



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2020032

DATE: 25 May 2020

RE: Town of Amherst to access property tax financing program in order to help qualifying taxpayers affected by COVID-19 pandemic

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Help is on its way for Town of Amherst taxpayers who have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 state of emergency.

Amherst town council on May 25, 2020, approved a tax financing policy that establishes a one-time property tax installment payment plan for owners of residential and commercial properties within town boundaries that have been negatively affected by the global coronavirus pandemic.

“The Town of Amherst is concerned about the health and safety of its citizens,” Mayor David Kogon said. “We believe that allowing taxpayers who have been negatively affected by the pandemic to pay their property taxes in installments will enable our citizens to follow the health directives endorsed by the Government of Nova Scotia’s public health directives during the current state of emergency.”

The mayor noted the policy is a tax financing program and not a tax forgiveness program. He also said those who “can pay their taxes should pay their taxes when they are due.”

The policy will be based on a template developed by the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities. It will give taxpayers 24 months to pay their 2020-2021 property taxes in installments.

Qualified participants will be charged interest at a rate of 1.35 per cent per year.

To qualify individuals and businesses must provide proof of financial hardship as a result of the state of emergency and their current tax accounts must be in good standing.



In addition, residential taxpayers must be the owner of a residential property that is their primary residents or the owner of a residential property where the owner is registered as a tourism operator with Tourism Nova scotia for the 2019 tourist season.

Commercial properties used as commercial, shopping, office, industrial or farm purposes and have a total taxable 2020 property assessment value equal to or under \$2 million also qualify, as does land owned by a tourism operator registered with the Tourist Accommodations Registration Act.

Property owners who have not been affected by the state of emergency do not qualify.

The town will access the Province of Nova Scotia's Municipal Operating Loan Program to finance its participation in the Property Tax Financing Program

More details on how to apply for the program will be provided in the near future.

-30-

Direct Inquiries to:
Tom McCoag, Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca

