

THE STORY

CREATION OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In November 2012 an ad-hoc committee of the St Stephen Area Chamber of Commerce formed. Dale Weeks, Brian Haste, Darren Marshall, Jason Rideout, Jeremy Barham, Gerald Disher & Troy Weeks - all shared a strong interest in community development.

Over the next 9 months the group discussed: why would people move to St. Stephen? what unique assets does the town offer? what inhibits growth of the town? how could we increase economic and community development of the town?

First step group suggested that a marketing strategy be created to attract new residents and businesses. DSS agreed and commissioned a local firm to develop the first phase of a marketing plan.

They reviewed a U.S. study of 45 small towns that successfully confronted serious economic challenges, drawing lessons from towns just like St. Stephen. Conclusion: St. Stephen needs a Community Development Plan.

Next Step - Drew in additional research from: 'Growth Initiative' meetings initiated by Paul Sweeney 'Rural Redefined' brainstorm initiated by Vern Faulkner downtown development research project by Mohammed Bagha BIA study of downtown infrastructure development by Glenn Group

NEXT STEPS

The future success of this town lies in the hands of its stakeholders. St. Stephen needs YOU! Together we share the responsibility for implementing this development plan, and between us we have the skills and dedication necessary to reach our goals and grow this town.

Research was then pulled together to identify the main top-level goals of a St. Stephen Community Development Plan.

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LET'S ALL PLAY OUR PART!

SUCCESS AHEAD! MAPPING OUR FUTURE GROWTH...

- Establish a Center for Arts (Service & Community Groups)
- Establish database of sports & clubs - events (Town)
- Develop marketing plan for Garcelon Civic Centre (Town)
- Develop plan for Arena (Arena Board)
- Assess feasibility of downtown social venue (Private Interests)
- Preserve/share history/heritage (Expanded scope Museum Board)

HEALTH

- Conduct Health Care Needs Assessment (Task Group)
- Plan for hospital future (Task Group)
- Define recruitment strategy for physicians (Town)

ECONOMY

- Develop a plan for Downtown Infrastructure Development (BIA)
- Develop Town Brand - Communicate & get community buy-in (DSS)
- ID people (demographic) & types of business as marketing targets (DSS)
- Develop marketing tools & market our Town:
 - to targeted people (demographic) (DSS)
 - to targeted types of business (DSS)
- Create New Business Package & ID a Single Point of Contact (DSS)
- Evolve Think Local First: plan and implement (SSACC)
- Create business and community service directory (SSACC, Town)
- Improve promotion of properties & businesses for sale (DSS, SSACC, Town)
- Raise profile with INVESTNB & ACOA (with this development plan) (DSS)
- Revise/Retire Business Incentive Plan (DSS, Town)
- Identify new ways to fund development initiatives (DSS)
- Create compelling ways to prevent tourist bypass (SSACC, BIA, DSS)
- Improve business retention/growth support (e.g. succession) (DSS, SSACC)
- Assess feasibility & benefit of hospitality tax (DSS)
- Develop an asset management plan for key municipal assets (Town)

EDUCATION

- Improve visibility of existing social & community programs (Town)
- Improve support for Hi School Entrepreneurship program (SSACC)
- Develop & support SSU Entrepreneurship Center program (SSACC)
- Strengthen High School CO-OP program (Hi School, SSACC)
- Collaborate to support entrepreneurs (DSS, SSACC, CBDC)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COLLABORATION

- Engage community (forums, surveys & communication) (Town)
- Welcome & Engage all newcomers (CCMA)
- Develop Community Ambassador program (Church/Service Groups)
- Enhance pride in the community (Church/Service Groups)
- Communicate success (people & business) (Town, St. Croix Courier)
- Survey youth to determine their views on community (B+G Club, Town)
- Foster community engagement in events/boards/volunteering (Church/Service)

ENVIRONMENT

- Conduct climate change impact review (SCEP)

GROWTH

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

St. Stephen Community Development Plan