



DRIVING TRANSFORMATION: The Power of Land Trusts in African Nova Scotian Communities

Launch Event Pre-Read Materials

January 23, 2024 ● Upper Hammonds Plains, NS





INTRODUCTION

This Document

This document serves as your launch event pre-read package.

To make the most of our time together, we provide you with this summary document to bring you up to speed on the project, provide an overview of our time together, and introduce some key topics for future discussion.

We hope you can take the time to familiarize yourself with this document before the launch event and begin to reflect on what you envision for the Upper Hammonds Plains Community Land Trust now and into the future.

Acknowledgements

This initiative is led by the Upper Hammonds Plains Community Land Trust (UHPCLT) with support from SHS Consulting and Courage Communications, and with funding and support from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Contents

This pre-read package includes:

- 1 **Introduction to this project including an overview of the process to come.**
- 2 **The goals and agenda for our launch event.**
- 3 **A brief introduction to some of the topics we will be discussing throughout this project.**

OVERVIEW

Our Goals

UHPCLT is hosting a series of workshops to bring the ANS community of Upper Hammonds' Plains together to talk about the future of UHPCT and its role in the community. These workshops are hosted as part of a Solutions Lab in partnership with SHS Consulting, Courage Communications, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The focus of this initiative is to elevate the potential impact of UHPCLT on both the UHP community and the ANS community at large.

Throughout this process we will focus on **two topics that are anticipated to have far-reaching impacts on the operation of UHPCLT and the community.**

This page gives a brief look at how the Solutions Lab process will take place.

The Workshops

Jan 23

Launch Event

- Come together and celebrate the progress UHPCLT has achieved to date!
- Introduction to the Solutions Lab process and future topics for discussion
- Share your initial input and shape our overall process

Feb 17

Lab Session 1

- Hands-on collaborative session exploring proposed topics in greater depth.
- Begin to determine the overall outcomes of this process.

Mar 9

Lab Session 2

- Building off previous sessions to further advance our discussions on topics of interest.
- Begin developing and shaping materials that will help guide UHPCLT in the future.

LAUNCH EVENT

What to Expect

This event will bring together members of the Upper Hammonds Plains community to **share in a meal as we celebrate UHPCLT's work to date and look toward the future.**

This event will introduce you to this project and the plan for future sessions. There will be posters around the room for you to share your initial thoughts or questions, and UHPCLT board members and volunteers will be there to answer questions and share in conversation.

Jan 23 Agenda

6:00 PM	Arrival and Dinner	Eat, relax, chat and settle in before the the session starts.
6:30 PM	Welcoming Remarks + Overview	Welcome and overview of the evening's agenda.
6:40 PM	Introduction to the CLT and Solutions Lab	Introduction to what's happening at UHPCLT, the Solutions Lab process, and the two topic areas we will explore together.
7:00 PM	Stroll and Share Activity	Share your thoughts and questions about the topic areas on the boards around the room or in conversation with UHPCLT.
7:30 PM	Reconvene for Group Discussion	Reconvene for a brief discussion and Q&A.
7:50 PM	Closing Remarks	Wrap up to share contact details, events schedule, takeaway items, and next steps.

The following pages will provide a brief introduction to the future topic areas for exploration.





TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Topic 1

Current and future use and distribution of land

Having conversations around land and ownership can be difficult due to complex histories of land based anti-Black racism and varied mindsets related to land ownership and community. At the same time, UHPCLT recognizes that these conversations are critical in understanding community concerns and desires related to the conveyance of land and are a necessary step to building a community land trust that uniquely reflects the ANS community.

This page provides several considerations and questions as starting points for this discussion, along with potential outcomes of this process.

What is our community's relationship to land?

- Land is both a part of ANS communities' identity and a place where anti-Black racism and systemic discrimination are experienced. UHPCLT wants to support the community to make decisions around land for ourselves.
- UHPCLT also hopes to recognize and honour the connections to land and the acts of stewardship by Mi'kmaq communities.

How will UHPCLT and the community make decisions surrounding land?

- UHPCLT, taking leadership from the community, will need to align on how decisions about land are made.
- UHPCLT understands the systemic harms caused by land appropriation. UHPCLT wants to honour the histories, needs, and reparation of the communities that came before them and avoid replicating settler-colonial behaviours.

How will UHPCLT acquire land?

- UHPCLT is exploring different pathways for acquiring land. One way is by tracing land title back to its original holders – a novel process in Nova Scotia that the CLT hopes to increase.
- UHPCLT may explore opportunities to acquire land through more conventional means, such as purchasing land from governments or individuals.

How will UHPCLT use and distribute land?

- UHPCLT wants to ensure that the land can continue to function as an opportunity for affordable housing and prosperity within the community.
- Community perspectives may vary concerning land. This could include how or whether land should be preserved or whether land should be owned by individuals or the community as a whole.

Potential Outcomes

Potential outcomes from Lab discussions could include:

- Creation of a **Statement of Values or Guiding Principles**
- Contributions toward UHPCLT **policies, procedures and by-laws** surrounding land acquisition, conveyance, or other land-based decisions
- Updates to UHPCLT's **Strategic Plan**

In addition, the learnings from this process may **support other Community Land Trusts (CLTs) and ANS communities** more broadly.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Topic 2

Membership and decision-making

Defining membership to UHPCLT will likely be complex due to the lack of historical records, the intergenerational nature of families, the ongoing displacement from ANS communities, and the complexities surrounding building an identity-based land trust.

This page provides several considerations and questions as starting points for this discussion, along with potential outcomes of this process.

How will UHPCLT define membership?

UHPCLT benefits from ongoing relationships with existing members of the community and other partners or stakeholders. We are also working to understand how our relations with our Mi'kmaq kin might evolve and be established. Developing the CLT will eventually require a more formalized membership system to convey land and support decision-making.

- This raises complex questions about identity and connection to the community. Different criteria might be relevant, such as ancestral ties to the original settlers or current or previous residence in the community.

What will be the expectations surrounding membership?

- This could include expectations of members, such as fees or other ways to contribute, or how active members should be.
- This also includes members' expectations of the organization, including how they may be compensated for contributions or how they will be involved in decision-making.

How will potential members "prove" eligibility?

- While some existing precedents exist, UHPCLT will need to develop a process that reflects their unique needs.

How will decisions be made?

- UHPCLT is operated by a small board of volunteers that recognizes the importance of placing community members at the forefront of decision-making.
- Defining membership will help determine who is involved in what decisions, particularly around the conveyance and use of land.
- For example, while the board may make some decisions, others will be made by the entire membership, while others may require broader engagement with the community.

Potential Outcomes

Potential outcomes from Lab discussions could include:

- The creation of **Membership Guidelines or Rules of Engagement**
- Contributions toward UHPCLT **policies, procedures or by-laws** surrounding membership and decision-making.

In addition, the learnings from this process may **support other CLTs and ANS communities** more broadly.