



## MEDIA RELEASE

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**RE: Amherst council approves 2023-23 capital budget**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – Amherst town council approved a water and general capital budget for the 2023-20224 fiscal year of just over \$2.1 million when it met on Monday, Feb. 27, 2022.

“In this time of inflation, the Amherst town council is pleased the town can continue to maintain and upgrade our infrastructure and equipment, with our capital budgets being based on current taxation rates,” Mayor David Kogon. “Our ability to do so is the direct result of the excellent work done by our CAO Jason MacDonald, our directors and town staff. We thank them for their dedication and commitment to ensuring Amherst is a great place to live, work and play.”

MacDonald also praised the staff for developing a capital budget that “met council’s strategic priorities and was affordable.”

“It was their hard work that resulted in us being able to maintain and upgrade our infrastructure and equipment during the upcoming fiscal year without having to incur any long-term debt,” MacDonald said.

Capital projects for the town’s water utility are budgeted at \$410,000, including \$300,000 for an upgrade to the McCully Street booster station and reservoir. This station ensures an adequate volume of water and pressure are available in the event of a structure fire in the Industrial Park.

Another \$80,000 is budgeted for the design and construction of a system that would enable the water lines from the water wells to the chlorination plant to be cleaned with swabs. Being able to clean these lines will go along way to offset some of the turbidity issue that currently exists.

Another \$30,000 is budgeted to replace fire hydrants and water meters.





Slightly more than \$2.1 million has been budgeted for general capital projects, with \$774,000 slated for paving projects. Streets scheduled for paving included:

- Academy Street, between Wellington and Dickey streets
- Church Street, between Longleah Court and Robert Angus Drive
- Ernclyffe Street, between Copp Avenue and Lawrence Street
- Foundry Street, between Copp Avenue and Sackville Road
- Hickman Street, between West Pleasant and Mission streets
- Lennox Avenue, between Haliburton Street and Westland Estates
- Lusby Street
- Melrose Street, between Agnew and Robie streets
- Park Street, between McCully Street and Maltby Court
- Terrace Street
- Prince Arthur, between Church Street and Maple Avenue
- Pearl Place
- Copp Avenue, between Ernie Mills Avenue and Victoria St. W.
- Clarence Street, between Clifford and Robie streets
- Maple Avenue, between Victoria St. W. and Crescent Avenue
- Crescent Avenue, between Church Street and Maple Avenue
- Gerard Avenue

The town has budgeted \$499,000 for flood mitigation upgrades that will address the type of flooding that was experienced in Feb. 2022. These upgrades are contingent upon receiving funding from the province's Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund grant program.

Another \$145,000 has been budgeted for the installation or upgrading of sidewalks. This includes:

- A new sidewalk for Maltby Court
- Replacing the sidewalk on Cornwall Street, between Anson Avenue and Kent Drive
- Replacing both sidewalks on Prince Arthur Street, between Maple Avenue and Church Street
- Replacing the sidewalk on Mission Street, between Hickman and York Street.





It also includes \$20,000 for a pilot project that will see tactile crosswalk plates installed at the Church and Victoria Street intersection. Tactile plates are textured ground surface indicators that assist people who are visually impaired effectively navigate the environment.

The capital budget for the Amherst Fire Department was set at \$167,000. This includes the purchase of about nine sets of bunker gear, 28 sets of wildland firefighter coveralls, new extraction tools that are replacing those that have reached the end of their useful life, a new breathing air refilling stations as well as repairs to the firehall's main entrance and lighting system.

The capital budget for the Amherst Police Department was set at \$66,500. This includes the purchase of 20 units of body armour, four new carbines and a new audio-voice recording system to replace the existing one that has been in use for more than a decade and has reached the end of its useful life.

For recreational facilities, council has budgeted \$148,000 for the replacement of a half-ton truck and utility trailer that have reached the end of their useful life, new decorative lighting, four-stream waste receptacles for the town's parks, a new trail groomer and fencing for the Willow Trail near Abbey Road and an elevated ice-level viewing surface at the stadium.

Another \$342,000 has been budgeted for the purchase of a new sidewalk plow with blower and a one-ton truck for the Operations Department, the replacement of a computer server in town hall and upgrades to the local library's HVAC system.

Funding for the water and general capital budgets comes from the water operating budget, water depreciation budget, the general operating budget, the Canada Community Building Fund, formerly know as the Gas Tax, and grants from other levels of government.

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