



ACTIVATE YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Activate Your Neighbourhood (AYN) is a joint initiative of the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the University of Waterloo designed to increase physical activity and social connections by encouraging people in neighbourhoods to re-think, re-imagine and re-purpose their neighbourhood spaces. The AYN **Tactical Guide** was produced to support Neighbours in this effort.

In 2023, CPRA received a grant from the Government of Nova Scotia, Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage to develop a pilot project to test the AYN Tactical Guide to understand the guide's useability and fine tune ideas and the tools to better serve communities in Nova Scotia and apply those findings across Canada. We provided tools and resources to five municipalities to share the AYN Tactical Guide and encourage its implementation. The pilot project supported Nova Scotia's **Let's Get Moving strategy** by advancing key pillars of equity, active environments, and collaboration. All AYN resources, including the AYN Tactical Guide and Nova Scotia-specific materials, are freely accessible at ActivateYourNeighbourhood.ca, allowing all MPALs and community organizations in NS to use them to support placemaking and physical activity leaders and neighbours.



KEY LESSONS LEARNED



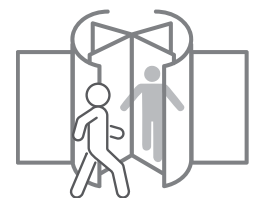
Competing Priorities and Staff Capacity: Recreation staff often juggle multiple roles, and unexpected events (e.g., weather disruptions, lingering post-pandemic

recovery) can significantly affect their ability to take on new initiatives.

The insights gained from this pilot have enhanced our understanding of local leader needs.

Staff Turnover and Continuity Challenges:

Transitions within MPAL positions impacted consistency and follow-through.



Need for Clearer, Simpler Language:

Some rural leaders were uncertain as to how to translate the content into their community contexts.



KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Adaptations for Future Delivery to Increase Engagement

Localized Coaching and Peer Support:



A mentorship or community-of-practice model, where experienced MPALs coach others in applying the AYN Tactical Guide, could

help increase uptake and confidence in implementation.

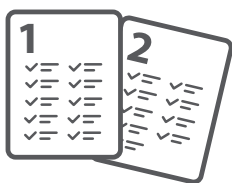
On-the-Ground Animators:



Embedding local “activation leads” or part-time placemaking facilitators within rural communities could

ensure more consistent follow-through.

Simplified, Modular Tools:



Repackaging the AYN Tactical Guide into smaller, step-by-step modules may make the content feel more

accessible and actionable.

Insights for Other Provincial Departments

Infrastructure Isn't Enough –

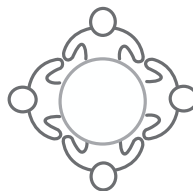
Engagement Needs Investment:



Even with strong resources and funding, uptake may be limited without dedicated staff time and interpersonal connection to

guide implementation. Embedding engagement supports (e.g., training sessions, office hours, roadshows) is key.

Cross-Departmental Collaboration Could Multiply Impact:



Departments beyond recreation (e.g., Health, Municipal Affairs, Environment) could benefit from integrating

AYN concepts into their work on active transportation, community well-being, and climate-resilient public spaces. The AYN Tactical Guide has the flexibility to support multiple mandates.

The Activate Your Neighbourhood initiative laid essential groundwork for future placemaking and physical activity promotion in Nova Scotia.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Activate Your Neighbourhood:

<https://activateyourneighbourhood.ca/>

<https://activateyourneighbourhood.ca/regions/nova-scotia/>



Public Health
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