



Town of Amherst
Committee of the Whole
Agenda

Date: **Monday, March 17, 2025**
Time: **4:00 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 (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. These are the Indigenous Blacks of Nova Scotia whose legacy and contributions date back over 400 years predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people.”	
1.2	Approval of Agenda	
1.3	Approval of the Consent Agenda	1 - 1
1.4	Acceptance of Minutes	
1.4.1	February 10, 2025	2 - 2
1.4.2	February 12, 2025	3 - 3
1.4.3	February 18, 2025	4 - 6
1.4.4	February 24, 2025	7 - 7
1.4.5	March 10, 2025	8 - 9
1.4.6	March 10, 2025	10 - 10
2.	Council Direction Requests	
2.1	Fireworks - Bristol	11 - 12
2.2	Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Committee Terms of Reference - Bristol	13 - 29

2.3	Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Strategic Plan - Bristol	30 - 59
2.4	Themed Crosswalks - Bristol	60 - 63
2.5	Installment Billing Policy - Wilson	64 - 66
2.6	PCAP Application for the Waste Water Treatment Plant UV system - Bourgeois	67 - 68
2.7	Annual Performance Review Chief Administrative Officer Policy - Crossman	69 - 82
2.8	Industrial Park Land Sales Policy - Fisher	83 - 88
2.9	Capital Budget 2025/26 – LiveScan Fingerprinting System Replacement - Pike	89 - 90
2.10	Community Support Grants Policy - Bristol	91 - 100
2.11	Artistic Painting of Fire Hydrants - Jones	101 - 101
3.	Information Items	
3.1	Strategic Action Plan / By-law and Policy Review - Jones	102 - 108
3.2	Sports Hall of Fame - Bristol	109 - 109
3.3	Safe Senior Scooter Use - Bristol	110 - 110
3.4	Crosswalk Safety Communication - Pike	111 - 112
3.5	Speeding in School Zones - Pike	113 - 113
3.6	Willow Street / Townshend Avenue Intersection - Pike	114 - 114
3.7	Church Street/Robert Angus Drive Intersection - Pike	115 - 115
3.8	Downtown Businesses Hours of Operation - Bacon	116 - 116
3.9	Marketing Levy Feasibility - Bacon	117 - 139
3.10	CAO Task Report - MacDonald	140 - 140
4.	Monthly Reports	
4.1	Community Living	141 - 141
4.2	Corporate	142 - 142
4.3	Cumberland Business Connector - to be distributed	

4.4	Financial Services	143 - 143
4.5	Fire Services	144 - 144
4.6	Human Resources	145 - 146
4.7	Operations	147 - 149
4.8	Planning & Economic Development	150 - 153
4.9	Police Services	154 - 156
5.	Closed Session	
5.1	Approval of Closed Session Agenda	
5.2	Acceptance of Closed Session Minutes	
5.2.1	February 10, 2025	
5.2.2	February 12, 2025	
5.2.3	February 18, 2025	
5.2.4	February 24, 2025	
5.2.5	March 10, 2025	
5.3	MGA 22(2)(c) - personnel matters	
5.4	MGA 22(2)(c) - personnel matters	
5.5	MGA 22(2)(c) - personnel matters	
5.6	MGA 22(2)(c) -personnel matters	
5.7	MGA 22(2)(e) - contract negotiations	
5.8	MGA 22(2)(e) - contract negotiations	
6.	Adjournment	



Town of Amherst
Committee of the Whole
Monday, March 17, 2025

Consent Agenda

MOTION:

That Council approve the following items as part of the consent agenda:

- 1.4 Acceptance of Minutes**
- 3.1 Strategic Action Plan / By-law and Policy Review**
- 3.2 Sports Hall of Fame**
- 3.3 Safe Senior Scooter Use**
- 3.4 Crosswalk Safety Communication**
- 3.5 Speeding in School Zones**
- 3.6 Willow Street / Townshend Avenue Intersection**
- 3.7 Church Street / Robert Angus Drive Intersection**
- 3.8 Downtown Businesses Hours of Operation**
- 3.9 Marketing Levy Feasibility**
- 3.10 CAO Task Report**
- 4.1 Community Living Monthly Report**
- 4.2 Corporate Monthly Report**
- 4.3 Cumberland Business Connector Monthly Report**
- 4.4 Financial Services Monthly Report**
- 4.5 Fire Services Monthly Report**
- 4.6 Human Resources Monthly Report**
- 4.7 Operations Monthly Report**
- 4.8 Planning and Economic Development**
- 4.9 Police Services Monthly Report**

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: February 10, 2025
Time: 4:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor Rob Small
Deputy Mayor Hal Davidson
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mayor Small called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Closed Session

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Small adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Robert Small
Mayor

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: February 12, 2025
Time: 4:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor Rob Small
Deputy Mayor Hal Davidson
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk

1. **Call to Order**
Mayor Small called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
 - 1.1 **Territorial Acknowledgement**
Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.
2. **Closed Session**
Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Councillor McManaman
That the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

3. **Adjournment**
There being no further business, Mayor Small adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Robert Small
Mayor

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: February 18, 2025
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Deputy Mayor Hal Davidson
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Members Absent Mayor Rob Small

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Sean Payne, Corporate Communications Officer
Jeff Bacon, Business Development Officer
Denise Smith, Finance Manager
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.3 Approval of the Consent Agenda

Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

To approve the consent agenda as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

1.4 Acceptance of Minutes

1.4.1 January 20, 2025

Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That the minutes of the January 20, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting be accepted as part of the consent agenda, as included in the agenda package.

MOTION CARRIED

2. Presentations

2.1 Property Valuation Services - 2025 Assessment Roll - Paul Beazley and Laura MacLean

Paul Beazley and Laura MacLean gave a presentation on the 2025 Assessment Role, included in the agenda package. Information only.

3. Council Direction Requests

3.1 Sidewalk Curb Construction Policy

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That Council forward to the February 24, 2025 regular meeting, approval of the amendments to the Sidewalk and Curb Construction Policy.

MOTION CARRIED

3.2 Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committees and Commissions Policy

Moved By Councillor Ripley

Seconded By Councillor Chambers

That Council forward to the February 24, 2025 regular meeting, approval of the proposed amendments to the Appointment of Members of Council to External Boards, Committee & Commissions Policy.

MOTION CARRIED

3.3 Themed Crosswalks

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That staff prepare a policy to address themed crosswalks in the downtown core for Council consideration.

MOTION CARRIED

3.4 Living Museum

Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor Ripley

To remove 'Living Museum' from the Strategic Priorities Points to Capture list.

MOTION CARRIED

3.5 Military Museum

Council will consider this item at a future Committee of the Whole meeting following the presentation scheduled for February 24, 2025.

3.6 Anson Avenue CN Crossing Train Whistle

Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That staff be directed to hire a professional engineer or other qualified person familiar with railway safety to complete the required assessments on behalf of the Town; and further that staff include \$10,000 in the proposed 2025/26 operating budget to pay for the required assessments.

Against (3): Councillor Furlong, Councillor McManaman, and Councillor Ripley

MOTION DEFEATED

4. Information Items

Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

The following information items were approved as part of the consent agenda:

4.1 Stadium PA System

4.2 Free Exercise

4.3 Bylaw Officer Capacity

4.4 Police and Mental Health

4.5 Reward for Development

4.6 Tourism Strategy

4.9 Wind Turbine

4.10 Chamberlain / South Albion Street Intersection

4.11 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

4.12 CAO Task Report

MOTION CARRIED

4.7 'A' Special Day

Staff to begin to think about plans for 'A' Special Day recognition and/or event(s) and further include funds in the 2026/27 budget for 'A' Special Day.

4.8 Egress from Council Chambers Procedure

The Clerk reviewed the Egress from Council Chambers Procedure with Council. Information item only.

6. Closed Session

Moved By Councillor Wells

Seconded By Councillor Furlong

That the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

7. Adjournment

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

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Hal Davidson
Deputy Mayor

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: February 24, 2025
Time: 5:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor Rob Small
Deputy Mayor Hal Davidson
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Sean Payne, Corporate Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk

Others Present Jim Lowther, VETS Canada
Debbie Lowther, VETS Canada
Bill Casey, Former MP, VETS Canada Advocate
Jaczar, Jaczar Design and Construction

1. Call to Order
Mayor Small called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement
Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Closed Session
Moved By Councillor Furlong
Seconded By Councillor Wells
That the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Adjournment
There being no further business, Mayor Small adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Rob Small
Mayor

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: March 10, 2025
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor Rob Small
Deputy Mayor Hal Davidson
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Sean Payne, Corporate Communications Officer
Torben Laux, Planner/GIS
Marc Buske, Building Official
Jeff Bacon, Business Development Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mayor Small called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

1.2 Moment of Silence - Amherst Fire Department Volunteer Firefighter Chris Hicks

There was a moment of silence in recognition of Amherst Fire Department Volunteer Firefighter Chris Hicks who passed away suddenly on March 3, 2025.

2. Presentations

2.1 Cumberland County Transportation Services - Helen Simms

Helen Simms, Operations Manager/Dispatcher for CCTS gave a presentation of the services they provide. Information item only.

2.2 Net Zero Energy - Joe Collier

Joe Collier, Project Manager with Net Zero Energy Atlantic gave a presentation on geothermal energy opportunities in the Cumberland County area. Information item only.

2.3 Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee - Ron Furlong

Ron Furlong with the Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee presented to Council on who they are, what they do, and the challenges they are facing. Information item only.

2.4 In The Works - Sean Lockhart

Sean Lockhart, Executive Director with In the Works a Social Enterprise Network presented to Council on the programs they provide and work done to date. Information item only.

2.5 Cumberland Chamber of Commerce - Beth Peterkin

Beth Peterkin, General Manager of the Cumberland Chamber of Commerce presented to Council on their new organizational structure since becoming a regional chamber of commerce, board representation, upcoming and past programs and events, and the need for new members. Information item only.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Mayor Small adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Rob Small
Mayor

**Amherst Town Council
Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Date: March 10, 2025
Time: 6:00 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Mayor Rob Small
Deputy Mayor Hal Davidson
Councillor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Nic Furlong
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley
Councillor Kathy Wells

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations
Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services
Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Kim Jones, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance
Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living
Sean Payne, Corporate Communications Officer
Torben Laux, Planner/GIS
Jeff Bacon, Business Development Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mayor Small called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

Mayor Small gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Closed Session

Moved By Councillor Furlong

Seconded By Councillor McManaman

That the Committee move to a Closed Session.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Small adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Rob Small
Mayor



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025019

Date: March 17, 2025

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Fireworks

ORIGIN: Ongoing consideration into the use of Fireworks

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council direct staff on the continued use of fireworks and dedicate resources to the Community Living budget on an annual basis to cover these costs if needed.

BACKGROUND: For several years the Town of Amherst held Fireworks displays on Canada Day and for a period of time New Years Eve. This practice was stopped during Covid. Staff organized an event on December 31, 2024 with a fireworks display at a cost of 10,000.

DISCUSSION: The New Years Eve celebration had approximately 300-400 people in attendance. Majority of feedback was positive however some complained that the falling ash was getting in their faces and eyes. Alternate locations could be considered if the use of fireworks is continued.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Annual budget of \$20,000 required to continue this practise.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: No community engagement required at this point.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: Smoke- In comparison with other smoke producing activities typical firework displays generate far less smoke than other common activities such as burning leaves, summertime campfires, fireplaces in homes, and wood pellet stoves.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: The effects of fireworks can trigger anxiety in pets and panic attacks or a flashback scenario for combat veterans who suffer with PTSD. Cost of fireworks is expensive and could be used for other projects or activities that reach a wider audience.

ALTERNATIVES: 1) Continue use of fireworks for Community Celebrations
2) Discontinue the practise of fireworks displays

ATTACHMENTS: None



Report prepared by: Sharon Bristol
Report and Financial approved by:

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bristol Director, Community Living

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (AIDE) Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

ORIGIN: The Town of Amherst has been undergoing a systematic review of its committees of council to determine future feasibility and human resource capabilities.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to March 24, 2025 regular meeting of Council approval of the new Terms of Reference for the combined Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advisory Committee, and further forward the Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, and the Inclusion Diversity and Equity Committee Terms of Reference for repeal.

BACKGROUND: Municipalities and other prescribed public sector bodies through the Accessibility Act of Nova Scotia 2017 and the Nova Scotia Dismantling Racism and Hate Act 2022 are required to develop and/or update their strategic plans by April 1, 2025. The Town of Amherst approved an Accessibility Strategic Plan in 2022 and the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan in 2023. Both plans are required to be updated and approved by Council and forwarded to the Province by April 1, 2025. Throughout this process it became known that we could combine our two committees as long as we were in keeping with requirements set out under the Accessibility Act. The combined committee would continue to advise Council on all matters of Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity. In November 2024, Amherst Town Council made a motion to combine these committees. As a result of this, a new terms of reference is required and the previous ones repealed. Council also passed a motion to dissolve the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee, therefore it is being recommended that the Terms of Reference for this Committee also be repealed.

DISCUSSION: Staff met with the respective committees in January and early February to update them on the formation of the new combined committee. This had previously been discussed with them at a joint workshop last May. Since that time staff have been working on a process to combine the committees in an effort to keep the integrity of the mission of each. Also, the committees were supportive on the new requirements for a joint plan.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025020

Date: March 17, 2025

The committees and the public have been involved in the community outreach to gather information to formulate the new AIDE Strategic Plan, its goals and objectives. The existing Strategic Plans were reviewed, successes articulated and advice given on what is still required. Combining these committees with a new terms of reference will allow more collaboration amongst committee members and allow for discussion on a broader range of topics for underserved and underrepresented groups especially when intersectionality is prevalent..

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: The community, through the AIDE Advisory Committee, will have continued input into the development of policy and procedures related to accessibility and inclusion, diversity and equity.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: None relating to the approval of the Terms of Reference.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Continued engagement with our community at large to ensure everyone has input into AIDE practises conducted in the town.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1 Send back to committee for further assessment
- 2 Defer to next month

ATTACHMENTS: New Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
Inclusion Diversity and Equity Committee Terms of Reference
Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Report prepared by: Sharon Bristol
Report and Financial approved by:



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

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **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
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

4.1.10 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
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

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

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

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

- 4.1.14 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. 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
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW

The Committee will review its Term 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	

Minutes reference date:

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

APPROVAL DATE: November 27, 2023

CAO Signature: 

1.0 BACKGROUND

Under the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act (NSAA), the Town of Amherst is required to appoint an Accessibility Advisory Committee to provide input on accessibility matters within the Town of Amherst.

2.0 PURPOSE

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (“Committee”) assists Town Council (“Council”) in fulfilling its responsibilities relating to identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. The Committee plays a pivotal role in helping the Town of Amherst become a barrier-free community and ensuring obligations under *An Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia* (2017) are met, and to assist in creating a community of wellbeing.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 The definitions in the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act 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 persons 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 and effective participation in society.

4.0 POLICY

4.1 Role

The Accessibility Advisory Committee shall:

- 4.1.1 Advise Council on the preparation, implementation, and effectiveness of its accessibility plan. In accordance with the Accessibility Act, 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 the following for their impact on accessibility for people with disabilities:
 - any proposed policies, programs, practices, and services
 - any proposed enactments or by-laws
 - iii. any other prescribed information

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

- 4.1.2 Review and update its accessibility plan at least every three years, in accordance with the Act.
- 4.1.3 Consult with the community on accessibility in the Town of Amherst.
- 4.1.4 Advise Council on the impact of Town of Amherst policies, programs, and services on people with disabilities.
- 4.1.5 Review and monitor existing and proposed Town of Amherst bylaws to promote full participation of people with disabilities, in accordance with the Act.
- 4.1.6 Identify and advise on the accessibility of existing and proposed municipal services and facilities.
- 4.1.7 Advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Town's accessibility plan.
- 4.1.8 Receive and review information from Council and its committees, and make recommendations, as requested.
- 4.1.9 Monitoring 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.
- 4.2.2 All members must adhere to and abide by the Code of Ethics Policy, Policy #04000-12.
- 4.2.3 When making appointments to the Committee, Council will give consideration to representation from different sectors of the community.
- 4.2.4 Appointees shall possess knowledge and understanding of accessibility related issues and services currently being provided by the community. Appointments shall be approved by Council annually at their October meeting.
- 4.2.5 The Committee shall have up to 9 voting membership that includes:
 - a) 2 Town of Amherst Council members
 - b) 6 community members
 - c) 1 Amherst Youth Town Council member as appointed by Council
- 4.2.6 Non-voting members shall include:
 - a) Municipal Accessibility Coordinator – Town of Amherst staff

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

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. AYTC members may be one or two year terms.
- 4.3.2 The Town of Amherst Council members shall be appointed annually by Council.
- 4.3.3 The Town of Amherst Accessibility Coordinator, and the Secretary of the Committee shall be employees of the Town of Amherst and appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 4.3.4 The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected annually by the Committee.

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 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. Members of the Working Group may consist of additional members of the community.
- 5.5 Meetings shall convene at 4:00 pm on the day selected, unless otherwise specified.
- 5.6 The Committee and its members shall follow the rules of order, as set in the Proceedings of Council Policy, Policy #10350-24.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW

- 6.1 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.

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-30

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Add a provision to appoint an Amherst Youth Town Council member to the Committee, change length of appointments, remove requirement that the Chair be a Town of Amherst Councillor	Clerk, LeBlanc	Council	November 27, 2023

Minutes reference date: February 24, 2020 November 27, 2023

TITLE: Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee Terms of Reference
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-31

APPROVAL DATE: November 27, 2023

CAO Signature: _____



1.0 PURPOSE

The Town of Amherst's Vision is to be a healthy, prosperous, inclusive and environmentally sustainable community in which people of all ages, abilities and cultures are engaged and proud to live, work and play. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Town of Amherst Council on matters related to inclusion, diversity and equity in the organization and the community.

2.0 MANDATE

The Town of Amherst values inclusivity, diversity and equity in all areas of the workplace. Additionally, the Town values the contributions that each citizen brings, and is committed to ensuring full and equitable participation for all in our community. The mandate of the Committee is:

- i. To recommend to Council the development and/or revision of policies and practices to create a diverse municipal workforce and to ensure an inclusive workplace;
- ii. To recommend to Council training opportunities for staff and Council to assist in creating a culturally competent workplace so that all employees feel valued and safe;
- iii. To research and recommend to Council any actions needed to ensure the Town is compliant with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act;
- iv. To include marginalized and under-served persons through Committee membership recruitment, sub-committee participation and community engagement;
- v. To make recommendations regarding equitable municipal services and programs that meet the needs of all residents
- vi. To promote and celebrate the diversity within our community

The Committee's initial mandate is for a two-year term, with the first 12-months dedicated to the creation of an internal organizational action plan. At the end of the 12 months, the Committee will evaluate the feasibility of developing an external community action plan. At the end of the two-year term, the Committee will review the terms of reference and make recommendations to Council regarding the Committee's continuing role.

3.0 MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Committee will be as follows:

- a. Voting Members:
 - i. Two (2) Councillors;
 - ii. Up to 5 Town of Amherst residents
 - iii. A member of the Amherst Youth Town Council as appointed by Council

TITLE: Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee Terms of Reference
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-31

- b. Non-voting Members:
 - i. Town staff as determined by the Chief Administrative Officer

4.0 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

Members of the Committee will be selected as follows:

- i. Council will select their own representatives;
- ii. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected by the Committee at the first meeting of each calendar year.
- iii. Applications for other community representatives will be solicited using the Town website and usual social media outlets. A targeted approach will be used to ensure under-served and under-represented people are reached. Members will possess qualities such as progressive teamwork, cross-sectoral respect, ability to respect confidentiality, and strong communication skills. Interested citizens will be invited to submit a letter of interest and experience for consideration. Citizen and AYTC members shall be appointed by Council.

5.0 DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The Committee is established as an advisory committee to the Amherst Town Council and does not have any delegated authority.

6.0 FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMITTEE

A quorum consists of a majority of the members of the Committee. Decisions of the Committee will be made by a majority vote. For the purposes of this Committee, majority means more than one half of those present.

7.0 BUDGET AND RESOURCES REMUNERATION

The Committee members serve as volunteers and shall serve without remuneration.

8.0 LOCATION OF THE MEETINGS

The Committee meetings will be held at a Town of Amherst facility, with the option of virtual attendance, as per policy.

9.0 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Committee will meet every two months. Additional meetings may be scheduled if needed, following consultation with the Chairperson and the Municipal Clerk. Meetings will normally be held during normal business hours or early evening.

TITLE: Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee Terms of Reference
SECTION: Executive Operations
POLICY NO: 10350-31

10.0 ABSENTEEISM

A committee member who, without leave of the Chair, is absent from three consecutive regular meetings, ceases to be a member.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Titles/Role	Responsibilities
Clerk	Schedule meetings, review Terms of Reference
Council	Appoint Council and citizen members to the Committee, consider recommendations from the Committee
CAO	Appoint non-voting staff members to the Committee
Director, Community Living	Adhere to the strategy, make recommendations to Council when required

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Add a provision to appoint a member of the AYTC, change how staff are appointed to the Committee, and how the Chair and Vice Chair are elected	Clerk, LeBlanc	Council	November 27, 2023

Minutes reference date: 2021 August 4 2023 November 27

TITLE: Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
SECTION: Executive Office
POLICY NO: 10350-29

APPROVAL DATE: December 18, 2023

CAO Signature: 

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy will govern the terms of reference for the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee for the Town of Amherst.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee (PRAC) is to advise Amherst Town Council on matters regarding poverty reduction through the application of social equity lenses within our community. The primary goals of the PRAC are:

1. Assist with increasing awareness of wellness and quality of life for all constituents living in Amherst focusing on what is needed to prevent people from experiencing poverty.
2. To support those who are equity deserving by focusing on inclusion, empowerment, capacity building, and cross-sectoral collaboration

ROLE OF COMMITTEE:

Mandate:

The mandate of the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee is to:

- Provide advice and recommendations to Municipal Council as determined by the goals of strategic plan, or as determined by ongoing collaboration with the community
- Work collaboratively with community organizations and neighboring municipalities to carry out priorities as identified in the strategic plan
- Create awareness and education around poverty and its impact on social wellness;
- Function as a hub of community-based poverty reduction assets;
- Consider and integrate the advice and activities of other council committees with mandates aligned with poverty reduction;
- Align with strategic priorities of councils that are matters related to the committee's purpose; and
- Review these Terms of Reference every three years.

TITLE: Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
SECTION: Executive Office
POLICY NO: 10350-29

MEMBERSHIP:

Committee Composition and Term

The committee will endeavor to maintain a diverse and inclusive membership and represent all demographics and cultural groups within Amherst.

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected by the committee at the first meeting of each calendar year.

The membership of the PRAC will be as follows:

- Two Councillors as voting members
- Up to six members of the public as voting members ideally with experience in a social equity field or lived experience. Membership will not be limited to Town of Amherst residents; however, preference will be given to residents of the Town of Amherst.
- Staff are not voting members.
- Applications for community representatives may be solicited using radio, newspaper, social media and municipal websites. Interested citizens will be invited to submit a letter of interest and experience. Staff will review the applications with the Councillor appointed to the Committee and make a recommendation to Amherst Town Council for approval of the citizen appointments.

MEETINGS:

Delegated Authority

The PRAC is established as an advisory committee to the Amherst Town Council and does not have any delegated authority. The Committee has no authority to direct staff but may request direction from the CAO as needed.

Functioning of the Committee

The Clerks Office will manage the scheduling and facilitation of Committee meetings.

A quorum consists of a majority of the members of the Committee. The Committee will attempt to make decisions by consensus, in the absence of such a vote will be held.

TITLE: Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
SECTION: Executive Office
POLICY NO: 10350-29

Budget and Resources Remuneration

PRAC Committee members serve as volunteers and shall serve without remuneration.

Frequency of Meetings

It is expected the PRAC will meet quarterly or as determined by the Committee.

Absenteeism

If a committee member misses three consecutive meetings without giving notice to the Committee, the position will be considered vacated and a new representative will be appointed.

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director Community Living	Ensure the Committee meets quarterly, follows the terms of reference and brings forward recommendations from the committee to Council
CAO	Ensures recommendations are reviewed by Council at Committee of the Whole meetings and communication on meetings is forward to PRAC
Council	Reviews monthly reports on progress and considers any recommendations brought forward with due diligence

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Revise the Terms of Reference to be a Town of Amherst Committee	Director of Community Living, Bristol	Council	December 18, 2023

TO: Mayor Rob Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bristol Director, Community Living

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Strategic Plan

ORIGIN: The Town of Amherst is required to update its Accessibility and Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan by April 1, 2025.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting, approval of the 2025 Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND: Municipalities and other prescribed public sector bodies, through the Accessibility Act of NS 2017 and the NS Dismantling Racism and Hate Act 2022 are required to develop and update their strategic plans by April 1, 2025. The Town of Amherst approved an Accessibility Strategic Plan in 2022 and the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan in 2023. Both plans are required to be updated and approved by Council and forwarded to the Province by April 1, 2025.

DISCUSSION: Staff have been working on the development of the joint Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan since May 2024. A joint social equity workshop was held in May of 2024 where mutual concerns were expressed for underseved and underrepresented groups. Since that time staff have attended several workshops, zoom calls and a provincial conference in November to inform on best practices when developing the new joint plans. Both committees and the public have been actively involved in community outreach to gather information to formulate the new Strategic Plan, its goals and objectives. The existing Strategic Plans have been reviewed, successes articulated and advice given on what is still required. Staff have been seeking collaboration from community allies and members of the public which has allowed us to inform on the future plan for our community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: The community, through the AIDE Committee, will have continued input into the development of policy and procedures related to Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025021

Date: March 17, 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: None with approving the new combined Strategic Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Continued engagement with our community at large to ensure everyone has input into AIDE practises conducted in the town.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1 Send back to committee for further assessment
- 2 Defer to next month

Neither of these alternatives are being recommended as the new Plan has to be submitted to the Province by April 1st.

ATTACHMENTS: AIDE Strategic Plan 2025

Report prepared by: Sharon Bristol
Report and Financial approved by:





Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, (A.I.D.E) Strategic Plan



2025-2030



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

We celebrate 400+ years of African Nova Scotian descent.

We strive to foster a diverse community that values everything that makes us unique including our visible differences, such as race or gender expression, as well as our non-visible differences, such as gender identity and diversity of thought.

We are committed to equity, fairness and dignity for all.

Mayor's Message



On behalf of the Town of Amherst, I am proud to introduce our newly combined Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity, (AIDE) Plan. This plan reflects our unwavering commitment to building a community where every resident, visitor, and business feels valued, respected, and empowered to participate fully in all aspects of town life.

Previously, our Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Plan and our Accessibility Plan were separate documents. By bringing them together, we recognize that the principles of IDE and accessibility are deeply connected – ensuring that Amherst is not only welcoming but also designed and structured to allow everyone to thrive.

This plan outlines our vision, goals, and concrete actions to create a more inclusive and accessible Amherst. It is the result of meaningful engagement with our community and a shared commitment from Council, staff, and residents to foster a town where barriers are removed, voices are heard, and diversity is celebrated.

As we move forward, we acknowledge that this work is ongoing. Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility are not just policies but principles that must guide our everyday decisions and interactions. I invite each of you to join us in making Amherst a place where everyone belongs.

Sincerely,
Rob Small
Mayor, Town of Amherst



Purpose

Amherst is becoming an increasingly diverse population which shapes and enriches the town. As we welcome all, we need to acknowledge that there are many forms of discrimination that can affect one's ability to participate in our community, from generations of systemic racism to facing physical barriers when trying to access our programs and services.

The Town of Amherst, in partnership with other levels of government and community organizations have a pivotal role to play in eliminating inequalities and systemic racism in order to create a welcoming and inclusive community.

This Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Plan (AIDE) outlines our vision and goals over the next three years and will guide our work to bring equity, accessibility and anti-racism to the forefront of the town's decision-making process to strengthen the health and wellbeing of Amherst.



Vision

The Town of Amherst's vision is to be a healthy, prosperous, inclusive and environmentally sustainable community in which people of all ages, abilities, genders and cultures are engaged and proud to live, work and play.

We are committed to ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to contribute and be valued. We believe in supporting diversity, inclusion and dignity for all citizens of our community.

We further seek to understand how we can be more responsive to the needs of the underrepresented groups of our community. We recognize that we need to create a space that is safe for their voices to be heard thus creating a community that is balanced, equitable and committed to ongoing review of our vision's objectives.



Mission

We provide quality leadership, services, opportunities and resources for the benefit of our citizens, and in support of our growth and development of our community in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.



Guiding Principles

Respect-Integrity-Collaboration-Accountability-Inclusivity-Evidence based decision Making-Sustainability.



How Did We Create This Plan

The Town of Amherst Accessibility, and Inclusion Diversity and Equity committees, each created a strategic plan to guide the Amherst Town Council in making decisions related to accessibility, inclusion, diversity and equity. These strategic plans were adopted by Amherst Town Council in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

As we moved towards the development of a new combined plan for Accessibility Inclusion Diversity and Equity (AIDE) it became apparent that a review of the existing strategic plan goals would be required and further community consultation necessary to bring an updated combined plan forward.

Meetings were held with both committees to look at how best to combine the plans. We met with our community allies and members of underserved and underrepresented groups to guide our work. This included people from the African Nova Scotia community, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, new settlers, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities.

We also gathered feedback from a survey that was initially intended to inform our work around the new Amherst Police Department Strategy. This gave us insight into how marginalized groups feel about our policing services, systemic racism in the community, and procedures around dealing with hate crimes.

Our Commitment

The Town of Amherst is aware of the need for reconciliation, the acknowledgement of the centuries long displacement and systemic racialization impacting persons of Indigenous and African NS descent.

We also understand that discrimination and bias exists towards individuals who live with disabilities, the 2SLGBTQ+ and newcomer communities. We are committed to including those who are typically excluded, actively seeking input to hear all voices and identities in the community.

With the guidance of the Town of Amherst Social Equity Committees: Accessibility, and Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, we are committed to doing the necessary work, by growing strong relationships with underserved, underrepresented groups, gathering feedback, researching and revising relevant policies, creating actionable, achievable goals and adequately resourcing the work.





Equity and Anti Racism Plan

Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Target Date
Be the leader in the community known for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity	Ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act.	Our policies and procedures will be updated to reflect a lens of equity and inclusion and accessibility.	Chief Administrative Officer	2027
	Work to create a diverse municipal workforce.		Mayor and Council	
	Ensure municipal services are equitable and accessible to all.	Elected officials and staff will embrace fairness, equity and operate with these principles each and every day.	Community Living Department	
	Develop, implement and promote anti racism policies and procedures including ways to hear complaints and resolve disputes.	The community will look to the Town as a role model in AIDE.	Human Resources	
	Provide educational opportunities for elected officials and employees on respect, cultural awareness and the promotion and protection of human rights.			



Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Target Date
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<p>To use Equity, Anti-Racist and Accessible language on all public documents</p>	<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>Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision.</p>	<p>We will ensure 100% of new content meets this standard using readability tools.</p> <p>Training will be provided to content creators to ensure successful implementation.</p> <p>Existing documents reviewed with an equitable and accessible lens.</p>	<p>Marketing Specialist</p> <p>Community Well-Being Manager</p> <p>Director of Community Living</p> <p>Communications Officer</p> <p>Marketing Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing until 2028</p>
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Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Target Date
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**Increase
Community
Engagement**

Over the next 12-24 months we will increase opportunities for engagement by launching an outreach campaign, round tables, to gather public information with diverse groups.

Build stronger connections with youth, the 2SLGBTQ+ and newcomer community.

Organize and launch an outreach campaign to understand how to improve our engagement strategies.

Through improving our engagement strategies we will increase our participation in community consultations, increase feedback from surveys

Create volunteer opportunities that build a sense of belonging and support relationship building in our community.

Build a community committee of volunteers from all diverse sectors of our community to further out Municipal Strategic plans.

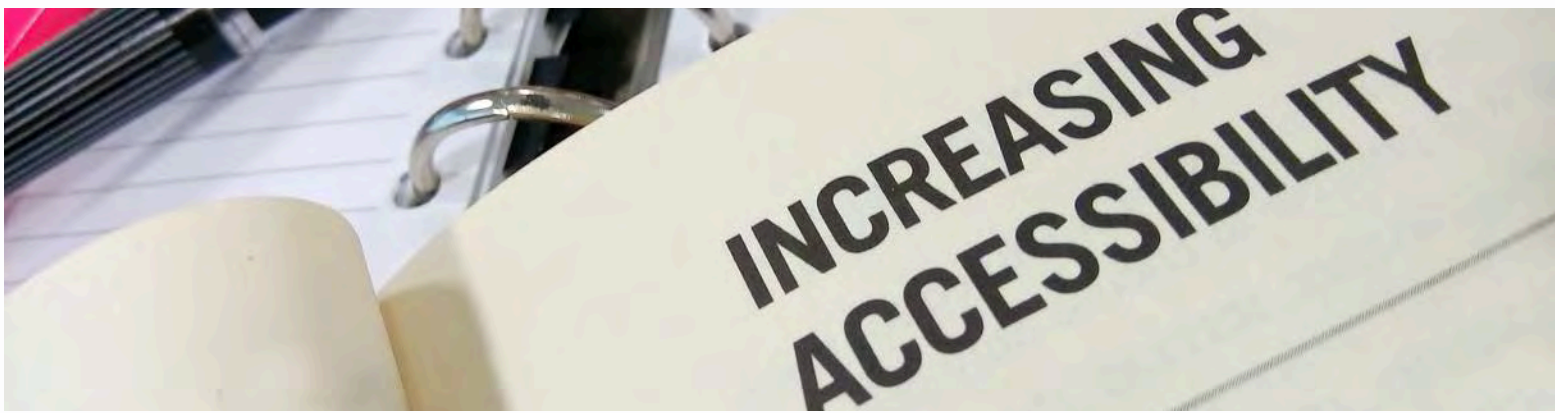
Community Living Department

2025-2027



Goals	Initiatives/ Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Target Date
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<p>Work to build an Equitable and Inclusive Community</p>	<p>We will continue to increase our promotion, respect, understanding and appreciation of our community’s diversity by organizing annual workshops, offering educational resources on equity and anti racism.</p>	<p>Embed social connection and sense of belonging into decisions about policies and programming.</p> <p>Partner with community groups and organizations to help create meaningful opportunities that celebrate diverse backgrounds and cultures.</p> <p>Support a culture of safety and inclusion for all community members.</p>	<p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
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Accessibility Plan

The Town of Amherst and the Accessibility Advisory Committee have been working tirelessly to identify, prevent and eliminate barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities.

We are taking the steps to address discrimination, racism and inequalities in our community as these can limit access to our services, education, employment, information and hinder our resident's ability to navigate our buildings and town.



Successes to date:

Training:

Training was offered to summer staff to ensure our park programs were more accessible to children with different needs. Safer Spaces training which strives to build and increase awareness of the 2SLGBTQIA+ experience, raises awareness of importance of pronouns, explores privilege and addresses how we can be allies. Physical and Health Training was also offered and focused on behaviors and technique, as well as adapting activities.

Staff attended multiple training opportunities for staff on accessibility and equity offered through the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia.

Active Living Strategy:

An Active Living Strategy was developed in 2024 where fostering equity, access, inclusion and safety were the key components in planning a framework to ensure an active and welcoming community for all.

Community Support Grants

Over \$20,000.00 was awarded to community groups and organizations to help with accessible projects including Fundy Winds to develop accessible trails, Autism Nova Scotia to help with community programming, the 50 + Club to improve the parking lot to be more accessible as well as the Cumberland County Museum to update displays to be more accessible.

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Target Date
<p>Increase Inclusive and Accessible community resources and services</p>	<p>Through community engagement, services will be created that fit the needs of all residents and visitors of Amherst.</p> <p>All existing services to be reviewed for being equitable, inclusive and accessible.</p> <p>New services will be introduced that increase sense of belonging (Volunteerism).</p> <p>Create reporting/ monitoring system for incidents of accessibility, hate, racism, discrimination and accessibility issues.</p>	<p>Director of Community Living</p> <p>Community Well Being Manager</p>	<p>2025-2026</p>

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Target Date
<p>Improve service delivery for residents</p>	<p>Improve service delivery by educating staff through ongoing awareness and training programs.</p> <p>Increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights and accessibility barriers in our community.</p> <p>Explore new awareness and training opportunities for staff, senior management and Council.</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer</p> <p>Community Living Team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Improve program delivery</p>	<p>Deliver training to all administrative and forward facing staff, including, event staff and summer students on accessibility issues and barriers to participation.</p>	<p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Ensure events are accessible to everyone</p>	<p>Continue to improve accessibility of public events hosted by the town by planning events with an equitable, anti-racism and accessibility lens, including location, event delivery and participation.</p> <p>Planning will have culture considerations as well as consider the needs of persons with disabilities including, but not limited to, having adequate accessible event parking, accessible portable toilets and, when possible, places to rest from sensory overwhelming environments.</p>	<p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



Information & Communication

Successes to date:

Delivery of Communication:

Staff attended Accessible Communications regional training on digital communications and plain language.

Website Re-Development:

The Town of Amherst recently completed a website re-development project, which included making improvements for accessibility.

Information:

Community Well Being team exploring different platforms to help information be more accessible to the public on events on activities.

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Target Date
<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>We will track and aim for 100% of new content to meet this standard using readability tools.</p>	<p>Community Living Department</p>	<p>Ongoing to 2028</p>
	<p>Training provided to content creators to ensure successful implementation.</p>	<p>Marketing Specialist</p>	
<p>Existing documents will undergo a review to ensure we are updating documents to reflect our vision</p>	<p>Existing documents will be revised where necessary.</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>2028</p>
		<p>Marketing Specialist</p>	
		<p>Staff</p>	

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Target Date
Improve signage to meet provincial standards	<p>Implementing signage consistent with accessibility best practice.</p> <p>Prioritize having signage where necessary and appropriate.</p>	<p>Community Living Staff</p> <p>Operations</p>	2028
Evaluate how we communicate to our external partners	<p>Develop a comprehensive communications plan that identifies strategies on how to communicate to and engage with the public.</p> <p>Seek input from equity deserving groups, persons with disabilities and newcomers.</p>	Marketing Strategist	2028



Successes to date:

Improvement of Town Sidewalks:

\$145,000 for sidewalk improvements 2023/24/25. All the sidewalk improvement projects included the installation of Tactile warning surface indicator plates.

February 24, 2025 Council approved amendments to the Sidewalk/Curb Construction Policy as part of the Accessibility Strategy. This change was recommended by the Accessibility Committee.

Active Transportation:

Currently, the Town of Amherst partially funds the Cumberland County Transportation Society bus system. The transportation society has fully accessible buses that run daily throughout Cumberland County and the Town of Amherst.

Goals	Initiatives/Actions	Owner/Lead	Target Date
Improve Pedestrian Infrastructure	<p>We will enhance connectivity in the community by improving pedestrian infrastructure including:</p> <p>Sidewalks: replacing the existing brick pavers with concrete.</p> <p>Installation of tactile warning plates.</p> <p>Prioritize safety of pedestrian infrastructure by investigating and making recommendations for appropriate lighting and benches to rest where possible.</p>	<p>Operations</p> <p>CAO</p>	Ongoing as operational budget allows - 2028
Enhance snow removal practices through consultation with outside agencies such as CNIB	Prioritize snow clearance at public buildings and municipally managed parking areas.	Operations	Ongoing
Continue to improve Active Transportation opportunities by reviewing accessibility of trails and sidewalks	Review current Active Transportation strategy, continue to enhance AT opportunities.	Operations	Ongoing

Increase opportunities for citizens to move throughout the community barrier free

Determine feasibility of an accessible community transit system.

Council
CAO
Staff

2027



Education

Initiatives/Actions

Indicators of Progress

Owner/Lead

Target Date

Continue to grow partnerships with schools and education centres at all levels to offer supports where needed

Support in preventing and removing barriers to accessing education.

Inclusion of students in community based cultural events such as, the Mawio'mi and pride events.

Community Living Department

Ongoing

Provide training and opportunities for accessibility, equity and anti-racism

Training and get staff involved in conversation about how equity, racism and accessibility impact their work.

Community Living Department

Ongoing

Work to ensure Community Safety

Support community initiatives such as neighborhood watch, provide training in senior scooter and crosswalk safety.

Police

Community Living Department

Ongoing



Employment

Successes to date:

Human Resources:

We implemented the Employment Equity Policy in February 2024. Over the past two years, we have conducted a comprehensive review of all HR policies to include inclusive language.

All job postings now include language around needing accommodations, equal opportunity and identifying protected groups. We have also eliminated bias from job postings.

We offer flexible work options and accommodations as required and have adopted a Flexible Workplace Policy.

Initiatives/Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Target Date
Diversify recruitment methods	Advertise jobs through diverse networks and community organizations.	Human Resources CAO	Ongoing to 2026
	Create hiring committee with equitable review of resumes.		
Promote Amherst as an inclusive and diverse workforce	Provide support and accommodations where necessary.	Human Resources CAO Staff	Ongoing
	Create team building and a welcoming atmosphere.		
	Ensure all abilities are recognized and celebrated.		
Review of policies and procedures	Continue to examine policies through a lens of accessibility and equity.	Human Resources CAO	2028
	Create Anti discrimination policies and mechanisms for dealing with issues.	Staff	



Built Environment

Successes to date:

Town Hall:

Replacement of the ramp at Town Hall to current standards -approx. - \$45,000 Addition of handrails at Town Hall entrances- approx. - \$5000 Ensuring new reception desk is at proper height.

Robb's Complex & Trail System:

\$21,000 for a new trailer groomer. The new groomer attachment can bury stones, remove surface vegetation, breakup clumps of hard packed soil, fill in holes / washouts, and leave behind a levelled surface layer with a single pass of the tractor. The attachment will also be used to maintain the foul lines and warning tracks at the Robb's Complex. The groomer has improved operational efficiency and accessibility of our trail system. 2023.

Stadium Platform:

To allow individuals who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices have access to view the ice surface over the dasher boards during an ice event, the Facilities Department at the Town of Amherst built a \$2000 10" high raised platform. The ramp can be moved and stored until needed. This project was completed as of September 2023.

Raised Garden Beds:

Town of Amherst provided \$5000 to the Amherst Community Garden to build accessible raised garden beds. 2023.

Accessible Playgrounds:

Over the past several months Town staff have connected with like-minded organizations and committees to discuss accessible playground planning, design, cost and inclusivity. Playground consultation was conducted with Camp Tidnish, the Parrsboro Playground Committee and the Town of Westville. Staff also issued a public survey for parents, caregivers and those with disabilities in the Town of Amherst to gain insight and understanding on how to make our play spaces accessible and inclusive for all. Terms of reference for an external Accessible Playground Committee has been developed. Council approved \$200,000 for the construction of a fully accessible playground and a work plan has been developed to move this work forward.

Initiatives/Actions	Indicators of Progress	Owner/Lead	Target Date
Review emergency management and building evacuation plan with a lens of accessibility in mind	A new emergency management and building evacuation plan is written with an equitable and accessible lens.	CAO Safety Committee	2026
Conduct built environment assessments	Continue to assess areas of accessibility to provide recommendations to council on improvements.	Operations CAO Council Staff	2025-2028
Improve ability to provide barrier free participation in events	Invest in infrastructure to host inclusive and accessible signature events which will attract tourists and newcomers.	Mayor/Council CAO Operations Community Living Staff	Ongoing to 2030
Improve access to safe, affordable and accessible housing	Support organizations that develop affordable and accessible housing.	Council CAO	Ongoing to 2030
Investigate & make recommendation on the establishment of an Accessible Playground	<p>Review parks and greenspace to evaluate usage and accessibility to accommodate growth and changing needs of the community.</p> <p>Consult community members with lived experience to gain insight and input on what should be included in the playground.</p> <p>Begin fundraising initiatives: community outreach, grants.</p>	CAO Operations Community Living	2028

**Increase
partnerships in
Accessibility**

Work with
community partners
to assist them with
grant writing.

Community Well
Being Staff

2026

Advise on how
community partners
can become more
accessible.



Who is Responsible for Implementing?

- **Amherst Town Council:**
Recognize the importance of implementing this plan and seek adequate funding to allow our municipality to meet the requirements under Nova Scotia's Accessibility and Anti-Racism Acts.
- **CAO/Staff:**
Ensure the commitments outlined in the AIDE Plan are integrated into all municipal practices.
- **Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee:**
Review this AIDE Plan on an annual basis as required by the Accessibility and Anti-Racism Act and update as required. The committees Review Municipal Accessibility Report Cards annually and report on progress toward meeting the commitments outlined in this plan.
- **Director of Community Living/Community Well-Being Manager:**
Guide the work of the Accessibility Advisory and the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee. Book meetings, prepare and distribute agendas and minutes, assist the chairperson in leading the meetings, manage recruitment for the committee when necessary. Act as a liaison with the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee and the Amherst Town Council.
- **Human Resources:**
Ensure all employee and hiring policies, procedures comply with Nova Scotia Human Rights Act and are reviewed and revised using an equitable, anti-racism and accessibility lens.





How We Will Measure And Evaluate?

- Develop a communications pathway that includes a emailing/ mailing list of persons who are interested in the ongoing work the committee is doing, to promote the work that is being done, and ask for feedback.
- Host regular information sharing sessions on the work of the committee and ensure underserved/underrepresented and diverse communities are invited.
- Establish a process of inquiry/complaint that is reviewed by the CAO and senior staff to respond to these inquiries.
- Community participation to be tracked and reviewed by the committee and council where required.
- Feedback to be gathered in various forms. The manner in which it's collected will be based on community preference.
- Equity Impact Assessments and Evaluation tool to be used when creating and reviewing policies, procedures, programs and services.



Key Partners

The Town of Amherst has many community allies and partners.

These include:

- The Cumberland African Nova Scotia Association
- Autumn House
- Bridge Adult Service Centre
- Maggie’s Place
- Cumberland YMCA
- Lilac Place (Resource Centre for Women)
- Sexual Health Centre
- Schools Plus
- Cumberland Housing and Homelessness Association
- Cumberland Restorative Justice Society
- Cobequid Housing Authority
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Autism NS
- Senior Safety program
- Amherst 50+ club
- Spring Street Academy
- The Nova Scotia Community College
- Y Reach
- West Highlands Elementary
- Amherst Regional High School
- Amherst and Area Multi-Cultural Society
- After the School Bell
- Amherst Food Assistance Program
- Cumberland County Transportation Society
- Cumberland Adult Education
- Cumberland Early Intervention Program
- Cumberland Pride
- Indigenous Affairs
- In the Works



Conclusion

We understand this plan is a living document and as our population continues to grow and age, new issues may arise. We will continue towards meeting the accessibility goals by 2030 as well as advancing equity and addressing systemic racism to improve community well-being.

A young girl with dark hair and a bright pink shirt is smiling. She has a colorful rainbow face paint on her cheek. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people at what appears to be an outdoor event.

Glossary

A Glossary of terms has been developed in an effort to promote understanding and clarify the terms that are contained in the strategy. It is recognized and understood that these definitions may change over time but will form a foundation for understanding in the current document.

Accessibility: Accessibility involves removing the barriers faced by individuals with a variety of disabilities (which can include but not limited to physical, sensory, cognitive, learning, mental health) and the various barriers (including attitudinal and systemic) that impede an individual's ability to participate in social, cultural, political and economic life. Disabilities can be temporary or permanent. As we age our abilities change and therefore an accessible society is one designed to include everyone and be fluid over time.

Anti-Racism involves actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. It includes understanding one's own privilege, challenging internalized racism, and speaking out against racism when it is seen.

An anti-racist person or organization goes a step further than simply stating they are anti-racist. These individuals and organizations work to understand their own privilege, challenge their own internalized racism and call out racism when they see it impacting others.

Barrier: Something that makes it harder for some people to participate. Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act defines a barrier as "anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice."

Disability: As defined in Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act: "a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society."

Glossary



Diversity: Vancouver's A Healthy City for All (2014) describes diversity as a term that is often confused for race or culture when in fact it should be used to consider the number of interlocking ways that people are disadvantaged and mistreated, and thus how people from various and marginalized groups or communities feel comfortable, safe and able to access their community spaces and institutions (City of Vancouver, 2014)

Equity: Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equity in all aspects of a person's life (Government of Canada, 2019)

Inclusion: Acknowledging and valuing people's differences so as to enrich social planning, decision making and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive Municipality, we each have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and are recognized as valued, contributing members of society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the mainstreams learn from those who are excluded and initiate change (City for All Women Institute, 2015)

Institutional Racism: Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than people of color, often intentionally or inadvertently (National League of Cities, 2017)

Intersectionality: The intersection, or crossover, of our many identities affect how each of us experiences the Municipality. The intersections occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments, other political and economic unions, religious institutions and media (City for all Women, 2015)

Marginalization: Refers to a long-term, structural process of systemic discrimination that creates a class of disadvantaged minorities. These groups become permanently confined to the margins of society; their status is continually reproduced because of various dimensions of exclusion, particularly in the labor market, but also from full and meaningful participation in society (Province of Ontario, 2017)

Glossary



Oppression is when one group benefits at the expense of another, using power and privilege.

Plain Language: Conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information (plainlanguagenetwork.org/).

Privilege: The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a given context (City of All Women Institute, 2015)

Race: A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, ethnic classification, and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups (Portland Metropolitan Region, 2017)

Racism is when people treat others unfairly because of their race, either personally or through unfair practices in organizations.

Racialization: A process of delineation of group boundaries and of allocation of persons within these boundaries by primary reference to (supposedly) inherent and/or biological (usually phenotypical) characteristics (Province of Ontario, 2017)

Racial Equity: Closing the gap so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all (National League of Cities, 2017)

Structural, Institutional or systemic racism: When institutions or systems create or maintain racial inequity, often as a result of hidden institutional biases in policies, practices and procedures that privilege some groups and disadvantage others (Province of Ontario, 2017)

Systemic racism refers to policies and practices within institutions that unintentionally exclude or promote certain groups.



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025032

Date: March 17, 2025

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Themed Crosswalks Policy

ORIGIN: Policy Development for Themed Crosswalks

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting approval of the new Themed Crosswalk Policy.

BACKGROUND: The Town of Amherst has four crosswalks in the downtown core that are currently considered theme crosswalks. These are located on East Victoria at the Havelock and Church Street intersections designated for Veterans and one in front of Town Hall designated for Pride.

DISCUSSION: Through the collaborative work in the community with allies, the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee, and the development of the new combined Strategic Plan, staff are proposing the addition of two new themed crosswalks for African Nova Scotians and Indigenous partnerships. It was therefore realized that a new policy that addresses the procedures around when, the number of crosswalks, maintenance etc. would be needed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Annual paint upgrades covered under the Operational budget.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: Approving this policy shows the continual efforts by the Town of Amherst to improve all aspects of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity in all our functions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no environmental implications to this decision.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Town staff have met with key stakeholders to discuss this and have received a favourable response.

ALTERNATIVES: 1) defer to next month
2) do not approve the policy and/or request amendments

ATTACHMENTS: New Themed Crosswalk Policy.



Report prepared by: Sharon Bristol
Report and Financial approved by:

TITLE: THEMED CROSSWALK POLICY
SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO:

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance as to how and when themed crosswalks on Town of Amherst owned or controlled properties shall be requested and permitted.

POLICY STATEMENT

All crosswalk themes shall have significance to, and provide benefit to the Town of Amherst and its citizens.

The crosswalk paintings shall not:

- Represent illegal activities
- Promote hate
- Be a political advertisement
- Cause, abet or stimulate civic disorder
- Be commercial in nature
- Be otherwise inappropriate in the opinion of the Town
- Represent or infer that the Town is a sponsor or proponent on the content or representation of the crosswalk.

CONDITIONS

1 LOCATIONS

The Town of Amherst has six crosswalks in the downtown core that will be considered as themed crosswalks, four on East Victoria Street, one on Church Street and one on Havelock Street.

2 INSTALLATION AND UPKEEP OF CROSSWALKS

The installation and upkeep is to be managed by the Town of Amherst only.

3 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL CROSSWALKS

- The painting of crosswalks by individuals or groups is not permitted on an ad hoc basis.
- Requests from individuals or groups to have further themed crosswalks, can be brought forward as a request to alter this policy.

4 DISCLAIMER

The Town reserves the right to refuse any application which it deems inappropriate.

TITLE: THEMED CROSSWALK POLICY
SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO:

APPENDIX A – Approved Themed Crosswalks

Veterans

**East Victoria Street (1) at Havelock Street intersection
and (2) Church Street intersection crossing Victoria Street**

Pride

East Victoria Street in front of Town Hall

African Nova Scotia

Church Street

Indigenous

Havelock Street

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director, Community Living	Ensure the guidelines of this policy are clear to community organizations.
Council	Continue to encourage and support the inclusive and equitable approval of this policy

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Director, Community Living, Bristol	Council	



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025027

Date: March 17, 2025

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Amherst Town Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sarah Wilson, Director of Finance

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Policy Review – Installment Billing Policy

ORIGIN: Policy Review.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: Town of Amherst Installment Billing Policy, #3800-03.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting of Council the proposed amendments to the Installment Billing Policy #3800-03 for approval.

BACKGROUND: The policy was originally adopted and approved in April 2000 with amendments in March 2008 and March 2011. The Installment Billing Policy provides authority and guidelines for interim tax billing as per section 112 of the Municipal Government Act.

DISCUSSION: As part of the policy review, this policy has been reviewed, and a copy of the amended version is attached. The text highlighted in red is new wording and the text that is struck out is being removed. The following changes are being recommended:

- Creation of a new policy statement.
- Updated interim tax bill due date to be the last business day in May.
- Define the final tax bill due date as the last business day in September.
- Added that final tax bills are to be issued in August each year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Allows taxpayers to pay their property taxes in two installments rather than a single payment each year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: No community engagement required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: No environmental implications.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: There are no social justice implications.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Do not accept the recommended changes and keep policy as it.
2. Make additional changes to the policy.

ATTACHMENTS: Installment Billing Policy, #3800-03 with changes noted in red. Installment Billing Policy, #3800-03 from March 2011.

Report prepared by: Denise Smith, Manager of Financial Services Report and Financial approved by:



TITLE: INSTALLMENT BILLING POLICY
SECTION: CORPORATE SERVICES FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
POLICY NO: 03800-03

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

POLICY STATEMENT

To establish a policy for the installment tax billing of real property taxes levied by the Town of Amherst under authority of Section 112 of the Municipal Government Act.

PURPOSE:

To provide authority and guidelines for interim tax billing.

1. In each year, an amount of the last year's assessment times one half of the tax rate levied in the previous fiscal year shall be due and payable ~~to the Treasurer~~ on the 31st **last business** day of May. These interim tax bills will be issued during the month of April of each year.
2. The rates levied against the property for the current fiscal year, less the payment made under Section 1 of this policy, shall be due and payable on ~~a date to be determined by a resolution of Council~~ **the last business day of September**. **The final tax bills will be issued during the month of August each year.**

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director of Finance/Manager of Financial Services	To ensure policy is followed by staff.
Revenue Collection Officer	To ensure bills are issued twice per year.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Policy review – update wording	Manager of Financial Services	Council	

Minutes reference dates: March 28, 2011 March 31, 2008 April 20, 2000

DEPARTMENT: CORPORATE SERVICES

TITLE: **INSTALLMENT BILLING POLICY**

Minutes reference date: 20 April 2000
31 March 2008
28 March 2011,

PURPOSE:

To provide authority and guidelines for interim tax billing.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. In each year, an amount of the last year's assessment times one half of the tax rate levied in the previous fiscal year shall be due and payable to the Treasurer on the 31st day of May. These interim tax bills will be issued during the month of April of each year.
2. The rates and taxes levied against the property for the current fiscal year, less the payment made under Section 1 of this policy, shall be due and payable on a date to be determined by a resolution of Council.

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: **PCAP Infrastructure Funding Application**

ORIGIN: 2025/26 proposed Capital Budget and the Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP).

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA Section 65 The council shall adopt an operating budget and a capital budget for each fiscal year.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting of Council approval of the Provincial Capital Assistance Program funding application for an ultraviolet disinfection system for the Town's wastewater treatment facility and authorize the CAO to submit the application on behalf of the Town.

BACKGROUND: The proposed 2025/26 capital budget includes a \$650,000 project to install an ultraviolet disinfection system at the Town's Wastewater Treatment Facility.

The treatment plant has been in operation since October 2012. At that time, Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change (NSECC) allowed the plant to operate without an ultraviolet disinfection system as it was hoped the engineered wetlands would provide the level of treatment required. As the plant has not been able to achieve compliance with the effluent discharge requirements set out by NSECC for E.Coli Bacteria and as required by our permit to operate a wastewater treatment facility a UV disinfection system must be added to the treatment process.

DISCUSSION: This project is eligible for 50% funding under the Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP) and requires a resolution from Council be submitted with the application. Council's approval to submit a funding application does not commit council to all or any part of the project should the application be denied.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The total value of the project is \$650,000. If the application is approved PCAP would fund 50% (\$325,000) and the Town would pay 50% (\$325,000)

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: There are no social justice implications as a result of this decision.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025028

Date: March 17, 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: Installing a UV treatment system at this time will ensure compliance with Provincial Legislation and also demonstrates Council's commitment to protection of the environment.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Prior to construction work taking place, a public notification program will be undertaken.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Do not include this project in the capital budget and do not submit the funding application.
2. Submit a funding application for a different project.

ATTACHMENTS: None

Report prepared by: Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations
Report and Financial approved by:





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025038

Date: March 17, 2025

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Amherst Town Council

SUBMITTED BY: Krista Crossman, Director, Human Resources

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: **Annual Performance Review (CAO) Policy**

ORIGIN: Policy review as part of the annual performance evaluation process.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47(1) The council shall make decision in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025, regular meeting of Council, approval of the amendments to the Annual Performance Review – Chief Administrative Officer policy #10350-25.

BACKGROUND: The annual performance evaluation process is underway, and a review of the policy was completed to ensure conformity with the evaluation process.

DISCUSSION: This policy has been reviewed, and the following updates are being recommended:

- Minor grammar corrections in the policy statement, purpose and policy sections highlighted in yellow;
- Minor reorganization of the paragraphs within the policy to improve the readability and create a more cohesive flow of information;
- Appendix 1, "Performance of Duties and Annual Performance Review", used an excerpt from the previous CAO's contract that was no longer applicable. The excerpt has been updated to reflect the applicable section of the current CAO's contract.
- Policy moved to the new policy template as the policy was last reviewed in 2016.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no financial implications. Policy updates only.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: No community engagement is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no environmental implications associated with this decision.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: There are no social justice implications.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Do not accept the recommendation.
2. Direct staff to develop alternative recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS:

#10350-25 Annual Performance Evaluation – Chief Administrative Officer Policy (AMENDED)

Report prepared by: Krista Crossman, Director, HR

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

POLICY STATEMENT

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the only direct employee of Council and is the connecting link between Council and municipal operations. This position derives its authority under Sections 28, 30 and 31 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

- The chief administrative officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the municipality and is responsible to the council for the proper administration of the affairs of the municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the municipality and the policies adopted by the council;
- The council shall communicate with its employees of the municipality solely through the chief administrative officer, except that the council may communicate directly with employees of the municipality to obtain or provide information;
- The council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the municipality to the chief administrative officer; and
- No council member, committee or member of a committee established by the council shall instruct or give instruction to, either publicly or privately, an employee of the municipality.

Regular performance reviews ensure that the CAO is provided with accurate and appropriate **feedback with goals for the purpose of enabling and achieving** corporate objectives and improving municipal performance.

PURPOSE

The performance evaluation of the CAO is a valuable instrument which can serve any or all of the following purposes:

- To formally discuss the relationship between Council and the CAO;
- To ensure that there is clarity with regard to the position expectations of the CAO;
- To provide an assessment of the performance of the role, responsibilities and authority as set out in legislation, Town policy and job description;
- To set objectives and criteria for future evaluation; and
- To serve as the basis for salary adjustments.

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

The annual performance review is part of an ongoing performance management process by which Council and the CAO work together to plan, monitor and review the work objectives and overall contribution to the organization. This is part of a continuous process of setting objectives, assessing progress and providing on-going feedback. The annual review of the CAO's performance should include the development of measurable criteria that:

- Align with the organization's strategic direction and culture;
- Are practical and easy to understand and use;
- Provide an accurate picture of expectation and performance;
- Include a collaborative process for setting goals and reviewing performance based on two-way communication between the Council and CAO;
- Monitor and measure results (what) and behaviours (how);
- Ensure that administrative work plans support the **strategic** direction of the organization;
- Identify and recognize accomplishments
- Support administrative decision-making

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Chief Administrative Officer as the only employee of Town Council.

POLICY

There shall be a CAO review committee of Council to facilitate and support excellent communications and positive collaborative effort between the CAO and elected officials. The Committee will consist of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the most recent Deputy Mayor. Where the most recent Deputy Mayor is not a member of Council, Council shall appoint another member of Council instead.

The review will be completed by December 31 annually, or another date as mutually agreed by the Committee and the CAO. The review will provide Council with the opportunity to assess the CAO's performance for the prior year and to clarify goals and expectations for the upcoming year.

Should the review not have been scheduled by March 31 of the following year, the CAO shall initiate the scheduling of the meeting.

Scheduling the date and time of the review shall be the responsibility of the Mayor in consultation with the Committee and the CAO.

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

Meetings of the CAO Review Committee and any meetings of Council regarding the CAO's performance review shall be held in-camera.

The process to be followed will be as has been agreed in **section 4** of the CAO's employment contract (excerpt at Appendix 1 of this Policy).

The CAO shall be assured that any comments regarding performance shall be strictly confidential and will not be released to any other staff member or the public.

A comprehensive appraisal form based on the core competencies of the job description and annual corporate goals and priorities should be jointly developed and agreed upon by the Committee and the CAO.

The CAO shall be given sufficient time to prepare for and respond to the performance appraisal. The appraisal shall be conducted at a time that is convenient to both the Council and CAO.

Council shall convene an annual strategic planning session in the fall of each year to determine and/or confirm the Town's strategic direction for the coming year. The Town's strategic direction, as approved by Council, shall be documented and forwarded to the CAO within 30 days of the annual **strategic** planning session.

The CAO shall draft a list of goals, objectives and training requirements for discussion during the review process.

The completed appraisal document shall be signed by the Mayor and CAO and be placed in the confidential personnel file.

Council may meet periodically throughout the year to discuss performance with the CAO, to review progress achieved on goals and priorities previously established and approved by Council.

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

APPENDIX 1
PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
(Excerpt from CAO Employment Contract)

4. (a) The Employee shall perform their duties in a professional manner that is expected of a CAO.
- (b) If the Employee successfully completes the probationary period, the Town of Amherst shall perform an annual review (the “Performance Review”) of the Employee’s performance.
- (c) The parties agree that clearly articulated, mutually agreed and measurable performance expectations are fundamental to an effective, efficient, and healthy employment relationship. Thus, the parties commit to using a goal-setting process for the CAO’s performance evaluation. The process shall be similar to the process utilized for Town staff, and it shall commence with a goal-setting process, with specific expectations, as well as commitments by the Town, to provide the support and communications that shall provide mutual commitment to success.
- (d) Council shall appoint a CAO Review Committee to oversee an annual Performance Evaluation and Development Plan. The objectives of the Performance Evaluation and Development plan are:
- (e) To ensure that Council and the CAO understand the responsibilities and priorities of the position as included in the approved position description; and to provide the CAO an opportunity to discuss such responsibilities to increase efficiencies and effectiveness of the organization.
- (f) To provide an opportunity for the Town and the CAO to dialogue on the organization’s priorities, operations and objectives.
- (g) To provide feedback to the CAO regarding the Town’s evaluation as to the CAO’s performance in carrying out the assigned responsibilities.
- (h) To discuss and obtain mutual agreement for long-term objectives and goals for the CAO and the position in the organization.
- (i) To discuss and identify both short- and long-term training requirements, based on position responsibilities and organizational objectives.
- (j) To provide a forum to discuss the factors that are considered in the approval of salary scale increments.
- (k) To discuss revisions to this Employment Agreement.

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

- (2) It is explicitly agreed that the annual goal setting process shall result in reasonable and achievable goals along with adequate resources from the Town, to support their achievement. The goals shall be accompanied by reasonable, mutually agreed upon annual measures and indicators.
- (3) The Town agrees that the process will be completed in writing and annually (by December 30, or at another date as mutually agreed, each year and in writing by the parties).
- (4) The CAO Review Committee shall present Council, in an *in camera* session, with a report that summarizes its findings and recommendations.
- (5) Upon completion of its work, the CAO Review Committee is to give all documents it reviewed or generated as part of this process to the Mayor to be retained in the office of the Mayor, with a duplicate copy given to the CAO.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Mayor	The Mayor will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lead and oversee the CAO performance review process; b. Ensure the review aligns with municipal goals and objectives; c. Provide feedback based on Council priorities and strategic initiatives; d. Work with the Review Committee and HR Director to prepare and deliver the final performance evaluation each year.
CAO Review Committee	The CAO Review Committee will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participate fully in the annual review process; b. Assess performance and set goals for the upcoming year; c. Align the review with Council’s strategic direction.
Chief Administrative Officer	The Chief Administrative Officer will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide self-assessment and updates on progress toward municipal objectives; b. Engage in the review process to discuss performance, achievements, and challenges; c. Implement feedback and improvement strategies as required.
Director, Human Resources	The Director of Human Resources will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assist in facilitating the review process by providing best practices for performance evaluations; b. Ensure the review is conducted fairly, consistently and in compliance with applicable HR policies; c. Supports Council with relevant HR metrics, data and/or feedback mechanisms.

TITLE: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW – CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
SECTION: EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
POLICY NO: 10350-25

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Policy Review: correct grammar errors, update Appendix 1 to align with current CAO contract	Director, HR	Council	

MINUTES REFERENCE DATE

October 3, 2016

DEPARTMENT: Council

TITLE: Annual Performance Review – Chief Administrative Officer

Minutes reference date: 3 October 2016

Policy Statement

1. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the only direct employee of Council, and is the connecting link between Council and municipal operations. This position derives its authority under Sections 28, 30 and 31 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

- The chief administrative officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the municipality and is responsible to the council for the proper administration of the affairs of the municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the municipality and the policies adopted by the council;
- The council shall communicate with its employees of the municipality solely through the chief administrative officer, except that the council may communicate directly with employees of the municipality to obtain or provide information;
- The council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the municipality to the chief administrative officer; and
- No council member, committee or member of a committee established by the council shall instruct or give instruction to, either publicly or privately, an employee of the municipality.

Regular performance reviews ensure that the CAO is provided with accurate and appropriate feedback with goals of ~~enabling and achievement of~~ **for the purpose of enabling and achieving** corporate objectives and improving municipal performance.

Purpose

2. The performance evaluation of the CAO is a valuable instrument which can serve any or all of the following purposes:

- To formally discuss the relationship between Council and the CAO;
- To ensure that there is clarity with regard to the position expectations of the CAO;
- To provide an assessment of the performance of the role, responsibilities and authority as set out in legislation, Town policy and job description;
- To set objectives and criteria for future evaluation; and
- To serve as the basis for salary adjustments.

The annual performance review is part of an ongoing performance management process by which Council and the CAO work together to plan, monitor and review the work objectives and overall contribution to the organization. This is part of a continuous process of setting objectives, assessing progress and providing on-going feedback. The annual review of the CAO's performance should include the development of measurable criteria that:

- Align with the organization’s strategic direction and culture;
- Are practical and easy to understand and use;
- Provide an accurate picture of expectation and performance;
- Include a collaborative process for setting goals and reviewing performance based on two-way communication between the Council and CAO;
- Monitor and measure results (what) and behaviours (how);
- Ensure that administrative work plans support the strategic direction of the organization;
- Identify and recognize accomplishments
- Support administrative decision-making

Scope

3. This policy applies to the Chief Administrative Officer as the only employee of Town Council.

Policy

Reorder “Policy” and “Responsibilities” paragraph structure to enhance readability and provide a cohesive flow of information.

- 4.
- 4.1. **Paragraph #2** The review will be completed by December 31 annually, or another date as mutually agreed by the Committee and the CAO. The review will provide Council with the opportunity to assess the CAO’s performance for the prior year and to clarify goals and expectations for the upcoming year.
 - 4.2. **Paragraph #5** Meetings of the CAO Review Committee and any meetings of Council regarding the CAO’s performance review shall be held in-camera.
 - 4.3. **Paragraph #6** The process to be followed will be as has been agreed in ~~paragraph 15~~ **section 4** of the CAO’s employment contract (excerpt at Appendix 1 of this Policy).
 - 4.4. **Paragraph #7** The CAO shall be assured that any comments regarding performance shall be strictly confidential and will not be released to any other staff member or the public.
 - 4.5. **Paragraph #8** A comprehensive appraisal form based on the core competencies of the job description and annual corporate goals and priorities should be jointly developed, and agreed upon by the Committee and the CAO.
 - 4.6. **Paragraph #9** The CAO shall be given sufficient time to prepare for and respond to the performance appraisal. The appraisal shall be conducted at a time that is convenient to both the Council and CAO.

- 4.7. **Paragraph #10** Council shall convene an annual strategic planning session in the fall of each year to determine and/or confirm the Town's strategic direction for the coming year. The Town's strategic direction, as approved by Council, shall be documented and forwarded to the CAO within 30 days of the annual ~~strategic~~ **strategic** planning session.
- 4.8. **Paragraph #11** The CAO shall draft a list of goals, objectives and training requirements for discussion during the review process.
- 4.9. **Paragraph #12** The completed appraisal document shall be signed by the Mayor and CAO and be placed in the confidential personnel file.
- 4.10. **Paragraph #13** Council may meet periodically throughout the year to discuss performance with the CAO, to review progress achieved on goals and priorities previously established and approved by Council.

Responsibilities

5.
 - 5.1. **Paragraph #1** There shall be a CAO review committee of Council to facilitate and support excellent communications and positive collaborative effort between the CAO and elected officials,. The Committee will consist of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the most recent Deputy Mayor. Where the most recent Deputy Mayor is not a member of Council, Council shall appoint another member of Council instead.
 - 5.2. **Paragraph #4** Scheduling the date and time of the review shall be the responsibility of the Mayor in consultation with the Committee and the CAO.
 - 5.3. **Paragraph #3** Should the review not have been scheduled by March 31 of the following year, the CAO shall initiate the scheduling of the meeting.

APPENDIX 1**PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP) (Excerpt from CAO Employment Contract)**

15. (1) ~~The parties agree that clearly articulated, mutually agreed and measurable performance expectations are fundamental to an effective, efficient, and healthy employment relationship. Thus there is an undertaking and commitment by the Town to employ a goal setting process for the Employee in a manner fully consistent with applicable provincial legislation and other applicable laws. The process shall be similar to the process utilized for Town staff, and it shall commence with a forward goal setting process, with specific expectations, as well as commitments, by the Town, to provide and support the communications that shall provide mutual commitment to success.~~
- ~~(2) There shall be a CAO Review Committee of Council, which shall be appointed by Council to facilitate and support excellent communications and positive collaborative effort between staff and elected officials. Council shall receive and review a report, which summarizes the findings and recommendations of the CAO Review Committee. In all cases both the Town and the Employee will endeavour to support and sustain effective performance and relationships in the interests of the community. All documents approved by the Review Committee will be retained by the office of the Mayor, and as well as a complete duplicate by the office of the CAO.~~
- ~~(3) The parties agree that the goals by which the Employee is assessed shall be established annually through a mutual process of drafting and discussion leading to a mutually acceptable and clear understanding, shall be both consistent and commensurate with the role of the CAO in the Town of Amherst by laws and policies and the Province of Nova Scotia per regulations and legislation, shall be in all ways directed to advance the best interests of the Town and shall include the measures of performance that also reflect sufficient resources and time to be accomplished by the Employee and all staff where such goals will result in delegation and the engagement of others.~~
- ~~(4) The Town and the Employee agree that there shall be an annual Performance Development Plan, the objectives of which are:~~
- ~~a) To ensure that Council and the Employee understand the responsibilities and priorities of the position as included in the approved position description; and to provide the employee an opportunity to discuss such responsibilities to increase efficiencies and effectiveness of the organization.~~
 - ~~b) To provide an opportunity for the Employer and Employee to dialogue on the organization's priorities, operations and objectives.~~
 - ~~c) To provide feedback to the Employee regarding the Employer's evaluation as to the Employee's performance in carrying out the assigned responsibilities.~~
 - ~~d) To discuss and obtain mutual agreement for long term objectives and goals for the Employee and position in the organization.~~
 - ~~e) To discuss and identify both short and long term training requirements, based on position responsibilities and organizational objectives.~~

- ~~f) To provide a forum to discuss the factors that are considered in the approval of salary scale increments.~~
- ~~g) To discuss revisions to this Employment Agreement.~~
- ~~(5) The Town agrees that the PDP process will be completed annually by December 31, or at another date annually as mutually agreed by the parties;~~
- ~~(6) It is explicitly agreed that the annual goal setting process shall result in reasonable and achievable goals along with adequate resources, provided by the Town, to support their achievement. The goals shall be accompanied by reasonable, mutually agreed upon, annual measures and indicators. This process is subject to annual written documentation and mutual agreement.~~

Replace with current CAO section 4 of agreement

APPENDIX 1

PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW (Excerpt from CAO Employment Contract)

4.
 - (a) The Employee shall perform their duties in a professional manner that is expected of a CAO.
 - (b) If the Employee successfully completes the probationary period, the Town of Amherst shall perform an annual review (the "Performance Review") of the Employee's performance.
 - (c) The parties agree that clearly articulated, mutually agreed and measurable performance expectations are fundamental to an effective, efficient, and healthy employment relationship. Thus, the parties commit to using a goal-setting process for the CAO's performance evaluation. The process shall be similar to the process utilized for Town staff, and it shall commence with a goal-setting process, with specific expectations, as well as commitments by the Town, to provide the support and communications that shall provide mutual commitment to success.
 - (d) Council shall appoint a CAO Review Committee to oversee an annual Performance Evaluation and Development Plan. The objectives of the Performance Evaluation and Development plan are:
 - (e) To ensure that Council and the CAO understand the responsibilities and priorities of the position as included in the approved position description; and to provide the CAO an opportunity to discuss such responsibilities to increase efficiencies and effectiveness of the organization.
 - (f) To provide an opportunity for the Town and the CAO to dialogue on the organization's priorities, operations and objectives.
 - (g) To provide feedback to the CAO regarding the Town's evaluation as to the CAO's performance in carrying out the assigned responsibilities.

- (h) To discuss and obtain mutual agreement for long-term objectives and goals for the CAO and position in the organization.
 - (i) To discuss and identify both short and long term training requirements, based on position responsibilities and organizational objectives.
 - (j) To provide a forum to discuss the factors that are considered in the approval of salary scale increments.
 - (k) To discuss revisions to this Employment Agreement.
-
- (2) It is explicitly agreed that the annual goal setting process shall result in reasonable and achievable goals along with adequate resources from the Town, to support their achievement. The goals shall be accompanied by reasonable, mutually agreed upon annual measures and indicators.
 - (3) The Town agrees that the process will be completed in writing and annually (by December 30, or at another date as mutually agreed, each year and in writing by the parties).
 - (4) The CAO Review Committee shall present Council, in an *in camera* session, with a report that summarizes its findings and recommendations.
 - (5) Upon completion of its work, the CAO Review Committee is to give all documents it reviewed or generated as part of this process to the Mayor to be retained in the office of the Mayor, with a duplicate copy given to the CAO.

Add Roles & Responsibilities

Add Version Log

Add Minutes Reference Date

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Economic Development

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Industrial Park Land Sales Policy

ORIGIN: This item supports Economic Prosperity and Industrial Park Expansion, both components of Council's Strategic Plan 2025-2028. In January 2024, Council passed the following motion: **That Council approve the purchase of Lots W, 8B, 21, 46, and 55, at Net Book Value, plus closing costs for future industrial park development.**

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: Municipal Government Act, Section 50(5) *A municipality may (b) sell property at market value when the property is no longer required for the purposes of the municipality.* Section 57(1) *A municipality may (a) solicit and encourage the establishment and development of new, and the establishment, development and expansion of existing institutions, industries and businesses in and around the municipality[.]*

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting of Council the proposed draft Industrial Park Land Sales Policy and amended Policy 2300-01 Sale of Usable Town Owned Lands for approval.

BACKGROUND: In early 2024, the process began to acquire five undeveloped properties in the Industrial Park owned by Invest Nova Scotia for Net Book Value (less than \$200), plus legal and closing costs. The ownership transfer required ministerial approval and significant survey and legal work however should be complete by the end of March.

Taking ownership of the remaining undeveloped properties will give the Town more direct control over their eventual sale and development, which will support Council's strategic priority to develop the park. To this end, the attached policy gives the CAO the authority to negotiate and sell property without having to seek Council approval for each sale. The process for sales would involve the following conditions:

- Purchaser provides a proposal outlining the operation and a Site Development Proposal that would form part of the Agreement of Purchase and Sale.
- Agreement of Purchase and Sale requires the proposal to comply with the MPS and LUB (and any other relevant Bylaw) and shall not constitute an obnoxious, nuisance or public hazard.
- Purchase price based on market value established by a third-party appraisal completed no more than 36 months prior to sale.



- The Agreement of Purchase and Sale would include a buy-back agreement stipulating that the Town may repurchase the property at 90% of the purchase price if construction is not commenced within 24 months from the closing date.
- Prospective buyers would be dealt with on a first come / first serve basis, except where multiple offers exist on the same property, the CAO, at their sole discretion, may evaluate the Site Development Proposal.
- The CAO will have sole discretion over timing and conditions of the sale, but may refer decision to Council where warranted.
- All sales are reported to Council at or before the next scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting.

Minor amendments to Policy 2300-01 Sale of Usable Town Owned Lands are also included that refers to the subject policy in the case of industrial land sales.

DISCUSSION: The sale process as described above gives the Town the ability to respond quickly to potential sales of industrial lands, but provides a level of protection against speculative lands buyers.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Proceeds of the sale and ongoing tax revenue.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: None specific to this issue.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: None specific to this issue.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Active promotion of the Industrial Park.

ALTERNATIVES: 1) reject this policy and require all individual sales be approved by Council. 2) approve this policy with changes.

ATTACHMENTS: Industrial Park Land Purchase and Sale Policy, and Policy 2300-01 Sale of Usable Town Owned Lands.

Report prepared by: A. Fisher
Report and Financial approved by:



TITLE: Industrial Park Land Sales Policy
SECTION: Facilities Management
POLICY NO: 2300-04

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

PURPOSE

1. To provide guidance and authority to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for the sale of industrial-use land within the Town of Amherst, specifically in the Industrial Zone, in alignment with broader economic development goals.
2. Provide flexibility to the CAO to sell or retain industrial land based on market conditions and future development needs, with all land sold at its appraised value, or at a price established by Council.
3. To ensure that the sale of lots in the Amherst Industrial Park can occur in a timely manner needed to ensure sales are not impeded by undue process.

POLICY

The Town of Amherst is committed to fostering economic growth and development by ensuring timely sale of industrial land to attract new businesses. The CAO will be authorized to sell Town owned industrial lots at their appraised value, or at a price established by Council.

APPLICATION

The CAO will have authority to sell industrial lands in the Industrial Zone under the following conditions:

1. The proposed development meets the criteria of the Amherst Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Planning Strategy.
2. The sale is valued at the appraised value of the subject property, on a cost per square foot basis. The sale price shall be based on market value established by a third-party appraisal completed no more than 36 months prior to the sale, or a price established by Council.
3. The Purchase and Sale Agreement shall include a Site Development Proposal and a Buy-Back Agreement.
4. The Buy Back Agreement shall stipulate that the Town may repurchase the property if construction is not commenced within twenty-four months from the closing date.
5. On a first come / first served basis, except where multiple offers exist on the same property, the CAO, at their sole discretion, may evaluate the Site Development Proposal.
6. The CAO will exercise sole discretion over the timing and conditions of the sale of industrial lots, and may refer a sale to Council at their discretion.
7. All sales will be reported to Council at the next scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting.

TITLE: Industrial Park Land Sales Policy
SECTION: Facilities Management
POLICY NO: 2300-04

8. All revenue will be deposited in a Capital Reserve account as per the Municipal Government Act.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Economic Development Officer	Promote the sale of lots in the Industrial Park and any expansion thereof.
CAO	Negotiate and execute necessary agreements related to the sale of lots

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Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
New Policy	Fisher, Director of Planning & Economic Development	Council	

Minutes reference date:

TITLE: Sale of Usable Town Owned Lands
SECTION: Facilities Management
POLICY NO: 2300-01

APPROVAL DATE: _____ **CAO Signature:** _____

PURPOSE

To establish a policy on the sale of surplus usable Town owned land. For the purposes of this policy, Usable shall mean:

All Town owned property that meets the requirements of the Subdivision Bylaw, Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw, and is not required for Town use.

POLICY

The Town of Amherst shall make available for sale usable property which Council deems, from time to time, to be surplus to its needs.

Except in the case of properties located in the Industrial Zone, the sale of property will be undertaken by either public tender, public auction, commission arrangement with local real estate firms, and/or by the Town posting the property for sale. The minimum asking price to be stipulated will be based on the appraised value for the property, prepared by an appraiser licensed and certified to practice in Nova Scotia and will be approved by Council before the land is listed for sale.

Any sale at a price less than the asking price must receive prior Council approval and Council may consider any offer presented after public tender.

For sale by public auction, Council will set a minimum price.

Property sold on Town owned lands located in the Industrial Zone shall conform to the Industrial Park Land Sales Policy.

TITLE: Sale of Usable Town Owned Lands
SECTION: Facilities Management
POLICY NO: 2300-01

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director, Planning & Economic Development	Property sale facilitation

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
To add the stipulations that property sold on Town owned lands located in the Industrial Zone shall conform to the Industrial Park Land Sales Policy.	Fisher, Director of Planning and Economic Development	Council	

Minutes reference date: August 17, 1992: January 20, 1997 December 13, 1999 : October 24, 2005 September 25, 2006



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025024

Date: March 27, 2025

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Amherst Town Council

SUBMITTED BY: Dwayne Pike – Chief of Police

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Capital Budget 2025/26 – LiveScan Fingerprinting System Replacement

ORIGIN: 2025/2026 Capital Budget

AUTHORITY: Town of Amherst Procurement Policy; MGA 65 Power to expend money

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting, approval of \$40,000 in the 2025/2026 capital budget for the purchase of new LiveScan system to replace our current system.

BACKGROUND: This item is brought to Council at this time as staff received a quote for the device for budgeting purposes. We have very recently been informed that the price will increase by about \$10,000 in the next couple of weeks. Staff are asking that Council approve this one capital item now in order to avoid the price increase.

This device has been recommended by the Police Commission for inclusion in the upcoming capital budget.

DISCUSSION: Our current LiveScan system is in excess of 10 years old, the software and hardware components are no longer supported and the computer poses a security risk. This system is used to digitally scan and send fingerprint information to the Canadian Police Information Centre databases and allows for near instantaneous results on checks. It is a required instrument for any Police agency. Most agencies are replacing their LiveScan System this coming year as a result.

In 2014, the National Police Information Services Advisory Board resolved that all Canadian police services and law enforcement partners must submit fingerprint forms electronically to the Canadian Criminal Real-Time Identification Service. As a result, our paper-based system was phased out so that all agencies had to purchase or have access to a LiveScan system to submit fingerprints collected as a result of criminal charges or to run fingerprint based criminal record checks for screening purposes for employment, adoptions, citizenship, foreign travel and other purposes. Automating the submissions of fingerprints is a key factor for accurate, complete and timely criminal records updates because they reduce the administrative errors and burden associated with paper-based processes and criminal records maintenance. In order to submit the fingerprint forms electronically, Police Services need to procure LiveScan devices.

Criminal fingerprints are scheduled on Wednesdays and are primarily completed by our By-Law Officer. On average, we schedule 7-8 people for prints on Wednesdays for this purpose, which does not include fingerprinting people held in custody for court or for identification purposes for criminal record checks, both of which are common occurrences.



As noted, our current LiveScan system was purchased in 2014 and Thales has determined that it is at 'end of life' as the software and hardware components are no longer supported and the computer poses a security risk. As a sole-source supplier our quote for this capital purchase was received in October 2024. In our last communications with Thanex, the quoted price will expire on April 7, 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: \$40,000.00 from the 2025/2026 Capital Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: NA

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: None to my knowledge.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: None to my knowledge.

ALTERNATIVES: Do not purchase a system and run the risk of using current system for another year before replacing.

ATTACHMENTS: NIL.

Report prepared by: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Report and Financial approved by:

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

SUBMITTED BY: Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Community Support Grants Policy Amendments

ORIGIN: The Town of Amherst has been awarding community support grants to individuals and organizations for many years. This places value in our community and ensures that non profit organizations are able to operate to support the individuals of our community. It also ensures that our community has a robust schedule of events that support participation of the community.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: MGA 47 (1) The council shall make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council forward to the March 24, 2025 regular meeting the following revisions to section 5(d) of the policy:

Funding for Social Equity Initiatives

For the purposes of this policy, Social Equity Funding” is defined as the annual funding allotment within the Community Support Area Rate, including any reserves for this purpose, to be used for initiatives that specifically target social equity issues. Applications which Council feels meet this definition and for which Council is considering funding from the annual Social Equity Funding allotment or associated reserves set aside for this purpose may be referred to the respective committees for a recommendation.

BACKGROUND: Previous practise by policy was to forward social equity grant applications to the respective committees of Poverty Reduction, IDE or Accessibility for review and provide recommendation on the awarding of grants. This was at times not timely or conducive to being able to award grants to organizations in a timely manner to meet their operational needs.

DISCUSSION: With the quarterly meeting schedule of the combined Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committees, and the fact that we no longer have a Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee this would make it even more difficult to award grants in a timely manner. Changes are being requested by staff to the existing policy that could still allow this process to happen if council or staff are unsure of how to proceed with an application. The change in wording would allow this to continue if needed but not make it mandatory.





COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CDR# 2025033

Date: March 17, 2025

It is recommended by staff that the this recommendation will make our grant program more responsive to the community organizations but still consider review by committees at the discretion of council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: There is no detriment to the community at large. We will continue to support applications that enhance the overall wellbeing of the community and elevate the social determinants of health such as reducing food insecurity and providing opportunities to positively impact the health of our community.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: None

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Community engagement will continue as always.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1 Keep the policy as it exists
- 2 Send back for further review
- 3 Defer to April meeting

ATTACHMENTS: Revised Community Support Grants Policy

Report prepared by: Sharon Bristol
Report and Financial approved by:



TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

APPROVAL DATE: October 30, 2023

CAO Signature: _____

POLICY STATEMENT

- a. The Community Support Grants Policy guides the allocation of financial and in-kind contributions to non-profit or charitable organizations that are based in the Town of Amherst and are providing services that in the opinion of Council, are of a benefit to the residents and businesses of the Town. Applicants and Groups that actively support inclusion, diversity, accessibility and equity will be given priority consideration as will those applications that enhance community well-being and increase the social determinants of health, such as, but not limited to food insecurity, affordable housing, early childhood development, education, social inclusion and non-discrimination of the citizens of Amherst
- b. This program does not govern the following, which are separately administered:
 - i. Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations (full and partial tax exemption by-laws);
 - ii. Residential Property Tax Rebates (low-income homeowners)

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- a. to outline the requirements to apply and be considered for a Community Support Grant
- b. to establish equitable guidelines for the distribution of limited amounts of funds to non-profit and charitable organizations in a manner approved by Council.
- c. to ensure that groups applying for Community Support Grants are evaluated on a consistent, equitable basis, utilizing the same evaluation criteria; and
- d. to provide for public disclosure of a list of grant recipients and the amounts of those grants.

1. SCOPE

The Program includes financial grants in the form of cash and in-kind services (for use of municipal facilities, for example). The value of requests is not limited; however, applicants must be aware that:

- a. The application process is competitive;
- b. There are more grant applications received than available funding;
- c. Past funding commitments should not be interpreted as a guarantee that future requests will be approved. The Town is interested in ensuring that organizations are self-sufficient;
- d. The Town would like to support programs and events that promote community well being and health and safety of our citizens. With that in mind, events based on alcohol consumption (beer gardens, wine tasting tours etc.) may only receive support if other community benefits can be shown. Overall, the Town will show preference to events that are family friendly and support the overall well being of the community.

2. EXCLUSIONS

The following are exclusions from the grant program:

- a. While Council reserves the right to, it is not the intent of this policy to fund activities of organizations that are clearly within the mandate of the Government of Nova Scotia (hospitals, medical programs, treatment services or social services programs) or the Government of Canada (e.g., health, social services)
- b. The Town of Amherst will not consider requests received as part of general (mass) mailing or telemarketing campaigns

TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

- c. Funding applications will not be considered from the following:
 - i. Businesses;
 - ii. Provincial Government organizations;
 - iii. School Boards or quasi government organizations;
 - iv. Non-profit organizations for the purpose of funding accumulated deficits;
 - v. Any organization for the purpose of fundraising to distribute to other organizations/individuals; and
 - vi. Organizations with political affiliations.
- d. Funding will not normally be provided to religious organizations where services include the promotion or required adherence to a particular belief
- e. Funding will also not normally be provided to fundraising campaigns of national charitable organizations either directly or indirectly.
- f. Funding will not normally be provided to organizations who are planning to give proceeds of the event to another organization.

3. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Council is not obligated to:

- a. Provide funding in the form of Community Support Grants;
- b. Spend all the funds allocated for grants in any given year;
- c. Award the full amount requested in an application; or
- d. Renew any grant

4. GUIDELINES

The following guidelines apply to all grant requests except those listed in 4 above:

- a. Funding will generally be limited to no more than 40% of overall costs for an event or program
- b. Funding cannot be used to directly purchase products regulated by the Liquor Control Act R.S., c. 260, s. 1. or the Cannabis Control Act 2018, c. 3, s. 1.
- c. Preference is given to new initiatives; however, grants may be provided in multiple years for the same initiative.

5. PROGRAMS

The following are a list of the grants available:

a. Sport, Arts, and Culture

Maximum funding considered will be \$1000 for a team and \$250 for an individual:

- i. This includes amounts for teams / groups and individuals traveling to Provincial, National and International competitions and events when the Amherst based teams or individual have been successful at a regional qualifying competition recognized by its relevant provincial or national umbrella organization, or have been invited by such an organization;
- ii. The team / group is in the Town of Amherst and is considered by the provincial or national umbrella organization to be the home for the team;

TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

- iii. The individual is competing / attending as an individual and has their principal residence in the Town of Amherst;
- iv. The Town of Amherst resident has been selected / qualified to represent the Province of Nova Scotia or Canada at a national or international competition / event.

b. Festivals, Arts and Cultural Events Grants

Under this component will generally not exceed \$5,000

- i. Event must demonstrate broad community support;
- ii. Provides an experience not duplicated by other ongoing events, festivals or activities.
- iii. Draw spectators locally, from the Maritimes, nationally or internationally and increases the profile of our community;
- iv. Must be affiliated with a local community non-profit organization.

c. Organizational Equipment

Operational and capital equipment purchase requests will be considered on an individual basis.

d. Funding for Social Equity Initiatives

For the purposes of this policy, Social Equity Funding” is defined as the annual funding allotment within the Community Support Area Rate, including any reserves for this purpose, to be used for initiatives that specifically target social equity issues. Applications which Council feels meet this definition and for which Council is considering funding from the annual Social Equity Funding allotment or associated reserves set aside for this purpose may be referred to the respective committees for a recommendation.

Notwithstanding the above, Council reserves the right to fund such poverty initiatives from other sources in addition to or in lieu of the annual Social Equity Funding allotment.

e. Large Scale Projects

Applications for large scale projects (generally greater than \$5,000 or multi-year initiatives) will be evaluated on an individual basis. In these cases, Council may require Municipal representation on a board, the development of an MOU and/or other reporting requirements etc.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

The following outlines the application process:

A call out for applications will be issued by the Town in the months leading up to budget time. Community organizations will be encouraged to apply during this initial call out however applications can and will be received throughout the year and be considered based on budget availability.

Community groups may submit more than one application per year however Council will prioritize funding over a diverse collection of applications to ensure fairness and equity for all.

TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

- a) Applications - must submit the following information
 - i. A complete Community Grant Application
 - ii. a proposed budget for the project
- b) The Town of Amherst may request additional information as deemed necessary.

7. APPROVAL PROCESS

- a. For applications over \$1,000 staff will review applications, ensure requirements have been met and make recommendations to Council. Funding will be determined by council upon reviewing the proposal and recommendations from staff.

8. AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) may approve applications that are less than \$1000 provided such applications qualify in accordance with this policy. Council will be notified by email upon approval of each application and a media release will be issued to communicate the support provided by the Town under the application. A list of applications approved will be provided to Council quarterly. (March, June, September and December).

The CAO may waive the cost for Town owned facility rentals for organizations carrying out an event or service that satisfies the intent of this policy to a maximum of four rental waivers per year per organization.

9. PAYMENT PROCESS

For amounts over \$1,000 payment will be made at time of award as follows:

- a. 75% at the time of award
- b. 25% at the time of receipt of the final report, including receipts. Reports must be received by no later than one year after the event/project is held

10. CONDITIONS

- a. Grant recipients shall:
 - i. Make no misrepresentation on their application
 - ii. Use the grant as described in the application
 - iii. Use the funds in the year granted
 - iv. Council and/or the CAO may request an in-depth report for grants over \$5,000 at their discretion
 - v. Recipients from previous years who received over \$2,000 will be asked to complete a report detailing expenses and impact on the community or individual. This report will be sent prior to the call for applications each year. This report must be completed prior to the new application being considered.
- b. Grant recipients shall keep proper books of accounts and receipts of all expenditures related to the project and shall make them available for inspection by the Town of Amherst upon request.

TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

- c. Non-compliance, in any aspect could result in no funding being awarded in the future year(s)
- d. Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the financial support of the Town of Amherst in all advertising, publicity, programs and signage for which funds are granted
- e. If the event/project does not occur for any reason, all grant monies must be returned
- f. Grant recipients who fail to comply with these conditions may be required to return all or partial funds to the Town of Amherst and may be deemed ineligible for Community Support Grant funding in future years.

11. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

- a. The Town of Amherst will provide financial information with respect to the budgeted amounts disbursed and actual amounts disbursed on an annual basis
- b. A summary of grant awards will be posted on the Town of Amherst's website in accordance with s.65C(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*

TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director Community Living	To ensure adherence to the policy. Advise staff of Policy changes and create awareness in the community of policy changes.
Mayor and Council	Review and approve applications as required.
CAO	Ensure applications under \$1,000 are reviewed and decision made in accordance with policy.

For Administrative Use Only:

VERSION LOG

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Amendments to policy to collapse A fresh grants, streamline application process, increase CAO approval limit, inclusion of MAP requirements, rewording to ensure policy is more inclusive and promotes community well-being	Director Community Living, Bristol	Council	February 27, 2023
Amendment to policy to remove Deed Transfer reference from Poverty Funding. Rename Poverty Funding to Social Equity.	Director Community Living, Bristol	Council	April 24, 2023
Eliminate section 4 as it is exclusionary of other organizations; amend Section 9 Payment Process to eliminate the two phased payment approach as this is administratively time consuming and places undue pressure on community organizations; and amend Section 10 Conditions to include the reporting requirement for organizations who intend to reapply for future grants. This will allow for transparency on how funds are used and the impact on the community.	Director, Community Living, Bristol	Council	October 30, 2023

TITLE: Community Support Grants Policy
SECTION: All Town Departments
POLICY NO: 72000-08

Change the requirement to send applications to the social equity committees from will to may	Director, Community Living, Bristol	Council	
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Minutes reference date: 23 September 2013 27 October 2014 21 May 2015 25 June 2018 24 September 2018
 28 October 2019 27 January 2020 25 October 2021 27 February 2023 24 April 2023
 30 October 2023

MEMO

To: Mayor Robert Small and Members of Council
From: Greg Jones, Director, Fire Services
Date: March 17, 2025
Subject: **Artistic Painting of Fire Hydrants**

We received an inquiry as to whether or not fire hydrants could be painted in an artistic way in the Town of Amherst. While painting hydrants in an artistic way has the potential to be eye-catching, there are a number of issues to consider when evaluating the concept of painting fire hydrants in an artistic way.

Fire hydrants are considered emergency equipment and as such need to be accessible and fully operational to firefighters at all times. It is critical that the painting of a fire hydrants does not interfere with the hydrant threads, the operation of the main stem nut screw, or somehow cause interference with the operability of the hydrant.

It is also important for emergency responders that fire hydrants remain visible. Hydrants must be highly visible as fire crews approach them in an emergency, to avoid any delay in obtaining an effective water supply. Currently, with all public hydrants colored yellow and visible with a standing sign, fire crews have a consistent color to look out for from a distance on arrival at a fire scene. This provides firefighters with the ability to recognize fire hydrants easier and reduce the identification time on scene.

Using the right paint is crucial for both durability and safety. Reflective, oil-based paint is often recommended for durability and visibility. Reflective paint helps firefighters see hydrants in low-light conditions, and oil-based options withstand harsh weather.

While using the hydrants for emergency needs or performing maintenance, it is likely that these actions may mark up any artistic painting with hydrant wrenches or when water supply appliances are hooked up. Unfortunately, this may necessitate the need for touch-ups from the artist. Further, expectations would need to be determined regarding the maintenance of the art; touch-ups would need to be made by the artist, and conditions would need to be set to determine when the hydrants are to be returned to the standard yellow color.

MEMO

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council
FROM: Kim Jones, Deputy CAO
DATE: March 17, 2025
RE: **Strategic Initiatives and Policy/Bylaw Review**

Staff have compiled a monthly workplan to address the Strategic Initiatives as well as the Policy/Bylaw Review project.

These are living documents and schedules will be adjusted based on operational demands or situational changes. Each month we will provide Council with these documents.

Month	Department	Initiative	Next Steps
February 2025 COW	Operations	PA system at Stadium	Schedule training sessions
February 2025 COW	Operations	Policy Review: Sidewalk Curb Construction Policy	Amended at Feb Council
February 2025 COW	Community Living	Themed crosswalks (sponsors?)	Prepare memo on options and costs
February 2025 COW	Community Living	Living museum	Complete
February 2025 COW	Community Living	Military museum	Confirm issue with Council
February 2025 COW	Community Living	Offer free exercise classes	Update Council on current practices, determine next steps
February 2025 COW	Community Living	A' Special Day - 'A' Day	Confirm issue with Council
February 2025 COW	Planning	Tourism Strategy Development	Update Council on the current plan
February 2025 COW	Planning	Reward for development - i.e. Phased In Assessment Program	Confirm issue with Council
February 2025 COW	Police	Police Bylaw Officer capacity	Prepare memo for Council
February 2025 COW	Police	Bridge gap between APD and mental health	Prepare memo for Council
Spring Budget 2025	Operations	Pickleball	Included in 2025/26 Capital Budget
Spring Budget 2025	Planning	TOA student staff position at tourist bureau	Include in 2025/26 budget and develop duties/contact border
Spring Budget 2025	Fire	Firefighter honorariums	Review appropriate amount, report to Council
Spring Budget 2025	Finance	Tax Reduction policy	To be included in the 2025/26 operating budget
Spring Budget 2025	HR	Solutions for TOA staffing on shoulder seasons	To be included in the 2025/26 operating budget
March 2025 COW	Community Living	Sports hall of fame	Prepare memo on options/locations and costs
March 2025 COW	Community Living	Coordinate with senior safety to educate safe scooter use	Meet with Senior Safety Coordinator/Communications staff
March 2025 COW	Community Living	Front door to NS, Welcome Home	Confirm issue with Council
March 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: make a decision on the continued use of brick sidewalks downtown	
March 2025 COW	Community Living	Policy Review: Themed Crosswalks	
March 2025 COW	Fire	Strategic Int: determine the feasibility of a live fire training solution	
March 2025 COW	Operations	Policy Review: Surplus Fill	
March 2025 COW	Finance	Policy Review: Installment Billing	
March 2025 COW	Police	Speeding in school zones	Prepare memo for Council on infractions & current enforcement
March 2025 COW	Police	3-way stop at Townshend and Willow	Traffic Authority Recommendation
March 2025 COW	Police	Lights at Church St/Robert Angus Dr	Traffic Authority Recommendation
March 2025 COW	Police	Left turn light at Subway	Traffic Authority Recommendation
March 2025 COW	Police	Strategic Int: communicate crosswalk safety to pedestrians + motorists	
March 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Turf soccer field	Review previous report/meet with citizen committee lead
March 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Strategic Int: make a decision on Community Centre	
March 2025 COW	HR	Policy Review: Annual Performance Evaluation - CAO	
April 2025 COW	Community Living	Carnival (commercial circus)	Connect with commercial operators
April 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: combine IDE + Accessibility committees + strategies	
April 2025 COW	Police	Helmet enforcement i.e. Scooters	Prepare memo for Council on current practices
Spring Budget 2025	Finance	Policy Review: Tax Reduction policy	
Spring Budget 2025	Finance	Policy Review: Tax Exemption Policy	
Spring Budget 2025	Finance	Policy Review: User Fee Policy	
April 2025 COW	HR	Policy Review: Employee Computer Purchase Policy	
April 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Need for a recreation department:	Prepare memo for Council
April 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Tournaments - Day of Champions, multiple tournaments at once	
April 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Sports Liaison Position	
April 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Territorial acknowledgement	Obtain legal advice and prepare memo for Council
May 2025 COW	Operations	Policy Review: Ice Allocation Policy	
May 2025 COW	Operations	Policy Review: Sign Rental Policy - Stadium	
May 2025 COW	Finance	Policy Review: Signing Authority Policy	
May 2025 COW	Police	Speed bumps in school zones	Traffic Authority recommendation
June 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: review the Active Transportation Strategy to determine next actions	
June 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: develop a business case for a community market	Get input from partners
June 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: develop three new engagement opportunities for youth	
June 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: develop a plan for an accessible playground	
June 2025 COW	Police	Strategic Int: complete the APD strategic plan	
June 2025 COW	Planning	Policy Review: Vacant Building Bylaw	
June 2025 COW	HR	Policy Review: Smokefree Workplace Policy	
June 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Policy Review: Media Policy	
June 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Policy Review: Procurement Policy	
September 2025 COW	Operations	Lead pipe replacement program	Prepare plan for inclusion in next water rate study
September 2025 COW	Operations	Parking lot availability/maintenance	Review Paser ratings/locate - present parking lot usage memo
September 2025 COW	Operations	Policy Review: Standard Specifications for Municipal Services (230-01)	
September 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: adoption of new Municipal Planning Strategy	
September 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: develop a registry of developers to work + communicate with	
September 2025 COW	Planning	Policy Review: Dangerous or Unsanitary Premises Policy	
September 2025 COW	Police	Policy Review: Enforcement Policy and Summary Offence Tickets Policy	
September 2025 COW	HR	Policy Review: Personal Leave of Absence Policy	
September 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Industrial Park Committee	Prepare memo with recommendations
October 2025 COW	Operations	Cricket	Include with parks review
October 2025 COW	Operations	Disc golf	Include with parks review
October 2025 COW	Operations	Strategic Int: review parks/greenspace usage to accommodate growth and changing trends	
October 2025 COW	Operations	Strategic Int: ensure long term viability of Amherst water supply	
October 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Backwater valve education: new Marketing position responsibility	Work with communications staff to develop education plan
October 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Policy Review: Recognition of Retiring Members of Council Policy	
October 2025 COW	Community Living	Policy Review: Arts and Culture Policy	
October 2025 COW	HR	Policy Review: Attendance Administration Policy	

October 2025 COW	Police	Strategic Int: support community initiatives such as neighbourhood watch	
October 2025 COW	Planning	Empty building tax for residential and commercial	Research authority
October 2025 COW	Planning	Sussex "beautification" policy	Research Sussex policy and report to Council
October 2025 COW	Planning	Policy Review: Heritage Advisory Committee	
October 2025 COW	Planning	Business passport program (perhaps with Sackville)	Discuss idea with Downtown Business Association
October 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: collaborate with our economic development partners & host 1 economic forum	
October 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: develop a Town beautification strategy	Actively engage community participation
October 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: determine the feasibility of a transit system (A Bus)	
October 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: Industrial Park expansion, develop a plan	Decide on expansion of industrial park
November 2025 COW	Operations	Colour-themed flowers	Prepare memo on logistics/options and cost
November 2025 COW	Operations	Policy Review: Paving New Residential Subdivision Streets	
November 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: investigate options to form a volunteer committee/liaison/database/action group	
November 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Policy Review: Written Submission to Council Policy	
November 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Policy Review: Naming Public Lands and Town Owned Facilities Policy	
November 2025 COW	Fire	Policy Review: Safety Policy	
November 2025 COW	Fire	Policy Review: Reporting Accidents Policy	
November 2025 COW	Planning	Minimum housing standards - tenant fear of eviction if complaint filed	Review bylaw with Council including intent
November 2025 COW	Planning	Cooperation between business regarding hours	Discuss idea with Downtown Business Association
November 2025 COW	Planning	Policy Review: New Subdivision Streets - Final Subdivision Approval Prior to Street Paving	
November 2025 COW	Planning	Arts component - murals and beautification of our streets	Develop initial memo to Council for discussion
November 2025 COW	Finance	Policy Review: Debt Management Policy	
December 2025 COW	Community Living	Digital idea board	Confirm issue with Council
December 2025 COW	Community Living	Explore naming partners for festivals and events	Develop plan to solicit interest
December 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: promote Amherst as an economic destination	
December 2025 COW	Community Living	Strategic Int: develop a strategy to target specific demographics to move to Amherst	
December 2025 COW	CAO's Office	Strategic Int: develop a communications plan/strategy	
December 2025 COW	Planning	Strategic Int: identify barriers to business growth	Create opportunities/incentives to overcome those barriers
December 2025 COW	Planning	Policy Review: Leased Land Community Bylaw	
December 2025 COW	HR	Policy Review: Remuneration for Acting Positions	
January 2026 COW	Community Living	Outdoor musical festival, both local and large	Prepare memo on options and costs
January 2026 COW	CAO's Office	Visitor information centre in Amherst	Explore options/prepare memo for Council discussion
February 2026 COW	Community Living	Photo opportunity location (similar to Sydney fiddle, Shediac lobster)	Solicit ideas from community
February 2026 COW	Finance	Policy Review: Audit Committee Terms of Reference	Policy Review
March 2026 COW	Community Living	Fishing derby	Prepare memo on options and costs
Budget 2026	Operations	Skatepark lighting	Prepare memo on options + cost
Ongoing Priorities	All	Consider environmental factors in all of our development decisions	
Ongoing Priorities	All	Plan and ensure we can provide quality municipal services for an ever-increasing population	
Ongoing Priorities	All	Support organizations that develop affordable housing	
Ongoing Priorities	All	Ensure Amherst grows as an environmentally sustainable urban community	
Ongoing Priorities	All	Collaborate with agencies to enhance community safety (police, social services, mental health/addictions etc)	
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Invest in infrastructure to host inclusive + accessible signature events to attract residents + visitors	
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Work with community educators to provide programs/training customized to the needs of employers + community	June 2027
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Work with NS Health recruiters to attract health care professionals	March 2027
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Develop a mobility strategy	March 2026
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Develop infrastructure/programming/info/services that reduce barriers	
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Foster community engagement on a wide range of leisure, social, cultural + recreational issues	
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Seek input from all demographics of the community, particularly newcomers + equity deserving groups	
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Actively promote volunteer recruitment, retention + recognition	
Ongoing Priorities	Community Living	Build and maintain strong relations with community organizations for festivals/events + explore naming partners	
Ongoing Priorities	CAO's Office	Advocate for the protection of the Chignecto Isthmus	
Ongoing Priorities	CAO's Office	Promote environmental initiatives to our town residents + businesses	
Ongoing Priorities	CAO's Office	Develop partnerships that will lead to increased housing opportunities along the entire housing spectrum	
Ongoing Priorities	Planning	Prioritize developments that fast-track housing for social equity deserving groups	
Ongoing Priorities	Planning	Advertise Amherst strengths and opportunities to business and developers	
Ongoing Priorities	Planning	Facilitate the construction of 400 housing units	December 2027
Ongoing Priorities	Fire	Continue active participation with the Regional Emergency Management Organization	
Ongoing Priorities	Police/Fire	Commitment to emergency preparedness	
Ongoing Priorities	Police	Up-to-date policing standards	
Ongoing Priorities	Finance	Sound financial management	
Ongoing Priorities	Finance	Ongoing financial projections	
Ongoing Priorities	HR	Comprehensive human resources plan	
Ongoing Priorities	HR	Internal communications plan	
Ongoing Priorities	HR	Ensure adequate training of all staff	

Jan-25	03000-08	HOSPITALITY EXPENSE POLICY	FINANCE	Amended January Council
	03000-07	EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY	FINANCE	Amended January Council
	03000-05	AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	FINANCE	Approved January Council Status quo
	10350-26	COUNCIL CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	CLERK	Approved January Council Status quo
Feb-25	10350-28	APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL TO EXTERNAL BOARDS, COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS	Clerk	Amended February Council
		Sidewalk/Curb Construction Policy	Operations	Amended February Council
Mar-25	03800-03	INSTALLMENT BILLING POLICY (110-03) Themed Crosswalk Policy (new)	FINANCE	
	10350-25	ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW - CAO Surplus Fill Policy	Community Living HR Operations	
	10350-30	ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	COMMUNITY LIVING	
Apr-25	03800-02	TAX REDUCTION POLICY (110-02)	FINANCE	
	03800-04	TAX EXEMPTION POLICY	FINANCE	
	03470-03	USER FEES	FINANCE	
	04530-02	EMPLOYEE COMPUTER PURCHASED POLICY (211-29)	HR	
May-25	03400-01	Ice Allocation Policy	OPERATIONS	
		Sign Rental Policy - Stadium SIGNING AUTHORITY POLICY (210-12)	OPERATIONS FINANCE	
Jun-25	04500-04	SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE POLICY	HR	
	01000-01	MEDIA POLICY (210-19)	COMMUNICATIONS	
	P 05 03700-01	VACANT BUILDING BY LAW PROCUREMENT POLICY	PLANNING Communications	
Sep-25	66150-01	DANGEROUS OR UNSIGHTLY PREMISES POLICY (210-21)	PLANNING	
	04000-14 31000-01	PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY Standard Specifications for Municipal Services	HR OPERATIONS	
	66150-02	ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SUMMARY OFFENCE TICKETS (211-28)	POLICE	
Oct-25	72000-04	ARTS & CULTURE POLICY (211-38)	COMMUNITY LIVING	
	04000-08	ATTENDANCE ADMINISTRATION (211-24)	HR	
	66400-01	HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	PLANNING	
	10350-10	RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL (210-14)	CLERK	
Nov-25	10350-15	WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL (210-25)	CLERK	

	66580-01	NEW SUBDIVISION STREETS - FINAL SUBDIVISION APPROVAL PRIOR TO STREET PAVING	PLANNING
	04500-01	Safety Policy (211-25)	FIRE
	01700-01	REPORTING ACCIDENTS (211-03)	FIRE
	31600-09	Paving New Residential Subdivision Streets (230-11)	Operations
	02000-03	NAMING PUBLIC LANDS AND TOWN OWNED FACILITIES	CLERK
	03450-03	DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY (211-37)	FINANCE
Dec-25			
	P 08	LEASED LAND COMMUNITY BYLAW	PLANNING
	04000-06	RENUMERATION FOR ACTING POSITIONS (211-22)	HR
Jan-26			
	31600-02	Street Light Policy	Operations
	10350-17	MEMBERSHIP ON NATIONAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES (211-32)	CLERK
	B 02-1	DEED TRANSFER TAX BYLAW	FINANCE
	10350-18	MEMBERSHIP IN CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS (211-33)	CLERK
	P 07	SUBDIVISION BYLAW	PLANNING
	04000-09	EMPLOYEE/FAMILY ASSISTANCE (211-30)	HR
Feb-26			
	04000-11	MATERNITY, PATERNAL AND ADOPTION LEAVE POLICY (20071126)	HR
	P 03	CIVIC ADDRESS BY LAW	PLANNING
	72000-01	RECOGNITION OF ATHLETIC ACHIEVERS (210-22)	COMMUNITY LIVING
	10350-01	RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF BOARDS (210-01)	CLERK
	03000-05	AUDIT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE POLICY	FINANCE
Mar-26			
		Sale of Beer/Liquor - Robbs Park	Operations
		Beer Garden Policy - Stadium	Operations
	10350-05	INQUIRIES FROM COUNCIL (210-07)	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS
	04500-03	SCENT REDUCTION POLICY	HR
	D 06	BUILDING BY LAW	PLANNING
Apr-26			
	10350-04	REPORTS TO COUNCIL (210-06)	CLERK
	68300-03	JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM	FIRE
	A 05	HERITAGE PROPERTIES	PLANNING
	D 19	Sanitary Sewer Rates	FINANCE
	10350-20	CODE OF CONDUCT OF ELECTED MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS	CLERK
	04000-12	PERSONNEL POLICY & CODE OF ETHICS	HR
May-26			
	C 01	BY LAW RESPECTING THE AMHERST BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS	POLICE
		Vehicular Idling Control Policy	Operations
	03000-04	Rounding of Cash Transactions	FINANCE
	05000-01	RECORDS MANAGEMENT (211-26)	CLERK
	10350-19	SCHOLARSHIP AND BUSARY POLICY (NEW)	CLERK
	02300-01	SALE OF USABLE TOWN OWNED LAND (211-07)	PLANNING
	02300-02	SALE OF NON-USABLE TOWN OWNED LAND (211-08)	PLANNING
	68500-01	FEMALE POLICE CONSTABLE AND EXPENSE (220-01)	POLICE
Jun-26			
	68300-01	PERMANENT FIREFIGHTERS (221-01)	FIRE

	68300-05	RESPECTING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE VOLUNTEER COMPONENT OF THE AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT	FIRE
	03600-01	Investment Policy	FINANCE
	10350-11	GIFTS, CARDS, FLOWERS	CLERK/COMM
	A 07	ALTERNATIVE VOTING BYLAW 2018	CLERK
Sep-26	C 11	ALARM BYLAW INTRUSION ROBBERY AND FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS	POLICE
		Snow and Ice Management Policy	Operations
	05000-04	ROUTINE ACCESS POLICY	CLERK
	68300-02	NEW FIRE STATION, ALBION STREET (221-02)	FIRE
	72200-01	R. H. SMITH BEQUEST LIBRARY (274-01)	COMMUNITY LIVING
Oct-26	04000-04	INQUIRIES REGARDING EMPLOYEES (211-16)	HR
	04000-07	HIRING POLICY (211-23)	HR
Nov-26		Solid Waste Bylaw	Operations
	03450-04	Budget Management Policy	FINANCE
Dec-26	05000-02	INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION/TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS
	68300-04	FIRE INSPECTION POLICY	FIRE
	31600-23	STREET NAMING POLICY	PLANNING
	68000-03	TRAFFIC AUTHORITY	POLICE
	31600-26	STREET RENAMING COPP LANE TO ERNIE LANE POLICY	PLANNING
Jan-27		Catch Basins and Laterals	Operations
	03000-10	Inventory of Non Capital Equipment Policy	Finance
	31700-04	NORTH TYNDAL LAND ACQUISITION (241-06)	PLANNING
	02000-01	USE OF FACILITIES - DOMINION PUBLIC BUILDING	CLERK / COMMUNICATIONS
	04500-02	VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY	FIRE
	66000-02	POLICY FOR MPS, LUB, SUBDIVISION BYLAW AND DA AGREEMENT ADOPTION AND ADMENDMENT	PLANNING
Feb-27		PACE BYLAW	FINANCE
	C 02	Discharge of Firearms Bylaw	Police
	P 04	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCIES	PLANNING
	04000-03	STAFF TRAINING (211-06)	HR
Mar-27	72000-08	Community Support Grants Policy	Community Living
		Adopt A Garden	Operations
	66000-03	POLICY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND NOTIFICATION	PLANNING
	C 03	LOITERING BYLAW	POLICE
	66000-01	PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (210-23)	PLANNING
			updated March 2023
Apr-27	P 09	COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT BYLAW	PLANNING
	C 10	MOBILE VENDORS ON STREETS AND SIDEWALKS	POLICE
	04000-05	OVERTIME - NON-UNION EMPLOYEES (211-21)	CUSTOMER SERVICE/HR
May-27		Encroachment on Public Streets	Operations
	10350-14	REQUESTS FOR FLAG RAISINGS & PROCLAMATIONS (210-24)	Communications
	10350-24	PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL	Clerk

	317400-05	NORTH TYNDAL WELLFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE POLICY	PLANNING
Jun-27	02300-03 C 09 C07	Sale/Disposal of Surplus Equipment C TAXI BYLAW FIRES AND BURNING OF MATERIALS BYLAW	FINANCE POLICE FIRE
Sep-27	04000-01 04000-02	Street Rating System RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES (210-15) SUGGESTION AWARDS (211-16)	Operations HR HR
Oct-27	01130-01	TOWN CREST (210)02)	CLERK
Nov-27	03450-02	Ice Helmet Policy Smoke Free Recreational Places Bylaw Capital Investment Plan (CIP) Framework/Budget Policy	Operations Operations FINANCE
Dec-27	03000-03	Fund Raising	FINANCE
Jan-28	03400-02	Sidewalk Inspection and Maintenance Street Inspection and Maintenance Banking Policy	Operations Operations FINANCE
Feb-28	C 04	COMPANION ANIMAL BYLAW	POLICE
Mar-28		Tree Planting on Town Owned Lands	Operations
Apr-28	01130-02	PURCHASE AND USE OF BOTTLED WATER	CLERK
May-28		Street Breaking Policy	Operations
Jun-28	03800-01	Revenue Collection Policy	FINANCE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Amherst Town Council
FROM: Sharon Bristol, Director Community Living
DATE: March 17, 2025
SUBJECT: Sports Hall of Fame – Strategic Priorities “Points to Capture”

During the strategic planning session, Town of Amherst Council and staff discussed the topic of a Sports Hall of Fame.

Currently there are several discussions underway in the community regarding a potential new sports recreation centre, an Arts and Culture Centre and the Military Museum.

The Director is also working with a community group to identify potential reuses of a historic building in the Downtown core.

It is requested that further investigation of the sports hall of fame be extended until some of these discussions come to fruition. New target date of December 2025 is recommended.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Amherst Town Council
FROM: Sharon Bristol, Director Community Living
DATE: March 17, 2025
SUBJECT: Safe Senior Scooter Usage – Strategic Priorities “Points to Capture”

During their strategic planning session, Council and staff discussed seniors’ safety with scooter use.

The Director of Community Living has been in touch with the Senior Safety Coordinator to formally request a session this spring on scooter safety. The Director will liaise with the Amherst Police Department as well to coordinate this.

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Small and Council
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Date: March 17, 2025
Subject: Crosswalk Safety – Communications and Enforcement – Strategic Initiative

The Amherst Police Department is dedicated to community safety. One of the initiatives we regularly are involved in includes communicating information to the public that enhances and promotes pedestrian and driver safety. One of the issues we regularly cover is that of crosswalk safety, whether via social media, in-person presentations or through focused enforcement.

Social media has been a useful medium to communicate information to our community. The Amherst Police Department Facebook page has over 7600 followers with our posts often being shared and reaching tens of thousands of people. It is not uncommon for some of our posts to have 50-60 thousand views, making such posts a very valuable tool to share information and educate people. On August 8, 2024, we shared a post concerning crosswalk safety (See Appendix A), which covered pedestrian safety as it relates to crosswalks and intersections, explaining such concepts as 'right of way' and the definition of a crosswalk. Such safety also requires that both motorists and pedestrians understand how crosswalks function, and the post information provides tips and education for both to enhance safety. A link to 'rules of the road' was also supplied (<https://novascotia.ca/sns/rmv/handbook/dh-chapter2.pdf>). This information was re-posted again on Monday, March 10, 2025.

Our members and staff often provide safety presentations on issues relating to public safety. Our plan is to continue to do this for our school, seniors and other target groups to ensure that we reach and educate those we come in contact with. Providing in-person instruction is an excellent way to educate people and have a two-way conversation that includes listening to the concerns of the public and determining how best to address concerns and designate priorities. Our School Resource Officer, Cst Michelle Harrison and our Crime Prevention Coordinator spend a significant amount of their time preparing such presentations and engaging with the community on these issues. It is also not uncommon for Cpl Tom Wood to also be involved as well.

Focused crosswalk enforcement is a third means of addressing safety concerns relating to crosswalks. Each month our members are provided with a subject for focused enforcement for the month, ranging from seatbelts, to speeding to all types of safety issues, and during warmer weather, often focusing on crosswalks, especially in school zones. This includes police visibility in the area to issuing tickets for infractions. Our plan is to also include our results from such enforcement, providing information on the number of tickets and warnings issues to motorists for crosswalk infractions.

Community safety is a shared responsibility, but we have an important role that includes providing education and enforcement to enhance understanding and promote deterrence.

APPENDIX A



Amherst Police Department *Crosswalk Safety*

Pedestrian Safety is a priority. It is important that people understand how Crosswalks are defined in Nova Scotia and how they work. Every intersection of 2 or more roads has a crosswalk, many of which are unmarked, meaning that they may not have signage or painted lines.

Some crosswalks have varying levels of traffic control and may have painted lines, crosswalk signs, lit signs or signals or may be a part of a 4-way stop or a fully controlled traffic intersection.

Unless intersections are controlled by traffic signals/lights, pedestrians are deemed to have the *'right of way'*. In these cases, drivers are responsible to yield to pedestrians who are waiting at, or are in Crosswalks regardless if they are marked or unmarked. This includes vehicles that are turning at an intersection.

Drivers are encouraged to slow down and scan the street and sidewalks when approaching intersections or crosswalks.



When the intersection is controlled by traffic signals, pedestrians are required to obey the signals.

Fines for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk or stopped facing a crosswalk starts at \$697.50

Pedestrians should always check to make sure an intersection is safe before crossing and are encouraged to wait for an adequate gap in traffic or until vehicles have come to a complete stop.



For more information, check out "Rules of the Road" from the Nova Scotia Driver's handbook that can be found at <https://novascotia.ca/sns/rmv/handbook/dh-chapter2.pdf>

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Small and Members of Council

From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police / Traffic Authority

Date: March 17, 2025

Subject: Speeding in School Zones – Strategic Priorities - “Points to Capture”

Road safety and the safety of our children is an important priority for the Police Department, especially in regard to the areas surrounding schools. In September 2012, in an effort to enhance safety for children and motorists in the areas surrounding schools, school zones were introduced.

School zones only exist in areas near schools and impact the speed limits for motorists when there are children present. This is in effect 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The speed limit drops from 50 kph to 30 kph in these areas when a child is within 30m of the roadway, within the school zone. If a child is not within 30m of the roadway, the decreased speed limit does not apply. School zones exist in several areas around town in relation to our schools: Amherst Regional High School, EB Chandler Junior High, Spring Street Academy and West Highlands.

During 2024, our members conducted several focused enforcement periods in which our members concentrated on speeding infractions, with many members monitoring school zone areas, especially during the start of the school year. In April of 2024, our focused enforcement initiative was speeding and 16 speeding tickets were written, but none in relation to speeding in a school zone. One member did indicate that on occasion, he adjusted issued tickets to reflect a regular speeding charge as a 'break' to the offender, but was unable to recall if this was done during this initiative. In total for 2024, our members wrote 29 speeding tickets and 28 warnings. All tickets, with the exception of one, were for exceeding the speed limit between 1-15kph. There were also three complaints concerning the issue of speeding in school zones and as a result, our members monitored the areas, but noted no issues, with the fastest noted speed being 38kph. During these times, we did issue 2 violations, but these were not for speeding. One member indicated that reported speeds often seem to be higher than they actually are as police radar monitoring appears to indicate there are no significant issues.

Our efforts will continue to focus on keeping our children safe, not only in school zones, but in other areas including crosswalks. This will be done by continuing to spread education and information through various mediums (social media, in person etc) and through active enforcement of the applicable sections of the Motor Vehicle Act. In the event of specific complaints about speeding in school zones, or during focused enforcement initiatives, we will ensure that additional attention is given to this concern and the areas are monitored and information is shared via the various mediums available.

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Small and Members of Council
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police
Date: March 17, 2025
Subject: Willow Street/Townshend Ave Intersection – Traffic Control – Strategic Priorities – “Points to Capture”

The intersection at Townshend Avenue and Willow Street is currently controlled by a stop sign on Townshend Avenue. Also at this location is a crosswalk that traverses Willow Street and connects to the sidewalk that runs along Townshend Avenue. Further to the east is the intersection of Willow Street with Oceanview Drive and to the west is the intersection of Willow Street with Walter Purdy Avenue. Homes in these locations are well-situated as there are three schools in the nearby area: A high school, a junior high school and an elementary school, all within walking distance. During



the mornings, often at lunch and at the end of the school day, this area is often busy with students walking to the nearby schools, the closest of which is Amherst Regional High School. Students on the south side of Willow Street often use the sidewalk and crosswalk at Townshend Avenue. Students on the north side of Willow Street who are walking to the High School use the sidewalk on Willow Street which runs along the north-east side of the street. The area from the crosswalk until past the intersection of Willow and East Pleasant Street is also designated as a school zone, meaning that if a child is within 30m of the road, motorist must slow from 50kph to 30kph. This is in place 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year, as long as a child is in the area.

With recent housing developments in the area, there are some concerns that traffic patterns and volumes may change and as a result, pedestrian and motorist safety may be impacted. While there is an expectation that there will be an increase in both pedestrian and vehicle traffic, the current situation indicates that this is not an issue. With the exceptions of the morning and afternoon heavier volume of traffic, this area is not an exceptionally busy intersection and the 3-way stop sign as a traffic control is working well. The stand-alone crosswalk also ensures that pedestrian traffic is clearly visible and observed by motorists.

Our intentions are to monitor this area as things progress and, if required, make changes to ensure that safety is not compromised. This may include a change in the type of traffic control that would be better suited to any change in traffic patterns or volumes or even the addition of traffic/pedestrian controls at other locations in the nearby area.

As Traffic Authority for the Town of Amherst, I am recommending that there be no changes to this intersection at this time, but recommend we continue to monitor for any developing risks or concerns.

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Small and Council
From: Dwayne Pike, Chief of Police / Traffic Authority
Date: March 17, 2025
Subject: Intersection of Church Street/Robert Angus Drive – Traffic Control – Strategic Priorities - “Points to Capture”

As new housing developments and other projects are initiated, traffic patterns and volumes also are subject to change. These can often result in issues that need to be addressed by a change in traffic controls or signals.

One such area of concern is the intersection of Church Street and Robert Angus Drive, which is currently controlled by a 4-way stop and accented with a flashing red light above the intersection. Also at this location are two marked crosswalks. One traverses Church Street on the north-west side of the intersection and another that traverses Robert Angus Drive on the north-east side of the intersection. Both crosswalks are connected to established sidewalks at either side of the streets.



With new developments on Church Street, it is anticipated that traffic volumes and patterns may change and have an impact on the volume and flow of traffic at this intersection. Potentially this could include an increase in pedestrian traffic using this intersection. As a result, there has been some attention given to adding a crosswalk that traverses Church Street near Cedar Drive to enable pedestrians to access the sidewalk that runs down the east side of Church Street and towards town.

While traffic does get busy at this intersection, there are relatively few problems noted. Its design allows traffic on Robert Angus Drive to make left-hand turns and vehicle flow is fairly consistent with minimal delays from any direction.

As current developments in the area are nearing completion, it is important to monitor this area for any changes that may indicate a developing risk and to take actions to mitigate that risk. This may include changes to the intersection traffic controls or even a design change that would meet the need for that area.

As Traffic Authority for the Town of Amherst, I am recommending that there be no changes to this intersection at this time, but recommend we continue to monitor for any developing risks or concerns.

MEMO

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council

FROM: Jeff Bacon, Economic Development Officer

DATE: March 17, 2025

RE: Cooperation Between Businesses Regarding Hours – Strategic Priorities
“Points to Capture”

Businesses in Downtown Amherst do not operate with a unified schedule for hours of operation and each business determines its own. It’s felt that if the business community could cooperate and offer extended and mutual operating hours it would increase their sales, allow customers more opportunities to shop, and would benefit our downtown.

Consulting with the Amherst Downtown Business Association (ADBA) Chairperson, some factors that may affect having unified operating hours were considered:

- Amherst’s downtown business core is comprised of numerous types of institutions, services and retailers spread throughout the district. From one building to the next, the entity operating inside will vary. An insurance company, beside a hairdresser who’s beside a bank, etc, breaks up the consistency of retailers and this spacing creates the perception of separation from each other.
- For the shopper, this separation could influence their sense of security, if evening hours are offered. Persons traveling from one business to the next would need to feel safe.
- If the business does not own the building, in some instances the building owner sets the hours of access to the building.
- Single owners who already operate during weekday hours may not be willing to work longer or have the staff to take their place.
- The benefits of being open extended or weekend hours may not benefit institutional, service or governmental organizations that exist in our downtown.

The ADBA Chairperson is interested in discussing with members their willingness to participate and solutions to these points. It was agreed that not all businesses may be able to make this adjustment but starting the conversation is the necessary first step to grow the idea.

MEMO

TO: Mayor Small and Members of Council
FROM: Jeff Bacon, Economic Development Officer
DATE: March 17, 2025
RE: Destination Market Readiness Feasibility Study

In November 2022, the Province passed legislation giving Municipalities authority to implement an Accommodations Marketing Levy. With funding assistance from ACOA, the Town partnered with the Municipality of Cumberland to hire the consulting firm Bannikin to perform a Tourism Industry Study. The study summarizes the feasibility and market readiness for implementing a Marketing Levy in the Cumberland Region. In July 2024, Bannikin conducted an environmental scan and best-practice analysis, review of regional assets, engaged community stakeholders and audited the region's online presence. A summary of the recommendations provided in the attached report is provided below:

1. Establish a Strong Foundation

Strategic Tourism Development:

- Appoint a tourism development and marketing lead.
- Create a tourism action plan to address infrastructure needs, service gaps, and industry goals.
- Conduct ongoing data collection on tourism impacts and visitor trends.

Engagement & Communication:

- Develop clear communication and engagement options for stakeholders.
- Advocate for tourism benefits with residents and stakeholders to foster support.

Partnerships & Capacity Building:

- Facilitate inter-industry collaborations and connections through events and training.
- Partner with local and Indigenous organizations to enhance tourism products and storytelling.

Marketing Planning:

- Develop a tourism marketing plan aligned with strategic goals.
- Focus on destination branding, website optimization, and collaborative marketing efforts.

Placemaking and Product Development:

- Enhance tourism products that extend the season and reflect regional narratives.
- Improve signage and implement placemaking initiatives to create a cohesive visitor experience.

2. Marketing Levy Implementation

Leadership, Structure, and Governance considerations:

- Municipalities to co-lead the levy implementation with potential support from a shared destination marketer.
- Form a joint governance structure to manage and allocate levy funds transparently.
- Explore partnerships with local organizations for grassroots initiatives.

Timeline and Operational Setup:

- Engage stakeholders to establish timelines for levy adoption, including bylaws and grace periods.
- Simplify levy remittance with centralized online payment systems.
- Set the levy rate consistent with provincial norms.

Oversight and Transparency:

- Develop accessible resources, including a dedicated levy webpage and guides for businesses and customers.
- Implement phased reporting and remittance processes.
- Create a reserve fund for levy revenues to ensure transparent tracking.
- Publish annual reports detailing funds collected, expenditures, and impacts.

In essence, the consultant recommended that more foundational work is needed in order to ready the industry for increased attractions and the management of the levy funds. A phased approach ensures thoughtful implementation and stakeholder buy-in. Foundation-setting activities, including planning, engagement, and capacity building, are expected to take 2–3 years. Before requiring visitors to pay a fee and asking accommodation providers to remit this money, a plan to use the funds and an organization to manage them will need to be established.

Attached to this memorandum is Bannikin's report for Implementing a Marketing Levy in the Cumberland Region.

Cumberland Region: Tourism Development Research

FINAL REPORT

bannikin

BEYOND TRAVEL & TOURISM

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
About this Project.....	3
Tourism 101.....	4
Tourism Today	6
Tourism Tomorrow	13

Acknowledgements

Cumberland Region, also known as Kwesomalegek or “hardwood point” in Mi’kmaq is located on the traditional, unceded, ancestral lands of the L’nu (Mi’kmaq) Nation. It forms part of primarily Siksikt District, but also parts of Sipekne’katik, and Piktuk Districts of Mi’kma’ki. These territories are covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which the L’nu (Mi’kmaq) first signed with the British Crown in 1726. We are all Treaty people, and these treaties are still applicable today. We also recognize and celebrate the Black African Nova Scotia Community, who have had a vibrant presence in the community. We honour these historical communities across Nova Scotia who have been here well over 400 years.

We are excited to see the growth and development of L’nu (Mi’kmaq) tourism throughout Mi’kma’ki. This includes the leadership and dedication from Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network (NSITEN), a not-for-profit cultural tourism organization that develops specific project-based initiatives aimed at growing the capacity of individuals, businesses, and community-led tourism initiatives.

This *Cumberland Region: Tourism Development Research* report is the result of an inclusive, stakeholder-driven, and community-based participatory research process that strived to engage a diversity of stakeholders in the community. We thank the residents, business owners and operators, organizational representatives, and tourism partners, who participated in the survey, interviews, and table talks, and those who shared their thoughts and perspectives in conversation at their businesses. This research would not have been possible without your input and feedback.

We would also like to thank the internal project team for their support across the project, including Eileen Davage, Economic Development Officer at the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and Jeff Bacon, Business Development Officer at the Town of Amherst. Finally, thanks are due to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency for their funding contributions to this project.

The research and development of the *Cumberland Region: Tourism Development Research* project was facilitated by the team at Bannikin, including Caroline Morrow, James Arteaga, and Camilo Montoya-Guevara.

About this Project

How did we get here?

Cumberland Region is as an important gateway destination in Nova Scotia made up of three distinct areas, including the Fundy Tides, Wentworth Valley, and Northumberland Shores, each with its own unique geography, heritage, and tourism offerings. The region covers three municipalities, namely Municipality of the County of Cumberland, the Town of Amherst, and the Town of Oxford.

From mid-July 2024 to late-November 2024, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and the Town of Amherst undertook a tourism development research project with support from Bannikin. Four project objectives were set for this work, including:

1. To have a deeper understanding of the current tourism context in Cumberland Region including related opportunities, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses.
2. To meaningfully engage a diversity of stakeholders and thereby gather relevant inputs, feedback, and perspectives.
3. To better understand the current state of tourism marketing in Cumberland Region, including its digital presence.
4. To have a shared understanding amongst the project team of the challenges, opportunities, and considerations to implementing a marketing levy.

The resulting *Cumberland Region: Tourism Development Research* report considers the research and engagement that took place across the project to outline the current state of tourism and provide recommendations related to strategic marketing activities for the near-term, the potential implementation of a marketing levy, as well as considerations for levy management.

Project Methodology

For this project, the research collection process used primary and secondary methods. Meaningful community engagement was prioritized throughout. As such, a research and engagement, and communications plan was developed at the onset of the project to guide the research process. Key research activities included:

- Background document review
- Comparator destination research on marketing levies
- Digital presence research
- Key tourism stakeholder interviews
- In-market destination tour
- Industry table talks (2 in-person, 1 virtual)
- Community survey for residents, the general tourism industry, and accommodation providers.

Tourism 101

What is tourism?

There are many ways to understand, define, and measure tourism. This project uses definitions aligned with those preferred by Tourism Nova Scotia (TNS). TNS has adopted the definition used by UN Tourism, which describes “tourism” as “the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes.” TNS defines a “visitor” as “a resident or non-resident of Nova Scotia that travel[s] for tourism;” and the “tourism industry” as the businesses working at the intersection of tourism, such as those engaged in transportation; accommodations; restaurants; vehicle rental and local transport; sports, culture and entertainment; groceries; shopping, etc.

Why tourism?

Tourism is an important economic sector for Canada, Nova Scotia, and Cumberland Region. It can also bring other benefits to communities, such as, increasing access to services and amenities for residents, conserving natural and cultural assets, sharing stories about peoples and places, and working towards reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples, especially with the Mi'kmaq.

Destination Canada’s, “Tourism 2030: A World of Opportunities” (2024) report recognizes tourism as Canada’s #1 export services sector, and central to the knowledge and service-based economy. It notes the job creation potential of tourism, explaining that one in ten jobs across Canada are sustained by the tourism sector. The report also sees tourism as a tool for protecting natural assets and describes it as a community builder, helping to sustain amenities that improve the quality of life of residents like transportation connections, festivals, museums, trails and recreational facilities, arts and culture, restaurants and pubs, among others. The report sees tourism as a tool for sharing authentic Canadian experiences and stories with visitors and for strengthening shared identities, while appreciating the inherent breadth and diversity and supporting a path to reconciliation and truthful storytelling.

At the provincial level, TNS recognizes the contribution the tourism sector has on the provincial economy. In 2023, the province welcomed 2.2 million non-resident visitors mostly arriving by road, and from Atlantic Canada (952,000), Ontario (626,000), Western Canada (219,000), and the United States (155,000). About 3 million room nights were sold, and 589,000 room nights booked on sharing economy platforms (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO, etc.). TNS notes that in 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism activities generated \$2.6 billion in spending, and although tourism spend has not fully recovered to pre-pandemic numbers, in 2020 and 2021 it exceeded \$1 billion.

For Cumberland Region, the tourism sector is also an important growth opportunity to foster economic, social, and environmental benefits. The *Cumberland Region 2021-2026 Community Economic Development Strategy* recognizes tourism as a key sector for the future of the region’s economy, for its revenue generation and its resident attraction and retention opportunities, including youth retention.

What's been done so far?

In 2019, the Cumberland Region Tourism Development Strategy (2019-2022) was launched. The strategy was developed by the three municipalities in Cumberland Region to support the *Community Economic Development Strategy* (2014) and align with Tourism Nova Scotia's *2018-2022 Strategy, Driving Export Revenue*. Important collaborative marketing initiatives today include the explorecumberland.ca website, which is maintained by the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and showcases tourism assets across Fundy Tides, Wentworth Valley, and Northumberland Shores to visitors.

On 1 November 2022, the Nova Scotia Legislature passed provincial legislation allowing municipalities the ability to adopt a marketing levy. This is a fee collected on overnight roofed accommodations and short-term rentals booked for 30 consecutive days or less within the boundary of a municipality. The fee is paid for by the guest and is collected by the accommodation provider and remitted to the municipality. The fee cannot exceed 3% of the purchase price of the accommodation and is subject to HST. The collecting municipality must use the funds to promote tourism, for example, through marketing campaigns, marketing materials, signage, etc. A municipality may pay some or all its marketing levy funds to an organization formed to promote tourism.

An "accommodation" is defined in the legislation as, "the provision of one or more rental units or rooms as lodging in hotels and motels and in any other facility required to be registered under the Short-term Rentals Registration Act (2019, amended in 2022) and in a building owned or operated by a postsecondary educational institution." There are exemptions to the marketing levy, which are included in the provincial legislation and further defined at the municipal level through bylaws.

Marketing levies have been adopted by several municipalities in Nova Scotia, including but not limited to the Cape Breton Island, Halifax, Annapolis County, Truro and Colchester Region. With several others, like Cumberland Region or the Annapolis Valley Region, investigating the potential use of a levy to raise funds to fuel tourism marketing efforts.

Understanding the importance of collaborative marketing and seeing the uptake of marketing levies across the province, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and the Town of Amherst saw an opportunity to review the current state of tourism marketing and investigate the suitability of a marketing levy to the Cumberland Region context through a research project that engages a diversity of community members.

Tourism Today

Brand, marketing, and narrative

Cumberland Region's geological richness, outdoor offerings, and ocean heritage are key themes for this emerging destination with much to offer prospective visitors. However, growth potential is limited without a clear marketing leader or a shared understanding of the destination's identity amongst the tourism industry. Industry members describe current marketing efforts as disjointed, noting a lack of coordination and a tendency to focus marketing energy on the destination's subregions rather than the destination at large. Confirming Cumberland Region's destination brand and narrative, and building awareness, connections, and collaborations across the region will nurture pride of place and ambassadorship. A community-informed destination narrative development and related marketing planning process would also add weight and authenticity to the brand.

To grow recognition of Cumberland Region as a destination amongst visitors, the tourism industry, and partners, exposure is needed through the frequent and consistent use of the destination's name and brand, including on partner channels. At present, exposure to information about the region and to the place name "Cumberland Region" is noticeably higher for intentional visitors (i.e. those planning a trip to Cumberland Region) than for potential visitors (i.e. those planning a trip to Nova Scotia). As a result, it is not a guarantee that someone planning a trip to Nova Scotia would be inspired to add Cumberland Region to their itinerary. On the other hand, visitors planning a trip to Cumberland Region have relatively easy access to information via explorecumberland.ca, business and partner channels, third-party sites, etc. Access to trip-planning information via pamphlets is also available in-person at many attractions and accommodations across Cumberland Region.

There is a noticeable level of local pride and genuine love for Cumberland Region and its subregions amongst business owners and operators. For example, the "About Us" pages of many business websites tell stories of why entrepreneurs decided to call the region home. Many local businesses list recommendations on their websites of things to do in Cumberland Region, providing tools for itinerary planning and encouraging longer stays. This cross-promotion is a strength of Cumberland Region's online presence, and one which many destinations struggle to achieve. Overall, food and drink businesses fall behind other tourism businesses in terms of digital presence, with several not having websites. There is an opportunity to work with food and drink businesses (e.g. through workshops or coaching) to improve their digital presence. Overall, the information that businesses provide via Facebook caters to local audiences and could be improved by adding better "About Us" descriptions to help visitors plan their trips

Geography and infrastructure

In Cumberland Region, there is a real sense as a visitor that one is exploring a hidden gem. Although Cumberland Region is a visitor destination with the infrastructure and amenities to support this, differences in the level of infrastructure between the subregions are noticeable on-the-ground. A potential challenge for visitors is understanding how Cumberland Region relates geographically to other destinations. For example, the tourism regions set up by Tourism Nova Scotia split Cumberland Region between the "Bay of Fundy and Annapolis Valley" and "Northumberland Shore." To address potential visitor

confusions related to overlapping destinations, important marketing strategies include celebrating Cumberland Region as a destination and offering easy-to-use trip planning tools.

A strength for Cumberland Region that should be better leveraged is its position as an access point for Nova Scotia. This should be highlighted in communications at the destination level and provincial level. Cumberland Region provides for many a first taste of Nova Scotia and it is in the best interest of tourism players across the province that this be a success. An important step will be making it easier for travellers stopping at the Visitor Information Centre to collect information about Cumberland Region. Currently, a visitor must consult three different pamphlet stations to gather all the information on Cumberland Region. It is also worth noting that driving distances are longer than may be assumed from online materials. Encouraging visitors to stay longer and do more in each place rather than spending too much of their trips driving is worthwhile communicating to visitors in advance of their arrival.

Overall, there is an opportunity to improve signage in the area and link this to marketing efforts. As a visitor travelling in Cumberland Region by car, the wayfinding signage does not provide enough warning to encourage stops. At the same time, there is no consistent and overarching storytelling to convey to visitors that they are somewhere interesting and unique. One way to address this is to use strategically placed wayfinding signage that connects Cumberland Region via a consistent in-person and online visual identity. This should be complemented by on-the-ground interpretive signage and digital storytelling tools. Later, developing related tourism product will reinforce the destination narrative by making it possible for visitors to interact with the narrative first-hand. There is an opportunity to incorporate more stories around Mi'kmaq culture, historically black communities, mining and seafaring history, geological heritage, contemporary culture, natural heritage, etc.

Tourism assets

Cumberland Region has much to offer curious visitors. Its diverse landscapes and geological heritage, in particular, stand out as world-class. There is a notable sense of alignment between how the three subregions of the destination are presented online and the in-person experience of the region's landscapes, namely Fundy Tides (rigged cliffs), Wentworth Valley (rolling hills), and Northumberland Shores (beaches). Primary tourism assets for Cumberland Region include outdoor recreation (e.g. hiking, birding, golfing), beaches, small town touring and shopping, museums and educational tours (especially based on geology). Overall, there is room to grow Cumberland Region's food and drink assets, including both the number of businesses and types of experiences on offer. Based on the on-the-ground visitor experience, Cumberland Region is well-suited to attract road trippers, adventurers, and outdoor-enthusiasts aged 30-65 years. UNESCO hunters is a niche target market within these segments that includes domestic and international travellers.

There are some challenges to trip planning, that may limit how long people stay in Cumberland Region and how much they spend. Specifically, the hours of operation for some businesses are not conducive to spontaneous travel styles. Several restaurants and attractions close at some point across Monday to Wednesday, which constrains itinerary development. Due to the large geography of the destination, returning to an area to see

something that was missed is challenging. As a result, the limited hours of operation encourage weekend visitation.

Although the Explore Cumberland website features activities and photos encouraging year-round visitation, on the whole, digital channels present summer as the main time to visit. Some industry members voiced concerns around efforts to expand the visitor season, noting that without consistent, high-quality winter and shoulder season offerings, visitors would be disappointed. This view aligns with an idea central to marketing strategy, which posits that nothing be marketed that cannot be delivered on. Therefore, a priority should be working with industry to build up the destination's supply of high-quality tourism offerings across the year that bring Cumberland Region's narrative to life. In the meantime, visitor expectations must be set by sharing the honest and useful information during the trip planning phase. This will help to ensure that Cumberland Region attracts visitors well-matched to an emerging destination, whose needs can be met and, ideally, exceeded!

Tourism leadership

Cumberland Region is home to multiple entities, organizations, and community groups that directly and/or indirectly engage with tourism. However, no organization emerges as the leader to grow and foster tourism development, management, and marketing in the region. Although there are some localized collaborative initiatives among key players like Parrsboro Creative, Sunrise Trail Magazine, or Fundy Discovery Site, there is a lack of cohesion and collaboration among organizations throughout the region. Each key player primarily leads their own initiatives, in many cases, with limited resources and funding.

A key challenge identified is the lack of a go-to person and/or organization to support fostering connections and collaborations amongst key tourism players. The opportunity to have a go-to person or organization was welcomed by industry and other actors. Some suggested leveraging existing organizations to lead tourism development, management, and marketing, like Municipality of the County of Cumberland, the Town of Amherst, Tourism Nova Scotia, Cumberland Chamber of Commerce, or the Cumberland Business Connector. Others stressed that there is no leader at present, but that many key players are doing great work in their sub-regions. However, these would require additional resources, staffing, funding, and an expanded mandate, including geographically, to lead tourism development, management, and marketing. These organizations include but are not limited to the Fundy Geological Museum, Joggins Fossil Cliffs UNESCO World Heritage Site, Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Geopark, Cumberland County Museum & Archives, Anne Murray Centre, and Ski Wentworth.

Funding and resources

Available resources and supports for tourism development and marketing are top of mind for destination marketing and management organizations, as well as tourism businesses. More specifically, many businesses and organizations are seeking new ways to secure financial resources within a changing and decreasing Canadian funding landscape. What's more, destination organizations, political actors, and community members of tourism destinations across the world are feeling the pressures that emerge from increased visitation and tourism traffic. Part of the conversation involves looking beyond local tax-payer dollars to respond to the pressures that come from being a

tourism destination. One way that destinations around the world are responding to this need is through the implementation of destination fees or “visitor-based assessments.”

In a 2023 report entitled, *The Importance of Visitor-based Assessments to Canada's Economy* the Tourism Industry Association of Canada outlines that visitor-based assessments are funding mechanisms that have increased in popularity across the world, which allow destinations to become more competitive in attracting visitors and grow local benefits through the visitor economy. Importantly, these destination fees raise funds directly from visitors rather than from residents or local businesses. As such, the fees are an additional cost to visitors through the services they procure in-destination.

As mentioned, in 2022 the Nova Scotia Legislature passed provincial legislation allowing municipalities the ability to adopt a marketing levy. Although marketing levies present a potentially valuable source for revenue, funds collected through the levy can only be used for marketing and cannot be applied to the development or management of an area's tourism. Funds from a marketing levy can be used to design, develop, and implement marketing campaigns but they cannot be used to support tourism-related infrastructure projects. As such, marketing levies do not represent nor should they be seen as a one-stop-shop solutions to grow, manage, and promote a destination sustainably.

With the above in mind, financial support for tourism must come from a variety of sources including provincial funds and grants, municipal budgets, industry contributions, pan-regional development and funding programs, among others regardless of implementing a marketing levy in the Cumberland region.

Levy revenue estimates

As part of the project, Bannikin produced high-level estimates for the potential marketing levy revenue. The accommodation providers' survey included specific questions to gather data about:

- the types of accommodations available in the area
- the availability of accommodations across the year
- the total number of guest rooms/units that are available for sale (i.e., for guests to rent)
- the average rate for a room across the different seasons
- the number of occupied rooms at the respondents' business in 2023 and 2024
- the average occupancy rates

Since the accommodation providers survey received few responses, Bannikin undertook supplementary research to gather information on the accommodations landscape in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Region. The supplementary research included consulting provincial reports on accommodation performance, projections for regional growth or constraints, and an online scan of accommodations in Cumberland Region to establish stronger baselines for revenue projections. Data from the Province of Nova Scotia's Short-term Rentals Registry for communities in Cumberland Region was also requested by the municipal project leads. Due to approval requirements and differing timelines, this data has not yet been provided by the Province and as such could not be used for the below estimates. In the future, it is recommended that the municipalities use this data to

calculate an estimate marketing levy with more accurate understandings of the available accommodation establishments and units/rooms available in Cumberland Region.

With the above in mind, it is important to stress that the below calculations present conservative and high-level estimates for a potential marketing levy. They do not represent, nor should they be read, as exhaustive estimations or guarantees. These high-level estimates do not account for future market performance, potential economic changes and factors influenced by inflation and other economic factors, or for potential growth or decrease of accommodations available in the region, among others.

Average Number of Establishments (i.e., Accommodation Businesses)

To provide high-level estimates, Bannikin first sought to determine the average number establishments, and number of units available across the year based by accommodation type. These calculations were completed using accommodation provider responses to the survey and adjusted based on averages in similar regions (sourcing of similar region averages was done with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence). To account for inaccuracies and gaps in data, a range is provided for the number of accommodation establishments calculated and estimated based on accommodation type:

Table 1: Average Number of Establishments (i.e., Accommodation Businesses)

Type of Accommodation	Estimated # of businesses (low)	Estimated # of businesses (high)
Hotel/Motel	10	15
B&B	20	30
STA/Cabin	60	90
Resort	1	2

Average Number of Units Available

Based on the estimated number of different types of accommodation businesses in the Cumberland Region, and using the accommodation provider survey responses, Bannikin calculated the average number of units available at each type of accommodation business. The number of units refers to the number of rooms/establishments that can be rented by a guest and which would be subject to their own levy. For example, a unit in a hotel refers to an individual room offered by the business, while a unit in a cabin refers to the “cabin” as the unit that is being rented, not the individual rooms within it.

Table 2: Average Number of Units Available Per Establishment Type

Type of Accommodation	Average and adjusted # of units available per accommodation type
Hotel/Motel	20 units
B&B	4 units
STA/Cabin	1 unit
Resort	75 units

Number of Total Room Nights Available for Sale (i.e., To be Rented by Guests)

Based on the calculated number of accommodations establishments (Table 1) and average number of units available per accommodation type (Table 2), Bannikin calculated the number of total room nights available. This calculation assumes establishments are open and have units available across approximately 85% of the calendar year (n=310 days). This is based on accommodation provider survey responses where an average of approximately 67% of accommodations are open in the winter months (December - February); approximately 87.50% are open during the spring season (March - May); approximately 100% are open during the summer season (June - August); and approximately 96% are open during the fall season (September - November).

To estimate the number of total room nights available, the average number of units available per accommodation type was multiplied by 310 (i.e., about 85% of 365 calendar days) which results in the average available room nights at their business that could be sold by a given accommodation based on type. This was then multiplied by the ranges of estimated number of businesses (low and high) to provide an estimate of the total number of rooms nights that may be available across the region over the year based on accommodation type.

Note, this does not mean that the total of room nights available equates to what is being sold by businesses currently. Instead, it is an estimate of unit stock for sale (i.e., rental) across the region and across the year.

Table 3: Number of Total Room Nights Available for Sale Based on Accommodation Type and Ranges

Type of Accommodation	# of units available	# room nights available for sale	# of businesses (low)	# total room nights available (low)	# of businesses (high)	# total room nights available (high)
Hotel/Motel	20	6,200	10	62,000	15	93,000
B&B	4	1,240	20	24,800	30	37,200
STA/Cabin	1	310	60	18,600	90	27,900
Resort	75	23,250	1	23,250	2	46,500
			Subtotal 1	128,650	Subtotal 2	204,600

Average Occupancy Rate

Bannikin also sought to calculate the average occupation rate based on accommodation type using the responses from the accommodation provider' survey. Based on the survey responses around how many room nights were booked in 2023, 2024, and how many units were available at their establishments, the average occupancy rate across the year for the different accommodation types was calculated to be 35%.

However, due to the limited number of survey responses, Bannikin supplemented the data gathered using the statistics included in Tourism Nova Scotia's "Nova Scotia Tourism Accommodations: January to December 2023" report. As such, the average occupation rate across the year reported by Tourism Nova Scotia for 2023 is being also used to

provide a rounder picture of occupancy rates in the region. Seeing as Cumberland Region is split among two primary tourism regions based on Tourism Nova Scotia jurisdictions, the average occupancy rates (AOR) for the Bay of Fundy & Annapolis Valley (AOR=45%) and Northumberland Shores (AOR=54%) regions is being used. As such, the occupancy rate across the year for Cumberland Region is estimated to be 45% (+/-5%).

Average Daily Rate (i.e., Unit/Room Cost)

The average room rate for Nova Scotia, as reported by Tourism Nova Scotia in 2023 is being used for the following marketing levy revenue estimation in Cumberland Region.

Provincial average room rate (2023): \$191.00

High-level Estimate

Two revenue estimates are presented below using the calculations illustrated above and a rate of 3% for the potential marketing levy revenue. These calculations are estimates that draw from a range of data sources, including data provided by accommodation businesses in the region and supplemented by provincial and regional data. As such, the estimates should be understood as possible projections for marketing levy revenue within the first year of implementation. Notably, these high-level estimates do not account for potential future changes in business types and availability across the year, changes in costs for units/rooms, changes to occupancy rates in the region, or changes in market demand for accommodations.

Table 4: High-Level Marketing Levy Revenue Estimation Based on Ranges

Data Type	Low band	High band
Number of Total Room Nights Available for Sale	128,650	204,600
Occupancy rate	45%	45%
Average Daily Rate	\$191.00	\$191.00
Estimated total room sales	\$11,057,467.50	\$17,585,370.00
Marketing levy	3%	3%
Estimated marketing levy revenue	\$331,724.03	\$527,561.10

Based on the calculations undertaken, Bannikin estimates that applying a 3% marketing levy to sales of eligible tourism accommodation units/rooms to visitors could result in a marketing levy revenue in the **range of approximately \$331,724 to \$527,561 CAD.**

Tourism Tomorrow

Executive Summary

To support tourism development, management, and marketing in Cumberland Region, it is strategic to progress in a stepwise fashion to allow for buy-in, transparency, and accountability. The 37 recommendations that follow outline the initial steps recommended to build on the momentum established through this project in two areas 1) Setting a strong foundation, and 2) Marketing levy considerations.

The tourism landscape in Cumberland Region today is complex, with several overlapping jurisdictions and tourism marketing organizations. Tourism industry members across the destination recognize this complex context, as well as the limited collaboration amongst stakeholders. Tourism industry members want to stay engaged and grow partnerships, but there is no clear leader to guide the path forward. By pursuing this project, however, the Town of Amherst and the Municipality of the County of Cumberland have stepped into leadership roles. Ideally, they will build on this momentum, grow their leadership capacities in the tourism space, and continue to work together to establish a strong foundation for tourism.

Implementing a marketing levy in Cumberland Region offers an opportunity to establish a reliable funding source for increasing the region's exposure and awareness, attracting visitors, and collectively growing the destination's competitive advantage. However, before implementing a marketing levy in Cumberland Region, planning, coordination, engagement, and relationship-building activities are needed to set a strong foundation for the development, management, and marketing of the destination. First steps include recognizing the value of tourism, creating a municipal role dedicated to the sector's growth, meaningfully engaging with the tourism industry, partners, and residents around the topic, and creating both a community-informed destination development and management plan as well as a tourism marketing plan.

In taking a phased approach, Cumberland Region is well positioned to thoughtfully and sustainably grow tourism to the benefit of the area's residents, businesses, and visitors. Cumberland Region boasts unique tourism assets, including its rich geological heritage, passionate business owners, and outdoor experiences, that, if leveraged strategically through product development and marketing, will set the destination apart from others in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada.

Timing

Adopting a marketing levy should not be rushed. To support successful implementation and maximize community benefits, it is important to set realistic (and flexible) timelines that will allow for meaningful engagement. Implementing the recommendations (see below) to set a strong tourism foundation is expected to take several years (~2-3), and potentially longer depending on any new insights that emerge from the proposed destination development and management plan, and the tourism marketing plan.

In summary, before implementing a marketing levy, it is advised that the municipalities take the time to set a strong foundation by further planning, consulting, listening to, and building a shared understanding of a potential marketing levy with key stakeholders, especially accommodation providers.

Recommendations: Setting a strong foundation

To set a strong foundation for tourism development, management, and marketing, recommendations are provided in five areas, namely, 1) Strategic tourism development, 2) Continued engagement, 3) Industry connections, partnerships and capacity building, 4) Marketing planning, and 5) Placemaking and product development. Within each area, recommendations are largely chronological, however, depending on staffing capacities and budgets, some of the recommendations can likely be undertaken simultaneously.

Strategic tourism development

To foster community buy-in and set a strong foundation for tourism, it's essential to have certain structures, resources, and processes in place. Preliminary work, such as, having a designated point-person and creating a tourism development and management plan allows for greater accountability and transparency by providing additional opportunities to engage stakeholders and a tool to inform decision-making around how funding is distributed. Some of these may occur while developing the comprehensive destination development and management plan or these may be undertaken separately. Ongoing data-collection activities will also be needed.

1. **Explore establishing a new tourism management and marketing role** at the Town of Amherst and/or Municipality of the County Cumberland (option for job share with other related organization).
2. **Confirm that processes and personnel at all municipal units are in place to ensure compliance with Short-term Rentals Registration Act.** Ensure that individual responsible is aware of links between registry and tourism.
3. **Create a community-informed tourism development and management plan** to confirm strategic direction and priorities. Amongst other areas, the plan should investigate tourism infrastructure needs, services, assets, gaps in tourism, product, business needs, resident concerns about tourism, seasonal expansion, partnership and collaboration opportunities (e.g. across Cumberland Region and with neighbouring regions).
4. **Undertake additional and ongoing research** to support strategic tourism development (e.g. economic impact of tourism in Cumberland Region, visitation data, resident sentiment surveys, tourism asset inventorying, etc.)

Continued engagement

Industry members expressed a strong desire to stay engaged in conversations around the potential implementation of a marketing levy (incl. exemptions, rollout, collection and remittance processes, etc.) as well as other destination management and marketing decisions. Comparator destinations echoed this sentiment, stressing the importance of ensuring meaningful engagement to inform decision making. Key to this effort will be strengthening relationships and communications between the municipalities and the tourism industry.

5. **Establish or confirm industry and resident communication channels** (e.g. set up webpage(s) dedicated to tourism development and marketing, develop direct email lists, etc.)
6. **Strengthen relationships with industry through diverse outreach activities** (e.g. direct telephone calls, in-person visits, hosting info sessions, etc.)

7. **Grow awareness amongst tourism industry around state of tourism** including initiatives currently underway (e.g. current structure of tourism management, explorecumberland.ca and related marketing activities, visitor data, etc.).
8. **Launch second round of levy-specific engagements** to update industry on decision-making process, collect feedback on proposed approach, grow buy-in, and reach more industry members.
9. **Communicate benefits of tourism and advocate for its prioritization** with residents, industry, partners, municipal Councils, etc. (incl. economic, social, environmental benefits).

Industry connections, partnerships, and capacity building

Collaboration can play a key role in placemaking and destination identity formation. It also fosters the development of unique, place-based tourism products. Industry members note opportunities to grow collaborative marketing and product development amongst tourism businesses in Cumberland Region, especially across sub-regions. A connected tourism industry can also help visitors by increasing the likelihood that they will receive informed recommendations from the business owners, operators, and staff they interact with during their trip. An area with room to grow local connections is the food and drink sector. Calling out local ingredients and sourcing on menus, for example, helps to create a sense of place.

10. **Foster inter-industry collaboration and connection across Cumberland Region** via dedicated tourism industry events, training sessions, direct introductions, establishing a web network, etc. Consider polling industry to gather more information on how they prefer to be engaged. Note: industry members expressed that busy schedules limit their capacity to participate but stressed that offering opportunities for networking is important.
11. **Host a farmer/food and drink producer-restaurant speed-dating event** to grow connections and encourage use and celebration of local products across Cumberland Region.
12. **Offer and/or connect tourism businesses to capacity-building workshops, tools & resources, etc.** to improve the visitor experience (e.g. areas of need based on the research include, storytelling, collaborative marketing, product development, digital presence- especially for food and drink businesses).
13. **Start/continue conversations with existing Destination Marketing Organizations and other tourism marketers** in overlapping and neighbouring jurisdictions (e.g. Sunrise Trail, Fundy Discovery Site, Cliffs of Fundy Geopark, etc.) to explore synergies, opportunities for collaboration, and how different stories fit together with the destination narrative.
14. **Grow relationships with and explore opportunities to partner** with Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network, Indigenous businesses, other Indigenous-led organizations and communities through tourism development and storytelling.
15. **Work with Nova Scotia Tourism to better leverage Cumberland Region's gateway to Nova Scotia status** in-person at Visitor Information Centres and online via provincial digital planning tools.

Marketing planning

When it comes to marketing Cumberland Region as a destination, both quick wins and longer-term actions are needed, and these can happen in parallel to maintain progress.

16. **Create a community-informed tourism marketing plan** in alignment with the tourism development and management plan to guide use of levy funds. This plan should explore ways to improve in-destination storytelling and wayfinding signage, share trip-planning information such as sample itineraries with visitors, set clear expectations (e.g. around driving times, cellular connectivity), etc.
17. **Set a destination narrative** through resident and industry engagement that reflects all of Cumberland Region (e.g. taps into region's geological heritage, diverse landscapes, outdoor activities, etc.)
18. **Improve the Search Engine Optimization of Cumberland Region** place name, and key assets such as beaches and outdoor activities by working with Tourism Nova Scotia, other DMOs, traditional media, content creators and bloggers, tourism businesses, etc.
19. **Grow capacity for collaborative marketing** by strategically pulling tourism industry into marketing activities via campaigns and other initiatives.

Placemaking and product development

The development of a comprehensive tourism development and management plan will likely yield additional insights and confirm gaps and opportunities related to Cumberland Region's tourism offering. Some areas of need include growing mid-week and shoulder/winter season offerings, nightlife assets such as restaurants that stay open later, Indigenous tourism assets, cultural tourism assets, etc. Another way to foster a memorable visitor experience is by creating a sense of place. When done successfully, this reminds visitors that they are somewhere special. Placemaking is often achieved through the installation of physical infrastructure like public art and signage that is connected to the destination narrative being shared.

20. **Support industry in strategically expanding existing and developing new tourism product** (e.g. focus on product that extends tourism season, fills gaps, reflects a destination narrative and brings this to life, etc.)
21. **Undertake signage review and strategy** to make navigating the destination simpler without access to mapping tools. There is an opportunity for gateway, wayfinding, and interpretive signage to align with a single destination brand and amplify the destination narrative.
22. **Lead/support placemaking initiatives** in alignment with marketing plan and signage strategy (e.g. murals, public art, signage, etc.)

Recommendations: Marketing levy considerations

Once a strong tourism foundation is set through the implementation of the above recommendations, confirming a levy will be possible moving forward. Although it is likely that through the foundation-setting work, new insights will emerge to further inform decisions around implementing a marketing levy, there are many learnings that can be applied from the research conducted for this project. These are compiled via the recommendations below across two areas: 1) Leadership, structure, and governance, and 2) Oversight and transparency. Within each area, recommendations are largely

chronological, however, depending on staffing capacities and budgets, some recommendations can likely be undertaken simultaneously. When a marketing levy is adopted for Cumberland Region, being adaptable and flexible across the roll out will be strategic. Consistent and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process will allow for changes to be made as needed.

Leadership, Structure, and Governance

Currently no destination marketing leader, equipped with the necessary skills, expertise, and resources to lead destination marketing for Cumberland Region, has been identified. Instead, a landscape of diverse industry-facing organizations and destination marketing organizations has emerged. With this context in mind, it will be important for the partner municipalities to continue acting as leads and rallying industry around the potential to implement a marketing levy, as well as strengthening and clarifying direct connections with key partners like Tourism Nova Scotia to ensure that Cumberland Region is being presented in a way that reflects destination realities and builds up brand recognition.

Moving forward, two possible governance approaches emerged through the research for managing a future marketing levy:

- The partner municipalities work together to manage marketing levy funds internally. This would likely require hiring an experienced destination marketer and support staff. Within this context, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and the Town of Amherst would co-lead destination marketing via the work of the destination marketer, acting as a shared staff person. The destination marketer would be responsible for tracking and operationalizing marketing levy funds through pre-approved destination marketing initiatives identified in the tourism marketing plan. Additionally, their role would likely also involve destination development initiatives that would require funding through alternative sources, as marketing levy funds would not apply.
- Alternatively, or potentially in harmony with the first governance approach, marketing levy funds would be governed and tracked by the partner municipalities to fund grassroots and collective marketing initiatives led by industry and local organizations. These initiatives would need to align with the tourism marketing plan to ensure that efforts are building on a shared direction.

However, in future, after creating the destination development and management plan and the tourism marketing plan, new insights on how to approach marketing levy leadership may emerge. At that time, alternative leadership approaches to consider include:

- Creating a new Destination Marketing Organization for Cumberland Region: This is the process that several regions in Nova Scotia, like Truro and Colchester, are exploring. However, this would require a strong foundation of connected tourism businesses, organizations, and community members in Cumberland Region before a new organization, and the expenses related to setting it up and making it operational are undertaken.
- Alternatively, marketing levy funds could be used to fund an existing organization, such as Cumberland Business Connector or Cumberland Chamber

of Commerce, to expand its mandate to take on destination marketing initiatives for the region.

When it comes to giving shape to the structure and developing strong governance processes for the marketing levy, in alignment with the leadership approaches illustrated above, several other recommendations are important for successful implementation.

23. **Engage with industry to inform timeline for levy implementation** (e.g. bylaw passed, existing reservations immediately subject to levy, grace period to ensure compliance, etc.)
24. **Strike a joint agreement/Memorandum of Understanding between all municipalities in Cumberland Region** that outlines intricacies of levy (e.g. processes and technology for remitting levy, use of funds in alignment with marketing plan, levy exemptions, communications approach/channels, and details of aligned bylaws, etc.) to ensure municipalities are moving forward in unison and with a shared approach.
25. **Establish a committee to inform and guide the use of levy funds** according to the tourism marketing plan. The committee should include representation from diverse accommodation providers (e.g. resort, hotel, B&B, short-term rental), and other tourism businesses and organizations (e.g. Tourism Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network, Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Geopark, Fundy Discovery Site, Sunrise Trail Magazine, Ski Wentworth, etc.) Representation should also be geographically dispersed across Cumberland Region.
26. **Establish levy structure in alignment with provincial norms** (e.g. set marketing levy at 3%, charge interest on overdue levies ranging from 12-15%, confirm timeframe of the levy introduction and grace period.)
27. **Facilitate direct online payments through one common channel** across all municipalities to support industry in adopting the marketing levy. Make the payment process as simple as possible and potentially have the levy be collected by one municipality in the region for regional spend.
28. **Strengthen relationships with industry-based and network organizations** that may be potential partners in future destination marketing efforts (e.g., Cumberland Business Connector, Cumberland Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

Oversight and Transparency

Concerns about transparency and effectiveness of levy spend are common amongst industry members, particularly accommodation providers, since a marketing levy is a fee that they would charge their customers directly but do not spend themselves. As such, ensuring that strong and clearly understood oversight and transparency processes are in place is beneficial to the overall success and support of a marketing levy. This requires the right information to be accessible to those who need it in the best format and place.

Oversight and transparency apply to all levels and all actors involved in levy collection, remittance, payment, and investment. One way to ensure aligned oversight is to prioritize marketing levy funds to resource the implementation of a publicly available tourism marketing plan.

29. **Develop a webpage about the levy process** so that information and updates are accessible and digestible (e.g. webpage that includes direct contact persons noted for each municipality, direct emails, newsletter, social media, etc.)

30. **Launch an awareness building campaign** directed to tourism industry to ensure general understanding of who is collecting the funds, who is receiving and actioning the funds, and how these are being spent (e.g. webinar, open house, one-pager on webpage, etc.).
31. **Develop additional information materials and resources that communicate key information for industry to understand why the levy is being implemented, what it is being used for, and how they can let their customers know about it and why it is being charged** (e.g., how-to report and remit guide, how-to guide for sharing information about the levy with guests, or why a marketing levy is charged in Cumberland Region webpage for travellers to the region, etc.)
32. **Host training session(s) with accommodation providers in-person, virtually, and asynchronously** with opportunities for follow-up conversations to ensure that all parties understand steps and roles in levy collection, remittance, etc.
33. **Phase in processes and related penalties with quarterly reporting and remitting** for the first year of implementation, where businesses need to remit and transfer marketing levy funds that they have collected to the collecting municipality on a quarterly basis but without penalties being applied for the first one to two quarters (i.e., first 3-6 months of implementation).
34. **Transition and shift to a bi-yearly or yearly reporting and payment process** for businesses to remit and transfer marketing levy funds that they have collected to the collecting municipality, starting in the second year after implementing the marketing levy.
35. **Confirm a levy introduction grace period** for tourism accommodations to learn about and adopt the required processes
36. **Create a levy reserve fund** where levy funds will be collected and to demonstrate that marketing levy revenues are being tracked separately and not folded into broader municipal budgets.
37. **Create yearly reports to be published publicly** that outline amount of funds collected, use/distribution of funds, and successes (e.g. economic impact, anecdotes from business owners, # people engaged, marketing campaigns or other initiatives from across Cumberland Region with businesses of different sizes, etc.)



CAO Task Report

March 2025

Task Updates:

Task: Inter Municipal Services Agreement

Received message from MCC CAO indicating that he is working on his end of the project.

Status: Ongoing

Task: Committee Review

New draft Terms of Reference and Strategic Plan for combining of IDE and AAC Committees on March COW agenda.

Status: In-progress

Task: Anson Aircraft Monument

Allocation made in the draft capital budget. Staff have yet to meet with Mr. Gould.

Status: In Progress

Task: Military Museum

Included as part of the armouries project.

Status: In Progress

Task: Living Museum

Motion passed at February COW to remove this from the Strategic Priorities Points to Capture List.

Status: Complete

Task: Request to Present – Social Media and Communication
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This will be undertaken when drafting our new marketing / communications plan.

Status: In Progress

Monthly Departmental Report

Community Living

March 2025

This month the Community Living Department has been working on the following things:

- Planning/promoting French Toast Fest
- Developing the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (AIDE) Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and the Strategic Plan
- Assisting the NS Healthcare with staff appreciation events in Pugwash, Parrsboro, Advocate, Springhill and Amherst
- Reviewing Volunteer nominations and Community Support Grants
- 2025 Budgets
- Finalizing the APD Strategic Plan
- Planning for the Athletic Achievers Banquet

Director Task Updates:

Task: Accessible Playground

Update: An internal committee of staff has been struck to determine plan, design and cost moving forward.

Status: Ongoing

Task: APD Strategic Plan

Update: Finalizing design and final review of content.

Status: Ongoing

Monthly Report

Corporate

March 2025

IT Services:

- Checked Wireless system at the stadium, speed tests, connectivity etc.
- Completed a stage upgrade of the backup system at Town Hall to current version.
- Moved and upgraded the backup system at APD to a new Server.
- Setup Active Directory Sync for the APD Body camera system. Creating groups and assigning users to the Video Manager System.
- Dispatch remodel is still on going. We are still waiting for the VOIP phone system to be installed. The new radio system has been installed and is up and running.
- Reception at Town Hall has been moved to its new location across the lobby.
- The building controls server and software was upgraded last month, operator training was provided this month.
- Day to Day IT issues.

Procurement:

ID	Type	Project	Process Type	Budget Type	Released	Closed	App'd	App'd By
25-02	RFP	Accessibility Ramp Town Hall	Regular	C			X	CAO

Other:

E-11 Customer Service

There were 83 open cases in February.

Top categories were: Weather conditions/ice (32 cases) which was 43% of all monthly cases, By Law issues (which includes permits and applications as well as Unsightly) (12 cases), Solid Waste (10 cases)

Monthly Departmental Report

Finance

March 2025

FINANCE

The Audit Committee met on March 4th and reviewed the third quarter financial report and capital year to date. The financial results continue to be favourable.

Staff are finalizing the 2025/26 capital and operating budgets. These budgets will be presented to Council in early April.

As we are quickly approaching our fiscal year end (March 31st), staff are busy with year end reviews and tasks.

TAX / ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE / COLLECTIONS

Water Collections – 45 final notices were sent to customers with two plus quarters outstanding.

2025 Assessment Appeals – The Town received the 2025 assessment appeal inventory from PVSC. There was a total of 69 appeals.

	# Of Accounts Appealing		Appeal Completed as of Mar 1/25	Pending as of Mar 1/25	Withdrawn as of Mar 1/25	Outstanding Appeals as of Mar 1/25	Appeals Successful as of Mar 1/25	Loss of Assessment Value	Amount of Revenue Reduction	Nova Scotia Assessment Appeal Tribunal Status
Residential /Resource	58	\$25,804,900	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00	0
Commercial	11	\$16,586,800	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	\$0.00	0
TOTAL	69	\$42,391,700	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	\$0.00	0

Property Sales/Tax Certificates– There were 3 commercial property sales and 4 residential property sales in February and 15 tax certificate requests were completed during the month.

WATER/SEWER

Preparations are being made for 4th quarter water meter reads for billing in April. We will continue with maintaining customer accounts and contacting residents that may require meter repair or replacement as required.

TASK UPDATES

Task: No outstanding tasks.

Monthly Departmental Report

Fire Department

March 2025

RESPONSES (February)

	<u>Town of Amherst</u>	<u>District 2</u>
Electrical fire	2	
Carbon Monoxide detector activated	1	
Evacuation assist	1	
Hazardous materials		1
Monitored alarm	4	1
Motor vehicle accidents	1	
Flue fire	1	
Smell of smoke / Air quality check	1	
Total events	11	2

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Weekly Fire Fighter Training

During the month of February, the fire department focused it's training on forcible entry, search & rescue patterns, wildfire response training.

Junior Firefighter Program

The focus of the junior firefighters' program is to provide youth with theory and hands on training related to firefighter duties. This is completed though weekly training and weekend training sessions once a month. During the month of February, the juniors spent a fair amount of time focusing on hands on training related to forcible entry, search & rescue and wildfire firefighting equipment.

RECRUITMENT

The fire department continues to look for new members to join our team. For more information on becoming a member of the Amherst fire department, please go to www.amherst.ca/volunteer-firefighter.html

TASK UPDATES

Task: **No open tasks at this time**

Monthly Departmental Report

Human Resources

March 2025

Staffing Updates

Recreation Facilities: Andy Kierstead, a long-term employee at the Amherst Stadium, has announced his intention to retire at the end of May. In the coming months, staff will prepare for the vacancy created by Andy's departure and send Andy off into retirement with a celebration of his achievements!

Current Recruitment

Police Constable: Our recruitment campaign for an additional full-time Officer remains open. Staff had previously developed a video to promote the benefits of living and working in Amherst and becoming a member of the Amherst Police Department family to support the recruitment efforts. The video and posting will continue to be circulated online until the position is filled.

Police Science Cadet Program: The Amherst Police Department has applied and was awarded a student position in the January 2026 police cadet class and is also on the wait list for a position in the spring 2025 class. Several applicants are currently participating in the screening process.

Marketing & Communications Strategist: The competition for this position closed on March 7. The selection process is currently in progress.

Summer Student Recruitment: The recruitment process for our annual summer student hiring is currently in progress. The competitions will remain open until late March/early April.

Student Placements: We are pleased to host various work placements, typically in the spring each year, to support students in gaining on-the-ground experience to enhance their studies. Two such placements are currently being explored; one in our Public Works Department and one in our Community Living Department.

Parks, Maintenance & Stadium Operator: Andy's retirement will create a vacancy for a Parks, Maintenance & Stadium Operator position. This vacancy will be posted internally in the coming weeks as this is a CUPE position governed by the collective agreement. Should no internal applicants be found suitable, the position will be posted externally.

Parks Attendant (Seasonal): A competition will be posted shortly to fill this vacancy, which was temporarily filled for the season last year. This will be posted internally and externally.

Other HR News

Labour-Management Meeting

Staff are preparing for the semi-annual labour management meeting with our CUPE Local 1233 members with the next meeting to take place March 20, 2025.

Annual Performance Evaluations

HR staff are working on rolling out our annual employee performance evaluations for all staff. The target deadline for completion is the end of March.

Group Insurance Plan Annual Renewal

HR staff review the group insurance plan every spring. The review includes the plan design, including levels of coverages, reviewing claims trends from the prior year and a review of premium rates.

Contractual Salary Increases

HR staff are preparing for annual salary increases for April 1 in accordance with the CUPE and APA collective agreements.

HR Policy Review

Staff also continue to review all HR policies and procedures with the “Staff Training and Professional Development” policy currently under review for recommended revisions.

Payroll

Payroll and WCB remittances are up to date.

Payroll remittances are remitted to CRA bi-weekly by the payroll company.

WCB is remitted automatically via our payroll provider.

The year-end payroll process for 2024 has been completed and T4's have been distributed.

Monthly Departmental Report

Operations

March 2025

In addition to their routine maintenance work Operational Services staff worked on and will be working on:

RECREATION & HORTICULTURE

- Dickey Park washroom is open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm.
- The walking track at the stadium is generally available for use daily from 7:00am to 9:00pm.
- Outdoor skating surface is closed for the season. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate with us this year to have consistently good ice on the surface. The frame and lighting will be removed in the coming weeks.
- The Amherst Jr. Ramblers playoff run started on March 15.
- The Ramblers playoff schedule may affect other user groups, staff will notify those affected and work with them to reschedule their ice time.
- The stadium hosted the Amherst Figure Skating Club's Skatefest on March 5 as well as the Bates/Merrill Friendship Hockey Tournament on March 7-9.
- Staff are starting to transition to outdoor work and will be working on cleaning up of our parks and green spaces from the winter.

PUBLIC WORKS

- There were no major snow events in the past month, but several smaller weather events with a combination of snow, sleet, and freezing rain kept public works staff busy. Streets and sidewalks were plowed 5 times.
- Sidewalk salting took place on 12 occasions and the salt truck was dispatched 15 times due to icy conditions.
- There were 2 broken water mains and 1 plugged sewer repaired in the past month.
- Staff have been patching potholes with recycled asphalt, typically 3 days per week.
- Operations staff continue working on the Town Hall office renovations, which are nearing completion. The new wheelchair ramp will be completed by the end of March.
- Staff are working on the annual report for the Amherst water utility, the annual report for the wastewater treatment facility has been submitted for review.

SOLID WASTE

- Futureworx Presentation. Staff conducted a half-day education session on the background of solid waste in Cumberland County. Students were given information on our facilities in Cumberland County (landfill, compost facility, & recycling transfer station), proper sorting, enforcement, litter, and provincial programs. The session went well, and participants were provided with a certificate for their participation.
- Staff met with clients from the Sunset Community Center to discuss Solid Waste Management in Cumberland County. During the meeting, staff reviewed the current sort guide with participants and showed examples of how their materials are recycled into new items. Additionally, staff provided signage to be placed on the community's solid waste receptacles.



- The 2025/2026 collection schedule is currently being printed at Acadian Printing and will be mailed to residents the week of March 17th.
- Divert NS provides each region with \$30,000 to assist with the disposal of Household Hazardous Waste. The \$30,000 will then be distributed within our region based on the proportion of eligible expenses claimed for each unit (Cumberland, Colchester, East Hants). The submission for Cumberland Region Solid Waste was submitted on February 28, 2025.
- The Solid Waste Hotline (902-667-5141) which receives calls from residents all over Cumberland County received 196 phone calls during the month of February.

Town of Amherst Curbside Rejections (February 2025)

Not dual stream	32
Late	23
Recycle contains garbage	32
Buried in snow	12
Miscellaneous	12
Total	111

UPCOMING

- There will be a focus on patching potholes over the next 6 weeks.
- Quarterly reading of water meters will start on April 1.
- Cumberland County Minor Hockey Association concludes their season on March 31.
- Amherst Stadium will be closed April 18 (Good Friday) and April 20 (Easter Sunday)
- Ice coming out April 21 if the Ramblers are no longer in the playoffs.

TASK UPDATES

Task: Havelock / Victoria Street Intersection Traffic Signals

Update: An option for intersection improvements has been included in the proposed 2025/26 capital budget

Status: Complete

Task: WWTP Grey Water Energy Extraction Report

Update: Staff did not have time to prepare the memo for March COW, will be completed for April 2025 COW.

Status: In Progress

Task: Water Utility Dump Truck

Update: Delivery expected in early April.

Status: In Progress

Task: Capital Budget Amendment – New Loader

Update: The new loader was delivered on March 5, 2025

Status: Complete

Task: Anson Avenue – CN Crossing

Update: Moved By Councillor Chambers

Seconded By Councillor Wells

That staff be directed to hire a professional engineer or other qualified person familiar with railway safety to complete the required assessments on behalf of the Town; and further that staff include \$10,000 in the proposed 2025/26 operating budget to pay for the required assessments.

Against (3): Councillor Furlong, Councillor McManaman, and Councillor Ripley

MOTION DEFEATED

Status: Complete

Monthly Departmental Report

Planning & Economic Development

March 2025

The attached development activity report shows permits issued in February and a 2024/2025 comparison. As indicated, several permits were issued for detached dwellings within the Hillsdale development.

At the February Council meeting, second reading was approved for a development agreement for 96 Church Street to permit a total of seven units. At the March 3rd PAC meeting, the committee recommended approval of a development agreement to permit an 18-unit apartment building at 91 Rupert Street and an 8-unit apartment building at 3 Robie Street. The PAC were also provided with options for multi-unit residential developments as part of the new MPS and LUB drafts. A special PAC meeting has been scheduled for March 25th to continue the discussion on the options provided, with a view to making a recommendation to Council on the draft planning documents in April.

A public participation opportunity will be held after the PAC meeting on March 25th to seek input on a development agreement application for a proposal at 100 Russell Street involving six, 42-unit apartment buildings, 38 Stacked Townhouses, and 14 Stacked Bungalows.

The April 7th PAC meeting agenda will include consideration for a multi-building proposal at 112 West Victoria Street. This proposal was deferred by the PAC in September 2024 with a request for changes to the building configuration and more information. The developer has provided additional information and changes in response to this request.

Advertising of the Industrial Park will continue over the coming months. ViewPoint website advertising will be complete at the end of April and allNovaScotia website ads will stop in August. Tourism promotions in SaltScape magazines will begin in April and will continue throughout the year. The February article on the Town of Amherst in Business View Magazine was delayed and will run in the March issue. Our ad in Canada Travel Magazine is running in both their print and digital publications. Canada Travel Magazine provided the added opportunity to place a digital billboard advertisement on a billboard along the Gardiner Expressway in Toronto. Our ad was shown over 50,000 times from February 24th to March 2nd.

The tender has closed for the construction of three business promotional signs for designated locations between Laplanche Street and Fort Lawrence Road. Town and County staff will be contacting existing sign owners to notify them of the changes and the removal of illegal signs. A program has been developed to allow businesses to be included on the new signs. This work is scheduled to be completed by May 1st.

The new Industrial Park Welcome Sign has been ordered and the supply and installation are expected in April. New lighting and landscaping around the sign will be completed this spring-summer by town staff. The improved area will showcase the Industrial Park to travelers along Hwy 104.

With the Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia (RANS) coming to Amherst on Tuesday, March 25th, Town staff and the Cumberland Business Connector are contacting local restaurants to ensure they are aware of the opportunity to meet the association. RANS will be discussing a collection of topics to help run a restaurant including staffing, CRA, education and training, and marketing.

Staff are working with Provincial partners to introduce and promote the NS Loyal program to businesses and organizations in our area. The program is designed to make it easier to identify local products at retail. InvestNS is offering funding up to \$3000 to producers for labeling and packaging costs for their products.

The Cumberland Chamber of Commerce will be hosting its 2025 AGM on April 24th at the CCUBIC conference room. Retiring General Manager, Beth Peterkin will be leaving the organization at the end of May. Ms. Peterkin’s replacement has yet to be announced.

On April 29th and 30th, the Cumberland Business Connector is hosting the annual Partners for Progress conference at the Fox Harbour Resort. Known as the Province's largest annual Economic Development Conference, the event gathers all economic development partners and stakeholders to discuss major topics affecting the economy and share solutions.

The 2025 SaltScapes East Coast Expo will be held from May 9th to 11th. Town and County staff will be at a tradeshow booth debuting the ExploreCumberland brand and promoting tourism in Amherst and the Cumberland region. This immensely popular consumer show is custom-designed as a one-stop opportunity to learn what Atlantic Canada has to offer.

There continues to be an abundance of business learning opportunities - the following list provides a sampling of what is being offered between now and the end of April. Those interested are encouraged to follow the Cumberland Business Connector Facebook page for announcements of upcoming learning opportunities.

Date	Organizer/Presenter	Topic
March 19	InvestNS	Programs for business expansion in international markets
March 25	Restaurant Association	Meet & Greet in Amherst & Pugwash
March 26	Mind Your Business	Art of Merchandising facilitated by Masstown Market
April 8	Cliffs of Fundy	Building Sustainable Tourism Networking event
April 16	Chamber of Commerce and Sunset Homes	Empowering Cumberland Conference
April 29 & 30	Cumberland Business Connector	Partners for Progress Conference

Task Updates:

Task: 15 & 31 East Victoria Street Development Agreement

Update: The agreement is ready to be signed but the developer is not likely to proceed as approved due to unforeseen circumstances.

Status: This will be marked complete

Task: Industrial Park Land Acquisition

Update: Legal/survey work should be completed in March. An Industrial Land Sale Policy will be on the March COW agenda.

Status: Ongoing

Task: 105 South Albion (Blaine Street) and Ottawa Avenue Acquisitions

Update: Staff are working with the developer to execute the development agreement with a tentative closing date in March for the land transaction.

Status: Blaine Street is ongoing. Development of the Ottawa Avenue property is paused.

Task: Hotel Levy

Update: The final report was completed in December. Staff are working on a summary of the report recommendations that will be presented to Council in March.

Task: LED Roadway Lighting Proposal

Update: A pilot project that would include replacement of almost all of the town's streetlights to more efficient lights, while testing LEDs radar and camera technologies. With funding for the project having been denied on multiple occasions, the project is not viable as originally conceived. Staff will be reviewing the town's streetlighting needs to determine what, if any, further actions are required.

Status: Ended This will be marked complete

Task: 8 Lower Laplanche Purchase

Update: This purchase has been waiting for settlement of the estate, which is being contested. The possibility remains that the sale will go through once the estate has been settled.

Status: Pause, pending settlement and registration of the vendor's estate.

Permits Issued in February 2025

PERMIT APPLICATIONS							For the Month of February	
Number	PID	Civc Address	New Units	Work Type	Bldg Type	Proposed Use	Permit Fee	Value
C2025-013	25029471	3 Robie St	4	Renovate	Apartments	Apartment Building	800.00	300,000.00
D2025-014	25009903	6 South Albion St	0	Construction	Commercial	Shed	50.00	3,000.00
C2025-015	25520305	47 Russell St	1	Construction	Single Detached Dwelling	Single Detached Dwelling	261.00	218,000.00
C2025-016	25007261	5 Copp Lan	2	Construction	Double Dwelling	Semi-Detached Dwelling	189.00	150,000.00
D2025-017	25009440	2 Albion St	0	Construction	Commercial	Permanent Sign	50.00	2,000.00
C2025-018	25005117	43 Russell St	1	Construction	Single Detached Dwelling	Single Detached Dwelling	179.00	150,000.00
Total	6		8				1,529.00	823,000.00

2023-2024 Comparison

ACTIVITY REPORT							For Month of February 2025-02-28		
Type	Feb 2024			Feb 2025					
	Permits	Units	Value of Construction	Permits	Units	Value of Construction			
Single Family	6	2	338,356	2	2	368,000			
Duplex/Semi	0	0	0	1	2	150,000			
Apartments	1	0	98,000	1	4	300,000			
Other Residential	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Commercial	1	0	2,000	2	0	5,000			
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Inst & Gov	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Agriculture	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Total	8	2	438,356	6	8	823,000			
Year To Date	15	6	1,517,816	18	17	2,714,000			

Monthly Departmental Report

Police Services

March 2025

TRAINING

Strategic Resilience: Constable Michelle Harrison completed the second portion of a 3-part training course on Extensive Resilience training for Active First Responders hosted by the Nova Scotia Community College. On February 13th and 14th, she attended the course which was held in Debert. This training covers such topics as developing strategic, effective, resilience-based protocols to deal with cumulative stress and trauma and the continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of self-care and coping strategies in response to stress.

GENERAL OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

Police Pursuits/Failing to Stop: During the month of February APD generated 4 occurrences in relation to vehicles failing to stop for police. On February 4th, APD received information in regards to a vehicle that had been stolen from the Pictou area. The suspects in the vehicle theft were also involved in other incidents and were arrestable. Further information was received that the vehicle was in the Amherst area. At approx. 5:40pm, the suspect vehicle was spotted in Amherst. Patrols attended and made efforts to contain the vehicle, but it fled at a dangerously high rate of speed. The pursuit was discontinued and the suspect was not located. On February 7th, Police received a complaint of a suspicious vehicle that was parked. An officer attended and approached the vehicle on foot and the vehicle fled. A second Police vehicle on the scene pursued for a very short distance and discontinued due to high speeds and poor driving conditions. On the evening of February 8th, 2 ATVs were observed in the MacDonalds parking lot, both with passengers and no license plates. Both fled from Police at a high rate of speed and cut through the rear of the mall and into the woods. On February 14th, a vehicle fled from Police when the driver was identified as a person who was on a curfew. The pursuit was discontinued, but the fleeing driver was involved in an accident and is facing several charges as a result. All pursuits were discontinued as per policy and risk assessments. All pursuit files are subject to a review to ensure that members are following policy.

Shoplifting Complaints: Shoplifting complaints during February drastically increased to 20 complaints from 7 in January. Of these complaints there were 3 people who were involved in more than one complaint. This is a fairly high increase considering our recent stats, but is closer to our stats in the fall (17 in November). Outside of shoplifting complaints, APD also received 16 complaints of theft in February, as compared to 20 in January and 22 in December. Of the 16 complaints in February, 3 were reports of 'gas drive-offs'. Two additional complaints were received in February concerning thefts from a motor vehicle.

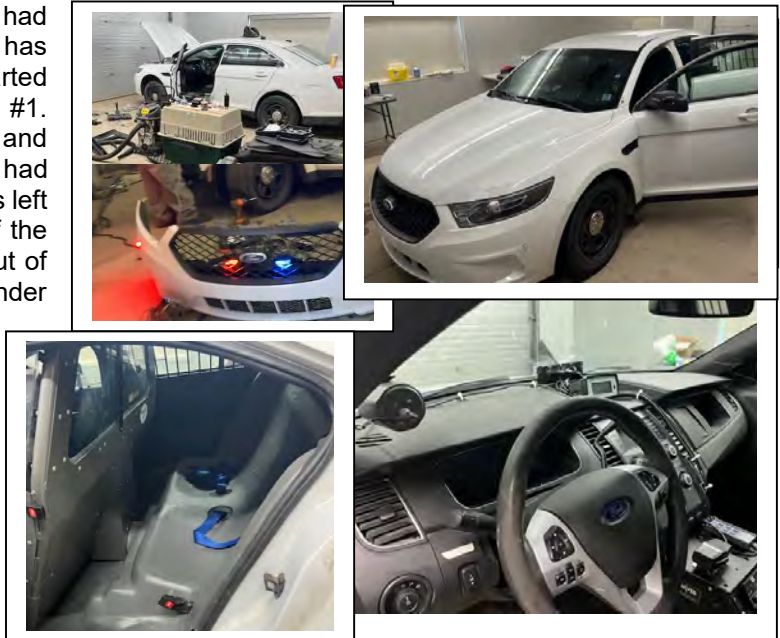
Homelessness: As you are aware, we continue to track complaints that have a nexus to homelessness. These may often also have an element of mental health, and usually involve trespassing, noise complaints, and disturbances. Such files usually involve 2-3 of the same people over and over again, with the majority of people who are homeless rarely having such an interaction with Police. We generated 24 complaints during February that have a connection to homelessness, with 15 of these occurring in the downtown area, and 8 of these at or near the shelter. While Police do often get calls concerning homelessness, the majority of homelessness issues are likely being dealt with and handled by other agencies and the homeless shelter instead of the Police Department.

OPERATIONAL

Drug Alert: I previously reported that on February 7th, 2025, Nova Scotia Health sent out a Community Alert concerning a new drug showing up in the drug supply. Lab testing of a suspected crystal meth sample indicated that the substance was *Desalkylgizapam*, a form of benzodiazepine mixed with fentanyl. This is significant because this is the first instance of *Desalkylgizapam* being detected in the drug supply. Since that time, we had another instance of *Desalkylgizapam* in a sample from Amherst. In this case, our members had seized numerous substances which included pills thought to be Xanax. Fentanyl was not in this particular sample. It is very common for illicit drugs to be mixed with other drugs unbeknownst to the users. Benzodiazepines are central nervous system depressants or sedative-hypnotics. They slow down the nervous system, giving them calming, sleep-inducing properties, which significantly increases risk and danger of drug poisoning.

Multiple Charges: A 54-year-old Springhill man is facing charges following an incident where he fled from Police on February 14th, 2025. Police had observed John Warner, who is the subject of a previous incident on January 25th at 2:40 in the morning which resulted in the seizure of more crystal meth as well as baggies with fentanyl. At the time he was arrested and charged with possession of meth for the purpose of trafficking as well as possession of fentanyl for the purpose of trafficking. He was released by the courts on conditions. During the February 14th incident, Warner fled from police who shut down the pursuit before observing the fleeing car get into a roll-over accident. Warner fled on foot but was caught and arrested. Police seized a handgun at the scene and later executed a search warrant on the vehicle and retrieved a second home-made firearm and an assortment of drugs that is suspected to be crystal meth. Warner is facing numerous new charges as a result and has been remanded into custody at this time.

APD Vehicles – Over the last 2 months, we have had numerous issues with our patrol vehicles that has resulted in a severe shortage of vehicles. This started in January when the transmission went in Vehicle #1. This vehicle, a Ford Taurus was due to be replaced and while we had received the ‘new’ vehicle one had arrived, the equipment for it was not yet ready. This left us with 4 vehicles. At the end of January, one of the Dodge Durango’s blew the motor. It was taken out of service and the motor was replaced shortly after under warranty. On February 11th, another Durango blew the motor and yet another blew on February 15th. This left us extremely short on cars with only one marked vehicle in use while members used the unmarked MCU and SCEU vehicles to patrol as during this time frame, the School Resource Vehicle also had mechanical issues. As a result, we reached out to town hall and were able to get an old Police Car which had been decommissioned. Members of our department, including Sgt Aaron Graham, Cst Pavlovic, Cst Millard, Cpl Babineau and Justin MacKay all chipped in and were able to ‘retro-fit’ this car with equipment we had in our inventory, do some repairs and, with the assistance of the town garage, make it ‘patrol-worthy’ by adding lights & siren with control panel, plastic prisoner seats, silent patrolman, PA, C-8 gunlock and radar. Nick-named ‘Frank’ (Frankenstein) this vehicle has been resurrected and has been in use during the shortage. Since that time, the Dodge has replaced, the motor in Vehicle 3 and Vehicle 2 should also be completed shortly. The new Vehicle 1 has also been brought to Halifax to be outfitted with the new equipment.



OPERATIONAL STATS – FEBRUARY 2025

Occurrences:	375	Criminal Code Charges:	71
Impaired by Alcohol:	3	CDSA:	0
Impaired by Drug:	0	CBCA:	0
Traffic Tickets:	29	PPA:	0
Traffic Written Warnings:	14	Vehicle Checks:	79
LCA:	1	Foot Patrol Hours:	17 hrs, 11min
Parking Tickets:	0	Parking Warnings:	0

TASK REPORT

Task: SARV – Safe Approach and Rescue Vehicle: GARDAWORLD has supplied APD with an armoured vehicle and we are slowly equipping it. It is operational, but requires additional emergency equipment

Update Status: In Progress: Several sources of funding for equipment and work have been secured. D Platoon, led by Sgt Graham, are working on a new front bumper and have purchased some metal to complete this. The Legion has confirmed they will provide a cheque for this as Justin MacKay has been heavily involved.

Task: Marsh Trail ATV Issues: That staff be directed to install signs, barriers and cameras along the centennial walking trail, and further that Council approves funding for such.

Update Status: In Progress: This matter is being handled by Public Works who are the lead as they are looking at new gates etc.

Task: Body Worn Cameras: Switch capital budget for BWC to annual operational budget lease.

Update Status: In Progress: Bodycams and materials are here and set up. Currently doing training for use and preparing for deployment. Draft policy also completed and being reviewed.