



Town of Amherst
Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advisory Committee
Agenda

Date: **Wednesday, May 13, 2026**
Time: **4:30 pm**
Location: **Council Chambers, Town Hall**

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement	
"I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in Mi'kma'ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people. I would also like to acknowledge that Nova Scotia has another unique people, the people of African descent whose legacy and contributions date back over 400 years predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people."	
1.2 Approval of Agenda	
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3. Next Meeting Date	
4. Adjournment	

TOWN OF AMHERST
Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
Minutes

Date: February 11, 2026
Time: 4:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Councillor Kathy Wells, Chair
Councillor, Hal Davidson, Vice Chair
Ava Tooley, Youth Town Council Representative
Clifford Pinchbeck, Citizen Representative
Jim Prendergast, Citizen Representative
LJ Barquilla, Citizen Representative
Tammy Gero, Citizen Representative
Vanessa Jones, Citizen Representative
Marina Godfrey, Citizen Representative
Victoria Vance, Citizen Representative

Staff Present Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Mallory Klooster, Community Well-Being Manager
Marc Buske, Building Official
Lori O'Connell, Marketing & Communications Officer
Sean Payne, Marketing & Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

Others Present Jason Haughn, Municipal Advisor

1. **Call to Order**
The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

1.1 **Territorial Acknowledgement**
The Chair gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

1.2 **Approval of Agenda**
Moved By Councillor Davidson
Seconded By Vanessa Jones
That the agenda be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried

1.3 **Acceptance of Minutes - November 12, 2025**
The Chair called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the November 12, 2025, meeting of the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee were accepted as included in the agenda package.

2. Presentations

2.1 Provincial Human Rights Remedy Presentation - Lindsay Harnish and Lora Church

Lindsay Harnish and Lora Church gave a presentation via ZOOM on the Nova Scotia Human Rights Remedy, included as part of the agenda package.

Marina Godfrey arrived at 4:35 PM.

Victoria Vance arrived at 4:37 PM.

3. Discussion Items

3.1 Built Environment Reviews - Klooster

Mallory discussed the Built Environment Reviews and explained how the Accessibility Audit Toolkit, which was included in the agenda package, will work. Mallory said that staff plan to start accessibility audits on Town-owned buildings in March.

Vanessa asked why green spaces are not included at this time. Mallory answered that staff want to address the buildings first, and that the Parks Management team did their own assessment and presented it to the Committee of the Whole at the November 17, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting. Mallory said that it will be the next step to include both parks and green spaces in the accessibility audit process.

Vanessa suggested that it would be inciteful to have someone with a disability to accompany staff on the accessibility audits to give their own perspective on their challenges and help point out areas of suggested improvements. Mallory agreed. Marina volunteered to participate in the audits, LJ and Vanessa also volunteered.

Councillor Davidson asked why only public spaces at the Police and Fire Departments will be addressed during the accessibility audit process. Marc answered that due to the nature of the work at these facilities, and much like buildings classified as "Industrial Buildings" the areas that are not open to the public are exempt according to the current building code.

Vanessa asked about the Accessibility Audit Toolkit requirement for hallway width and mobility devices. Marc answered that the toolkit is designed to reflect the current building code.

Staff will provide an update to the Committee at the next meeting on the status of the accessibility audits at that time.

4. Information Items

4.1 A.I.D.E Strategic Plan Progress to Date

Information item included as part of the agenda package. If any committee member has any questions, please contact Mallory.

4.2 CNIB SnoWay Campaign

Information item included as part of the agenda package. If any committee member has any questions, please contact Mallory.

5. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was scheduled for May 13, 2026, at 4:30 PM.

LJ requested that agenda packages be sent out to the committee sooner, Clifford agreed. Staff will attempt to accommodate this going forward.

6. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Councillor Kathy Wells
Chair

MEMORANDUM

To: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
From: Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Date: May 13, 2026
Subject: Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee Terms of Reference states that the Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected annually by the Committee. Staff will be seeking nominations for these positions at the meeting. Should there be more than one nomination for each position, there shall be an election by secret ballot.

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY (AIDE) ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

APPROVAL DATE: March 24, 2025

CAO Signature: _____



1.0 BACKGROUND

Under the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act (NSAA) and the Nova Scotia Dismantling Racism and Hate Act (2022) the Town of Amherst is required to appoint a Committee on matters of Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity to provide input on accessibility and equity matters within the Town of Amherst.

2.0 PURPOSE

The Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advisory Committee (AIDE Advisory Committee) assists Town Council in fulfilling its responsibilities relating to identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities, underserved and underrepresented populations and to address systemic hate, inequity and racism in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. The AIDE Advisory Committee plays a pivotal role in helping the Town of Amherst become a barrier-free community while ensuring obligations under *An Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia* (2017) and the *Nova Scotia Dismantling Racism and Hate Act 2022* are met, and to assist in creating a community of equity, inclusion and wellbeing for all.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 The definitions in the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act / Nova Scotia Dismantling Racism and Hate Act 2022 will supersede any and all definitions in this policy.

3.2 Barrier means anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of person with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

3.3 Council means the Town Council for the Town of Amherst.

3.4 Disability includes a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full participation in society.

3.5 Hate means provocation, hostility or intolerance by means of threats, harassment, abuse, incitement or intimidation motivated by the actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability or sexual orientation of any person.

3.6 Racism means the discrimination or antagonism by, or the prejudice of, an individual, community or institution against a person or people based on the person's or people's membership or perceived membership in a racial or ethnic group, and having the power to carry out that discrimination, antagonism or prejudice through institutional policies and practices that shape cultural beliefs and values of a society.

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY (AIDE) ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

4.0 ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY (AIDE) ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4.1 Role

The AIDE Advisory Committee shall:

4.1.1 Advise Council on the preparation, implementation, and effectiveness of its AIDE Plan. In accordance with the two Acts. The plan must include:

- i. A report on measures the municipality has taken and intends to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- ii. Information on procedures the municipality has in place to assess any proposed policies, programs, practices, and services and/or any proposed enactments or by-laws for their impact on equity and accessibility for people; and
- iii. Any other prescribed information.

4.1.2 Review and update its AIDE plan at least every three years, in accordance with the Acts.

4.1.3 Consult with the community on accessibility and equity in the town of Amherst.

4.1.4 Advise Council on the impact of Town of Amherst policies, programs, and services on people of equity deserving groups and those with disabilities.

4.1.5 Review and monitor existing and proposed Town of Amherst by-laws to promote full participation of equity deserving groups and people with disabilities, in accordance with the Acts.

4.1.6 Identify and advise on the accessibility of existing and proposed municipal services, facilities and infrastructure.

4.1.7 Advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Town's AIDE Plan.

4.1.8 Receive and review information from Council and its committees, and make recommendations, as requested.

4.1.9 Monitor federal and provincial government directives and regulations.

4.2 Membership

4.2.1 In accordance with the Act, at least half of the Committee membership must be people with disabilities or represent organizations that represent people with disabilities with preference for the former.

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY (AIDE) ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

4.2.2 All members must adhere to and abide by the NS Code of Ethics Policy.

4.2.3 When making appointments to the Committee, Council will give consideration to representation from different sectors of the community including equity deserving groups.

4.2.4 Appointees shall possess knowledge and understanding of equity and accessibility related issues and services currently being provided by the community.

4.2.5 The Committee shall have up to 10 voting members that includes:

- 2 Town of Amherst Council members as appointed by Council
- 7 community members as appointed by Council
- 1 Amherst Youth Town Council (AYTC) member as appointed by Council

Town of Amherst staff will be non-voting members.

4.3 Terms of Appointment

4.3.1 The initial appointments will be for one-year terms, with further appointments made for up to two years to ensure knowledge is retained on the Committee

4.3.2 AYTC members may be appointed for one or two-year terms.

4.3.2 The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected by the Committee at the first meeting annually.

5. OTHER

5.1 The Committee shall meet at least quarterly but may meet more frequently as required.

5.2 Meetings of the committee shall be open to the public; however, they are subject to the provision of Section 22 of the Municipal Government Act with respect to closed session meetings.

5.3 The Committee provides open avenues of communication to stakeholders and Council.

5.4 The Committee may establish Working Groups to explore specific issues related to the accessibility plan and/or to other responsibilities, subject to staff capacity. Members of the Working Groups may consist of additional community members.

5.5 Meeting shall convene at 4:00 p.m. on the day selected, unless otherwise specified.

5.6 The Committee and its members shall follow the rules of order as set out in the Town of Amherst Proceedings of Council Policy #10350-24.

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY (AIDE) ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
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6. TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW

The Committee will review its Terms of Reference annually and make any recommendations to Council as the Committee deems appropriate.

7. REFERENCES

- 7.1 Bill No. 59 – Accessibility Act, Chapter 2 of the Act of 2017.
- 7.2 Nova Scotia Dismantling Racism and Hate Act 2022.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director, Community Living	Adhere to the Strategic Plan, make recommendations to Council when required. Review Terms of Reference annually.
CAO	Appoint non-voting staff members to the Committee
Council	Appoint Council, AYTC and citizen members to the Committee, consider recommendations from the Committee.
Clerk	Schedule meetings, advertise for citizen members.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Clerk, LeBlanc	Council	March 24, 2025

Minutes reference date: March 24, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
From: Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Date: May 13, 2026
Subject: New Code of Conduct for Municipal Volunteers Policy

At their regular meeting in February, Council adopted the attached new Code of Conduct for Municipal Volunteers Policy. Volunteers who serve our Town on various Boards and Committees and at events are an extension of our organization. In their role, they are representatives of the Town of Amherst.

This new policy outlines the values of the Town of Amherst and clarifies the expectations of volunteers. It is important to establish these guidelines and expectations of municipal volunteers serving our community on behalf of the Town of Amherst.

Included as part of the Policy is Appendix A which all volunteers are required to sign indicating they have read and understand the policy and will adhere to it. Staff will have printed copies at the meeting for you to sign as a volunteer on the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee.

TITLE:	CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL VOLUNTEERS
SECTION:	EXECUTIVE OFFICE
POLICY NO:	10350-02

APPROVAL DATE: February 24, 2026

CAO Signature: 

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for the conduct of volunteers serving the Municipality. Volunteers play an essential role in delivering programs, services, and events, and are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and respect in representing the Municipality.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals who volunteer their time, skills, and services to the Municipality, whether on a regular, seasonal, or one-time basis, including members of advisory committees, boards, community events, and recreational programs. Volunteer members of the Amherst Fire Department and Amherst Police Department are covered under their own specific policies or standing orders.

3. Principles

Volunteers are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of the Municipality and its residents.
- Conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and inclusive manner.
- Comply with all applicable laws, municipal policies, and safety regulations.
- Refrain from any conflicts of interest or actions that could harm the Municipality's reputation.
- Maintain a high standard of integrity

4. Standards of Conduct

Volunteers must:

a) Respect and Inclusivity

- Treat all persons with courtesy, dignity, and fairness, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, or bullying.

b) Integrity and Accountability

- Perform volunteer duties honestly, ethically, and to the best of their ability.
- Follow through on commitments and notify the appropriate supervisor if unable to attend or complete assigned tasks.
- Shall not use their volunteer position for personal gain.

c) Confidentiality

- Protect confidential and sensitive information obtained through volunteer activities.
- Refrain from disclosing personal or municipal information without proper authorization.

d) Safety and Conduct in the Workplace

- Comply with all municipal health and safety rules.
- Report hazards, unsafe conditions, or incidents immediately.
- Refrain from the use of alcohol, cannabis, or impairing substances while performing volunteer duties.

e) Use of Municipal Resources

TITLE: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL VOLUNTEERS
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OFFICE
POLICY NO: 10350-02

- Use municipal property, equipment, and materials only for authorized purposes.
- Return any borrowed items promptly and in good condition.

5. Conflict of Interest

Volunteers must:

- Disclose any personal, financial, or professional interest that may conflict with their volunteer role.
- Refrain from participating in decisions or activities where such conflicts exist or could be perceived.

6. Social Media and Public Representation

- Volunteers shall not speak on behalf of the Municipality unless specifically authorized in advance by the Mayor, CAO or designate.
- When expressing personal opinions publicly, volunteers must make it clear they do not represent the Municipality's official position.
- Avoid posting or sharing content that could damage the Municipality's reputation.

7. Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Verbal or written warnings.
- Reassignment of duties.
- Dismissal from the volunteer position by the CAO. In the event the volunteer(s) had been formally appointed by Council, the CAO shall recommend dismissal to Council who shall make the final decision through a motion of direction.

8. Acknowledgment

All volunteers must review and sign the **Volunteer Code of Conduct Acknowledgment Form** before commencing their duties, confirming that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by the policy.

TITLE: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL VOLUNTEERS
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OFFICE
POLICY NO: 10350-02

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
CAO	Administer policy
Directors/Supervisors	Report any potential breaches of policy to the CAO

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Deputy CAO	Council	February 24, 2026

Minutes reference date: February 24, 2026

TITLE: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL VOLUNTEERS
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OFFICE
POLICY NO: 10350-02

APPENDIX



I, _____ declare that as a volunteer for the Town of Amherst, I acknowledge that I have read and support the Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy.

Signed: _____

Dated this ___ day of _____, 202_.

MEMO

TO: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
FROM: Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being
DATE: Wednesday, May 13, 2026
RE: **Annual Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Report**

The Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, *Access by Design 2030*, and the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* require municipalities to proactively work towards creating inclusive, accessible, and equitable communities. These frameworks mandate accessibility and anti-hate plans that identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities and marginalized groups, ensuring full participation and equal opportunity for all.

Since adopting the AIDE Strategy, the Town of Amherst, Council, and staff have made significant progress in improving accessibility and inclusion across municipal services. Achievements include enhanced event coordination and communication, accessible digital platforms, and substantial investments in walkways, recreational areas, and year-round equipment to ensure usability for all residents.

The Town of Amherst Annual AIDE Report highlights the municipality's continued leadership and commitment to building a more inclusive, equitable, and accessible Nova Scotia by 2030.

Staff have been providing the annual report in November. Further discussions with other municipal leads has proven that providing the report in April or May can align priorities and support the committee in choosing areas of focus for the upcoming year.

Appendix Item: Annual Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Report.

Annual A.I.D.E Report

Town of Amherst

2025-2026

Mallory Klooster,
Manager of Community Well-Being



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Executive Summary

The Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, *Access by Design 2030*, and the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* require municipalities to proactively work towards creating inclusive, accessible, and equitable communities. These frameworks mandate accessibility and anti-hate plans that identify, remove, and prevent barriers for people with disabilities and marginalized groups, ensuring full participation and equal opportunity for all. Municipalities were required to have such plans in place by April 1, 2025.

To meet these obligations, the Town of Amherst consolidated its Accessibility Committee and Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Committee into a single, comprehensive Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (AIDE) Committee and Strategy. This integrated approach addresses all four pillars—accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity—through coordinated planning, community consultation, and public accountability.

Since adopting the AIDE Strategy, the Town, Council, and staff have made significant progress in improving accessibility and inclusion across municipal services. Achievements include enhanced event coordination and communication, accessible digital platforms, and substantial investments in walkways, recreational areas, and year-round equipment to ensure usability for all residents.

The Town of Amherst Annual AIDE Report highlights the municipality's continued leadership and commitment to building a more inclusive, equitable, and accessible Nova Scotia by 2030.

Introduction and Overview

The Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, *Access by Design 2030*, and the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* mandate that communities across the province take proactive steps to build inclusive, equitable, and accessible environments for all. These legislative frameworks require municipalities to develop and implement accessibility and anti-hate plans that identify, remove, and prevent barriers—ensuring full participation and equal opportunity for people of all abilities and backgrounds. Under the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act*, all municipalities are required to have a plan in place by April 1, 2025.

In response, the Town of Amherst established a unified Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (AIDE) Committee, combining its Accessibility Strategy and Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Strategy into a single, comprehensive plan. This integrated approach reflects the Town’s commitment to addressing systemic inequities and promoting fairness through community collaboration, transparency, and continuous improvement.

Since the launch of the AIDE Strategy, Amherst Town Council, and staff, have made significant progress in improving accessibility, inclusion, and equity throughout municipal operations. Efforts have focused on making public events, facilities, services, and communications more inclusive and user-friendly, while investing in infrastructure and programs that enhance community participation for everyone.

The Town’s AIDE Strategy is guided by five key focus areas:

1. **Delivery of Goods and Services** – Ensuring equitable access to all municipal goods and services for residents and visitors.
2. **Information and Communication** – Providing accessible and inclusive information and communication channels for people with accessibility needs.
3. **Transportation** – Supporting the ability of residents and visitors with accessibility needs to move freely and access reliable transportation options.
4. **Employment** – Promoting the Town of Amherst as an equitable employer that supports the careers of employees with accessibility needs and seeks to attract and retain a diverse, skilled workforce.
5. **Built Environment** – Creating and maintaining buildings and outdoor spaces that provide meaningful, equitable access for all users.

Our 2025-2026 Accessibility Accomplishments

Accessible Standard: Goods and Services		
Accessible Objective	Equity and Anti-Racism Goals/Objectives	Accomplishment
Increase inclusive and accessible community resources and services	Work to build an equitable and inclusive community	The Seminar Room inside the Library has been renovated. It has two doors into the room and both sides had steps down to a flat area in the middle. Staff put framing into the sunken area as well as the steps, insulated it, then covered it with plywood to create a one level surface. It was then covered with new flooring, room was painted and electrical plugs were replaced with Tamper-Resistant plugs.
Improve service delivery for residents	Provide educational opportunities for elected officials and employees on respect, cultural awareness and the promotion and protection of human rights.	Development of an Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity training plan has been completed. Will put resources on our website for community. HR and CL Director to work together to implement with staff and council. Staff completed the Foundations of Belonging in the Workplace training created by Placemaking 4G.
Improve program delivery	Be the leader in the community known for equity, inclusion and diversity	Staff submission to the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Program was denied.

		Accessible Sledge Equipment borrowed from the County to promote sport.
Ensure events are accessible for everyone	Ensure municipal services are equitable and accessible to all.	<p>Considerations for 55+ Games: Washrooms and Walkways at Robb's Complex and Rotary Park are being upgraded.</p> <p>Live Stream Events: Christmas Parade, Light Up, Remembrance Day, Jane's Walk</p>

Accessible Standard: Built Environment		
Accessible Objective	Equity and Anti-Racism Goals/Objectives	Accomplishment
Review emergency management and building evacuation plan with a lens of accessibility	Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision.	<p>Review being done of Stadium Evacuation Procedure</p> <p>Regional Emergency Management By Law postponed to later date pending consultation.</p>
Conduct built environment assessments	Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.	<p>Nova Scotia Building Code Regulation Checklists are used in all new construction.</p> <p>Staff have undergone trainings on the Built Environment Standard and also have taken Rick Hansen Courses.</p>

Accessible Standard: Information and Communication

Accessible Objective	Equity and Anti-Racism Goals/Objectives	Accomplishments
<p>Ensure that all new public documents, website content, social media posts, publications, policies and procedures will be developed through an accessible and equitable lens</p>	<p>Shared Objective</p>	<p>Continued focus on using plain, concise language</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate colour contrast in design materials</p> <p>Repeating information contained within graphics as typed text</p> <p>Providing text-based links for document downloads alongside clickable graphics</p> <p>Ongoing review and update of website content for clarity and easy navigating.</p>
<p>Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision</p>	<p>Shared Objective</p>	<p>Monthly review of policies and bylaws.</p> <p>18 Policies and bylaws have been reviewed to date.</p> <p>Inventory and review of all marketing, communications and branding documents in progress.</p>
<p>Improve Signage to meet provincial standards</p>	<p>Work to build an equitable and inclusive community</p>	<p>Accessible trail signage/wayfinding materials have been installed.</p>
<p>Evaluate how we communicate to our external partners</p>	<p>Increase opportunities for engagement by launching an outreach campaign to gather public information with diverse groups (to</p>	<p>Development of comprehensive communications plan that identifies strategies on how to communicate to and</p>

	understand how to improve our engagement strategies).	engage with the public is completed. Input from equity deserving groups, persons with disabilities and newcomers was considered.
		<p>Staff and Community Built Environment Assessments completed of the Community Credit Union: Business Innovation Centre</p> <p>“From Green to Great: Building for a Growing and Diverse Community” Presentation given by Town staff. Presentation included a review of our park system and a plan to align Amherst’s parks with community growth and recreation demand, emphasize inclusion, accessibility and adaptability and how to guide high- level decisions and future park investments. Appendix Item 1. B</p>
Improve ability to provide barrier free participation in events	Ensure municipal services are equitable and accessible to all.	<p>Conducting facility audits for the 55+ Games.</p> <p>Built Environment Assessments includes recommendations that can be brought forward to Council.</p>
Improve access to safe, affordable and accessible housing	Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.	United Way Maritimes, The River Philip Foundation, and The Shaw Group have partnered on a new housing

		<p>community called <i>The Groves at Hillsdale</i>. Located on Church Street in Amherst, Nova Scotia, this development is a clustered residential community of compact, well-built homes for rent and sale. The Groves at Hillsdale is designed to fill growing gaps in the missing middle of housing options, where homeownership opportunities for working families with modest, stable incomes are in extremely short supply.</p> <p>There are 47 residential units in total. 28 units are available for sale through a <u>modified shared-equity homeownership model</u>, with 19 units available at <u>affordable monthly rents</u>.</p> <p>The Town of Amherst paid for all the infrastructure on Vista Drive totalling about \$625,000. This supported the development of water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer infrastructure as well as a curbed, built road.</p>
<p>Investigate and make recommendation on the establishment of an accessible playground</p>	<p>Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.</p>	<p>Council approved \$1,300,000 for an accessible playground.</p> <p>Accessible Playground Build Design RFP was open until May 12th 2026.</p>

		Staff have submitted an Expression of Interest to gauge funding possibility for various design options.
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Accessible Standard: Transportation		
Accessible Objective	Equity and Anti-Racism Goals/Objectives	Accomplishment
Improve pedestrian infrastructure	Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.	<p>NS Walks/ Hike NS is coordinating a Community Walk Audit set to take place on Tuesday June 9th. More details to follow.</p> <p>The Town is investing approximately \$2,500,000 to install street, water, sewer and active transportation infrastructure in the first phase of our new business park. Possible we will see new street construction commence this fall.</p> <p>The Town of Amherst maintains approximately 75.5 km of paved roadways. The Town uses a standardized process to assess road surface conditions to determine maintenance and rehabilitation needs. Considerations to replace sidewalks to coincide with a street reconstruction project if such a larger project is</p>

		scheduled. To be fiscally responsible not all projects are recommended. Appendix Item 1. A.
Continue to improve active transportation opportunities by reviewing accessibility of trails and sidewalks	Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.	In order to ensure fiscal capacity for other initiatives Council decided not to pursue a public transit system at this time.

Accessible Standard: Education		
Accessible Objective	Equity and Anti-Racism Goals/Objectives	Accomplishment
Continue to grow partnerships with schools and education centres at all levels to offer supports where needed	Increase Community Engagement	Partnered with Amherst Regional High School to host an Opportunities Fair on February 23 2026. Multiple partner organizations gathered to discuss volunteer and employment opportunities within Amherst.

<p>Provide training and opportunities for accessibility, equity and anti-racism</p>	<p>Continue to increase our promotion, respect, understanding and appreciation of our community’s diversity by organizing workshops, offering educational resources on equity and anti-racism.</p>	<p>Development of an Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity training plan has been completed. Will put resources on our website for community. HR and CL Director to work together to implement with staff and council.</p> <p>Staff completed the Foundations of Belonging in the Workplace training created by Placemaking 4G.</p> <p>Amherst Police Department partnered with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation to take part in immersive Hate Crime Training. This training is designed to increase our police service’s capacity to investigate allegations of hate crime and support victims. Part of this training included a Community Engagement piece on Monday March 30th from 6-8PM at 21 Havelock St. Discussions included: how to recognize and report hate crimes and incidents, learning about community resources and supports as well as strategies to build a safer, more inclusive town.</p>
<p>Work to ensure Community Safety</p>	<p>Work to build an Equitable and Inclusive Community</p>	<p>Staff is beginning to investigate best practices into a Strategy for Community</p>

		<p>Well Being, Safety and Belonging</p> <p>Town Staff and Community Partners are attending a Downtown Safety and Harm Reduction Community of Practice on May 27th 2026.</p> <p>Amherst Police Department partnered with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation to take part in immersive Hate Crime Training.</p>
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Recommendations

The following is a list of recommendations for the Amherst Town Council to review.

1. Sidewalks and crosswalks continue to be a top priority.

As the sidewalks are being revitalized, the demographics of the pedestrian population as well as the mix of road users at different time periods should be considered, and crossing facilities and control devices should be designed accordingly.

2. Accessibility Standard Audits

Friday April 17th 2026 Staff conducted a thorough Built Environment assessment using the Accessibility Audit Toolkit of the Community Credit Union: Business Innovation Centre.

Thursday April 23rd 2026 A.I.D.E committee members and staff conducted a Built Environment Walk Through of the Community Credit Union: Business Innovation Centre.

Operation Improvements over fiscal year:

- 1. Signage: Main Entrance and Interior Signage
- 2. A bench/resting area from back accessible parking space towards front entrance
- 3. Installation of new stage ramp with handrail
- 4. Increase number of accessible parking spaces

Accessible Standard: Employment		
Accessible Objective	Equity and Anti-Racism Goals/Objectives	Accomplishment
Diversify recruitment methods	Work to create a diverse municipal workforce.	People Strategy, implemented in early 2026. This strategy will strengthen our accommodation processes and help remove barriers to employee participation and success.
Promote Amherst as an inclusive and diverse workforce	Provide educational opportunities for elected officials and employees on respect, cultural awareness and the promotion and protection of human rights.	<p>Conducted a comprehensive wellness survey to better understand the diverse needs of our employees (Dec 2024/Jan 2025)</p> <p>Launched a virtual health platform to improve access to care and supports (Feb 2025)</p> <p>Introduced more inclusive onboarding practices, including a tailored orientation for our summer students (Spring 2025)</p> <p>Established an official employee wellness committee, offering activities that reflect a diverse range of interests, abilities and perspectives (Sept 2025)</p>
Review of policies and procedures	Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision.	We continued our HR policy review through an accessibility and equity lens and updated the Smokefree Workplace Policy (June 2025)

		and the Workplace Violence & Harassment Prevention Policy (Sept 2025) to support a safer, healthier, and more respectful work environment.
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Long Term Improvements to Recommend to Council for next Capital Budget:

- 1. Investigate feasibility of an accessible rear entrance
- 2. Renovate doorways to meet 36” clearance
- 3. Investigate feasibility of a universal washroom (single use room) downstairs
- 4. Install push buttons on Universal Washrooms upstairs
- 5. Install handrails on both sides of staircase

3. Community Education Campaign

Building on our success of the past few years, town staff should inform the public and also include how we announce our progresses in our Communication Plan. This could include updating our website to reflect our accomplishments.

MEMORANDUM

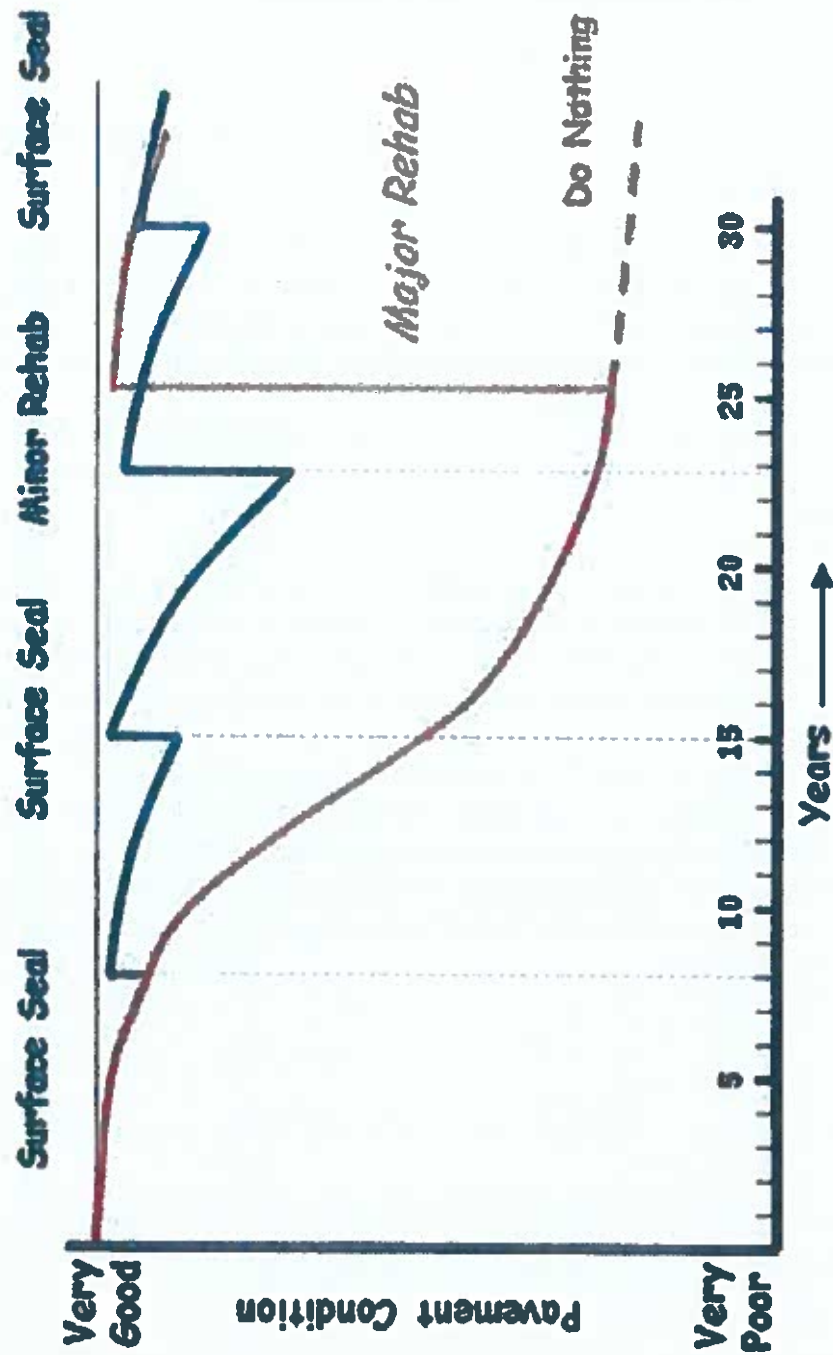
To: Mayor Small and Members of Council
From: Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations
Date: February 27, 2026
Subject: Selection of Infrastructure Projects for 5 Year Capital Budget

The Town of Amherst maintains approximately 75.5 kilometres of paved roadways. In 2014 the Town began using a standardized process to assess road surface conditions to determine maintenance and rehabilitation needs. By closely monitoring roadway surface conditions and following maintenance recommendations the life cycle of the roadway can be maximized.

There are a number of other factors that must be considered prior to recommending or not recommending a paving project for the five-year capital budget after the PASER rating is completed:

- Water and Sewer mains should be less than 75 years old: The expected life cycle of ductile iron main or a clay pipe is 75 years. It would not be efficient to repave a street and shortly thereafter have to replace a water or sewer main.
- Similar to the reasons above, ideally, we don't carry out a paving project on streets that have corrugated steel pipe (CSP) for a storm sewer. This pipe was installed in the 70's and 80's has been found to be in need of replacement.
- We may want to schedule the replacement of a sidewalk to coincide with a street reconstruction project if such a larger project is scheduled.
- Finally, there is a substantial amount of infrastructure that should be replaced every year, however in order to be fiscally responsible not all projects are recommended.

*Pavement Management with
"Good Roads Cost Less"
Preservation Strategies*



RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING

Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
Academy	Senior	Dickey	1
Academy	Dickey	Queen	1
Charles	Townshend	Rogers	1
Church	Wellington	Dickey	1
Clarence	Belmont	Clifford	1
Clarence	Clifford	Spring	1
Copp	Ernie Lane	West Victoria	1
Cornwall	Hickman	Cordova	1
Crescent	Maple	Station	1
Dickey	Rupert	Charles	1
Dickey	Charles	Rupert	1
Dickey	Church	Academy	1
Dickey	Academy	Charles	1
Dickey	Donald	Rupert	1
Donald	Townshend	Walter Purdy	1
East Pleasant	Charles	Academy	1
East Pleasant	Academy	Church	1
East Victoria	North Adelaide	Herbert	1
Eddy	Dale	East Victoria	1
Laplanche	East Victoria	Dale	1
Laplanche	Dale	Palmer	1
Laplanche	Palmer	Robb Ball Fields	1
Prince Arthur	Rupert	South Adelaide	1
Prince Arthur	South Adelaide	Acadia	1
Queen	Croft	Albion	1
Queen	Church	Croft	1
Queen	Davison	Church	1
Queen	Academy	Davison	1
South Albion	Newton	Chamberlain	1
Spring	Croft	Albion	1
Willow	Milford	Spring	1
Academy	Wellington	Senior	2
Acadia	Prince Arthur	Shiretown Villas	2
Agnew	Acadia	Havelock	2
Agnew	Clarence	Acadia	2
Agnew	Rupert	Clarence	2
Agnew	Regent	Rupert	2
Albion	Pleasant	Queen	2
Albion	Queen	Spring	2
Albion	Spring	Croft	2
Albion	Croft	Church	2

RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING			
Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
Albion	Crescent	Fullerton	2
Albion	Crescent	Church	2
Anson	Parkwood	Cornwall	2
Anson	Liberty	Hickman	2
Anson	Parkwood	Woodlawn	2
Beacon	Stanley	Croft	2
Beacon	Chignecto	Stanley	2
Beacon	East Pleasant	Chignecto	2
Charles	East Pleasant	Townshend	2
Charles	Rogers	Dickey	2
Charles	Dickey	Dunlap	2
Charles	Dunlap	Spring	2
Charles	Spring	Dunlap	2
Church	Townshend	East Pleasant	2
Church	Townshend	Senator	2
Church	Senator	Wellington	2
Church	Spring	Queen	2
Church	Belmont	Spring	2
Church	Queen	Beacon	2
Church	Queen	Spring	2
Church	Clifford	Belmont	2
Church	Prince Arthur	Albion	2
Church	Prince Arthur	Crescent	2
Church	Dickey	Queen	2
Church	Spring	Clifford	2
Church	Electric	Prince Arthur	2
Church	Belmont	Robie	2
Church	Albion	87 Church	2
Church	Queen	Beacon	2
Church	Robie	Prince Arthur	2
Copp	Redland	Ernie Lane	2
Copp	Foundry	Redland	2
Donald	Dickey	Spring	2
Donald	Walter Purdy	Dickey	2
East Pleasant	Willow	Charles	2
East Pleasant	Stanley	Croft	2
East Pleasant	Chignecto	Stanley	2
East Pleasant	Beacon	Chignecto	2
East Victoria	Rupert	Regent	2
East Victoria	Laplanche	Lawrence	2
East Victoria	Acadia	South Adelaide	2

RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING			
Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
East Victoria	Herbert	Eddy	2
East Victoria	Eddy	Laplanche	2
East Victoria	Lawrence	Laplanche	2
East Victoria	Church	Havelock	2
East Victoria	Havelock	Acadia	2
East Victoria	Maple	Church	2
East Victoria	Station	Maple	2
East Victoria	Lawrence	CNR	2
Eddy	East Victoria	Dale	2
Eddy	Palmer	Dale	2
Herbert	East Victoria	End	2
Industrial Park	South Albion	Rosewood	2
King	Havelock	Church	2
King	Church	Havelock	2
Lawrence	CO-OP	End	2
Lusby	End	West Victoria	2
North Adelaide	East Victoria	Harding	2
Park	Pleasant	Patterson	2
Park	Hickman	Maltby	2
Prince Arthur	Acadia	Havelock	2
Prince Arthur	Havelock	Church	2
Prince Arthur	Church	#70	2
Ratchford	Acadia	Havelock	2
Ratchford	Havelock	Acadia	2
Regent	Elmwood	Agnew	2
Rupert	East Victoria	Prince Arthur	2
Rupert	Prince Arthur	Agnew	2
Rupert	Agnew	Robie	2
Rupert	Robie	Clifford	2
Rupert	Rogers	Rhodes	2
Rupert	Rogers	Rogers	2
Rupert	Rhodes	Dusker Way	2
Rupert	Spring	Dunlap	2
Russell	Meadow	West Victoria	2
Russell	#44	West Victoria	2
South Albion	Costin	Winston	2
South Albion	Winston	Edgewood	2
South Albion	Edgewood	Admore	2
South Albion	Admore	Ottawa	2
South Albion	Ottawa	Poplar	2
South Albion	Poplar	East Pleasant	2

RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING			
Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
Spring	Albion	Croft	2
Spring	Church	Davison	2
Spring	Davison	Academy	2
Townshend	Townsvew	Centennial	2
Townshend	Centennial	Willow	2
Townshend	Charles	Townsvew	2
West Pleasant	Mill	Hickman	2
West Pleasant	Mill	CNR	2
West Vicoria	Terrace	End	2
West Victoria	CNR	Copp	2
West Victoria	Copp	Arlington	2
West Victoria	Arlington	Russell	2
West Victoria	Lusby	Gerard	2
West Victoria	Mill	Lusby	2
West Victoria	Russell	Smith	2
West Victoria	Smith	Haliburton	2
West Victoria	Haliburton	Terrace	2
West Victoria	Hickman	Mill	2
West Victoria	Gerard	CNR	2
Willow	Spring	Pathway	2
Willow	Elmwood	Milford	2
Willow	Agnew	Elmwood	2
Willow	Willow Court	Agnew	2
Willow	East Victoria	Willow Court	2
Willow	Webster	Spring	2
Willow	East Pleasant	Oceanview	2
Willow	Oceanview	Webster	2
Academy	Spring	Queen	3
Academy	Queen	Spring	3
Acadia	Ratchford	Prince Arthur	3
Acadia	Shiretown Villas	East Victoria	3
Albion	Ladybug Picnic	West Pleasant	3
Albion	Station	Queen Ext	3
Chamberlain	CNR	Albion	3
Church	King	East Victoria	3
Church	Princess	King	3
Church	Prince Arthur	Princess	3
Church	Electric	Prince Arthue	3
Church	East Victoria	Electric	3
Church	Gladstone	East Pleasant	3
Church	Robert Angus	Gladstone	3

RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING			
Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
Church	Cedar	Robert Angus	3
Cornwall	Anson	Kent	3
Crescent	Church	Maple	3
Croft	Spring	Albion	3
Dale	Eddy	Laplanche	3
East Pleasant	Central	Church	3
East Victoria	Marshview	End	3
East Victoria	Abbey	Marshview	3
East Victoria	Willow	Abbey	3
East Victoria	Willow	Lamy	3
East Victoria	Regent	Willow	3
East Victoria	Lamy	North Adelaide	3
East Victoria	South Adelaide	Rupert	3
East Victoria	Acadia	South Adelaide	3
Eddy	Brownell	Palmer	3
Havelock	East Victoria	Ratchford	3
Havelock	Ratchford	Prince Arthur	3
Havelock	King	East Victoria	3
Havelock	Princess	King	3
Havelock	Prince Arthur	Princess	3
Hickman	West Victoria	Anson	3
Hickman	Mill	West Pleasant	3
Hickman	Mission	West Pleasant	3
Hickman	Mission	Park	3
Hickman	Dundonald	Anson	3
Hickman	Minto	Dundonald	3
Hickman	Mission	Minto	3
Hickman	Cornwall	Mission	3
Hickman	Park	Mission	3
Lawrence	CO-OP	East Victoria	3
Lawrence	Lawtons	East Victoria	3
Maple	Electric	East Victoria	3
Mill	West Victoria	Mill Ave	3
Mill	Mill Ave	West Pleasant	3
North Adelaide	Civic #20	Dale	3
North Adelaide	Civic #8	Dale	3
Park	Patterson	Patterson	3
Park	Patterson	End	3
Poplar	South Albion	Belliveau	3
Poplar	Belliveau	Fairview	3
Poplar	Fairview	Central	3

RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING			
Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
Prince Arthur	Maple	Station	3
Prince Arthur	#70	Havelock	3
Princess	Havelock	Church	3
Robert Angus	158 Robert Angus	South Albion	3
Robert Angus	158 Robert Angus	Church	3
Robert Angus	Church	Civic #182	3
Robie	Church	Funeral Home	3
Robie	Funeral Home	Havelock	3
Rupert	Clifford	Spring	3
Rupert	Dusker Way	Dickey	3
Rupert	Dickey	Dunlap	3
South Albion	Robert Angus	Costin	3
South Albion	Robert Angus	Costin	3
South Albion	Costin	Industrial Park	3
Spring	Charles	Rupert	3
Spring	Rupert	Donald	3
Spring	Donald	Willow	3
Spring	Boylston	Willow	3
Spring	Franklyn	Boylston	3
Spring	Coates	Franklin	3
Spring	Fletcher	Coates	3
Spring	Abbey	Fletcher	3
Spring	Church	Croft	3
Spring	Croft	Church	3
Spring	Academy	Charles	3
Wellington	Church	Academy	3
Beacon	Croft	Church	4
Cornwall	Cordova	Anson	4
Croft	Poplar	Beacon	4
Derby	Victoria	Walking Trail	4
Electric	Church	Parking Lot	4
Electric	Creighton Shatford	Maple	4
Electric	Maple	Parking Lot 1	4
Electric	Parking Lot 1	Parking Lot 2	4
Electric	Parking Lot 2	Parking Lot 3	4
Electric	Church	Creighton Shatford	4
Electric	Parking Lot 3	Church	4
Laplanche	Robb Ball Fields	Town Boundary	4
Laplanche	Lower Laplanche	Lawrence	4
Laplanche	Dale	East Victoria	4
Laplanche	Lawrence	Dale	4

RATINGS FOR SIDEWALKS - SORTED BY RATING			
Street	From	To	2025 Rating 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent (New ratings due 2027)
Maltby	Park	End	4
Mission	Hickman	Park	4
Prince Arthur	Church	Maple	4
Prince Arthur	Maple	Church	4
Regent	Spring	Elmwood	4
South Albion	Ancestral Drive	Robert Angus	4
South Albion	Costin	Clinton	4
South Albion	Chamberlain	Clinton	4
Dickey	Rupert	Donald	5
Donald	15 Donald	Dickey	5
Havelock	Agnew	Prince Arthur	5
Havelock	Spring	Clifford	5
Havelock	Clifford	Belmont	5
Havelock	Belmont	Robie	5
Havelock	Robie	Agnew	5
Wellington	Croft	Church	5



From Green to Great

Building for a Growing and Diverse Community

Presented With Passion

“Our department is committed to building a parks network that reflects who we are today – And who we’re becoming tomorrow. ”

Building Community, Together.

Transforming Our Parks

Amherst's park system includes spaces ready for renewal and adaptation. Practical, inclusive, and low-maintenance by design.



Flexible Recreation

Multi-use, all ages,
all seasons



Community Growth

Parks reflecting new
residents and
recreation trends



Health & Wellness

Active, Accessible
design for
everyone

Evolving local spaces into flexible, sustainable community recreation zones.

Purpose of the Plan

This plan shifts Amherst's Parks system from maintenance-focused to momentum-driven — aligning people, priorities, and purpose.

- **Align Amherst's parks with community growth and recreation demand**
- **Emphasize inclusion, accessibility, and adaptability**
- **Guide high-level decisions and future park investments**

From Maintenance to Momentum

Past Performance

- Reactive maintenance
- Standalone projects
- Uneven design standards
- Short-term fixes over long-term planning
- Parks measured by appearance

Future Outlook

- Strategic reinvestment
- Unified, tiered system
- Consistent design language
- Phased, sustainable planning
- Parks measured by community impact

From Green to Great captures this shift – from maintenance to momentum.

Emerging Recreation Trends in Nova Scotia

- **Cricket** – Reflecting Amherst’s growing cultural **diversity**.
- **Pickleball** – **Inclusive**, low-cost recreation.
- **Walking & Outdoor Fitness** – **Accessible** and family-friendly.
- **Community Integration** - Recreation as a bridge for belonging.
- **Unstructured Play** - Encouraging **creativity**, **well-being**, and **inclusive spaces**.

“As Amherst grows more diverse, our Recreation network must grow more inclusive – where every resident feels welcome to play, gather, and belong.”

Theme : Recreation that reflects a growing, diverse Amherst.

Amherst's Park Network



Transforming local spaces into flexible, sustainable community recreation zones.

Strategic Hubs

Amherst's cornerstone recreation spaces — high-use, multi-generational parks that anchor community life and attract regional visitors.

- **Lions Park – Family & Recreation Hub**
- **Dickey Park – Future Soccer & Athletic Complex**
- **Beacon Park – Accessible Playground Destination**
- **Rotary Park – Growth through Greenspace**

The foundation of Amherst's Parks System — where community, sport, and connection meet.

Lions Park

Features

- Playground
- Splash Pad
- Walking Track
- Basketball Court
- Soccer Field
- Tennis Courts (x2)
- Open Green Space
- Seating
- Washrooms
- MOU with Lion's Club

Future Potential

- Low maintenance upgrades with modern play structures
- Pave walking track – Cost Estimate \$75,000
- Lions Park is largely built out to its intended capacity — the focus moving forward is on maintaining quality, accessibility, and the overall experience rather than expansion
- Cost Estimate New Structure - \$200,000

Theme : Built Through Partnership, Thriving Through Community

Dickey Park

Features

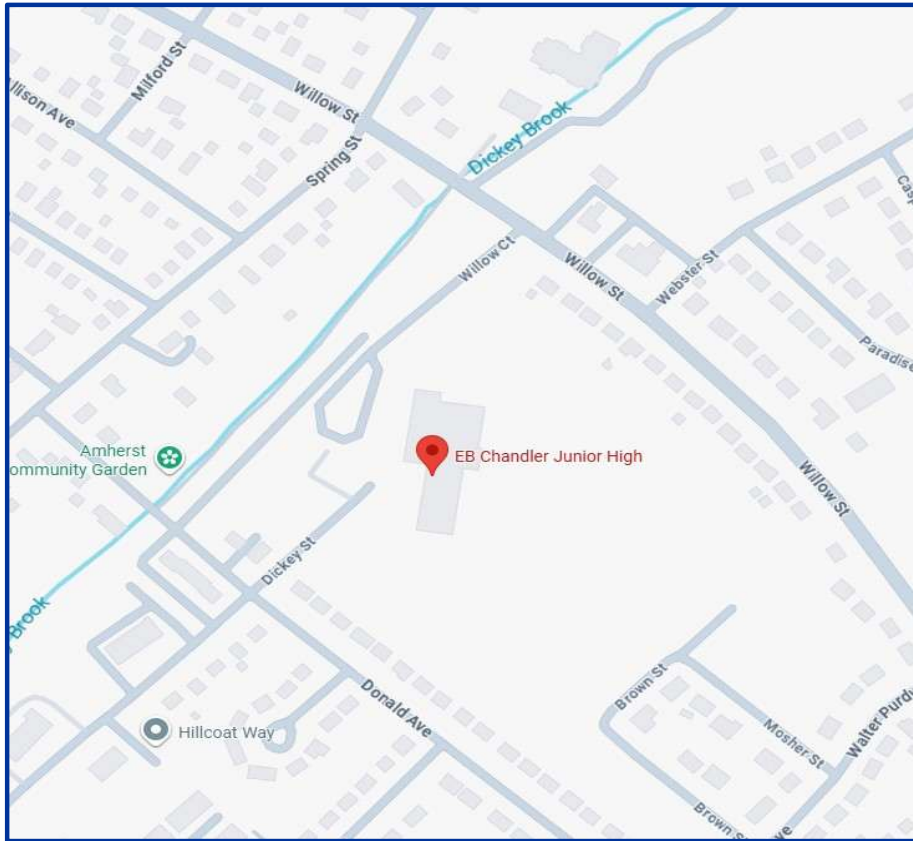
- Playground
- Splash Pad
- Dog Park
- Walking Track
- Soccer Field
- Open Green Space
- Benches
- Washroom

Future Potential

- Future Soccer And Athletic Complex Site, driving tournaments, visitor traffic, and local spending to boost Amherst's sports tourism economy.
- Project Currently Underway

Theme : Building Amherst's Next Athletic Hub

Dog Park : Alternate Locations



- **Next to E.B. Chandler Junior High (Willow St and Donald Ave)**
- **Motor Avenue lot (Old dump site)**

Theme : An adaptable, community-focused solution supporting responsible growth.

Beacon Park

Features

- “Accessible” Playground
- Greenspace
- Picnic Tables
- Washrooms
- Volleyball Pit

Future Potential

- Future site of Amherst’s Modern Accessible Playground
- Project Currently underway

Theme : A Place for Everyone to Play

Rotary Park

Features

- Greenspace
- Picnic Tables
- Washrooms
- Playground
- Long Jump Pit
- MOU with Rotary Club

Future Potential

- Position Rotary Park as a central event and gathering space, with upgrades to lighting, pathways, and seasonal programming for adaptive recreation
- Potential spot for outdoor rink
- Future home of new Bocce Court

Theme : Expanded programming for adaptive and inclusive recreation — supporting athletes of all abilities.

Community Anchors – “Pocket Parks”

Small but essential spaces — neighborhood parks that support family life, walkability, and everyday recreation across Amherst

- **Harding Park – Family Neighborhood Park**
- **Ernie Mills Park – Central To A Growing Neighborhood**
- **Abbey Road Park – A Gathering Space in a Growing Neighborhood**
 - **Curry Park – From Green Space to Community Place**

Pocket Parks for Livability — connecting neighbors through everyday spaces.

Ernie Mills

Features

- Playground
- Greenspace
- Picnic Table

Future Potential

- Low maintenance upgrades with modern play structures, gardens, and shaded seating. Cost Estimate \$75,000
- Shared identity through signage, color, and plant choices
- Designed to enhance liveability, walkability, and community pride

Theme : Pocket Parks for Liveability

Abbey Road

Features

- Playground
- Greenspace
- Picnic Table

Future Potential

- Low maintenance upgrades with modern play structures – Cost Estimate \$100,000
- Shared identity through signage, color, and plant choices
- Designed to enhance liveability, walkability, and community pride
- Improve drainage infrastructure

Theme : Pocket Parks for Liveability

Harding Park

Features

- Playground
- Greenspace
- Picnic Table

Future Potential

- Low maintenance upgrades with modern play structures – Cost Estimate \$100,000
- Shared identity through signage, color, and plant choices
- Designed to enhance liveability, walkability, and community pride
- Aging trees need to be removed

Theme : Pocket Parks for Liveability

Curry Park

Features

- Features aging walkways and tired flowerbeds requiring replacement.
- Open grass area with limited infrastructure and no defined gathering or event space.
- Primarily used for passive recreation and casual green space.

Future Potential

- Transform into a vibrant neighborhood gathering space that balances beauty and function.
- Replace walkways with accessible concrete paths for durability and inclusion.
- Relocate performance area from Dickey Park, giving the ability to host markets, music, and community events.
- Add seasonal amenities, such as winter skating or pop-up recreation zones.
- Refresh flowerbeds and plantings with low-maintenance perennials and improved layout.
- Reinforce its identity as the heart of the neighborhood — a true community place surrounded by community itself.

Theme : From Green Space to Community Place

Opportunity Parks

Transforming underused or aging spaces into vibrant, inclusive, and low-maintenance parks that reflect Amherst's evolving recreation needs.

- **Victoria Square – Honoring Heritage, Modernizing Community Spaces**
- **Northern Telecom – Activating Space Through Youth Recreation**
- **CN Side Hill – Enhancing Amherst's Everyday View**
- **Christie Gardens – Where Amherst Blooms**

From overlooked spaces to inspired places

Victoria Square

Features

- Cenotaph
- Picnic Tables
- Mature trees
- Bandshell
- Hardscape

Future Potential

- Upgrade Bandshell with durable, multi use performance structure
- Replanting plan (tree succession, shaded seating)
- Accessible paths and surface upgrades
- Keep ceremonies front-and-center in the design

Theme : Honoring Heritage, Modernizing Community Spaces

Downtown Corners – Lunchtime Commons

Corners of Havelock/Ratchford and Havelock/Victoria

Current Features

- Picnic tables
- Decorative Lighting
- Umbrellas (Havelock/Victoria)
- Large Blue “A” Chair

Future Potential

- Picnic tables with café-style umbrellas
- String lights and planter accents
- Seating and shade for lunch hours
- Wayfinding to Victoria Square
- Consistent branding linking the three downtown parks

Theme : Eat, Rest, Connect

Northern Telecom

Features

- Natural Terrain
- Greenspace
- Garbage can

Future Potential

- Develop Northern Telecom as a natural-terrain BMX/dirt track using existing grade

Theme : Activating Space Through Youth Recreation

C.N. Side Hill

Features

- High visibility for traffic travelling between downtown and the mall, and East / West Amherst.
- Functions primarily as a visual corridor — a natural buffer that improves curb appeal.

Future Potential

- Enhance the visual appeal with ornamental plantings, selective plant replacements, and simple aesthetic features that highlight this well-traveled area.
- Add low-profile fencing or boundary definition along Pleasant Street to improve safety while maintaining the park's open, natural appearance.

Theme : Enhancing Amherst's Everyday View

Christie Park

Features

- Picnic Tables
- Mature trees
- Beautiful, unused greenspace

Future Potential

- Christie Gardens - a signature horticultural showcase and passive recreation space.
- Develop a formal garden layout with walking paths, seating areas, and floral displays.
- Preserve and enhance the existing tree corridor as a shaded natural aisle — ideal for yoga sessions, outdoor classes, and small wedding ceremonies
- Add benches, ornamental fencing, and lighting accents to create a safe, elegant atmosphere for daily enjoyment and special occasions.
- Position Christie Gardens as Amherst's premier horticultural destination — a space focused on beauty, tranquility, and community pride.
- Christie Park – Failing retaining wall along Dickey Brook requires replacement or major restoration, preserving safety and heritage from the former Christie Trunk & Baggage Company site.

Theme : Christie Gardens; Where Amherst Blooms

Recreation Facilities & Sport Hubs

Spaces that inspire participation, pride, and performance

- **Amherst Skate Park** – Revitalizing Youth Spaces for the Next Generation
- **Robb Centennial Complex** – Where Community and Competition Meet
- **Winston Soccer Field** – Expanding Play for a Growing Community
- **Church Street Court** – Revitalizing Core Spaces

From action sports to organized sports — facilities that bring our community together



Amherst Lions Skate Park

Features

- Approximately 10,000 sq ft in size
- Plaza-style layout: various ledges, rails, stairs, and hips for street-style skateboarding
- Sun Shelter
- Drinking Fountain

Future Potential

- Surface and safety improvements, with seating/viewing zones
- Lighting and sightlines to extend safe hours
- Suggested roof concept will be reviewed for feasibility, cost, and long-term practicality.

Theme : Revitalizing Youth Spaces for the Next Generation

Robb Centennial Complex

Features

- Senior Hardball Field
- Softball Field
- Bantam Hardball Field
- Batting Cages
- Washrooms
- Lighting on all fields
- New Scoreboards 2024

Future Potential

- Continue to develop as a regional hub in northern Nova Scotia, driving visitor traffic and local spending to boost Amherst's sports tourism economy.
- Evaluate options for multi-use integration, including pickleball resurfacing and off-season recreation opportunities.
- Refresh signage and naming recognition, celebrating community and local sport history.
- Strengthen partnerships with local leagues for ongoing maintenance and capital planning.

Theme : Where Community and Competition Meet

Winston Avenue Soccer Field

Features

- Soccer Field
- Unused space
- Not Town owned

Future Potential

- Explore the addition of a multi-use layout to support emerging sports such as cricket, which is seeing increased local interest among new residents
- Minor upgrades to turf quality, drainage, and boundary fencing could enhance the site's usability for both sports without significant capital investment.

Theme : Expanding Recreation Through Inclusion and Adaptability

Church Street Court

Features

- Hockey Nets
- Basketball Hoop
- Pickleball Lines
- Paved Surface

Future Potential

- Reimagine Church Street Court as a vibrant, multi-sport destination that celebrates connection, movement, and modern recreation.
- Replace the tired fencing with a new, durable enclosure that frames the court as a safe, welcoming gathering place.
- Layer in dynamic surface markings and adaptable features, creating space for basketball, pickleball, hockey — even cricket — as Amherst’s recreation story evolves.
- With refreshed lighting, surfacing, and curb appeal, this once-quiet court becomes a central hub for community energy, where every game adds to the heartbeat of downtown.

Theme : Revitalizing Core Spaces for Modern, Multi-Generational Play

Amherst Recreation Fast Facts



Parks per Resident

- 1 park per 430 residents
- Nearly 4x higher than the national small – city average of 1 per 1700 residents



Soccer Field Network

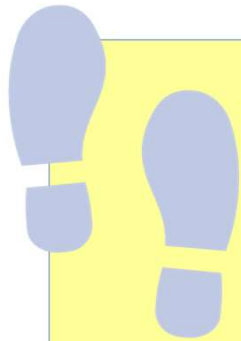
- 5 fields in play across Amherst
- Only 1 Town-owned : 4 are partnered, demonstrating regional collaboration and shared community investment.



Green Space Leadership

- 22 maintained parks and open spaces
- One of the highest park densities per capita in Atlantic Canada

Amherst Recreation Fast Facts



Active Living Access

- Every Amherst resident lives within a 10 – minute walk or drive of a recreation space
- Proving accessibility is built into our design, not added later



Partnership in Action

- Town + Schools + Community Groups
- Cooperative management ensures maximum community reach with shared resources

The Future of Amherst's Parks

Amherst's parks will always evolve — not through one project or one plan, but through the steady work and pride of those who care for them.

From Green to Great is more than a strategy — it's a promise to keep building spaces that reflect who we are and where we're going.

The future of Amherst's parks will be built the same way they always have been:

Together.

Parks. People. Pride



MEMO

TO: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
FROM: Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being
DATE: Wednesday, May 13, 2026
RE: **Community Walk Audits**

Nova Scotia Walks/ Hike Nova Scotia are coordinating a Community Walk Audit on June 9th, 2026, to support the creation of safer, more accessible, and walkable communities while providing social and health benefits for adults of all abilities.

Committee members are invited to observe infrastructure (sidewalks, lighting, traffic, crosswalks) and assess accessibility for pedestrians, including those using mobility devices and provide feedback which will be used to update our current Active Transportation Plan.

Final details are being decided and updates will be provided through email correspondence.

MEMO

TO: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
FROM: Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being
DATE: Wednesday, May 13, 2026
RE: **Canadian Race Relations Foundation Hate Training**

The Amherst Police Department recently partnered with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation to participate in immersive hate crime training.

As part of this initiative, a community engagement session was held on Monday, March 30, 2026, from 6:00–8:00 PM at 21 Havelock Street. The session aimed to foster dialogue and increase awareness around key issues impacting our community.

Discussion topics included:

- Recognizing and reporting hate crimes and incidents
- Available community resources and supports
- Strategies for building a safer, more inclusive town

While the session provided valuable information, attendance was lower than anticipated. Given the importance of this topic and the opportunity for broader community impact, staff would like to invite committee members to consider offering this training again at a future date.

MEMO

TO: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
FROM: Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being
DATE: Wednesday, May 13, 2026
RE: **Access Awareness Week**

Access Awareness Week Nova Scotia is guided by a clear and important goal; to shift the narrative surrounding persons with disabilities by raising awareness and taking meaningful action on disability-related barriers. The events and initiatives organized throughout the week are grounded in *first voice* perspectives and shaped through a disability lens, ensuring inclusion and accessibility for all community members.

The 2026 theme, **Disability Justice: Stronger Together** and **First Voice Leading Change for Collective Action**, emphasizes the importance of centering lived experience while working collaboratively to create more equitable and inclusive communities. Access Awareness Week runs from May 31st to June 6th, 2026.

As part of this year's theme, staff would like to invite committee members to consider hosting a Coffee Chat or other community events during the week. This could serve as an opportunity to foster open dialogue, share perspectives, and explore local priorities related to accessibility and inclusion.

At this stage, staff are seeking input from committee members on:

- Interest in hosting a Coffee Chat or similar events
- Potential topics or focus areas for discussion
- Preferred dates and times during Access Awareness Week

Committee member feedback will help shape an event that is meaningful, accessible, and reflective of community needs and lived experiences.

MEMO

TO: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee
FROM: Mallory Klooster, Manager, Community Well-Being
DATE: Wednesday, May 13, 2026
RE: **Working Group Session**

Staff would like to invite committee members to participate in a working group session hosted in June. This session is intended to be collaborative and discussion-focused, providing an opportunity for committee members to reflect on priorities and help shape the direction of the committee for the fall and towards the new year.

In terms of discussion topics, the working group may include (but is not limited to) the following areas:

- **Understanding how an advisory committee functions**
Exploring roles, expectations, and best practices to ensure the committee operates effectively and with clarity.
- **Observations within the community**
Sharing insights on current issues, trends, and opportunities observed in town that may require attention or action.
- **Planning ahead**
Identifying key priorities, initiatives, or recommendations that the committee would like to bring forward in September, with a focus on setting direction for the remainder of the year.

Committee member perspectives will play an important role in shaping both the immediate and long-term focus of the group.

Suggested dates:

- Wednesday June 10th 4:30-6:00PM
- Wednesday June 17th 4:30-6:00PM
- Wednesday June 24th 4:30-6:00PM