



Town of Amherst  
Regular Council Meeting  
Agenda

Date: **Monday, January 23, 2023**  
Time: **6:00 pm**  
Location: **Zoom Virtual Meeting**

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	Pages
<b>1. CALL TO ORDER</b>	
<b>2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT</b>	
<p>“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.”</p>	
<b>3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES</b>	
3.1 Approval of the Agenda	
3.2 Approval of Minutes - December 19, 2022	3 - 5
<b>4. REQUESTS FOR DECISION</b>	
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4.2 Solid Waste Collection RFP - Emery	40 - 43
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4.4 User Fee Policy - Landry	48 - 58
4.5 Housing Investment Policy - Davidson	59 - 63
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6.2	Cumberland YMCA - Fawthrop	76 - 76
6.3	Northern Region Solid Waste Management - Baker	77 - 77
6.4	L. A. Animal Shelter - Fawthrop	78 - 78
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6.7	Poverty Reduction - Landry	80 - 80
6.8	Municipal Alcohol Project - Emery	81 - 81
7.	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	

**TOWN OF AMHERST  
Regular Council Meeting  
Minutes**

**Date:** December 19, 2022  
**Time:** 6:00 pm  
**Location:** Council Chambers, Town Hall

**Members Present** Mayor David Kogon  
Councillor George Baker  
Councillor Hal Davidson  
Councillor Lisa Emery  
Councillor Dale Fawthrop  
Deputy Mayor Leon Landry

**Staff Present** Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer  
Greg Jones, Director of Fire Services  
Aaron Bourgeois, Director, Operations  
Andrew Fisher, Director, Planning & Strategic Initiatives  
Sarah Wilson, Director, Finance  
Krista Crossman, Director, HR & Customer Service  
Kim Jones, Director, Corporate Communications/Clerk  
Tom McCoag, Corporate Communications Officer  
Natalie LeBlanc, Deputy Clerk

**Staff Absent** Dwayne Pike, Chief, Police Services

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Mayor Kogon gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

**3.1 Approval of the Agenda**

Moved By Councillor Baker

Seconded By Councillor Fawthrop

To approve the agenda as amended to include item 4.5 - Snow Clearing Request.

**Motion Carried**

**3.2 Approval of Minutes - November 28, 2022**

Moved By Councillor Emery

Seconded By Councillor Davidson

To approve the minutes of November 28, 2022 regular meeting of Council as included in the agenda package.

**Motion Carried**

**4. REQUESTS FOR DECISION**

**4.1 2023 Meeting Dates**

Moved By Councillor Emery

Seconded By Councillor Baker

That Council approve of changing the February 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting date from Monday, February 20, 2023 to Tuesday, February 21, 2023 due to the Heritage Day holiday, change the May 2023 regular meeting of Council date from Monday, May 22, 2023 to Tuesday, May 23, 2023 due to the Victoria Day holiday, and further change the December 2023 regular meeting of Council date from Monday, December 25, 2023 to Monday, December 18, 2023, and reschedule the December 18, 2023 Committee of the Whole to start at 3:00 p.m. instead of 4:00 p.m.

**Motion Carried**

4.2 **Appointment of Auditor**  
Moved By Councillor Fawthrop  
Seconded By Deputy Mayor Landry  
That Council accept the proposal from McIsaac Darragh Inc. and appoint them as the municipal auditor for auditing services for the 2022/23 fiscal year, with the possibility of four (4) single year extensions to be reviewed and determined before March 31 of each fiscal year, as recommended by the Town of Amherst Audit Committee.

Motion Carried

4.3 **Appointment of Director, Community Living**  
Moved By Deputy Mayor Landry  
Seconded By Councillor Davidson  
That Council appoint Sharon Bristol as Director, Community Living.

Motion Carried

4.4 **Intermunicipal Cooperation**  
Moved By Councillor Davidson  
Seconded By Councillor Emery  
I move that the Municipality of the County of Cumberland be invited to be involved in planning and participating in a joint meeting or workshop to develop an ongoing framework of working principles between the Town of Amherst and the Municipality of the County of Cumberland for ongoing and future collaboration.

Motion Carried

4.5 **Snow Clearing Request**  
Moved By Councillor Davidson  
Seconded By Councillor Fawthrop  
That staff be directed to not approve the citizen request for enhanced snow removal efforts near the E.B. Chandler School, and further communicate to the citizen the efforts that staff are taking to mitigate flooding in this area.

Motion Carried

## 5. INFORMATION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.1 **NSFM Fall Conference 2022 Report**  
Moved By Councillor Fawthrop  
Seconded By Councillor Emery  
That the Town communicate with the NSFM executive that social issues facing municipalities today need to be discussed with the province.

Motion Carried

## 6. INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 **Planning Advisory Committee**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.

6.2 **Amherst Board of Police Commissioners - No Report**

6.3 **Audit Committee - No Report**

6.4 **Amherst Youth Town Council - Rowan Blanch**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.

6.5 **Accessibility Advisory Committee - No Report**

6.6 **Inclusion Diversity and Equity Committee - No Report**

## 7. EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 **Cumberland Public Libraries**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.

- 7.2 **Cumberland YMCA**  
Information item; no direction given or action required. Councillor Fawthrop indicated that over 400 seniors participated in the Santa for Seniors gift program, and not 200 as indicated in the report.
- 7.3 **Northern Region**  
Information item. Councillor Baker to get stats on municipalities meeting the 300kg per household per year, and how close we are to getting to this target.
- 7.4 **L. A. Animal Shelter**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.
- 7.5 **Senior Safety - Emery**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.
- 7.6 **Inter Municipal Tourism - No Report**
- 7.7 **Poverty Reduction - Landry**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.
- 7.8 **Municipal Alcohol Project - Emery**  
Information item; no direction given or action required.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**  
**Moved By Councillor Davidson**  
**Seconded By Councillor Emery**  
**To adjourn the meeting.**

**Motion Carried**

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Kimberlee Jones  
Municipal Clerk

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David Kogon, MD  
Mayor

# SYNOPSIS

## Accessibility Strategy

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The Province of Nova Scotia enacted the Accessibility Act in 2017. Access by Design 2030 is Nova Scotia's strategy to make the province accessible by 2030. It was released to the public in September 2018. Each Municipality was tasked with developing their own strategic plan for removing the barriers to participation in their community through accessing communications, goods and services, transportation, employment and the built environment.

In May 2022 the Community Well Being Manager developed a survey to start the community consultation process. Over 180 citizens, community groups and persons with lived experience were contacted to complete a survey and provide feedback in the areas of Goods and Services, Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Built Environment. Information gained from this consultative process formed the basis for the action plans of the Strategy. The Accessibility Committee reviewed the documents and approved the strategy at the November 2022 meeting. The strategy was presented to Council at the December meeting.

The strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and yearly reports on progress will be developed.

### **MOTION:**

**That Council accept the Town of Amherst Accessibility Strategy as presented to Council in December 2022.**



## AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2023006

Date: January 23, 2023

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**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Sharon Bristol, Director, Community Living

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Accessibility Strategy

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**ORIGIN:** In 2017 the Accessibility Act was legislated by the Province of Nova Scotia. Each Municipality was required to develop their own Accessibility Strategy to comply with the Access by Design 2030.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:** NS Accessibility Act 2017

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council accept the Town of Amherst Accessibility Strategy as presented to Council in December 2022.

**BACKGROUND:** The Province of Nova Scotia enacted the Accessibility Act in 2017. Access by Design 2030 is Nova Scotia's strategy to make the province accessible by 2030. It was released to the public in September 2018. Each Municipality was tasked with developing their own strategic plan for removing the barriers to participation in their community through accessing communications, goods and services, transportation, employment and the built environment. Work on the strategy was delayed during covid due to lack of community gatherings so work began in early 2022.

**DISCUSSION:** In May 2022 the Community Well Being Manager developed a survey to start the community consultation process. Over 180 citizens, community groups and persons with lived experience were contacted to complete a survey and provide feedback in the areas of Goods and Services, Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Built Environment. Information gained from this consultative process formed the basis for the action plans of the Strategy. The Accessibility Committee reviewed the consultation documents and feedback and approved the strategy at the November 2022 meeting. The strategy was presented to Council at the December meeting where suggestions on the document were requested. No feedback has been given to change the document in its current state. The strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and yearly reports on progress will be developed.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** Acceptance of the strategy may have future financial implications as the actions are operationalized. This will be reviewed by senior management and factored into capital budgets as we move forward.





## AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2023006

Date: January 23, 2023

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:** The Town of Amherst Accessibility strategy will allow persons with disabilities to equitably access programs, services, employment and transportation within the community. By removing the barriers to participation our citizens will have an enhanced quality of life.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:** None

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** The Accessibility Committee is comprised of persons with lived experience and will continue to meet quarterly to ensure the ongoing needs of our community are identified and communicated to Council. They will provide advice and input to council on an ongoing basis.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

- 1 Decline acceptance of the document.
- 2 Refer back to committee for further revisions

**ATTACHMENTS:** Accessibility Strategy Document

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Report prepared by:

Report and Financial approved by:



# Town of Amherst Accessibility Strategy

December 2022



DRAFT

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## Welcome

The Town of Amherst is a diverse community that is striving to be equitable and inclusive.

As part of that effort, we are committed to working towards a community where every citizen, every visitor, no matter their age, ability or gender, has equitable access to our buildings, programs and services.

Our long-standing commitment towards building a barrier-free society has resulted in many improvements to our community over the years, such as the creation of accessible buildings and trails, the live-streaming of our council meetings and more. With the advent of the new Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, which recognizes accessibility as a human right and aims to make Nova Scotia an accessible province by 2030, the Town of Amherst has established an Accessibility Advisory Committee and directed it to establish an accessibility strategy that would help guide us in our effort to become a more accessible community.

To this end, the committee has consulted with the community through a survey and meetings with various stakeholders. We have listened. Using the input we received from our citizens, we have developed an accessibility strategy for the Town of Amherst that we believe is flexible enough to meet our ever-changing world while providing more than adequate guidance as together we work towards our goal of achieving an equitable and inclusive community that is barrier-free.

I would like to thank the committee and the town staff for their contributions in developing this strategy.

I would also invite everyone to read the Town of Amherst Accessibility Strategy and to work with us to create an accessible, barrier-free community in which we all love to live, work and play.



Councillor Dale Fawthrop  
Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Chair

## Our Vision: A community that is built for everyone

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In our community, it is important that all citizens have the opportunity to participate in a barrier-free society. To that end, we believe in equitable access for community living and participation by all regardless of age, ability or gender. Further, it is important that dignity and independence be a pillar of our way of thinking, acting and planning, ensuring that everybody is treated equitably, based on their needs and abilities.

During the learning phase of this strategy development, it was paramount to us that we hear from as many persons as possible with a “lived experience,” especially those who face barriers to accessibility. Only then can we appreciate and rectify the gaps in our built environment, goods and services, communications and programs.

Throughout the development of this plan our focus remained firm on how we can remove and/or prevent barriers, thereby understanding and ultimately adhering to the requirements of the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act.





## Understanding Disability in our Province

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It is important to understand disability in the context of our Province of Nova Scotia. According to Statistics Canada, 30% of Nova Scotians aged 15 years and older identify as having at least one disability. That is nearly 230,000 Nova Scotians. This is the largest percentage of any Canadian province. It emphasizes the important need for municipalities to take an active role in improving accessibility in their communities. Additionally, Nova Scotia seniors, those 65 and older, account for 20% of people who have a disability.



This percentage will increase to about 25% of the population by 2030. Since older adults are more likely to experience barriers than younger people, the number of Nova Scotians with disabilities will rise as our population ages.

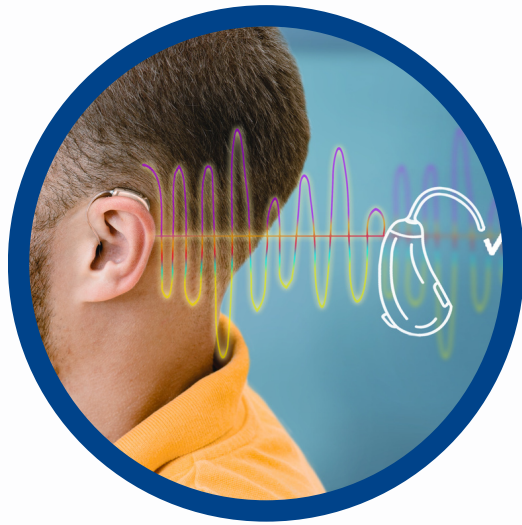
## Nova Scotia Accessibility Act

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In 2017, Nova Scotia became the third province in Canada to pass accessibility legislation. This serves as a testament to our province's commitment to become a more equitable and accessible province. The Accessibility Act recognizes accessibility as "a basic human right" and aims to make Nova Scotia an accessible province by 2030.

The goal of the Accessibility Act is to prevent and remove barriers that restrict people with disabilities from fully participating in society. It enables the government to develop standards for accessibility and outlines responsibilities for some public sector bodies, including municipalities.

The full Accessibility Act can be found at the following website:  
[www.nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf](http://www.nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf)



## “Disability” versus “Barrier”

In the Act, a disability is defined as “a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic event that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual’s full and effective participation in society.”

A barrier is defined in the Act 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.”

The government’s strategy for achieving an accessible province by 2030 is described in Access by Design 2030.

Digital link to Access by Design 2030:

[www.novascotia.ca/accessibility/access-by-design/access-by-design-2030.pdf](http://www.novascotia.ca/accessibility/access-by-design/access-by-design-2030.pdf)



# Provincial Accessibility Standards

Provincial standards will be developed for the following areas:

- **Goods and Services:** It will be important to ensure that people with disabilities have equitable access to goods and services.
- **Information and Communication:** It will be important to ensure that all people can receive, understand and share the information they need.
- **Transportation:** It will be important to consider the transportation needs of community members and to make it easier for everyone to get to where they need to go.
- **Employment:** It will be important to make workplaces accessible and to support people with disabilities in finding meaningful employment.
- **Built Environment:** It will be important to ensure public buildings, streets, sidewalks, and shared spaces are accessible to people of all ages and ability.
- **Education:** It will be important to make the education system accessible to all students, from early childhood to post-secondary levels.

As described in Access by Design 2030, a plan is in place to develop and implement these standards over several years. Municipalities and other affected sectors will be consulted before each standard is enacted.

These standards will first apply to the Government of Nova Scotia, then to municipalities and other prescribed public sector bodies and later to other organizations. The standards for the Built Environment and for Education are currently under development.

Other standards will be implemented in subsequent years (in an order to be determined).



# Our Requirements as a Municipality

Under the Accessibility Act, municipalities and villages are prescribed to do the following:

1. Establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee. (completed)
2. Develop an accessibility plan within one year. (in progress)

Further, the Act states accessibility plans must be updated every three years.



## Our Guiding Principles

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- We commit to fostering a culture of accessibility, encouraging the prevention and removal of barriers to participation, thereby building capacity in these areas among municipal staff, Amherst Town Council members and the public.
- The principles that have guided this process should remain as priorities as we work to implement this plan.
- We will work towards equitable access for all members of our community.
- It is essential to include first-voice perspectives or lived experience of people with disabilities in the creation of this plan, actions and decision-making processes.
- Strive to understand, be compassionate and meet the needs of people who face accessibility barriers.
- Strive to identify, remove and prevent barriers in our community according to the requirements of Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act and the needs of our citizens.
- As new standards are introduced and new technologies become available, we will review and update this plan to ensure its relevance. As such, this plan should be interpreted as a living document.
- Continue to collaborate with other municipal units, the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate and community partners to advance this plan and work towards improved accessibility in our communities.



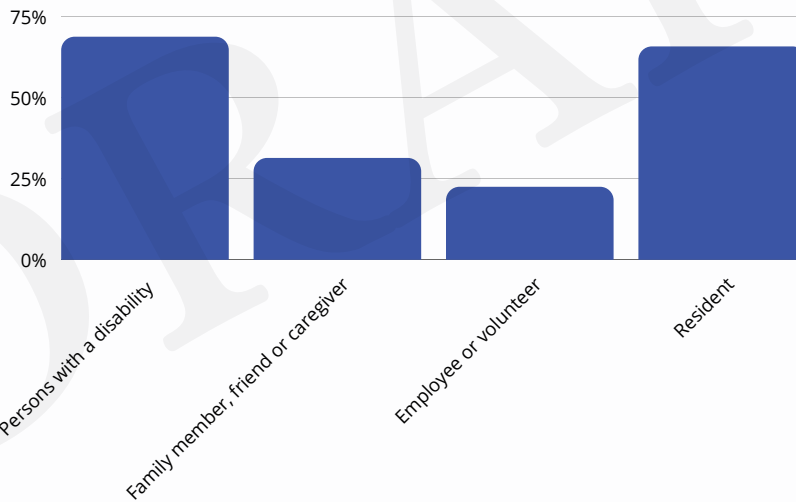
# Community Consultation

The Accessibility Committee undertook public consultation efforts from May through October 2022. Despite the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee heard from 185 residents and seven community organizations on the issue of accessibility through an online survey, presentations to community groups, visits to senior’s complexes, phone calls, emails and informational interviews.

## Summery results

### Respondent demographics

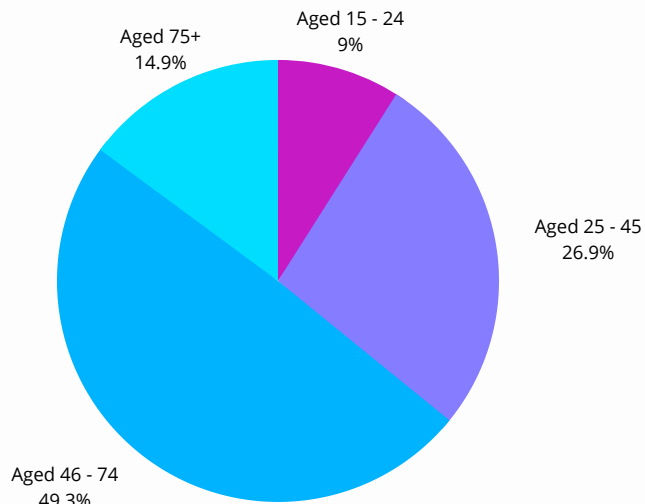
- 68.7% Persons with a disability (visible or invisible)
- 31.3% Family member, friend or caregiver of a person with a disability
- 22.4% Employed or volunteer at an organization that provides services to people with disabilities
- 65.7% Resident of the Town of Amherst



Graph 1. Respondent Demographic

### Age of respondent

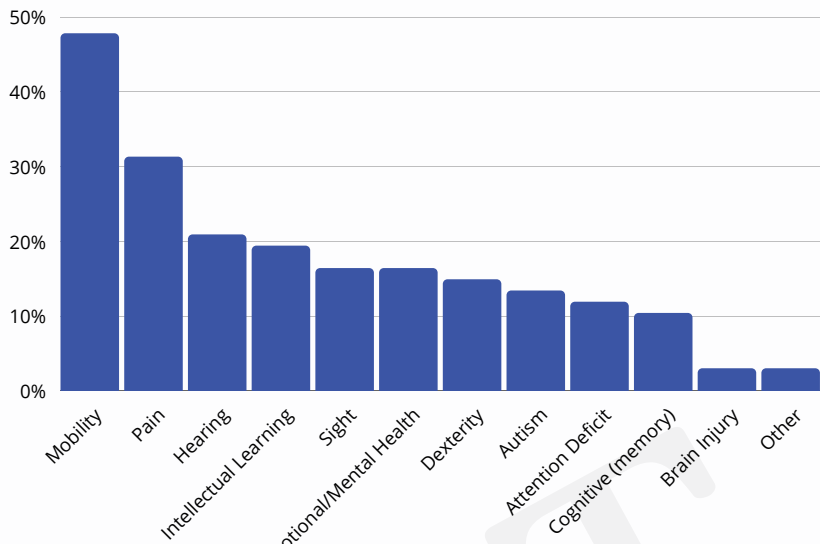
- 9% aged 15-24
- 26.9% aged 25-45
- 49.3% aged 46-74
- 14.9% aged 75+



Graph 2. Age of Respondent

### Type of disability

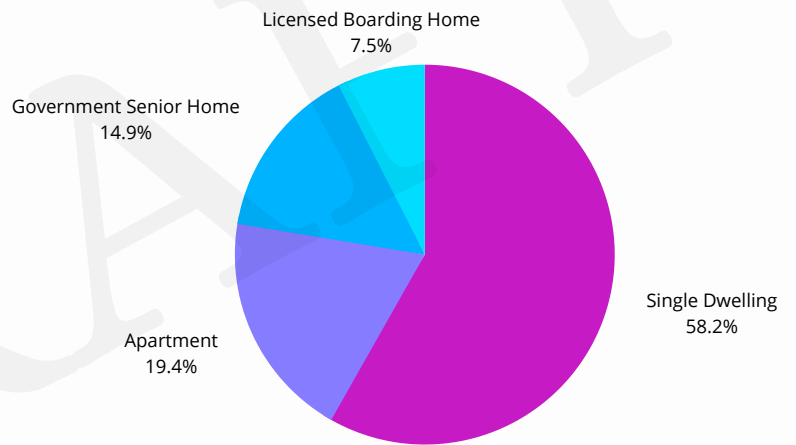
- 47.8% Mobility
- 31.3% Pain
- 20.9 % Hearing
- 19.4% Intellectual Learning
- 16.4 % Sight
- 16.4% Emotional/Mental Health
- 14.9% Dexterity
- 13.4% Autism
- 11.9% Attention Deficit
- 10.4% Cognitive (memory)
- 3% Brain Injury
- 3% Other



Graph 3. Disability Type

### Housing situation

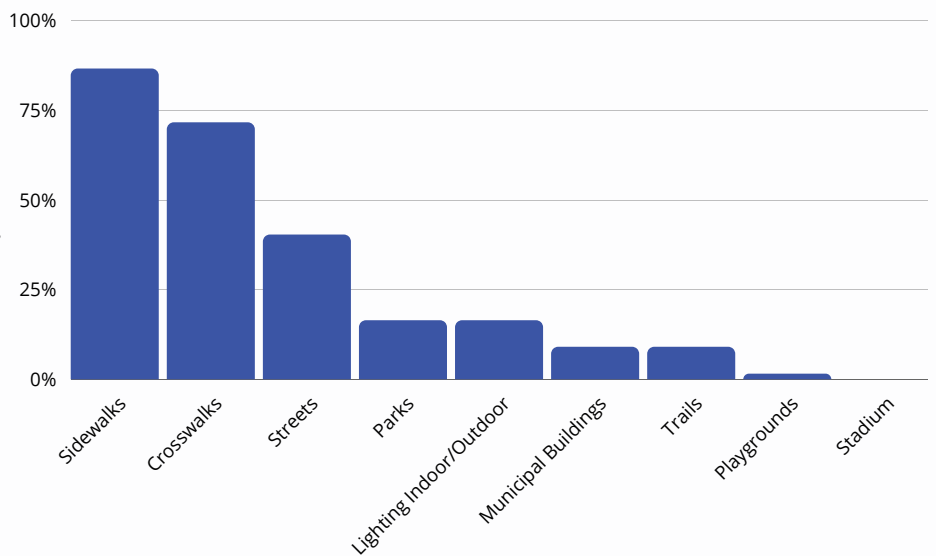
- 58.2% Single Dwelling
- 19.4% Apartment
- 14.9% Government Senior Home
- 7.5% Licensed Boarding Home
- 0% Nursing Home
- 0% Private Boarding Home



Graph 4. Housing Situation

### Barriers Identified

- 86.6% Sidewalks
- 71.6% Crosswalks
- 40.3% Streets
- 16.4% Parks
- 16.4% Lighting Indoor/Outdoor
- 9% Municipal Buildings
- 9% Trails
- 1.5% Playgrounds
- 0% Amherst Stadium



Graph 5. Barriers Identified

## Qualitative data: Comments from the Survey

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*"In 2021 I was legally blind (due to cataracts). The downtown sidewalks, crosswalks, and streets were atrocious for navigating (in one day I'm sure I almost tripped nearly a dozen times). Steps are also a hazard unless they are marked with high visibility paint/tape (a huge thank you to those areas). I have since had two surgeries and am no longer legally blind, but I will never forget the fear of immobility."*

*"Your question is asking about physical spaces and not the environment of the spaces I.e. lighting and sounds Something being too loud and too busy of a design are also barriers to participation. If you're thinking beyond physical barriers, think layout, flow, noise, lighting. Example does there need to be tvs on in the foyer of town hall?"*

*"Bandstand, anything other than first floor of stadium and Town Hall, ramp to Town Hall is difficult to access in manual chair, sidewalks are uncomfortable to navigate in any wheelchair (manual or power) because of the bumps, and along East Victoria the sloped driveways make wheeling along the sidewalk hard and potentially dangerous in slippery winter weather."*

*"Sidewalks are uneven, crossings lights not long enough when walking."*

*"Sidewalks downtown are difficult to walk on with cane or walker, uneven surface lots of places to trip and fall."*

*"Yes, although the brick side walk is very nice looking it's extremely uncomfortable and dangerous to those of us with mobility issues."*

*"Town hall staff could not tell me if the building was wheelchair accessible or not."*

*"Some sidewalks should be lowered for wheelchair/walker/cane users."*

*"Fix the crosswalks and the roads, huge step towards easier mobility for most people, and a sidewalk to the hospital. We see people walking out there all the time."*

*"Allow persons on Mobility Scooters to use bike lanes."*

*"More grants available to businesses and private citizens."*

*"Think beyond mobility issues."*



*"I work as a part of the palliative care team I'm this area. If the community could consider investing in portable ramps that could be borrowed for weeks to months at a time for end-of-life clients this would make an incredible difference in the lives of many. Folks are often stuck in their homes to die and cannot get outside as their disease progresses. Quality of life can be positively impacted if these ramps were available. I consistently run into this issue. As well- with the extreme cost of building supplies ramps are next to impossible to afford and most people do not have these resources."*

*"I cannot identify any specific inaccessibility barrier. However, for people who are wheelchair bound, business owners and operators should be encouraged to install access ramps to doors but within reason."*

*"Improve sidewalk conditions, fix holes and spots where people with visual disabilities could fall- sidewalks need to be reviewed and fixed where there are problems."*

*"Fix the sidewalks and make dedicated walk lights longer with no ability for cars to turn on the light."*

*"When using the street at lights have a sound play so that vision impaired know when to walk across."*

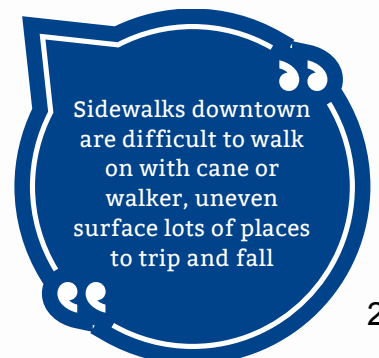
*"More accessible parks, wheelchair swings, trails to park, sidewalks should be flat."*

*"Sidewalk should be wider for visually impaired people and safer for wheelchairs. the trees downtown are pretty but when you can't see those are dangerous to have in a walking path. Individuals in wheelchairs should have options at the park, accessible swings and paths to equipment gravel is hard to use a wheelchair on."*

*"Sidewalks should be flat, hard to walk downtown. Playgrounds should have more things for adults with disabilities."*

*"Longer walking lights in spots that need it (by the mall), signs in braille where people can reach, fix the roads."*

*"Keep the sidewalks repaired and cut the weeds for better visibility, finish sidewalk to Pharmasave."*





# Plan of Action: Our path forward



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# Goods and Services



## Our Commitment

The Town of Amherst will provide equitable access to goods and services provided by the municipality to our residents and visitors.

- **Services:** We will strive to enhance services provided by the town by making municipal services and events more accessible to people with disabilities, including but not limited to: accessible means of communication, digital content and technologies and welcoming service animals and support persons.
- **Service Delivery:** we will strive to improve service delivery by educating staff through ongoing awareness and training programs. Our goal is to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights and accessibility barriers in our community. In addition, we will explore new awareness and training opportunities for staff. This will ensure that all municipal staff and Amherst Town Council can be educated in and striving toward building competency in accessibility matters.
- **Physical Space:** Upon entering Amherst Town Hall and other municipally owned buildings, physical spaces should be conducive to positive customer service experiences. For example, appropriate signage, safe quiet space to deal with sensory issues and chairs to rest in while waiting.
- **Programs:** Deliver programming to people of all ages and abilities and commit to increasing the knowledge of all program delivery staff, including summer students.
- **Events:** Improve accessibility of public events hosted by the town by planning events with an accessibility lens, including location, event delivery and/or participation. Planning should 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.
- **Procurement:** Apply an accessibility lens to our procurement processes.

## Our Commitment (Continued)

- **Internal Policy:** Apply an accessibility lens to our policies, procedures and practices.
- **Emergency Management:** Emergency management plans and prioritization of critical infrastructure need to consider accessibility barriers and vulnerable populations to ensure safety of people with disabilities in contingency and evacuation plans.

## Our Successes to Date

- Many community events are scheduled for the downtown core where accessible parking is available and surfaces are flat. Major events have streets sectioned off to only pedestrian traffic and all efforts are made to ensure everyone who wants to attend is able to do so.
- Victoria Square was completely redesigned to make the surface more accessible to everyone.
- Most events and programming are free or low cost to the public thereby eliminating the financial barriers to participation.
- The Town of Amherst currently has accessible playgrounds and work is underway to make them even more user friendly.
- The front counter at Amherst Town Hall was lowered and a ledge installed for wheelchair accessibility.



## Action Plan

- We will continue to evaluate programs and services related to accessible needs.
- Where applicable, include an “Accessibility Lens”/Impact Analysis in reports to Amherst Town Council.

# Information and Communication



## Our Commitment

People with disabilities can equitably access information and communications provided by our municipalities.

- **Delivery of Communications:** We will endeavor to improve communications about existing municipal programs, services, and events that are accessible to people with disabilities by delivering communications in a wide range of accessible formats. Further to this, we will seek input from the public on an ongoing basis as to how they would like to receive information.
- **Public Meetings:** We will arrange public open houses and meetings to be as accessible as possible to all members of the public by offering materials in various formats, providing support to facilitate participation and making sure topics are discussed in plain language when possible.
- **Advertising/Marketing:** Develop and recommend a standardized symbol system for all public communications of programs and events to clearly identify what accessibility accommodations are available on site. For example, accessible entrances, scent-free facilities and accessible washrooms.
- **Signage:** Improve signage for municipal buildings and public facilities by implementing signage consistent with accessibility best practice. Prioritize having signage where necessary and appropriate.

## Our Successes to Date

- Our Council Chambers are on one level accessible from the foyer of Amherst Town Hall. We have incorporated technology to live stream meetings for persons who are unable to be present in person.
- All council and committee meeting agendas, minutes and recorded meetings are available on our website. Hard copies are available upon request. Currently, our communications uses multiple forms of media (mainstream), social media and utilize the back of water billings.



## Our Successes to Date (Continued)

- There are several kiosks about town that house information about our programs, events and celebrations.
- Ample space is dedicated in our town buildings to sit while waiting for bill payments or to talk to an employee.
- Installation of electronic signage outside the Amherst Stadium.



## Action Plan

- More signage may be required in certain areas.
- We will continue the practice of disseminating all communications through a variety of mediums and explore any new ones as identified.
- We will evaluate our website limitations for persons with visual impairments.
- We will strive to hold all public meetings in barrier-free locations.
- We will recommend sensitivity training to ensure staff are better equipped to communicate with people of all ages and abilities and to provide information in an accessible format.



# Transportation



## Our Commitment

Residents and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to move freely and have adequate transportation options.

- **Pedestrian Infrastructure:** We will work to improve connectivity in the community by improving pedestrian infrastructure where possible, including constructing sidewalks, improving surface quality of sidewalks and implementing appropriate curb cuts. Prioritize safety of pedestrian infrastructure by investigating and making recommendations for appropriate lighting and benches to rest where possible.
- **Snow Removal:** Prioritize snow clearance at public buildings and municipally managed parking areas.
- **Parking:** Ensure all municipal parking areas and municipally managed parking areas have accessible parking spaces and appropriate drop-off locations for larger vehicles.



## Our Successes to Date

- 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.
- New sidewalks installed in various areas of the town to increase pedestrian traffic.
- Several kilometres of accessible trails have been developed throughout the community.



## Action Plan

- Continue to develop and enhance our transportation infrastructure.



# Employment



## Our Commitment

The Town of Amherst is an accessible and equitable employer. It supports the careers of employees with disabilities. We will seek to attract and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diverse residents of the municipality.

- **Job Opportunities:** Improve opportunities for people with disabilities to gain employment with the town by ensuring job postings clearly state they are open to people with disabilities.
- **Hiring:** Improve processes, policies and practices to facilitate and encourage the recruitment, selection, transition and advancement of people with disabilities in their employment.
- **Flexibility:** Improve support and flexibility in the workplace by ensuring municipal staff and Amherst Town Council members with disabilities have access to adaptive technologies, possible accommodations in the workplace, appropriate and supportive leave practices and return to work plans.
- **Culture of Inclusion:** Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains and provides opportunities for career growth to people with disabilities. The town will continue to emphasize Employment Equity Statements.
- **Representation:** Actively recruit people with disabilities on all municipal committees and working groups. Review committee and council recruitment materials to ensure they are accessible.

## Our Successes to Date

- Town of Amherst staff have been attending meetings to explore options for assistive technology that may assist in making the workforce equitable and accessible for all.
- We actively participate with Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia and our insurance provider to develop return to work plans that meet both employer and employee needs.
- We assist employees with adaptive work stations when necessary.



## Action Plan

- The Town of Amherst is currently reviewing our policies and procedures. Moving forward, we will be examining the policies through a lens of equity and accessibility.
- Staff will explore training opportunities to increase knowledge in areas of equity and accessibility.
- Enhance learning opportunities for staff to create an understanding of the value of accessibility and inclusion.



# Built Environment



## Our Commitment

Our buildings and outdoor spaces within the municipality provide meaningful and equitable access for users with disabilities.

- **Buildings:** Improve and maintain the accessibility of municipal buildings and outdoor spaces to comply with the Nova Scotia Building Code and the Accessibility Act's Built Environment Standard (when implemented), aiming to exceed them when possible.
- **Public Spaces:** Improve access to public spaces and opportunities for recreation by improving access to parks and playgrounds, diversifying recreation equipment and creating accessible parks, playgrounds and trails.
- **Washrooms:** Look for opportunities to construct and maintain more accessible public washrooms and retrofit existing washrooms where possible.
- **Temporary Disruptions:** Establish and implement processes to ensure accessibility is maintained during temporary disruptions, including emergencies, evacuations and/or special events.
- **Emergencies:** Ensure emergency management and building evacuation plans are reviewed with accessibility in mind.
- **Construction Mitigation:** The town should, when possible, ensure accessible detours are available when a sidewalk is closed for or affected by construction.

## Our Successes to Date

- The Town of Amherst currently has two accessible playgrounds (Amherst Lions Park and Ronald MacDonald Rotary Playground). Work is currently underway to make our playgrounds at Dickey, Rotary and Lions parks more accessible by installing paved walkways.
- The Amherst Fire Department, Amherst Police Department, Amherst Stadium and Amherst Town Hall all have accessible entrance systems.
- Continuation of the sidewalks have been extended from East Pleasant St. to Willow St., Church St. from East Pleasant St. to Robert Angus Drive.
- Installation of accessible picnic tables at our parks.
- Accessible parking spaces in front of town-owned buildings.
- Installation of elevators at Amherst Fire Department, Amherst Police Department, Amherst Stadium, Four Father's Memorial Library and Community Credit Union Innovation Centre.
- Designated heated room at the Amherst Stadium.



## Action Plan

- Improvements may include the tactile warning plates in areas where new reconstruction is scheduled.
- Provide basic access for people of all ages and abilities to public buildings, public washrooms and at public parks.
- Recommend new and or updated signage for people with visual and hearing impairments

# Implementation



## Responsibilities

### *Accessibility Advisory Committee*

- Review this Accessibility Plan at least every three years as required by the Accessibility Act and update as required.
- Review Municipal Accessibility Report Cards annually and report on progress toward meeting the commitments outlined in this plan.

### *Community Well-Being Manager/Director, Community Living*

- Guide the work of the Accessibility Advisory 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 Advisory Committee and the Amherst Town Council.

### *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 Act.

### *CAO/Staff*

- Ensure the commitments outlined in the Accessibility Plan are reflected and installed in municipal Accessibility Action Plans required as public sector bodies under Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act.
- Accept complaints, questions and concerns submitted to them by the public.

## **Timeline**

Recognizing this strategy is a living document and as our population continues to age new issues may surface. Work will continue towards meeting the goals by 2030 and beyond. The Accessibility Act set an ambitious goal to become a fully accessible province by 2030. As such, we will also strive to have the commitments in this plan achieved by 2030.

## **Monitoring and Evaluating**

The Town of Amherst will be responsible for submitting an Accessibility Report Card to the Accessibility Advisory Committee by November 30 each year. This report card will track and report on the progress made toward the commitments in this plan. The Accessibility Advisory Committee may also make recommendations to improve this plan.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will continually review new directives, guidelines and updates from the province as they are released. It will determine if updates to this Accessibility Plan are required based on those updates. The Accessibility Advisory Committee will make recommendations to the Town of Amherst on the need for updates to their Accessibility Action Plan.

## Glossary of Terms

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- **Accessibility Act (2017):** The provincial law enacted to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The law defines the role and responsibilities of the Accessibility Directorate and the Accessibility Advisory Board, and addresses standards, compliance, and enforcement. ([nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf](https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf))
- **Accessibility Advisory Committee:** A volunteer committee established by a municipality to advise Amherst Town Council about 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 municipality become a barrier-free community that complies with Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act (2017). At least one half of the members of the advisory committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.
- **Accessibility Lens:** An Accessibility Lens is a tool for identifying and clarifying issues affecting persons with disabilities used by policy developers and analysts to assess and address the impact of all initiatives (policies, programs or decisions) on persons with disabilities. It is also a resource in creating policies and programs reflective of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.
- **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."
- **Equitable/equity:** A commitment to fairness. Equitable access is different from equal access. Equality means everybody is treated the same; equity means everybody is treated fairly, based on their needs and abilities. Equity recognizes and values differences, removing systemic barriers and accommodating individual differences, as needed.

## Glossary of Terms (Continued)

- **Government of Nova Scotia Accessibility Plan:** A multi-year plan setting specific priorities and commitments for achieving accessibility within the Government of Nova Scotia. The first plan was published in 2018 and covers the years 2018 to 2021. ([novascotia.ca/accessibility/plan](http://novascotia.ca/accessibility/plan))
- **Meaningful:** In the context of our accessibility work, the term meaningful is used to ensure the efforts being made are deemed valuable by those affected by the efforts.
- **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/](http://plainlanguagenetwork.org/)).
- **Prescribed:** Means “prescribed in the Accessibility Act General Regulations.” The Accessibility Act enables the government to use the regulations to identify which organizations must comply with certain requirements. These requirements include forming an Accessibility Advisory Committee and developing an accessibility plan within one year. The use of the word “prescribed” in legislation is intended to give wide authority for regulations to be made that set down a specific rule or direction



## Resources

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<https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/stats-on-disability-in-Nova-Scotia.PDF>

[www.nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf](http://www.nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf)

[www.novascotia.ca/accessibility/access-by-design/access-by-design-2030.pdf](http://www.novascotia.ca/accessibility/access-by-design/access-by-design-2030.pdf)

## Committee Members

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### **Elected Representatives**

Councillor Dale Fawthrop, *Chair*

Deputy Mayor Leon Landry

### **Citizen Appointees**

Matthew Medland

Marina Godfrey

Joanne Hopper

Tammy Allen

### **Staff**

Jason MacDonald, *Chief Administrative Officer*

Kim Jones, *Director of Communications/Municipal Clerk*

Sharon Bristol, *Community Well-Being Manager*

Cindy Brown, *Administrative Assistant*

Andrew Bickle, *Capital Asset Co-ordinator / Property Manager*

# SYNOPSIS

## Solid Waste Collection RFP

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The current 5-year residential solid waste collection contract is due to expire on March 31, 2023. A new contract is required to continue with this service.

A joint request for proposals with the County of Cumberland was issued and two companies responded; Miller Waste Systems Inc., and Royal Environmental Inc.

The proposals were evaluated with regards to price, experience, fleet management, and proposed methodology. For the proposed services to be provided, Miller Waste Systems Inc. scored the highest on the evaluation matrix while also having the lowest cost.

The Miller Waste proposal also included a proposed change to the collection schedule that will see each household place all materials on the curb on the same day once every 2 weeks. Collection day for all Town residents will fall on a Tuesday when the new collection schedule is implemented on April 1, 2024. This change to the collection schedule will save \$74,327.47 over the life of the contract.

### **MOTION:**

**That Council award the new five-year residential solid waste collection contract for three stream collection, yard waste, bi-weekly bulky item pickup and six extra summer organic collections to Miller Waste Systems Incorporated, Alternative Collection Proposal, in the amount of \$2,525,979.07.**

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**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Aaron Bourgeois, Director of Operations

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Residential Solid Waste Collection Contract Award

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**ORIGIN:**

The current 5-year residential solid waste collection contract is due to expire on March 31, 2023. A new contract is required to continue with this service.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:**

Municipal Government Act Section 65; The council may expend money required by the municipality for (q) collecting, removing, managing, and disposing of solid waste.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council award the new five-year residential solid waste collection contract for three stream collection, yard waste, bi-weekly bulky item pickup and six extra summer organic collections to Miller Waste Systems Incorporated, Alternative Collection Proposal, in the amount of \$2,525,979.07.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Town's contract with Miller Waste for collecting municipal solid waste expires on March 31, 2023. A joint request for proposals with the County of Cumberland was conducted and proposals from two vendors were received, Miller Waste Systems Incorporated and Royal Environmental Inc.

As requested in the RFP, Miller Waste submitted a proposal for the 'status quo' in regards to our waste collection and they also provided an 'alternative proposal'.

**DISCUSSION:**

Staff from the Town and County of Cumberland completed independent evaluations of the proposals received. The highest scoring proposal for both municipal units was the 'alternative' collection proposal submitted by our current service provider, Miller Waste Systems. The proposals were evaluated on the following criteria;

- Experience & References 10%
- Contingency Management 10%
- Fleet & Fleet Management 10%
- Proposed Methodology 30%
- Price 40%



If awarded, the earliest the alternative collection schedule can be put into effect is April 1, 2024. Until that time the current collection schedules will remain in place.

Once implemented, the new collection schedule for Amherst residents would be;

- Each household will place all materials on the curb on the same day once every 2 weeks. Organics and source separated solid waste will be collected using one split stream rear-load truck, while a second split stream rear load truck will collect fibre materials and container recycling. Each household will have two trucks collect from them each pick-up day.
- Amherst will be split over two days, with the approximately 75% of the Town being done on the first Tuesday and the remaining 25% being collected on the second Tuesday.
- Primary reason for proposing Tuesday collection in Amherst is to avoid rescheduling due to holidays which most often fall on Mondays and Fridays.
- Additional services such as Bulky item collection, Christmas tree pick-up, weekly summer organics collection and spring/fall leaf and yard waste pick-up will also be collected on Tuesday's.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Awarding the alternative collection contract for \$2,525,979.07 will save \$74,327.47 over the 'status quo' proposal during the five-year life of the contract.

The residential collection cost is captured within the residential solid waste charge, this charge can be adjusted by Council depending on the cost of the service.

Historical solid waste charges over the past 20 years;

- First implemented at \$150 in 2002/03
- Gradually increased to \$174 by 2012/13
- Gradually reduced to \$160 by 2017/18
- Current charge is \$185

The impact on the cost to each household for this bid is an additional \$73 which would bring the solid waste charge to approximately \$258. While significant, an increase of this magnitude was not totally unexpected given what staff have seen with other municipal contracts as of late.

In addition to the above financial impact of the new collection contract, the annual solid waste charge will have to be further increased due to the increase of tipping fees by CPI.

At this time Council is being asked to award the residential solid waste contract only, the final solid waste charge will be approved by Council during the budget process.





## AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2023001

Date: January 23, 2023

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no social justice implications.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The new collection schedule and use of new fleet vehicles used for collection should result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

No specific community engagement has been contemplated for the award of the RFP. However, during the first year of the contract Miller Waste will prepare detailed maps and collection schedules and communicate the proposed collection schedule changes with residents. Town staff will promote the collection schedule changes via social media.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Do not award the contract for residential solid waste collection at this time.
2. Award the contract for the 'status quo' contract option.

### **ATTACHMENTS:** None

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



# SYNOPSIS

## Amendments to Signing Authority Policy

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As part of the policy review, this policy has been reviewed and changes are recommended. In September 2022 the Salary Administration Policy was amended and the position of Chief Financial Officer was removed, therefore the Signing Authority Policy has been amended to reflect this. This does not impact the ability of the Town to sign documents or cheques. The policy lists various bank accounts some of which have not been active for many, many years. Therefore, the policy has been updated to state “all Town bank accounts” which will include all current and future accounts of the Town.

**MOTION:**

**That Council approve of the revised Town of Amherst Signing Authority Policy # 03400-01.**



## AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2023002

Date: January 23, 2023

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**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Amherst Town Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Sarah Wilson, Director of Finance

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Policy Review – Signing Authority Policy

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**ORIGIN:** Policy Review.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:** Town of Amherst Signing Authority Policy, # 3400-01

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council approve of the revised Town of Amherst Signing Authority Policy # 03400-01.

**BACKGROUND:** As part of the policy review, this policy has been reviewed and changes are recommended. The changes include removing the position of Chief Financial Officer and updating the listed bank accounts by replacing the wording with all Town bank accounts.

**DISCUSSION:** In September 2022 the Salary Administration Policy was amended and the position of Chief Financial Officer was removed, therefore the Signing Authority Policy has been amended to reflect this. This does not impact the ability of the Town to sign documents or cheques. In # 2 of the policy, it listed various bank accounts some of which have not been active for many, many years. Therefore, the policy has been updated to state “all Town bank accounts” which will include all current and future accounts of the Town.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** There are no financial implications.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** No community engagement required.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:** No environmental implications.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:** There are no social justice implications to this decision.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The changes are necessary to make the policy reflect current operations.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Signing Authority Policy, 03400-01.

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Report prepared by: Sarah Wilson, Director of Finance

Report and Financial approved by:



**TITLE:** SIGNING AUTHORITY POLICY  
**SECTION:** FINANCE  
**POLICY NO.:** 03400-01

**REFERENCE/DATE:** 21 September 1992  
: 25 September 1995; 25 March 1996; 21 May 1996; 12 December 2000; 25 November 2002  
26 January 2015; 23 November 2020, 28 February 2022

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**PURPOSE:**

To identify signing officers of the Town of Amherst

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

1. All documents signed under the seal of the Town shall be signed by the:
  - a) Mayor or Deputy Mayor (any one of them)And
  - b) Chief Administrative Officer, Town Clerk, ~~Chief Financial Officer~~ or Treasurer (any one of them).
  
2. ~~For All Town bank accounts General, Payroll, Water, Stadium, Trust and Reserve Fund any~~ cheques, bank documents, etc., of the Town shall be signed by two signing officers. The signing officers of the Town shall be:
  - a) Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Designated Councillor (any one of them)And
  - b) Chief Administrative Officer, ~~Chief Financial Officer~~ or Treasurer (any one of them).

**TITLE:** SIGNING AUTHORITY POLICY  
**SECTION:** FINANCE  
**POLICY NO.:** 03400-01

**REFERENCE/DATE:** 21 September 1992  
 : 25 September 1995; 25 March 1996; 21 May 1996; 12 December 2000; 25 November 2002  
 26 January 2015; 23 November 2020, 28 February 2022

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
<b>Chief Administrative Officer</b>	CAO: a. To ensure all documents are signed by the proper signing authorities.
<b>Director of Finance</b>	Director of Finance: a. To ensure all documents are signed by the proper signing authorities. b. To ensure any changes to signing authorities are corresponded to the proper external organizations.

## VERSION LOG

Version Date	Amendment Description	Amendment/Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
<b>January 23, 2023</b>	Policy review – remove CFO, update bank account names.	Director of Finance		

# SYNOPSIS

## Amendments to the User Fee Policy

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The advancement of the Electric Vehicle industry benefits the shift from the need for fossil fuels. A large increase in the availability of Electric Vehicle (EV) charge stations is needed for this transition.

The Town has installed a level-two Electric Vehicle Charging Station behind Town Hall to compliment the existing level-one charger. The new charger is able to charge two vehicles simultaneously. The industry standard to use this type of charger costs the user \$1.50 per hour, taxes included. In order to charge this fee, it must be added to the Town's User Fee Policy.

**MOTION:**

**That Council approve of following changes to the User Fee Policy:**

<b>Services/Products – Operational Services</b>		
<b>Electric Vehicle Charging Station User Fee</b>	<b>\$1.50/hr</b>	<b>HST Included</b>



**AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL**

**RFD# 2022087**

**Date: January 23, 2023**

**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Amherst Town Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Jeff Bacon, Business Development Officer

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** User Fee Policy Amendments

**ORIGIN:** 2022-23 Operating Budget

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:** Municipal Government Act, section 84 allows council to make decisions in the exercise of its powers and duties by resolution, by policy or by by-law.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council approve of following changes to the User Fee Policy:

<b>Services/Products – Operational Services</b>		
Electric Vehicle Charging Station User Fee	\$1.50/hr	HST Included

**BACKGROUND:** The Town of Amherst has installed an Electric Vehicle Charging Station behind Town Hall on 98 Victoria St. The station is able to charge two vehicles and has dedicated parking spaces for each charger allowing simultaneous charging. To activate and use the charger, each vehicle operator is charged an hourly user fee. This new Electric Vehicle Charging Station user fee will need to be included in the Town’s User Fee Policy.

**DISCUSSION:** Through discussions with comparable station owners in both private and public sectors and a review of standard industry user fees throughout the Maritimes, it is recommended a user fee of \$1.50 per hour, taxes included, for electric vehicle charging stations be added to the User Fee Policy. Details of the review are in the attached memorandum. This new user fee line item would be included under Operational Services, under the Section Services/Products – Operational Services, in the policy.

Upon activation, station usage monitoring will measure the number of connections, power consumption, and time-of-day use. The station functionality allows owners to adjust the operational time of use and user fee rates at any time. If it is determined adjustment to the user fee is necessary, based on usage, requests to amend the user fee policy will be submitted to Council.



**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** This new user fee will provide an additional source of revenue for the Town. Station functionality requires an annual Cloud Access subscription and a transaction fee charge of 10%. With these costs, tax adjustment, and the cost of the power consumption from the station usage, it is to be determined the amount of revenue that will be gained.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** A press release will be issued announcing the availability of the station.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:** The advancement of the Electric Vehicle industry benefits the shift from the need for fossil fuels. A large increase in the availability of EV charge stations is needed for this transition.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:** Demonstrating how the Town of Amherst is adopting new technologies to support environmental and climate change initiatives draws attention to the issues and builds community awareness.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Council does not include the user fee as stated.
2. Council could request additional changes to the Policy.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Memorandum; User Fee Policy with Amendment

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Report prepared by:

Report and Financial approved by:

**DEPARTMENT:** ALL TOWN DEPARTMENTS

**TITLE:** **Annual Review of User Fees**

Minutes reference date:	30 April 2007	29 October 2007	18 April 2008
	28 May 2009	26 April 2010	24 May 2011
	23 May 2012	01 May 2013	30 April 2014
	12 June 2015	25 May 2016	03 October 2016
	23 January 2017	23 May 2018	15 May 2019
	25 May 2020	22 June 2020	27 September 2021
	08 June 2022		

**PURPOSE:**

To establish a schedule of user fees for Council to review for appropriateness and to revise if necessary during the annual budgeting process.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

It is appropriate for Council to charge fees, as authorized under the *Municipal Government Act*, in the Town’s Bylaws, Policies and Procedures in order to defray its administrative costs. In order to allow for a systematic and thorough evaluation of those fees, a comprehensive schedule of User Fees with applicable tax status has been established. The responsibility for the accuracy of the Schedule shall rest with the department to which a fee applies. Any additions/deletions to the Schedule will be updated by the Executive Office. Those fees legislated under Provincial and/or Federal Acts and Authorities will also be shown on the schedules for completeness, but will not be subject to change by Council.

**OBJECTIVES:**

To make the administration of the cost recovery portion of the Town’s Bylaws, Policies and Procedures more efficient and to determine the impact on each year’s projected revenues during the budget process. By combining all of the fees in one document, the review will be more visible and complete.

<b>Corporate Services</b>		
<b>SERVICE/PRODUCT/ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>FEE</b>	<b>HST STATUS</b>
Photocopies	.25/copy	Plus HST
Tax Certificates	\$50.00	HST Exempt
NSF Cheques	\$20.00	HST Exempt

<b>By-Law Fees Collected by Corporate Services</b>		
<b>C-4 Dog-By-Law, Schedule A</b>		
Dog License spayed/neutered	\$15/yr	HST Exempt
Dog License un-spayed/un-neutered	\$30/yr	HST Exempt
Lost Tag Replacement	\$15	HST Exempt
Dog-1 <sup>st</sup> Impoundment	\$30	Plus HST
Licensed Dog-2 <sup>nd</sup> Impoundment	\$70	Plus HST
Licensed Dog-3 <sup>rd</sup> & Subsequent Impoundments	\$100	Plus HST
Unlicensed Dog-Impoundments	\$100	Plus HST
Maintenance fee – Impoundment period	\$15/per day	Plus HST
<b>C-11 False Alarms - After 2<sup>nd</sup> Notice</b>	<b>\$50/alarm</b>	<b>HST Exempt</b>

<b>Operational Services</b>		
It is not the intention of the policy to rent Town of Amherst equipment to the general public; these rates and the availability of this equipment are contemplated for use by commercial concerns only.		
<b>Equipment Charge out Rates</b>	<b>Rate per Hour</b>	<b>HST Status</b>
Backhoe	\$93.00*	Plus HST
Loader	\$97.25	Plus HST
1-ton trucks/Service trucks	\$44.23*	Plus HST
3-5 ton trucks	\$66.00*	Plus HST
Street Sweeper	\$115.00*	Plus HST
Trackless	\$70.00*	Plus HST
Sewer Camera	\$100.00*	Plus HST
Line Locator	\$50.00*	Plus HST
Hole Hog	\$45.00*	Plus HST
Vermeer Brush Chipper	\$60.00*	Plus HST
Steamer	\$30.00*	Plus HST
Trash Pump	\$15.00	Plus HST
Diaphragm Pump	\$15.00	Plus HST
Line Painter	\$115.00/hour	Plus HST
Overhead charges extra – see procedure		
* Price includes one operator and fuel during normal working hours; overtime labour rates are extra.		

<b>Operational Services By-Laws</b>		
<b>D-3 Wastewater Discharge By-Law</b>		
One Connection	\$750.00	HST Exempt
Storm Sewer Connection (if done at the same time as sewer connection)	\$250.00	HST Exempt
<b>D-19 Sanitary Sewer Rates By-Law</b>		
Residential Metered Customers	\$.99 m <sup>3</sup>	HST Exempt
Commercial/Industrial/Institutional metered customers	\$.49 m <sup>3</sup>	HST Exempt
<b>Annual Base Charges – Meter Size</b>		
5/8"	\$72.00	HST Exempt
3/4"	\$108.00	HST Exempt
1"	\$175.00	HST Exempt
1.5"	\$344.00	HST Exempt
2"	\$545.00	HST Exempt
3"	\$1,085.00	HST Exempt
4"	\$2,000.00	HST Exempt
Annual Non-metered Mobile Home Park Owner	\$178.53 /dwelling unit/year	HST Exempt
Uniform Charge for Wastewater Treatment Facility for unmetered mobile homes billed on the property Tax Bill	\$72.00/yr	HST Exempt

<b>Solid Waste Rates</b>		
Solid Waste Collection billed on Tax Bill	\$185.00/yr	HST Exempt
Replacement Green Bin (Composter)	\$95.00	Plus HST
Replacement White Kitchen Compost (Bucket)	\$5.00	Plus HST

<b>Services/Products – Operational Services</b>		
<b>Electric Vehicle Charging Station User Fee</b>	<b>\$1.50/hr</b>	<b>HST Included</b>
Street Breaking Permit (Policy 31600-08)	\$500.00	Plus HST
Commercial Sewer Service (Policy 31600-14) Estimated by Engineer and final adjustment when work is done	Cost of Service	Plus HST

<b>Planning and Development Department</b>		
Zoning Confirmation Letter	\$50.00	HST Exempt
Copy of Land Use Bylaw or Municipal Planning Strategy	\$20.00	HST Exempt
Copy of Zoning Map (11 x 17)	\$5.00	HST Exempt
Copy of Zoning Map (50 cm x 60 cm)	\$10.00	HST Exempt
Application to Amend the Land Use Bylaw	\$200.00	HST Exempt
Application for a Development Agreement	\$200.00	HST Exempt
Application to Amend the Municipal Planning Strategy	\$300.00	HST Exempt
Application for a Variance or Site Plan	\$75.00	HST Exempt
Creation of Mapping Document	\$60.00/hr(including 10 lineal metres of maps)	Plus HST
Print Existing Map – less than 50 cm x 50 cm	\$25.00	Plus HST
Print Existing Map – more than 50 cm x 50 cm	\$50.00	Plus HST

<b>Building Permits</b>		
New residential buildings, community centres, churches	\$50.00 + \$0.12 per square foot	HST Exempt
New Commercial, Industrial or other building not listed	\$50.00 + \$0.17 per square foot	HST Exempt
All alterations or repairs	\$50.00 + 0.25% of value	HST Exempt
Decks, accessory buildings and farm buildings	\$50.00 + \$0.04 per square foot	HST Exempt
Demolition	\$20.00	HST Exempt
Permit Renewals	\$50.00	HST Exempt
Development Permit	\$50.00	HST Exempt

<b>Police Department</b>		
Commissioner of Oaths Signing	\$15.98	HST Exempt
Criminal Record Check/Vulnerable Sector for Amherst citizens to participate as volunteers for community organizations.	Waived	N/A
Criminal Record Check	\$30.00	Plus HST
Criminal Record Check for Amherst citizens to participate as volunteers for community organizations	Waived	N/A
Serial # Verification (homemade trailers)	\$25.00	Plus HST
Fingerprints (for non-criminal reasons)	\$50.00	Plus HST
Accident Reports	\$25.00	Plus HST
Community Room Rental	\$125.00/day \$75.00/half day	Plus HST
<b>C-9 Taxi By-Law, Schedule E</b>		

Taxi Cab License	\$25/yr	HST Exempt
Taxi License Transfer	\$10	HST Exempt
Taxi Driver License	\$20/yr	HST Exempt
Taxi Driver License Replacement	\$10	HST Exempt
Taxi License Photo	\$10.00	Plus HST

<b>Fire Department</b>		
Firefighter	\$20.00/hour	HST Exempt
Apparatus	\$200.00/in use; \$100.00/standby	HST Exempt
Standby Jaws of Life Alarm	\$350.00	HST Exempt
Meters	\$50.00/hr	HST Exempt
Saws	\$50.00/hr	HST Exempt
Lighting System	\$25.00/hr	HST Exempt
Generator	\$25.00/hr	HST Exempt
Foam – All Types	\$185.00/jug	HST Exempt
Specialized Suits – Hazmat	Replacement cost	HST Exempt
PPE (bunker gear)	Replacement cost	HST Exempt
Fire Extinguisher Training	\$300.00 up to 15 people	Plus HST
Fire Inspections	\$75.00/hr	Plus HST
Inspection Confirmation Letter	\$50.00	HST Exempt

<b>Recreation</b>
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<b>Ice Time/Stadium</b>								
<b>The rates below are per hour plus HST.</b>								
	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Holidays</b>
<b>Early Time</b> 6:30-8:30am	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$128.00
<b>Fair Time</b> 8:30-5:00pm	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	-	-	\$128.00
<b>Prime Time</b> 5:00-12:00am	\$128.00	\$128.00	\$128.00	\$128.00	\$128.00	\$128.00	\$128.00	\$128.00
<b>Youth Time</b> Monday-Sunday	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$99.00

**Youth Time Rates Include:**

- Groups affiliated with Amherst Skating Club; or
- Groups affiliated with another skating club; or
- Groups affiliated with Skate Nova Scotia and/or Skate Canada who are **18 years old and younger.**
  
- Groups affiliated with Cumberland County Minor Hockey; or
- Groups affiliated with another minor hockey association; or
- Groups affiliated with Hockey Nova Scotia or Hockey Canada who are **18 years old and younger.**
  
- Groups affiliated with Ringette Nova Scotia; or
- Groups affiliated with Ringette Canada who are **18 years old and younger.**
  
- Community groups who don't reside in the Town of Amherst and are **18 years old and younger.**

<b>Photocopies/Stadium (Policy 72000-06)</b>		
8 ½ X 11 (Town Paper)	\$0.10/copy	Plus HST
8 ½ X 14 (Town Paper)	\$0.15/copy	Plus HST
11 X 17 (Town Paper)	\$0.25/copy	Plus HST
8 ½ X 11 (own paper)	\$0.05/copy	Plus HST
8 ½ X 14 (own paper)	\$0.05/copy	Plus HST
11 X 17 (own paper)	\$0.10/copy	Plus HST

<b>Ballfield User Policy (Policy 72300-01)</b>		
Lights	\$18/diamond/game	Plus HST
Tournament Fee	\$100/day	Plus HST
Tournament Lights	\$30/day	Plus HST

<b>Stadium Advertising Rates plus artwork, design and production*</b>		
Ice logos	\$400.00	Plus HST
Dasherboard	\$400.00	Plus HST
Wall Signage (4X6)	\$400.00	Plus HST
Ice Making Machine	\$2,500.00	Plus HST
Red and Blue Line – per line (not per side)	\$100.00	Plus HST
Stairs Kick Plates	3 for \$150.00	Plus HST
Score clock Small	\$600.00	Plus HST
Score clock Large	\$850.00	Plus HST

\*In addition to the advertising rate, the customer will be responsible and invoiced for all cost(s) associated with the creation of artwork, design, production & installation if applicable. Actual quote will be provided at the time the service is requested.

<b>Off Season Stadium Rentals</b>		
Rink Floor Only	\$50.00 per hr or \$630.00 per day (8:00a.m. to 12:00a.m. midnight)*	Plus HST
Entire Facility including meeting rooms, team rooms	\$70.00per hr or \$790.00 per day (8:00a.m. to 12:00a.m. midnight)*	Plus HST
Extra Employees	\$25.00 per person per hour	Plus HST
2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor meeting room and lounge	\$50.00 per hour or \$150.00 per day	Plus HST

<b>Beer/Liquor Concession Robb Centennial Park (Policy 72300-05)</b>		
Concession only. NSAGA requirements responsibility of organizing committee	\$100.00/day	Plus HST

\*Includes one employee during that time

<b>Community Credit Union Business Innovation Centre</b>			
<b>Rental Fee</b>	<b>Daily</b>	<b>1/2 Day</b>	<b>Hourly</b>
Conference Room	\$400.00	\$250.00	\$80.00
Conference Room – Community	\$240.00	\$150.00	\$48.00
Boardroom	\$125.00	\$80.00	\$25.00
Boardroom – Community	\$75.00	\$48.00	\$15.00
Hub	\$75	\$50	
Hub – Community	\$45	\$30	
Evening & Weekend Surcharge			\$20.00
Evening & Weekend Surcharge – Community			\$12.00
Sound & Lighting Technician			\$30.00
Sound & Lighting Technician – Community			\$18.00

\*HST shall be applied and be in addition to all rates noted for the Community Credit Union Business Innovation Centre

<b>Municipal Government Act Fees – FOI-POP Section 466, MGA</b>
The fees charged for access to information under Part XX of the MGA (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy) shall be in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulations of Nova Scotia, as amended from time to time.

Note: “All rates and charges with respect to the Amherst Water Utility will be in accordance with the schedule of rates for water and water services as approved by the Utility and Review Board of Nova Scotia from time to time and as reflected in the Order of the Board.”

# SYNOPSIS

## Housing Investment Policy

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The Town of Amherst is experiencing a housing shortage as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. This shortage is impacting the ability of our local businesses and service providers to hire much needed workers. Business leaders, health care providers and more are telling us that more housing of all types and tenures is needed in the Town.

Notwithstanding the above need for housing, there is very little in the way of new subdivision developments within the Town. Some of the reason may be attributed to the fact that most of the undeveloped land is owned by a few landowners who may not be highly motivated to develop their property. In addition, we are told that the high cost of street and associated infrastructure is a deterrent to new subdivision development.

In order to help incentivise new development, the Town is prepared, on a case-by-case basis, to temporarily fund all or a portion of the street and underground infrastructure needed to bring new housing opportunities to market. Council will only consider such arrangements when:

1. Council is of the opinion that there is a housing shortage within the town and infrastructure is required to meet the housing demand;
2. The Town has the financial capacity to fund such infrastructure;
3. At the sole discretion of Council, a satisfactory agreement can be negotiated that provides the Town with adequate security and minimal investment risk;
4. The Town retains the right to decide if Town human and equipment resources will be utilized to build / install any or all infrastructure within the development, as well as the amount to charge the property owner for that work; and
5. Any decision to utilize Town resources in four (4) above will take into consideration the impact that the project will have on other capital projects or operational requirements for the Town.

### **MOTION:**

**That the Housing Infrastructure Investment Policy be approved by Council.**



## AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2022090

Date: January 23, 2023

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**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Jason MacDonald, CAO

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Housing Infrastructure Investment Policy

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**ORIGIN:** Council's direction to stimulate housing construction in light of the current housing shortage being experienced in Amherst.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the attached Housing Infrastructure Investment Policy be approved by Council.

**BACKGROUND:** The Town of Amherst is experiencing a housing shortage as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. This shortage is impacting the ability of our local businesses and service providers to hire much needed workers. Business leaders, health care providers and more are telling us that more housing of all types and tenures is needed in the Town.

**DISCUSSION:** Notwithstanding the above need for housing, there is very little in the way of new subdivision developments within the Town. Some of the reason may be attributed to the fact that most of the undeveloped land is owned by a few landowners who may not be highly motivated to develop their property. In addition, we are told that the high cost of street and associated infrastructure is a deterrent to new subdivision development.

In order to help incentivise new development, the Town is prepared, on a case-by-case basis, to temporarily fund all or a portion of the infrastructure needed to bring new housing opportunities to market. Council will only consider such arrangements when:

1. Council is of the opinion that there is a housing shortage within the town and infrastructure is required to meet the housing demand;
2. The Town has the financial capacity to fund such infrastructure;
3. At the sole discretion of Council, a satisfactory agreement can be negotiated that provides the Town with adequate security and minimal investment risk;
4. The Town retains the right to decide if Town human and equipment resources will be utilized to build / install any or all infrastructure within the development, as well as the amount to charge the property owner for that work; and
5. Any decision to utilize Town resources in four (4) above will take into consideration the impact that the project will have on other capital projects or operational requirements for the Town.



**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** There are significant financial implications to the implementation of this policy. In most cases it will require the Town to incur expenses of hundreds of thousands of dollars. In most, if not all cases, payback arrangements will be agreed to, but there will always be some amount of risk. In general, with risk mitigation built into each agreement, and over the long term, there is significant opportunity to grow our tax base in a meaningful way, in addition to having our initial invest paid back in full.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:** Improving housing options may impact housing affordability. More housing will also help deal with labor shortages in health care and social services.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:** As with most infrastructure projects, greenhouse gas emissions will be increased due to construction. However, as new developments are located within a dense (small town) urban environment having more people live closer to work, services and leisure activities will reduce long term greenhouse gas emissions compared to developments outside the urban core of our community.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** As these agreements are negotiated on a case by base basis, fulsome community engagement is not possible.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Do not adopt the Housing Infrastructure Investment Policy or adopt the policy with amendments.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Draft Policy

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Report prepared by:

Report and Financial approved by:

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**TITLE:** HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT POLICY  
**SECTION:** Planning and Development - General  
**POLICY NO:** 66000-05

**REFERENCE/DATE:** January 23, 2023

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

It has become widely recognized in 2022 that the Town is experiencing a significant shortage of housing supply in all segments of the residential real estate market. In order to incentivize new housing development, the Town will consider, on a case-by-case basis, entering into an agreement with a land owner to temporarily fund all or a portion of new street and / or underground infrastructure required and intended to provide housing within the Town.

## **PURPOSE**

To incentivize new residential development within the Town to address the current housing shortage.

## **APPLICATION**

Town Council will consider entering into agreements with property owners who intend to bring new housing developments to market when, in the sole opinion and discretion of Council:

1. there is a housing shortage within the town and new streets and / or infrastructure are required to meet the housing demand;
2. the Town has the financial capacity to fund such infrastructure;
3. a satisfactory agreement can be negotiated that provides the Town with adequate security and minimal investment risk.

Any such agreement entered into by the town will contain:

1. Roles and responsibilities of each party;
2. Schedule of street and / or infrastructure construction;
3. Schedule and terms of payback of the Town's investment;
4. Terms and conditions of development, construction and lot sales as applicable;
5. Any other terms and conditions required to ensure the Town is not undertaking undue risk;
6. Any other terms and conditions, which at the sole discretion of Council, are in the best interests of the Town of Amherst.

The Town retains the right to refuse to enter into any agreement for any development, in any location, for any reason.

**TITLE:** HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT POLICY  
**SECTION:** Planning and Development - General  
**POLICY NO:** 66000-05

**REFERENCE/DATE:** January 23, 2023

The Town retains the right to decide if Town human and equipment resources will be utilized to build / install any or all infrastructure within the development, as well as the amount to charge the property owner for that work.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title/Role	Responsibilities
<b>Mayor and Council</b>	The Mayor and Council will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upon recommendation of the CAO, provide direction to the CAO in regards to commencing, continuing and ending negotiations</li> <li>Retain sole authority to enter into any agreement that has been negotiated</li> <li>Maintain strict confidentiality and do not engage with property owners when contacted during negotiations.</li> </ol>
<b>Chief Administrative Officer</b>	The CAO: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will determine opportunities to apply this policy</li> <li>Has the authority to negotiate on behalf of the Town Council</li> <li>Will update Council throughout the negotiation(s)</li> <li>May seek legal and other professional advice when required</li> <li>Will make a recommendation to Town Council regarding the agreement</li> </ol>
<b>Directors &amp; Managers</b>	Directors and Managers will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide advice and information to the CAO as required</li> </ol>
<b>Policy Owner</b>	The policy owner (see version log) is responsible for reviewing the policy on an annual basis for relevancy and potential updates.

### VERSION LOG

Version Number	Amendment Description	Amendment/Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
1.0				

# SYNOPSIS

## RFP-22-102

### Blaine Street, Sale & Development of Town Land

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The subject property known as Blaine Street is a 4-acre, undeveloped town-owned property with street frontage on South Albion Street. A public Request for Proposals was issued to solicit proposals from developers interested in purchasing and developing the lands for multi-unit residential development. Multiple proposals were received and evaluated by staff. The proposal from Black Bay Real Estate Group received the highest total score. The Black Bay Real Estate Group proposal included the development of a total of 138 dwelling units within two 64-unit apartment buildings and ten townhouse dwellings. The proposal offered a purchase price of \$200,000 with no conditions.

Award of the RFP will facilitate the negotiation of an agreement of purchase and sale with conditions that ensure the property is developed for multi-unit residential uses. Awarding the RFP will also allow the proponent to apply for a development agreement where the details of the proposed development will be reviewed by the public, the Planning Advisory Committee and ultimately approved by Council. It is important to note that award of the RFP does not represent approval of the development.

Development of the subject property represents an efficient use of land and will provide housing that is within walking distance of services and employment, reducing the need for a vehicle.

#### **MOTION:**

**That Council award RFP-22-102 to Black Bay Real Estate Group and authorize the company to make an application for a development agreement that reflects their proposal; and further, direct staff to draft an agreement and purchase and sale for the Blaine Street property.**

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**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Strategic Initiatives

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** ***RFP-22-102 – Blaine Street, sale & development of town land***

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**ORIGIN:** June 27, 2022 Council motion:

That the purchase of Blaine Street and Ottawa Avenue properties for a total price of \$90,000, plus applicable HST funded from the Capital Budget, be approved by Council, and that the Mayor and CAO be authorized to sign the Agreement of Purchase and Sale.

Further, that staff be directed to schedule and advertise a public hearing to close Blaine Street as required by the Municipal Government Act.

And further, **that staff be directed to formalize and issue two Request for Proposals to sell both the consolidated Blaine Street property and Ottawa Avenue property separately and with conditions, with the RFP process determining the fair market value for the properties to be sold.**

**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 municipality.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council award RFP-22-102 to Black Bay Real Estate Group and authorize the company to make an application for a development agreement that reflects their proposal; and further, direct staff to draft an agreement and purchase and sale for the Blaine Street property.

**BACKGROUND:** The subject property known as Blaine Street is an undeveloped town-owned subdivision approximately 3.9 acres in area shown on the attached map. A public Request for Proposals was issued with the following scope taken from the RFP document:

**2.1.1** The Town is interested in seeing this property developed for multiple-unit residential purposes as quickly as possible, and will prioritize Developer proposals according to their response to the current housing market demand, social benefit and overall fit with the community. The Town recognizes the lack of housing availability in the community throughout the full spectrum of the market. As such, a major component of the evaluation process will be the proponent's ability to both begin and complete the development in the timeliest manner possible.

**2.1.2** Commercial uses will also be considered as part of the overall development proposal. This document contains information about the development opportunity, the Site, the Town’s objectives for the development of the property, proposed business terms for the acquisition and development of the property, terms and conditions for this RFP, instructions for submitting a Proposal, and evaluation criteria.

**2.1.3** The intended outcome of this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is an agreement of purchase and sale that is subject to completion of a Development Agreement (“DA”) that will establish terms and conditions, and further define the development scope, design, overall use, and timeline of the Project upon which the selected Developer can purchase and develop the preferred project on the Site.

Multiple proposals were received in response to the RFP. Black Bay Real Estate Group, based out of Halifax, have demonstrable experience developing and operating multi-unit residential buildings in Halifax and Bridgewater. The detailed proposal includes a total of 138 units within two, 4-storey, 64-unit apartment buildings and ten, 3-storey, 3-bedroom townhouse buildings. There is a mix of indoor and outdoor parking, as well as, outdoor amenity spaces. The offer is for \$200,000 with no conditions.

It should be noted that multiple proposals initially included conditions for property tax forgiveness to varying degrees. Staff met with all parties to advise them that residential tax forgiveness is not within the town’s authority and requested that they revise their offers. The amounts and conditions noted above are the revised offers.

**DISCUSSION:** The CAO and the author reviewed both proposals and determined that Black Bay best met the above noted RFP scope, and made the most attractive purchase offer for the land.

Should Council award the subject RFP to Black Bay Real Estate Group, staff would negotiate an agreement of purchase and sale with conditions around the timing of the development agreement and transfer of title. While it is generally understood by all parties that development needs to take place as quickly as possible, staff feel the agreement must adequately protect the town’s interest in insuring this happens. As such, staff will seek a legal opinion and bring an agreement of purchase and sale back to Council for approval. In addition, there are some details with respect to the agreement in principle to sell a small triangle-shaped piece of land currently used for parking at 103 South Albion (Frank & Gino’s) to that property owner. Staff feel that these items can be sorted out without delaying commencement of the development agreement process.



**AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL**

**RFD# 2023008**

**Date: January 23, 2023**

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** As outlined above, the Black Bay offer is for \$200,000 with no conditions.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:** This issue supports the priority to address the housing shortage.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:** Development of the subject property represents an efficient use of land and will provide housing that is within walking distance of services and employment, reducing the need for a vehicle.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** The RFP was a public process. Residents on Clinton Street were advised of the RFP and its intended purpose. The development agreement process includes multiple public input opportunities.

**ALTERNATIVES:** 1) Do not award the RFP

**ATTACHMENTS:** none.

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



# SYNOPSIS

## 8/10 Prince Arthur Street

### Transfer of Ownership

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Council acquired the subject property in 2021 at tax sale with the view to making it available for affordable and/or supportive housing. The Cumberland Homelessness and Housing Support Association have requested that ownership be transferred to them for a project called “Cornerstone”, that will renovate the property to contain affordable supervised apartments, a resource room, kitchen and office space for administration and support services.

The Municipal Government Act requires that a public hearing be held before a town-owned property valued at over \$10,000 can be transferred to a non-profit organization for less than market value.

This item directly supports those in need of affordable and supportive housing.

#### **MOTION:**

**That Council confirm their intention to transfer ownership of 8/10 Prince Arthur Street to the Cumberland Homelessness and Housing Support Association, and schedule a public hearing on this matter for February 8, 2023.**

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**TO:** Mayor Kogon and Members of Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Strategic Initiatives

**DATE:** January 23, 2023

**SUBJECT:** **8/10 Prince Arthur Street property – transfer of ownership**

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**ORIGIN:** November 2022 recommendation from the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee to transfer ownership of 8/10 Prince Arthur Street to the Cumberland Homelessness and Housing Support Association (Cornerstone).

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:** Municipal Government Act (MGA), section 51 (1) *A municipality may sell or lease property at a price less than market value to a non-profit organization that the council considers to be carrying on an activity that is beneficial to the municipality. (3) Where the council proposes to sell property referred to in sub-section (1) valued at more than ten thousand dollars at less than market value, the council shall first hold a public hearing respecting the sale.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council confirm their intention to transfer ownership of 8/10 Prince Arthur Street to the Cumberland Homelessness and Housing Support Association, and schedule a public hearing for February 8, 2023.

**BACKGROUND:** Council acquired the subject property at tax sale with the view to make it available for affordable and/or supportive housing. The Cumberland Housing and Housing Support Association have requested that ownership be transferred to them for a project called “Cornerstone” that will renovate the property to contain affordable supervised apartments, a resource room, kitchen and office space for administration and support services.

As noted above, the MGA requires that a public hearing must be held before a town-owned property can be transferred to a non-profit organization for less than market value.

**DISCUSSION:** This is a necessary step in the process to make the Cornerstone facility a reality.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** The Town paid \$26,000 for the property at tax sale in 2021. Transferring the property would forego the market value of the property.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS:** This item directly supports those in need of affordable and supportive housing.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:** None specific to this issue.





**AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL**

**RFD# 2023007**

**Date: January 23, 2023**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** The public hearing will be advertised in accordance with MGA requirements.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Do not hold a public hearing to facilitate the transfer of the subject property to Cornerstone.

**ATTACHMENTS:** None

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



# Internal Committee Report

## Planning Advisory Committee

January 2023

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The Planning Advisory Committee did not meet in January due to a lack of agenda items.

The next meeting has been scheduled for Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. in Town Hall. Tentative agenda items will include first review of the new draft Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw and a review of three applications for development agreements for the following:

- an apartment building at 155 East Victoria Street;
- a change of use from a community hall to a commercial office space at 3,5,7 Robie Street; and,
- a 98-bed long term care facility at 264 Church Street.

# **Internal Committee Report**

## **Amherst Board of Police Commissioners**

**January 2023**

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The Amherst Board of Police Commissioners was scheduled to meet on December 14<sup>th</sup>; however, due to issues with quorum the meeting was rescheduled. The Board is now scheduled to meet this Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in Town Hall Council Chambers.

# **Internal Committee Report**

## **Amherst Youth Town Council**

### **January 2023**

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Amherst Youth Town Council (AYTC) met on January 12, 2023 where we began preparations for the new year. AYTC will be hosting a family skate during Winter Carnival on the outside ice surface February 20, 2023 from 6-8 p.m. We will be offering cookies and hot chocolate and asking for food donations for a local food charity (to be determined)

After hearing a presentation from the Poverty Reduction Advisory committee co-chair Leon Landry, we have decided to focus our efforts around food security and youth. We are currently developing a questionnaire to use when meeting with various food security providers here in Amherst. We want to identify from their perspective how we can best assist their efforts. We will be meeting with them in the coming weeks once exams are over! Once we have more information to guide our decision making, we will then mobilize to create activities that can further these goals.

We have been invited and are excited to attend a joint meeting with the Cumberland County Youth Council on February 14. More details on the next report.

# Internal Committee Report

## Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Committee

### January 2023

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The Inclusion, Diversity and Equity committee met on January 12, 2023 at 6 p.m. in Town Hall Council Chambers.

The meeting was a workshop format with informal discussion around the topic of Community Engagement. As we move toward with the development of the Strategic Plan, it is imperative that we gather as much information from first voice experiences as it relates to barriers faced when trying to access our Town of Amherst services, events and employment opportunities. As we gather this input it will allow us to formulate the plan as how to review, amend or develop internal policies that address the systemic barriers that are present and experienced by marginalized persons in Amherst.

There was much discussion about how to frame the request for information, various ways to reach out to the community, what will be the challenges and opportunities of doing so and ultimately how do we reach as many people as possible.

We are pleased to announce the upcoming name change of Lord Amherst Drive to Ancestral Drive in the very near future.

Our committee was saddened to learn of the passing of former Town Councilor and community advocate, Theresa Halfkenney. Flags have been lowered to half-mast in her honor.

# External Committee Report

## Cumberland Public Libraries

January 2023

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### **Accessible Collections**

In an effort to expand accessible resources, Cumberland Public Libraries has started collecting braille books. This collection is available to borrow from the Amherst Library. Cumberland Public Libraries is also a part of National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) which offers books in accessible formats for Canadians with print disabilities: produced by request, delivered by public libraries, and available across the country.

### **Literacy Day 2023**

The Amherst Library will be partnering with Maggie's Place, Y-Reach and CAN-U for this year's Family Literacy Day on Saturday January 28. This year's theme is Celebrate your Heritage. Amherst youth services staff will be in attendance to help with activities, as well the Library purchased copies of 'A Hundred Thousand Welcomes' by Mary Lee Donovan, which will be handed out to all families who attend.

### **Statistics**

In the month of December, Cumberland Public Libraries signed out over 8,000 items, 4,747 items in Amherst alone. This includes books, movies, TV shows, magazines and more.

Also in December, Four Fathers Library offered 13 in-person programs with 200 people in attendance. The Four Fathers Library had 1,649 in person visits.

**Next Board meeting February 16, 2023.**

# External Committee Report

## YMCA of Cumberland

### January 2023

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#### **Childcare**

The Friday Night Fun program started back up in January following a break over the Christmas holidays. This program is an ongoing partnership with the Town of Amherst.

#### **Membership**

We have 1193 active members.

The Strong Communities Holiday Online Auction wrapped up having raised just over \$3000 to help ensure that every child, teen and family can participate in YMCA programming.

Our current promo is First Payment Free when signing up for a continuous biweekly membership.

#### **Aquatics**

The winter session of group lessons has begun. There are 113 registered participants.

#### **Fitness**

The Winter Group Fitness Schedule is in full swing. We received a donation to our Wellness Centre of 12 bumper plates, a barbell, a curl bar, six kettlebells, a battle rope, and four abs rollers.

#### **Donations/Fundraising.**

**CNOY:** The Coldest Night of the Year campaign has officially launched.

The event will take place on Saturday, February 25, 2023. There are currently eight teams registered comprised of 28 walkers.

#### **Community Development**

The YMCA is also supporting the Winter Emergency Temporary Shelter by following up with referrals and sharing resources for clients. Many donations for the shelter have been dropped off at the YMCA and have been given to the shelter staff.

# External Committee Report

## Northern Region Solid Waste Resource Committee

January 2023

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### **NR Chair**

I regret to report that our Northern Region Chair, Councillor Mary Commo passed away on December 15. Councillor Jennifer Houghtaling, Vice Chair for the NR Committee, has graciously offered to fill the role of Chair until a new Chair is appointed. The Northern Region will be meeting on February 3 and will be discussing the role of the Chair position moving forward.

### **C&D Regulation Changes**

Nova Scotia Environment is in the process of finalizing their review of the comments provided by the municipalities and are working on editing the Guidelines. Don MacQueen, NSECC, reported that the goal is to have everything on their end completed in February, after which the new guidelines can be provided to the municipalities.

### **300 kg Disposal Target**

No update at this time.

### **Extended Producer Responsibility**

No update at this time.

# External Committee Report

## L.A. Animal Shelter

### January 2023

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In December 5 dogs, 18 cats and 25 kittens were adopted out, for a total of 48 animals. To date 25 have been adopted out in January. For 2022, 466 animals were adopted, from 534 intakes.

We currently have 3 dogs, 13 kittens and 18 cats.

A motion was approved to make slight increases to the adoption fees for cats and kittens. This is the first increase in quite some time. This will help cover more of our costs and bring us closer to the amounts charged at other rescues.

A nomination committee was struck and our AGM will be held on March 23 at 6:30 pm upstairs at Dayles.

# External Committee Report

## Senior Safety

January 2023

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The Committee met on Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 through zoom.

The senior safety coordinator has been busy meeting with 37 seniors: 19 in town and 18 in the county to provide information on services available to them and how to connect with the proper service providers. She has also done 21 home visits to help with forms that need to be filed for assistance that they may need. In a lot of cases, it is best to meet with seniors in their homes or places where they are comfortable.

We are starting to plan Senior Safety Academies for 2023. Scams against seniors are heavy right now, therefore this is definitely a topic to be covered. We have a PowerPoint presentation that regards this issue; however not all seniors have internet. They can be scammed over the phone or in the mail. Inviting a banker to speak at an academy will be of value

Next meeting will be February 14, 2023.

# External Committee Report

## Advisory Committee to Reduce Poverty

### January 2023

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The Advisory Committee to Reduce Poverty met on January 19, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in Town Hall Council Chambers.

A roundtable discussion was held around issues of barriers to youth in our communities. Jennifer Houghtaling reported on the Mitacs discussions that have taken place over the last couple of months.

The Chairs have been meeting with several researchers/university staff to determine if we can partner on research initiatives around our three pillars of Food insecurity, Housing and homelessness and youth outreach and engagement. The Chairs were most impressed with the proposal from Hallie Tattrie and will be updating Council at the February meeting.

The Winter Emergency Temporary Shelter is now open and operating at full staff capacity. There are approximately 7 people per night utilizing the facility and so far, things are going well.

The design of the strategic plan was presented for the committee with new pictures and changes that were requested by committee members.

# External Committee Report

## Municipal Alcohol Project

January 2023

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The MAP Committee met on January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:30 p.m. by Zoom.

Winter Holiday messaging was successful again this year and there will be letters of thanks sent to the three municipal units that hosted alcohol free and family friendly activities during the holiday season. Many people shared and remarked on the alcohol-free beverages that could be served during holiday parties.

There will be a social media strategy starting soon supporting Dry February. Dry Feb is a fundraiser that challenges you to go alcohol free for the month in support of the Canadian Cancer Society. It helps a person get healthy while clearing their head and supporting a good cause. Go to [www.dryfeb.ca](http://www.dryfeb.ca) for further information.

I'm also including the following link to reflect the release on January 17<sup>th</sup> of the updated Canadian Guidance on Alcohol & Health (on behalf of Canadian Centre on Substance Use & Addiction). The recommendations are quite a bit stronger than there were in the 2011 document, which reflects the most up to date rigorous scientific data around alcohol and harms to health. The guidance is based on the principle of harm reduction and the fundamental idea behind it that people living in Canada have a right to know that all alcohol use comes with risk.

<https://www.ccsa.ca/canadas-guidance-alcohol-and-health>

Key points from the guidance include:

- There is a continuum of risk associated with weekly alcohol use where the risk of harm is:
  - **0 drinks per week** — Not drinking has benefits, such as better health, and better sleep.
  - **2 standard size drinks or less per week** — You are likely to avoid alcohol-related consequences for yourself or others at this level.
  - **3–6 standard drinks per week** — Your risk of developing several types of cancer, including breast and colon cancer, increases at this level.
  - **7 standard drinks or more per week** — Your risk of heart disease or stroke increases significantly at this level.
  - **Each additional standard drink** radically increases the risk of alcohol-related consequences.
- Consuming more than 2 standard drinks per occasion is associated with an increased risk of harms to self and others, including injuries and violence.
- When pregnant or trying to get pregnant, there is no known safe amount of alcohol use.
- When breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is safest.
- No matter where you are on the continuum, for your health, less alcohol is better.

Again, as mentioned several times before, this committee is about harm reduction, and just present the facts so citizens can make their own decisions regarding alcohol.

Our next meeting will be February 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:30p.m.