Framework for Change

This Framework for Change document was developed to guide Turning the Tide's work in the Digby area. It describes the community context, sets out a long-term vision for the area, and outlines our approach to achieving this vision.

Turning the Tide's Framework for Change is intended to serve several purposes. It will help us identify goals and establish a pathway for achieving those goals; it will help us decide what work we should, and should not, take on; and it will help us explain to others what we do, and how and why we do it.

Development of the Framework for Change was guided by Turning the Tide's Evaluation Working Group, who contributed tirelessly and in good humour through Zoom calls, Jamboards, and emails to articulate a long term vision for the area, as well as appropriate roles for Turning the Tide.
Many thanks for the insight and wisdom shared by Evaluation Working Group members:

- *Dawn Thomas (Seniors Safety)*
- *Jennifer Lamrock (Public Health Services, NSHA)*
- *Jill Balser (Turning the Tide)*
- *Nina Barnaby (Nova Scotia Community College)*
- *Rhonda Fraser (Juniper House)*
- *Suzanne White (Juniper House)*

The material in this document also benefited from comments and perspectives provided by Turning the Tide's Backbone staff; and the final draft of the Framework was reviewed by Inspiring Communities' Director of Research and Evaluation.

Turning the Tide's Framework for Change was developed primarily during the latter half of 2020. Over time, the assumptions, influencing factors, and priorities that are relevant during this period will evolve, and so too should this Framework. It is intended as a document that should be readdressed regularly, and revised as needed.

Where We Are Now

The Digby Area is a broad geographic region extending from the Town of Digby and coastal communities on St. Mary's Bay, Digby Neck and the Islands, to inland villages such as Weymouth and Bear River. The area actually consists of many small micro-communities, each having its own unique history, culture, identity and strengths. People who live in the area appreciate its natural beauty and strong sense of community and history.

The area is also struggling economically; poverty rates are higher than average, employment tends to be seasonal and part time, and residents are worried about future employment prospects. They are also worried about reductions in community services and amenities, and about the area's ability to attract and retain health care professionals. The area's population is decreasing and aging; youth are leaving to find suitable employment or further education, and residents are concerned about the impact of these trends on community vitality.

These are complex, interrelated, and deep-rooted problems that cannot be resolved by any one group or organization, nor by various groups working in isolation. A sustained, collaborative approach is required, with all community sectors working together to resolve the complex social problems that are keeping the area from reaching its full potential.

However, there are various factors that make it difficult for area residents to work collaboratively on any issues.

The many small communities that make up this area have long histories as separate communities. They have evolved independently, each focusing on its own needs and priorities; and they have very little experience working together. In the past, these small communities often competed for scarce resources; this discourages information sharing, and increases the tendency to act independently.

The area has a history of racial discord and discrimination, which tends to emphasize differences among communities. Also, there is a tendency for some long term residents to resent rather than welcome newcomers.

Whether for these or other reasons, the area has developed a reputation for having a negative, defeatist attitude; residents are characterized as unwilling and unlikely to participate in community activities, lacking in community pride, and pessimistic about the future.

Developing A Long Term Vision

These factors impede the ability of residents to plan and undertake the collaborative work needed to address the area's complex social problems. To determine the best way to address this situation, Turning the Tide drew on information from our Community Survey of over 800 area residents, from community consultation sessions hosted in many small communities in the area, and from discussions with community partners and staff. The community partners who serve as Turning the Tide's Evaluation Working Group played a key role in guiding this effort.

With this input and guidance, Turning the Tide proposes a long term vision that focuses on supporting the ability of area residents to work together collaboratively, engaging all community sectors in a coordinated effort to improve life for people who live and work in the Digby area.

Long Term Vision for the area: An engaged, positive, sharing community

Engaged and Connected:

> People who live and work here feel connected to the area; they are actively involved in community activities, and participate collaboratively in shaping the future of the area; they are aware of community activities and events, and feel their participation in community life and events is welcomed and encouraged.

Positive; Celebrating Successes:

> People who live and work here feel pride in their community, and feel good about living and working in the Digby area; they view this as a desirable place to live, an area people want to move to; they know about the area's successes, assets and accomplishments, and want to share this awareness with others; they feel confident and positive about the community's future.

Sharing Resources:

> The area has established a clear pathway to accessing resources to meet the needs of area residents; community organizations and others share information about community resources so people know where to go, and how to access needed resources; community organizations and others collaboratively identify and address both gaps in resources and impediments to accessing needed resources.

Achieving the Vision

Achieving this vision means focusing on activities that encourage and support community engagement, collaborative effort, and information sharing, while acknowledging factors that have in the past made these activities difficult for area residents. To do this, Turning the Tide will work to strengthen connections across communities, support communication to enhance community awareness and information sharing, and support the development of navigation tools and systems to facilitate resource sharing.

Strengthening Connections

A foundation of trusting relationships within and across communities is needed before those communities can engage in productive collaborative work. The development of trusting relationships increases awareness of other perspectives and other means of addressing issues, and reduces inter-community competition.

Communities with a history of acting independently and in competition with one another often have not had the opportunity to develop positive trusting relationships, nor the experience of planning and implementing mutually beneficial activities.

Turning the Tide will work to strengthen community connections by . . .

- providing opportunities for community members to meet and learn more about one another and their communities; identifying and addressing barriers and challenges to connections within and across communities

- providing opportunities for residents and communities to work together on community issues, both within and across communities, providing a better understanding of others' perspectives

- providing opportunities for communities to try new ways of doing things, involving new faces, trying different roles, testing new approaches

- enabling communities to learn from the experience of working together, so that they can recognize and build on positive outcomes and aspects of the experience.

Learning more about situations and perspectives in other communities, having positive experiences working together on common issues, and learning from that experience will encourage development of trusting relationships across communities.

Supporting Communication

Knowing about your community and the area – its events, activities, resources,

assets, accomplishments, successes and plans – encourages community engagement, promotes better understanding across communities, and fosters a positive attitude and sense of empowerment.

The tendency of many area residents to link their information needs to their own smaller communities has been somewhat disrupted by population changes and patterns, and by changes in local, historical means of providing, exchanging and accessing community information.

Turning the Tide will work to enhance community awareness and information sharing by . . .

- helping community members determine their needs for information about community – and cross-community – events and activities; and supporting efforts to identify appropriate and accessible means of addressing those needs

- sharing success stories, within and across communities – drawing attention to accomplishments and positive things that are happening/have happened in the area, and encouraging the sharing of information and stories across communities

- sharing the stories of communities' positive experiences working together and trying new approaches; supporting efforts of other communities to learn from, adopt, and/or modify those approaches for application in their community or area

- supporting community efforts to increase awareness of community resources, and to identify needs for information about community resources and means of accessing those resources.

Supporting efforts to share information within and across communities, and promote awareness of the area's positive accomplishments helps area residents learn more about one another and about the area.

Supporting Navigation

Knowing that your community has the resources to meet the needs of people who live and work there increases attachment to the community and promotes a positive perspective. There are many resources in and available to the Digby area, but people who want to use those resources may not know about them, or may not know how to access them. For example, someone may need help with lawn care, grocery delivery or transportation; others may need a family doctor, financial assistance, a
job, or housing. There are individuals, businesses, groups, organizations, and

government services that can address some or all of these needs.

A history of inter-community competition for scarce resources has deterred some individuals and groups from sharing information about community resources. Additionally, some procedures for accessing resources have changed, leaving residents at a loss as to where to turn to obtain the resources or services they need.

Turning the Tide will support the development of navigation tools and systems to facilitate resource sharing by . . .

- supporting the compilation of information on available community resources, (e.g. provider, access, eligibility etc.)

- supporting and providing opportunities for community organizations to collaborate and to share information on their resources and services, so as to provide a better understanding of the full range of resources available in the area

- working with community residents and organizations to identify gaps in needed resources, identifying means of addressing those gaps, and working with community and government partners to develop and implement measures to close gaps

- working with community residents and organizations to identify individual and systemic factors, including policies and practices, that may restrict access to needed resources; working with community and government partners to develop and implement measures to reduce/eliminate factors that restrict access.

Supporting the sharing of resource information and the development of navigation tools and systems encourages connections across sectors and across communities. It provides an opportunity for community groups and government partners to work together to identify needs, reduce barriers, and develop a community-focused, sustainable means of sharing resources.

Watching for Signs of Progress

As we work to implement these steps, it will be important to watch for signs that tell us we are making progress toward the achievement of our long-term vision. Early signs of change will focus on the factors that make it challenging for community members to work collaboratively on community issues.

As early indicators of progress we will be watching for . . .

- Increased number of community and cross-community events, activities, and projects

- Enhanced community engagement in community-focused events, activities and projects: more -- and different -- people are involved/participate *("not always the same ten people");* more participation in cross-community activities

- Community members are able to discuss, reflect on, and learn from their experience of involvement in cross-community activities and projects; to identify what worked well, what could have been done differently, and to plan for future collaborative efforts

- Community members meet, learn more about other people from across the Digby area; they learn more about other communities and cultures in the area; know more about events and activities in other communities

- Indications of increasing trust among community members engaged in cross-community activities

- Improved means of information sharing about community events and activities, both within and across communities; community members know where to get information about events and activities

- Positive stories about events, successes, and accomplishments in the area are in circulation; process is established to identify, bring to public attention, to distribute, keep in the public spotlight on an ongoing basis

- Community serving organizations, groups, and government partners meet to exchange information on services, resources available in the area, and on eligibility and access requirements; to develop a means of making this information publicly available on an ongoing basis

- Community members, community serving organizations, groups, and government partners identify barriers to accessing current services/ resources, and gaps in needed services and resources,

- Planning for a navigation system for the area; identifying resources and how to access -- so people know where to go when they need information or help, and where to go when they want to give back to the community.

How We Work: Our Values and Principles

Turning the Tide carries out its work in a manner that values the inclusion of all sectors of the community, actively seeking out community members who may not usually participate, and making a point of welcoming and respecting their involvement. We focus on building trusting relationships within and across communities; we recognize this takes time, and we value the opportunity to support community efforts to work together in a positive manner to develop enduring relationships and sustainable community practices.

As part of the Inspiring Communities network, Turning the Tide endeavours to carry out its work in a manner consistent with Inspiring Communities principles. These are as follows:

September 24, 2020

OUR PRINCIPLES

Inspiring
Communities

WE THINK BIG

We focus on the big picture. We look at the world through a complexity lens, so we can take meaningful action on addressing root causes of social problems.

WE TAKE ACTION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

We are aware of power and privilege. We critically reflect on our individual and collective role(s) - and the roles of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability - in contributing to, benefitting from, and perpetuating inequities within systems, so we can understand where change is needed, and take relevant action.

We address inequity. We know that not all communities are impacted the same; we focus our efforts on marginalized and vulnerable communities.

WE LIKE TO LEARN

We learn from each other. We seek out, value, respect, engage and listen to people with multiple perspectives and experiences; we value and draw on different ways of knowing and learning to give us a fulsome understanding of how to address issues and make needed changes.

We are innovative and curious. We try new things and bring wonder and open-mindedness to the work; we innovate, reflect, learn from our efforts, and try again.

We know working for change isn't always easy. We understand that our experiences are part of our unconscious bias. We learn from difficulties and discomfort; we recognize tension within relationships as an opportunity to grow.

WE KNOW WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER

We are stronger together. We work collectively and collaboratively across sectors to amplify everyone's contributions to change. We celebrate accomplishments and we build on existing strengths. We generously share resources, capacity, information, connections and learnings to create a culture of collaboration and abundance.

We take time to get to know each other. We build and nurture authentic, trusting, respectful relationships that support effective change efforts.

WE ARE INTENTIONAL

We mind the pace. It takes the time it takes; we are accountable to the work, not the calendar.

We take care in our work. Our actions and policies show care for ourselves, each other, our communities, and our planet.