



COASTERS
ASSOCIATION
UNITED FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Social Development Framework for the Development of the Lower North Shore

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*A framework to unlock the resourcefulness
of the Lower North Shore*

Made possible through funding from

***Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
d'expression anglaise***

Québec 

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Introduction

The Lower North Shore has seen a lot of changes of the past ten years while ongoing challenges still persist, despite efforts made by multiple organizations. As a “Lower North Shore community”, we all try to get a grasp on the community and social influences of the current local and global changes, including advances in technology, environmental realities, outmigration, emerging economies and aging population.

It is important to keep in mind how these changes will affect the population of the Lower North Shore and the communities in which they live. Ongoing challenges, such as transportation, population decline, mental health, high unemployment rates, etc., requires the focus of several levels of government, organizations/institutions, community and families. Basically, all of us are working in a changing world where avenues for community and social well-being are far from straightforward. What is clear is that change happens, whether a community is ready for it or not, and the impacts will be both dynamic and complex.

What we need to consider is that...if change is certain, then how can the Lower North Shore embrace the opportunity and be prepared to rise to the challenge? From municipal government to health, to education, being specific in how each sector works together will have a huge effect on our communities and the population. Usually, siloed directives from separate sectors have been effective...to a point, however as the Lower North Shore changes, a different perspective is required from us all to better serve the population and have a positive influence on the communities we love. This framework attempts to outline a potential way to make that happen.

Opportunity for renewal of focus

The Lower North Shore Social Development Framework outlines an approach that focuses on increasing support and capacity for communities on the Lower North Shore. This framework was a response to the continuity of challenges that hinder the progress of the region, including community, social and economic issues. The framework acknowledges and builds on many positive initiatives that are currently being implemented on the Lower North Shore and targets specific community capitals.

Natural Capital	Cultural Capital
Human Capital	Social Capital
Political Capital	Financial Capital
Built Capital	

This is meant to be a jumping off point for communities to gain awareness on a “not so typical” mindset and take inventory of and build upon existing capacity. Community capacity building is all about developing the “capacity” of communities to create, implement and sustain their own solutions to challenges in a way that helps them shape and exercise control over their physical, social, economic and cultural environments. The first step in building capacity is having the awareness of what the challenges and what isn’t working... the intent is that involved citizens are capable of reviewing the current state of their own community, understand how it got where it is today, and ultimately, identify possible ways forward.

Link between social and economic development

Social development is about improving the well-being of every individual in society so they can reach their full potential. This relates to the improvements in health, education, housing, drinking water, etc. and the social status as a whole. Social development is directly related to economic development because if income increases, people can enjoy better health, education, nutritional food and housing.... resulting in improved well-being.

Economic development is achieved by creating employment opportunities to those who are unemployed or by creating better employment opportunities to those who are already employed. Better employment opportunities generate more incomes and when income is good, people can improve their living conditions. Therefore, improving economic development on the Lower North Shore will, theoretically, improve the social development of the Lower North Shore.

Exploring our community capital

Community capitals are resources and characteristics identified with successful and sustainable communities. Every community possesses a variety of resources and characteristics that interact between and with each other.



Natural Capital

It is a community's environment, ocean, forests, wildlife, soil, weather, berries, natural beauty, etc.



Cultural Capital

It gives a community its own distinctive character, consisting of common attitudes, symbols, events, traditions, heritage, etc.



Human Capital

Includes the qualities of an individual that helps them earn a living; strengthen the community, volunteerism, etc.



Social Capital

A network of connections among individuals and organizations in a community, and even between communities.



Political Capital

Created when access to power causes a change in resources and is the ability to influence standards, rules, regulations and their enforcement.



Financial Capital

This is money used for investment, not for consumption. Communities depend on financial capital to invest in the growth of the community and to ensure sustainability for the future.



Built Capital

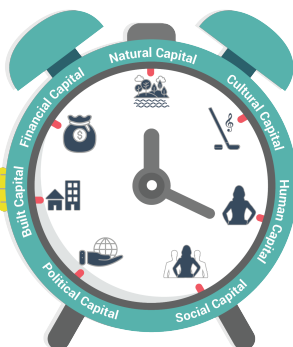
This is the infrastructure that supports the community. They are the basic services and a structure a community expects to have and need to be managed.

The process: An Eco-System Approach

The eco-systemic approach is a way of making decisions with a focus on sustainability of the bigger picture. It recognises that people are part of the eco-system and that our actions both affect the ecosystem and depend on it. For example, what affects individuals will affect their families, what affects the families will affect the community and, ultimately, what affects the communities will affect the Lower North Shore.

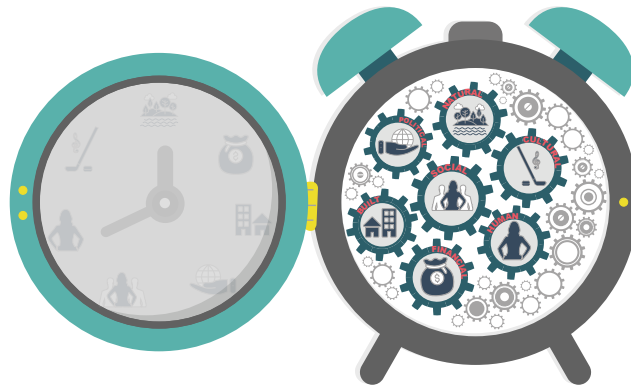
A community capitals process allows us to view the various elements, resources, and relationships within a community and their contribution to the overall functioning of the community from an eco-systemic lens.... how it all works together.

The clock analogy



When you look at a clock you see the smooth progression of time, it's consistent and continuous. But when you open a clock you see a complex system of gears and cogs all in motion for the purpose of moving time forward.

Envision your community the same way, from the outside we see that things are just happening... people are moving and day-to-day activities are going on. But behind the scenes there are organizations, groups, municipal bodies and people working to make community life happen. And much like a clock, if one of the moving parts stops, or is lacking in any way... it impacts the entire function.



The process is obviously not as simple or as clean as the illustration. Experience shows that communities enter the process in a wide variety of ways and in a wide variety of places, and that their progress through the process is unpredictable, but the elements of the process illustrated can be effective and necessary for sustainable community development.

Conclusion

Often absence of improvement in social and economic development results from lack of consistency, alignment, and of capacity at the community level to take advantage of resources and services. The Social Development Framework was designed in response to that and to bring the focus back to community assets... aka the community capitals, and create a way for all stakeholders to envision and understand how the assets are interdependent and interlinked.

The Social Development Framework can only work with involvement from all of the key players in a community and representatives of each sector – public, private and civil. The process requires contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations and educational and spiritual organizations as well as political interests. After all, the Lower North Shore is, in theory, one community when we think about the bigger picture... and shouldn't that picture be clear?