

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2025, 6:02pm-8:03pm
Sanford Council Chambers, 76 Morison Dr, Windsor



Attendance:

Domenic Padula, Community Member, Co-Chair
Lisa Bland, Community Member
Alma Crnalic, Community Member
Mattea Sexton, Community Member
Jess West, Community Member
Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Health Board Representative
Heather Kidd, West Hants Middle School Liaison
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor
Mark Phillips, WHRM CAO
Katie Rose, WHRM HR Manager
Vanessa Lake, WHRM Employee
Brielle Pyette, WHRM Employee
John Ogilvie, WHRM Employee

Guests:

Leila Bautista, Nova Scotia Health Authority
Penny Kuhn, Nova Scotia Health Authority
Sarah Morris, Nova Scotia Health Authority
Amanda Alguire, Avon Valley Regional Centre for Education

Regrets:

Anne Bishop, Community Member, Co-Chair
Izzy Rayworth, West Hants Pride Liaison
Tim Doyle, RCMP Representative
Donna MacMillan, Avon View High School Liaison
Ashley Connors, Avon View High School Liaison
Rayvonne Carrington, SPEC Advisory Member
Deanna Snair, WHRM Employee
Kathy Johnston-Isenor, WHRM Employee
Chris Burns, WHRM Employee

1) Call to Order

At 6:02pm, Domenic called the meeting to order.

2) Acknowledgements

We acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. This land was neither surrendered nor conquered. We are governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. We are all treaty people, and we all have responsibilities to this land and to each other. African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched this part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years. We honour and offer gratitude to the elders who came before us and to Mother Earth.

3) Attendance, Introduction of New Members and Guests

Quorum was achieved. Regrets had been received from Anne Bishop and Izzy Rayworth. The Committee welcomed Jess West, new voting member. There were four guests present: Leila Bautista, Penny Kuhn and Sarah Morris from Nova Scotia Health, and Amanda Alguire from the Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education. Everyone introduced themselves and shared one goal they have for their time on the Committee.

4) Approval of the Agenda, Including Additions or Deletions

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Jess West that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

5) Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

6) Announcements

Vanessa shared an update on Izzy's behalf. The West Hants Pride Society will be hosting an informal collaboration workshop for Out Together from 6:00-8:00pm on October 20, at the Visitor Information Centre in Windsor. Out Together is a new initiative from the Pride Society that encourages a safe and welcoming space for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals and their allies to come together, connect, and build a stronger and more inclusive community.

Lisa shared that Aces Hockey is off to a great start, a free hockey program with all the gear provided for Black youth to get involved in the game. The program goes from October to December. The first Sunday saw about 30 kids take to the ice.

Domenic shared that POSSE will be hosting a community engagement session this Sunday (October 12) at the Windsor Library, from 4:30-6:00pm, where folks can come meet the team and learn more about what they do and access resources.

Karrie-Ann shared that there will be an Immigration and Community Fair on November 1, from 10:00am to 3:00pm at Acadia University. This is an opportunity for newcomers and business owners to network and learn more about the Valley. The Immigration Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) will be joining this event to promote their anti-hate strategy.

7) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Moved by Mattea Sexton and seconded by Lisa Bland that the minutes of September 8, 2025, be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

8) Special Presentation: HealthADAPT Team

Leila Bautista, Sarah Morris, and Penny Kuhn from the Nova Scotia Health Authority gave a presentation on the HealthADAPT project. John Ogilvie, Climate Action Coordinator for the Municipality, is on the advisory committee for the project and attended as support. A copy of the presentation has been included with the minutes.

In Fall 2024, Central Zone Public Health's Healthy Communities team secured a four-year Health Canada HealthADAPT Grant. This funding will support a multi-year project that will help the health sector prepare for and respond to the health impacts of climate change. The primary purpose of this project is to conduct a Climate Change and Health Vulnerability study. This will improve the understanding of climate-related health risks to the Central Zone's (Halifax area, Eastern Shore and West Hants) population, focusing on equity-deserving groups. Baseline vulnerability indicators of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity will be measured.

Community engagement will be conducted to learn how each community has been affected by climate change. These lived experiences will be integrated into the project output.

All the collected data will be used to develop a spatial vulnerability index, an interactive online mapping tool, and will help inform adaptation planning and action across different sectors. The results of the study, infographics, and community profiles will be created and shared.

Lisa asked what the team will do about research fatigue and other ethics questions. Leila responded that the ethics review is ongoing, and they will do their part to make sure they are not inundating the equity-deserving communities with questions. A letter of invitation has been sent to the Mi'kmaq communities recognizing they have been historically excluded in such studies, though they have not heard back yet. The team is also in contact with Ingrid Waldron and the 2025 ambassadors for the ENRICH program to engage the Black community. How this information all fits together is still in the works.

Domenic asked if there would be an honorarium provided to those who share their stories and Leila confirmed that there will be. Penny explained that the information gathered will be used as baseline data. Climate change has only recently been declared a threat for Nova Scotia Health, and there is no base data to work with. The collected information will allow future projects to be created. Mark said that the municipality has data that may be useful for their project. The health and safety of all residents is a shared responsibility.

Jess asked how environmental determinants are qualified. Penny replied that it is a complicated and nuanced process. The HealthADAPT team acknowledged that there may be gaps or limitations to their data. They are already having conversations with different sectors.

John explained that the data will be especially useful for him when he applies for funding and will be valuable background information for his work.

The Committee thanked the HealthADAPT team for the presentation. The Committee would like to be informed of the results. The DEICC may be able to help at the knowledge translation stage of the process and provide the team with a list of community groups and other contacts. The team can be contacted at czhealthadapt@nshealth.ca with any questions or concerns. At this time, Leila, Sarah, Penny and John left the meeting.

9) Any further thoughts from the September meeting

Due to the nature of the discussions on the Committee, there is often an “us VS. them” feeling between the community members and staff/Council. The Committee acknowledged that everyone is on the same side and working towards the same goals. One way to feel more unified

is for staff and community members to sit with new people and mingle instead of sitting in groups, i.e. all staff on one side, community members on another.

10) Ongoing Business

a) Reports: Strategic Action Sub-committees

Some of the sub-committees met at 5:00pm prior to the main meeting.

Lisa has been working on a draft policy framework for the naming of roads, buildings, etc. (Action #2). She hopes to complete a review and inventory of all existing names and go through a scoring/flagging process to decide if any changes need to be made. She acknowledged the budgetary impact of such a change and that some roads are under the Province's authority rather than the municipality. Mark added that there can be changes to the policy on who gets to name the road in a private development (i.e. developer or municipality).

Heather, Alma, Mattea, and Amanda Alguire, equity consultant for the Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education (AVRCE), discussed what is being done both in and outside of schools about equity for students (Action #6). There is a new Code of Conduct in place for education staff which has a range of options/responses to students who face discrimination or who perform a hateful act. There is a matrix for how a situation is managed and not a blanket suspension.

Domenic and Mattea discussed creating a resource hub on the municipal website under the DEICC page. It could have learning aids, resources for the questioning or curious, and a glossary, and/or links to other resource hubs and community groups.

b) Creation of a unified budget

Domenic asked Committee members to think about what they want to achieve and bring back their ideas to the next meeting. From there, staff can help narrow down what is possible and can be budgeted for.

c) New membership application

This item was deferred to the next meeting for Anne to explain in more detail.

d) Committee Email and Business Card

Katie will discuss the group email with the IT Specialist. Kathy may be able to provide an update on business cards at the next meeting.

e) Environmental Racism Panel

A recommendation report is going to Council this month (October 28).

f) Peace and Good Order By-law

This will come back to Council in November. Mark explained that this by-law was cut and pasted from a neighbouring municipality's by-laws and is being reviewed and rewritten. When it returns to Council, it will be at the Public Hearing stage where the public can still provide their input. Council may refer it back to the DEICC to be reviewed under a diversity lens.

g) Committee's letter re shelter funding and provision of deeply affordable housing

The Committee's letter was included in the Sept. 26 Council agenda package as correspondence and was not discussed by Council. Mayor Zebian did respond directly to the email, saying that the Municipality is willing to offer the space, but is unable to provide financial compensation at this time. The Committee discussed the importance of a warming shelter and the lack of funds and volunteers to properly set up one.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Lisa Bland that the Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee recommends that Council write a letter to the Province urging them to take the responsibility for providing a warming shelter in West Hants for the coming winter. Motion carried unanimously.

h) Communication with WTBA re sharing meeting space at 100 King St

The Windsor Township Business Association (WTBA) meets at 100 King Street on the first Monday of each month, unless that is a holiday, in which case they meet on the second Monday, the same night as the DEICC. Lisa has provided a list of all conflicting Mondays to staff who will work with the WTBA to arrange meeting dates/locations without disrupting each other.

i) Changes to Council Chamber space

Staff have begun the process by hanging flags in the Council Chambers and new pictures on the wall. There is the opportunity for more and staff are open to ideas.

j) Request to Province for a Windsor Plains land title project like that in Preston

This item was deferred to the next meeting for Anne to explain in more detail.

11) New Business

There was no new business at this time.

12) Adjournment/Next Meeting Date

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:03pm. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:00pm on November 10, 2025, and will be held in the Council Chambers at 100 King Street, Windsor. A notice will be sent out if there are any changes.

NS HealthADAPT Project Overview and Discussion

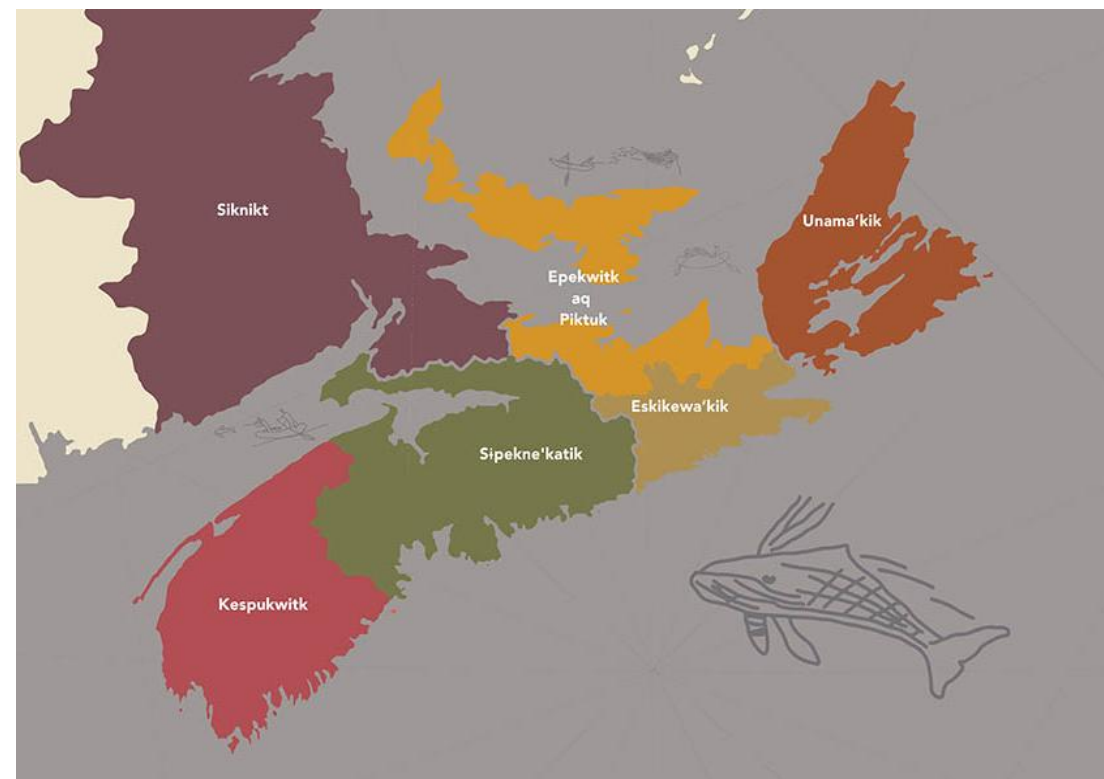
October 2025



Land Acknowledgement

The HealthADAPT team acknowledges that we live and work in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched Mi'kma'ki Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

We recognize that our project explores weather hazards that impact the land and the people of the Sipekne'katik district, specifically the surrounding areas of Kijipuktuk and West Hants region. We recognize our role in advancing anti-racism and anti-oppression and ensuring that equity-deserving groups are included in this work.



NS Vulnerability Assessment Project

Purpose:

- Improve understanding of climate-related health risks to Nova Scotia's Central Zone (CZ) population, focusing on equity-deserving groups
- Expand this work to other health zones in the province

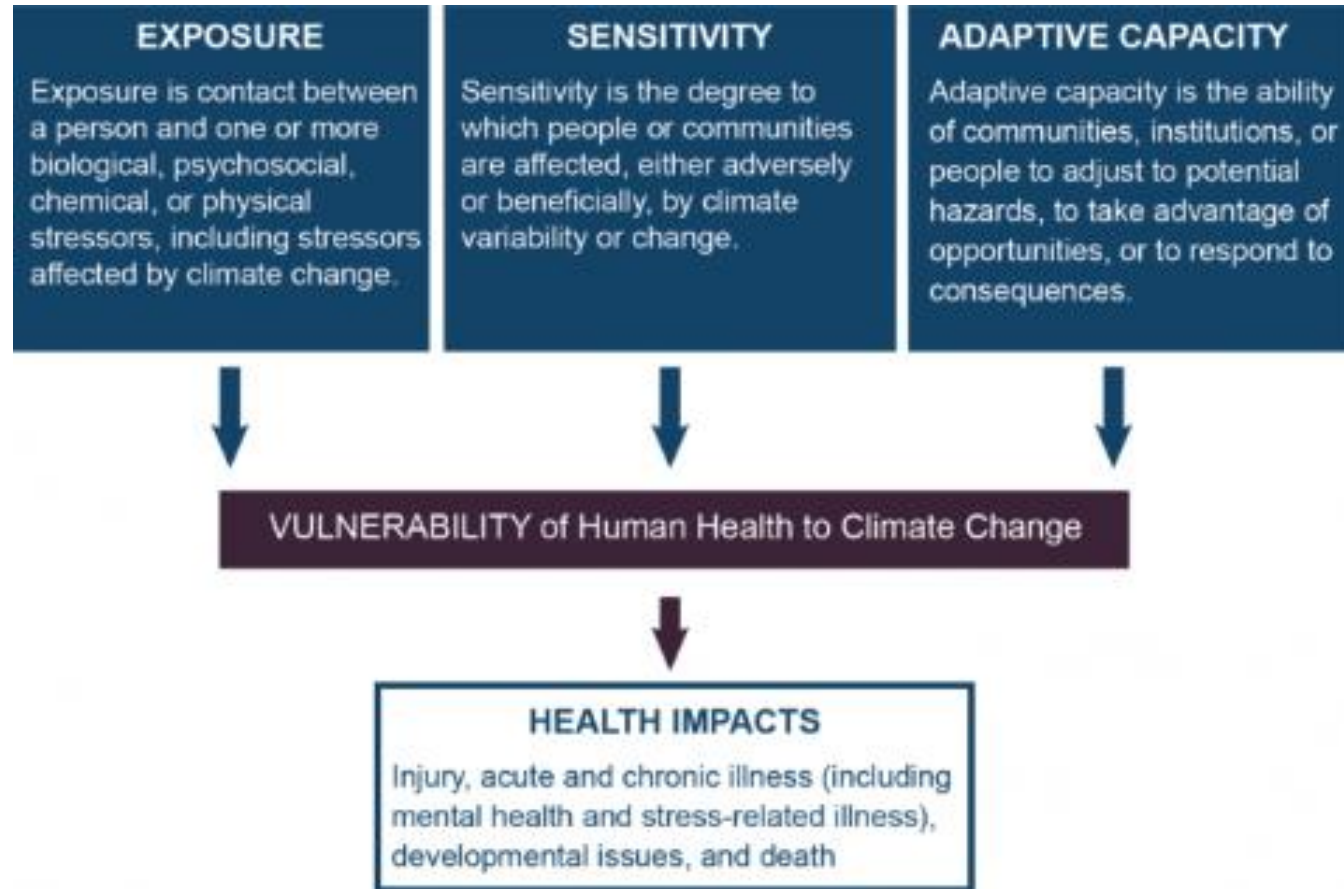
Scope:

- Complete a Vulnerability Assessment (VA) for NS-CZ based on existing climate and health data to understand key local risks.
- Complete a future health risk assessment by integrating climate projection scenarios into the VA data
- Develop a spatial-based Vulnerability Index using VA data
- Identify opportunities and recommendations for adaptation planning, both within health system, other sectors, and communities.

Timeline



Proposed Framework



Baseline Vulnerability Indicators

Exposure

- % population living in floodplain
- % population living in coastal flood zone
- % households on well water
- Fresh water quality index by community
- % population who are outdoor workers (*fishing, agriculture, construction, landscaping*)
- # persons experiencing homelessness

Sensitivity

- % population 65+ or <5 years
- % population living with a disability
- % population who are pregnant
- % population with existing health conditions (*e.g. diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, asthma, COPD*)
- % population with a mental health condition
- % population experiencing food insecurity

Adaptive Capacity

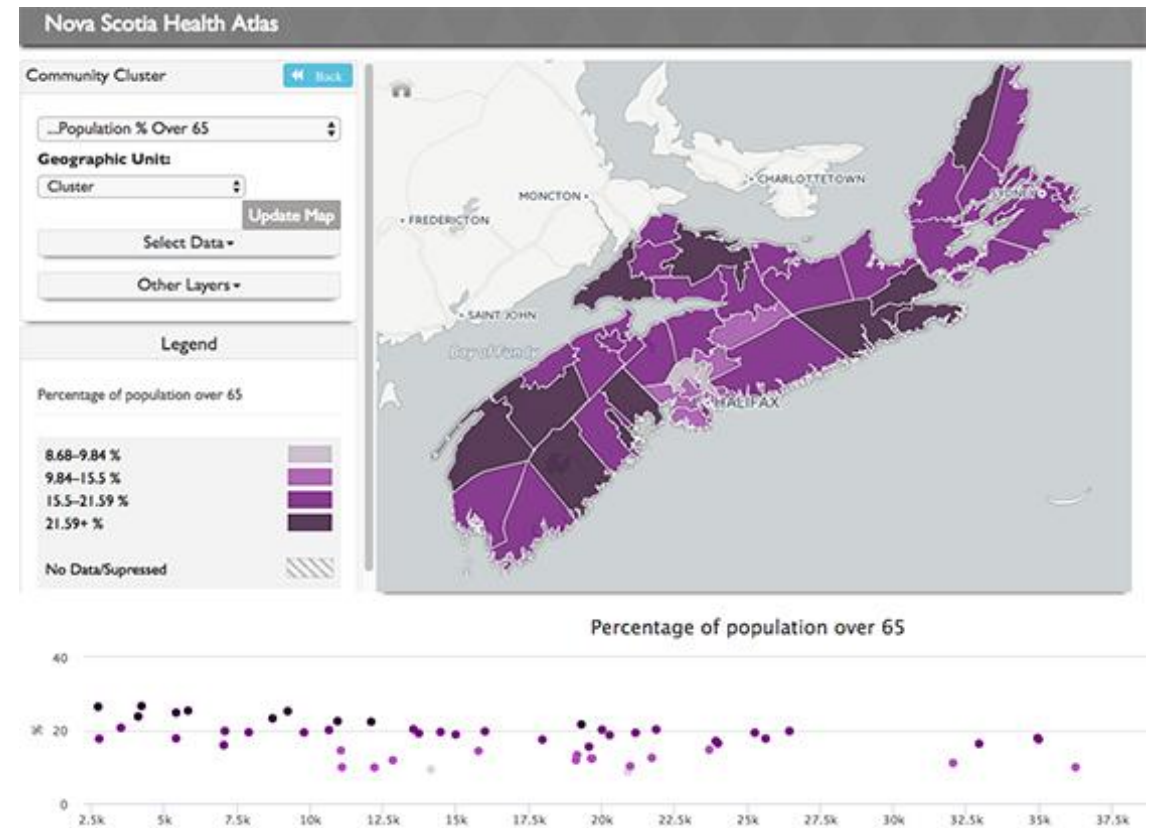
- % tree coverage / vegetative coverage
- Material Deprivation index
- Social Connectivity Index
- % population in need of a Family Care Provider
- Response times by EHS by community
- % population living in communities without a second egress route

Project Outputs & Communications Tools

All the data will be used to develop a **spatial vulnerability index**, identify **key climate and health risks** and the **most vulnerable populations** to inform **adaptation planning** and **action** across the health system and other sectors

Potential outputs include:

- Vulnerability Assessment Results Report
- Infographics on key findings
- Community level profiles
- Interactive mapping tool: Vulnerability Index



Health Equity and Engagement Considerations

- Demonstrating the health impacts on different populations
 - Equity-deserving groups: African Nova Scotia, Indigenous, Children and Youth, Elderly, Accessibility & Disability groups, housing insecure, pre-existing illness, pregnant
 - Learn how communities have been impacted and integrate these lived experiences into project outputs
- Community engagement work
 - Validate the data findings and provide qualitative narratives to support
 - Identifying outputs and communications that would be useful, providing feedback
 - Sharing / communicating results with their communities and connections
 - Developing adaptation recommendations

Engagement Planning Discussion

Thoughts, Insights, Interest, Connections

Guiding prompts

- What do you think about the project?
- Are you aware of similar work exploring climate change and health impacts?
 - Equity-deserving groups: African Nova Scotia, Indigenous, Children and Youth, Elderly, Accessibility & Disability groups, housing insecure, pre-existing illness, pregnant
- What role could DEICC members potentially have in supporting this work – engagement planning insight, connecting us to groups, desire to stay informed on results, etc.?

Committee members are invited to share your thoughts via email or meeting with the HealthADAPT team. Contact information:

czhealthadapt@nshealth.ca

Questions / Discussion