abilities to walk, roll, and cycle, while supporting a more equitable community.

Affordability

Active transportation is a cost-effective transportation option, and one that can be accessed by a broad spectrum of the community. By providing opportunities to shift away from vehicles, active transportation can help more people reduce transportation-related expenses.

Community Connectivity

Active transportation can strengthen connectivity throughout Colchester in both urban and rural areas - linking commercial nodes, residential areas, schools, parks, trails, and neighbouring communities together, as well as providing more opportunities for social interactions with other community members.

Climate Action

Active transportation supports reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by replacing vehicle trips with walking, cycling, and rolling trips, and eliminating emissions and air pollution associated with vehicle travel. This helps address goals of the *Carbon-Free Colchester Community Energy and Emissions Plan*, as well as broader provincial emissions reductions targets.

Local Economy

More people walking and cycling supports our local economy through an increase in foot traffic to local businesses, providing new opportunities for recreation and tourism, as well as providing employees the opportunity to access their places of employment through various transportation options.

Social Connection

Active transportation creates opportunities for community interaction, fostering social connectedness and sense of place.

Health + Well-Being

Travelling by active modes contributes to increased personal activity, positively impacting our health and reducing risks associated with a lack of physical activity. Research has shown active transportation also contributes to lower stress levels and improved overall well-being.

2.0 Our Community

This section describes many of the people, places, and key documents that will influence the Active Transportation Strategy. Key information on Colchester and Bible Hill will direct where active transportation can be most impactful and what might motivate greater uptake of walking, rolling, and cycling.

First Nations

Content to be added once engagement with Millbrook, The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'Kmaq, and Indigenous residents of Colchester has been completed.

Jurisdiction + Service Providers

Municipality of Colchester

The Municipality of Colchester develops and maintains active transportation infrastructure, including sidewalks and some trails outside of the Villages. Only a few roads in Colchester are under municipal jurisdiction, including all new local roads built since 1995. Other important functions include providing land use and development services, planning and maintaining municipal parks, and writing and enforcing municipal bylaws and policies.

Villages of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche

Bible Hill and Tatamagouche build and maintain their communities' sidewalks, trails, and parks. Unlike municipalities, the Villages do not own or maintain local roads, so collaboration is needed with road owners when approvals are required. While the Villages can access many funding programs, certain provincial sources require Council's consent, making collaboration necessary.

Nova Scotia Department of Public Works (NSPW)

The Nova Scotia Department of Public Works (NSPW) owns and maintains most roads in Colchester, including all highways. NSPW must approve all work done on provincial roads, including new sidewalks and trails, and controls speed limits and crosswalks on all provincial roads.

Millbrook First Nation

Millbrook First Nation plans and builds new active transportation infrastructure to serve its lands, while the Town of Truro maintains these facilities through a service agreement. Millbrook also administers its own land use planning to guide new growth and development.

Towns of Truro and Stewiacke

Truro and Stewiacke plan, build, and maintain their active transportation networks. Like Colchester, they also control land use and development and various other bylaws and policies that support key municipal functions.

Community Organizations

Various community groups support active transportation promotion and education, along with maintenance of some key trails. For example, the Tatamagouche Area Trails Association (TATA) maintains and improves the Short Line Trail along the North Shore.

Community Context + Demographics

Land Area

The Municipality of Colchester is located in the heart of Nova Scotia, covering 3,578 km^2 from Cobequid Bay to Northumberland Strait. Colchester neighbours the communities of Cumberland, Pictou, East Hants, and Halifax Regional Municipality, and surrounds the Towns of Truro and Stewiacke. The Cobequid Mountains and numerous watercourses, such as the Salmon River, also shape Colchester's development patterns, character, and history.

The Village of Bible Hill is a central part of Colchester along the Salmon River across from the Town of Truro. It is one of the Growth Centres identified in the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS), where new development and growth will be concentrated in the municipality.

Map 1 on the following page provides an overview of the Municipality of Colchester and the identified Growth Centres, including the Village of Bible Hill.

Population + Demographics

Understanding the habits and preferences of Colchester residents is important in informing active transportation planning, as well as supporting investments that will make active transportation more attractive to people across the Municipality. This section highlights some key information and trends from Census data collected by Statistics Canada and their connection to active transportation in Colchester.

It is important to acknowledge that currently available census data is now somewhat outdated, with census information now almost five years old. New census data from the 2026 Census will help understand how the municipality has changed over more recent years and account for some of these local and provincial trends. The Census is also based on place of primary residence, and so information may exclude seasonal residents, temporary workers, or post-secondary students from other parts of Nova Scotia, Canada, or the world.

Active Transportation Strategy: Regional Overview

Map 1

- Municipal Boundary
- Village
- Indigenous Community
- Growth Centre
- Park
- Highway
- Road
- Railways

CUMBERLAND

TATAMAGOUCHE

COLCHESTER

PICTOU

BIBLE HILL

TRURO

STEWIACKE

HANTS

HALIFAX

KINGS

Cobequid Bay

Bay of Fundy - Minas Basin

10
Kilometers

BIBLE HILL

Colchester
be centred here.

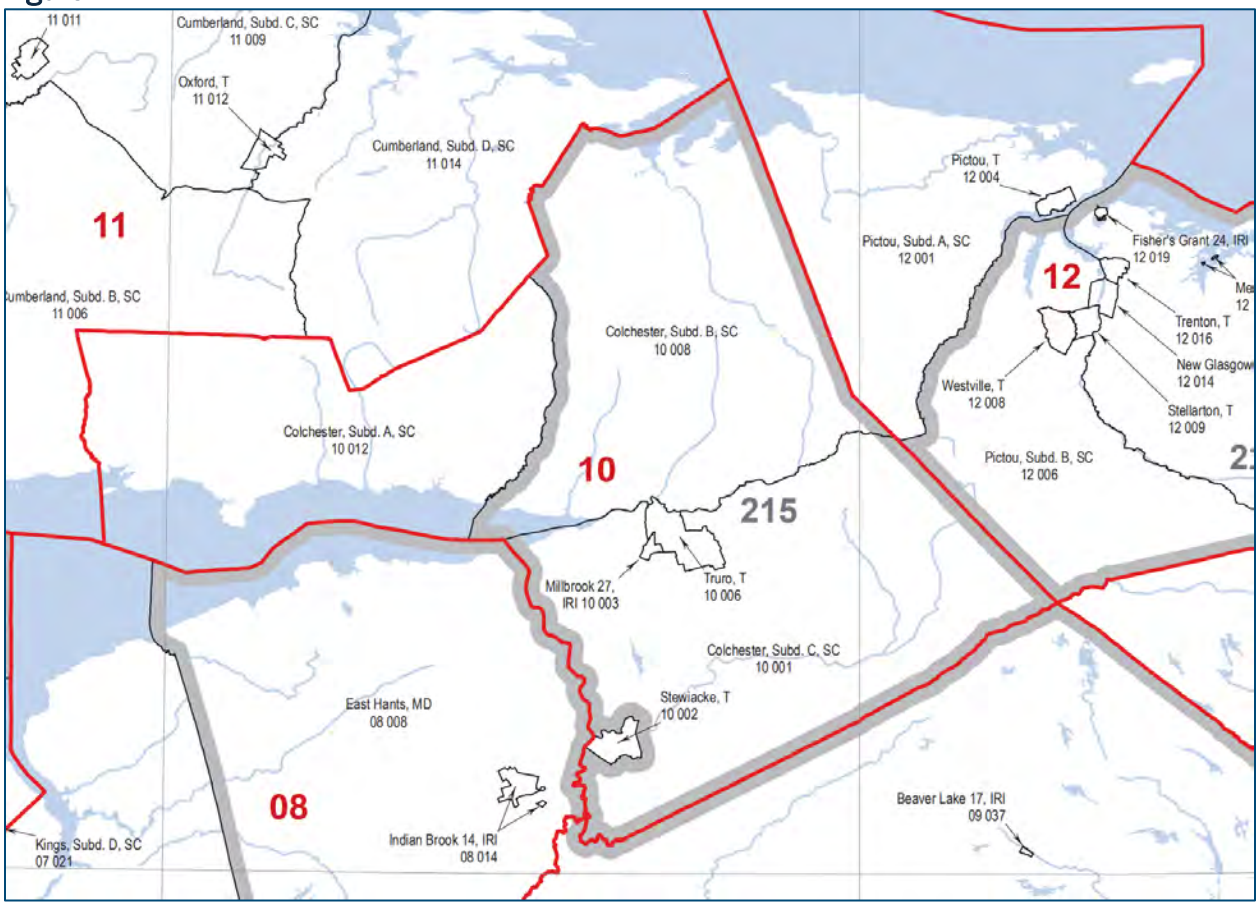
Geography

The Municipality of Colchester is made up of three different census subdivisions within the larger Colchester County census division. Census data from these three can be analyzed together to form a more complete picture of the Municipality, or individually to understand more local trends. The three subdivisions are described below and shown in **Figure 1**.

- Subdivision A – Northern Minas Basin
- Subdivision B – Bible Hill, Tatamagouche, Kemptown
- Subdivision C – South Colchester, Truro Heights / Lower Truro

Separate data is also available for the Villages of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche, as a subset of the areas described above. Trends for the villages are also included in this section.

Figure 1. Census Subdivisions in Colchester

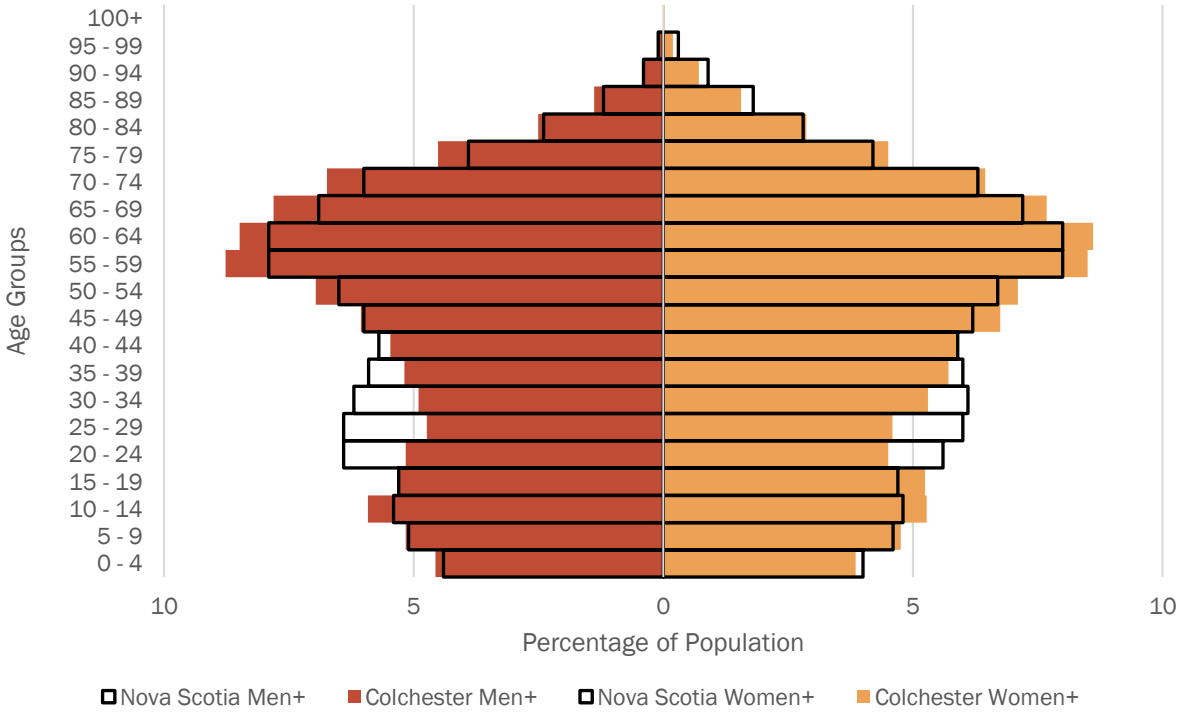


Population

According to Statistics Canada, Colchester's population was 36,040 in 2021. This is a slight decline in total population compared to the previous census in 2016. While population has grown overall in the past 30 years, the municipality's population peaked in 2011 and has slowly declined since.

Trends indicate that Colchester's population is also aging. The number of residents aged 65 or older has increased significantly, while the number younger than 65 has decreased. This trend of an aging and declining population is also being experiencing in many other rural communities in Nova Scotia. **Figure 2** shows how age distribution in the Municipality compares across Nova Scotia.

Figure 2. Population Pyramid of the Municipality of Colchester and Nova Scotia (2021)



The 2021 Census does not fully capture people moving to and within Nova Scotia after the COVID-19 pandemic. Population estimates produced by the Nova Scotia Department of Finance show strong population growth across Colchester, with populations either reaching or exceeding peak populations since 2006.[1]

[1] Nova Scotia Department of Finance. (2024). Nova Scotia Population Estimates by County and Census Subdivision - July 1, 2023. Retrieved from https://novascotia.ca/finance/statistics/archive_news.asp?id=19934&dg=&df=&dto=0&dti=3

Equity

Active transportation can support equity-deserving people in accessing transportation options, recognizing that many people in Colchester face diverse barriers to moving around their communities. Some of the equity-deserving populations captured in Census data include newcomers, visible minorities, and low-income individuals in Colchester, along with Indigenous identity, youth, and seniors discussed in previous sections.

Newcomers	Approximately 4% of Colchester's population identify as immigrants, including 0.5% of the population who are newcomers between 2016 and 2021.
Visible Minorities	Colchester's population in 2021 included fewer visible minorities (2.5%) when compared to Nova Scotia (9.8%) and Truro (10.3%).
Income	Low-income individuals make up about 14% of Colchester's population, slightly below the provincial average (17.3%) and in Truro (16%).
People Experiencing Homelessness	52 people were experiencing homelessness in Colchester according to a 2021 homelessness estimation survey.[2] Most of these individuals were located primarily in the Town of Truro (80%).
People Living with Disabilities	Nova Scotia had the highest rate of disability across Canada in 2022, with nearly 38% of people over the age of 15 experiencing a disability, which has grown 7.9% since 2017.[3] The national average is 27%.

Information on these important parts of Colchester's diverse population are also dated given accelerating immigration across Nova Scotia and growing affordability challenges.

When planning for active transportation, understanding the specific needs of these groups and other equity-deserving populations is crucial. Moving forward, the ATS will seek to align infrastructure and programming recommendations with the specific needs of these groups.

2 Turner Drake & Partners. (2021). Affordable Housing Needs & Supply Study, Truro-Colchester. https://www.colchester.ca/planning/3329-final-report-truro-colchester-housing-needs/file

3 Province of Nova Scotia. (2022). Canadian Survey on Disability – Nova Scotia https://accessible.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/2024-09/2022%20Canadian%20Survey%20on%20Disability-Nova%20Scotia%20Overview%20-%20web-ua_0.pdf

Land Use + Community Destinations

Colchester features a diversity of urban and rural areas. The highest concentration of residential uses are found in Bible Hill and Tatamagouche, in other areas around Truro, and in Debert. Other smaller population centres are spread throughout the municipality, including Great Village, Brookfield, and Masstown.

Commercial and employment activity is largely concentrated in these population centres. Debert is a growing industrial centre which draws employees from across the region, while the Towns of Truro and Stewiacke provide higher densities of employment and service uses. Truro acts as the commercial and service centre for much of Colchester, with many major roads connecting to and from the Town through various areas of the municipality. Many Colchester residents regularly travel to these urban areas or service centres for work, shopping, health care, or recreation, especially Truro. Ongoing development on Millbrook First Nation lands is also expanding commercial and employment lands, along with services for Nation members.

Education

17 schools are found in Colchester, with the highest number found in more urban areas and many rural schools drawing on large catchment areas. Truro is also an important destination for high school students travelling to the Cobequid Educational Centre. Post-secondary schools include the Dalhousie University Agricultural Campus in Bible Hill and the Truro campus of Nova Scotia Community College.

Health Care

Health care services are largely concentrated in the urban areas and Town of Truro, including the Colchester East Hants Health Centre and Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital in Tatamagouche. The West Colchester Community Health Centre in Bass River also serves many rural communities. Other health care facilities, such as long-term care facilities, are found throughout Colchester.

Parks

Colchester has many parks and recreational sites, including the Fundy Discovery Site, Bible Hill Recreation Park, Stewiacke River Park, and many others. Numerous provincial parks and protected areas also found in Colchester, including Five Islands Provincial Park and Gully Lake Wilderness Area.

Recreation

The Rath-Eastlink Community Centre is a highly used local amenity that offers recreation opportunities for all age groups and is jointly owned between the Municipality and Town. Other key recreational opportunities include numerous community rinks, community recreation centres, and sports fields.

Seasonal Destinations

Visitor traffic to locations like the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark and the Brule area increase over the summer and fall. Seasonal employment is also crucial to tourism-oriented and agricultural businesses, often greatly (albeit temporarily) increasing populations in rural areas.

Future Growth

Colchester's 2025 *Municipal Planning Strategy* (MPS) defines three general land use classes to help guide future growth and development as described in **Table 1** and shown in **Map 1**, which will help shape where active transportation can be most effective in supporting community goals.

Table 1. Land Use Structure from Colchester's Municipal Planning Strategy

	Description	Applicable Areas
Growth Centres	Higher-density development areas with a wider range of residential options and commercial services that may feature a variety of municipal infrastructure, such as sidewalks.	• Bible Hill • Debert • Hilden • Lower Truro – Truro Heights • North River • Central/Upper Onslow • Salmon River • Tatamagouche • Valley
Rural Service Centres	Denser nodes in the rural areas that provide a range of services and some municipal services, such as sewer and sidewalks.	• Brookfield • Great Village
Rural Areas	Low-density areas that include natural zones, agricultural uses, resource-based development, and larger recreational areas.	• All other areas of Colchester

Planning + Regulatory Framework

This section describes the planning and regulatory documents that guide active transportation and important complementary plans and policies. These documents will inform the Active Transportation Strategy, helping to understand broader municipal priorities and community goals. Key documents are described in more detail below. Some of the other plans, policies, and studies reviewed include:

Colchester Plans + Policies

- Parallel Strategic Priority Pillars 2024-2028
- Carbon-Free Colchester: Community Energy & Emissions Plan (2021)
- Physical Activity Strategic Plan 2021-2026
- Colchester County Trail Strategy (2005)

Regional Documents

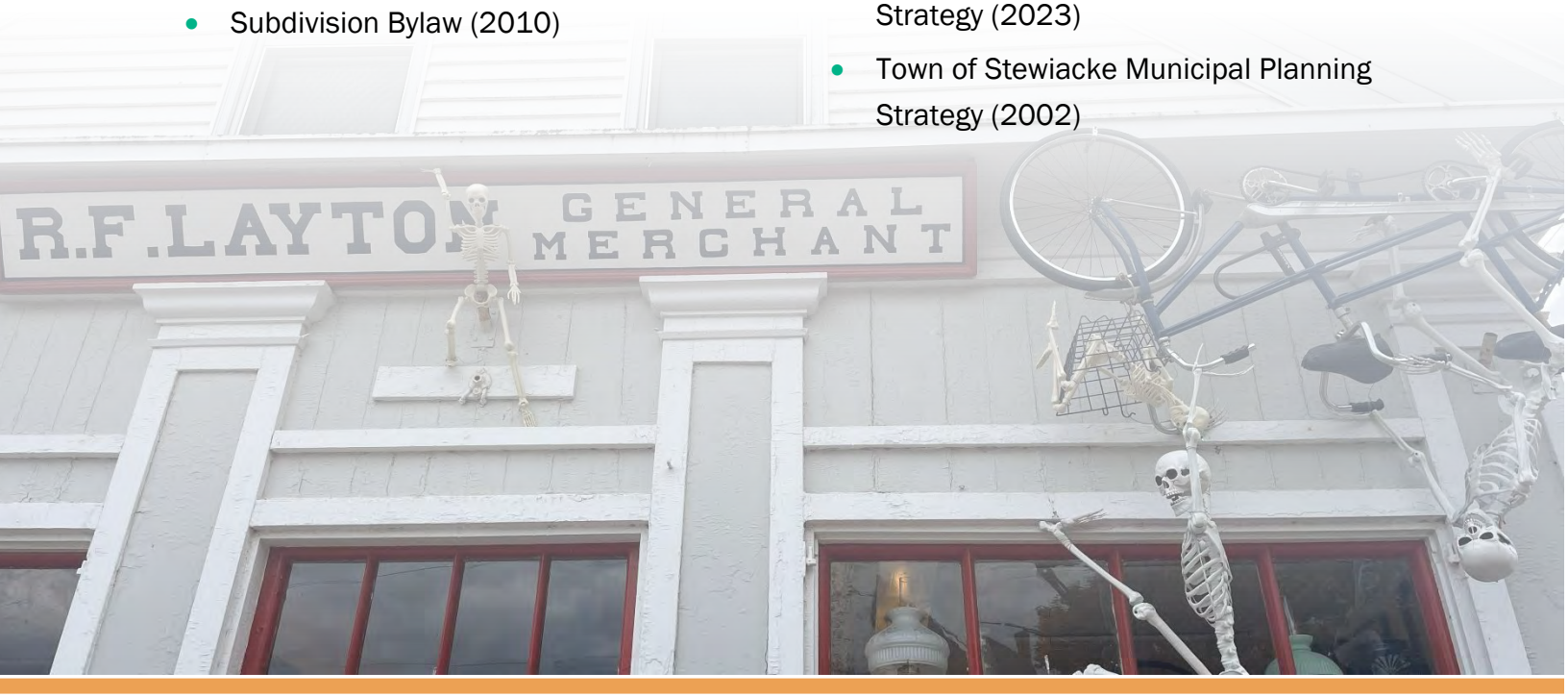
- Joint Regional Transit Feasibility Study (Ongoing)
- Regional Transportation Study (2025)
- Central Nova Scotia Strategic Tourism Expansion Program 2025–2027 Tourism Strategy (2024)
- Affordable Housing Needs & Supply Study Truro-Colchester (2021)

Colchester Bylaws

- Land Use Bylaw (2025)
- Subdivision Bylaw (2010)

Neighbouring Community Documents

- Town of Truro Municipal Planning Strategy (2023)
- Town of Stewiacke Municipal Planning Strategy (2002)



Municipal Planning Strategy (2025)

Colchester's Planning Strategy establishes guiding policy regarding land uses, growth, service provision and community development. Engagement identified support for improved active transportation to help decrease the community's reliance on private vehicles. Policies relevant to the Active Transportation Strategy include:

- **Policy 5-28:** Council may, through the Subdivision Bylaw, require sidewalks and/or multi-use paths on new public roads in the Growth Centres.
- **Policy 5-30:** Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, require pedestrian connections to adjacent active transportation networks for developments approved via the site plan approval process.
- **Policy 5-31:** Council shall, through the Land Use Bylaw, enable a reduction in required automobile parking spaces in certain zones if the developer provides bicycle parking spaces meeting standards established in the Land Use Bylaw.
- **Policy 5-32:** Council shall regularly review and update the Municipality's Active Transportation Strategy and shall work to implement the active transportation network identified in each successive version of the Municipality's Active Transportation Strategy.

Active Transportation Strategy (2011, rev. 2017)

Colchester's Active Transportation Strategy (ATS) has guided development of active transportation network of pedestrian, cycling, and multi-use facilities to increase connectivity, improve safety, and provide more affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation options. The original ATS Phase 1 projects were largely implemented, and it was therefore updated in 2017 to refresh the actions and priorities.

Guiding principles of the ATS included:

- The Municipality of Colchester recognizes that there are a variety of reasons why people use Active Transportation, including health/ wellbeing, recreation/ fitness, commute to work/ school, and tourism/ visitors.
- Active Transportation is a healthy alternative for all ages and economic background.
- Active Transportation can help the Municipality to achieve sustainability goals by reducing the community's greenhouse gas emissions.
- When real or perceived safety barriers are removed, more people will choose to actively travel.
- People will embrace the social and health benefits of AT. Building healthier communities will decrease healthcare costs and enable people to interact positively with members of their community.
- A solid AT network is a community enhancement attractive to prospective residents and businesses. It is also an attractive community feature for visitors.
- To make the AT Network for Colchester a success, a coordinated effort with the Town of Truro and villages of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche is important.

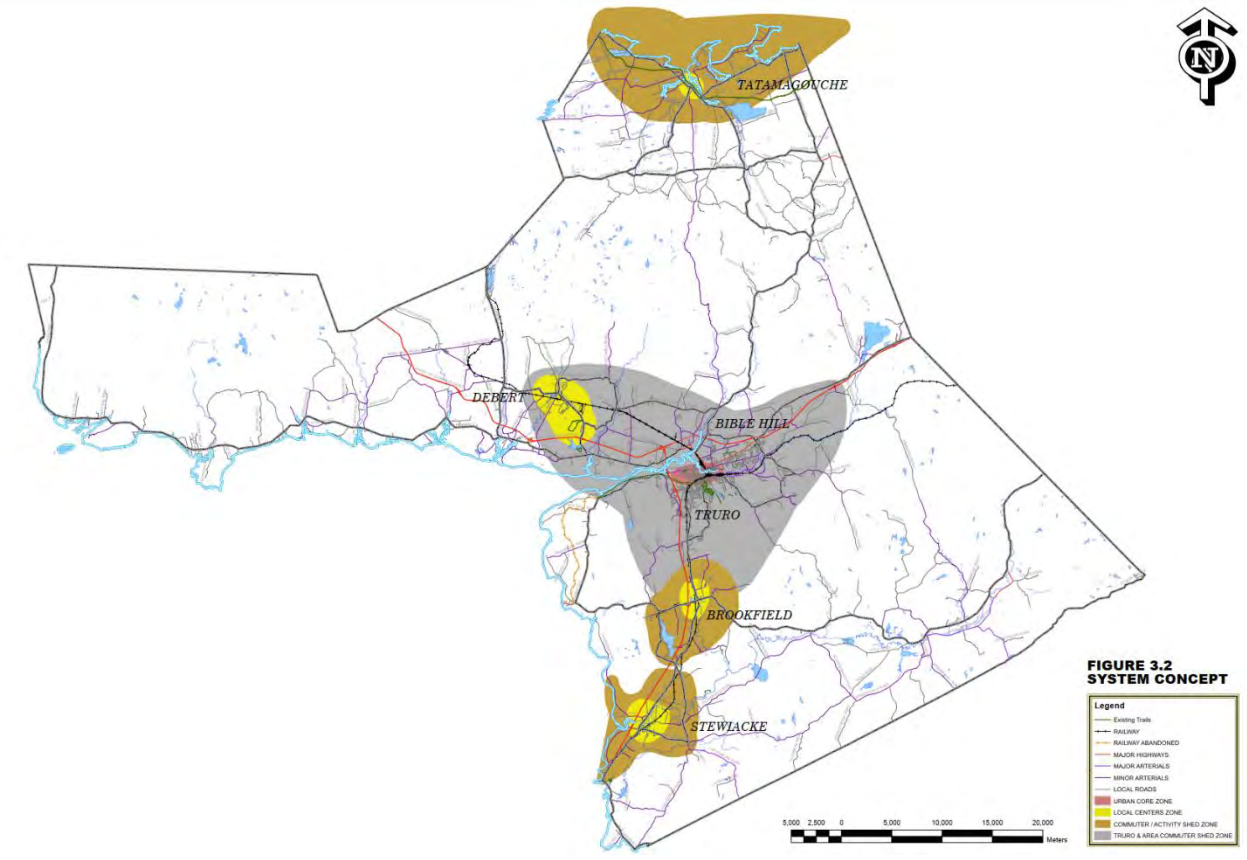
The 2011/2017 Strategies identified a series of facility types that are appropriate to the Colchester context, along with short-term priorities for active transportation network implementation and potential future projects.

Colchester – Truro Bikeways Plan (2009)

Before the Active Transportation Strategy, the Municipality collaborated with the Town of Truro to develop a plan that would guide the implementation of safe cycling routes through both communities. Built on extensive public engagement, the Plan prioritized on- and off-road cycling facilities, while also recommending pedestrian projects, where relevant.

Criteria for project prioritization were identified to select desirable routes. New and improved infrastructure was identified in multiple zones, based on their relationship to the regional core in Truro, as shown in **Figure 3** below. Several recommendations for Colchester both identified connections to Truro as well as proposed local active transportation networks in more rural areas. Ultimately, implementation of the *Bikeways Plan* has been limited; some of the sidewalk projects have been completed or included in subsequent plans like the 2011 *Active Transportation Strategy,* and the Plan discussed the development of a pedestrian bridge at what is now the Fundy Discovery Site.

Figure 3. Colchester-Truro Bikeways Plan System Concept



Regional Accessibility Plan (2025)

In collaboration with the Town of Truro, Stewiacke, and Millbrook First Nation, the recently updated *Regional Accessibility Plan* sets out priorities to improve accessibility and equity. These commitments are captured in six focus areas including Buildings, Infrastructure, Public Spaces, and Transportation.

Key commitments in these areas will ensure that accessibility is at the heart of transportation projects by seeking input from people with disabilities, embedding accessibility in design standards for new active transportation infrastructure, and addressing existing accessibility barriers in the built environment. Specific commitments include:

- Consulting people with disabilities in the planning and design of transportation-related projects, including the Region's 2025 regional transportation feasibility study.
- Working to improve sidewalk and safety access in line with provincial requirements by:
    - Working to identify high-priority sidewalks and crosswalks in need of repairs and updates.
    - Working with the province to secure necessary permissions to facilitate those improvements.
    - During project planning/design, consulting people with disabilities and industry experts on accessibility to identify the key accessibility features (e.g. curb cuts, tactile surface indicators, crosswalk markings, auditory and visual signals) needed for these improvements.
    - When projects are moving forward, working with the necessary Councils/Commissions to secure the budget to complete the work.
- Prioritizing accessibility when planning transportation projects.
    - Ensure accessibility is a key consideration in the execution of projects.
    - Prioritize plans that address known accessibility barriers or provide significant upgrades to accessibility and increased safety for vulnerable road users.

Tatamagouche Active Transportation Master Concept (Draft 2025)

Tatamagouche's draft *Active Transportation Plan* will guide future implementation of pedestrian and multi-use projects within the village. This includes both new and improved active transportation infrastructure, developing facilities that are appropriate to context, including wider, retail-oriented sidewalks in the "downvillage". Cycling is accommodated through the development of a more extensive network of on- and off-road multi-use pathways, many of which would replace existing sidewalks. The Butter and Short Line Trails also play an important role in the proposed network, connecting Tatamagouche to neighbouring communities - primarily for recreational use.

Town of Truro Active Transportation Plan (2023/24)

Truro's Active Transportation Plan outlines the Town's vision for active transportation and infrastructure needs to develop a complete active transportation network within the community.

Partnerships and collaboration are emphasized throughout the plan, including between the Town, Municipality, Millbrook First Nation, and the provincial government, among others. A series of "Regional Routes" are identified in the plan which connect to various communities within Colchester and the Village of Bible Hill. If and when implemented, these will require close collaboration between governments and agencies.

In 2024, the Town completed a review of the proposed network to create a more detailed implementation plan, including refinements of the proposed facility types and routes. Through this review, multiple key AT connections were identified that connect Truro to Colchester or approach the municipal boundary. Routes included Brunswick Street, Lorne Street, Marshland Drive, and McClures Mills Road, all of which were recommended to accommodate multi-use pathways.

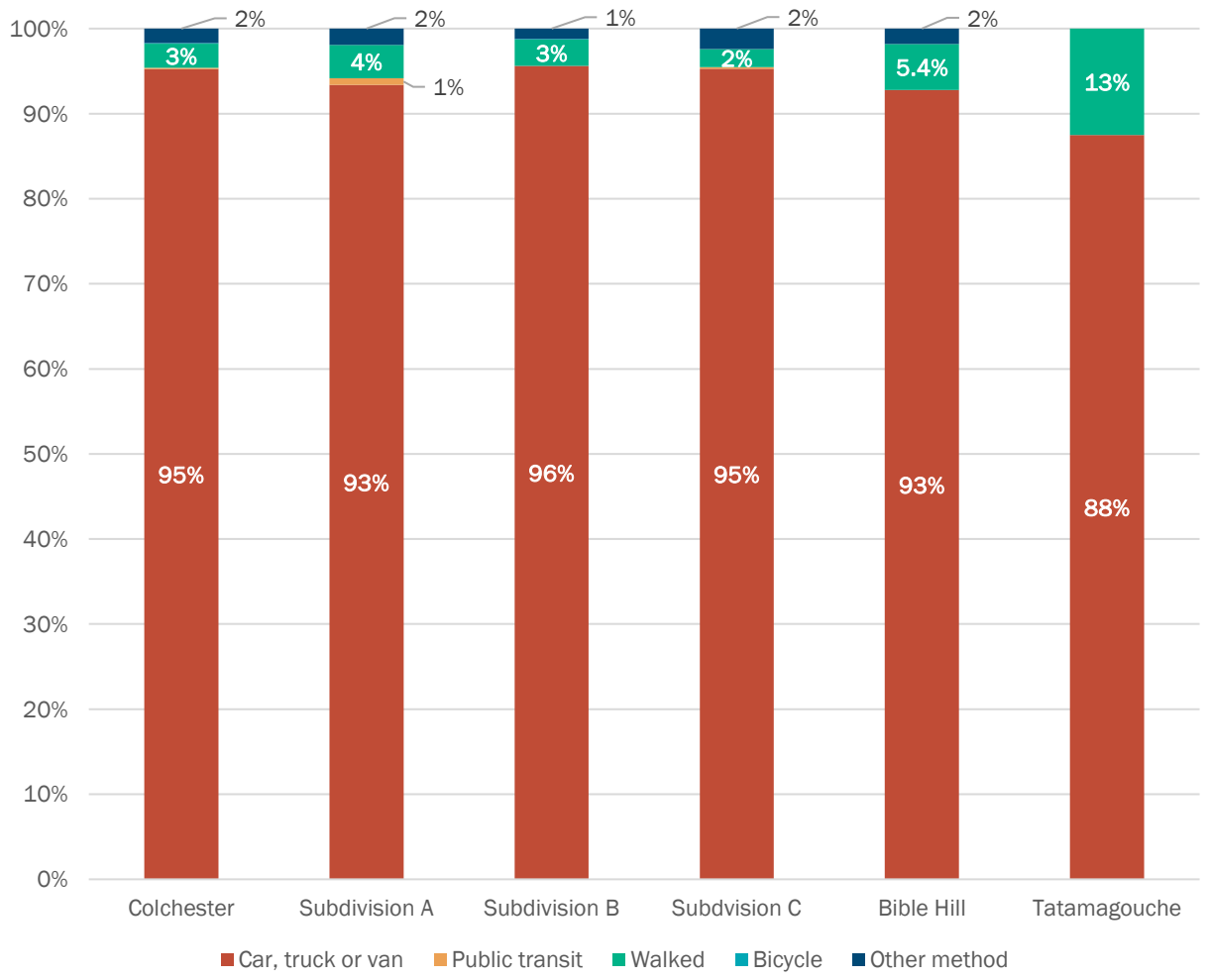
3.0 Active Transportation Today

How We Move

Mode Share

Like most rural communities in Canada, most trips in Colchester are completed in a private vehicle. 95% of commuter trips in the Municipality are either as the driver or a passenger of a private vehicle. The remaining portion of trips are divided between walking (2%), other modes (1%), and cycling and transit (<1%). **Figure 4** shows commuter mode share for Colchester, the three Stats Canada subdivisions, and the Villages of Bible Hill and Tatamagouche.

Figure 4. Commuter Mode Share in Colchester, 2021 Census



Colchester's active mode share is comparable to other county municipalities in Nova Scotia, as shown in **Table 2**. The more compact towns, such as Truro and Stewiacke, show a higher proportion of active transportation use, particularly walking. Other rural municipalities featured lower active commuter trips, where long travel distance and low-density settlement patterns can be challenging for walking, rolling, and cycling.

Table 2. Peer Community Mode Share, 2021 Census

Community Name	Population	Active Transportation Mode Share
Municipality of Colchester	36,044	2.9%
Village of Bible Hill	5,076	5.4%
Town of Truro	12,954	12.4%
Town of Stewiacke	1,557	9.4%
Municipality of Pictou	20,676	1.9%
Municipality of Cumberland	19,964	4.1%
Municipality of the County of Antigonish	15,101	3.0%
Municipality of the County of Kings	47,918	3.8%
Municipality of the County of Annapolis	18,834	6.0%

Transit in Colchester

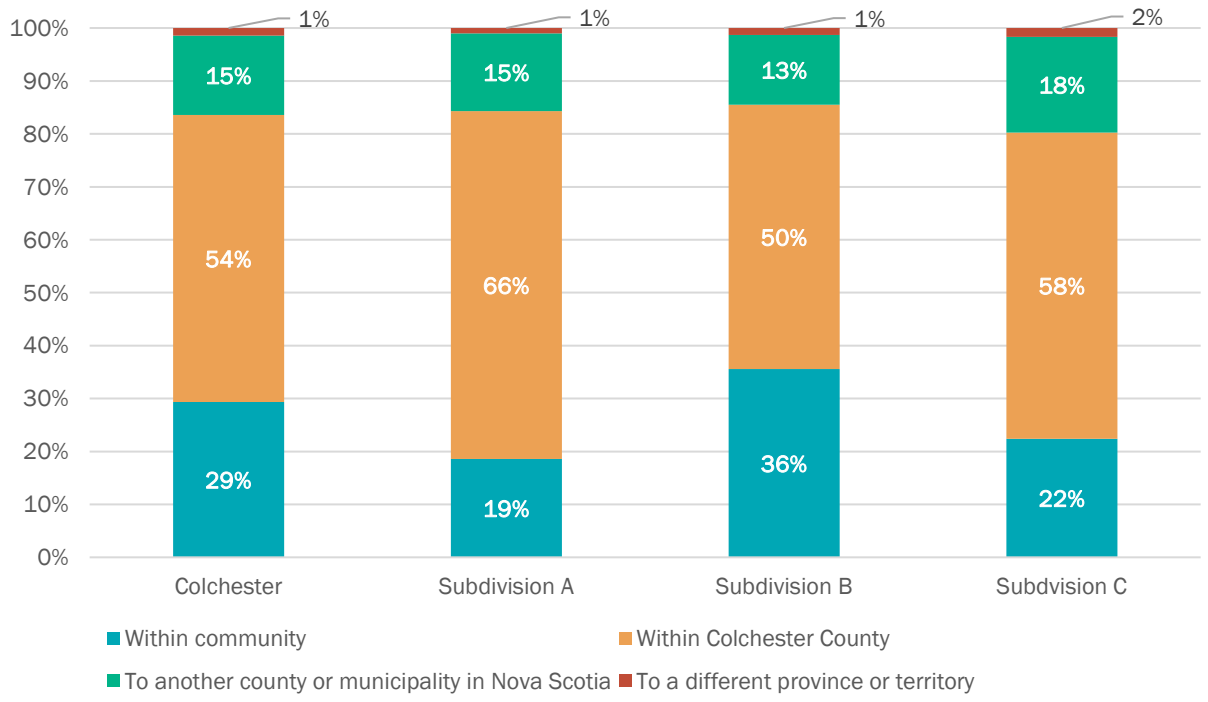
Conventional public transit service is not currently available in Colchester. The Colchester Transportation Cooperative Limited (CTCL) is a non-profit organization that offers on-demand transportation for Colchester residents to reduce transportation barriers.

Through the ongoing *Regional Transit Study*, Colchester and Truro are currently studying options for transit service that could connect the urban core, employment centres, and rural communities. Two options for transit service were presented to the community in the Fall of 2025, and these will be considered for future funding and implementation. Connections to any future transit service in Colchester, especially bus stops, will be a priority for the Active Transportation Strategy.

Travel Time + Distance

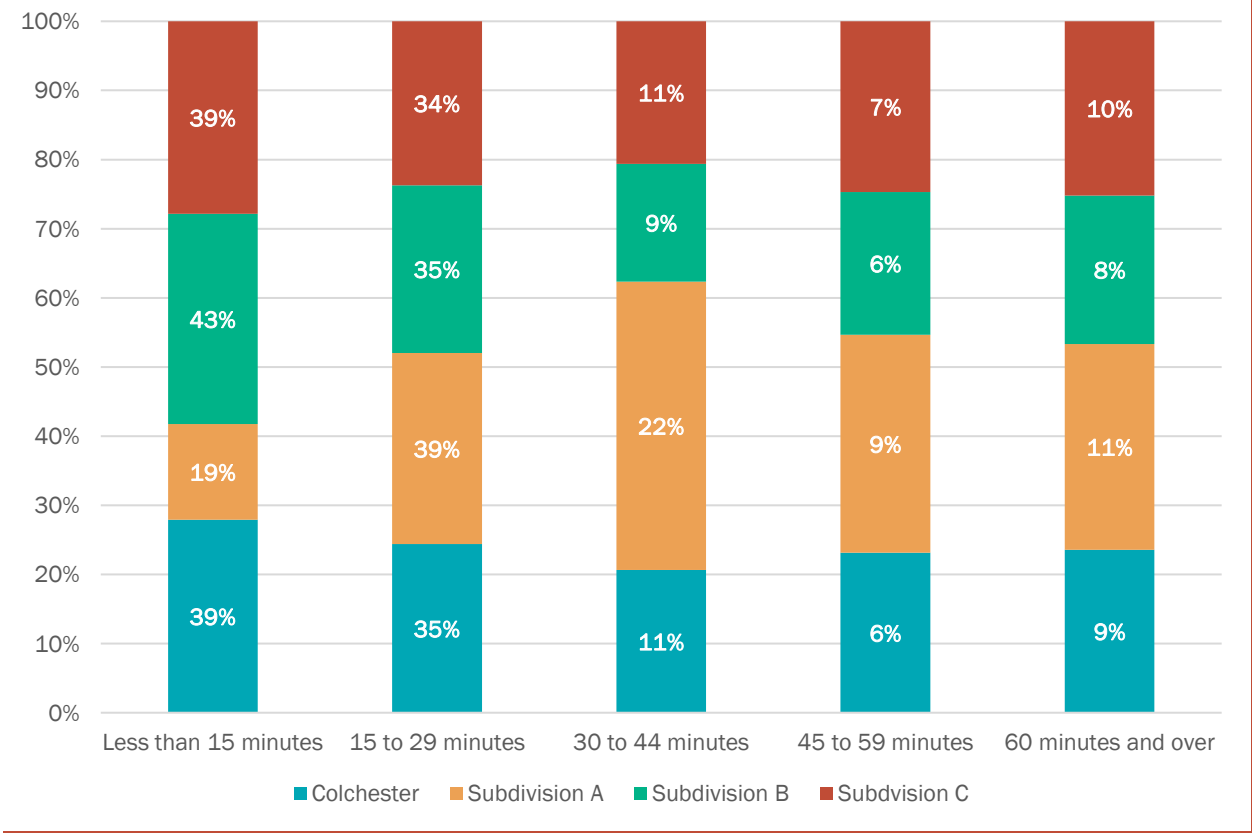
Daily use of active transportation is strongly influenced by travel distance and time to and from work. In 2021, 84% of residents worked in the Municipality, with most commuters travelling outside of their community to other destinations in Colchester County, such as Truro, Stewiacke or other parts of Colchester. Over a quarter of residents (29%) lived and worked in the same community; these trips have higher potential to be shifted to active transportation. Commute destinations vary across Colchester as shown in **Figure 5**, with residents of Subdivision B typically travelling to work within the community more often.

Figure 5. Commuter Destinations in Colchester, 2021 Census



Given Colchester's size, it is also important to understand commute time since destinations within the same census subdivision may be substantially further than those in other census subdivisions. Most commutes in Colchester were less than 15 minutes (39%), or 15 to 29 minutes (35%), which also suggests strong potential for active transportation - particularly for the shortest trips. Like with commute destinations, travel time varies widely across the Municipality. Subdivisions B and C generally had shorter travel times, as shown in **Figure 6** below. Working from home also grew significantly, from 8% of workers in 2016 to 14% in 2021.

Figure 6. Commuter Duration in Colchester, 2021 Census



Existing Conditions

When building out Colchester's active transportation network, it is important to understand where we are today as well as how well existing facilities are supporting walking, cycling in rolling in Colchester. This section highlights some of the key elements of the current active transportation and road networks, including infrastructure and initiatives that will be the starting place for the future Active Transportation network.

Active Transportation Network

Sidewalks

Colchester has an extensive sidewalk network for a rural municipality, as shown in **Appendix B**. This includes approximately 78 km of sidewalks across the community, 29 km (37%) of which are in Bible Hill. Pedestrian infrastructure is generally concentrated around more densely populated areas; community centres, such as schools, commercial areas, or key services, as well as roads with high traffic speeds and volumes where no suitable alternative is available. Many of the sidewalk networks in Colchester are localized, and as such do not offer opportunities to connect across the region or to neighbouring communities.

Typically, Colchester develops one new sidewalk connection and improves another section of existing sidewalk each year. Sidewalk projects are selected based on inputs from the previous *Active Transportation Strategy*, including prioritization criteria. Recent projects include Old Courthouse Branch Road and portions of Trunk 2 in Brookfield and Hilden.

Sidewalks are developed, improved, and maintained through taxation and grant funding programs, when possible. All communities within the Urban Service Area pay taxes for these services, except in Bible Hill where sidewalks are funded separately. Outside of these areas, active transportation area rates are also applied in Brookfield and Debert. Streetlights are also paid for through local taxes, separate from the active transportation rate.

Pedestrian Crossings

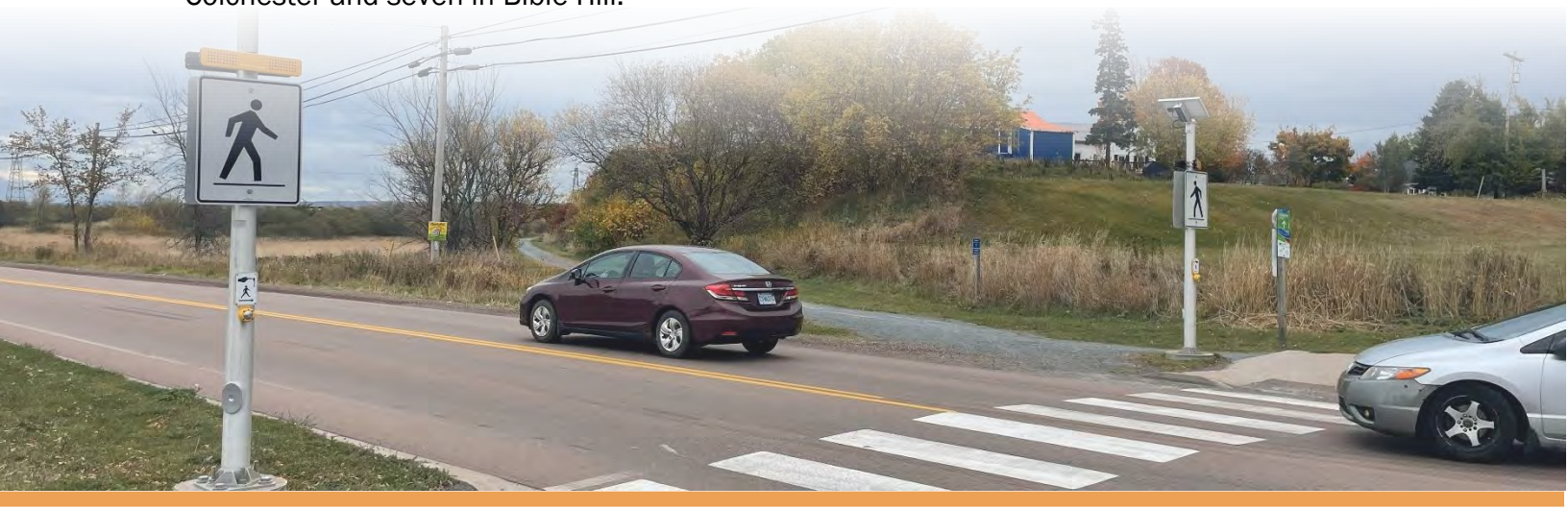
Improvements to pedestrian crossings have been an important road safety measure over recent years in Colchester. Rapid rectangular flashing beacons (RRFBs) have been introduced at numerous locations with a high volume of pedestrians, distinct safety concerns, or as requested by residents to improve pedestrian visibility to drivers. Some signalized intersections (particularly in areas with higher pedestrian activity) include pedestrian indicators to help inform users when they can cross. Signed and painted crossings are also found in some locations that may not be suitable for RRFBs or do not have the conditions to support the requests.

Fundy Discovery Site Pedestrian Bridge

With support from the Government of Canada, the Municipality is currently designing and building a new active transportation bridge across the Salmon River as part of the development of Fundy Discovery Site. The new bridge will provide a dedicated crossing for active transportation, directly connecting Onslow with Truro Heights, while also creating opportunities to better view the tidal bore. The 110-metre bridge will be a crucial connection for all active modes in the ATS.

The Municipality implements new pedestrian crossings as guided by the *Crosswalk Policy (2017)*, which allows residents to request crossings for general use and in school zones. Requests for crossings on municipal roads are addressed directly by Colchester, while those on provincial roads are forwarded to NSPW. Crossing requests to the province are approved based on two criteria: exceeding traffic volumes and/or improving pedestrian connectivity. Recently, connectivity-based requests have been more successful to allow the Municipality to expand the number of improved crossings in the community.

Colchester and Bible Hill hire crossing guards to help children travelling to school safely cross major roads. A total of 11 crossing guards support these programs, including four in Colchester and seven in Bible Hill.



Cycling Network

Opportunities for cycling in Colchester are primarily on either multi-use pathways or on-road facilities (such as paved shoulders), both of which are presently limited in scale in the municipality. There is no official inventory of cycling facilities in Colchester, but key facilities include approximately 40 km of multi-use pathways, such as the Cobequid Trail and the Truro Heights Connector multi-use pathway that connect to Truro and provide excellent recreational and commuting cycling opportunities. The Butter and Short Line Trails also connect along the Northumberland Shore, passing through Tatamagouche.

Safety and comfort for cyclists on these routes can vary, especially for on-road facilities. While better than no dedicated space at all, paved shoulders do not provide any physical protection for cyclists. Paved shoulders are often found on high-speed roadways with significant traffic volumes in Colchester, meaning surrounding conditions are unsafe (both in perceived and actual safety) for cyclists of different comfort levels.

Since most roads in Colchester are owned by the Province of Nova Scotia, implementing new on-road cycling facilities, even paved shoulders, can be challenging. Ongoing collaboration with provincial agencies is therefore crucial to developing a safe and comfortable cycling network in Colchester.

Multi-use pathways also present variable conditions, with most being a gravel surface which can limit some mobility devices like wheelchairs. Parts of Colchester (notably Bible Hill and Lower Truro) feature large floodplain areas, and as a result, some existing and planned pathways and sidewalks are prone to seasonal flooding. Recent mitigation efforts have focused on installing rock berms as well as new and additional rock berms to help reduce the impacts o from future flooding events in the region. Due to the increase and severity of weather events, additional disruptions may also occur from storm damage including fallen trees, washouts, and localized erosion from intense rainfall. While seasonal flooding is a reality in the region due to its topography and location, trail design and alignment can help manage and reduce the impact these events have on trails in the community.

Nova Scotia Blue Route

The Nova Scotia Blue Route is an ongoing project to develop a continuous, inter-regional cycling network throughout the province. The Blue Route concept was initially introduced in 2016, with a gradual rollout of the route throughout the province as facilities and funding become available. The Blue Route is primarily a wayfinding system and does not currently feature consistently safe and comfortable facilities for all cyclists. Facilities included in the Blue Route are primarily paved shoulders and multi-use pathways, but often no cycling facilities are found on designated routes.

Colchester's location at the heart of the province means that it is central to the Blue Route, with several different Blue Route-designated corridors crossing the municipality, including the list below and shown in **Map 2**:

Open Routes

- Cobequid Trail (Truro, Lower Truro, Old Barns)
- Trunk 4 - Pictou County to Valley
- Trunk 2/4 – Onslow to Cumberland County

Routes Under Review

- College Road / Salmon River Road – Truro to Trunk 4
- Trunk 2 – Enfield to Truro
- Highway 236/289 (Glooscap Trail) - Hants to Truro
- Trunk 2 – Highway 4 to Cumberland County

Along some of these corridors, the Blue Route uses municipal infrastructure (including the Cobequid Trail), but the Blue Route is primarily found along provincially owned highways that are generally high-speed/high volume vehicle routes. When completed, the active transportation bridge at the Fundy Discovery Site will form a key connection along the Blue Route in Colchester.

Active Transportation Strategy: Nova Scotia Blue Route

Map 2

- Municipal Boundary
- Village
- Park
- Indigenous Community
- Highway
- Road
- Railways

Blue Route

- Open Road Route
- Open Trail Route
- Planned Road Route
- Planned Trail Route

CUMBERLAND
TATAMAGOUCHE
COLCHESTER
PICTOU
HANTS
TRURO
BIBLE HILL
STEWIACKE
HALIFAX
KINGS
Cobequid Bay
Bay of Fundy
Minas Basin
St. Lawrence

10
Kilometers

BIBLE HILL
Colchester
be centred here.

Trails

Recreational trails are an important part of the active transportation network: connecting to community destinations, providing opportunities to access nature, and supporting healthy lifestyles. Trails can attract a broad range of users, including hikers, mountain bikes, cross-country skiers, snowshoers, and many other forms of active travel. This variety of use means that trails are often not universally suitable for active transportation, as they are often impacted by weather, indirect, unsafe for some users, and not designed for all modes.

In developing the Active Transportation Strategy, trail facilities will be seen as opportunities for active transportation. Their recreational nature will inform how they are included within the network to ensure that they are considered as both important destinations as well as opportunistic for active transportation where feasible.

Trans-Canada Trail

The Trans-Canada Trail (TCT) crosses Colchester along multiple routes, including for hiking, cycling, and water-based modes, along roads, trails, and paddling corridors. Like the Blue Route, the TCT uses municipal infrastructure for portions of the trail through Colchester, including municipal sidewalks and the Cobequid Trail.

Maintenance

The Municipality is responsible for maintaining its active transportation system, including the many trails and sidewalks throughout Colchester. Snow and debris clearing, and sidewalk and trail repair are among the maintenance responsibilities for the Municipality and the Village, with both responsible for these functions within their boundaries. Budgeting and operational capacity for maintaining the active transportation network are key considerations and constraints on how the Municipality will expand and prioritize active transportation improvements through the Active Transportation Strategy.

Did You Know?

Colchester has four snowplows suitable for sidewalks; these vehicles (pictured below) are moved around the community to clear snow as quickly as possible after or during a snowfall. Plowing is prioritized on sidewalks within 500 m of schools, before being done on other pedestrian routes. The Village of Bible Hill contracts its snow and ice control - three snowplows are similarly used with priority given to high traffic roads and school zones.

Barriers to Active Transportation

There are many factors that can influence how attractive or practical active transportation is to people in Colchester. Through the background review and site visits across the community, some of the following barriers to walking, cycling, and rolling were observed across Colchester. Additional barriers are also explored through the engagement findings discussed in **Section 4.0**.

Geography

Colchester is a large, low-density region, meaning that some active transportation infrastructure may not serve a large portion of the overall population, or that distances to other communities or along active transportation routes may discourage active transportation for some. Colchester also features hilly topography, which makes active transportation more physically demanding for people walking, rolling, and cycling.

Road Network

Colchester's transportation network features several key corridors that provide local and inter-regional connections. This includes a mix of more urban streets located in Growth Centres such as Pictou Road, College Road, Truro Heights Road, as well as more rural highways. Some of these routes support active transportation, including as part of the Nova Scotia Blue Route and the Trans-Canada Trail, as discussed previously in this section.

Less than 2% of the roads in Colchester are owned and maintained by the Municipality, where most other roads are provincially owned. The Municipality works closely with NSPW to identify opportunities to incorporate active transportation infrastructure into road renewal projects throughout the region, and it is required to consult and confirm any projects alongside or in NSPW-owned and -operated corridors.

Many of these key highways feature high traffic volumes and speeds, which conflict with perceived and actual safety for active transportation users. Some of the key highways in Colchester are included in **Table 3** below.

Table 3. Key Highways In Colchester With Average Annual Daily Traffic Volumes

Road Name	Description	Traffic Volumes[4] (Average Annual Daily Traffic) *
Highway 102	Halifax Regional Municipality to Onslow and Highway 104	20,840
Highway 104	Colchester to Pictou and Cumberland Counties	12,850
Highway 236	Truro to East Hants	11,690
Highway 289	Hants to Pictou County via Brookfield and Middle Stewiacke	4,930
Highway 311 (Main St – Bible Hill)	Bible Hill to Tatamagouche	6,950
Highway 336	Halifax Regional Municipality to Highway 289	370
Trunk 2 (Robie St)	Halifax Regional Municipality to Cumberland County via Stewiacke and Truro	17,300
Trunk 2 (Brookfield)		4,950
Trunk 2 (Great Village)		2,450
Trunk 4 (Onslow Rd)	Pictou to Cumberland County via Truro and Bible Hill	4,610
Trunk 4 (Pictou Rd)		6,120
Trunk 6	Pictou to Cumberland County via Tatamagouche	4,640

*Where multiple count locations are recorded in the same year, the highest volume count is displayed in the table.

[4] Province of Nova Scotia. (2025). Traffic Volumes - Provincial Highway System. Retrieved from https://data.novascotia.ca/Roads-Driving-and-Transport/Traffic-Volumes-Provincial-Highway-System/8524-ec3n/about_data

River Crossings

There are several prominent watercourses in Colchester that create barriers for safe and direct routes to community destinations. The Salmon River is a key example where existing bridges are not designed nor suited for active transportation, and new or adapted bridges are deeply affected by project costs and feasibility. The new crossing of the Salmon River at the Fundy Discovery Site will help address some of these challenges around Onslow and Lower Truro.

Vehicle Speeds and Volumes

Conflicts with motor vehicles are one of the primary deterrents to active transportation use. Corridors with many vehicles travelling at high speeds create uncomfortable and unsafe conditions for walking, rolling, and cycling, and can result in a negative user experience. Vehicle volumes tend to be highest on primary corridors that are direct and connected to community destinations, which are also best suited to active transportation facilities. Posted speed limits in Colchester are generally 50 km/h or higher, while vehicles will regularly drive faster than the posted speed limit due to road design.

Seasonality

Colchester experiences a highly varied climate throughout the year. Winter conditions in particular can deter active transportation, as snow, ice, and cold temperatures are common, and maintenance standards may not be able to create a consistently safe or comfortable experience.

Funding

Ensuring that the Municipality of Colchester and the Village of Bible Hill can make sustainable investments in active transportation is crucial. Current funding levels may need to be increased to construct or maintain high-quality active transportation infrastructure, or implementation may be reliant on greater support from provincial and federal funders.

Interagency Coordination

With the many jurisdictions in and around Colchester, coordinating active transportation construction and maintenance can be a challenge. While some corridors may be located within a community that is within Colchester and Bible Hill, these corridors may not be under the control of the local or even regional government. In these situations, the design, maintenance and construction of any active transportation facilities my be provided by provincial public works staff and equipment that may have different design and maintenance standards than the local government. This can result in inconsistent facility types along a corridor, differences in clearing and maintenance schedules, and differing priorities and evaluation standards for new active transportation infrastructure. These conflicting priorities can create inefficient active transportation investment, such as when sidewalk construction is not aligned with road repaving, leading to a potential duplication of efforts in the same section of corridor. It is important to consider what agency is responsible and where when new active transportation projects are proposed.

Major Highways & Rail Corridors

Highways play an important role in connecting Colchester and its many communities. At the same time, these corridors feature high vehicle speeds and volumes, which make them unsafe and intimidating for many to consider using for active transportation. Crossing access-controlled highways like Highway 102 and 104 is also a challenge due to their large cross-sections and lack of stop controls, making infrastructure like the Highway 102 multi-use bridge necessary to provide safe crossings. Rail corridors create a similar barrier due to limited crossings and the need for collaboration with interest holders like the Canadian National Railway Company (CN).

4.0 What We Learned

The first round of public and interest holder engagement took place between October and December 2025. The primary objectives of this round of engagement were to inform community members of the Active Transportation Strategy, consult with Colchester residents, key interest holders, and equity deserving groups (including youth, seniors, people with disabilities, newcomers and more) to understand issues, opportunities, and priorities of the active transportation network.

This section summarizes engagement opportunities, themes, and limitations from the first round of engagement. Detailed responses and analysis from engagement activities are included in **Appendix A**.

How will engagement input be used?

What we learned from the community and interest holders during Engagement Round 1 will be used to inform the draft and final Active Transportation Strategies. This includes shaping a vision for active transportation, identifying goals and guiding principles, and informing actions and strategies that can support active transportation in Colchester and Bible Hill. Location-specific input will inform the long-term active transportation network to identify where people want to walk, roll, and cycle.

Engagement Round 2 will continue to collect input on the strategy to shape the final directions to the needs and priorities of people in Bible Hill and across Colchester.

Engagement Opportunities

The following activities were completed as part of the first round of engagement.

Survey

A survey was shared to community members of the Municipality of Colchester. 265 people responded to the survey, sharing their opinions on existing and potential opportunities for active transportation in Colchester. The survey asked about walking/rolling and cycling use, as well as potential outcomes for the Active Transportation Strategy. A full breakdown of survey responses and demographics can be found in **Appendix A**.

Open Houses

A total of four open houses were held over three days in Debert, Truro Heights, and Bible Hill. Open houses included informational boards with opportunities to provide comments on current barriers and opportunities for active transportation in the Municipality, as well as maps and conversational areas to discuss more specific challenges and locations in detail.

Interest Holder Sessions

Interest holder sessions were held over three events, inviting participants from community organizations and agencies that serve residents with lived and living experience and/or have high interest or interaction with active transportation. Discussions focused on the importance of active transportation, current barriers and opportunities, and how the strategy should prioritize efforts to improve active transportation.

*A full summary of key messaging heard in both Open Houses and Interest Holder Sessions can be found in **Appendix A**.*

Walk Audits

Community walk audits were completed in 10 of Colchester's 11 electoral districts to observe and discuss local active transportation challenges. These sessions were led by Municipal staff throughout October 2025 and resulted in 60 completed walk audits.

Participation Summary

Approximately 391 participants were engaged across all events in Round 1 of engagement for the Colchester Active Transportation Strategy. Engagement events included walk audits completed with residents and Colchester Staff throughout the Municipality, an online survey and mapping tool, four open houses throughout the community, a pop-up event at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Truro Campus, three interest holder workshops, and interviews with Colchester Councillors and the Living Earth Council.

A breakdown of participation is included below:

60
Walk Audit Participants

265
Survey Participants

48
Open House and Pop-Up Event Attendees

18
Interest Holder Participants

Engagement Themes

A summary of key themes from the first round of engagement are highlighted in this section, along with any barriers, opportunities, or priorities that will be carried forward as the Active Transportation Strategy is developed. In some cases, these themes overlap and connect, emphasizing active transportation's broad meaning to people across Colchester.

Safety, Comfort, and Access to Amenities

Across all sessions, participants consistently identified safety and comfort while using active transportation networks as the most significant concern, citing Colchester's rural nature as contributing to many challenges and opportunities for improvement, from more separated AT infrastructure to increased amenities.

Barriers	• High vehicle speeds and heavy truck traffic on rural roads • Narrow shoulders • Debris or steep drop offs on shoulders • Roads and trails are dark at night • Lack of sidewalks throughout community • Unsafe crossings with low visibility
Opportunities	• Increasing lighting both on streets and trails • Adding amenities to AT networks including benches, washrooms, shade, rest areas, bike racks, lockers, and charging stations • Ensuring crosswalks are in visible areas and have rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) • Comfort/Use cycle (increasing safety - increasing use - increasing comfort) • Separating user groups, including vehicles from bikes and bikes from pedestrians

Connectivity and Growing the Network

Participants noted the lack of a continuous active transportation network, noting disconnected routes and challenge with accessing major destinations or other jurisdictions.

Barriers	• Lack of sidewalk network • Disconnected AT and trail network • Limited trails/networks that connect rural to urban areas (e.g. having to drive to use trails, or being unable to commute) • Having to bike or walk on roads/shoulders • Deteriorating infrastructure (e.g. cracks in pavement) • Inconsistent snow clearing • Rural areas getting less attention for AT development and infrastructure
Opportunities	• Connecting existing trail network • Widening and/or paving shoulders where possible • Increasing the sidewalk network • Establishing stronger snow clearing policies • Grooming trails in winter • Integrating Active Transportation routes with school bus pick up and drop off locations • Tourism and increased use • Increasing access to amenities

Education, Etiquette, and Cultural Change

Participants emphasized the need for better education, etiquette, and cultural change to support safer and more respectful interactions among all users of active transportation networks, as well as a stronger understanding of the rules of the road.

Barriers	• Inattentive drivers and pedestrians • Active Transportation users and vehicle drivers not following rules, laws, or responsibilities of the road • High-speed vehicles (e-bikes/e-scooters, ATVs, snowmobiles) on multi-use trails • Cyclists on sidewalks
Opportunities	• Shifting away from car-centric thinking and encouraging active transportation • Increasing signage and wayfinding along AT networks • Lower speeds and traffic calming measures • Public awareness and engagement campaigns about AT network and available routes • Collaborative and community-building initiatives such as group rides, bike school buses, and social AT programs. • Reducing carbon footprint
Priorities	• Reducing the stigma associated with Active Transportation

Planning, Policy, and Long-Term Commitment

Many emphasized the need for consistent, long-term planning and clear prioritization to ensure active transportation infrastructure is integrated for the short- and long-term, is well-monitored, and supported by municipal leadership.

Barriers	• Municipal plans often sit on a shelf instead of being actioned • Lack of funding to integrate strategies or policies
Opportunities	• Integrating AT into road renewal policies • Adding AT requirements to development agreements • Adding AT infrastructure into land use by-laws • Right-sizing/creating collection of area rates for future plans
Priorities	• Alignment with neighbouring Municipal plans

Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion

Participants shared that active transportation is vital for many residents without access to a vehicle, and highlighted the need for more inclusive, accessible, and universally designed infrastructure to support safe and equitable mobility for all.

Barriers	• Lack of a connected AT network to key destinations • Poorly maintained pathways • Unsafe paths (e.g. located in areas that are low population or lack visibility) • Lack of rentals or access to AT options (such as bikes) • Not knowing Active Transportation culture or the rules of the road • Wayfinding and signage lacking alternative languages or pictures to support broader interpretation
Opportunities	• Wider sidewalks and multi-use paths • Education and awareness campaigns highlighted through lived-experience storytelling • More frequent crossings on roads • Bike rental facilities • E-bike trial services or events • Providing information about accessibility, difficulty, length of trails on trailheads/online. • Consider technologies to mitigate slip and fall risks • Increasing the universal accessibility and language options available on wayfinding signage • Tracking slip and fall/accident data
Priorities	• Universal design of all infrastructure • Community-municipal collaboration

Transit Integration and End-to-End Mobility

Participants stressed the importance of integrating public buses with active transportation to create safer, more accessible, and seamless end-to-end mobility options.

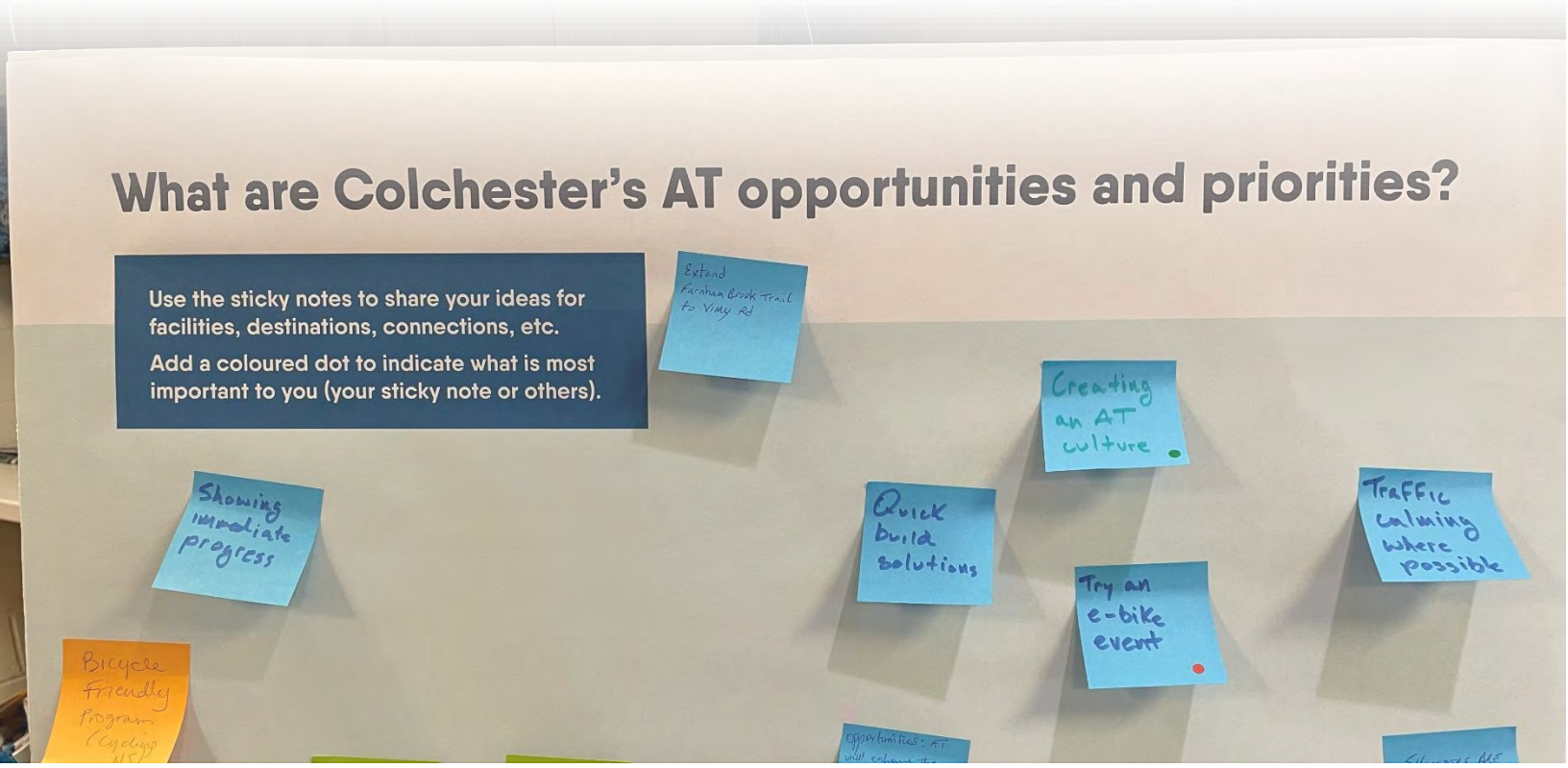
Barriers	• Lack of a public bus network to be able to support walking, rolling, and cycling
Opportunities	• Linking active transportation routes to regional destinations • Adding bike parking to all future bus stops • Integrating bike rental or e-scooter options throughout Colchester

Engagement Limitations/Gaps

Engagement in Round 1 attempted to meet as many demographic groups as possible to garner a broad range of experiences and opinions. However, after engagement was completed, the following groups were noted to have less turnout than desired and anticipated:

- **Youth (children under 18) and Seniors (above 75):** while efforts were made to reach out to senior- and youth-specific organizations, demographics from the survey indicated a low participation from these groups highlighting a missing target demographic from the engagement analysis.
- **Lower incomes:** Survey participants did share household income, with a majority being of a higher household income, however household size was not asked in the survey and therefore a more detailed analysis of income was not able to be provided.
- **Rural residents and Millbrook First Nation:** Most participants in both in-person engagements and in the survey indicated they live in the more urban areas of Colchester or in the Town of Truro, and therefore the specific insights of more rural residents, or those farther from Truro may be lacking in engagement analysis.

As further engagement is undertaken throughout the development of the Active Transportation Strategy, including these voices will be a priority to ensure that the final strategy is reflective of diverse community input.



5.0 Best Practices

This section highlights existing or emerging best practices in active transportation, organized by walking + rolling, cycling, and other important considerations. Best practices include infrastructure, policy, and new technologies that can help shape communities to support and encourage active transportation. Some of these practices are already happening in Colchester and Bible Hill, while others may be new concepts that can be considered for the Active Transportation Strategy.

Walking + Rolling

Accessibility for All Ages and Abilities

Best practice in accessibility is to follow universal design principles – to include everyone in the built environment by making designs equitable, flexible, and simple to navigate. Universal design covers people of all ages and abilities, with a focus on those people facing accessibility challenges across the transportation network. This includes people with reduced mobility, vision, hearing, strength, dexterity, and comprehension and various sensory needs. Accessibility is crucial across Colchester due to its increasingly large senior population and diverse needs across the disabled community.

The Province of Nova Scotia's Built Environment Accessibility Standard embeds many of these best practices in accessibility across Nova Scotia, coming into effect in April of 2026.[5] Important components of the Standard relevant to active transportation include:

- Barrier-free sidewalks, including temporary sidewalks
- Tactile attention indicators to support identification of barriers within the public realm
- Accessible curb ramps and pedestrian control signals
- Public benches

[5] https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/built-environment/

Safety and Crossing Improvements

Temporary curb extension

Pedestrian safety includes addressing personal safety (e.g., sightlines, lighting) and traffic safety (separation from motor vehicles, reduced speeds and volumes). Traffic calming and diversion are important tools and include vertical deflection (speed humps/tables/cushions, raised crossings and intersections), horizontal deflection (curb extensions, traffic circles, and chicanes), and volume management tools (full/directional closures, intersection channelization, etc.).

Safe intersection design principles include minimizing conflict between users, reducing speed at conflict points, ensuring clear sightlines, and making intersections as compact as possible. Specific best practices include providing pedestrian countdown timers (including leading pedestrian intervals), adding curb extensions (right) and pedestrian safety islands to reduce crossing distances, and enhancing crosswalks with additional pavement markings and flashing beacons where warranted.

Tactical Urbanism Projects

Tactile urbanism is a set of tools and techniques that can be used to pilot low-cost, quick-build improvements to streets, which can greatly enhance the pedestrian realm. Projects can last for hours, days, or weeks, and some can become permanent. Cities have implemented tactical urbanism pilot projects such as creating temporary curb extensions, parklets, and even full street closures. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary road space reallocation became more common, as cities repurposed parking and traffic lanes to create wider sidewalks and safe spaces for pedestrians to walk and queue outside of businesses.

Topography

Basic best practice strategies for mitigating the effects of steep topography include maintenance, providing rest areas, adding switchbacks (pictured), and providing accessible ramps and railings. Integrating the pedestrian and bus networks could also help to lessen the impact of steep topography and increase accessibility, as those with reduced mobility could use transit to avoid the steepest slopes along their route.

Switchbacks in a pedestrian path

Pedestrianizing Public Spaces

Streets are a critical component of a community's public space - publicly accessible places for walking, cycling, rolling, gathering, and everyday use that are managed in the public interest. Public space also provides space for people to socialize, recreate, shop and work. Places to rest, especially for an ageing population, and street trees to provide shade are important to facilitate walking for all ages and abilities. A pedestrian facility should be separated from the street with a buffer zone to increase comfort and safety. Available space for pedestrians should have a constrained width of at least 1.8 metres, which allows two people using mobility devices to pass one another. In areas of high pedestrian activity, the desired sidewalk width is 2.0 metres or greater. This gives space for people to comfortably walk at different paces, supporting higher volumes and a broader range of users.

Safe and Active Routes to School

Safe routes to school programs encourage sustainable school transportation by planning for the six E's (engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation, and equity) to improve safety for all road users around schools – especially children and families. They can also be used to test innovative tactical urbanism tools such as temporary street closures. Collaborating with the Chignecto-Central Regional Centre for Education (CCRCE) to identify candidate schools and developing school specific school travel plans can drastically improve the safety and numbers of children and families actively travelling to and from schools.

Cycling

All Ages and Abilities Network (AAA)

A complete and connected network of All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bicycle facilities is crucial in significantly increasing cycling mode share. Focusing on creating a safe, comfortable, connected, and convenient network of bicycle facilities can result in significant gains in ridership while also encouraging more diverse cyclist demographics. Physically separated facilities are required on corridors with high traffic volumes, while neighbourhood bikeways can serve quieter streets. Intersection treatments such as cross-rides, bicycle signals, and protected intersections can make a huge difference in improving the safety and comfort of a bicycle facility. Cities across Europe have both historically (Amsterdam, Copenhagen) and recently (Paris) demonstrated the significant benefits of providing AAA infrastructure for citizens, while smaller Canadian communities such as Courtenay, Wolfville, and Penticton have started experiencing significant uptake in cycling rates from improving the safety and comfort of their bicycle networks.

Rapid Implementation Strategies

Pilot projects are an effective way to significantly reduce the implementation time of cycling facilities, especially on-street protected bicycle lanes, and can help build support for changes to the street design. Rapid implementation at a network level is more effective in increasing ridership than building higher-cost projects in isolation and can typically be achieved without significant changes to existing infrastructure. Halifax Regional Municipality has had success in using rapid implementation to expand their AAA bicycle networks. Multiple organizations have produced rapid implementation for this type of cycling infrastructure, including Translink in B.C[6] and the California Bicycle Coalition.[7]

[6] https://www.translink.ca/-/media/translink/documents/cycling/regional-cycling-strategy/rapid_implementation_design_guide_for_bikeways_in_metro_vancouver.pdf
[7] https://altago.com/wp-content/uploads/Quick-Build-Guide-White-Paper-2020-1.pdf

Electric Bicycles

The rapid growth in electric bicycles (e-bikes) for personal transportation and goods movement is a significant opportunity for active transportation. Deloitte predicts that over 130 million e-bikes will be sold by 2030, and the growth is outpacing electric cars[8], or in some countries, pedal bicycles.[9] E-bikes can extend the range of a cycling trip, help to navigate challenging topography, lessen the effort required to ride longer distances, and support people with reduced mobility to continue enjoying cycling – especially seniors and older adults. Planning for e-bikes includes providing access to charging as well as designing bicycle infrastructure to be wide enough to include passing. Municipal and provincial governments in Canada have provided rebates for e-bike purchases to support uptake. For example, the Province of British Columbia provided a total of $6.5 million through its BC *Electric Bike Rebate Program*, with results showing that people who received a rebate reduced their travel costs and GHG emissions, and experienced increased rates of physical activity after their e-bike purchase.[10]

End-of-Trip Facilities

Bicycle parking and other end-of-trip facilities (e.g., showers, lockers, and repair stands) help to make cycling more attractive and convenient. Both short-term parking (bicycle racks) and long-term parking (bicycle lockers, cages, and parkades) are important facilities in making cycling a feasible everyday mode of transportation. Bicycle parking design should consider a range of bicycle shapes and sizes, including cargo bikes and bicycles with trailers, and supporting facilities like bike repair stations. Bicycle racks can be branded and designed to enhance the streetscape, as long they remain fully functional.

End-of-Trip Facilities - Fundy Discovery Site

[8] https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/us/articles/722835_tmt-predictions-2020/DI_TMT-Prediction-2020.pdf
[9] https://www.cyclingelectric.com/in-depth/electric-bike-sales-around-the-world-pass-key-milestones
[10] https://news.ubc.ca/2025/09/bc-e-bike-rebates-benefits/

Shared Micromobility

Shared micromobility includes bike share and scooter share systems with a variety of ownership and operation models. These systems have grown massively over the past few years, with several systems operating throughout Canada, including in the HRM and Cape Breton Regional Municipality. Bike and scooter share can make multi-modal transportation more convenient, including connecting to transit. Bike share systems can be docked or dockless and can include e-bikes. Dockless micromobility services provided by private companies can be cheaper to launch than services funded and controlled by municipalities, but are vulnerable to market fluctuations, with many examples of abrupt service changes and companies suddenly pulling out of markets.

The *Motor Vehicle Act* was updated to allow for e-scooter use in Nova Scotia, where users are required to be over 14 years old, wear a helmet, and observe a speed limit of 32 km/h.[11] In the HRM, the municipality specified lower speed limits for e-scooter use on roads or bike lanes (25 km/h) and multi-use pathways (15 km/h), which can be similarly defined by other local governments in the province.[12]

[11] https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/64th_1st/1st_read/b134.htm
[12] https://www.halifax.ca/transportation/cycling-walking/e-scooters

Other Best Practices

Vision Zero

Figure 7. Safe Systems Approach Principles (USDOT)

Vulnerable road users, such as people walking and cycling, are disproportionally killed and injured by traffic collisions and need special consideration when designing streets. Governments around the world have implemented Vision Zero strategies, which aim to prioritize human health and safety by eliminating all traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. Vision Zero is grounded in the Safe Systems Approach, which integrates the principles of Safer People, Safer Vehicles, Safer Speeds, Safer Roads, and Post-Crash Care to provide a comprehensive perspective on road safety, as shown in **Figure 7**. Reducing motor vehicle speeds and volumes is the most effective way to improve road safety for all road users. Street and intersection improvements (e.g., traffic calming, AAA cycling infrastructure, leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs), enhanced crosswalks, curb extensions) are also important Vision Zero tools.

Successful Vision Zero programs use all available data sources (e.g., insurance claims, hospitalization data, police reports, etc.), build strong partnerships with related interest holders, and include bold, actionable implementation plans. A recent example of a successful Vision Zero strategy rollout is in the City of Helsinki, where initiatives such as reduced vehicle speed limits resulted in no recorded traffic fatalities in 2024.[13]

[13] https://www.politico.eu/article/helsinki-no-traffic-death-roads-eu-accident-finland-driving-transport/

Multi-Modal Integration

Enhancing active transportation facilities and ensuring comfortable connections to bus stops can enhance the transit experience and make transit more accessible. Improved sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and adding micromobility systems near bus stops can help resolve the 'first- and last-mile' problem of accessing transit. Multi-modal transportation hubs can also provide bicycle parking and other end-of-trip amenities.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are a best practice design intended to move people, not just cars. They are designed and operated to enable safe and comfortable use for all, regardless of age or ability. They recognize that streets have different roles, functions, and characteristics depending on their context. Through attractive design, enhanced safety, and multi-modal infrastructure, streets can be transformed into spaces that:

- Increase safety;
- Encourage diverse transportation modes
- Promote a more active lifestyle;
- Decrease carbon dioxide emissions;
- Encourage a sense of community; and
- Support local businesses.

Traffic Calming

High vehicle speeds negatively affect the safety of active transportation users. Where possible, taking steps to reduce vehicle speeds can limit conflicts as well as reduce the severity of collisions between motor vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users. Strategies to calm traffic include vertical deflection tools (e.g., speed bumps or tables), horizontal geometry tools (e.g., chicanes or pinch points), and operational tools (e.g., signal coordination). Where these tools can be effectively combined, active transportation routes can be made safer and more comfortable for all road users. The Global Designing Cities Initiative released their *Designing for Safe Speeds* guide in 2025, which describes how to effectively implement traffic calming in different contexts across the world.[14]

[14] https://globaldesigningcities.org/publication/designing-for-safe-speeds/

6.0 Closing + Next Steps

The first phases of the Active Transportation Strategy process, as summarized in this report, have set the stage for a strategy that is connected to the needs and priorities of the residents of Colchester and Bible Hill. Over the coming months, the lessons learned from engagement, research, and observation will be used to develop the draft Active Transportation Strategy, before bringing this document to the community for further conversations and refinement. Key tasks over the next phase of the project include:

Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles

A vision for the future of active transportation in Colchester and Bible Hill, and goals and guiding principles to support desired results

Active Transportation Strategies and Actions

Presenting supportive policies, programs and practices to increase active transportation use and improve education, safety, and awareness of active transportation.

Active Transportation Network Mapping

Identifying key active transportation routes within Colchester and Bible Hill to support walking, rolling, and cycling.

These key elements of the draft Active Transportation Strategy will be shared with the community and interest holders during Engagement Round 2. It is anticipated that this will occur in Winter 2026 and for the final Active Transportation Strategy to be presented to Council in Spring 2026.

Engagement Summary

Appendix A

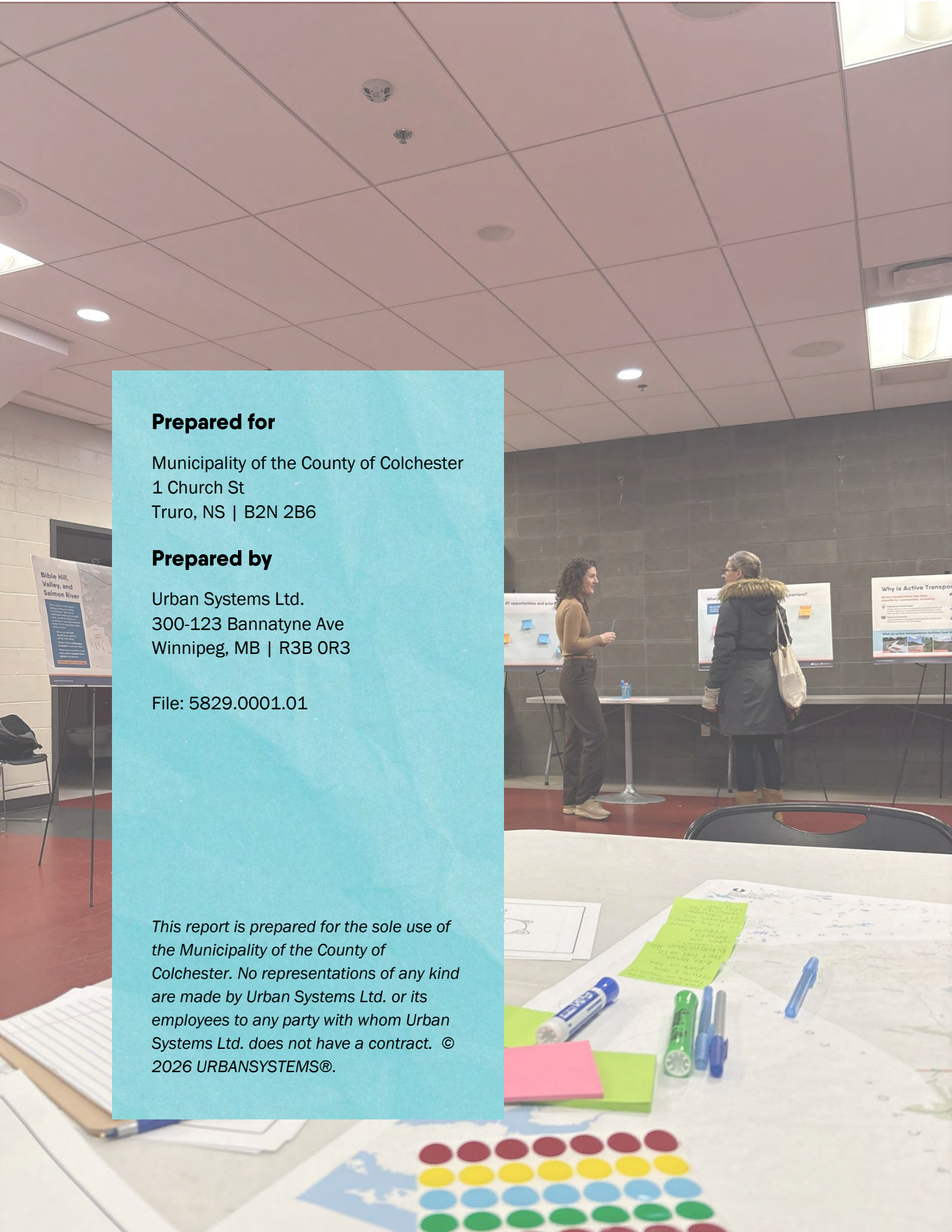
Active Transportation Strategy

Engagement Summary

January 2026

BIBLE HILL
Plant Your Roots

Colchester



Prepared for

Municipality of the County of Colchester
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Contents

Introduction

The primary objectives of this round of engagement were to inform community members of the Active Transportation Strategy, consult with Colchester residents, key stakeholders, and equity deserving groups (including youth, seniors, people with disabilities, newcomers and more) to understand issues, opportunities, and priorities of the active transportation network.

The following activities were completed as part of the first round of engagement.

Survey

A survey was shared to community members of the Municipality of Colchester. 265 people responded to the survey sharing their opinions on existing and potential opportunities for active transportation in Colchester. The survey asked about walking/rolling and cycling use, and potential outcomes for the Active Transportation Strategy. A full breakdown of survey responses and demographics can be found in Appendix A.

Open Houses

A total of four open houses were held over three days in Debert, Truro Heights, and Bible Hill. Open houses included informational boards, with opportunities to provide comments on current barriers and opportunities for active transportation in the Municipality, as well as maps and conversational areas to discuss more specific challenges and locations in detail.

Interest Holder Sessions

Interest holder sessions were held over three events, inviting participants from community organizations and agencies that serve residents with lived and living experience and/or have high interest or interaction with active transportation. Discussions focused on the importance of active transportation, current barriers and opportunities, and how the strategy should prioritize efforts to improve active transportation.

A full summary of key messaging and recorded comments heard in both Open Houses and Interest Holder Sessions can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C.

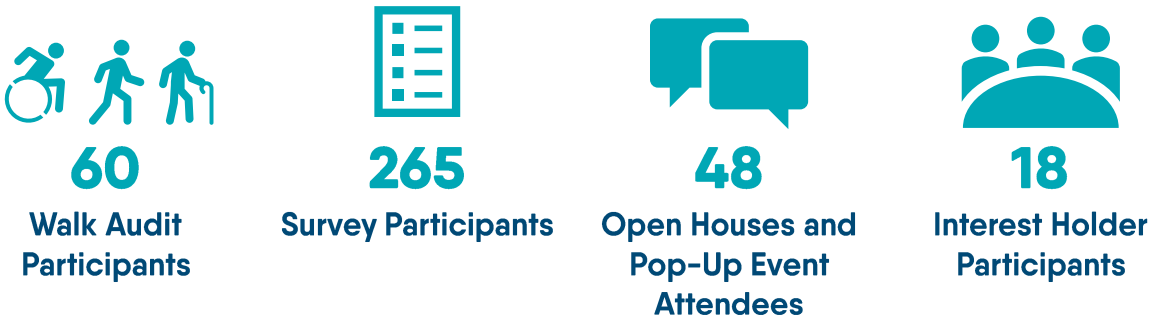
Walk Audits

Community walk audits were completed in 10 of Colchester's 11 electoral districts to observe and discuss local active transportation challenges. These sessions were led by Municipal staff throughout October 2025 and resulted in 60 completed walk audits.

Participation Summary

Approximately 391 participants were engaged across all events in Round 1 of engagement for the Colchester Active Transportation Strategy. Engagement events included 60 walk audits completed with residents and Colchester Staff throughout the Municipality, an online survey and mapping tool, four open houses throughout the community, a pop-up event at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Truro Campus, three interest holder workshops, and interviews with Colchester Councillors, Bible Hill Village Commissioners, and the Living Earth Council. The Mayor and Councillors from Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 11 participated in engagement events or Council interviews.

A breakdown of participation is included below:



Engagement Limitations

Engagement in Round 1 attempted to meet as many demographic groups as possible to garner a broad range of experiences and opinions. However, after engagement was completed, the following groups were noted to have less turnout than anticipated:

- **Youth (children under 18) and Seniors (above 75):** while efforts were made to reach out to senior- and youth-specific organizations, demographics from the survey indicated a low participation from these groups highlighting a missing target demographic from the engagement analysis.
- **Lower incomes:** Survey participants did share household income, with a majority being of a higher household income, however household size was not asked in the survey and therefore a more detailed analysis of income was not able to be provided.
- **Rural residents and Millbrook First Nation:** The majority of participants in both in-person engagements and in the survey indicated they live in the more urban areas of Colchester or in the Town of Truro, and therefore the specific insights of more rural residents, or those farther from Truro may be lacking in engagement analysis.

As further engagement is undertaken throughout the Active Transportation Strategy, including these voices will be a priority to ensure that the final strategy is reflective of diverse community input.

Engagement Themes

A summary of key themes from the first round of engagement are highlighted in this section, along with any barriers, opportunities, or priorities that will be carried forward as the Active Transportation Strategy is developed. In some cases, these themes overlap and connect, emphasizing active transportation's broad meaning to people across Colchester.

Safety, Comfort, and Access to Amenities

Across all sessions, participants consistently identified safety and comfort while using active transportation networks as the most significant concern, citing Colchester's rural nature contributing to many challenges and opportunities for improvement from more separated AT infrastructure to increased amenities.

Barriers	• High vehicle speeds and heavy truck traffic on rural roads • Narrow shoulders • Debris or steep drop offs on shoulders • Roads and trails are dark at night • Lack of sidewalks throughout community • Unsafe crossings with low visibility
Opportunities	• Increasing lighting both on streets and trails • Adding amenities to AT networks including benches, washrooms, shade, rest areas, bike racks, lockers, and charging stations • Ensuring crosswalks are in visible areas and have rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) • Comfort/Use cycle (increasing safety - increasing use - increasing comfort) • Separating user groups, including vehicles from bikes and bikes from pedestrians

Connectivity and Growing the Network

Participants noted the lack of a continuous active transportation network, noting disconnected routes and challenge with accessing major destinations or other jurisdictions.

Barriers	• Lack of sidewalk network • Disconnected AT and trail network • Limited trails/networks that connect rural to urban areas (e.g. having to drive to use trails, or being unable to commute) • Having to bike or walk on roads/shoulders • Deteriorating infrastructure (e.g. cracks in pavement) • Inconsistent snow clearing • Rural areas getting less attention for AT development and infrastructure
Opportunities	• Connecting existing trail network • Widening and/or paving shoulders where possible • Increasing the sidewalk network • Establishing stronger snow clearing policies • Grooming off-road trails in winter • Integrating Active Transportation routes with school bus pick up and drop off locations • Tourism and increased use • Increasing access to amenities

Education, Etiquette, and Cultural Change

Participants emphasized the need for better education, etiquette, and cultural change to support safer and more respectful interactions among all users of active transportation networks and better understanding of the rules of the road.

Barriers	• Inattentive drivers and pedestrians • AT users and drivers not following rules, laws, or responsibilities of the road • High-speed vehicles (e-bikes/e-scooters, ATVs, snowmobiles) on multi-use trails • Cyclists on sidewalks
Opportunities	• Shifting away from car-centric thinking and encouraging active transportation • Increasing signage and wayfinding along AT networks • Lower speeds and traffic calming measures

	• Public awareness and engagement campaigns about AT network and available routes • Collaborative and community-building initiatives such as group rides, bike school buses, and social AT programs. • Reducing carbon footprint
Priorities	• Reducing the stigma associated with AT

Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion

Participants shared that active transportation is vital for many residents without access to a vehicle and highlighted the need for more inclusive, accessible, and universally designed infrastructure to support safe and equitable mobility for all.

Barriers	• Lack of a connected Active Transportation network to key destinations • Poorly maintained pathways • Unsafe paths (e.g. located in areas that are low population or lack visibility) • Lack of rentals or access to AT options (such as bikes) • Not knowing AT culture or the rules of the road • Wayfinding and signage lacking alternative languages or pictures to support broader interpretation
Opportunities	• Wider sidewalks and multi-use paths • Education and awareness campaigns highlighted through lived-experience storytelling • More frequent crossings on roads • Bike rental facilities • E-bike trial services or events • Providing information about accessibility, difficulty, length of trails on trailheads/online. • Consider technologies to mitigate slip and fall risks • Tracking slip and fall/accident data • Increasing the universal accessibility and language options available on wayfinding signage
Priorities	• Universal design of all infrastructure • Community-municipal collaboration

Transit Integration and End-to-End Mobility

Participants stressed the importance of integrating public buses with active transportation to create safe, accessible, and seamless end-to-end mobility options.

Barriers	• Lack of a public bus network to be able to support walking, rolling, and cycling
Opportunities	• Linking active transportation routes to regional destinations • Adding bike parking to all future bus stops • Integrating bike rental or e-scooter options throughout Colchester

Planning, Policy, and Long-Term Commitment

Many emphasized the need for consistent, long-term planning and clear prioritization to ensure active transportation infrastructure is integrated for the short- and long-term, is well-monitored, and supported by municipal leadership.

Barriers	• Municipal plans often sit on a shelf instead of being actioned • Lack of funding to integrate strategies or policies
Opportunities	• Integrating AT into road renewal policies • Adding AT requirements to development agreements • Adding AT infrastructure into land use by-laws • Right-sizing/creating collection of area rates for future plans
Priorities	• Alignment with neighbouring Municipal plans

Appendix A: Survey Summary

As part of Round 1 Engagement, a survey was shared to community members of the Municipality of Colchester. A total of 265 people responded to the survey.

Common Themes

Increased and well-maintained AT infrastructure

Respondents frequently shared that there is a need for increase separated cycling and walking facilities including paved shoulders, dedicated bike lanes, and a broader sidewalk network. Additionally, many shared that existing infrastructure is poorly maintained (surface cracks) or requires more winter upkeep to stay useable year-round.

Education and changing attitudes

Many respondents shared that both drivers and pedestrians can be inattentive in high-risk environments where they co-exist. Some asked for lower speeds and/or traffic calming, increased enforcement of both vehicular and cycling misdemeanors, and proper signaling at crosswalks. It was noted that there are challenges with multi-use facilities, particularly conflicts between higher-speed vehicles (such as e-bikes/scooters, ATVs, and snowmobiles) with pedestrians.

Safety and access to amenities

Respondents shared that adding more lighting options would support more feelings of safety and more frequent use of existing AT paths and trails. Additionally, adding amenities such as secure bike parking and benches would increase use.

Participant Demographics

Most respondents (74%) indicated that they live in the Municipality (Figure 1**Error! Reference source not found.**), with 26.5% noting that they live in a neighbouring community.

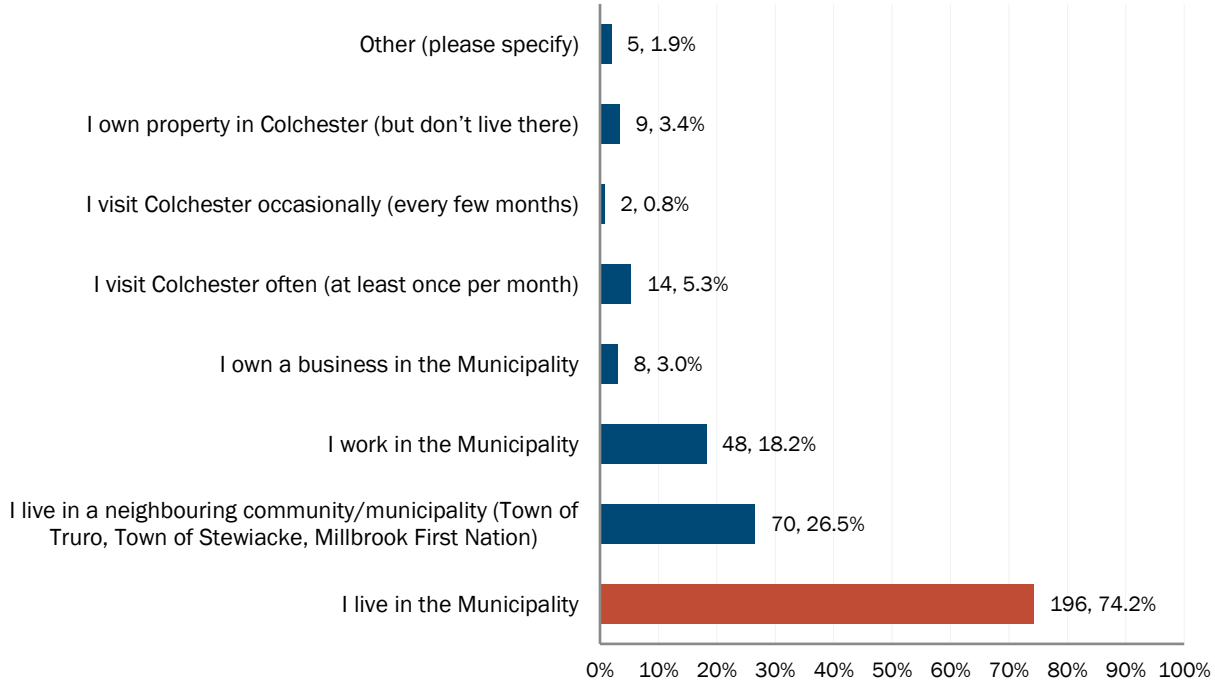


Figure 1. Responses to the question, "What is your connection to the Municipality of Colchester?" (n=264)

Respondents were also asked to share their postal codes, where most frequent respondent rates are mapped below. Results show that most respondents lived in or near the Town of Truro, with fewer respondents from Colchester's rural areas. Note that postal codes apply to general areas and will not show exact locations of residence.

Active Transportation Strategy: Survey Results Postal Codes Heat Map

Municipal Boundary
Village
Indigenous Community
Park
Highway
Road
Railways

Survey Responses

Fewer Responses
More Responses

CUMBERLAND
TATAMAGOUCHE
COLCHESTER
PICTOU
BIBLE HILL
TRURO
HANTS
STEWIACKE
HALIFAX
KINGS

Cobequid Bay
Bay of Fundy
Minas Basin

6
326
246
256
311
4
2
104
236
102
289
336
224

10
Kilometers

BIBLE HILL
Colchester
be centred here.

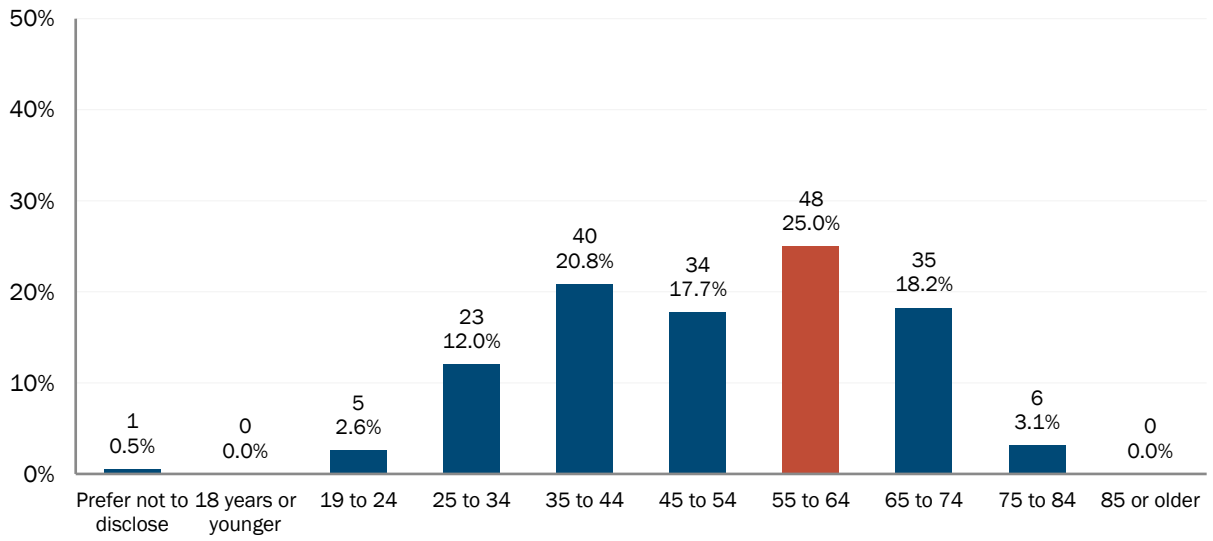


Figure 2. Responses to the question, "What is your age?" (n=192)

The predominant age group for respondents (Figure 2**Error! Reference source not found.**) was between 55 to 64 (25%, 48) with the second-most respondents being between ages 35 and 44 (20.8%, 40), The majority of respondents identified as women (64.6%, 124) or men (30.7%, 59) (Figure 3**Error! Reference source not found.**).

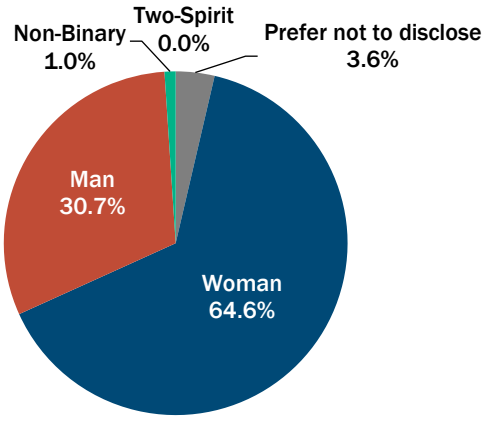


Figure 3. Responses to the question, "What is your gender?" (n=192)

The majority of respondents indicated that they did not identify as having a disability (66%, 123) (Figure 4**Error! Reference source not found.**). Of those who noted that they have a disability, the majority noted that they either have a mobility disability (9.7%, 18) or are neurodiverse (9.1%, 17). Those who indicated “other” (3.2%) shared that they have minor or fluctuating disabilities or are support persons for family members with disabilities.

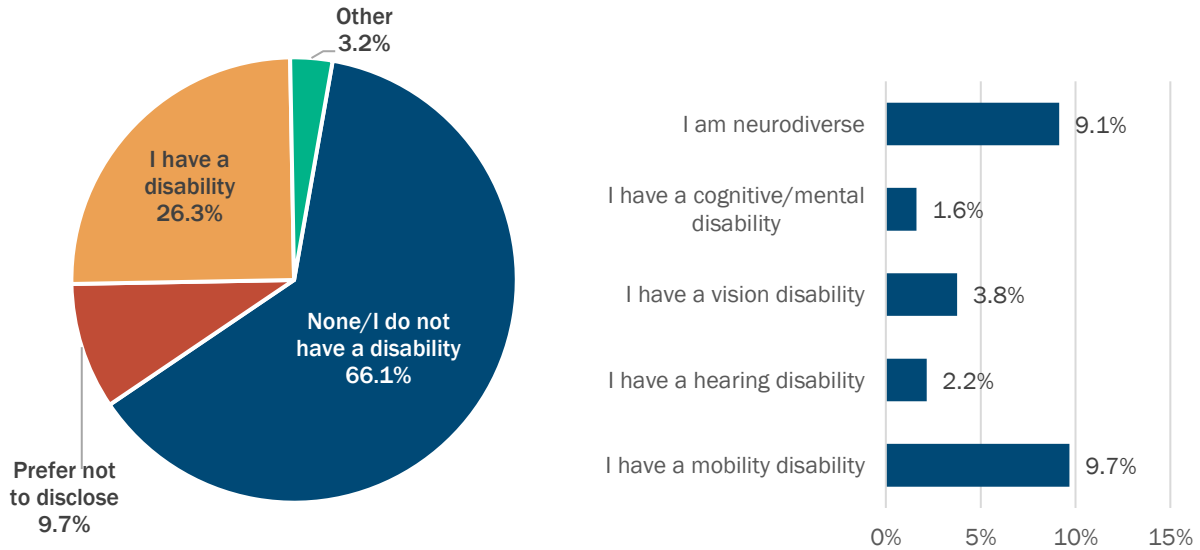


Figure 4. Responses to the question, "Do you identify as a person with a disability?" where more than one option could be selected (n=164)

The majority of respondents indicated that their household income is between $100,000 and $149,999 (18.2%, 35) (Figure 5**Error! Reference source not found.**). Over 31% (60) of respondents have a household income of over $100,000 where 17.7% (34) indicated they make less than $50,000.

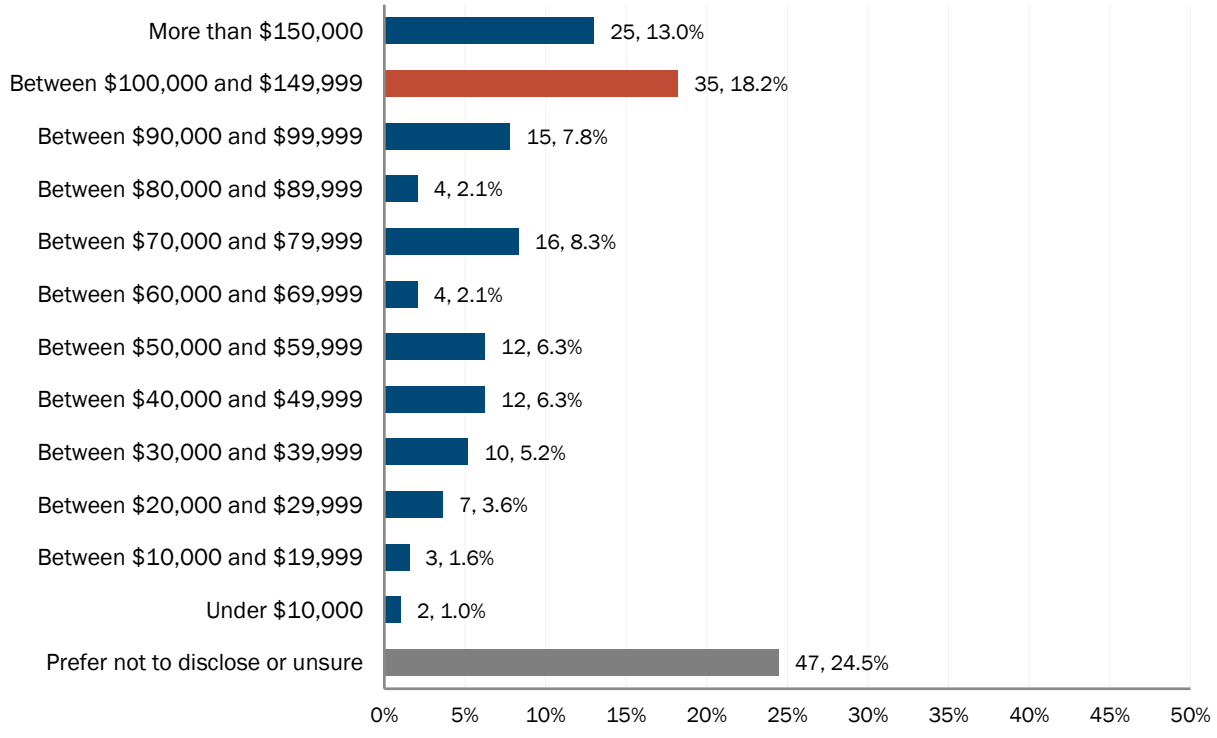


Figure 5. Responses to the question, "What is your annual household income (before tax)?" (n=192)

Using Active Transportation in Colchester

Commuting

Most respondents (55.6%, 130) indicated that for work or school, they travel within the Municipality of Colchester, however 24% (56) indicated that they do not travel for either work or school (Figure 6). Those who indicated “other” shared that they travel to variable destinations throughout the province, work from home, or stay within the Town of Truro.

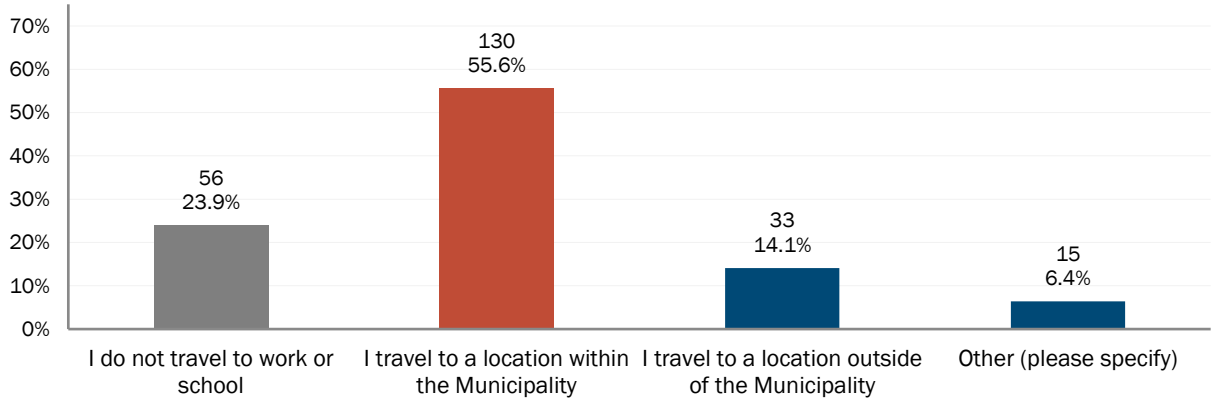


Figure 6. Responses to the question, "When you travel for work or school, where is your typical destination?" (n=234)

Most respondents indicated that they drive alone to their work or school destinations (64.5%, 151) (Figure 7). Overall, 70.5% (165) of respondents drive to their destination, 3.5% (8) cycle or use e-devices, and 4.3% (10) walk or roll. Those who indicated “other” shared that they use ride shares or taxi services, commute with family, or change their method of transportation frequently.

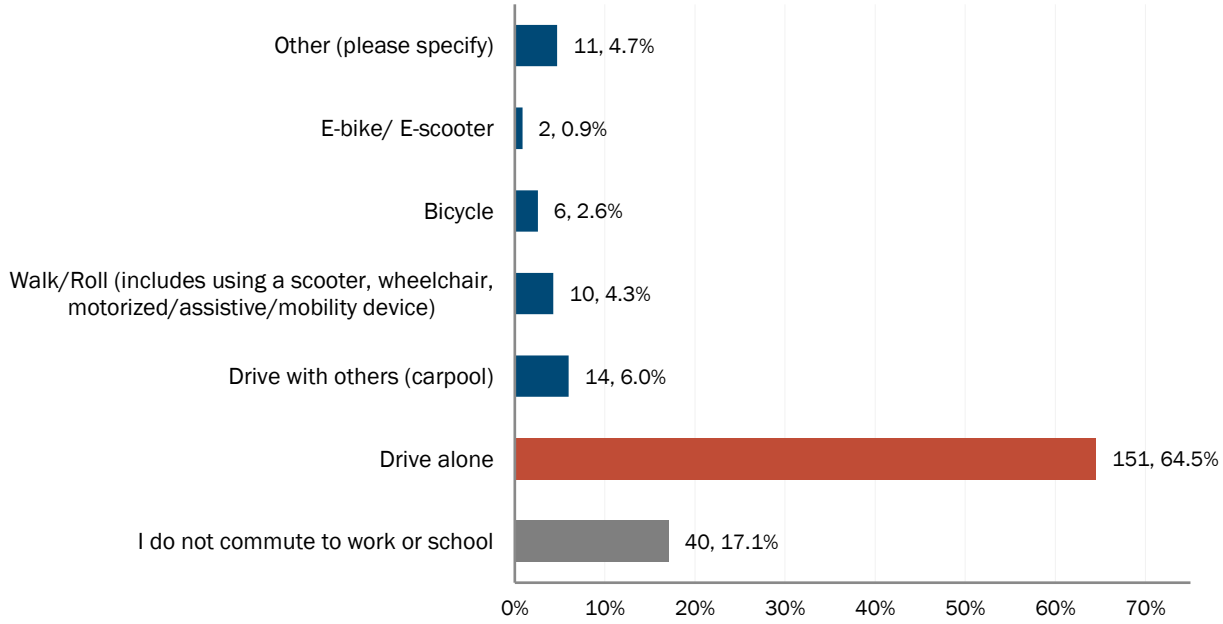


Figure 7. Responses to the question, "On a typical day, what is your usual mode of transportation for commuting purposes (e.g., travelling to work or school)" (n=234)

Most respondents who indicated they have children who attend school in the Municipality shared that their children commute by school bus (19.1%, 41) or drive alone/ are driven by their family (17.7%, 38) (Figure 8).

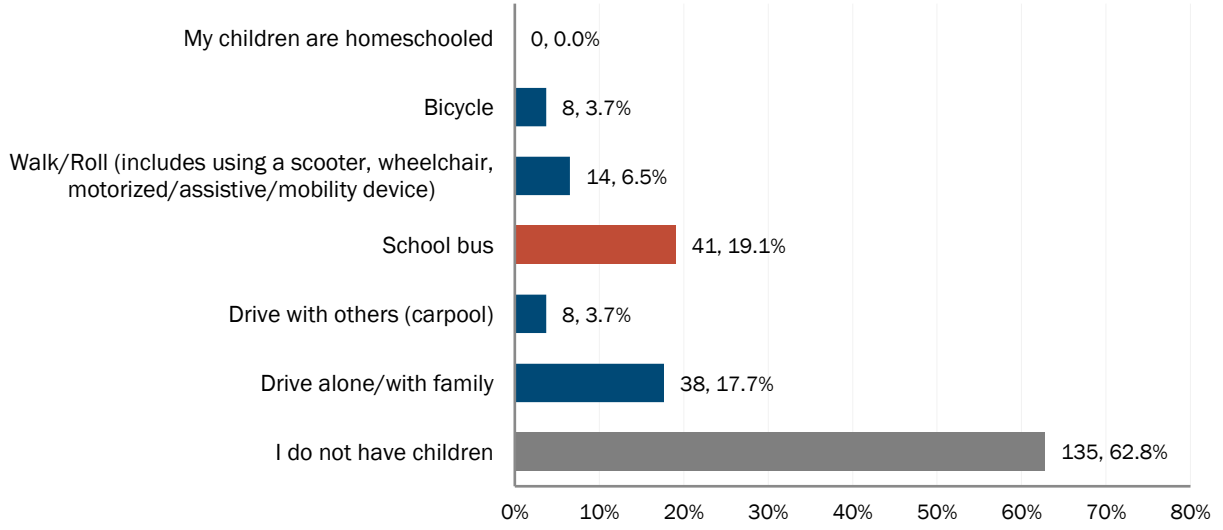


Figure 8. Responses to the question, "If you have children that attend school in Colchester, how do they typically travel to and from school? Select all that apply." (n=215)

Using the Existing Active Transportation Network

The majority of respondents (74.6%, 173) indicated that they use the current active transportation network to walk/roll or hike (Figure 9). The next most common responses included accessing parks (57%) or enjoying nature (54%). Cycling was the fifth most frequently indicate use active transportation at 39%. Those who chose “other” to this question shared that they use AT infrastructure to run errands, maintain a healthy lifestyle, or travel outside of their community.

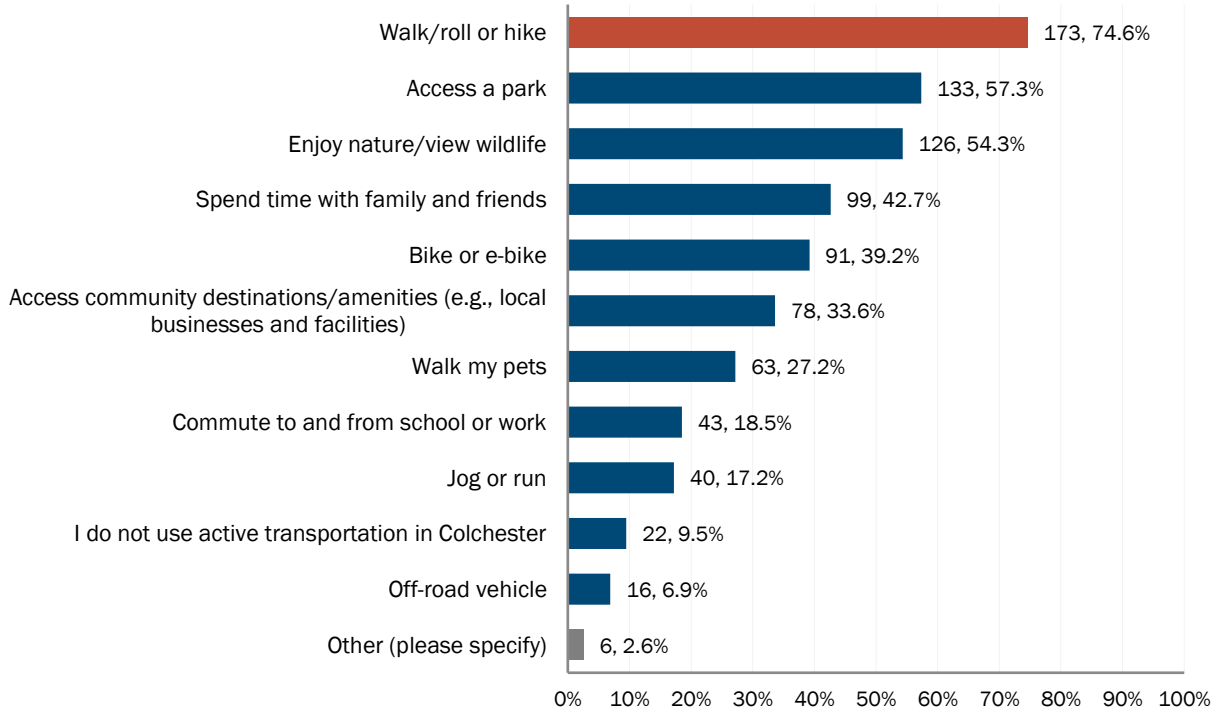


Figure 9. Responses to the question, "How do you use Colchester's existing active transportation network, including sidewalks, trails, walking paths, and bike routes? Select all that apply" (n=232)

Overall, residents of Colchester primarily use the active transportation network for recreational purposes (Figure 10), most frequently for 1-3 days a week (26.5%, 61). The majority of respondents indicated that they do not use active transportation to commute or complete errands (33.6%, 72).

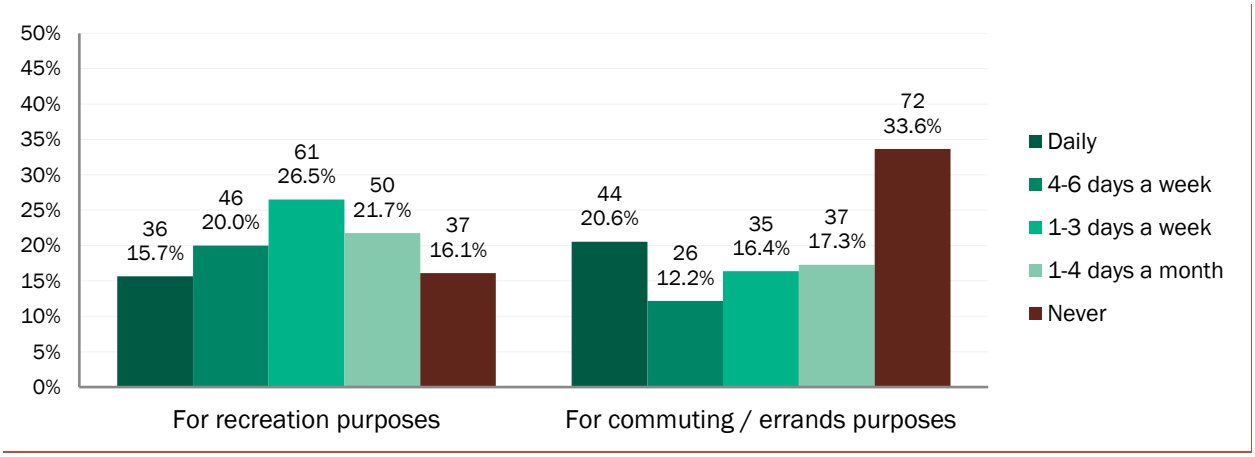


Figure 10. Responses to the question, "How often do you use the active transportation network in Colchester for recreation and commuting?" (n=233)

Walking and/or Rolling

Similarly to respondent feedback indicated above, the majority of those who walk/roll in Colchester (Figure 11) noted that they do so to enjoy nature, parks, or trails (74.5%, 155) or to exercise (70.2%, 146). Only six respondents (2.9%) indicated that they *do not* walk or roll, which reflects a high percentage of community members who actively seek walking options in Colchester. Those who noted "other" in their response (2.4%, 5) included comments regarding exercise, hiking, or to travel to their personal vehicles.

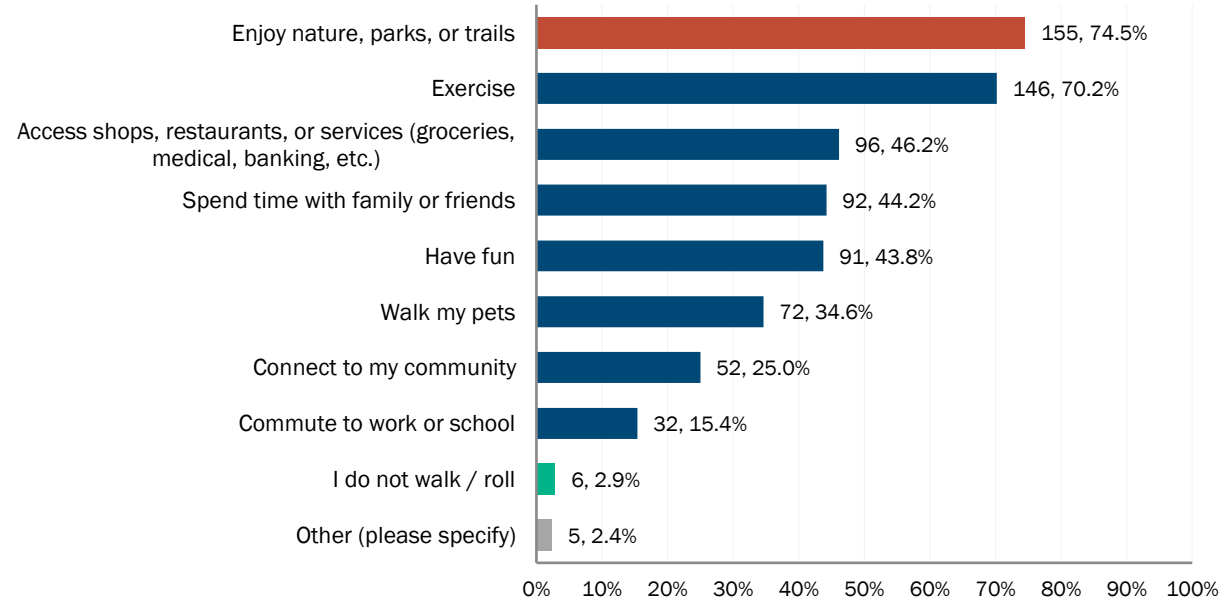


Figure 11. Responses to the question, "When I walk or roll, it is to: (Select all that apply)" (n=208)

Respondents noted that they most frequently walk/roll approximately 1-3 days per week in both spring/summer/fall (31.6%, 65) and in the winter (34.7%, 69) (Figure 12). Less people never walk in winter (12.1%, 24) than in the warmer months (3.4%, 7).

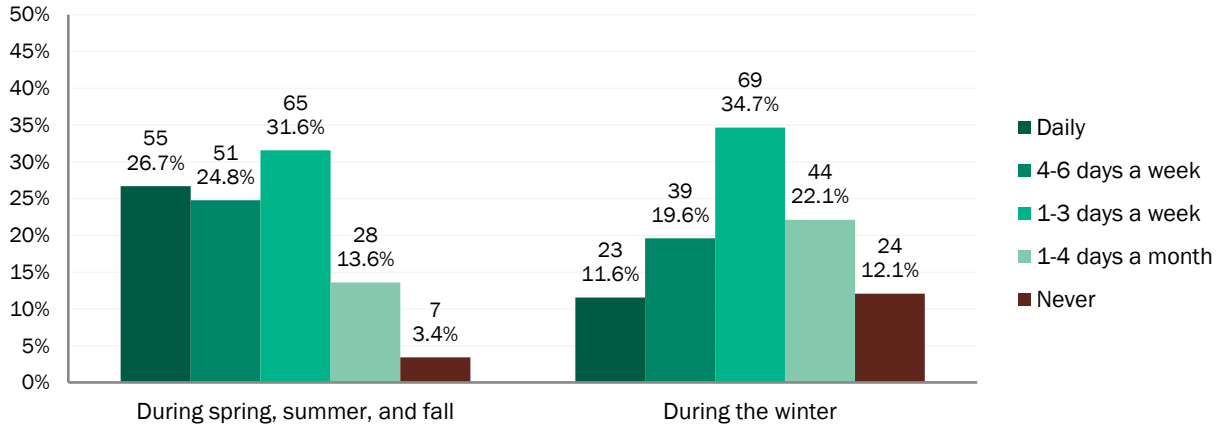


Figure 12. Responses to the question, "How often do you walk/roll?" (n=208)

When asked how safe people feel walking/rolling in Colchester (Figure 13), the majority indicated they feel “mostly safe” (64.7%, 134) with only 6.3% (13) indicating they feel very unsafe.

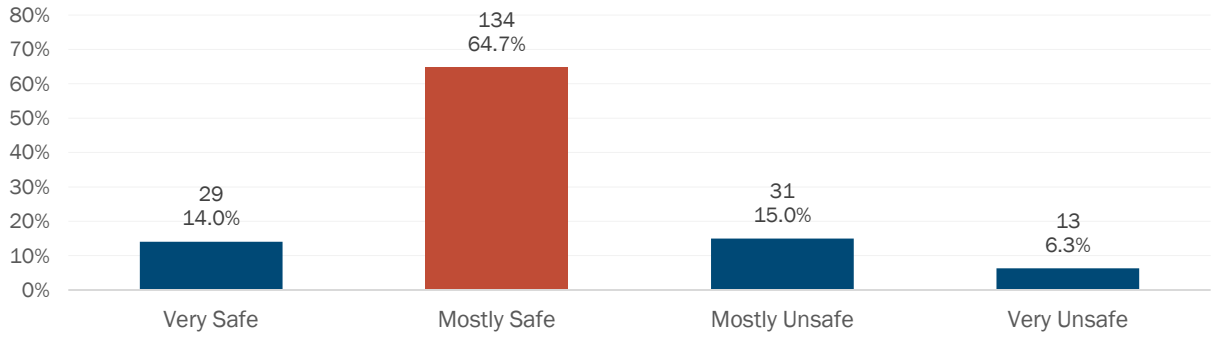


Figure 13. Responses to the question, "How safe do you feel walking/rolling in Colchester?" (n=207)

When asked what the most important safety concerns are for walking/rolling (Figure 14), the most frequent response was vehicle proximity, speed, and volume (62.9%, 129) with weather being the second most chosen response (32.2%, 66).

> *“Unsafe terrain or no sidewalks, gravel roads not suitable for wheelchair”*

Respondents who indicated “other” (20%, 41) mentioned that there is a lack of walking infrastructure, particularly sidewalks, and that there is a need for increasing the condition and regular maintenance of pathways. Others noted that there are challenges with

inattentive drivers, cyclists on sidewalks, and the high speeds of e-bikes and e-scooters. Lastly, residents shared that concerns for safety were particularly due to poor lighting conditions and potential interactions with unhoused populations.

> *"Driver attention when walking even at lit and flashing cross walks. I see violations every time I walk. I have to use extreme cause at cross walks." – survey respondent*

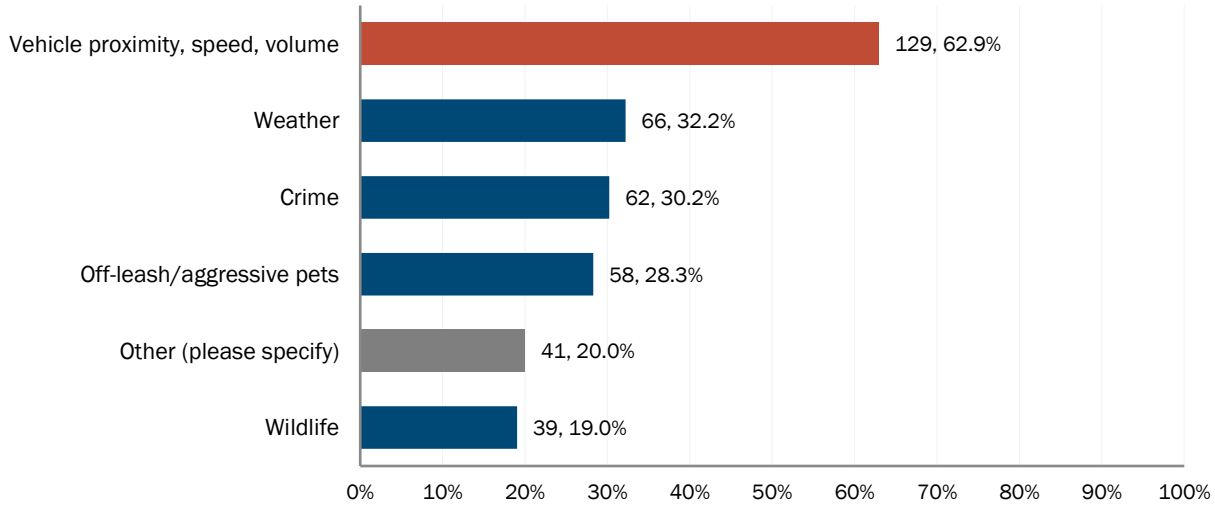


Figure 14. Responses to the question, "What are your most important safety concerns when walking/rolling? Select all that apply" (n=205)

When asked what issues most prevent walking/rolling in Colchester (Figure 15), the majority of responses indicated that lack of sidewalks/paths were the primary issue (41.5%, 88) as well as speed/volume/noise of vehicles (37.7%, 90) and poor lighting (32.6%, 69). Only 9% (19) indicated that they have no issues/fully positive experiences with walking/rolling.

> *"re: "lack of winter maintenance", certain sections of sidewalk that can be (quite regularly) icy"*

Respondents who noted "other" (9%, 19) shared that common issues include a lack of protected bike lanes or barriers between pedestrians and personal vehicles, travel time or distances to locations, and safety challenges in interacting with other residents.

"When raining walking on sidewalks you get drenched when cars pass by on road because of puddles."

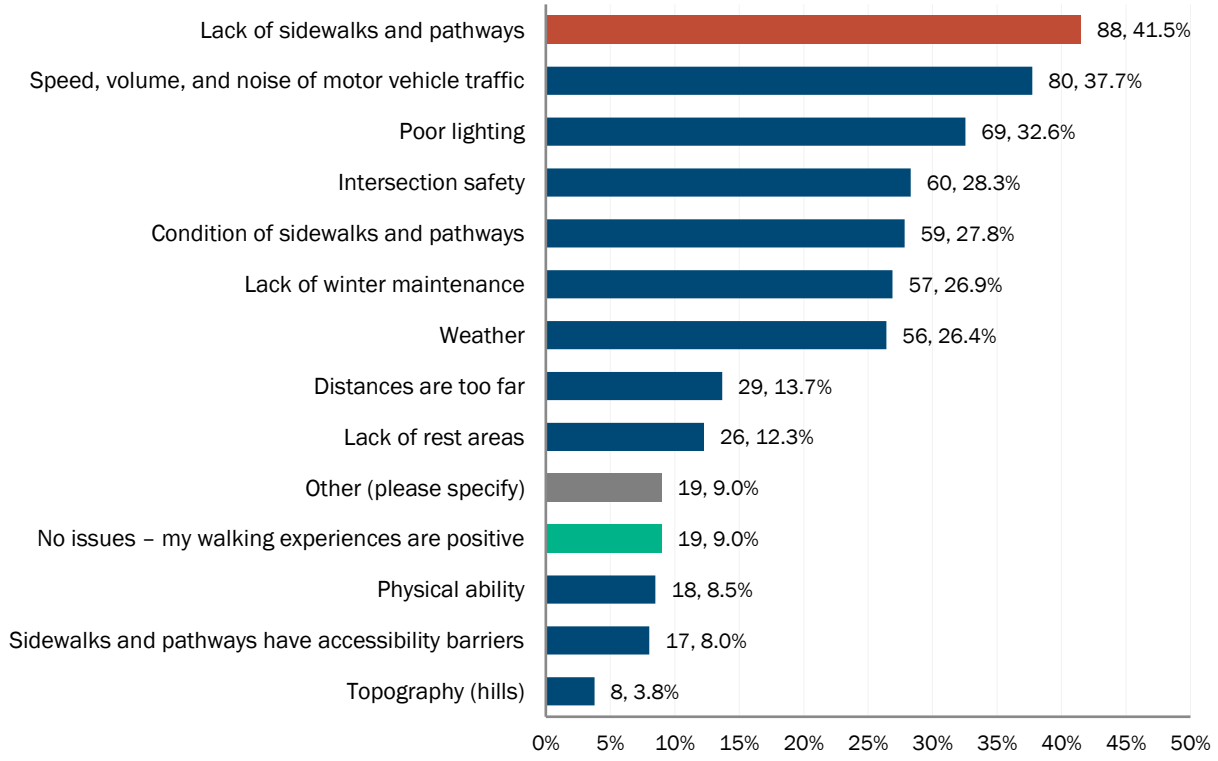


Figure 15. Responses to the question, "What are the issues preventing you from walking/rolling more often than you do in Colchester? Select up to 5." (n=212)

Cycling

Respondents were asked to share the primary reasons they cycle in Colchester (Figure 16) and the majority indicated they cycle to exercise (50.5%, 99) or to enjoy nature, parks, or trails (47.5% 93). A larger percentage of respondents noted that they do not use this form of active transportation (40.3%, 79). Respondents who indicated "other" (2.6%, 5) shared they no longer cycle due to far distances, construction zones, or safety concerns.

"More accountability for vehicular/cycling infractions"

"Bike lanes or simply a solid painted line indicating where cars should not drive"

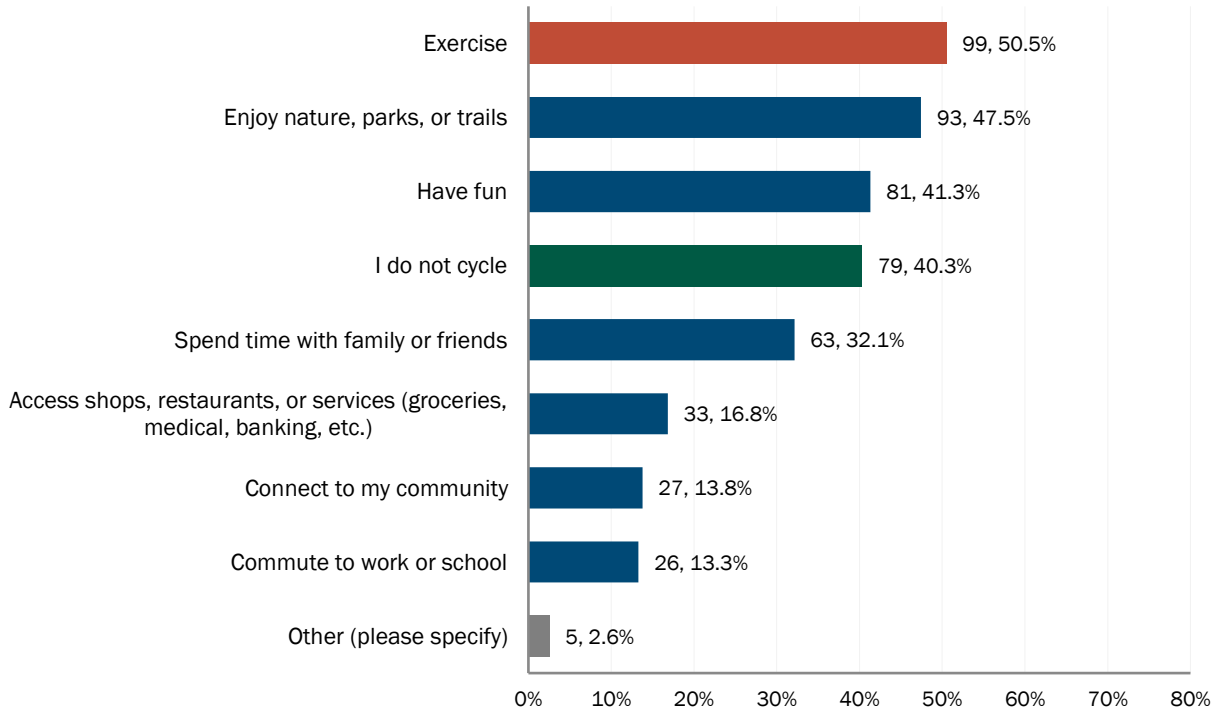


Figure 16. Responses to question, "When I cycle, it is to: Select all that apply." (n=196)

When asked how frequently residents of Colchester cycle, the majority noted that they never cycle, both in spring/summer/fall (41.1%) and more so in winter (80.4%, 148). Those who do cycle, most frequently do so 1-4 days a month in the warmer seasons (22.1%, 42).

"I live in the country so other destinations are too far and not safe to cycle to."

"I don't cycle anymore but when I did, I agree the paved shoulder could be a bit wider"

"Rarely cycle any more for fear of safety on the road"

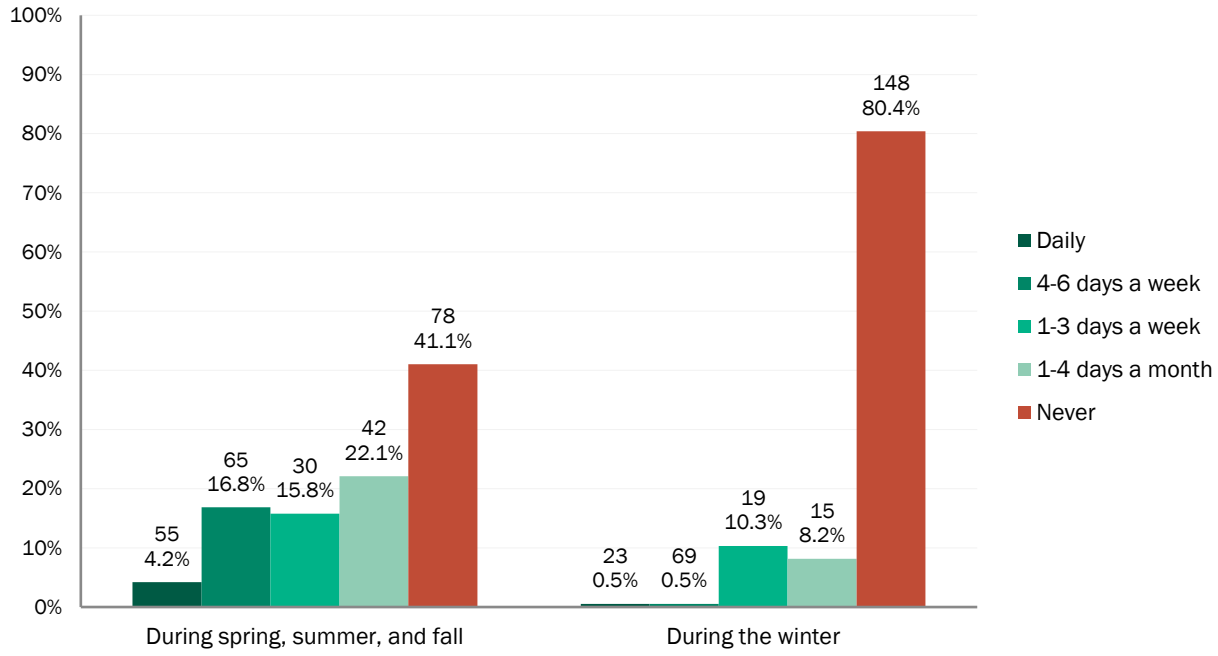


Figure 17. Responses to the question, "How often do you ride a bike?" (n=191)

Less people in Colchester cycle than walk, and those who do cycle predominately feel either “mostly unsafe” (33.8%, 52) or “mostly safe” (31.2%, 48) when on their bikes (Figure 18).

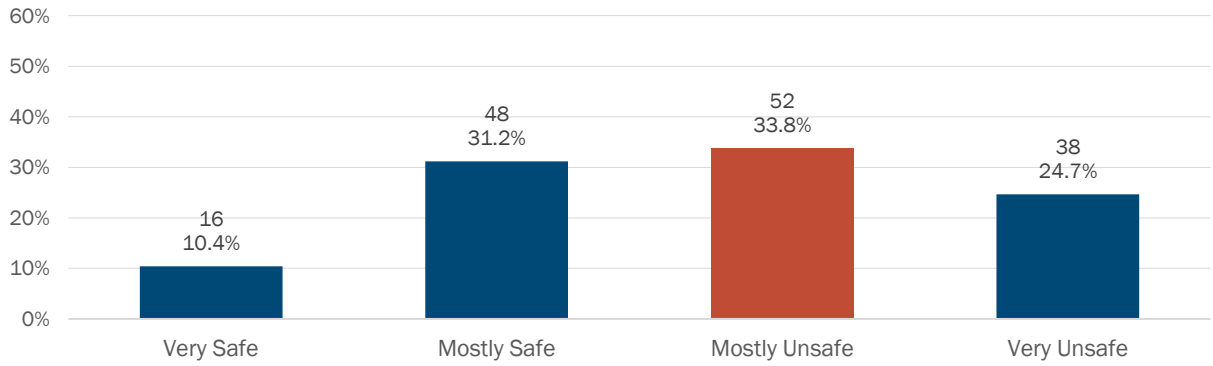


Figure 18. Responses to the question, "How safe do you feel cycling in Colchester?" (n=154)

The primary contributor to feeling unsafe while cycling was shared as being vehicle proximity, speed, and volume (71.7%, 109). Respondents who indicated “other” (21.1%, 33) shared that there is a need for protected bike lanes and increasing the conditions of existing infrastructure while providing more regular maintenance. Others also noted that traffic and inattentive drivers are a primary concern, as well as overall safety.

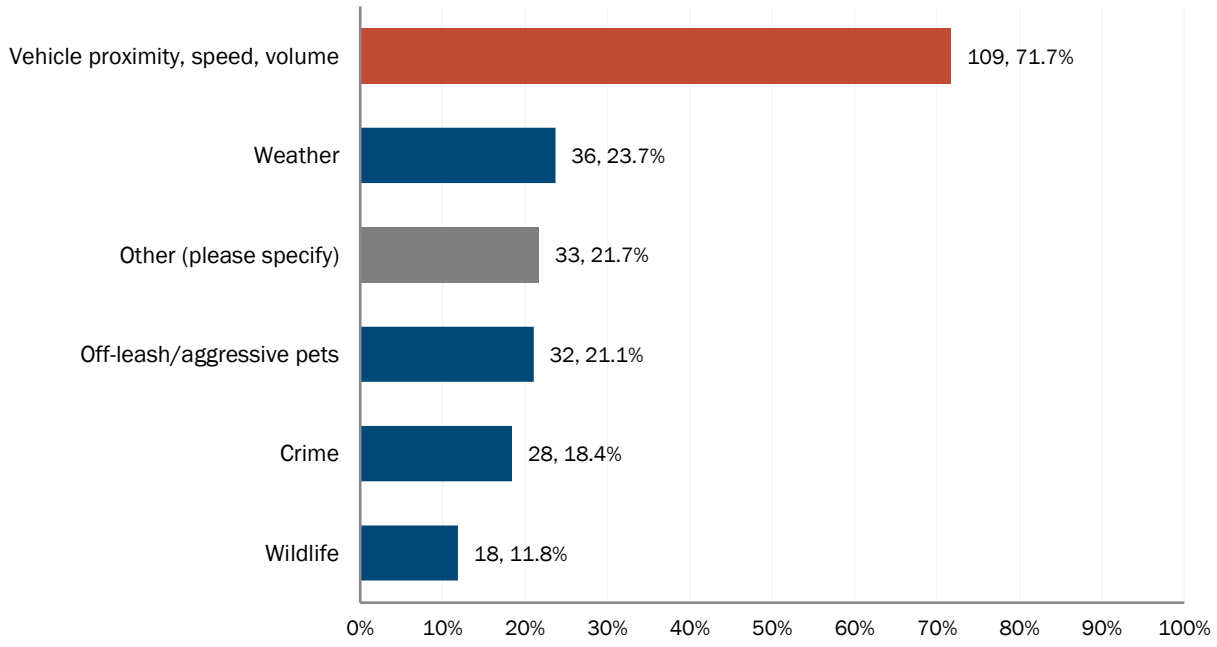


Figure 19. Responses to the question, "What are your most important safety concerns when cycling? Select all that apply." (n=152)

The primary challenges noted for cycling were shared as being a lack on dedicated on-street bicycle lanes (55.3%, 110), speed/volume/noise of vehicles (47.2%, 94) and lack of lanes separated completely from traffic (44.7%, 89). The majority of respondents who indicated "other" (11.1%, 22) shared that they do not cycle.

"When necessary to ride on roads, potholes, dirt, sewer covers, curbs make it difficult to navigate a safe distance from vehicles"

"The cycling paths do not connect. Not conducive for cycling outside recreation, verses for running errands."

"Cyclists are a danger. They have no insurance and obey no rules"

"I do not feel safe using the roads for biking. There are no proper bike lanes. Motorists are not bike friendly"

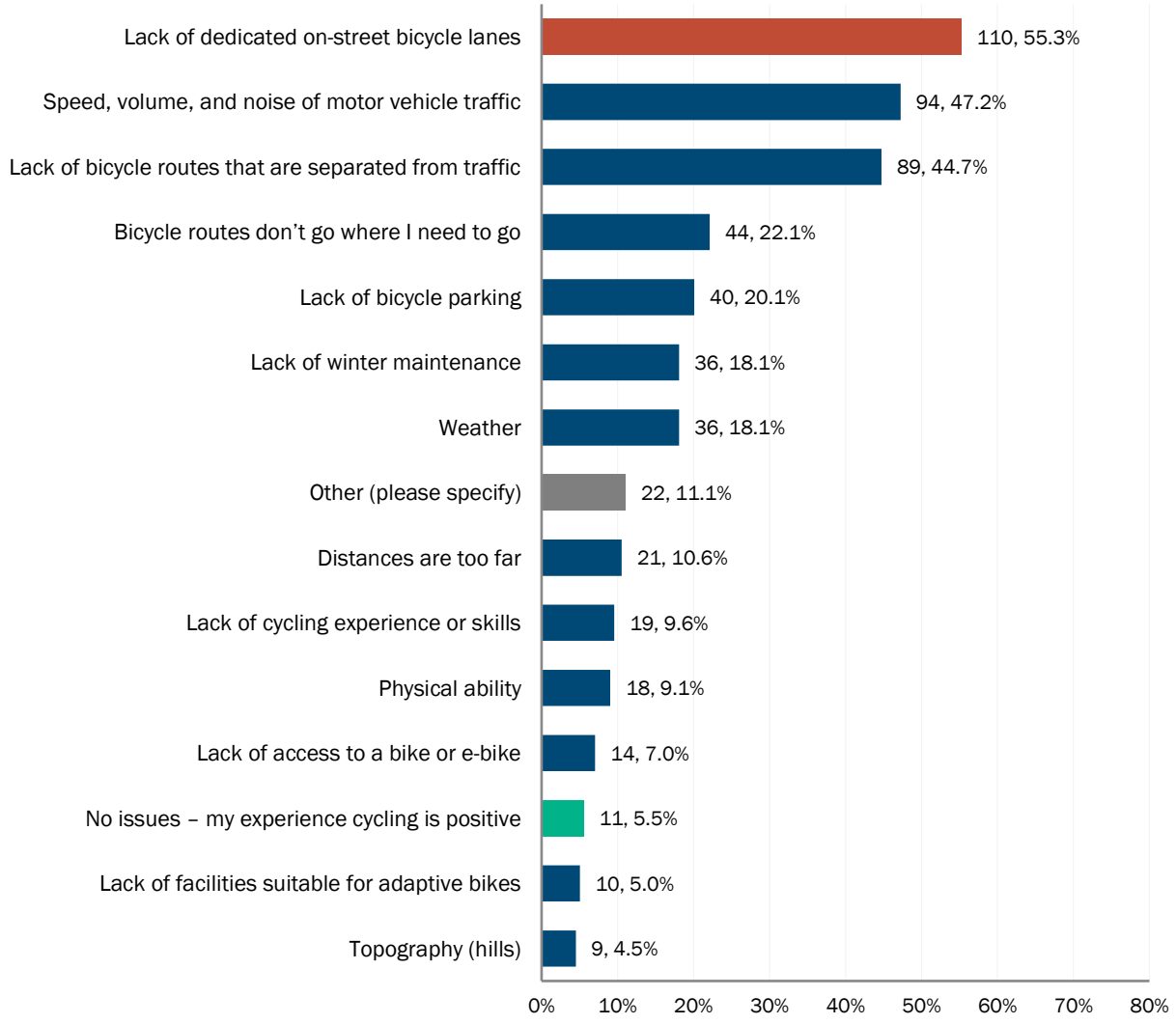


Figure 20. Responses to question, "What are the main issues or challenges for cycling in Colchester? Select up to 5." (n=199)

Outcomes of the Active Transportation Strategy

Survey respondents were invited to share opinions on how the Active Transportation Strategy can be prioritized, what specific types of infrastructure are most needed, and where they should be located.

To help incentivize walking/rolling (Figure 21), the majority of respondents noted that paved multi-use pathways would be a primary support (56.5%, 118), followed by sidewalks (55%, 115). Similar proportions of respondents noted that increased lighting (52.2%) and crosswalk improvements (51.7%) would support more movement. Those who indicated other (11%, 23) shared that adding protected bike lanes, lighting, and increase connectivity would be the most helpful.

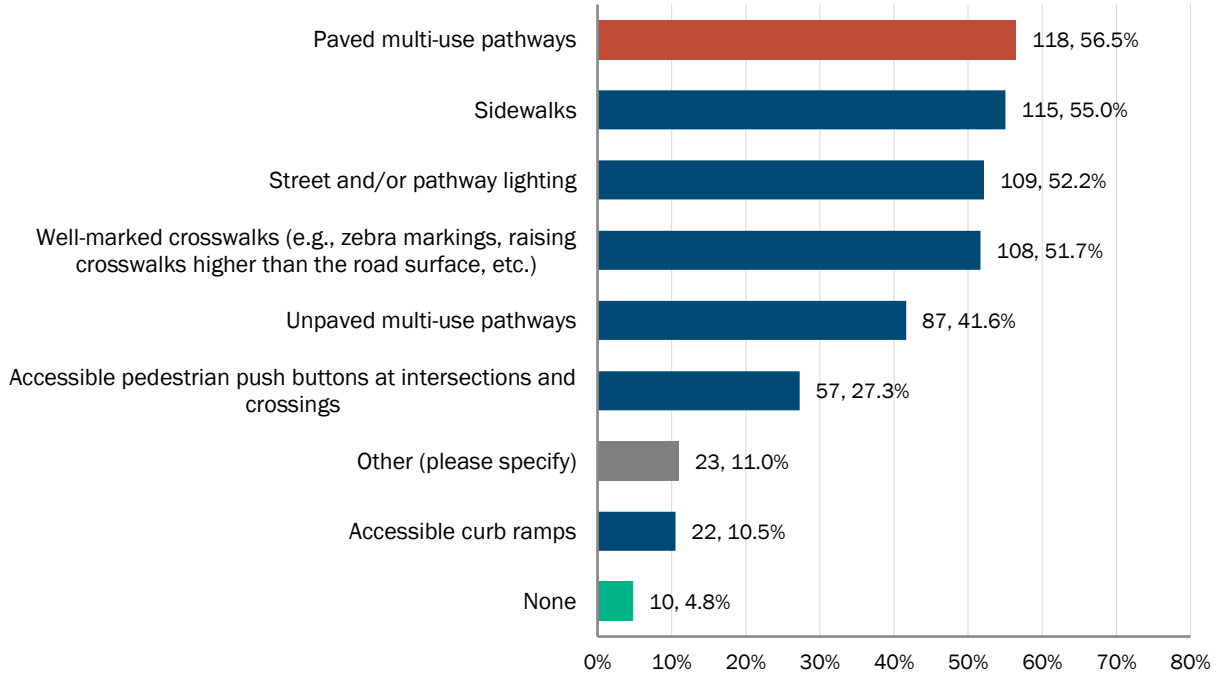


Figure 21. Responses to question, "What types of walking infrastructure (including using mobility devices) would encourage you to move more in Colchester? Select all that apply." (n=209)

For considering new sidewalks in Colchester, the majority of respondents indicated that their top priorities (Figure 22) would be adding them along roads that have high vehicle volumes and/or speeds (62.3%, 119) followed by closing gaps in the current network (58.6%, 112). Respondents who indicated “other” (4.7%, 9) shared that ensuring crosswalks are considered alongside sidewalk development, as well as worries about already narrow roads that may not be able to accommodate more space for pedestrians.

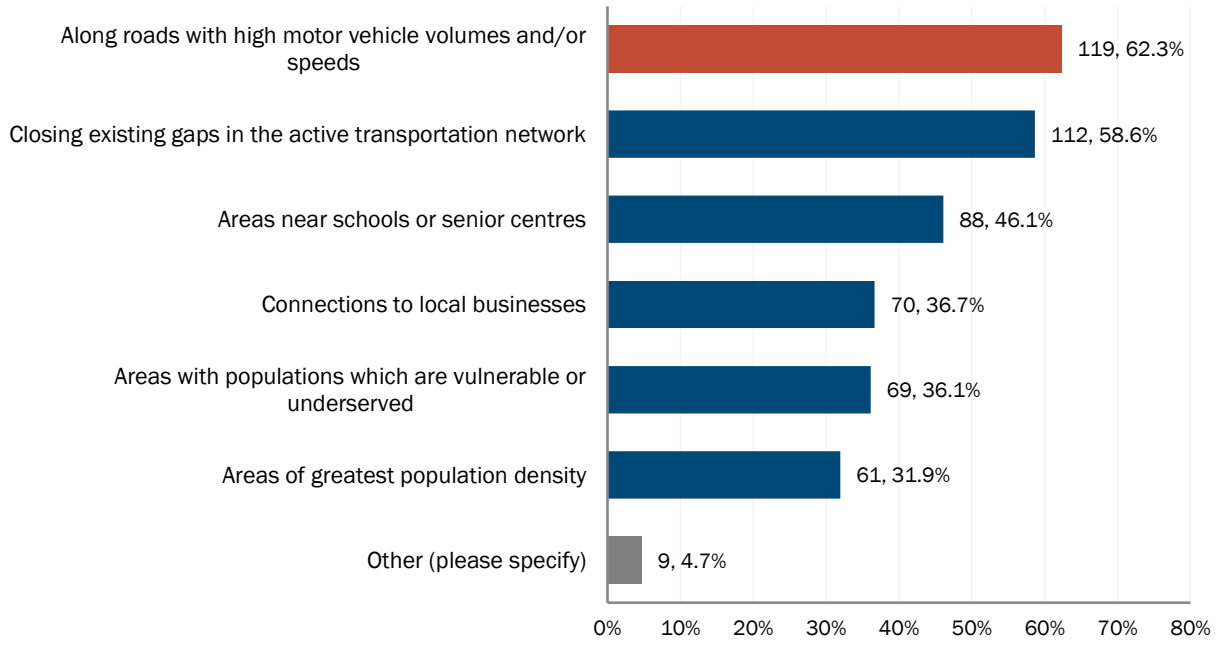


Figure 22. Responses to question, "When considering new sidewalks and pathways in Colchester, what are your top priorities? Select all that apply." (n=191)

To encourage more cycling, respondents indicated that separated bicycle lanes (56.1%, 96), paved shoulders (54.4%, 93) and paved multi-use paths (52.1%, 89) would be most supportive.

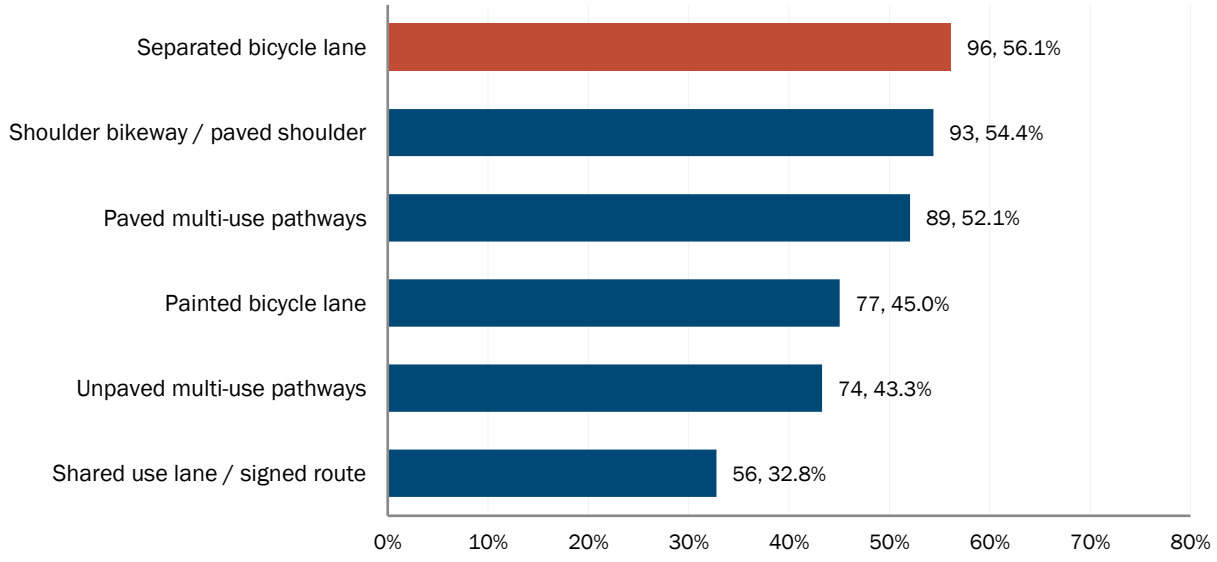


Figure 23. Responses to question, "What facility type(s) would encourage you to cycle more in Colchester? Select all that apply." (n=171)

When respondents were asked where bike parking is most needed in Colchester, the following responses occurred most frequently (n=89):

- Businesses, malls, shopping areas, and grocery stores (46)
- Downtown Truro (25)
- Parks (8)
- Schools (7)
- Hospitals and Medical Facilities (5)

Some respondents specifically mentioned streets or communities to consider for bike parking including:

- Robie St.
- Victoria Park
- Bible Hill
- Esplanade
- Inglis St.
- Prince St.
- Downtown Tatamagouche
- Willow St.

The Town of Truro is not included in this Strategy's study area but ensuring that rural-to-urban end-to-end infrastructure (e.g. bicycle parking) is accounted for was a common theme throughout the survey.

The theme noted as most important for the Active Transportation Strategy is improving road safety for all users (64.3%, 124) followed by providing more AT choices (37.3%, 72). Respondents who chose "other" (3.1%, 6) shared that having paved roads and protected bike lanes would be their priorities, as well as increase public transportation in the area.

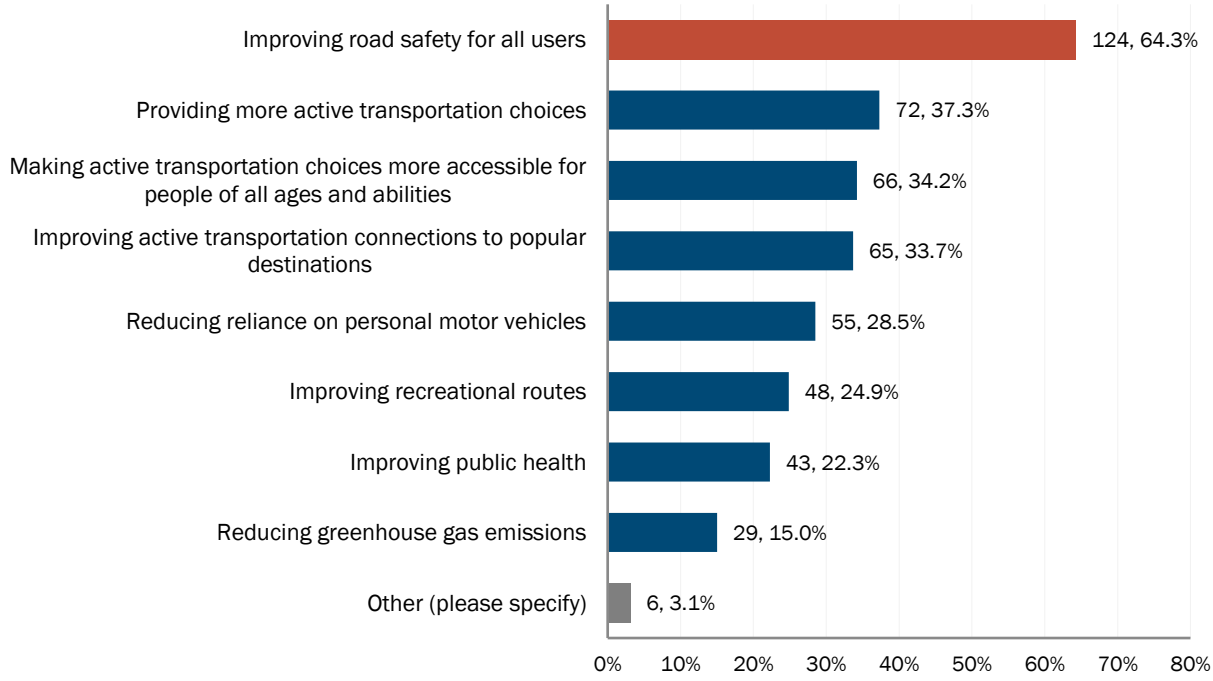


Figure 24. Responses to question, "Which outcomes of the Active Transportation Strategy are most important to you? Select up to 3." (n=193)

Appendix B: Open House and Interest Holder Discussion Summary

Key Themes

Safety Concerns

Across all sessions, participants consistently identified safety as the most significant concern, citing high vehicle speeds and heavy truck traffic, particularly on rural roads. They also noted that in many cases, pedestrians are forced to use dangerous or narrow shoulders for active transportation as there is frequently an absence of sidewalks. They noted that there are many unsafe crossings throughout the community, many without signals or high visibility. Conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians, and motorized trail users were commonly shared. Many highlighted dark or poorly lit areas making residents feel unsafe at night, including crosswalks, trails, roundabouts, and sections of the Cobequid Trail at night.

Connectivity and Growing the Network

Participants emphasized the lack of a continuous active transportation network, noting disconnected sidewalks, trails, and bike routes, along with difficult transitions between jurisdictions. They highlighted missing links to major destinations and the reliance on rural roads where no active transportation alternatives exist. Many stressed the need for extending current trails and AT infrastructure as well as upgrading existing connections through paved shoulders and year-round maintenance, including snow clearing or grooming for OHV trails.

Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion

The discussions highlighted that active transportation is essential for people who may not have access to a vehicle, including students, low-income residents, newcomers, seniors, and people with disabilities. Participants highlighted the importance of active transportation in supporting community participation, mental health, and social inclusion. Conversations among services providers stressed the need to humanize the benefits of active transportation through storytelling and collaboration among community groups and municipal partners. They called for infrastructure that works for everyone, including wider and paved pathways, more frequent crossings, and design that supports users of all ages and abilities. Overall, universal design was viewed as essential and beneficial to all users. Many current routes were described as inaccessible, citing examples such as poorly maintained pathways or paths in unpopulated areas. Concerns were raised about residents

not having access to necessary equipment to participate in active transportation options, or the ability to try or rent different options.

Education, Etiquette, and Cultural Change

The importance of the human side of active transportation was discussed, highlighting the need for improved education and etiquette for all including pedestrians, cyclists, e-bike/e-scooter users, and drivers of both personal vehicles and ATVs. Participants stressed that drivers should be more aware of laws and responsibilities around sharing the road, while cyclists need to also know and follow rules, signals, and trail etiquette. Some called for a cultural shift away from car-centric thinking and encouragement of active transportation, which could be supported by better signage and wayfinding, and increased engagement and public information about available routes. They noted that community-building initiatives including group rides, bike school buses, and social programs could help normalize active transportation and encourage safer, more confident use.

Lighting, Amenities, and Comfort

It was noted that infrastructure needs for active transportation go beyond the network, emphasizing the importance of improved lighting on trails to support safety and comfort, as well as the value of amenities such as benches, washrooms, shade, rest areas, bike racks, lockers, and charging stations.

Transit Integration and End-to-end Mobility

Participants shared that transit and active transportation should work together, noting the need for safe, accessible connections to bus stops and improvements that make it easier to travel the first and last mile, such as bike rentals, e-scooters, and integrating mobility hubs. They also highlighted the importance of linking active transportation routes with major regional destinations to support seamless, end-to-end travel.

Planning, Policy, and Long-Term Commitment

Many noted that there is a need for consistent, long-term planning for active transportation that is actionable. They noted that active transportation infrastructure should be planned with clear prioritization and be integrated from the start including through road renewals or capital development opportunities. Strong municipal leadership and collaboration across departments was seen as essential, along with consistent maintenance standards and enforcement.

Appendix C: Recorded Comments from In-Person Engagement

Open Houses

November 17th, 6pm-8pm – Debert

Attendance

Residents: 7

Council: 2

Staff: 4

What are Colchester's AT concerns and barriers?

- Traffic speed/volume (3)
- Lighting on rural roads (1)
- Speed limit too high in base area (2)
- Safe crossings on Plains Rd. (1)
- Lack of sidewalks or adequate shoulder space (1)
- No crosswalks
- Need the bridge over Salmon River
- Loop pathways so can make a circular route
- Cleaning debris from shoulders
- Connecting to transit service
- Access to transportation options

What are Colchester's AT opportunities and priorities?

- Pedestrian improvements on Masstown Rd.
- Paved shoulder on Middle Rd.
- Driver etiquette / education
- Cyclist education and personal protective equipment (helmets)
- Trail on the north side of Salmon River
- Paved MUP on Plains Rd.
- Paved shoulders ped/bike
- More speed reader boards

Map of Debert

- Need access to transit – Plains and Masstown – need to navigate safely with wheelchair for example
- Middle Rd paved recently w/ paved shoulder
- Bad condition Masstown Rd. can't use a bike on shoulders
- Lights along trails (solar?)
- No shade at Base Park
- Hudson St. – Downtown Debert popular walking route – Used by School run club
- Possible cross-country trail to Hearts Haven in this area
- Large trucks hitting shoulders causing ruts in shoulder – unsafe for walkers and drivers
- Busy/large trucks at intersections with Lancaster Cres (especially around 3 PM)
- Some people walk around Dakota Road, recent increase in truck traffic.
- Speed complaints on East Folly Mountain Road
- CTCL only serves weekdays (local transit co-op)
- Priority 1 – base to school, Priority 2 – base to McElmons, Priority 3 – Base to Hearts Haven
- School bus drops teens at Mc Elmonds /Plains to walk to Tim's for work
- Trails to be paved to accommodate scooters/ motorized chairs
- Kids bike to town (skate park) along high access Rd.
- Unsafe to bike to Masstown Market from Base
- Drive to Dakota to walk dog on paved road *weekends
- Safe trail from base to school /store & base to hearts haven kids already walk from base to school/store 50km zone
- Connect hearts haven to Mi'kmaq trail?
- Safe walking trail in the base around the football field for example. C. Benoit/ Community
- Teens bike to market (Masstown)
- Need to link people to transit via disability friendly AT
- Blue route paved shoulder is an improvement
- Masstown Rd going up Plains should be considered main transit path
- Son with disability had no transit – had to leave job in town
- Park maintenance – trail, mowing, lots of ticks
- Business park to be looked at separately
- Debert is a bit different because it is a business park so shouldn't be looked at only community
- Public transit to town for medical, work, social, to get out of Debert
- More speed radar signs

- Crossings to the Mi'kmaq Interpretive Centre
- Requested crosswalk at Dresden Way (daycare operator)

Map of Colchester

- Paved shoulders needed around Debert
- Drive from Debert to Bible Hill to use trails
- FDS active transportation bridge will be a key connector
- Roads in Onslow not safe for walking – paved shoulder required at minimum to improve safety (Highway 102 to Farnham Rd)

November 18th, 1pm-3pm – RECC, Truro Heights

Attendance

Residents: 14

Council: 3

Staff: 4

What are Colchester's AT concerns and barriers?

- Unsafe roads for biking. Not only broken pavement but unsafe drop offs on the side (1)
- On rail trails active transportation "compete" with motorized users
- Barrier – rural communities are connected primarily by roads. Unsafe for active transportation and by ATV trails (also unsafe)
- Concerns: decentralization of AT. There is a concern that the rural areas are always neglected when planning for AT
- Cycling on sidewalks
- Enforcement – cyclist safety – riding on sidewalks

What are Colchester's AT opportunities and priorities?

- Showing immediate progress
- Bicycle friendly program (Cycling NS)
- Food retail outlets (grocery stores, farm markets, farm stand) – Food access
- Equitable distribution across County (1)
- Opportunities: AT will enhance the active living of folks with disabilities
- Quick build solutions
- Try an e-bike event (1)
- Paving shoulders
- Creating an AT culture (1)
- Shoulders are very poor condition on several connections

- Traffic calming where possible
- Extend Farnham Brook Trail to Vimy Rd.

Truro Heights, Lower Truro, and Onslow Maps

- Speed limits on rural roads/ education for drivers around 1 metre buffer
- Willow St. intersection to get into RECC and hospital
- Central Onslow – No shoulder, no connection to Blue Route
- Bible Hill/Universities/Colchester pedestrian bridge on Main St, Bible Hill tunnel, Stanfield development
- Cobequid style trail by the dyke, alternative to highway out to great village
- Truro park entrance – Bible Hill for work – Salmon River/College Rd/ University for recreation rides
- Cobequid ride/ highway recreation ride
- Robie St services problem on a bike
- University students safe place to ride / walk into downtown / get access to the river
- Willow St roundabout: post 30 km/h
- Paved shoulders on certain routes
- Motorist education is necessary (e.g. 1m law)
- Salmon River – route along river or road to connect neighbourhoods to Truro downtown

Colchester Map Notes

- Extend Cobequid Trail to Fundy Discovery Site?
- Travel from Truro to Old Barns, via Cobequid Trail
    - Would like extension from Old Barn more along the coast, into Clifton
- Truro to Bible Hill bridge is awful. Getting to that bridge is challenging. Park St. bridge is wider – build connecting trails. Park St. to Vimy, avoiding Main St.
    - Currently bike that route, would be nice to turn right and connect to other trails
    - Marshland to Park? Vimy Loop. Upper Onslow Loop.
- Nice trails in Perennia area, badly connected through town to Vimy/Bible Hill
- Don't like riding on paved shoulders. Big trucks and bad drivers. People don't end up using it, would rather more dyke trails.
- Biking to get close to nature.
- Salmon River or East Prince as AT options
    - Often go there as it's quiet
- If you repave a road – add more space as cars now go faster
- Pictou Rd. is getting busier
- Connect to Upper loop

- Connect to existing quieter roads instead of on Main St.
- Increase signage of these routes
- Where can you get bike rentals? Want to try options to get more active. Example of a try-an-e-bike event.
- Biking seems to be mainly recreational and not in town. Changing culture from car-centric to being more accepting of other options.
- Not currently a "network"
- Feel unsafe with unhoused and folks facing mental health challenges in town
- Been almost hit on Willow St. while in the crosswalk. Cars don't slow down. Need lights at the roundabout
- Could use a bike lane on Robie St (both sides).
- Took away 2/3 of the bike parking at the mall.

November 18th, 6pm-8pm – RECC, Truro Heights

Attendance

Residents: 9

Council: 0

Staff: 5

What are Colchester's AT opportunities and priorities?

- AT bridge from Bible Hill to Truro
- Continuous trail to Masstown Market
- Shoulders on Highway 2 east of 102
- Grooming trails in winter
- Multi-use connected paths (1)

What are Colchester's AT concerns and barriers?

- Lighting
- Drivers are not aware of cyclists
- Car traffic and lack of connected infrastructure. Increased risk to cyclists. Barriers, financial
- User safety – e-scooters and pedestrians
- Lack of connected trails

Truro Heights, Lower Truro, and Onslow Maps

- Groom trails for winter
- Potential trails on dyke
- Intersection improvement at Lower Truro / Wade Rd

- Sewage right of way with high AT potential
- Viewing platform near Old Rd. S access on CT
- Wade Rd improvements – access to RECC / hospital
- Cobequid trail – Wade Rd. connection
- Using sewer easements as trails/access roads
- Connect FDS to Marshland Dr.
- Trail through Holy Well Park
- Concerns: bike shelter or bike locker – keep safe from weather and theft
- Irwin Lake Rd sidewalk/MUP
- Crosswalk on Highway 2 at Irwin Lake Road
- Paved shoulders on Truro Rd – Young to Hilden
- Not sufficient bike parking at RECC and hospital
- Add a bike route on Robie. Separate. Only crossing at McDonalds. Not sufficient MUPs!
- Upper Onslow major missing link for AT. Blue Route ends at 102
- Extend Cobequid trail
- Extend median by Giant Tiger
- Consider multi-use path along Wade Rd with connection to Cobequid Trail. Sidewalk included in capital budget for 2027/28 in this location.
- Improved connection from Fundy Discovery Site to Cobequid Trail
- Connection along sewer easement from Fundy Discovery Site to Marshland Rd

Bible Hill, Valley, and Salmon River Map

- Cyclists feel pretty good on Pictou
- Cyclists come for Blue Route
- Riverbed trail
- Salmon River Rd bad shoulder but preferable route to College Rd because of catch basins.

Colchester Map / General Notes

- Have to jay walk twice to get to trails (Truro Heights Rd & 236). 70 km/h (with people going even faster) on Tideview Dr. – it should be 50 km/h.
    - What is the solution? Truro Heights Rd. is a corner, have to put on 236? Reducing speed limit would really help.
    - Almost was hit coming out of yard on Tideview. More traffic, and faster moving.
- Infrastructure not keeping up with growth (need sidewalks for the amount of people)
- Trees are not cut back so vehicles hit them, or residents go further into streets to avoid trees.

- Use trail to pick herbs/medicines
- Love the trails, but so difficult to access them.
- Cobequid Trail – bikes are going so fast, being used for commuting not just rec – difficult for non-cyclists (dog walkers, walkers) – e-bikes and scooters on trails are too fast
- Put etiquette signs up on crosswalks to dismount, slow down – car risk
- Cyclist etiquette training
- Paved shoulders should be looked at differently than in-town bike lanes as the longer paved shoulder rides attract the long-distance intense bikers who are more comfortable with a narrow lane. In town bike lanes should offer more space/better level of comfort
- Not great options to bike from County into town for commute- example East Prince/Prince St not bike friendly
- Casual/rec bikers prefer to use gravel – speeds are slower and you can hear vehicles coming better
- Try to identify and use existing gravel paths, roads, informal paths and adapt them as formal/county maintained AT trails. Example to Masstown/Debert/Onslow
- Level of education around rules of the road when biking needs to be improved. Drivers have become more aggressive since COVID. Group bikes on paved shoulders can be scary as some people who attend don't know the rules and etiquette
- Cities like Calgary design all new subdivisions to make connections to existing trail networks – we should adopt the same approach
- Riding bike on gravel is more enjoyable than paved shoulders as you can enjoy and take in surroundings rather than always be on alert when on paved shoulder or on a road.

November 19th, 6pm-8pm, Bible Hill

Attendance

Residents: 10

Council: 2

Commission: 1

Staff: 6

Bible Hill/Valley Maps

- Multi-use path on Park St
- Bike improvements on Park St
- Connecting the Blue Route across Truro
- College Rd MUP (or sidewalks)
- Reduce posted speed on College Rd
- College Road -> College St
- Crosswalk at College Rd (Bridge Way Academy)
- Village Line / Forest Hill Dr crosswalk
- Crosswalk at Pictou / Village Line Rd
- Audible indicators on RRFBs when lights are flashing
- Crosswalk at school bus stop on Vimy, add RRFB (1)
- Clear paths of travel at curb cuts
- Connections to service centre at Hwy 4 / Valley Rd
- Connecting trail from McCallum Dr to Teviot Pl?
- Explore trails on sewer lines
- Flooding issues on Park St
- Consider improved lighting and widening of rail underpass on Main St

What are Colchester's AT concerns and barriers?

- Driver education
- Inconsiderate drivers
- Road/shoulder widths
- I would bike more except for these two reasons
- Trail on sewer line?

Notes from Conversations/Mapping Table

- Salmon River Rd is very dangerous. It is narrow and has bends. Cars are going too fast and not prepared for cyclists. Quieter on the western side (where the bridge is currently closed)
- Prefer Pictou to get into town (via bike) as it has a white line and is a more gradual slope.
- Manholes and storm catch basins are too deep for biking on the sides of College Rd.
- Stopped commuting to work in Truro (from Bible Hill) via bike because it's become so dangerous and stressful. An untethered dog would chase them.
- Drivers curse at cyclists (e.g. of women's group getting yelled at by a male driver). Drivers aren't taught to shoulder check for pedestrians and cyclists at every stop. Often cyclists aren't taught the rules of the road or safety either.
- Love the trail system, wish it was more connected. Cobequid Trail that ends at Foodland should be connected out further.
- Scared to let children bike, that they might get hit. Gets dark early in shoulder seasons and sidewalks don't continue or they have to cross streets, etc.
- Speeds near CCA. It's a school zone and don't feel like speeds are controlled or enforced. Drivers don't let people cross.
- Kids walk to school in the CCA area.
- No infrastructure through Upper Onslow, not even shoulders (Park St to the 102). Park St. is doable. Cars do not stop. Neighbours moved out of this area because there are no places to walk. Lots of truck traffic here as well. Would love to bike to Scotia Pool, but too unsafe.
- Great trails at Gully Lake. Need volunteers.
- Main St. underpass "subway" is unsafe.
- Winter maintenance on Cobequid Trail.
- Sunrise Court area has boomed (from 2 people to 45) but doesn't have the infrastructure – bad traffic going by makes it hard to leave the area.

Interest Holder Sessions

November 19th

Attendance

Interest Holder Representatives
NS Health
YMCA YREACH Settlement Staff
YMCA YREACH
LEC AT Committee
Ecology Action Centre
FutureWorx
African Nova Scotia Affairs

Meaning/Purpose of AT

- Proactive vs Reactive
- Accommodating growth and avoiding retrofits
- AT and greenspaces BEFORE development
- Low cost and accessible
- Cycling and walking is important to the humanity of a community
- Feeling comfortable and trusting the infrastructure
- Active Transportation vs Active Recreation – the issue is more than leisure accessibility
- Recreation AND everyday living
- Walking
- Access to a wider network, not “confined” to one community
- Infrastructure between municipal boundaries
- Safety
- Year-round movement
- Moving without fear
- Being excited to move through and use the community
- Cultural shift towards AT needed for implementation
- Changing culture
- Longevity and sticking to the plan – long-term thinking
- Moving for a purpose vs just to move
- Knowing what is out there
- Do you bike? VS Would you bike?
- Learning from lived experience
- Accessibility and inclusivity

- Universal design is even good for AT

Barriers

- AT users vs drivers (tension)
- Road rage and egos
- Newcomers learning about AT culture
- Where to go and how to use infrastructure
- Even having access to these things (a bike, helmet, lock, etc.)
- Winter forces pedestrians into (or further into) the roads
- Plow sidewalks before streets (and ensure curb cuts cleared, etc.)
- Enforcement of maintenance and snow removal – and parking restrictions
- Poorly maintained infrastructure (bumps/cracks in sidewalks)
- Lack of parking enforcement
- Gravel shoulders/paths are challenging for things on wheels (e.g. strollers, mobility devices)
- Motorized scooter barriers
- Parking still often means needed access to AT (walking to destination)
- Not knowing what the rules are on a bike (hand signals, turns, etc.)

Opportunities

- Education will increase users. Trying different modes.
- RRFBs at every crossing
- More lighting, especially on roundabouts (at pedestrian scale)
- Trip-end facilities (bike racks, bike storage, showers, etc.)
- 30km/h speed limits on secondary streets
- Adding cycling infrastructure in land use by-laws
- Crowd-sourced mapping tool to track injuries or challenge areas
- Defining routes to remove barriers and ease use
- Group rides and programs (bike school bus, walking school bus, social groups)
- Public awareness of what's available and the benefits
- Signage and wayfinding and public information on where to go
- Signage including distances or information about level of effort
- 1-metre and safety campaign (drive slow when sun is low)
- Bring this engagement to language classes or existing group/service providers (meet people where they are at)
- Bike lanes and multi-use paths (on routes that take you where you need to go (amenities and destinations))
- High visibility on paths/routes that are good access points (e.g. NSCC path)
- Cost of heated sidewalks vs healthcare and social supports of injuries work stoppage

- Snow clearing with a purpose
- Gender-based snow clearing (Stockholm)
- Tracking slip and fall data
- Dalhousie Bike Centre model (add back to Ag Campus and to NSCC)
- Ensuring infrastructure transitions between municipalities and connects
- More frequent crosswalks and RRFBs
    - Schools, areas with low visibility, near stores)
- Slower speeds near crossing areas to ensure stopping
- Wayfinding is advertising for walking!
- Routes that take you the whole way to your destination
- Resources in multiple languages (most common: Farsi, Hindi, Punjabi, Tagalog)

Priorities

- Strong commitment from Municipality
- Infrastructure (wide shoulders, white lines, lighting)
- Community groups encouraging AT
- People want to cycle, we just need more education
- High-visibility bike parking
- Step-free rolling access
- Seems most important that the AT plan serves the portion of the population who don't have cars (students, disabled)
- Universal design – accessibility and inclusion
- Predictable places to rest and find washrooms
- Safety and education
- Community collaboration and skills-based learning – what can we all contribute to succeed?
- Crossings – more crossings within a distance so that no one jaywalks

November 20th

Attendance:

Interest Holders
Autism Nova Scotia
ISANS
YMCA North Shore Local Immigration Partnership
Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia
United Way Maritimes
Women's Centre

Meaning/Purpose of AT

- Affordability and equity in the community
- Saving money by not needing other means of transport. Having options
- Education of why this is important/helpful for everyone.
- Mutual understanding of how to use AT and transportation systems
- People feel welcome to regularly use AT amenities
- Being able to access cultural and social spaces (tourism too)
- More people = more safety
- Feeling included in the community and safe
- Not having to require a vehicle for day-to-day
- Having access to service hubs (e.g. Truro)
- Allowing rural folks to have same access to amenities and services as town residents
- Consistent and understandable and universally accessible.
- Signage and wayfinding (words and images)
- Increase use = inspiring use
- Modeling AT behaviour with use of services
- Having access to the devices you need (from bikes to mobility devices)
    - Being able to maintain and fix them (+ education and awareness)

Barriers

- Consistency of rules and following of rules
- Unsafe for women to walk at night in Town
- Not an accessible community (old buildings and infrastructure)
- Too cold to access amenities if using AT
- Sidewalks are in poor condition or not maintained so people use the streets
- Rec amenities are too difficult to access (RECC is outside of Town)
- The County is very large – hard to even travel to access available services

Opportunities

- Supporting service providers in knowing what is possible and all working together
- Reducing stigma of integration of AT with needing a service or being low income or at risk
- Grants for not-for-profits – sharing messaging to increase uptake and become champions (not just relying on Muni)
- Partnerships! Collaboration!
- Social integration into bike/AT use (e.g. Fat Boys Biking, women's bike group, walking groups)
- Community support exists!
- Breaking down barriers for everyday use and increasing level of comfort
- Allow not-for-profits to help with education and roll out, why it's needed
- Everyone participating in messaging to build trust and buy-in
- Bringing things to people instead of making them come to you
- Consistency in service provision (not just pilot projects)
- Added advantages of AT (e.g. shortcuts/easier routes for AT users)
- Storytelling to humanize (lived experience in messaging – not just statistics)
- What is the missed opportunity cost? Vs upfront cost
- Using road renewal/reconstruction as opportunity to add AT infrastructure
- Creating goals to aspire to and built to when infrastructure needs to change
- Integrating community service providers with the implementation of the AT strategy
- Tricycles for seniors – would need a wider path (3m)
- Transit services integrated into AT offerings (e.g. bikes available at major bus stops)
    - First and last mile
    - Mobility hubs
- Central place for information about what is out there (Hub!)
- Pictou County has free e-scooter rentals?
- Traffic calming to narrow roadways and reduce speeds (and add community – public art, planters, etc)
- Design for highest needs first and then trickle down (universal design)
- Pilot projects – e.g. scooters to food banks
- Government funded personal grants for rental options for AT devices
- Education of how to use and about the new infrastructure (what is allowed)
- Colchester Loop? (bus) that goes around County

Priorities

- Collaboration with businesses, not-for-profits, all levels of government for buy in
- Community voices and collaboration

- Capturing the narrative and storytelling
- Building relationships and collaboration
- How do we do this while also being environmentally friendly?
- The comfort/use cycle

-
- Storytelling
- Innovative ideas of building infrastructure
- More colour/art/murals – beauty integrated into planning/infrastructure
- Importance of buy-in from partners
- What active transportation really is
- Different types of transportation
- Incorporating the social connection of active transportation into the education on how to use the options
- Bike racks on buses and taxis to incorporate active and other forms of transportation
- Creating safe and accessible communities where we can all thrive
- Accessibility for all!

November 25th (Virtual)

Attendance:

Interest Holders
Lemonaid Stand Society
Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee
Carbon Free Colchester
Truro Housing Outreach Society

Meaning/Purpose of AT

- Getting from A to B (accessing amenities with a purpose)
- Social, to meet with people, to view your community safely
- Different experiences for different mobility types and uses
- Connectivity within a community without the requirement of a vehicle
- Every person has an equal and equitable experience
- Exercise
- The experiences you gain (every street, every space/environment feels unique)
- Independence (for all ages and abilities)
- Safety through the existence of sidewalks/trails.
- Collaborating with other systems (such as transit, car share, etc.) to create multi-mobility network
- Every transit trip starts/ends with AT
- Accessing jobs, food, etc.
- Reduces carbon footprint.
- Enhances community and community participation through using AT (talking to neighbours, seeing what is going on, etc.)
- Enhanced safety through more people on the street

Barriers

- crosswalks at night are so dark (need lights)
- Do not currently see the disability community using AT
- No sidewalks, dangerous to access community
- New developments have accessible units but aren't in accessible areas (lack of AT, topography)
- Cost
- Lack of care in the current services and options provided (and accountability)
- Maintenance of AT infrastructure (particularly for mobility devices) - snow, cracks, debris
- Lack of pedestrian scaled amenities (benches, lighting, washrooms)

- Lack of bike racks in community
- It's a long way between places in the County, with very few streets hosting sidewalks, etc.
- Municipality and Town (Truro) are operating separately and have disconnects
- Can't afford a vehicle or cabs - therefore AT sometimes the only option.
- No place to get to via AT options that currently exist
- Even fewer options for people with disabilities (and high demand)
- Not in control of your timing / means of travel / expenses
- Public education - people aren't aware enough of the existing barriers and challenges
- Cobequid Trail is a great resource, but dark/ unusable at night
- Cyclists on sidewalks
- Consultation with those who need it most is not always done.
- Harder to retrofit than it is to do proper planning in the first place
- Topography of community is challenging (hills/ site lines/ distances)
- Once you get to a location, how do you then get around?
- Biggest struggle is leaving the house and knowing what to expect
- Trail in Stewiacke Park is inaccessible (poorly maintained/more naturalized)
- Increased cyclist/pedestrian accidents and at crosswalks

Opportunities

- Ensuring the continuity of the network
- Ensuring accessibility of community included in accessibility of a development.
- Align with neighbouring Plans (Truro, Millbrook, etc.)
- Harnessing the collective effort of not-for-profits and community groups
    - Building a collective voice for change
- Sharing stories instead of just statistics
    - Building compassion
    - Education to see the whole picture
- Rental options! Bikes
- Dedicated space for cyclists, makes pedestrians spaces feel safer, and all get more used
- Ensure the plan gets done given restraints of cost/time - prioritizing this work (not letting it get lost) Emphasizing the IMPACT
- Prioritization will be very important for this work.
- Improving the mental health of residents through community, physical activity, connection.
- Doing it right the first time.
- Increasing amount of bike racks/storage options
- AT infrastructure is for all, not just the current "few"

- Increasing amenities will increase comfort and increase use
    - Increases diversity of use (mobility devices)
- Finding funding opportunities to support AT-related needs (charging stations, bike fixing stations, etc.)
- Holding folks accountable to what is stated/ proposed (e.g. the "tagline" of accessibility which isn't always true)
- Bike lanes!
- Lights at all pedestrian crosswalks/ increasing crossing safety
- Giving people options instead of forcing into a single choice (e.g. Montreal transit, rentals, street amenities, low costs)
- Often things considered accessibility features benefit everyone (lighting, benches, charging stations, etc.)

Priorities

- This is a big challenge and will be a collective effort
- Community and Safety. Doing it right the first time.
- The overlap of communities and how they can benefit each other
- Inclusion of more people in these conversations
- Awareness campaign to education on AT challenges and opportunities
- Awareness of council proceedings is important. Engage with your elected officials!
- Being intentional with connectivity - ensuring the accessible routes are always linked
- Not getting lost in perfection.
- How important this work is and how many people it impacts significantly (and how it can affect quality of life and participation in community)
- How I can implement AT personally and change my own perspectives
- Sharing awareness of what and where accessibility features are

Active Transportation Network + Community Destination Maps

Appendix B

Active Transportation Strategy: Active Transportation Network and Community Destinations

Bible Hill / Valley
Salmon River / Brookside

- Municipal Boundary
- Millbrook First Nation
- Village Boundary
- Growth Centre
- Commercial Property
- Institutional Property
- Park

Community Destinations

- Hospital
- Care Home
- Rath Eastlink Community Centre (RECC)
- Dalhousie Agricultural Campus
- School
- Future AT Bridge at Fundy Discovery Site

Pedestrian Network

- Pedestrian Network
- Multi-Use Pathway
- Trail

Blue Route

- Open Road Route
- Open Trail Route
- Planned Road Route

1,000 Meters

NORTH RIVER
UPPER BROOKSIDE
EAST MOUNTAIN
BROOKSIDE
BIBLE HILL
VALLEY
TRURO
LOWER TRURO
TRURO HEIGHTS
SALMON RIVER
MURRAY SIDING
HARMONY
NSLOW
MILLBROOK FIRST NATION

PENNY MOUNTAIN ROAD
UPPER BROOKSIDE ROAD
EAST MOUNTAIN ROAD
MOUNTAIN LEE ROAD
BROOKSIDE ROAD
FARNHAM MILL ROAD
BROOKSIDE BRANCH
FARNHAM ROAD
FOREST HILL DRIVE
COLLEGE ROAD
SAXWOOD DRIVE
OLD SOUTH HOUSE BRANCH
LEXINGTON DRIVE
SALMON RIVER ROAD
VALLEY ROAD
OLD UNION ROAD
OLD GREENFIELD ROAD
GREENFIELD ROAD
EAST PRINCE STREET
PRINCE STREET
QUEEN STREET
BRUNSWICK STREET
ARTHUR STREET
KING STREET
PLEASANT STREET
YOUNG STREET
WOOD STREET
GLENWOOD DRIVE
INDUSTRIAL AVENUE
MACCLURES MILLS ROAD
LOWER TRURO ROAD
TRURO HEIGHTS ROAD
WADE ROAD
ABENAKI ROAD
HARMONY ROAD
BLANCHARD DRIVE
EVERGREEN DRIVE
SPRUCE DRIVE
SPRINGWATERS PLACE
TEVIOT PLACE
MARSHLAND DRIVE
ROBIE STREET
PARK STREET
LOCKE STREET
WILLOW STREET
MAIN STREET
DOMINION STREET
MEADOWLAND AVENUE
MACDONALD DRIVE
NITA DRIVE
LAYBOLT ROAD
WEST TOWN RIVER ROAD
GRAY ROAD
MCCURDY BROOK
NORTH RIVER
MCCLURES BROOK
FARNHAM BROOK
HALF MOON BROOK
CHRISTIE BROOK
MURRAY BROOK
CAMPBELL BROOK
LEPPER BROOK
CLYDE BROOK
WILLIAMS BROOK

311
104
4
236

Active Transportation Strategy: Active Transportation Network and Community Destinations

Bible Hill

- Municipal Boundary
- Millbrook First Nation
- Village Boundary
- Growth Centre
- Commercial Property
- Institutional Property
- Park

Community Destinations

- Hospital
- Care Home
- Rath Eastlink Community Centre (RECC)
- Dalhousie Agricultural Campus
- School
- Future AT Bridge at Fundy Discovery Site

Pedestrian Network

- Pedestrian Network
- Multi-Use Pathway
- Trail

Blue Route

- Open Road Route
- Open Trail Route
- Planned Road Route

1,000 Meters

ONSLOW MOUNTAIN
EAST MOUNTAIN
NORTH RIVER
UPPER BROOKSIDE
BROOKSIDE
BIBLE HILL
VALLEY
TRURO
TRURO HEIGHTS
SALMON RIVER
MURRAY SIDING
COLCHESTER
MOUNTAIN LEE ROAD
BROOKSIDE ROAD
GRANVILLE DRIVE
FARNHAM MILL ROAD
BROOKSIDE BRANCH
NITA DRIVE
FARNHAM ROAD
VINEY ROAD
MACDONALD DRIVE
FOREST HILL DRIVE
MEADOWLAND AVENUE
TEVIOT PLACE
SPRUCEWATERS PLACE
COLLEGE ROAD
SAYWOOD DRIVE
GUEST DRIVE
OLD COURT-HOUSE BRANCH
LEXINGTON DRIVE
SALMON RIVER ROAD
VALLEYDALE ROAD
GREENFIELD ROAD
EAST PRINCE STREET
PRINCE STREET
QUEEN STREET
BRUNSWICK STREET
VICTORIA STREET
DOMINION STREET
ARTHUR STREET
KING STREET
PLEASANT STREET
YOUNG STREET
PARK ROAD
BUCKNELL STREET
INKMAN STREET
WOOD STREET
WILLOW STREET
KAULBACK STREET
INDUSTRIAL AVENUE
GLENWOOD DRIVE
LOWER TRURO ROAD
TRURO HEIGHTS ROAD
WADE ROAD
MCCLURES MILLS ROAD
SPRUCE DRIVE
EVERGREEN DRIVE
HARMONY ROAD
BLANEDALE DRIVE
ROBERTSON ROAD
PARK STREET
LORNE STREET
D DRIVE
STREET
311
104
4
102
North River
McClures Brook
Jepper Brook
Half Moon Brook
Christie Brook
Campbell Brook
Murray Brook

BIBLE HILL
Colchester
be centred here.

Active Transportation Strategy: Active Transportation Network and Community Destinations

Lower Truro
Truro Heights / Onslow

- Municipal Boundary
- Millbrook First Nation
- Village Boundary
- Growth Centre
- Commercial Property
- Institutional Property
- Park

Community Destinations

- Hospital
- Care Home
- Rath Eastlink Community Centre (RECC)
- Dalhousie Agricultural Campus
- School
- Future AT Bridge at Fundy Discovery Site

Pedestrian Network

- Pedestrian Network
- Multi-Use Pathway
- Trail

Blue Route

- Open Road Route
- Open Trail Route
- Planned Road Route

1,000
Meters

CROWES MILLS
MEETING HOUSE ROAD
OLD TAMARGOUS
ONSLOW ROAD
UPPER ONSLOW
NORTH RIVER
BROOKSIDE
MILL ROAD
HWY ROAD
Crowes Brook
McGrady Brook
North River
Farnham Brook
FARNHAM ROAD
311
104
NEWHALL ROAD
Higgins Brook
BOARD LANDING ROAD
CENTRAL ONSLOW
Salmon River
TRURO
BIBLE HILL
2
102
4
Baird Brook
Carter Creek
COLCHESTER
Salmon River
MARSHLAND DRIVE
PARK STREET
ROBIE STREET
LORNE STREET
COLCHESTER
TRURO
QUEEN STREET
PRINCE STREET
VICTORIA STREET
DOMINION STREET
BRUNSWICK STREET
ARTHUR STREET
McClures Brook
LOWER TRURO ROAD
WILLOW STREET
PARK ROAD
BURNEY STREET
IRWIN STREET
WOOD STREET
236
OLD ROAD #3
Soley Brook
KENT ROAD
LOWER TRURO
WADE ROAD
TRURO
KOJIBACK STREET
KNOB STREET
PLEASANT STREET
MCCLURES MILLS ROAD
GLENWOOD DRIVE
YOUNG STREET
Lepper Brook
TRURO HEIGHTS
TRURO HEIGHTS ROAD
INDUSTRIAL AVENUE
POLYMER ROAD
UPHAM DRIVE
CUMMIS DRIVE
INNES STREET
ABENAKI ROAD
MILLBROOK FIRST NATION
OLD BARNS
LOCH HAVEN LANE
BIBLE HILL
Colchester
be centred here.

Active Transportation Strategy: Active Transportation Network and Community Destinations **Brookfield / Hilden**

- Municipal Boundary
- Growth Centre
- Commercial Property
- Institutional Property
- Park

Community Destinations

- Care Home
- School

Pedestrian Network

- Pedestrian Network
- Trail

Blue Route

- Planned Road Route

TRURO
COLCHESTER
TRURO ROAD
WILLIAM RUSSELL ROAD
IRWIN LAKE ROAD
HILDEN
102
EDWARDS ROAD
2
McClures Brook
CAMDEN
MARNEY ROAD
KENNEDY ROAD
PLEASANT BROOK ROAD
Mill Brook
BURRIS ROAD
PLEASANT VALLEY
JOHN BELL ROAD
CARTER ROAD
BROOKFIELD
UPPER BROOKFIELD ROAD
Brandy Brook
Little River
Alder Brook
Fields Brook
Lake Brook
289
SHORTTS LAKE
1,000
Meters

BIBLE HILL
Colchester
be centred here.

Active Transportation Strategy: Active Transportation Network and Community Destinations

Debert

Municipal Boundary
Commercial Property
Institutional Property
Park

Community Destinations

Care Home
School

Pedestrian Network

Pedestrian Network
Trail

Blue Route

Open Road Route

PLAINS ROAD
UPPER DEBERT
EAST FOLLY MT
DAKOTA ROAD
RED ROAD
HUDSON STREET
VENTURA DRIVE
LANCASTER CRESCENT
BELMONT
DEBERT
CAMPBELL ROAD
MIDDLE ROAD
GEORGINA DRIVE
SOLEY FACTORY ROAD
MASSTOWN ROAD
Pine Brook
Debert River
Lightbody Brook
Staples Brook
Gallowing Brook
Wilson Brook
FRED GROVE ROAD
CANSO DRIVE
MACLEAN ROAD
Chiganois River
BELMONT ROAD
COLCHESTER
CROWES MILLS
LOWER DEBERT
MASSTOWN
LOWER ONSLOW
FULLER CROSS ROAD
DEBERT RIVER ROAD
104
4
2

,000
Meters

BIBLE HILL
Colchester
be centred here.

Active Transportation Glossary

Appendix C

All Ages and Abilities (AAA) – Planning concept where everyone is safe, comfortable, and included in new active transportation routes and supporting amenities.[15]

Curb extension – Where the curb is expanded into a street to create more space for pedestrians, support shorter crossing distances, slow vehicle traffic, or introduce new amenities like bus stops or street trees, among other uses.

End-of-trip facilities – Amenities that support active transportation use by ensuring people walking, rolling, and cycling are safe and comfortable at their end destination. This includes bicycle parking, showers and washrooms, clothing lockers, and/or bike maintenance spaces, along with other facilities.

Leading pedestrian interval (LPI) – Pedestrian signals at an intersection that give pedestrians the opportunity to cross before vehicles are allowed to proceed. LPI support pedestrian safety by increasing the visibility of crossing pedestrians at intersections.

Pedestrian safety island – Spaces in the centre of a street to allow pedestrians to safely stop as they cross, if needed. Pedestrian safety islands are particularly common on streets with high vehicle speeds and volumes and four or more vehicle lanes.

Multi-use pathways – a pathway that allows walking, rolling, and cycling within the same space, either beside a street or off-road.

Pedestrian-activated signal – Signals at pedestrian crossings that are controlled by a push button, either to change traffic lights or activate flashing beacons.

Streetscape – A streetscape is the mix of buildings, public spaces, paving, lighting, trees, furniture, and transportation facilities that form the aesthetic and identity of a street.[16]

Switchbacks – A feature on a steep path, trail, or street where sharp turns are introduced to make the slope gentler.

Tactical urbanism – Low-cost, temporary, and flexible infrastructure changes to support long-term community goals, often including road safety or activating public spaces.[17]

Traffic calming – Any measure to reduce the speed and/or volume of vehicle traffic on a street or in an area such as a neighbourhood.

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[15] https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/NACTO_Designing-for-All-Ages-Abilities.pdf
[16] https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/98fc-UrbanDesign-StreetscapeManual-TrainingSession3AODA.pdf
[17] https://tacticalurbanismguide.com/about/