



TOWN OF OXFORD  
Town Council Meeting  
Conducted in Council Chambers and through Zoom –  
Live to FaceBook  
Monday, April 19 2021  
6 PM

## AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Previous Minutes
  - 3.1 Town Council Minutes – March 15, 2021
  - 3.2 Special Town Council Minutes – April 6, 2021
  - 3.3 Special Town Council Minutes – April 12, 2021
4. Presentation: Robert Mannette, I.T Solutions
5. New Business
  - 5.1 Joint CED Strategy - decision
  - 5.2 Committees & Boards - revisions
  - 5.3 Fall 2019 Debenture - discussion
  - 5.4 Councils' position on Bill 47 - discussion
6. Reports
  - 6.1 Public Works Report
  - 6.2 Finance Report – no report – working on budget.
  - 6.3 Fire Report
  - 6.4 Community Economic Development Report
  - 6.5 Police Advisory Board & RCMP Report – APP Priorities for discussion
  - 6.6 Audit Draft Minutes – March 4, 2021
  - 6.7 Library Report – April 9, 2021
  - 6.8 Recreation Commission Minutes
7. Correspondence
  - 7.1 Exhibition Committee Letter - Out of Season Arena Usage
8. Adjournment



## Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting

Place: Conducted in Council Chambers through Zoom and live to Facebook  
Date: Monday, 15 March 2021  
Presiding Officer: Mayor Gregory Henley  
Councilors present: Deputy Mayor Wade Adshade, Carla Black, Brenton Colborne, and Paul Jones  
Regrets: Nil

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting.***

Staff in attendance: Acting Town Clerk – Linda Cloney (recording secretary)

Media in attendance: Amherst News – Darrell Cole and Six Rivers News, Radio and TV – Bill Martin and Mark Rushton

### **1. Call to order**

Mayor Henley called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm and made notice to the public that the Council Members, that are in the Council Chambers, are six feet apart and following COVID-19 Protocols.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

4.1 to be amended to Budget Discussion.

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Regular Town Council Meeting for March 14, 2021 be approved, as amended.

***Motion Carried***

### **3. Approval of Previous Minutes**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Town Council Meeting for 16 February 2021, Special Town Council Minutes for 24 February 2021 and Special Town Council Minutes for 01 March 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **4. New Business**

#### **4.1 Budget Discussion**

Staff verbally reported to Council that the administration has met with Mr. Ken Smith and is working with him again this week on the draft budgets. Mr. Smith has also met with the Audit Committee. A tentative target date set for the draft budgets to be presented to the Audit Committee is the end of April with the intent to present to Council in May.

#### **4.2 Staff Member Resignation Notice – information**

Ruthie Patriquin, the Community Economic Development Officer for the Town of Oxford, has submitted her notice of resignation for March 31, 2021.

Mayor Henley and Council thanked Ruthie Patriquin for her years of service for the Town of Oxford.

The Personnel Committee will meet and discuss the Community Economic Development Officer position and bring a recommendation forward to Council.

#### **4.3 CJSMA – Draft FY 2021-2022 Budget – Councillor Adshade**

The CJSMA staff presented the CJSMA Board with a draft budget to be approved. For the budget to be approved, the three municipalities (Oxford, Amherst and the County of Cumberland) need to send back to the CJSMA Board their recommendations of approval regarding the budget presented.

Deputy Mayor Adshade presented the report. This report is filed in the Council Package.

It was moved and seconded that the Council accepts the CJSMA Draft FY 2021-2022 Budget, as presented and send it back to CJSMA for approval.

***Motion Carried***

#### **4.4 RFD #001-2021 – lamResponding.com Subscription**

It was recommended by the Committee of the Whole, February 1, 2021, to approve the lamResponding.com subscription for the Oxford Volunteer Fire Department.

It was moved and seconded that the Town Council approve the Oxford Volunteer Fire Department's request to purchase the lamResponding.com as a tool for their communications. The Committee of the Whole also recommends to Town Council to enter a One-year subscription agreement of \$305.00 with lamResponding.com

***Motion Carried***

### **5. Reports**

Council was content to learn that the budget for salt is under budget.

Council had a discussion regarding the arena automation interest that was presented in the Financial Report. Staff advised Council that they understood that a debenture was taking out for the arena automation and would investigate that further for a better understanding and then follow up with Council.

Council had a discussion regarding the tape for the ceiling in the arena. The service provider was paid for the materials but have not been able to do the work involved. Staff will contact the service provider to complete the job.

Council had a discussion regarding the promotion of the new location of the Library. The library will be located on 111 Rideau Street (old Oxford Journal Office) by the end of April 2021. Council directed staff to promote more about the library on the website and social media regarding its location.

It was moved and seconded to accept the reports as submitted.

***Motion Carried***

**6. Correspondence**

**6.1 Oxford Pioneer Heritage Club – request for letter of support**

Council directed staff to write a letter of support to the Oxford Pioneer Heritage Club.

**6.2 Government House – Community Spirit Plaque to the Town of Oxford**

Mayor Henley presented the plaque to the Council and agreed that the new Library would be where the plaque will be displayed.

**6.3 YMCA of Cumberland & Nova Scotia Health Authority – Community Approach to Understanding Homelessness in Cumberland County**

Staff are participating in this approach by conducting surveys regarding homelessness in Cumberland County.

**6.4 Oxford & Area Trails Association – request for letter of support**

Council directed staff to write a letter of support for “The Rocks Trail” as per the Oxford & Area Trails Association request.

**6.5 Department of Justice – Policing Review**

Staff presented to Council the Motion that the Municipality of the County of Cumberland passed to partner with the County of Colchester in the Police Service Review.

Therefore, the new Council for Cumberland has not voted on the further reduction of two regular members in Cumberland RCMP, as was the original agreement. Department of Justice can not implement the recommendation until both funding partners (Town of Oxford and Municipality of the County of Cumberland) agree.

Council expressed their concern in the delay of this approval as it will delay in the anticipated cost savings to the Town of Oxford due to the agreed reduction of the two regular members.

#### **6.6 Census 2021 – promotion of possible local job opportunities**

Staff will be posting possible job opportunities with the Census 2021 on the FaceBook and website.

### **9. Adjournment**

At 6:45 pm, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

***Motion Carried***

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**Gregory Henley, Mayor**

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**Linda Cloney, Recording Secretary**



## Minutes of the Special Town Council Meeting

Place: Conducted through Zoom, streamed live to FaceBook  
Date: Tuesday, April 06, 2021  
Presiding Officer: Mayor Gregory Henley  
Councilors Present: Deputy Mayor Wade Adshade, Carla Black, Brenton Colborne, Paul Jones, Arnold MacDonald, and Chrystal McNutt  
Regrets: Nil

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting.***

Staff in attendance: Senior Accountant - Ruthann Brookins and A/Town Clerk - Linda Cloney (recording secretary)

### **1. Call to Order**

Mayor Henley called the meeting to order at 7:24 pm. (this meeting followed the COW meeting at 6 pm)

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Special Town Council Meeting for April 06, 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **3. RFD# 004-2021: Duke Street Watermain Spring Debenture**

It was moved and seconded that Town Council approves the resolution for pre-approval of debenture issuance, subject to interest rate, in the amount of \$615,100 for a period not to exceed 20 years, as presented.

<b>Resolution for Pre-Approval of Debenture Issuance Subject to Interest Rate</b>
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**WHEREAS** clause 66 (1) of the Municipal Government Act (the “Act”) provides that a municipality may borrow to carry out an authority to expend funds for capital purposes conferred by the Act or another Act of the Legislature;

**AND WHEREAS** clause 91(1)(a) of the Act provides that where a municipality is authorized to borrow money, subject to the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs (the “Minister”), that the sum shall be borrowed by the issue and sale of debentures, in one sum or by installments, as determined by the council;

**AND WHEREAS** clause 91(1)(b) of the *Municipal Government Act* authorizes the council to determine the amount and term of, and the rate of interest, on each debenture, when the interest on a debenture is to be paid, and where the principal and interest on a debenture are to be paid;

**AND WHEREAS** clause 91(2) of the *Municipal Government Act* states, that in accordance with the *Municipal Finance Corporation Act*, the mayor or warden and clerk or the person designated by the council, by policy, shall sell and deliver the debentures on behalf of the municipality at the price, in the sums and in the manner deemed proper;

**AND WHEREAS** the resolution of council to borrow for was approved by the municipal council on April 6, 2021.  
(council’s TBR approval date)

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**

**THAT** under the authority of Section 91 of the *Municipal Government Act*, the

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Town of Oxford*  
(Name of Unit)

borrow by the issue and sale of debentures a sum or sums not exceeding \$615,100, for a period not to exceed 20 years, subject to the approval of the Minister;

**THAT** the sum be borrowed by the issue and sale of debentures of the

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Town of Oxford*  
(Name of Unit)

in the amount that the mayor or warden and clerk or the person designated by the council deems proper, provided the average interest rate of the debenture does not exceed the rate of 5.5%;

**THAT** the debenture be arranged with the Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation with interest to be paid semi-annually and principal payments made annually;

**THAT** this resolution remains in force for a period not exceeding twelve months from the passing of this resolution.

**For MFC use only:**

**TBR #:**

**Minister  
signed:**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY** that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution duly passed at a meeting of the Council of the

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Town of Oxford*

(Name of Unit)

held on the 06<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021

**GIVEN** under the hands of the Mayor/Warden and the Clerk of the

\_\_\_\_\_  
Town of Oxford

(Name of Unit)

this 06<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor/Warden

\_\_\_\_\_  
A/ Town Clerk

***Motion Carried***

**4. CRA online access for staff**

Staff advised Council that administration staff do not have access to the Town of Oxford CRA account and have recently learned that Mr. Mark Milner of Jorgenson & Bickerton does have this access.

It was moved and seconded by Town Council to allow Mr. Mark Milner of Jorgenson & Bickerton to grant online access to Ruthann Brookins – Senior Accountant and Linda Cloney – Acting Town Clerk for the Town of Oxford.

***Motion Carried***

**5. Adjournment**

At 7:42 pm, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

***Motion Carried***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory Henley, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda Cloney, Recording Secretary





## Minutes of the Special Town Council Meeting

Place: Conducted through Zoom, streamed live to FaceBook  
Date: Tuesday, April 12, 2021  
Presiding Officer: Mayor Gregory Henley  
Councilors Present: Deputy Mayor Wade Adshade, Carla Black, Brenton Colborne, Paul Jones, Arnold MacDonald, and Chrystal McNutt  
Regrets: Nil

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting.***

Staff in attendance: A/Town Clerk - Linda Cloney (recording secretary)

### **1. Call to Order**

Mayor Henley called the meeting to order at 6 pm.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Special Town Council Meeting for April 12, 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **3. Boards & Committees Appointments**

Council had a detailed discussion regarding the Boards & Committees for the Town of Oxford. As there were many changes, attached to these minutes are the 2020 / 2021 Boards & Committees approved by Council.

It was moved and seconded that Town Council approves the 2020 / 2021 Town of Oxford Boards and Committees, as amended.

***Motion Carried***

### **4. In-Camera – acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal property and personnel**

At 6:26 pm, it was moved and seconded to go in-camera to discuss sale of municipal property and personnel.

***Motion Carried***

At 6:35 pm, it was moved and seconded to come out of in-camera and resume the Special Council Meeting.

***Motion Carried***

**Personnel**

It was moved and seconded to appoint Linda Cloney as the Town Clerk for the Town of Oxford.

***Motion Carried***

**Sale of Municipal Land**

It was moved and seconded that Town Council approve the sale of surplus lands, located on Water Street, identified on the Property Online map by PID #25212580, PID #25212606, and PID #25212630, each zoned Downtown Commercial, with the agreement of commercial activity within 18 months of the date of sale, transfer of title, deed registration and all legal costs, and the submitted purchase price of \$5,000 for each PID totaling \$15,000 from Brenda Robinson & Olivier Hendrikx.

***Motion Carried***

**5. Adjournment**

At 6:40 pm, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

***Motion Carried***

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Gregory Henley, Mayor

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Linda Cloney, Recording Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Municipality of Cumberland Council, Town of Amherst Council, and Town of Oxford Council

**FROM:** Michelle Byers, Tamara Porter, Jonathan McClelland

**DATE:** April 9, 2021

**RE:** Joint Community Economic Development Strategy

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The purpose of this memo is to request Council to adopt the Cumberland Region Community Economic Development (CED) Strategy.

The Cumberland Region CED Strategy was presented at a Joint Council meeting on March 23, 2021. At that meeting, the feedback to our presentation was positive. Following the meeting, staff circulated a survey to Council to gather more in-depth feedback. This feedback allowed us to fine tune the Strategy prior to being presented to Council for adoption. We received feedback from eight Councillors in total (i.e. eight Councillors from all three municipal units).

The feedback we received from Councillors generally confirmed that the Strategy is on the right track and has addressed the most significant economic development concerns. There were several positive comments provided relating to inter-municipal collaboration and cooperation, which we were pleased to see as this is a cornerstone of the Strategy and a general reflection of how we approach our work. Here's a summary of feedback that resulted in revisions to the Strategy:

- Include a system for accountability of achieving goals
- Account for new people moving to the region
- Engage with business to obtain their feedback on an ongoing basis
- Include annual action items

As a result of the feedback we received, here's a summary of the revisions we made:

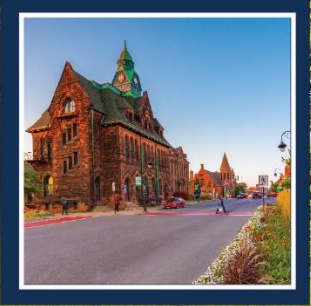
- We added a section titled "Reporting and Implementation" to address concerns about how implementation will take place. This section also provides context for annual work plans.
- In the Economy pillar, we added an action for formal and informal business retention and expansion programs. This is an action that has been ongoing and we apologize for the oversight of not including this originally.
- We added detail related to using deed transfer tax as well as number and amount of building permits as a means of indicating population shifts in the region.

The revised Cumberland Region CED Strategy is attached to this memo in full for your review.

**Staff recommendation:**

At this point, staff are excited to present the revised Strategy to all three Municipal Councils in the Cumberland Region and to recommend the adoption of the Strategy. If Council agrees with this recommendation, the following motion would be appropriate:

*Motion to adopt the Cumberland Region Community Economic Development Strategy as presented.*



# CUMBERLAND REGION 2021-2026 COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

MUNICIPALITY OF CUMBERLAND  
TOWN OF AMHERST  
CUMBERLAND BUSINESS CONNECTOR  
TOWN OF OXFORD



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## SUMMARY

The Cumberland region encompasses the Town of Amherst, the Municipality of Cumberland and the Town of Oxford.

This Community Economic Development Strategy is a collaborative effort between the two towns, the municipality and the Cumberland Business Connector.

Geographically, Cumberland is the second largest county in Nova Scotia, with a population of about 30,000 people. The rural region's largest service centre is the Town of Amherst, which has approximately one-third of the region's population. Another one-third of its citizens live in close proximity to Amherst, with the remainder spread across smaller centers, such as the Town of Oxford, the communities of Springhill, Parrsboro, Pugwash and many rural communities.

The region boasts modern, state-of-the-art, health-care and educational facilities, vibrant retail and cultural sectors, a diverse agriculture industry, excellent manufacturing facilities and high entrepreneurial spirit.

Declining population, low labour force participation, high poverty rates and an aging population are creating challenges and having negative impacts on the Cumberland region. This Community Economic Development Strategy recognizes the importance of healthy residents and a strong economy in order to be a sustainable region. Creating community well-being and pride in our communities, supporting a job ready workforce, providing quality community infrastructure and creating economic opportunities play a key role in attracting new people, new investment and a healthier demographic.

This strategy focuses on four pillars: Economy, Population, Quality of Life and Community Capacity. These four pillars are closely inter-related and evident in the listed goals and objectives. Opportunities are addressed by capitalizing on resources, including tourism, natural resources, renewable energy, immigration and business parks. Working to enhance these resources will have a positive impact on business retention and expansion, population growth and a higher quality of life for citizens.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Historical Challenges**

The Cumberland region has known economic challenges for many decades. Communities, such as Springhill and Joggins, were built around coal mines. They flourished when this industry thrived. After the coal mines closed, these communities experienced a long-term decline that was marked by significant out-migration. Other industries, such as shipbuilding, once played a key role in the economy of coastal communities.

Small, mixed farms have seen their margins squeezed as revenues have not kept up with increasing production costs. However, the region has successfully developed large maple syrup and wild blueberry industries. The beef sector has stabilized and is growing. These industries have continued growth potential, while also being vulnerable to cyclical price declines, especially for farms that are not involved in value added activities.

The changing retail landscape has created both opportunity and challenges. Certain retail businesses have found unique niche products and markets that draw customers from across Atlantic Canada and further afield, while department stores and local malls have faced challenging times. These challenges are partly due to our close proximity to Moncton and its large retail sector, as well as competition from online retailers such as Amazon.

The region's historical challenges led to a declining and aging population, low labour force participation and high poverty rates. In recent years, there have been improvements in some of these indicators.

### **Current Business Climate**

There are more than 1,000 businesses in the Cumberland region. With excellent rail, road, air and sea links, the Municipality of Cumberland, Amherst and Oxford offer easy access to markets across North America and around the world. Cumberland County is located at the center of the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and between two of its largest urban centers – Halifax and Moncton. The CN rail line and the Trans Canada Highway pass through the Cumberland region, making the region a popular location for businesses serving the northeastern United States and Canadian markets.

There is a private jetport along the Northumberland coast in Fox Harb'r, and we are less than an hour's drive from one of two international airports, Halifax Stanfield International Airport and Greater Moncton Romeo LeBlanc International Airport, depending on which part of the region you are located.

Two international ports, in Halifax, N.S., and Saint John, N.B., are also within a two-hour drive and connect us with more than 150 countries. Canada has free-trade agreements with many countries in Europe, Asia, the U.S. and other parts of the world. This allows businesses in the Cumberland region to ship their products across the globe.

## Key Sectors in Our Economy

The key sectors in our economy include:

- The goods producing sectors, including manufacturing, forestry, fishing, agriculture and mining as well as construction.
- The service sector has significant employment spread across many private sector businesses. There are many health-care related services, such as dentists, physiotherapists, optometrists, nursing homes, etc. Most of these businesses are in Amherst or in urban communities across the region.
- The public sector is another significant source of employment, with many jobs in the health-care and educational services fields. The Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre and Springhill Institution are among the largest employers in the region.

Our economy is very diverse and resilient. The Cumberland region has the largest agricultural land base in Nova Scotia and a vibrant fishing industry on both the Northumberland Strait and Bay of Fundy. These primary industries support a local agri-food and seafood processing industry. The Cumberland region has a significant strength in food processing, with about 1,000 people working in this sector.

Other natural resource industries include an active mining industry, with two salt mines employing hundreds of workers. We also have many quarries. The Cumberland region has more than 327,748 hectares (800,000 acres) of forest that account for 16 to 20 per cent of the wood cut annually in Nova Scotia. Seventy per cent of Nova Scotia's maple syrup is produced here as well as 50 per cent of the province's wild blueberries.

There are several businesses and organizations with expertise in clean energy manufacturing. The Cumberland Energy Authority's focus is on developing the energy resources of the region. Initially, most of their work centered on the development of geothermal energy in Springhill, as well as the potential around tidal energy in the Parrsboro area. Other areas of interest include solar energy, wind energy and energy from low-grade wood.

The Town of Amherst and the Municipality of Cumberland are participating in the Solar Electricity for Community Buildings Program. Amherst is also a partner in a smart-grid demonstration and deployment project led by Nova Scotia Power and NB Power that will test a suite of distributed energy resource technologies. Primary components of the project in Amherst include a one- to two-megawatt, community-scale, solar installation, battery storage, smart charging for electric vehicle fleets and solar-battery installations on municipal and industrial facilities. The project will help accelerate the affordable adoption of renewable energy solutions on both a regional and national scale.

Our location as the geographic centre of the Maritimes, and the gateway to Nova Scotia, has attracted companies involved in transportation, warehousing, distribution and wholesale trade. The transportation, warehousing and distribution sectors have continued expansion potential. There is room in the Amherst Industrial Park for growth and the new Springhill Geothermal



Business Park is currently being established. The Geothermal Business Park will provide an additional 40 hectares (100 acres) of affordable green, industrial land.

### **Our Collaborative Spirit**

There is a proactive, collaborative spirit in our region. Our three municipalities work together on many enterprises, including economic development initiatives. The Cumberland Business Connector is an independent, business-led, non-profit organization that focuses on economic development across the entire region. The Business Connector is funded by the three local municipalities and the Government of Nova Scotia.

There is a monthly meeting for all stakeholders in economic development in the Cumberland region that keeps everyone informed about the priorities and programs that are available for the area. This informal “Team Cumberland” includes: CBDC Cumberland, the Nova Scotia Community College, the three municipal units, the Cumberland Business Connector, the Chambers of Commerce/ Board of Trade, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Nova Scotia Works.

The three municipalities have formed a working task force with businesses in the tourism sector to develop the Cumberland Region Tourism Development Strategy. This strategy is now in the implementation phase.

The same collaborative spirit is evident in our region between businesses. Larger businesses are willing to mentor smaller ones. Farmers and artisans have collaborated to establish vibrant farmers markets. Area artisans have developed creative retail models throughout the Cumberland region and hundreds of businesses are members of Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade. This collaborative attitude strengthens our ability to work effectively. We recognize that working together allows our businesses to accomplish a lot more than any one organization could do by itself.

### **COVID-19 Impact**

As COVID-19 swept across the world and emerged in Nova Scotia in mid-March 2020, life as we knew it came to an abrupt halt. All levels of government and society adapted to a slower pace in order to help stop the spread of COVID-19. As large parts of our economy shut down, the federal and provincial governments scrambled to put emergency programs in place to limit the economic damage. These programs were rolled out rapidly and modified as needed.

This crisis has reinforced the value of teamwork. All local partners involved in economic development have collaborated to support the business community as effectively as possible while avoiding duplication. The initial focus concentrated on connecting businesses with the resources they need to be successful. There has been a proactive effort to summarize and share with individual businesses the relevant supports the federal and provincial governments have put in place to help them survive through this unprecedented crisis.

Municipalities have worked with the Government of Nova Scotia to assist business owners and residents who need help with their 2020 property tax payments. The Cumberland Business Connector has collaborated closely with the Regional Enterprise Networks across the rest of rural Nova Scotia in order to share best practices and resources that can help rural businesses, from one end of Nova Scotia to the other, cope with the pandemic. The Amherst and Area Chamber of Commerce has tapped into resources from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and others to provide resources to the business community. Other economic development partners have shared their resources and expertise to assist businesses at this time.

As sectors emerge from the impacts of COVID-19, our focus is shifting to support their reopening and adaptation to a new way of doing business. From 2020-2022, this will be a key priority as retaining our existing businesses will be critical in order to be able to rebound quickly from the effect of the pandemic.

This crisis has reinforced the value of a diversified economy. We are fortunate to have strong manufacturing and goods producing sectors in Cumberland, Amherst and Oxford. Many of these companies, especially those involved in food production and processing, are expanding and hiring more staff. This is creating opportunities for workers that have been laid off because of declines in other sectors. This helps the Cumberland region mitigate the longer-term impacts of COVID-19.

### **Forestry Crisis**

The Cumberland region, with more than 327,748 hectares (800,000 acres) of woodlands, has a large forestry sector that accounts for 16 to 20 per cent of Nova Scotia's total wood harvest. Up until the end of 2019, Northern Pulp in Pictou County was the largest buyer of wood in Nova Scotia. When Northern Pulp closed in January 2020, it put the entire, integrated forestry supply chain in Nova Scotia into a very precarious situation. More than 40 per cent of the market for wood in Nova Scotia was immediately lost.

Restrictions from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency were already in place to minimize the spread of invasive species such as the Brown spruce longhorn beetle. These restrictions prohibit Nova Scotia from exporting spruce and fir sawlogs and pulpwood to other provinces.

While there are still some markets for sawlogs in Nova Scotia, the sawmills do not have a market for their byproducts of sawdust, shavings and bark. This lack of cost recovery has reduced the price sawmills pay to the landowners for sawlogs. Landowners have also lost their largest market for low-grade hardwood and softwood that is not good enough to be sawn for lumber.

The forestry industry in the Cumberland region has come together and formed the Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee to chart a path forward through the crisis. The community has developed a practical and comprehensive vision, with strategies to create a more diversified and stronger industry. A lot of work has been done, but a lot remains to do in order to retain the

hundreds of jobs and the businesses that are dependent on this industry. This sector wants sustainable growth moving forward, but needs support to transition the industry.

## **ECONOMY: GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **1. Increase Business Retention and Expansion**

#### **1.1 General support for businesses and services emerging from COVID-19.**

- 1.1.1** Host training workshops, online meetings and webinars to assist businesses reinvent their business model including:
  - developing online sales
  - social media marketing
  - web development
  - communication skills
- 1.1.2** Arrange mentoring and training opportunities for 20 small businesses needing outside expertise. This will include the Cumberland Virtual Advisor Program powered by Boomer's Plus.
- 1.1.3** Provide up-to-date, accurate information about the support for business coming from various levels of government that will help businesses reopen and grow. Communication with businesses will include email or phone calls, as well as having relevant information posted on the Cumberland Business Connector's website.
- 1.1.4** Expand the Cumberland Business Accelerator Program to support 20 more companies with high-growth potential, helping them develop their strategic planning skills, implement their growth plans and improve key performance indicators.
- 1.1.5** Provide affordable or free resources for small businesses to assist in strategic planning and reinventing their business models.

#### **1.2 Support for the forestry sector whose industry has been disrupted.**

- 1.2.1** Support the local forestry industry as it implements their recently created strategic plan by encouraging the development of diverse markets and locally produced wood products in order to retain and grow a skilled workforce.
  - Find new markets for 100,000 tons of wood chips and low-grade wood, including having at least two public institutions in the Cumberland region that use wood for energy.
  - Develop more value-adding within Cumberland County.
  - Lobby and influence all levels of government to allow tenders on new government buildings, bridges and other infrastructure to be built with wood.

#### **1.3 Support for goods producing sectors.**

- 1.3.1** Complete a business mix analysis for key goods producing sectors, such as manufacturing, natural resources, etc., in order to identify supply chain gaps or skilled trades needed in the region.

- 1.3.2 Based on the business mix analysis create a strategy for business attraction and entrepreneurship development to fill identified gaps.
- 1.3.3 Offer a training session each year around business transition or succession as a way to retain existing businesses over the long term.

#### **1.4 Support for sectors identified as having significant growth potential, including renewable energy, natural resource industries and construction.**

##### **Renewable energy:**

- 1.4.1 Advocate for continued research and development of the Fundy Ocean Research Centre for Energy (FORCE) in order to develop the energy potential of the Bay of Fundy's tides by:
  - lobbying other levels of government as needed.
  - supporting FORCE to create a power storage facility for testing by advocating on their behalf.
- 1.4.2 Support the Cumberland Energy Authority.
  - Build the roadways and other infrastructure in Phase 1 of the Springhill Geothermal Business Park.
  - Prepare business attraction brochures and information targeted to business sectors identified by the Cumberland Energy Authority as having high energy needs.
- 1.4.3 Support the expansion of wind farms for production of electricity.
- 1.4.4 Support the use of solar energy for electricity or space heating of residential homes, businesses, institutions and greenhouses by promoting and providing education on available financial supports.
- 1.4.5 Support the use of wood or wood chips for heating residential homes, businesses, institutions and greenhouses by:
  - promoting and providing education on the benefits.
  - completing priorities as stated in Section 1.2 above.
  - Lobbying the province to offer a rebate on the installation of wood stoves, pellet stoves and wood or wood-chip burning furnaces.
- 1.4.6 Lobby all levels of government to provide regulatory certainty and support to businesses willing to invest in producing renewable natural gas or bio-char from low-grade wood and wood chips.

##### **Natural Resource Industries:**

- 1.4.7 Support the Maritime Lumber Bureau and the forestry sector's work by lobbying other levels of government to increase the use of wooden bridges like the Roger Bacon Bridge that was built in Nappan.
- 1.4.8 Increase the amount of farm land in use by lobbying for the removal of the tax exemption currently given to farm land that is no longer farmed.
- 1.4.9 Lobby to improve the management of forestry resource land by requiring a wood lot management plan in order to continue receiving the low forestry tax rate.
- 1.4.10 Provide support for business plan development in order to increase the number of provincially inspected abattoirs in the region and meet the increasing demand for locally sourced meat.

- 1.4.11** Support the continued growth of the agri-food and seafood processing sectors to encourage more value-adding and more exports from this region by providing workshops and connecting businesses with other resources.
- 1.4.12** Encourage the responsible growth of aquaculture, including shellfish production and on-land aquaculture production, by working with the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture to see how we can best help the aquaculture industry create employment in rural communities.

**Construction:**

- 1.4.13** Increase the housing supply by at least 100 units per year with a mixture that includes rental units, moderately priced starter homes and seniors' housing by:
- attracting more trade workers.
  - exposing students to opportunities in the construction industry.
  - collaborating with the industry to offer training opportunities to businesses and workers presently employed in the construction industry.
  - increasing awareness of financial support provided by the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to build affordable rental units.
- 1.4.14** Upgrade existing housing stock to maintain affordable and safe housing by:
- increasing awareness of the PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) program offered by the Town of Amherst and the Municipality of Cumberland.
  - attracting more trades people with specialized skills in renewable energy upgrades to the region.
- 1.4.15** Upgrade commercial properties by:
- promoting programs such as Gritty to Pretty.
  - increasing awareness of available accessibility funding.
  - increasing awareness of available energy efficiency upgrade programs.

**1.5 Focus on business expansion and increase productivity in existing businesses.**

- 1.5.1** Continue to complete formal and informal business retention and expansion programs with businesses to ensure continued responsiveness to ongoing and changing business needs.
- 1.5.2** Maintain an up-to-date comprehensive business directory to facilitate increased business-to-business sales and buy local initiatives.
- 1.5.3** Approach Sackville, N.B., and area with the idea of producing a joint business directory by 2023.
- 1.5.4** Encourage businesses to focus on productivity upgrades in order to improve their global competitiveness and address work force shortages by:
- providing annual workshops on improving productivity to various sectors of the business community.
  - ensure the Cumberland Business Accelerator program is available to businesses needing support with productivity.
- 1.5.5** Provide workshops to encourage small businesses to focus on key performance indicators (KPI's) and focus on improving these indicators more than on revenue growth.
- 1.5.6** Lobby Nova Scotia Business Inc., the Department of Business and others to allow medium-sized businesses to qualify for the Innovation Rebate Program for productivity enhancing investments of less than \$2 million.

- 1.5.7 Maintain an up-to-date list of industrial buildings and land available for sale or lease in order to be able to respond to enquiries.

**1.6 Strengthen connections and partnerships between businesses, educational and research institutions.**

- 1.6.1 Connect businesses to the research capacity of NSCC, Mount Allison University, Dalhousie Agriculture Campus, Ignite Labs, FORCE and other private and public colleges, universities and research institutions.
- 1.6.2 Work with NSCC Cumberland to have this campus become a Centre of Excellence in Renewable Energy.
- 1.6.3 Have more customized training programs in Amherst/Springhill based upon the needs of local businesses, particularly in manufacturing.

**1.7 Increase the impact of tourism on the local economy.**

- 1.7.1 Implement the Cumberland Region Tourism Development Strategy to increase visitors' length of stay and average spend.
- 1.7.2 Develop a regional tourism brand, marketing strategy and website.
- 1.7.3 Conduct a feasibility study and a needs assessment on infrastructure needs for conference and event hosting, including the possible need for additional accommodations.

**1.8 Enhance Amherst's role as a regional retail and service centre and communities throughout Cumberland County as local hubs.**

- 1.8.1 Complete a business mix analysis for urban communities throughout the Cumberland region to identify core retail and service sector businesses required to maintain the critical needs of residents.
- 1.8.2 Attract businesses and focus on entrepreneurship development in order to fill gaps identified in the business mix analysis for urban communities.
- 1.8.3 Support the continued growth of businesses in the health-services sector to increase the number of good paying jobs, while also increasing the quality of life for local residents by maintaining key services in local communities.
- 1.8.4 Develop and implement downtown beautification and revitalization projects that include the buy-in of business owners, building landlords, municipalities and Chambers of Commerce or Board of Trade including the:
  - 1.8.4.1 Gritty to Pretty Program
  - 1.8.4.2 Expansion of similar program like Gritty to Pretty in other communities
  - 1.8.4.3 Pugwash Waterfront Development Master Plan
  - 1.8.4.4 Springhill Beautification Plan

**2. Increase business attraction and new business startups.**

- 2.1 Attract two additional businesses involved in distribution and warehousing that would benefit from the region's central location and strong transportation networks.
- 2.2 Expand and promote the availability of affordable industrial land in the Amherst Industrial Park.

**2.3** Focus on attracting businesses that have been identified through the business mix analysis as being needed in the region, individual communities or in specific industries' supply chains.

**2.4** Recruit and support people interested in becoming entrepreneurs.

**2.5** Support the Cumberland Energy Authority's promotion of the Springhill Geothermal Business Park.

**2.6** Promote the region to remote workers who value affordable housing and outdoor recreational opportunities. These workers can utilize the region's high-speed internet capabilities while benefiting from the region's amenities.

**3. Create a job ready workforce.**

**3.1** Work with the P-12 education system to address weaknesses in soft skills such as time management, teamwork, conflict resolution and empathy.

**3.2** Help connect displaced workers with new employment opportunities and remove barriers by engaging the disengaged workforce.

**3.3** Improve student engagement (universities, NSCC, P-12) with local businesses.

**3.4** Workforce attraction from outside Cumberland County.

**3.5** Develop a part-time, skilled and knowledgeable workforce that can fill employment vacancies in seasonal or project-based work.

## POPULATION

From 2001 to 2016, the population of the Cumberland region declined by eight per cent, with a net loss of 2,600 people due to a combination of out-migration and deaths outnumbering births and immigration. Between 2001 and 2016, net interprovincial migration accounted for a loss of more than 600 people from the Cumberland Census Division as out-migration outnumbered attraction of people from other provinces.<sup>1</sup> According to Statistics Canada, there are only 195 immigrants living in Cumberland who arrived between 2006 and 2016. The rest of Nova Scotia saw a per capita immigration rate that was three times as large during the same 10-year period.

Population decline is a concern for many reasons, with significant impacts on the local and regional economy as the customer base shrinks. As a result, businesses become more dependent on export sales and visitor spending. New service-oriented businesses are less likely to start up or survive. From a municipal service viewpoint, declining population has a negative effect on the residential tax base if it cannot grow at a rate needed to keep pace with rising municipal costs. A lack of new construction and a surplus of housing stock mean residential property assessment remains flat or declines.

The shrinking population, paired with low labour force participation and declining unemployment rates, means employers could have difficulty filling vacant positions if the number of job seekers is outnumbered by vacant jobs. Slightly more than 60 per cent of the residents living in the Cumberland region are between the ages of 15 and 64, while 66 per cent of all Canadians are of working age. In the next decade, businesses will have difficulty filling jobs vacated by retiring employees because there will be fewer younger workers available to take their place. This is especially relevant as the 60- to 64-year-old population is currently the largest percentage of our population.

The aging population presents economic opportunities as well. For example, there is an increasing need for construction of suitable housing. There is increasing demand for health and personal wellness services. Older people often contribute a larger share of the GDP than their share of the population. According to a 2016 report by Oxford Economics, people over 50 years of age are only 35 per cent of the U.S. population, but contribute 43 per cent of total U.S. GDP.

Older people are working longer. According to Statistics Canada, nearly one in five (19.8 per cent) Canadians aged 65 and older reported working at some point in 2015. This was almost double the proportion in 1995, with most of the increase coming from part-year and/or part-time work. Older people are also increasingly interested in starting their own businesses. According to a Kauffman Foundation report, the 55- to 64-year-old age group accounted for 25.8 per cent of new U.S. entrepreneurs in 2014, compared to 14.8 per cent in 1996.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table null Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2016 boundaries.](#)



The negative effects of the shrinking and aging population can be offset by economic development efforts that focus on increasing the population of working-age people, developing the “longevity economy” as noted in the economy section and increasing revenue from exports and tourism.

## **POPULATION: GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **1. Increase the population of the Cumberland region with a significant focus on working-age families.**

#### **1.1 Maintain positive net interprovincial migration.**

- 1.1.1** Create a place where people want to live. Invest in “live, work, play” initiatives, such as development of major attractions, community amenities and events, active transportation, culture and recreation and opportunities to enjoy shopping, dining and entertainment.
- 1.1.2** Develop a campaign aimed at repatriating people who have moved away from Nova Scotia.
- 1.1.3** Develop a remote worker attraction program. These workers bring their jobs with them and often have accompanying family members who may be looking for work. They help strengthen and diversify neighbourhoods, frequent local establishments and support the regional economy.
- 1.1.4** Connect with HR managers to co-ordinate relocation opportunities and address barriers for employees moving from other provinces.
- 1.1.5** Work with realtors to promote relocating to the Cumberland region, evaluating year-over-year deed transfer tax will be used to provide an indication of growth in this area.
- 1.1.6** Work with contractors to identify ways to upgrade current housing stock, including financing and labour, evaluating year-over-year number and value of building permits to measure new residential construction and upgrades.
- 1.1.7** Link tourism activity to population recruitment with an emphasis on quality-of-life factors.

#### **1.2 Attract 200 new immigrants to the Cumberland region by 2026.**

- 1.2.1** Develop an immigrant recruitment and retention program.
- 1.2.2** Attract graduating international students from Maritime universities to the Cumberland region by connecting them with co-operative education placements and internships.
- 1.2.3** Support the YREACH program in Cumberland to help immigrants integrate and become connected to their new communities
- 1.2.4** Support Immigrant Services of Nova Scotia (ISANS) to match skills and interests of immigrants with employment vacancies and entrepreneurship opportunities in Amherst and Cumberland.

The goals noted in the Economy section and the Quality-of-Life section also contribute to population growth for the Cumberland region.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life refers to the level of health, comfort and happiness experienced by an individual or group. It is highly subjective and is different for every person and group.

Quality of life has traditionally been overlooked in economic development. However, it is becoming increasingly vital as it relates to the ability of a community or an area to attract and retain people and businesses. Quality of life can refer to a wide range of topics from environment, education, health and leisure to culture, living standards, time use and many other topics.

According to Develop Nova Scotia, quality of life is a critical factor in the decision to live and work in a community, especially in the knowledge economy. In this context, the beauty, vitality and accessibility of place is a significant contributor to the creation of a highly livable environment where people want to come together. Great places signal quality of life and quality of life drives the decision to put down roots. In the knowledge economy, industry and investment follow talent. According to Harvard Business Review, “Almost 64 per cent of college-educated 25- to 34-year-olds said they looked for a job only after they’d chosen the city where they wanted to live.” (May, 2010) <sup>2</sup>

For the purpose of this strategy, quality of life will focus on improving the following four key contributing factors:

1. Health of residents/Healthy Populations
2. Living standards
3. Community infrastructure and Placemaking
4. Access to technology

### Health of Residents/Healthy Populations

Maintaining and improving the health of residents is a major contributing factor to the quality of life within the region. Communities with a higher percentage of healthy people will attract other healthy people and will also attract new business and investment to the community. There are a wide range of factors that contribute to the health of residents, including mental health, level of physical activity, nutrition, obesity, smoking, etc. Many of these factors are being addressed by other organizations and within the health-care field. For the purpose of this strategy, the focus will be on how income levels and adequate access to the health-care system can contribute to the overall quality of life within the region.

According to the Government of Canada, the number one indicator of a person’s health is their income level<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, focusing on increasing the average and median household income in the region will be a priority. Adequate access to the health-care system, including maintaining access to a family doctor, access to emergency departments and access to necessary

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<sup>2</sup> Develop Nova Scotia, <https://developns.ca/about/placemaking/>

<sup>3</sup> Government of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health.html>

specialists and procedures, impacts the health of residents. For that reason, physician recruitment will be a priority with a focus on recruiting the necessary specialists within the health-care field.

### **Living Standards**

Living standards examine average and median incomes and wealth, distribution of income and wealth, including poverty rates, income fluctuations and volatility. It considers economic security, including labour market security, housing and food prosperity.

Living standards should reflect the capacity to transform economic growth into stable current and future income streams for everyone. Economic growth does not automatically translate into better living standards. A higher average income, for example, may be achieved at the cost of increased social inequality or greater economic insecurity. In contrast, achieving greater job quality, reducing poverty and providing basic affordable housing and food security to individuals and families will raise well-being and living standards for everyone. The Cumberland region seeks to go beyond reaching a basic level of securities in our communities. We will aim for prosperous living standards throughout our communities.

### **Community Infrastructure and Placemaking**

Community infrastructure includes the collection of facilities and spaces provided to residents and communities that generally improve quality of life in an area. This can include libraries, community centres, parks, outdoor spaces, safe walking areas and arenas, among many other facilities and spaces. Having the right mix, including quantity and quality, of community infrastructure is vital to attracting people to visit the region, live in the region and do business in the region. Community infrastructure is an important factor in placemaking.

According to Develop Nova Scotia, placemaking is the planning, development and management of land and infrastructure with and for people. Place has an essential role in economic development. Great places need to be designed with the community and for the community. In placemaking, it is vital to work with the community to discover their needs and aspirations in order to develop a vision for the community.

In the context of tourism, great places attract visitors who are looking for authentic, cultural experiences. The Cumberland Region Tourism Development Strategy focuses on high-yield markets, including authentic experiences, free spirits and cultural explorers. Focusing on placemaking will contribute to the success of that strategy and contribute to achieving the Cumberland region's tourism goal of extending a visitor's length of stay and increase the average amount they spend in the region.

Attracting more people to visit, live and work in the Cumberland region is a significant opportunity. The region has unique and spectacular landscapes, access to the coastline and is relatively affordable. All of this positions the region well in its efforts to attract people seeking quality of life. To achieve a strong sense of place, the Cumberland region will focus on

implementing projects and strategies that align with the principles of placemaking and ensuring adequate community infrastructure in the communities throughout the region.

### Access to Technology

The “digital divide” is the term used to describe the fact that whole segments of society are split into those “with” and “without” access to high-speed digital infrastructure. From an economic standpoint, those communities with a digital advantage can expect higher small business values and new business formation rates, higher home values, higher quality of employment and generally more economic opportunity for the entire community. According to studies, the overall economic impact is substantial – in excess of 10 per cent in many cases (see World Bank Study\*). From a human impact, it means more young adults decide to stay and work in their own communities and can lower rates of poverty and related social issues and businesses that are better able to compete and grow.

Large urban centers have a natural advantage in that their digital infrastructure develops organically based on a communication service provider’s standard design-build economic model. Rural communities can obtain similar results, but they must be much more proactive in order to ensure their success. In light of the rapid pace of technological evolution, it is increasingly vital that they do so.

The Town of Amherst and the Town of Oxford are already well serviced with access to high-speed internet. However, many areas throughout the Municipality of Cumberland are not so fortunate. To address the existence and impact of the “digital divide,” the Municipality of Cumberland has partnered with the Municipality of Colchester to work towards achieving the following vision:

*The entire geographic area will be served by a state-of-the-art, continuously upgraded, communications network that includes capacity for reliable, affordable, highest-speed internet access, as well as mobile telephone, community Wi-Fi, and internet-of-things uses such as ‘smart agriculture’, 5G and other future applications.*

These two municipalities intend to work towards developing a best practice framework for smart-rural initiatives, which does not currently exist.

High-quality, cost-effective internet services to each home in our communities is considered an “essential service,” a utility no less important than electricity, emergency management services and other municipal residential services. Working through the protocols in place for the COVID-19 response reinforced how important this ability to access reliable internet services is for working and learning from home. Under this vision no one gets left behind.

In addition to being among the most connected rural communities in Canada, the two municipalities also want to be among the “smartest.” This means the digital infrastructure needs to support existing and future smart-agriculture, road safety cameras, water leakage detection, weather collection, vehicle fleet tracking and a whole range of other IoT (Internet of Things) use cases.

## QUALITY OF LIFE: GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### 1. Increase the overall health and living standards of our residents.

#### 1.1 Continue to grow the median household income by a greater rate than the province, to result in the Cumberland region being within 10 per cent of the provincial median household income by 2026.

- 1.1.1 Develop a one-year pilot project to transport Cumberland residents to their workplaces within the Cumberland region.
- 1.1.2 Develop and implement training opportunities throughout the Cumberland region.

#### 1.2 Support the Nova Scotia Health Authority with job recruitment throughout the Cumberland region.

- 1.2.1 Support the joint physician recruitment committee.
- 1.2.2 When requested, assist with area familiarization tours to visiting and resident doctors and other medical professionals that focus on highlighting the area and sense of community.
- 1.2.3 Support spouses and family members of health-care workers to find jobs in their field.

#### 1.3 Percentage of people living in poverty will be within 2.5 per cent of the provincial average by 2026.

- 1.3.1 Implement training programs and workshops on an ongoing basis throughout the Cumberland region, including Learn2Lead workshop series.
- 1.3.2 Connector Program to help match people with jobs in their field.
- 1.3.3 Develop training programs that target youth seeking part-time employment to encourage skill development and employability. (Example: offer forklift training for eligible grade 10, 11 and 12 students throughout the Cumberland region.)

### 2. Develop community infrastructure to meet the needs of residents to improve their quality of life.

**2.1 Town of Amherst:** Support the review of community infrastructure, complete with recommendations to maintain and enhance this infrastructure.

**2.2 Town of Oxford:** Working through a strategic and comprehensive asset management plan to address infrastructure needs within the community.

#### 2.3 Municipality of Cumberland

- 2.3.1 By 2023, define the service level of community infrastructure to be provided within communities throughout the municipality (i.e., to include parks, playgrounds, trails, libraries, community centres, multipurpose space, sidewalks, safe walking areas, outdoor space, etc.).
- 2.3.2 Support and encourage the development of community centres in communities throughout the municipality.

- 2.3.3 Work with the chief librarian of the Cumberland Regional Libraries and communities to provide safe and accessible space for libraries throughout the municipality.

### **3. Implement projects and strategies that align with the principles of placemaking.**

#### **3.1 By implementing the following strategies, the Cumberland region will increase a sense of place in communities and will be better positioned to attract people to visit and live in the region, as well as do business here.**

- 3.1.1 The Pugwash Waterfront Development Master Plan
- 3.1.2 The Cape d'Or Master Plan
- 3.1.3 The Cumberland Region Tourism Development Strategy
- 3.1.4 Springhill Beautification Plan
- 3.1.5 Mainstreet beautification programs in Parrsboro, Joggins, and Advocate
- 3.1.6 Oxford Downtown Beautification Program

#### **3.2 To support placemaking and developing sense of place, the municipalities will undertake the following:**

- 3.2.1 Financially support and assist with the development and promotion of the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark.
- 3.2.2 Assist communities and community groups, as needed, to develop strategic plans, undertake community initiatives and achieve their visions.
- 3.2.3 Help community groups network and learn from each other's best practices.
- 3.2.4 Increase intermunicipal collaboration by continuing regular economic development staff meetings online.

### **4. Increase access to technology.**

#### **4.1 Achieve the vision to make Cumberland (and Colchester) one of Canada's most digitally connected rural areas.**

- 4.1.1 Reach 100 per cent of households in Cumberland County with high-speed internet service (as defined by the CRTC) by 2026.
- 4.1.2 Provide free community Wi-Fi in a minimum of five communities in the Cumberland region by 2026.
- 4.1.3 By 2025, the Municipality of Cumberland will have a plan to address cellphone coverage throughout the Cumberland region.
- 4.1.4 Have a plan in place to use the municipally owned dark fibre that could include investing in digital infrastructure to support existing and future smart-agriculture, road safety cameras, water leakage detection, weather collection, vehicle fleet tracking and a whole range of other IoT (Internet of Things) use cases.

## COMMUNITY CAPACITY

By looking at community capacity as a critical mass of people, infrastructure, reasonable availability of programs and services and economic opportunities from a **strategic** perspective, we can focus attention on those elements that are most critical and valued within communities. More importantly, we can encourage local citizens to be engaged in the critical issues that impact their communities. This CED Strategy will identify those communities where there is a readiness for residents to be involved in the future of their communities and to support them in doing so.

Community Capacity encompasses the initial three pillars of the CED Strategy at a community-specific level. Therefore, we will focus our efforts on working with individual communities to create strategies that will impact business development, population growth and increased quality of life in much greater detail. The local strategies will account for community-specific opportunities and establish strategies that best overcome the unique challenges within our communities.

## COMMUNITY CAPACITY: GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### 1. Develop Community/area specific plans and initiatives.

#### **1.1 Facilitate the development of community/area specific plans and initiatives that focus on decreasing economic barriers in our communities and improving the quality of life for our residents using the following schedule:**

- 1.1.1 Springhill 2019/2021 (in progress)
- 1.1.2 Parrsboro 2019/2021 (in progress)
- 1.1.3 Amherst 2021/2022 (Municipal Planning Strategy)
- 1.1.4 Pugwash 2022/2023
- 1.1.5 Oxford 2022/2023
- 1.1.6 River Hebert/Joggins 2022/2023
- 1.1.7 Wentworth 2023/2024
- 1.1.8 Advocate 2023/2024
- 1.1.9 Wallace 2023/2024

## REPORTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Each Municipality and the Cumberland Business Connector will develop their own annual work plans, which will each address priorities related to each organization’s individual mandate and capacity. Implementation tables are included in the pages that follow which as a whole identifies each organization’s area of focus. A joint mid-term review will happen by year three.

### Implementation Tables

<b>ECONOMY: GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>L = Leading S = Supporting</b>	<b>Business Connector</b>	<b>Municipality of Cumberland</b>	<b>Town of Amherst</b>	<b>Town of Oxford</b>
<b>1. Increase Business Retention and Expansion</b>					
<b>1.1 General support emerging from COVID-19</b>					
1.1.1 Host training	L	S	S	S	
1.1.2 Arrange mentoring and training	L	S	S		
1.1.3 Provide up-to-date, accurate information	L		S		
1.1.4 Expand the Business Accelerator Program	L				
1.1.5 Provide affordable or free resources	L				
<b>1.2 Support for the forestry sector</b>					
1.2.1 Support to implement strategic plan	L				S
<b>1.3 Support for goods producing sectors.</b>					
1.3.1 Complete a business mix analysis	L	S	S	S	
1.3.2 Business attraction strategy			L		
1.3.3 Annual transition/succession training workshop	L	S	S	S	
<b>1.4 Support significant potential growth sectors</b>					
<b>Renewable energy:</b>					
1.4.1 Lobby for continued R&D work (FORCE)	S	L			
1.4.2 Support the Cumberland Energy Authority.	S	L			
1.4.3 Support the expansion of wind farms	S	L	S		
1.4.4 Support the use of solar energy	S	L	L		
1.4.5 Support the use of wood or wood chips	L	S			S
1.4.6 Lobby all levels of government	L				
<b>Natural Resource Industries:</b>					
1.4.7 Support industry re: wooden bridges	S				
1.4.8 Tax on un-used farm land	S				
1.4.9 Lobby to improve management of forestry land	S				
1.4.10 Support on business plan development	L				
1.4.11 Support growth food processing sector	L	S	S	S	
1.4.12 Encourage the growth of aquaculture	L	S			
<b>Construction:</b>					
1.4.13 Increase the housing supply	L	S	S		
1.4.14 Increase awareness of PACE		S	S		



<b>ECONOMY: GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b>	Business Connector	Municipality of Cumberland	Town of Amherst	Town of Oxford
	<b>L = Leading</b> <b>S = Supporting</b>			
1.4.15 Upgrade commercial properties	S			
<b>1.5 Business expansion and productivity</b>				
1.5.1 Formal and informal BRE programs	L	S	L	
1.5.2 Maintain Business Directory	L	S	L	L
1.5.3 Joint business directory with Sackville, N.B.	L			
1.5.4 Encourage business productivity improvement	L	S		
1.5.5 Small business workshops with KPI focus	L	S		
1.5.6 Lobby to expand Innovation Rebate Program	L			
1.5.7 Maintain land availability database	L		L	
<b>1.6 Strengthen connections and partnerships</b>				
1.6.1 Connect businesses to research institutions	L			
1.6.2 NSCC as centre for renewable energy	L	L		
1.6.3 Customized training programs	L	S	S	
<b>1.7 Increase impact of tourism on the economy</b>				
1.7.1 Implement the regional tourism strategy		L	S	S
1.7.2 Tourism brand, marketing strategy and website		L	S	S
1.7.3 Infrastructure needs assessment		L	S	S
<b>1.8 Enhance regional retail &amp; service centre/hubs</b>				
1.8.1 Complete a business mix analysis		L	L	S
1.8.2 Attract businesses and entrepreneurship	L			
1.8.3 Support businesses in health services sector	S			
1.8.4 Downtown beautification and revitalization				
1.8.4.1 Gritty to Pretty Program		S		
1.8.4.2 Expansion Gritty to Pretty in other communities		L		
1.8.4.3 Pugwash Waterfront Development		L		
1.8.4.4 Springhill Beautification Plan		L		
<b>2. Increase business attraction and new business</b>				
2.1 Attract two distribution and warehousing businesses	L	S	S	S
2.2 Expand and promote the Amherst Industrial Park.	S		L	
2.3 Attract businesses identified in business mix analysis	L	S	L	S
2.4 Recruit and support entrepreneurs.	L		L	
2.5 Support promotion of the Springhill Geothermal Business Park	S	L		
2.6 Promote the region to remote workers	L	S	L	S
<b>3. Create a job ready workforce.</b>				
3.1 Work with the P-12 education system to address weaknesses	L		S	
3.2 Support connecting displaced workers to new opportunities	L			
3.3 Improve student engagement with local businesses	L		s	
3.4 Workforce attraction from outside Cumberland County	L		L	
3.5 Develop flex workforce to fill vacancies and seasonal/project work	L			

<b>POPULATION: GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b>  <b>L = Leading</b> <b>S = Supporting</b>	Business Connector	Municipality of Cumberland	Town of Amherst	Town of Oxford
<b>1. Increase population of the Cumberland region</b>				
<b>1.1 Maintain positive net interprovincial migration.</b>				
1.1.1 Create a place where people want to live.		L	L	L
1.1.2 Develop a repatriation campaign	L		L	
1.1.3 Develop a remote worker attraction program	L	S	L	S
1.1.4 Co-ordinate relocation opportunities	L			
1.1.5 Work with realtors to promote relocation	L	S	L	S
1.1.6 Identify ways to upgrade current housing stock	L			
1.1.7 Link tourism activity to population recruitment			L	
<b>1.2 Attract 200 new immigrants to the Cumberland</b>				
1.2.1 Develop an immigrant recruitment and retention program.		L		
1.2.2 Attract graduating international students		L		
1.2.3 Support YREACH		L		
1.2.4 Support ISANS		L		

<b>QUALITY OF LIFE: GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>Business Connector</b>	<b>Municipality of Cumberland</b>	<b>Town of Amherst</b>	<b>Town of Oxford</b>
<b>1. Increase the overall health &amp; living standards of our residents.</b>				
<b>1.1 Grow median household income</b>				
1.1.1 Pilot project to transport residents to workplaces	L			
1.1.2 Develop and implement training opportunities	L		S	
<b>1.2 Support the NSHA with job recruitment</b>				
1.2.1 Support the joint physician recruitment committee.		L	S	
1.2.2 Assist with area familiarization tours		L	L	
1.2.3 Support spouses and family members of health care workers	L			
<b>1.3 People living in poverty within 2.5% of the provincial average</b>				
1.3.1 Implement training programs and workshops	L	S	S	S
1.3.2 Connector Program to match people with jobs	L			
1.3.3 Develop training programs to target youth	L		S	
<b>2. Develop community infrastructure</b>				
2.1 <b>Town of Amherst:</b> Review of community infrastructure			L	
2.2 <b>Town of Oxford:</b> Plan to address infrastructure needs				L
<b>2.3 Municipality of Cumberland</b>				
2.3.1 Define standard service level of community infrastructure		L		
2.3.2 Support and encourage the development of community centres		L		
2.3.3 Provide safe and accessible space for libraries		L		
<b>3. Implement placemaking projects and strategies</b>				
3.1 Implement the following strategies				
3.1.1 The Pugwash Waterfront Development Master Plan		L		
3.1.2 The Cape d'Or Master Plan		L		
3.1.3 The Cumberland Region Tourism Development Strategy		L	S	S
3.1.4 Springhill Beautification Plan		L		
3.1.5 Mainstreet beautification in Parrsboro, Joggins and Advocate		L		
3.1.6 Oxford Downtown Beautification Program				L
3.2 To support placemaking and developing sense of place:				
3.2.1 Support and assist with the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark	S	L		
3.2.2 Assist communities and local groups achieve their visions.		L		
3.2.3 Help community groups network and learn from each other		L		
3.2.4 Increase economic development intermunicipal collaboration			L	
<b>4. Increase access to technology.</b>				
4.1 Make Cumberland Canada's most digitally connected rural area				
4.1.1 Reach 100% of households with actual highspeed internet		L		
4.1.2 Provide free community Wi-Fi in five communities		L		
4.1.3 Develop a plan to address cellphone coverage		L		
4.1.4 Develop plan to use municipally owned dark fibre		L		

<b>COMMUNITY CAPACITY: GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b> L = Leading S = Supporting	Business Connector	Municipality of Cumberland	Town of Amherst	Town of Oxford
<b>1. Develop Community/area specific plans and initiatives.</b>				
<b>1.1 Schedule</b>				
<b>1.1.1</b> Springhill 2019/2021 (completed)	S	L		
<b>1.1.2</b> Parrsboro 2019/2021 (completed)	S	L		
<b>1.1.3</b> Amherst 2021/2022 (Municipal Planning Strategy)	S		L	
<b>1.1.4</b> Pugwash 2022/2023	S	L		
<b>1.1.5</b> Oxford 2022/2023	S	S		L
<b>1.1.6</b> River Hebert/Joggins 2022/2023	S	L		
<b>1.1.7</b> Wentworth 2023/2024	S	L		
<b>1.1.8</b> Advocate 2023/2024	S	L		
<b>1.1.9</b> Wallace 2023/2024	S	L		



# DRAFT COPY

## Boards and Committees

Approved April 12, 2021

<b>Boards</b>	
All Saints Community Health Care Foundation	Councillor Black
Cumberland Joint Services Management Authority - (CJSMA)	Deputy Mayor Adshade
Cumberland Regional Library Board	Councillor Black
Lillian Albion Animal Shelter	Public Member - VACANT
Municipal Alcohol Program Board (MAP)	Councillor Black
Police Advisory Board	Deputy Mayor Adshade, Councillor Colborne, Byron MacDonnell (Chair), Josephine MacDonald (public member), DOJ Representative - vacant
<b>Committees - Internal</b>	
Accessibility Committee	Councillor MacDonald, Josephine MacDonald
Arena Committee	Councillor Colborne, Councillor MacDonald, Councillor Jones and public members (2 vacant positions) Jennifer Kouwenberg
Arena Fundraising Committee	Chairperson Councillor Colborne, Councillor Jones, Councillor McNutt, Recreation Director (vacant) and Community Members: Bev Clark, Tracy Black, Greg Wood, Alfie King, Eleanor Crowley, Joe Reade, Tom Reid, Tracy Sweet, Dave Clark and Jennifer Kouwenberg
Audit Committee	Councillor Jones, Councillor Black, Councillor McNutt, Tracy Black, and Dave Clark
Community Economic Development Committee	Councillor MacDonald, Councillor Jones and Public Members (2 vacant)
Fire Department Committee	Councillor MacDonald and Councillor Colborne
Personnell Committee	Chairperson Mayor Henley, Deputy Mayor Adshade, and Councillor Jones
Procurement Committee	
Public Works Committee	Mayor Henley, Councillor Black, and Councillor Jones
Recreation Commission	Chairperson Councillor McNutt and Deputy Mayor Adshade
Town Buildings Committee	Deputy Mayor Adshade, Mayor Henley, Councillor Colborne, Councillor Jones
<b>Committees - External</b>	
Cumberland Forestry Advisory Committee	Deputy Mayor Adshade
Cumberland Region Tourism Marketing Committee	Councillor MacDonald
Joint Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee	Town Clerk Cloney
Northern Region Solid Waste Management Committee	Councillor Colborne
Physician Recruitment Committee	Mayor Henley and Councillor McNutt - Dr Rondeau and Tory Rushton
Regional Emergency Measures Organization Advisory Committee - (REMO)	Councillor Colborne
Tourism Advisory Committee	Councillor MacDonald
Victorian Order of Nurses (VON)	Mayor Henley and Councillor Colborne

March 29, 2021

The Honourable Randy Delorey  
Chair, Standing Committee on Law Amendments  
c/o Office of the Legislative Counsel  
CIBC Building, Suite 802  
1809 Barrington Street  
PO Box 1116  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2X1

Email: [Legc.office@novascotia.ca](mailto:Legc.office@novascotia.ca)

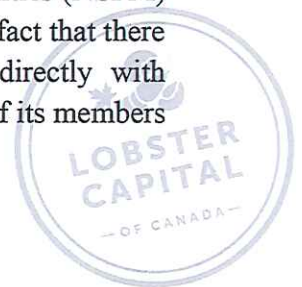
**Re: Bill 47**

Dear Chair,

On behalf of the Municipality of the District of Barrington, I am writing to you in opposition of Bill 47, which amends the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to allow municipalities to provide direct financial assistance to businesses for the purpose of improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

While the Municipality recognizes accessibility as a human right and fully supports the Province's goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030, Bill 47 will impose a significant financial and administrative burden on municipalities and will add to the competing responsibilities we currently have. Should the Province download this responsibility onto municipalities, we are greatly concerned that this will also generate unfair and unrealistic expectations towards municipalities from the private sector and from people with disabilities.

As for consultation, we acknowledge that the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) made a statement in support of the Bill but we have serious concerns regarding the fact that there was no consultation specific to Bill 47 by the Federation or the Province directly with municipalities. While NSFM's mandate is to advocate for and to defend the rights of its members this action does the opposite.



2447 Highway 3, P.O. Box 100, Barrington, Nova Scotia B0W 1E0

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We respectfully request that the Department of Municipal Affairs consult directly with the municipalities before proceeding with the passing of Bill 47 in order to get a clear perspective of the Bill's implications for all parties involved.

Thank you for considering our request. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Eddie Nickerson  
Warden

cc: The Honourable Brendan Maguire, Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Mr. Colton Leblanc, M.L.A. for Argyle-Barrington  
Mayor Amanda McDougall, Acting President, NSFM  
Nova Scotia Municipalities and Towns





## Fire report for March

We had 5 calls for the month of March

- 1 Flue fire
- 1 Vehicle fire
- 2 MVA'S
- 1 Fuel spill

4 town calls and 1 call in the county

Clean Heros came in and cleaned and inspected our bunker gear, 4 sets need to be sent to Truro for minor repairs All our Black colored gear are cleaned but not inspected due to the age they would fail and need to be thrown out ( bunker gear has a 10 year life span) We are in the process of getting quotes to replace 5 to 6 sets this would give all our interior firefighters the proper gear.

Our monthly training consisted of pump training, hooking to hydrants and hose streams. We are also doing extra training with our spare drivers on pump operations.

We also have wildland fire training and Maritime Northeast Pipelines will be in for a refresher on natural gas

In my my previous reports I forgot to mention that we have 5 members taking their level one

Last spring we had asked about getting a dry hydrant installed again at the Black River park is there anyway we could proceed with this? This would give us another water supply if needed.

That is my report for March if you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me at 902-664-6600 or email [truemanrushton@gmail.com](mailto:truemanrushton@gmail.com)

Thanks



## **Community Economic Development (CED) Report**

### **Highlights: March 15-29, 2021 (inclusive)**

**My final four days were primarily devoted to working on the 2021 Virtual Poetry Festival and organizing to leave my position. Details on additional activities appear below.**

- A second business has applied for a Wild Blueberry Capital Beautification grant.
- The grant was re-posted on our website and Facebook page
- My regular business and community contacts were informed that I am leaving.
- I updated the website (various information)
- Facebook posts: Tourism workshop, Wild Blueberries, Poetry Month, Cumberland County Exhibition initiative
- The Oxford Poetry Committee's request for poetry from local poets received an excellent response from throughout the county. These poems will be posted during poetry month (April).
- The Amherst Chamber of Commerce sent out a report on Not for Profits in the area which I shared with the Acting Town Clerk.
- I've provided Linda with information on active CED files.

**In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank current and past Town Councils for the opportunity to serve the Town of Oxford as its *Community Economic Development Officer*.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Ruthie Patriquin



## Minutes of the Police Advisory Board

Place: Council Chambers  
Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021  
Chair: Byron MacDonnell  
Members Present: Wade Adshade, Brenton Colborne, Josephine MacDonald, Corporal Clay Wortman and District Commander S/Sgt. Craig Learning  
Regrets: Nil

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting.***

Staff in attendance: Linda Cloney (recording secretary)

### **1. Call to order**

Chair MacDonnell conducted introductions and called the meeting to order at 6 pm.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Police Advisory Board Meeting for April 13, 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **3. Approval of Previous Minutes**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Police Advisory Board Meeting for January 26, 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **4. Business**

#### **4.1 RCMP Report**

S/Sgt. Craig Learning presented the RCMP report in detail. Below are the highlights discussed:

- Calls for services reported is considerably lower compared Jan 1 – March 31, 2020. Reasoning may be due to COVID-19. It was mentioned that property crime and thefts are all down. There was discussion that at a previous meeting the Jan 1 – March 31,

2020 numbers reported were mentioned to be high and may have included traffic statistics in 2020.

- Annual Performance Plan (APP) – we need Council’s input to be forwarded to S/Sgt Learning.
- There was a discussion regarding the number of members that are currently out sick or on a gradual return to work program. The Pugwash Office is currently open, and they will be filling the vacant D/A position mid-May.
- April 18 &19 is the anniversary of the 2020 Portapique, NS mass shootings.
- Discussion of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland’s motion to send a request to Colchester to allow the County of Cumberland to partner with them in the Police Service Review they are currently undertaking.
- The RCMP are now unionized. It was advised to the Board that the RCMP are advocating for a raise. If this raise is approved, it may become a financial impact on the policing costs to the municipalities.

It was moved and seconded that the RCMP report for this quarter presented on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 be accepted, as presented.

**Motion Carried**

*A copy of the RCMP report is filed.*

## **4.2 Business from previous meeting**

### **4.2.1 Status of Crosswalk Intersection Study**

Council is undergoing budget discussions and staff anticipates that this project will not be approved for this budget year as the budget priorities are to focus on building the reserves and only approve the projects of urgency. Note this has not been decided by Council yet.

### **4.2.2 Minister appointed position on Board - update**

Staff have sent out correspondence to the Minister of Justice and they confirmed that the appointment process is not complete. They will investigate this immediately. The Department of Justice did advise staff that they are currently working on providing in person training to all police governance bodies over the summer months. This correspondence is filed.

### **4.2.3 Reduction of Speed Limits - update**

Staff reached out to Acting S/Sgt Pennoyer regarding the reduction of Speed Limits on back streets in Oxford. S/Sgt Pennoyer communicated the process to staff and staff will follow up on this. This correspondence is filed.

### **4.3 New Business**

Nil

### **4.4 Correspondence**

Nil

### **4.5 Board Member Issues**

There was discussion regarding four wheelers travelling on Duke Street late at night with no lights on. Also, the speeding on Duke Street and Horton Street was discussed.

### **4.6 Municipal Issues**

#### **4.6.1 Crosswalk & Gazebo during school breaks**

The Town was having an issue regarding the Crosswalk and was having a hard time reaching out to the Oxford Detachment. Chairperson MacDonnell contacted Acting S/Sgt Jason Pennoyer and he acted immediately. The Town was thankful for that immediate reaction to the issue. The correspondence regarding this is filed.

The hangout and behaviour at the Gazebo were an issue at the previous Police Advisory Board meeting and remains an issue. S/Sgt will follow up on this.

### **4.7 Date and time for next meeting**

The next Police Advisory Board Meeting is set for Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 6 pm.

## **5. Adjournment**

At 8:05 pm, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

***Motion Carried***

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**Byron MacDonnell, Chair**

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**Linda Cloney, Recording Secretary**

**RCMP**



ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

# Oxford

## Police Advisory Board

**January 1– March 31, 2021**

Submitted by S/Sgt. Craig Learning

The Cumberland District RCMP is made up of five offices located in Amherst, Springhill, Pugwash, Parrsboro and Oxford. The Amherst office consists of a Staff Sergeant, Sergeant, Corporal, Community Policing Officer, 5 general duty Constables as well as 2 District Assistants. Also sitting in our Amherst office is our Cumberland County Street Crime Unit which is comprised of a Corporal and 2 Constables from the RCMP as well 2 Constables from the Amherst Police Department. The North East Nova Domestic Violence Coordinator also works out of the Amherst Detachment. See **Appendix A** for a list of all District Employees.

## CALLS FOR SERVICE OXFORD RCMP January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021

<b>TOWN</b>	January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021	January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020
Zone 12 – Town	76	112
OXS – Oxford school	1	0
<b>TOTAL TOWN</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>112</b>

<b>RURAL</b>	January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021	January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020
Zone 6	48	156
Zone 7	31	112
Zone 8	6	32
Zone 15	0	0
Zone 16	13	6
TCH TC1	0	1
TCH TC2	36	126
OSP	0	0
Other rural	66	76
<b>TOTAL RURAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>509</b>
<b>TOTAL TOWN AND RURAL</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>621</b>

### Oxford Area Zones

<b>Zone</b>		<b>Zone</b>	
6	Cumberland County Electoral District 6	12	Town of Oxford
15	Springhill Penitentiary	16	Ski Wentworth
OXS	Oxford area Schools	OSP	Oxford area Provincial Parks

# Oxford Detachment Updates

January 1 – March 31, 2021

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## **1 Call for Oxford Regional Education Center:**

**2020-268633**

Minor two vehicle Motor Vehicle Collision was reported by the receptionist at the school. Patrol was made. Both drivers' were students. No injuries and minor damage to both fenders; both vehicle were driveable. Parents arrived on scene. Information was obtained and a file number provided to both parties. One vehicle was towed due to an expired temp sticker.

## **14 Calls for Ski Wentworth**

### **Of note 2 threats files**

**2021-83618**

Threats complaint was received through 911. An individual who was fired from Ski Wentworth threatened to burn it down. Members attended, took statements and obtained screen shots of the threats. Investigation resulted with a Warrant being issued for a male to be charged with Uttering Threats x 2. Subject not located as of this date.

**2021-322658**

Members dispatched via 911 for police assist at Ski Wentworth. A patrol was made and an individual was subsequently arrested for Uttering Threats and Cause a Disturbance Drunk in Public. The male was transported to Amherst Cells to be released on paperwork in the morning when sober. His vehicle was towed. The matter is currently before the court.

## **Other Oxford Files**

**2021-98899**

Female reported that her son was assaulted by 2 young males. Member spoke to the victim who advised that he was pushed into a puddle and punched in the head. Statements were taken from the victim and several other witnesses. Investigation resulted in 2 young males being arrested for Assault and released on an Undertaking. The matter is before court.

**2021-339670**

A call was received of a theft that had occurred sometime in the previous week. The complainant stated that his security system has been stolen from the office of his apartment building. One camera was removed from the lower level hall and the wire cut. The shell that held the camera was left in place so it was seized for possible prints. The hard drive for the camera system was also stolen from the locked office. There was no sign of forced entry. The matter is still under investigation.



**2021-377062**

A complaint was received that on two occasions a customer attended an Oxford business while supposed to be isolating. The complainant only wanted for the individual to be warned. The individual was warned. No further action required.

**2021-113753**

While getting gas, Member observed a Ford Ranger pull in for gas as well. Member noted no plate on the truck and spoke with driver who was identified. The driver was arrested for prohibited driving. An ASD was given which resulted in a failure. Breath samples obtained of 160, 190, 180. The vehicle was towed and the male was released on an Undertaking. Matter is before the court.

**2021-144611**

Call via 911 for suspicious activity in progress at an Oxford business. The complainant reports a red Ford truck pulled up with a utility trailer behind the business and they are going back and forth in the building with flashlights. Complainant did not hear any audible alarms. Member contacted property rep who is aware that an employee was picking up a parcel after hours. No further action required. The complainant was updated on the findings.

**2021-153238**

While patrolling, an Oxford Member was advised by staff at Tim Hortons that a male had been disturbing customers. The Member attended and arrested a male who refused to identify himself. While speaking with the male to try to get his identity, the male spit on other Member who attended the scene. The male was arrested for Cause a Disturbance, Obstruction and, Assault Police Officer. He was Remanded to Pictou and later released on an Undertaking. The matter is before the court.

**ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN**

Initiative has been on hold for several months. We are hoping this gets back on track late spring/early summer, 2021.

## APPENDIX A

The following is a list of all members and staff who are currently posted to Cumberland District R.C.M.P.

**District Commander:** S/Sgt. Craig Learning  
**Operations NCO:** Sgt. Jason Pennoyer - ODS

### **Amherst Office**

**Team Leader:** Cpl. Josh DuBois (admin)  
Cst. Victor Manuel  
Cst. Jeffrey Campbell  
Cst. Phil Basque  
Cst. Matt Bray  
Cst. Richard Harvey  
D/A Rachael McLellan  
D/A Crystal Farrell

### **Oxford Office**

**Team Leader:** Cpl. Robert Parris (ods)  
Cst. Paul Cheesman  
Cst. Heather Graves  
Cst. Donald Fisher  
Cst. Heather Lourie  
D/A Lina Taraschi

### **Parrsboro Office**

**Team Leader:** Cpl. Troy Gill  
Cst. Troy Hopkins (ods)  
Cst. Don Matthews  
Cst. Tyler Smith  
Cst. Steve Maddison  
D/A Heather Winters

### **Pugwash Office**

**Team Leader:** Cpl. Shawn Galbraith  
Cst. Marc Blinn  
Cst. Rena Currie  
Cst. Anna Cochrane  
D/A Vacant – New hire identified.

### **Springhill Office**

**Team Leader:** Sgt. Dave Lilly (ODS)  
Cst. Tom Livingstone  
Cst. Mike Currie  
Cst. Marilyn Campbell (admin/grw)  
Cst. Stephanie Guzzwell  
Cst. Dan Anger  
Cst. James Campbell (admin/grw)  
Cst. Gina Macrae  
D/A Cindy MacDonald

### **Street Crime Enforcement Unit**

**Team Leader:** Cpl. Clay Wortman (acting Ops NCO)  
Cst. Mike Black  
Cst. Ryan Wilson  
Cst. John Haggerty (APD)  
Cst. Stephon Deveille (APD)

### **Community Policing Officer**

Cst. Sarah Pennoyer (Paternity Leave)

### **Domestic Violence Coordinator**

Irma McCallum

### **Court Liaison Officer**

Alanna Blanch



## Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting

Place: Oxford Town Hall, Council Chambers  
Date: Thursday, March 4, 2021  
Chairperson: Councilor Carla Black  
Members Present: Councilors: Paul Jones and Chrystal McNutt  
Public Appointees: Tracy Black and Dave Clark.

Regrets: Nil

***A quorum was present throughout the meeting.***

Staff present: Senior Accountant - Ruthann Brookins and A/Town Clerk - Linda Cloney (recording secretary)

Guest: Financial Advisor – Ken Smith

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Black called the meeting to order at 6 pm. Chairperson Black then welcomed everyone to the meeting and conducted introductions.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Audit Committee Meeting for March 4, 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **3. Approval of Previous Minutes**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting for February 4, 2021 be approved, as presented.

***Motion Carried***

### **4. New Business**

#### **4.1 Budget Discussions with Ken Smith and Ruthann Brookins**

Mr. Smith lives in Bridgewater, NS. He was the CAO for the Town of Bridgewater for 19

years before retiring. Mr. Smith also filled in as the CAO for the Municipality of the District of Shelburne and the Municipality of the District of Barrington. Currently he is finishing up with the Town of Shelburne as he was asked to stay on to assist them with their budget. Prior to his experience with municipal government, he was the VP of Finance for Island Beach Company and Fundy Textiles. Mr. Smith also worked in the public and private sector of Health Care.

Mr. Smith noted that the Town of Oxford and Town of Shelburne are in similar financial situations.

While studying the Town of Oxford, Mr. Smith commented that, like many small towns, Oxford has infrastructure and infrastructure debt. It is going to be important to have a strategy in place.

Mr. Smith had reached out to Paul Wills from the Municipal Finance Corporation (MFC) to discuss the Debt Affordability Analysis that was done in 2020. This report analyzes how much debt the Town of Oxford can take on.

Mr. Smith reviewed the financial condition indicators for the Town of Oxford. There are some that are good but, the same as the Town of Shelburne, the Operating Reserves, Capital Reserves, and the ability to take on debt are in high risk.

Mr. Smith reported to the Audit Committee that he reviewed the Auditor Management Letters for the past 3 – 4 years and it reflects that Oxford has not invested a lot in the Financial Staff. Internal controls also need attention.

Ken Smith handed out the Municipality Debt Affordability for the Town of Oxford. ***This report is filed with the package.***

Reviewing the Municipality Debt Affordability that was presented, Mr. Smith pointed out to the Committee that they really need to focus on the bottom numbers (as this is the outcome) and that they do not want to see anything above 15%. This report reflects that the first three years are high, but then it lowers considerably. This is because it is incomplete. Paul Wills will update the Municipality Debt Affordability when the past year audited operations figures, budget figures for this year and estimates on our Capital are provided to him.

***An important question to consider is: How much does the Town of Oxford need to put in the reserves?***

The Town of Oxford has an Action Plan – April 2020. The plan details that money needs to be put in reserves and to avoid increasing debt. ***A copy of this plan is filed with the package.***

Inter Fund Accounting is something that staff would like training on. This is required for Municipal Accounting Standards. We need someone that has experience and working knowledge of fund accounting and year-end journal entries.

***Question from the Board: Why is there no training from the Province regarding Fund Accounting? If staff are required to know municipal financing or want a refresher, there should be training offered.***

Staff noted that they plan to construct manuals with steps on how do the municipal finance for Oxford. The idea is that, in the case that finance staff is sick or leaves, someone could step in and get an understanding on how to manage the finances required.

The TownSuite finance modules were discussed. Staff have not implemented this yet as they need to be in a place they are caught up and at a good starting point. Staff will need resources to help with conversion because there will be obstacles.

The priority for staff is to finish the year-end.

The current water study for the Town of Oxford expires in 2022. Therefore, it is recommended that Oxford should conduct another water study to recover costs spent on the Watermain project on Duke Street and to plan for future projects.

#### **4.2 Arena Proposed Budget – Councillor Jones**

Councillor Jones presented to the Audit Committee to put \$50,000 in the budget for the arena as a grant to a society to run the Oxford Arena during ice season.

#### **5. Adjournment**

Next meeting is tentatively set for the end of April, 2021 pending on the readiness of the draft budgets with the intent to present to Council in May, 2021.

At 7:30 pm, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

***Motion Carried.***

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**Carla Black, Chairperson**

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**Linda Cloney, Recording Secretary**

**Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation**  
**Calculation of Municipal Debt Affordability**  
**Policy: Debt Service Ratio**  
**Town of Oxford**

<b>Description</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>2026-27</b>	<b>2027-28</b>	<b>2028-29</b>
<b>Revenue Sources</b>										
Total Revenues	\$2,534,162	\$2,541,944	\$2,549,803	\$2,557,741	\$2,565,758	\$2,573,856	\$2,582,034	\$2,590,294	\$2,598,637	\$2,607,063
<b>Expenditures</b>										
Discretionary Expenditures	\$1,930,975	\$1,898,750	\$1,922,682	\$1,956,785	\$1,991,573	\$2,036,559	\$2,063,260	\$2,100,190	\$2,137,864	\$2,185,799
Mandatory Expenditures	\$603,189	\$530,256	\$529,937	\$468,160	\$465,826	\$363,874	\$364,802	\$365,676	\$315,805	\$317,927
Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$2,534,164	\$2,429,007	\$2,452,619	\$2,424,946	\$2,457,399	\$2,400,434	\$2,428,062	\$2,465,866	\$2,453,669	\$2,503,726
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(\$2)</b>	<b>\$112,937</b>	<b>\$97,184</b>	<b>\$132,795</b>	<b>\$108,360</b>	<b>\$173,422</b>	<b>\$153,971</b>	<b>\$124,428</b>	<b>\$144,968</b>	<b>\$103,337</b>
<b>Debt Affordability:</b>										
<b>Debt Service Ratio</b>										
Limit set by Municipal Council	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Limit set by Municipal Council Policy	\$204,339	\$205,005	\$205,679	\$206,360	\$207,048	\$207,743	\$208,447	\$209,157	\$209,876	\$210,602
Total debt servicing costs	\$318,618	\$258,264	\$278,960	\$212,008	\$204,473	\$97,296	\$75,194	\$70,791	\$15,617	\$12,410
<b>Capacity for New Debt Servicing Cost</b>	<b>(\$114,279)</b>	<b>(\$53,259)</b>	<b>(\$73,281)</b>	<b>(\$5,648)</b>	<b>\$2,575</b>	<b>\$110,447</b>	<b>\$133,253</b>	<b>\$138,366</b>	<b>\$194,259</b>	<b>\$198,192</b>
<b>Actual &amp; forecasted outstanding debt</b>	<b>\$975,195</b>	<b>\$780,416</b>	<b>\$552,637</b>	<b>\$383,358</b>	<b>\$214,079</b>	<b>\$144,200</b>	<b>\$84,300</b>	<b>\$24,400</b>	<b>\$15,200</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>
<b>Estimated revised debt service ratio</b>	<b>15.59%</b>	<b>12.60%</b>	<b>12.43%</b>	<b>9.29%</b>	<b>9.04%</b>	<b>3.99%</b>	<b>3.05%</b>	<b>2.97%</b>	<b>0.47%</b>	<b>0.46%</b>

*Capacity for new debt would be a result of the amount of capital work done in a particular year, & the interest rates and amortization period assumptions used by the municipality.*

**Cumberland Public Libraries  
Brief Report- Oxford  
April 9, 2021**

**Oxford Library**

Oxford Library is now expected to open in May due to delays in shelving.

**Draft Budget**

Ms. Corey presented the Board with the preliminary budget for the 2021/22 fiscal year.

**March Break 2021**

March Break 2021 was a success! After the cancellation of March Break last year it was wonderful to have so many people participate. During the week of March Break Cumberland Public libraries held 10 virtual programs with 5944 views and Oxford Library distributed 81 Take and Make crafts.

**April Public Meeting**

The Board will hold its annual Public Meeting on April 27, 2021 via Facebook live.

**Statistics**

In the month of February, Cumberland Public Libraries signed out over 5,529 items, 95 items in Oxford alone. This includes books, movies, TV shows, magazines and more.

Also in February, Cumberland Public Libraries held 28 virtual programs with 542 views and the Oxford Library distributed 10 Take and Make crafts.

**Next Board meeting June 3, 2021.**

Recreation Commission met on April 7<sup>th</sup> – Attendance: Wade Adshade, Kody Wood, Sarah Henley, Linda Cloney, Kristen Thompson & Chrystal McNutt

Kody Wood will be the liaison between the Town and Minor Baseball

- Kody will be in contact with Wes Adshade on all field improvements
- Wade will make sure Minor Baseball has access to the arena for registration & indoor workouts

All Arena bookings (aside from Minor Baseball) will go through Town Hall

We are still looking for a liaison between the Town and Soccer – many names were passed around, will keep looking until we find someone

Chrystal will look into getting Porta Potties for the baseball and soccer fields

Chrystal will contact Vicki Weaver re: Pride Week info and possible recreation grants

Chrystal will contact a possible senior citizen who would like to be the liaison between the Town and all senior events as well as the running of the OPH.

It was decided we will run an Earth Day social media blitz starting Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup> through to Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. We will ask the public to clean up garbage around town. Take pictures of themselves or strange garbage that is found and the pics will be posted on the Town of Oxford Facebook site.

If Covid restrictions allow we run Summer Camps in some form, many possibilities were discussed.

We will be creating a Youth Rec Commission. This will be a list of local youths who are interested in volunteering. These youths can be used to help during town events – Canada Day, baseball tournaments, etc...

Next Meeting April 21<sup>st</sup> @ 6:00