

Beyond Possibilities

2024-2027 Strategic Plan



**RATH EASTLINK
COMMUNITY CENTRE**

DECEMBER 2023

Message from the General Manager and Board Chair

Dear Valued Members, Partners, and Supporters,

We are excited to share with you the Rath Eastlink Community Centre's new three-year strategic plan that will shape our future endeavors and set us on a course for success. This plan is the result of collaborative efforts from our dedicated team, led by community input and guided by our Board of Directors.

Our strategic plan focuses on four key goals that will help us better serve our community and elevate our performance in all areas of our offerings. We believe these goals are essential in maintaining our position as a cornerstone of our community and fostering an environment where everyone can thrive. The goals that will be outlined in the following strategic plan are “Building Strong Communities,” Elevate Event Attraction and Hosting,” “Enable us to Preform our Best” and “Cultivate a Great Place to Work and Volunteer.”

This strategic plan is a testament to our commitment to continuous improvement and our dedication to serving our community. We are excited about the opportunities it presents and are eager to work together with our members, user groups and partners to achieve our vision.

Over the coming months, we will action specific initiatives aligned with these goals, and we invite you to join us in continuing this exciting journey. Your support, feedback and participation are crucial to our success, and we look forward to your involvement.

Thank you for your ongoing support over these last 10 years. Together, we will make the region an even more vibrant and engaging place for our community.

Warm regards,

Matt Moore
General Manager,
Rath Eastlink Community Centre

Melani Lane
Chair of the Board,
Rath Eastlink Community Centre



Vision: Heart of the region where people gather, play and thrive

Mission

Deliver exceptional experiences that build memories and healthy, vibrant communities.

Values

Create healthy communities. We aim to create a sense of belonging for residents, visitors, partners and our team.

Be proud hosts. We welcome all and are proud of our ability to host people and quality experiences.

Celebrate diverse cultures. We embrace the uniqueness of people, community and the province.

Adapt and evolve. We are constantly pursuing improvements and evolving to needs around us.

Act sustainably. We aim to contribute to positive community impacts and its well-being for years to come.

1. Enhance engagement through recreational and wellness programming.
2. Expand sport, agriculture, live entertainment and wellness programs at the Exhibition Grounds.
3. Enhance connections in the community.
4. Make enhancements as a comfort centre to support and align with community emergency preparedness plans of the region.

Goal 1: Build Strong Communities

Goal 2: Elevate Event Attraction and Hosting

1. Establish a sustainable, longer term authentic Nova Scotia Signature Event.
2. Grow and expand quality event hosting opportunities.
3. Enhance the quality of the experience.
4. Bring destination leadership to build capacity, alignment of priorities, and regional impact.



1. Ensure the financial sustainability of RECC operations.
2. Make well-planned strategic investments in equipment, facility and infrastructure at the RECC.
3. Pursue exceptional experience standards for all stakeholders.
4. Strengthen governance approaches to sustain operations.

Goal 3: Enable Us to Perform Our Best

Goal 4: Cultivate a Great Place to Work and Volunteer

1. Build capacity to appropriately and sustainably support existing operations and growth.
2. Build an inclusive, team-oriented environment where all staff is part of one team.
3. Ensure staff have opportunities to grow and develop in their roles.
4. Embrace and recognize the differences and contributions of all staff, volunteers, Board members, partners and other stakeholders.

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In peace and friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, we acknowledge that the Rath Eastlink Community Centre is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

A SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY ASSET

The Rath Eastlink Community Centre (RECC) welcomes visitors from all over and is a valuable economic driver for the local and regional business community, which in turn, supports the well-being of the region. Operating under the name of the RECC, the facility is managed by Central Nova Scotia Civic Centre Society Ltd. (The Society) which is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and led by the General Manager and Senior Management Team.

This dynamic facility is a central hub that brings together community, from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and helps build memorable experiences. The Centre and its activities have proven to be a significant asset in the community. Achieving this level of activity is only possible with strong leadership, dedicated staff and volunteers and valued partnerships locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Some of the most significant partners include the Town of Truro, Municipality of Colchester, tenants, local, provincial and national sport groups, tourism and event stakeholders, event promoters and venues, and more.

The RECC provides options for:

- **Recreational and wellness programming for individuals and families**, including an Aquatic Centre with two pools and a water slide; fitness centre and studio with cardio, weight lifting, and circuit equipment; athletic development centre; day camps; indoor rock climbing wall; and a walking/jogging track free for public use.
- **Entertainment and sport event and community/meeting space**, including NHL sized ice pad for skating, surrounded by 2,500 fixed seats; Community Credit Union Arena, which has seating capacity for over 3,000 for concert and sporting events; and meeting rooms.
- **Hospitality and community services**, including in-house food and beverage service; clean facilities; information sharing about what is happening in the region; and a safe and welcoming comfort centre during situations of need. The Board of Directors and Senior Management Team recognize the importance of the RECC in the community and wish to work with partners to define how best to make the most positive impact on the community in terms of well-being and economic growth.

100,000+

Community members and visitors participating in concerts, events, trade shows, sport games and fitness programs per year

20+

Unique events throughout the year on average

2500+

Daily active members of fitness centre, climbing wall, walking track and aquatic centre per year



A new significant way to help deliver greater value to community is with the new event management agreement for The Society related to the Exhibition Grounds with the Province of Nova Scotia. The Exhibition Grounds has been operating for more than 80 years and is a significant part of the agriculture heritage of the region. The 65-acre of property operates year-round and includes multiple facilities capable of hosting a variety of events, community groups, and long-term tenants. Under this agreement, the Province of Nova Scotia will continue to be responsible for infrastructure maintenance and investment, while similar to the RECC, the Senior Management Team employed by the Society, will foster and grow strong development through major events and recreational programming.

The RECC is an important partner to the region and province, and shares the vision for tourism growth, community development and showcasing the culture and spirit of the community including agriculture.



A SUSTAINABLE DIRECTION: BEYOND POSSIBILITIES

In 2023 the RECC celebrated its 10th year anniversary after a decade of proven leadership and commitment to community. During that time, the RECC has sought to bring programming to support the health and well-being of residents and bring entertainment for the enjoyment of local community and visitors. These efforts contribute to attracting people and generating economic and social spin offs in the community.

We are excited about the possibilities ahead and as such, have committed to preparing a new strategic plan to act as a roadmap for the next three years. The Beyond Possibilities 2024-2027 Strategic Plan (up until the fiscal year end March 2027) recognizes the role that The Society has in delivering exceptional experiences that build memories and healthy, vibrant communities. The direction builds on the important values related to creating community, being proud hosts, celebrating diverse cultures, continuously adapting and evolving to changes, and acting sustainably to support community for generations to come.

Working together, we have identified a clear direction focused on **four important goals**:

Goal 1: Build Strong Communities

Goal 2: Elevate Event Attraction and Hosting

Goal 3: Enable Us to Perform Our Best

Goal 4: Cultivate a Great Place to Work and Volunteer

We recognize that by achieving our goals of building strong communities and elevating event attraction and hosting we will make a greater positive impact – economically and socially – on the central Nova Scotia region and beyond. To be able to do this, we have a strong recognition of the importance of reinvesting in our future as a significant asset in the community. The Society belongs to community and it is essential as community we ensure the continued investment in and sustainability of this valuable asset. We recognize that investment in important infrastructure, as well as having strong management and governance practices, are critical to enabling us to perform our best and deliver exceptional experiences. We continue to be committed to cultivating a great place to work and volunteer. **We are all about people – those who use our facilities and attend our events, our partners and supporters, and our team who help us work towards our vision: heart of the region where people gather, play and thrive.**



OUR COMMITMENT

Vision

**Heart of the region
where people gather, play and thrive**

Mission

Deliver exceptional experiences
that build memories and healthy, vibrant communities.

Values

In all that we do, our values guide our decisions, actions and how we work together and with others.

Create healthy communities. We aim to promote wellness and a sense of belonging for residents, visitors, partners and our team.

Be proud hosts. We welcome all and are proud of our ability to host people and quality experiences.

Celebrate diverse cultures. We embrace the uniqueness of people, community and the province.

Adapt and evolve. We are constantly pursuing improvements and evolving to the needs around us.

Act sustainably. We aim to contribute to positive community impacts and its well-being for years to come.





STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Build Strong Communities

Goal 2: Elevate Event Attraction and Hosting

Goal 3: Enable Us to Perform Our Best

Goal 4: Cultivate a Great Place to Work and Volunteer



GOAL 1:

BUILD STRONG COMMUNITIES



The Outcomes We Want

- Grow and sustain number of members and users
- Provide enhanced offerings to members, users and partners
- Provide safe and welcoming spaces for residents and community

How We will Achieve This

Our strategies and actions are:

1. Enhance engagement through recreational and wellness programming.

- Implement creative ways to accommodate growth and retention (e.g., extension of hours, reconfiguration of existing space, specialty programming).
- Work with community interest groups to provide programming that best meets their needs.
- Establish consistency in programming and scheduling.

2. Expand sport, agriculture, live entertainment and wellness programs at the Exhibition Grounds.

- Work with the Province to establish a multi-year operational plan that includes adequate and incremental staffing and allows for the sustainable development and growth of Event Management.
- Provide advice to the Province about capital investments that will support potential growth plans within the Event Management agreement that are capital assets not owned by the RECC.

3. Enhance connections in the community.

- Work with partners to support programming delivered within the facilities and in the community, while optimizing space, resources and partnerships.
- Work with municipalities to promote programs and events to the community and surrounding areas.
- Gain a strong understanding of community and user needs through engagement and outreach.
- Work with investors to enhance our ability to help address broadened financial barriers to participation within activities held at the RECC to meet the growing demand in the community.

4. Make enhancements as a comfort centre to support and align with community emergency preparedness plans of the region.

- Collaborate with municipalities to ensure preparedness and build accommodating spaces (e.g., invest in an emergency generator, device/technology charging stations).

GOAL 2:

ELEVATE EVENT ATTRACTION AND HOSTING



The Outcomes We Want

- Establish a reoccurring annual Nova Scotia Signature Event
- Offer a variety of local, national and international events involving sport, culture and arts
- Increase major event revenues by 50% and contribute to tourism and regional economic impact

How We will Achieve This

Our strategies and actions are:

1. Establish a sustainable, longer term authentic Nova Scotia Signature Event.

- Build capacity to develop and deliver an event of this scope and scale.
- Measure event performance to determine the impact on the region and province.

2. Grow and expand quality event hosting opportunities.

- Identify a diverse mix of potential types of events to pursue and broaden strategic partnerships with venues, promoters and agents in Atlantic Canada and beyond to attract impactful events.
- Expand hosting of conferences, trade shows and other events working with provincial and federal governments to ensure strategic investments are made to optimize the potential.

3. Enhance the quality of the experience.

- Continuously improve our event hosting experience, including based on participant feedback.
- Facilitate a mission that showcases best practices in Event Tourism and quality experiences.
- Work with community, municipal and business partners to increase readiness and attendance.

4. Bring destination leadership to build capacity, alignment of priorities, and regional impact.

- Showcase destination leadership through the Nova Scotia Stampede as a pilot.
- Partner to enhance the coordination of events within the region.
- Advocate for a portion of the visitor accommodation levy funds generated through the levy to be allocated to a major event investment fund.
- Work with partners to develop community event readiness supports to elevate local hospitality.
- Align priorities with the provincial event strategy and the local culture and agriculture focus.
- Provide operational support and leadership to the development of destination marketing operations.

Source: Photographer, Currie CineMedia

GOAL 3:

ENABLE US TO PERFORM OUR BEST



The Outcomes We Want

- Maintain and sustain essential facilities and infrastructure to effectively manage risks
- Create revenue streams to support the financial sustainability of the RECC
- Manage and sustain expansion and growth

How We will Achieve This

Our strategies and actions are:

1. Ensure the financial sustainability of RECC operations.

- Build a sustainable financial model with a mix of revenue generation.
- Work with the Board to access sustainable operational funding that reflects the increasing costs of operating a facility of this scope and scale without negatively impacting participation levels.

2. Make well-planned strategic investments in equipment, facility and infrastructure at the RECC.

- Establish longer term lifecycle plans that prioritize investments for the RECC facility with a defined municipal approval process that includes the building of reserves.
- Secure a planned project management approach to advance infrastructure priorities on behalf of the RECC as a municipal-owned asset.
- Seek unified decision-making for municipal capital investment to support infrastructure needs.

3. Pursue exceptional experience standards for all stakeholders - members, tenants, audiences, athletes, performers, partners, staff and other stakeholders.

- Establish standard operating procedures within all programming and service areas.
- Establish and communicate professional guidelines.

4. Strengthen governance approaches to sustain operations.

- Ensure strong board governance and reporting.
- Establish and implement risk management strategies.
- Develop, continuously improve and implement effective policies.

GOAL 4:

CULTIVATE A GREAT PLACE TO WORK AND VOLUNTEER



The Outcomes We Want

- Continue to be a large employer in the region
- Ensure sufficient staffing to support current operations and long-term sustainability
- Recognize people for their contribution to priorities that support community well-being

How We will Achieve This

Our strategies and actions are:

1. Build capacity to appropriately and sustainably support existing operations and growth.

- Ensure appropriate levels of staffing to support our strategic priorities and operations.

2. Build an inclusive, team-oriented environment where all staff is part of one team.

- Build a strong culture and one team environment with a unified brand.
- Ensure strong staff engagement and sharing of information including of the events and activities.
- Enhance interdepartmental and cross-team communications and collaboration.

3. Ensure staff have opportunities to grow and develop in their roles.

- Define and communicate roles that include flexibility to adapt and evolve.
- Provide staff opportunities for growth, development, and succession planning.

4. Embrace and recognize the differences and contributions of all staff, volunteers, Board members, partners and other stakeholders.

- Recognize people for their contributions.
- Continue to give back to the community.

IMPLEMENTATION AND THE PATH AHEAD

The Team is committed to the pursuit ahead and to ensuring sustainable operations to be enjoyed and bring benefit for generations to come. Under the governance and with the guidance of the Board, Senior Management will bring strong leadership and engagement to advance the priorities identified within this strategic plan.

It will take the full team – Board, Senior Management, staff, partners and other stakeholders to navigate and climb the path ahead. This Team welcomes the challenge and all the possibilities that comes with it.

