

**NOVA SCOTIA
BUSINESS AND LABOUR ECONOMIC COALITION**

Tactical Recovery Plan



JUNE 2021



It would be hard to overstate the scale of the pandemic's impact on us all. It has been devastating, far-reaching and felt on multiple levels -- individually, locally, nationally, and internationally. The stakes for recovery could not be higher, and the scale of the challenge should not be underestimated. There isn't an easy solution for recovery. It will require effort across sectors by many people. And the opportunity that this significant, global disruption has provided to reinvent ourselves, to make systems change for the benefit of everyone, can not be overlooked.

We need to stimulate business out of the gate. Every day matters. It is equally important we are deliberate about focusing our recovery on creating the system change we need. Necessity is the mother of all invention. We have shown we can do big things quickly where there is a need and a will and working together makes even heavy work lighter. We can't go back.

This plan aims to build on that forward momentum. It isn't the plan to end all plans. It doesn't replace good work already happening. It is a collection of initiatives harvested from people and businesses across the NSBLEC table, across public and private sectors, and across the province. It's meant to stimulate, amplify, support, and inspire action that helps us build back better. Our success will be driven by the extent to which we collaborate to reach our collective goals. The NSBLEC table has shown us that we have a scale advantage. We can make big things happen quickly when we work together.

The purpose of this work is to quickly drive business, revenue, consumer confidence and social license for gathering and welcoming visitors. Just as important, we are seeking to build a thriving, inclusive economy where everyone can participate. We are working to build an economy that is not only sustainable environmentally but regenerative, where businesses and communities are resilient – through stronger connections – digitally and socially to the world and each other. A place of collaboration and a place that values and works to build individual and collective well being. It's a shift from government as rule maker and regulator to government as co-creator and enabler and business as leaders in the work to build the change we need. This is a reimagining of who is involved in leading recovery - by community for community, in every neighbourhood, on every street.

The world has changed. Success looks different. Quality of life matters more than ever. Nova Scotia is well-positioned to be among the most desirable places in the world to live. To thrive economically, we need to attract people. This is our time if we want to rise to it. While what we build matters, that we build it together matters just as much. We have everything we need to create a thriving, sustainable Nova Scotia for everyone. This plan aims to help get us started.

Principles that inform the plan and action:

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Effort across sectors and communities, shift role of government to co-creator

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Create thriving communities where everyone can participate

INSPIRE ACTION

Build momentum, amplify work, and stimulate new ideas

BUILD BACK BETTER

Focus action on reinvention and addressing necessary system change

STIMULUS

SHORT TERM (1-6 MONTHS)
DRIVE BUSINESS,
BUILD CONFIDENCE

TRANSFORMATION

MEDIUM TERM (3+ MONTHS)
SUPPORTIVE POLICIES,
PROGRAMS, PROJECTS

IMPACTS

LONG-TERM/SUSTAINABLE

BUILD BACK BETTER

INCLUSIVE
ECONOMIC
GROWTH

HEALTHY POPULATION

CARBON REDUCTION

POPULATION GROWTH

DIVERSITY, EQUITY,
AND INCLUSION

WELLBEING

SOCIAL CAPITAL/LICENSE

	BIG IDEA	FUNDING	POSSIBLE LEAD	INITIATIVE	MEDIUM TERM
1	Provincial Placemaking	\$1M	Develop Nova Scotia (with BIDs, Chambers, Mun,, other)	Placemaking activations 10+10 initiatives	Open-source capacity building with program supports
2	Active Streets & Parks for People	\$650,000	Nova Scotia Events Recovery Table	Host Patio Lanterns Festival	Host open streets / play streets
3	Celebrate Diverse Cultures	\$500,000	BBI, MNFC, AHS, other	Support and promote existing programs and ideas	Support development of social infrastructure Build new programs with communities
4	Enable Public Access to Unique Places	\$250,000	Park leads (gov), community program, Recreation NS	Support recreation equipment loan programs	Develop programs to promote +access parks and beaches throughout the year
5	Celebrate and Enhance Quality of Life	TBD	DIPG, other	Create best in class concierge service	Support work to address housing affordability
6	Develop Niche Markets Where Nova Scotia Can Win	\$250,000	DMOs, other	Develop accessible tourism program	Support businesses and communities to develop niche products
7	Celebrate Winter (+ Second Winter)	\$850,000	DMOs, DNS	Province-wide Evergreen Festival Enhance central event/experience calendar (novascotia.com)	Develop winter brand for Nova Scotia
8	Support Businesses through Digital Adoption	\$250,000	NSBI, other	Create digital Nova Scotia Marketplace and/or link to and amplify existing one stop shop	Support sectors at all stages of the digitization journey



Big Idea #1: Provincial Placemaking Program

OBJECTIVE: To build momentum on main streets through engaging residents and visitors to come together, participate, socialize, and support business and, because the work is open and engages people in the community to participate in making the place, to build community. The idea is to build placemaking understanding and skills through local implementation teams that develop uniquely local programs and ideas.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: \$1M + in kind support

- **Create placemaking activations in 10+10 sites**
 - Led by Develop NS, host placemaking workshops and webinar series. Use marketing and promotion to drive participation, celebrate progress, outcomes, attract people.
 - Supported by Develop NS centrally, and led and executed locally by BIDs, Chambers, community organizations, execute placemaking projects in 10 communities across Nova Scotia this summer and a second cohort of 10 communities in fall 2021. These projects include lighter, quicker, cheaper place interventions; infrastructure, art, seating and amenities that contribute to the magnetism of a place and its build capacity and magnetism to bring people together.

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Open-source capacity building with program supports**
 - Ongoing placemaking workshops and open source portal for plans, tips, and resources to inspire people across Nova Scotia to lead placemaking projects in their communities.



Big Idea #2: Activate Streets and Parks for People and Events

OBJECTIVE: To drive people to main streets and downtown to re-engage in social life and support business. Part of reimagining our streets is considering how to prioritize people and remove barriers for active uses, over vehicular uses.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: \$650,000

- **Host Patio Lanterns Festival**
 - Create a province-wide outdoor festival that celebrates Nova Scotian music, cultures, and communities and supports the arts and culture sector.
 - Overall program coordinated by Events Recovery Table, Develop NS, Events East, Discover Halifax and other organizations.
 - Several outdoor stages will showcase high quality Nova Scotia talent free to the public. Grants available to fund hundreds of live music events in bars and restaurants across with NS musicians at an average \$1250/event with production/stage/other costs related to hosting to be borne by host business or entity.
 - Neighbouring businesses will also be encouraged to take part by providing specials or meal packages that coincide with live performances in their area. Any existing music festival could leverage the branding and the platform of patio lanterns to amplify/support their event.

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Enable open streets / play streets**
 - Create and host Open Streets Webinar Program fall 2021 and invite Open Streets Activations in communities in spring 2022.
 - Address enabling government action, including: remove/reduce municipal servicing costs for events (e.g., requiring a police officer to direct traffic during street closures); reduce main street speed limits to reimagine streets for all ages and abilities; permit alcohol consumption in controlled public spaces to signal trust and enhance experience.



Big Idea #3: Celebrate Nova Scotia's diverse cultures and history

OBJECTIVE: To celebrate the diverse cultures in Nova Scotia by providing platforms to engage community in sharing stories and our shared history. This work is about co-powering communities to improve access to important places and to amplify diverse voices and programs.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: \$500,000

- **Support and promote existing programs and ideas**
 - Support for the Black cultural trail + itinerary (including Africville & Black Cultural Centre)
 - Support for Everyone Everyday K'jipuktuk project
 - Support for Mi'kmaq craft market on the waterfront
 - Connect and support cultural events that celebrate immigrants into provincial celebration

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Support development of critical social infrastructure**
 - Africville accessibility and marina plan development
 - Wije'winen/Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre new building project
- **Co-Create new programs**
 - Build community ovens program
 - Fund program to support diverse artists to create public art
 - Develop plan to showcase expression of our diverse cultures from moment visitors are en route and woven through public realm (eg. New Zealand)
 - Create cultural storytelling platform/platforms (incl digital) to share stories with the world and invite people to visit.



Big Idea #4: Enable Public Access to Unique Places

OBJECTIVE: To inspire people to explore the province and participate in healthy recreation activities, learn new things, and enhance social life.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: \$250,000

- **Support recreation equipment loan programs**
 - Build on various municipal and library lending programs that provide equipment rentals, group learning opportunities, etc. Equipment rentals could include: walking sticks, shoe spikes, snowshoes, cross country skis, bicycles, tents/camping gear, etc. Make these available for free or very low cost. Host programs to teach people how to use them.
 - Work to ensure these activities are accessible to everyone. Access to beaches and parks is difficult for individuals without a car. Develop a beach bus/park bus program with a circuit through key locations.

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Develop programs to promote parks and beaches throughout the year**
 - Create conditions for people to engage with parks and beaches and participate in wonderful recreation activities year-round across the province. The initiative will focus on improving access (equipment rentals, learn to camp programs, etc), transportation options, and promote use in all seasons (opening the gates and washrooms).
 - Build itineraries to get people started and create a website to promote four season programs and activities. Support parks operators – municipalities, provincial, federal and others to build sustainable winter/ shoulder season programs and amenities.
 - Ensure all washrooms that can be open, are. Ensure all new washrooms built are winter operational. Partner with proximate businesses to make washrooms near parks available for park visitor usage in meantime. Perhaps add temporary washrooms where there is a desert.

Big Ideas #5: Celebrate + Enhance Quality of Life in NS

OBJECTIVE: To grow the population through an emphasis on quality of life and by making it easy to become part of communities in Nova Scotia. An important attractor is our social capital and sense of community, but these will be jeopardized if we prioritize growth above well-being. Equity divides exist now and will only grow wider if we don't ensure that efforts are made to enhance quality of life for *everyone*.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: TBD – in partnership with Dept of Immigration + Population Growth

- **Create best in class concierge service**
 - Create a one stop shop, multi-platform resource for everything you want or need to know about moving to living in Nova Scotia. Ensure service provides historical and cultural context to help people understand the legacy of the people, local values, and points of challenge and pride.
 - Support workfromnovascotia.com as a key online channel and build a social campaign to celebrate living in Nova Scotia. Establish a 1-800 line, in community retail presence.
 - Vision is a place that helps people get access to the services and information they need to thrive in community, as well as attracting people with the notion that we value wellbeing for all and we want those who move here to consider those values and how they may contribute to that vision.

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Support work to address housing affordability**
 - Central to our value proposition in attracting young talent and new residents to Nova Scotia is housing affordability.
 - Support implementation of recommendations and calls to action outlined in Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Commission's [report](#).
 - There is an imperative to link the inclusive economic growth strategy for the province with the community and social sector, not as an initiative but through every economic development initiative.



Big Idea #6: Develop Niche Markets Where Nova Scotia Can Win

OBJECTIVE: To build on what differentiates us from other places and develop markets that capitalize on Nova Scotia's unique experiences and offerings.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: \$250,000

- **Develop Accessible tourism market**
 - Explore support for the launch of the “Accessible Tourist” led by Reachability Nova Scotia: <https://www.theaccessibletourist.com> (password: reachability)
 - Engage Tourism NS, TIANS, Accessibility Directorate, Reachability and others to develop/support accessible tourism program.
 - Align infrastructure improvements with Nova Scotia's accessibility 2030 priority

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Support businesses and communities to develop niche products**
 - Support communities to identify their unique attributes, tell their unique story, and share their histories.



Big Idea #7: Celebrate Winter

OBJECTIVE: To encourage people to explore Nova Scotia year-round, extending the tourism season and contributing to active, healthy, inspired residents.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVES

Proposed funding: \$850,000

- **Host province-wide Evergreen Festival**
 - Led by Discover Halifax, Develop NS, HRM, ACOA, CCH, Jazz East, Tourism NS, and corporate partners.
 - This holiday season will be one of the first “seasons” where we can plan for large scale public events to celebrate the holidays and the return to normal. This will be achieved by scaling 2020’s inaugural Evergreen Festival.
 - Elevate existing activations in communities and online and encourage complementary events to be hosted. Make it affordable for businesses and organizations to drive participation. Make opportunities with shorter/flexible time commitment available. Continue to foster charitable and cultural activations during Evergreen and create collaborations with businesses and property owners.
- **Enhance Tourism Nova Scotia’s event/experience calendar**
 - Make Tourism NS’s event calendar at novascotia.com the go to place for activities year-round. Some improvements to the back end of the site (TNS working with developer) could make it easier to populate and share by outside groups. Link to Tourism NS’s [Wintervention](#).
 - Target youth involvement in more things/target youth market for participation – get off the couch.

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES

- **Develop winter brand for Nova Scotia and embrace winter**
 - Inspired by Iceland’s promotion of [“there’s no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing”](#); or Visit Finland’s hilarious [welcome sign to travellers visiting in November](#); Norway’s [Viking Season](#).



Big Idea #8: Support Businesses through Digital Adoption

OBJECTIVE: To help businesses transition to digital – to support business growth (grow revenue, build brand, access new markets) and business resilience. The urgency to move to digital in COVID, while built through necessity, should be harnessed to ensure as many businesses as possible can be supported even as things begin to open up.

SHORT TERM INITIATIVE

Proposed funding: \$250,000

- **Create digital Nova Scotia Marketplace and/or link to and amplify existing one stop shop**
 - Easy to use, easy to participate digital marketplace that is open to all registered businesses in Nova Scotia - to participate, to sell products and services.
 - Simple to get business listed, enables easy e-commerce, has ongoing customized support available for business, takes care of adwords, SEO, natural advertising, has a built in directory mechanism and is broadly promoted as a Nova Scotia marketplace.
 - Could provide opportunity for co-op students to support (and funded through ICTC 100%).

MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVE

- **Support business at all stages of the digitization journey**
 - Provide close and consistent support through the first step of digital adoption accompanied by very short, entrepreneur focused workshops, and makes it painless, easy to sustain, provides exposure and drives revenue for business, and is a proof point for the merits of digital adoption.