



Community Development Policy Initiative

Community Development Lens

<p>What is the Lens?</p> <p>The community development lens is a tool that raises awareness of important issues as new policies, programs, and business plans are developed.</p> <p>The lens is a key element of the province's community development policy, endorsed by the Government of Nova Scotia in December 2004.</p> <p>The policy guides government's interaction with communities and fosters partnerships. It recognizes that sustainable communities are vital to the future strength and prosperity of the province.</p>	<p>How to use the Lens?</p> <p>The lens strengthens the capacity of government departments and communities to find collaborative solutions to address local challenges. It raises questions that assess the impact new initiatives have on Nova Scotia's communities.</p> <p>The lens seeks to ensure that departments and agencies bring government's community development principles to their work; key principles include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community plays the leadership role in its own development • government actively facilitates and supports community development • community development builds on collaboration between government and communities • community development builds on a balanced approach that integrates economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations 	<p>Key Questions</p> <p>Reflecting on the community development principles, questions to consider when developing a new business plan, policy or program include</p> <p>Does the decision/direction ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance coordination and collaboration? • support community taking a leadership role? • provide information, expertise and resources? • make government and/or communities more accessible? • integrate social, economic, environmental and cultural considerations? • promote opportunities for full participation? • consider the potential impact on communities? • allow adequate time for relationships to develop? • engage the appropriate range of partners? • build on existing capacity?
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Terms for Community Development Principles

Local Leadership

The community plays the leadership role in its own development.

Government Support

Government actively facilitates and supports community development through the provision of information, expertise, guidance, and other resources, as appropriate.

Collaborative Approach

Community development builds on cooperation, coordination and collaboration between government and communities.

Balance

Community development builds on a balanced approach that addresses and integrates economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations.

Respect for Local Values

Government strives to understand and respect community values.

Social Inclusion

All community members, regardless of gender, age, disability, race, culture, language or social and economic status, have the opportunity to become engaged in the community development process and are able to access its social and economic benefits.

Transparency and Accountability

Government involvement in community development encourages transparency, accountability, participation and evidence-based decision-making.

Partnerships and Shared Interests

Community development engages the necessary partners at the community and government levels.

Common Vision

Community members and government define a common vision for the future.

Focus on Community Assets

Community development is built on existing community capacity and assets.

Volunteerism

Community development values, respects, nurtures and encourages volunteerism.