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## **Finance Committee Meeting Agenda**

**Tuesday, September 2, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**

**MODL Council Chambers – 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville**

- 1. Call to Order**
  - 1.1 Mi'kma'ki Territorial Acknowledgement
- 2. Announcements, Acknowledgements, Recognition**
- 3. Public Input (15 Minutes)**
- 4. Changes/Approval of Agenda**
- 5. Approval of Minutes – July 8, 2025 (as circulated)**
- 6. Business Arising from Minutes**
- 7. Presentations/Scheduled Times - Nil**
- 8. Referrals from Committees/Council - Nil**
- 9. Staff Reports**
  - 9.1 Finance Department**
    - 9.1.1 Operating Variance Report 1st Quarter (to June 30, 2025)..... 1-5
    - 9.1.2 Capital Status & CCBF Investment Report 1st Quarter (to June 30, 2025)..... 6-11
  - 9.2 Administration Department**
    - 9.2.1 REMO Governance Review ..... 12-24
- 10. Consideration of Correspondence - Nil**
- 11. Recommendations from Council – Nil**
- 12. Added Items**
- 13. In Camera**
  - 13.1 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA
- 14. Adjournment**



## Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

### Report to Council

**Report To:** Finance Committee  
**Submitted By:** Elana Wentzell, CPA, CMA, Director of Financial Services  
**Date:** September 2, 2025  
**Re:** Operating Variance Report 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (to June 30, 2025)

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The enclosed Operating Fund Variance Report gives Council details of operating budget accounts where variances to budget have occurred. Staff have commented on all forecasted budget variances over \$1,000.

Budget variances occur for a variety of reasons. The budget is a plan made before the beginning of the fiscal year based on the information available at that time. When new information becomes available, staff make adjustments and show those in their forecasts. Directors are responsible for managing their department budgets.

In this first quarter report, staff are projecting an Operating surplus of \$87,500 which represents a 0.19% budget variance.

The revenue variance shows \$26,000 in additional revenue compared to budget. Differentials include Provincial grants received and recovery for increased insurance costs for the CES building.

The expenditure variance shows a forecasted budget increase of \$74,300. This includes recoverable insurance costs of \$8,200 and increased costs for replacement of malfunctioning septic systems under the LaHave straight pipe replacement program.

Please refer to the attached report for details of the variances.

Report Preparation	
Department	Finance
Report Prepared by	Elana Wentzell
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg  
Operating Fund Variance Report - 1st Quarter  
June 30, 2025**

Finance Committee  
Item #: 9.1.1  
Date: September 2, 2025  
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

Comments on Forecast Variance to Budget		Actual to Date	Annual Budget	FORECAST	Actual Variance (% Budget left)	Forecast Variance to Budget
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Tax Revenue		\$ 17,132,125	\$ 34,188,000	\$ 34,188,000	49.9%	\$ -
Business Property		100,623	176,200	176,200	43%	-
Deed Transfer Tax		734,301	1,800,000	1,800,000	59%	-
Other Taxes		42,814	89,000	89,000	52%	-
Grants in Lieu of Taxes		-	269,600	269,600	100%	-
REMO/Accessibility recovery from Other Units		51,054	204,200	204,200	75%	-
Sale of Services						
Recreation Services		33,576	110,000	110,000	69%	-
Regional Building Inspection Services		(573)	285,000	285,000	100%	-
Other Revenue - Fines, Permits, Rentals & Interest	Recovery from CES for increased building insurance costs.	705,906	2,750,700	2,758,700	74%	8,000
Farm Acreage Grant		59,541	102,500	102,500	42%	-
Provincial Grants	Grants received for Project Volunteer \$8,000 & Age Friendly \$10,000 (unbudgeted)	497,852	594,900	612,900	16%	18,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$ 19,357,219</b>	<b>\$ 40,570,100</b>	<b>\$ 40,596,100</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>\$ 26,000</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>						
Mayor & Council		\$ 172,463	\$ 826,400	\$ 826,400	79%	\$ -
Bank Interest & Charges		1,508	5,400	5,400	72%	-
Administration		343,196	1,429,800	1,429,800	76%	-

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg  
Operating Fund Variance Report - 1st Quarter  
June 30, 2025**

	Comments on Forecast Variance to Budget	Actual to Date	Annual Budget	FORECAST	Actual Variance (% Budget left)	Forecast Variance to Budget
Finance		191,997	876,300	876,300	78%	-
Tax Exemptions & Property Tax rebate		52,154	868,700	868,700	94%	-
Legal & Advisory Services		96,826	528,600	528,600	82%	-
Administration Building, Supplies, Advertising and Data Processing		256,172	1,132,600	1,132,600	77%	-
Allowance for Uncollectible taxes		-	143,200	143,200	100%	-
Tax Sale Expenses		532	70,000	70,000	99%	-
Government Relations, Communications & Municipal Celebrations		60,852	237,600	237,600	74%	-
Insurance	Actual insurance costs for year not allocated to cost centres (vehicles, sewers, recreation and CES building)	148,076	149,300	148,100	1%	(1,200)
Grants to Organizations	Council Motion May 13/25 - provide up to \$20,000 in additional funding to the Community Recreation Capital Grant Program for the 2025-2026 fiscal year; and further, that it come from the general operating reserves. See corresponding Reserves increase below.	561,095	1,388,100	1,408,100	60%	20,000
Election Costs		-	-	-	0%	-
Assessment Services		181,464	725,300	725,300	75%	-
Police Protection		1,169,440	4,553,900	4,553,900	74%	-
Correction Services & Prosecutions		2,659	75,700	75,700	96%	-
Fire Protection Municipal Costs		(117,049)	500,800	500,800	123%	-
Emergency Measures	Actual insurance cost savings based on new contract.	69,164	976,700	975,800	93%	(900)

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg  
Operating Fund Variance Report - 1st Quarter  
June 30, 2025**

	Comments on Forecast Variance to Budget	Actual to Date	Annual Budget	FORECAST	Actual Variance (% Budget left)	Forecast Variance to Budget
Protective Inspection Services		258,129	915,100	915,100	72%	-
Dog Control		7,456	44,900	44,900	83%	-
Common Services (Engineering)		167,556	754,800	754,800	78%	-
Provincial Roads & NSTIR Paving Partnerships		129,055	866,200	866,200	85%	-
Municipal Road Maintenance	Based on actual summer maintenance costs.	74,002	365,500	367,300	80%	1,800
Lahave Sewer Maintenance	Based on estimated increased cost to replace system malfunctions (\$60,000). Budget includes \$65,000 that is 100% recoverable from residents in the maintenance program (included in budgeted tax revenue above).	32,862	105,000	165,000	69%	60,000
Garbage & Waste Collection		815,741	3,286,500	3,286,500	75%	-
Planning & Zoning		390,338	1,640,000	1,640,000	76%	-
Economic Development, Schools, CES Bldg & Tourism	Increased cost for insurance premiums for CES building. This is recovered in the contract with CES.	216,951	2,884,100	2,892,300	92%	8,200
Recreation Staffing, Facilities and Programming	May 13/25 Council Motion provide \$20,000 to support a feasibility and options study regarding climate risk mitigation to the Friends of Crescent Beach (FOCB), with the funds coming from the Open Space and sustainability operating reserves (see corresponding reserve transfers below). Insurance cost allocation for Recreation liability higher than budgeted - offset by reduced general insurance costs in other cost centres.	436,514	2,081,500	2,107,900	79%	26,400
Libraries		49,925	199,700	199,700	75%	-
LCLC		239,688	1,062,000	1,062,000	77%	-
Education		2,661,692	11,594,400	11,594,400	77%	-

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg  
Operating Fund Variance Report - 1st Quarter  
June 30, 2025**

	Comments on Forecast Variance to Budget	Actual to Date	Annual Budget	FORECAST	Actual Variance (% Budget left)	Forecast Variance to Budget
Financing & Transfers	Per Council motions \$20,000 operating reserve transfer for Community recreation Capital Grants and \$20,000 from Open Space & Sustainability reserves for Friends of Crescent Beach request.	(120)	(310,500)	(350,500)	100%	(40,000)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>\$ 8,670,337</b>	<b>\$ 39,977,600</b>	<b>\$ 40,051,900</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>\$ 74,300</b>
<b>Area Rates</b>						-
Fire Protection Revenue		2,517,660	5,028,000	5,028,000	50%	-
Fire Protection Expenditures		(2,410,249)	(5,028,000)	(5,028,000)	52%	-
Sewage Collection & Disposal Revenue	Savings on insurance contract allocation of premiums.	217,700	674,800	674,800	68%	-
Sewage Collection & Disposal Expenditures		(234,437)	(1,159,300)	(1,144,100)	80%	15,200
Private Road Maintenance Revenue		387,396	387,500	387,500	0%	-
Private Road Maintenance Expenditures		(368,949)	(369,100)	(369,100)	0%	-
Street Lighting Revenue		76,397	153,400	153,400	50%	-
Street Lighting Expenditures		(3,178)	(159,200)	(159,200)	98%	-
<b>NET AREA RATES</b>		<b>\$ 182,341</b>	<b>\$ (471,900)</b>	<b>\$ (456,700)</b>		<b>\$ 15,200</b>
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT)**</b>		<b>\$ 10,869,222</b>	<b>\$ 120,600</b>	<b>\$ 87,500</b>		<b>\$ (33,100)</b>
<b>% Annual Budget</b>			<b>0.26%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>		<b>-0.07%</b>



## Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

### Report to Council

**Report To:** Finance Committee  
**Submitted By:** Elana Wentzell, CPA, CMA, Director of Financial Services  
**Date:** September 2, 2025  
**Re:** Capital Status & CCBF Investment Report 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter  
(to June 30, 2025)

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The Capital Budget Status & Canada Community Building Fund (CCBF) Report is enclosed to give Council information on the status of the projects approved in this fiscal year.

Projects are moving forward as indicated in the attached status report. Included in the report are columns for the approved project budget, actual costs incurred to date, cost variance actual to budget, forecast to March 31, 2026.

Of the \$18.37M approved budget, project costs in the amount of \$970,299 have been paid at the end of the first quarter with a forecast of \$12.8 M to be completed by year end.

Report Preparation	
Department	Finance
Report Prepared by	Elana Wentzell
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

5 Year Capital Investment and Canada Community-Building Fund Plan	Project Description	Status	Approved Budget 2024/25	Actual Cost 30-Jun-25	Actual Cost Variance to budget %	Forecast Cost 31-Mar-26
<b>Administration Department</b>						
Community Solar Garden - Site Selection & design & Construction	Construction of 7 MW Solar Garden managed by AREA (energy savings equal to 700 homes or 150,000 trees). Municipal partnership with MODL. An IMSA will be formed to Construct & Manage. Interest during Construction \$1,491,346 (MODL Share 56.14%). The spend is conditional on application approval and successfully negotiating a PPA and that the amount is fully repaid to MODL from the IMSA Corp from long term borrowing.	<b>Power Purchase Agreement not accepted - project will not move forward.</b>	840,000	-	-	840,000
Community Solar Garden - Land Acquisition	The purchase of the land for the solar garden with same conditions as above and fully repaid - cost is \$650,000		650,000	-	-	650,000
<i>Administration Department Subtotal</i>			<i>1,490,000</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1,490,000</i>
<b>Finance Department</b>						
Tax Bill Portal	Purchase software for online access to Tax Bills (Provincial funding rec'd) also includes employee pay stubs. 70% paid on contract start. 30% due in 2025/26. Total \$34,500 + HST	<b>Portal settings in place, working on implementation. Will not be ready for September Tax Billing.</b>	10,800	-	-	10,800
Finance Department Subtotal			10,800	-	-	10,800
<b>Economic Development Department</b>						
Enhancement Plan	Plan to inform where beautification should occur based on existing and expected development in Osprey Village. Where to place streetlights, benches, landscaping. Carry over project completion	<b>The plan is in process and at the draft planning stage with internal staff review.</b>	15,000	1,371	9.1%	15,000
<i>Economic Development Department Subtotal</i>			<i>15,000</i>	<i>1,371</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>15,000</i>

5 Year Capital Investment and Canada Community-Building Fund Plan	Project Description	Status	Approved Budget 2024/25	Actual Cost 30-Jun-25	Actual Cost Variance to budget %	Forecast Cost 31-Mar-26
<b>Engineering, Public Works, Water &amp; Wastewater</b>						
WWTP Van & Truck replacements	To replace aging vehicles (2014 purchase year)	Half Ton Truck awarded to O'Regan's Chevrolet Buick GMC Cadillac Limited on May 27, 2025. Awaiting delivery.	85,000	-	-	85,000
Osprey Village Sidewalk Project - Design	Sidewalks, Curb and Gutter, Water Course Crossing, Stormwater Infrastructure, Traffic Signal Lights & Pedestrian Crossing, Lighting & Seating along Nathan Cirillo and Pine Grove Roads. External Funding: ICIP (\$1,814,204), MCGP (\$1,136,973), and AT Fund (\$504,000). Municipal Funding: (\$1,044,823)	Design work awarded to Design Point Engineering & Surveying on May 27, 2025. Project will be Tender ready in early 2026.	250,000	2,077	0.8%	250,000
Osprey Village Water Tower - Year 1 of 3 (Site Selection, Design & Site Prep)	Water Tower - funding 73% of \$2.9M, TOB MODL share 50% Total \$3.84M for tower and connections, design included	Awaiting results of the joint water capacity study by Design Point Engineering before project can proceed.	500,000	8,516	1.7%	500,000
Osprey Village Water Tower - Year 2 of 3 (Construction)		CBCL awarded the engineering design contract; land acquisition required.				
Osprey Village Water Tower - Year 3 of 3 Completion						
WWTP Cookville Plant Expansion - Year 2 of 3 (construction)	Grants received: ICIP \$6.67M; Reallocated ICIP (\$5.3M), MCGP (\$4.1M) Balance will be debt financing. Anticipated Expenditures 2024/25 \$1M, 2025/26 \$6.5M, 2026/27 \$17M for Total \$24.5M	Construction of Cookville WWTP upgrades well underway. Pomerleau as General Contractor and exp Services Ltd. as lead designers.	6,500,000	657,477	10.1%	6,500,000
Nathan Cirillo Pumpstation Backup Power - Year 1 of 2 (design & begin construction)	Provide on-site generator to supply back-up power during power outages, design in Year 1, and construct in Year 2.	Generator is now in-stock. Currently working with neighbouring land-owner to acquire additional land for the installation.	140,000	608	0.4%	140,000
Nathan Cirillo Pumpstation Backup Power - Year 2 of 2 (completion)						
Municipal Services Building Warranty Repairs	HVAC (3rd party warranty \$400,000), Miscellaneous upgrades balance carry forward until complete.	Finalizing last of the HVAC deficiencies	50,000	3,000	6.0%	50,000
J Class Roads (NSPW paving Partnership)	NSPW partnership to pave non-owned MODL roads. Carry over 2024/25 Request: Darby's Head Rd (0.45 km), St. Augustine Rd (0.13km), Riverside(0.1 km), Freeman(0.37 km), Riverview (0.18 km) & Church(0.25 km) Total 3.12km.	No J-Class Road paving projects scheduled for this year	350,000	-	-	350,000

5 Year Capital Investment and Canada Community-Building Fund Plan	Project Description	Status	Approved Budget 2024/25	Actual Cost 30-Jun-25	Actual Cost Variance to budget %	Forecast Cost 31-Mar-26
Summer Road	Upgrade storm drainage, widen cul-de-sac, grade and gravel.	Design work complete. Project not proceeding	65,000	-	-	60,000
Centre School ESA Assessments Centre School Bldg. Demo & Soil Remediation	ESA Assessment, Implementation of remediation & demolition of building. 73% grant funding estimate. Project will not proceed without grant.	Tender package currently being prepared; awaiting funding opportunities before proceeding with project	5,500,000	-	-	10,000
Green Compost Carts - annual purchase	Annual purchase of Green Compost Carts.	Green cart order placed in May 2025, delivery expected in September 2025	60,000	-	-	60,000
Wile's Lake Park - Barn Demolition and Removal	Demolish vacant barn	Project Completed in June 2025	35,000	277	0.8%	10,000
WWTP - Annual Large Pump Rebuilding/Replacement Program	Annual Large Pump Rebuilding/Replacement Program (\$15-25k/YEAR) 2025/26 NC PS and NG PS#1,2, or 5; 2026/27 HB PS#20 Pump 1; 2027/28 HB PS#20 Pump 2; 2028/29 HB PS#19 Pump 1; 2029/30 HB PS#19 Pump 2; 2030/31 HB PS#18 Pump 1; 2031/32 HB PS#18 Pump 2. HB would only be done if we don't upgrade the stations as part of the larger capital project for \$6M.	Equipment was ordered and are awaiting delivery.	25,000	-	-	25,000
Wastewater Treatment Options - Study - Conquerall Bank and New Germany	Study wastewater treatment options to the current treatment plants in Conquerall Bank and New Germany	Study awarded to exp Services Inc. on July 22, 2025. Work expected to be complete for the upcoming 2026/27 Capital Budget discussions.	125,000	-	-	100,000
Annual Manhole Cover Repair/Replacement Program	Annual program to uncover and adjust to grade, repair/replace manhole covers to allow access for maintenance and monitoring of sewers.	Work to commence in the fall 2025.	20,000	-	-	20,000
WWTP NG pH and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) Probe	Supply and install new pH probe and DO sensor to monitor and adjust treatment process to ensure regulatory compliance.	Equipment was ordered, awaiting delivery and installation.	18,000	-	-	18,000
<i>Engineering, Public Works, Water &amp; Wastewater Subtotal</i>			13,723,000	671,955		8,178,000
<b>Planning &amp; Development Services</b>						
Land Conservation Strategy	This project will identify and map all Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) in MODL, providing a strategic framework to protect valuable natural areas. It will also help procure land and attract external stakeholders and matching funding to meet the municipality's 20% protection target by 2030.	2025-06-22 Council awarded RFP to CBCL Ltd for \$89,167.50 plus HST; Additional amount from the Sustainability Reserve \$39,167.50 plus HST.	50,000	-	-	92,600

5 Year Capital Investment and Canada Community-Building Fund Plan	Project Description	Status	Approved Budget 2024/25	Actual Cost 30-Jun-25	Actual Cost Variance to budget %	Forecast Cost 31-Mar-26
Public Transit	Transit costs for route in Osprey Village. Gas Tax (CCBF) earmarked \$236,900 (2023/24) Carry over 2023/24 to 2025/26.	Provided desired route stops in MODL to Bridgewater Transit. Waiting on revised routes from Bridgewater Transit.	150,000	-	-	150,000
E-permitting platform	Replace software permitting platform to facilitate e-permitting for expected growth in MODL. Carry-over of MIP grant \$91,250 (capital portion)	RFP Awarded to Clariti for \$71,900; Additional cost to use Moneris as a payment provider \$16,000 (USD) approx. \$24,000 (CAD). Other migration costs may be incurred.	150,000	71,900	47.9%	150,000
Land Purchases - Conservation (from Sustainability reserve)	Sustainability reserves availability.	Amount to be reviewed after the Land Conservation Strategy has been completed	50,000	-	-	50,000
<i>Planning &amp; Development Services Subtotal</i>			400,000	71,900		442,600
<b>Recreation, Parks &amp; Tourism</b>						
MARC Facility Re-imagining	Public consultation, concept designs and Class D budgets to reimagine the MARC	Intend to issue RFP in September 2025	80,000	-	-	80,000
Wiles Lake Park Re-imagining	Public consultation, concept designs and Class D budgets to reimagine Wiles Lake Park	Intend to issue RFP in September 2025	50,000	-	-	50,000
MARC Ballfield	Extend fencing on ballfields and reposition four dugouts	Contract awarded to Eastern Fence Erectors Ltd. on July 22, 2025; Installation scheduled for Fall 2025	150,000	-	-	150,000
Wayfinding (Directional/Visual Signage to MODL Assets) * Multi-year project to install signage at municipal parks & trails	AN RFP was awarded. Anticipated to be completed by end of fiscal. Due to delays getting art designs and stamped engineered plans from the contractor and cold weather funds need to be carried over with completion now expected in early May 2025.	Project to be completed the end of September 2025. A substantial amount of signs have been installed.	340,000	36,522	10.7%	340,000
Internal Park Wayfinding Strategy & installation	To develop an internal park wayfinding strategy that aligns with the current Wayfinding Strategy and Design.	RFP will be issued in the Fall 2025	25,000	-	-	25,000
Hillside Cemetery Monument	To install a monument so family can choose to install a family member(s) name to the monument. Engagement in Year 1. Year 2 cost based on engagement.	The interpretive panel and rock monument will be updated. based on information presented by the South Shore Genealogical Society. Need to determine whether sufficient interest from family members to include names on monument before deciding to proceed with project.	150,000	-	-	150,000

5 Year Capital Investment and Canada Community-Building Fund Plan	Project Description	Status	Approved Budget 2024/25	Actual Cost 30-Jun-25	Actual Cost Variance to budget %	Forecast Cost 31-Mar-26
Miller Point Peace Park	\$150,000 Provincial grant received for Miller Park accessible trails, pending \$20,000 accessibility funding for accessible canoe/kayak boat launch	Accessible kayak boat launch completed. Design work underway by Design Point Engineering for accessible trails.	478,000	90,313	18.9%	478,000
Indian Falls Park Accessibility upgrades	Grassy area and look off (as you enter the park) to be made accessible by creating accessible pathways (\$50,000), a trail upgrade to be fully accessible (\$50,000) and accessible vault toilets (\$250,000).	Trail / culvert design work underway by Design Point Engineering; currently sourcing modular accessible vault washrooms	350,000	14,728	4.2%	350,000
Recreation Truck - Tourism & Events	Purchase a Truck to provide mobile VIC Services and other recreation services.	Half Ton Truck awarded to O'Regan's Chevrolet Buick GMC Cadillac Limited on May 27, 2025. Awaiting delivery. Switching vehicles with Engineering Dept.	85,000	-	-	85,000
Annual contribution to Trail Groups	Annual budgeted grant to local Trail associations (\$584/km in 2024/25 then 10% annual increase thereafter ) for ongoing trail capital requirements. Central Nova has been added as they now look after 4 kms.	Funds have been released to trail groups and Central Nova ATV Club	82,300	75,756	92.0%	82,300
Art on the Trail/in the Parks	Continuation of art installations on MODL trails/parks in consultation with stakeholders. The amount budgeted includes carrying over \$30,000 from the 2024-2025 budget.	RFP to be issued in September 2025	50,000	-	-	50,000
Land Purchases - Open Space (from Open Space reserve)	Open Space reserves availability.		50,000	-	-	50,000
Sawpit Park	Implementation of the Sawpit Wharf Park Concept Plan. The next phase is to complete engineered designs.	Design awarded to exp Services Ltd. on June 24, 2025; Survey and geotechnical work completed; wharf assessment to be scheduled; Met with Community Committee	200,000	-	-	200,000
Pickleball Courts	Construction of outdoor pickleball courts in collaboration with the Pickleball Club. An \$800,000 Operating reserve was created as a placeholder.	A motion was made to financially support the South Shore Pickleball Club in constructing six pickleball courts at the MARC and enter into a lease agreement.	600,000	1,525	0.3%	600,000
E Bike Purchase for Equipment Loan Program	Expand the current MODL equipment loan program to include bicycles & e-bikes. Cost includes bikes, helmets, bike rack & storage containers. Connect 2 & rebates 75% funding \$31,000.	4 of the 7 bikes received. Doing a soft launch of the program in July 2025.	41,000	6,230	15.2%	41,000
<i>Recreation, Parks &amp; Tourism Subtotal</i>			2,731,300	225,074		2,731,300
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>			\$ 18,370,100	\$ 970,299	5.3%	\$ 12,867,700



<b>Document #</b>	
<b>CAO Approval</b>	
<b>Date: June 13, 2025</b>	
<b>COPIES TO:</b>	
<b>REMAC</b>	<b>July 21</b>
<b>Other-CAO's</b>	<b>X</b>

<b>REQUEST FOR COUNCIL DECISION</b>	
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Subcommittee for Governance Review
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Tammy Crowder, MURP, MCIP
<b>DATE:</b>	June 13, 2025
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Process and Timelines Inter-Municipal Agreement/Governance Review

**ORIGIN**

Regional Emergency Management Committee- (Need Motion)

**RECOMMENDATION**

**It is respectfully recommended that the REMAC recommend to the partner Municipal Council's the process outlined in this report for the completion of the review of the Inter-Municipal Agreement; and**

**Further that the REMAC authorizes the use of REMO funds (contingency) to engage a facilitator to work with the Subcommittee and Councils to complete this review.**

**BACKGROUND**

The Regional Emergency Management Committee undertook a Strategic Planning Process in early 2025. Through this review a few matters were identified within the Inter-Municipal Agreement that required review, such as the budget approval process and requirements. It was agreed that given that the Agreement has not undergone a significant review in recent years, an overall review should be completed.

To this end, the Governance Review Committee, a subcommittee of REMAC, was established with the mandate of developing a process and overseeing the review of the Inter-municipal Agreement.

This report provides a recommendation from the Subcommittee on a process and timeline for the completion of this review.

**DISCUSSION**

The Inter-Municipal Agreement to establish the Regional Emergency Management Organization was first established in 2011. It was amended in 2017 to add the Town of Lunenburg. The Agreement has not been reviewed or revised since.

The Subcommittee, upon review and discussion of options to undertake this review felt that, given the date of the original agreement, a comprehensive review is preferred. Given that the parties to the Agreement are the Municipal Councils, it was best to have the Councils directly

engaged during this review. This approach will ensure final product aligns with Council's expectations. As such the following is proposed:

**Subcommittee works directly with Council's to complete the Review– Target date for completion – Dec 2025/Jan 2026**

To ensure there are no concerns from partner municipal units respecting bias, it is recommended that the partner units engage an external facilitator to lead the parties through this review.

Proposed Steps

- i) Facilitator Engaged- August 2025
- ii) Pre-planning meeting with Subcommittee and Facilitator- August 2025
- iii) Facilitated session with Councils- September 2025
- iv) Report /Recommendations from Facilitator to Subgroup- September 2025
- v) Subgroup report and draft agreement to REMAC – October 2025
- vi) REMAC – draft agreement to Council's – December 2025

**IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial**

It is anticipated that the costs of an external facilitator will be approximately \$3500 to \$4000.

**Strategic Plan**

The review of the Inter-Municipal Agreement was identified as a priority during the REMAC Strategic Planning process.

**Legal**

Legal review of the final draft agreement will be completed by each units respective legal counsel.

**Workload**

Resource support will be provided by each units respective CAO or designate, and an external facilitator.

**Accessibility/EDI**

Accessibility and EDI may be more applicable to contingency plans and response.

**OPTIONS**

The REMAC has the following options for consideration:

Process

- 1. Accept the recommendation of the Subcommittee as proposed and recommend the same to the Council's;
- 2. Accept the proposed process/time as recommended by the subcommittee with modifications
- 3. Propose an alternative process
- 4. Defer a decision for further information

## **COMMUNICATONS**

REMAC's recommendation will be forwarded to the partner units for consideration.

**Report To:** Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (REMAC)  
**Submitted By:** Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO, MODL  
**Date:** February 10, 2025  
**Re:** Examination of Staff Resource allocation

## Background

REMO was established by agreement of 4 councils to work together to provide coordinated emergency planning and response. In 2017, the Town of Lunenburg joined the organization, expanding the service to all citizens in the County. REMO's daily operations focus on the following areas itemized below

### Planning

- Creation and updating all emergency & contingency plans
- Consulting with Planning Committee and stakeholders
- Approval of plans and policies at Advisory Committee meetings

### Training & Exercising

- Training and exercising key staff to be prepared for activations
- Training and keeping AECs updated on roles for on-call coverage
- Attending training by the province and other entities to stay up to date
- Be Ready training for municipal staff

### Building network and relationships with partners

- Identifying and maintaining stakeholder partnerships
- Government departments
- First responders
- Community halls/comfort centres
- Potential suppliers & resources during emergencies
- Large facilities and businesses
- Working with and keeping updated with the provincial Dept of EM (DEM)

## Public Outreach and Education

- Public presentations
- Emergency Preparedness Week
- 72-hour preparedness promotion
- Social media and web presence

## Governance & Administration

- Coordinating and supporting REMAC
- Tracking expenditures vs budget
- Information management among five units

## Emergency Response

- Oversight of on-call rotation
- Serve as “duty officer”
- Critical role in guiding ECC operations

## Special Projects

- As time permits (e.g. Vulnerable persons registry, volunteer roster)

## Resources

Currently staffing is one regional manager and a (vacant) coordinator position. In addition, during exercises and activations REMO draws upon CAOs & Deputy CAOs from partner units as well as Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AECs).

## Issues

Some persistent concerns outlined in this section led to the addition of the coordinator position to the 2024/25 REMO budget.

## Increasing Severity & Frequency of Events

2023 was a busy year for emergency response in MODL. Over 30 days were spent in active monitoring, partial activations, and one full activation. The flooding in July of 2023 resulted in the full activation and necessitated several declarations of local states of emergency, a voluntary evacuation and two mandatory evacuations. Over the past decade Nova Scotia has

been experiencing stronger winter storms, more direct landings of hurricanes, more and longer extended power outages, flash flooding and historic forest fires.

In response to these increased threats the province is in the process of changing its response to emergency management. In the last year, the province has created a standalone department responsible for emergency management, increased local responsibility for public alerts, and directly criticized local EMO for insufficient public notification. Most recently, the Department of Emergency Management sent communication outlining higher expectations for Local EMOs to respond - including dedicated public lines, and reciprocal in-person activations. There are strong indications that local REMOs can expect greater demands to be placed on them from the Provincial department.

### **Activation Gap**

Lunenburg REMO uses the Incident Command System (ICS) as an organizing schema for activations. This internationally recognized system has standardized roles and systems for emergency management and is important for interagency cooperation and communication. Historically, Lunenburg REMO has been relatively lucky and has managed smaller events largely through virtual and partial activations. As the frequency and severity of emergencies has increased, the need for a larger number of trained and available staff for positions in an Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) has increased.

Based on recent activations and training, municipal staff working with REMO have determined that between 24-50 individuals are required to fully activate over multiple shifts. It is important to note that the majority of these positions have been and will remain municipal staff (e.g. CAOs and AECs), who have undertaken additional training and responsibility for exercises and activations. There are 2 specific needs to address the activation gap: first municipal units must commit more staff for exercises training and activations; second, greater backup and redundancy for the regional manager is required to ensure that there is expert emergency management advice available to staff operating an activated ECC.

### **Need for projects to improve Emergency Response & Preparedness**

#### **After action reports**

Significant strides have been made to improve emergency response since 2019. The 2023 Flooding After Action Report listed over 100 recommendations to improve the program and close the gaps. Recommendations covered the following areas: ECC positions depth,

competence, & resources; contingency plan revisions; communications; Inter-agency information sharing & collaboration across shifts; and volunteer & elected official training.

In addition to the after-action reports, the Advisory Committee has discussed a range of special projects that could be undertaken to the benefit of emergency planning and preparedness. Some of these projects include: ECC Role Specialization and Training; Evacuation Shelters; Volunteer Roster; Vulnerable Persons Registry; REMO app for Alerts; Evacuation Routes; and REMO Radio Station.

The Provincial government has at various times completed assessments or required self assessments of municipal emergency managements. Appended to this report is a copy of the most recent self assessment completed by Lunenburg REMO. The assessment reveals that we have the basic elements of a program in place and continue to work towards having a comprehensive program in place.

## Discussion

To summarize the above background and issues, REMAC has considered the following conditions or baseline assumptions:

1. There is an increasing need for emergency response driven both by changing climate and by increasing public expectations
2. REMO needs more resources than present allocation of a Regional Manager and AECs
3. Emergency response works best through regional cooperation

Following the Budget approval process in 2024, the Municipality of Chester raised concerns about both the budget approval process and the need to consider alternative allocations of resources.

### Budget Approval Process

Currently the agreement requires a budget to be presented to the REMAC for recommendation to the partner units. The agreement states that the budget is approved once at least 2 councils approve it, provided they make up at least 51% of the budget. It was noted that the number of units (2) was not increased when the Town of Lunenburg joined. It was also noted that the budget is one of the largest decisions that the REMAC committee makes and, on occasion, some units have reported concern that they did not feel sufficient information was received by

them prior to the budget being formally passed by the organization based on the conditions set out in the agreement.

To address these concerns staff are recommending the following changes. First, REMAC should undertake a more comprehensive budget process as follows:

- Staff present a draft budget for REMAC to review and approve in draft form.
- REMAC should then host a meeting to which the members of all Councils are invited to review the draft budget. The meeting would provide an efficient approach to ensure that all councillors had access to draft budget information before it was passed, so they could raise concerns or questions to their REMAC representatives before the budget is recommended to partner Councils.
- Following the draft budget presentation REMAC will then re-consider the draft budget for recommendation to Councils.

Second, the agreement should be revised to require at least 3 units representing at least 51% of the funding before the budget is formally considered approved.

## **Arrangement of Resources**

### **Option 1: Regional Staff, decentralized offices**

**Description:** This would include the same staffing complement as in the 2024/25 budget: A Regional Manager, a Coordinator, and additional existing municipal resources (6 AECs, and the CAO group).

#### **Allocation:**

The Regional Manager would remain based out of the host unit offices in Cookville on the western side of the county. The Coordinator would be based out of Chester in the eastern side of the county. The AECs and CAO groups would be maintained to provide staffing for the on-call rotation and ECC activations.

Approximately 50% of the Coordinator's time would be spent on local preplanning activities, including identifying and maintaining stakeholder partnerships, supporting local community groups and larger residential facilities and commercial operations in emergency planning and preparedness, and public outreach and education. The remaining portion of the coordinator's time would be devoted to regional level activities (i.e. planning and running training/exercises,

special projects, on-call and activation work, incorporating local networks and community plans into REMO Contingency plans). Work plans for REMO are generated via the regional manager presenting to the CAO group in advance of the budget preparation and following after action reports.

### Costing:

This model uses the existing cost allocation model of uniform assessment:

	Uniform Assessment	Share	Regional Costs	Total Cost
<b>District of Lunenburg</b>	3,493,034,076	49.6%	186,384	186,384
<b>District of Chester</b>	2,123,424,985	30.2%	113,303	113,303
<b>Town of Bridgewater</b>	851,153,903	12.1%	45,416	45,416
<b>Town of Lunenburg</b>	375,580,597	5.3%	20,040	20,040
<b>Town of Mahone Bay</b>	195,179,307	2.8%	10,415	10,415
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,038,372,868</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>375,558</b>	<b>375,558</b>

### Analysis:

The Primary benefit of this model is that it is an enhancement of resources over what was available in 2023. It would permit more time for staff to work on training and exercises, special projects, and local pre-planning work. Critically, adding the position provides much needed redundancy for covering the Regional Manager functions during vacation, illness, and extended activations. The option is also a smaller budget commitment in comparison with Option 2.

In comparison with the second option, less resources are available for local pre-planning, activations, and special projects. This approach leaves a high level of responsibility for emergency management with municipal staff who have other full-time responsibilities. Any activation beyond active monitoring requires AECs and CAOs to take on important roles in the Emergency Coordination centre. In addition, there is less capacity for special projects to be completed under this option.

### Option 2: Local Resources, Regional Coordination

**Description:** This represents an increase in staffing over the 2024/25 budget: A regional Manager, 3 local emergency coordinators, and additional existing municipal resources. Under this model, it can be expected that some units would eliminate the AEC position, however each unit would still be responsible for providing a number of staff who would be available for training exercises and activations beyond the CAO group.

## Allocation:

The Regional Manager would remain based out of the host unit (i.e. MODL) offices in Cookville on the western side of the county. The local emergency coordinators would be based in 3 of the municipal partners, for example, one in the District of Chester, one in the District of Lunenburg and one in Mahone bay, serving the three towns. The AECs and CAO groups would be maintained to provide staffing for the on-call rotation and ECC activations.

Approximately 75% of the Local emergency coordinators' time would be spent on local pre-planning activities, including identifying and maintaining stakeholder partnerships, supporting local community groups and larger residential facilities and commercial operations in emergency planning and preparedness, and public outreach and education. The remaining 25% of the coordinator's time would be devoted to regional level activities (i.e. planning and running training and exercises, special projects, on-call and activation work, incorporating local networks and community plans into REMO Contingency plans).

Examples of local pre-planning work identified by units:

- Strengthening local stakeholder partnerships such as local fire commissions and departments community halls and comfort centres;
- Supporting larger residential facilities and commercial operations in emergency planning and preparedness (e.g. Maibec, Shoreham Village, Charing Cross Manor);
- Local hazard mapping including flood mapping and evacuation route planning in collaboration with municipal GIS staff;
- Explore potential evacuation shelter facility locations within MOC;
- Staff Training Support – Assist in disseminating Emergency management training to MOC staff who may be needed during activations.
- Engagement with Smaller Community Groups – Increase outreach to vulnerable community groups, such as the Blandford Seaside Senior Club, to understand their emergency needs and explore engagement opportunities.
- Enhance collaboration with MOC first responders to strengthen emergency preparedness and response efforts.
- Support community groups and individual residents adopt the FireSmart model;
- Community presentations on 72-hour preparedness and the municipal role during an emergency;
- Securing local facilities that could house large livestock during an emergency;
- Assisting comfort centres during activation and securing volunteer rosters and grant applications.

It is important to note that these activities (with the exception of the flood and evacuation route mapping) currently form part of REMOs preparedness work. The addition of local coordinators would increase the total staff hours dedicated to this work and would improve local institutional knowledge.

### Costing:

This model uses the existing cost allocation formula for regional costs and then assigns proportional local costs, i.e.: 1 position costs to MODL, one to MODC, 50% of a position to TOB and 25% each to TOL & TOMB.

	Uniform Assessment	share	Regional Costs	Local Costs*	Total Cost
<b>District of Lunenburg</b>	3,493,034,076	49.6%	140,635	97,715	238,350
<b>District of Chester</b>	2,123,424,985	30.2%	85,492	97,715	183,208
<b>Town of Bridgewater</b>	851,153,903	12.1%	34,269	48,858	83,126
<b>Town of Lunenburg</b>	375,580,597	5.3%	15,121	24,429	39,550
<b>Town of Mahone Bay</b>	195,179,307	2.8%	7,858	24,429	32,287
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,038,372,868</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>283,376</b>	<b>293,146</b>	<b>576,522</b>

For ease of comparison, both cost options are presented here in a single table:

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Option 2</b>
<b>District of Lunenburg</b>	186,384	238,350
<b>District of Chester</b>	113,303	183,208
<b>Town of Bridgewater</b>	45,416	83,126
<b>Town of Lunenburg</b>	20,040	39,550
<b>Town of Mahone Bay</b>	10,415	32,287
<b>Totals</b>	<b>375,558</b>	<b>576,522</b>

It is important to note that there is some opportunity under option 2 to free some time at the CAO level that is currently allocated towards training and smaller activations. It is not possible to quantify financially due to the varying hourly costs, number of CAOs/Deputies involved and level of engagement but is an important consideration.

### Analysis:

Benefits:

- The primary benefit is more resources are available to REMO and to individual communities for emergency preparedness and management. Currently local pre-planning work is being conducted by the Regional Manager. With more resources

available to do this community planning and education work, the Regional Manager would have more time to devote to enhancing the functionality and training of the ECC and to address special projects and after-action report recommendations.

- An additional benefit is the increased professionalization of ECC staff. With four full time staff working in emergency management this approach reduces the demand on the CAO group and AECs who have other municipal duties. If desired, active monitoring and some partial activations could be run without requiring non-EMO staff to take on ECC roles. It is important to bear in mind that continued involvement of municipal staff in the emergency management will be required; most events requiring more than active monitoring will require more than the proposed 4 EM staff.
- Given the additional capacity provided through this option, it is more likely that REMO could address after action report recommendations, special projects, and new expectations from the provincial department.

Issues:

- The cost to hire an additional 2 positions is a barrier potential barrier to pursuing this option.
- The funding formula is more complex and requires agreement from the Towns on how they would share the costs and time of the split regional coordinator.
- There is some potential for management challenges for the new positions given that they will have reporting responsibilities to both their local unit(s) as well as the REMO manager. As a result, there is some risk of losing the benefits of regional coordination.

## Alternatives

Rather than selecting one option over the other, REMAC could adopt a staged approach whereby a coordinator is hired regionally and embedded in Chester. In 2 years, an assessment of progress on local pre-planning, training of municipal staff for ECC work, and addressing after action report recommendations could be completed so that the REMAC could determine if the addition of 2 more local coordinators is advisable.

The funding model for option 2 is not the only option available. Alternative approaches could be identified and examined (e.g. the shared local coordinator costs could be allocated using the same cost sharing formula that exists for REMO).

## Conclusions

There is an increasing need for emergency response. Experience in Lunenburg County has demonstrated that emergency response works best through regional cooperation. REMO needs more resources than present allocation of a Regional Manager and AECs. REMAC must advise councils on the best route and appropriate budget to do so.