This document was created using best practices in document accessibility. Should you need assistance reading or understanding this document, call 902-543-8181 or email info@modl.ca.

Finance Committee Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, December 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

2.1 Proclamation – International Day for Persons with Disabilities 1

3. Public Input (15 Minutes)

4. Changes/Approval of Agenda

5. Approval of Minutes – November 4, 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 Debt Financing for Municipal Projects..... 2-5

9.2 Recreation, Parks & Tourism

9.2.1 2024 Active Transportation Plan 6-74

9.2.2 PRO Kids Reserve Budget Request..... 75-77

9.3 Administration Department

9.3.1 By-law 017 – Police Clearance Certificate 78-81

9.4 Economic Development

9.4.1 Communities in Bloom..... 82-115

10. Consideration of Correspondence - Nil

11. Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matter

11.1 Request a Letter of Support for Seniors Safety Program – Councillor Smith..... 116

12. Added Items

13. In Camera - Nil

14. Municipal-Wide Planning

14.1 Public Input Regarding Municipal Wide Planning

14.2 Direction Report.....1:00 p.m. 117-135

15. Adjournment

Finance Committee
Item: 2.1
December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

Proclamation

International Day for Persons with Disabilities

WHEREAS, December 3 is recognized globally by the United Nations as International Day for Persons with Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Canada is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability, and two out of five Nova Scotians live with a disability; and

WHEREAS, Nova Scotia has proclaimed the *Accessibility Act* that recognizes accessibility is a human right and set a goal of an accessible province by 2030; and

WHEREAS, International Day of Persons with Disabilities promotes an understanding of disability issues and the importance of equal access for Nova Scotians with disabilities in all aspects of society; and

WHEREAS, through public awareness, community partnerships, and municipal accessibility initiatives this day aims to foster an environment of equal participation of individuals with disabilities within the District of Lunenburg.

THEREFORE, be it proclaimed that I, Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile, on behalf of the District of Lunenburg, do hereby proclaim December 3, 2025, as “International Day for Persons with Disabilities” in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.

_____
Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile

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

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Information Report

Report To:	**Finance Committee**
Submitted By:	**Elana Wentzell, CPA, CMA Director of Finance**
Date:	**December 2, 2025**
Re:	**Debt Financing for Municipal Projects**

Background

Municipal Council discussed the 2026-27 Draft Capital budget and 5-year financial plan at a Special Council meeting on November 25, 2025. Debt financing for two wastewater treatment projects is included the draft financial plan. Although the use of debt was not discussed at length in prior years' budget discussions, it has been included in the detailed financial plan for the past two budget years (2024-25 & 2025-26).

The Municipality became debt free in October 2021. This was a great achievement but not a sustainable path for a growing municipality. Using the 5-year financial strategy and forecasting model, the Municipality was able to build its reserves, planning for the large capital infrastructure projects that were identified to be completed in the future. As the costs of those future projects became known and included in the 5-year plan, a combination of grants, municipal reserves and debt financing was budgeted to pay for this infrastructure. Staff have recommended that municipal reserves remain at a benchmark level to ensure there are funds for future emergencies, unexpected infrastructure repairs or to leverage grants when they become available.

Pros of Using Debt for Municipal Capital Projects

Intergenerational Equity

- Debt ensures that future residents who benefit from long-lived assets (e.g., wastewater plants) help pay for them.
- Prevents current taxpayers from bearing the entire cost upfront for assets with 20–50-year lifespans.

2. Maintains Infrastructure Without Large Tax Shocks
    - Allows a municipality to build or replace major assets without imposing large immediate tax increases or depleting reserves.
    - Helps keep tax rates more stable and predictable.

3. Preserves Cash and Reserve Funds
    - Allows municipalities to maintain reserve balances for emergencies, asset management, or other priorities.
    - Avoids draining capital reserves on a single project.

4. Leverages Historically Low (or Favorable) Interest Rates
    - Municipalities can secure preferential borrowing rates through Nova Scotia Municipal Finance.
    - Borrowing can be financially efficient when rates are low relative to inflation or construction cost escalation.

5. Supports Economic Development and Growth
    - Debt can accelerate infrastructure development (e.g., upgraded sewer systems), enabling:
        - Increased assessment base
        - Job creation
        - Long-term economic benefits.

6. Predictable, Long-Term Budgeting
    - Debt service payments are generally fixed and predictable, aiding long-term financial planning.
    - Aligns with multi-year capital planning frameworks.

Cons of Using Debt

1. Long-Term Interest Costs
    - Borrowing increases the total cost of a project because of interest.
    - Even with low municipal rates, debt service can significantly increase lifecycle costs for major projects.

2. Reduces Fiscal Flexibility
    - Debt servicing payments (principal + interest) become a fixed annual expense.
    - Limits the municipality's future ability to respond to:
        - Emergencies
        - New priorities
        - Revenue downturns.

3. Risk of Overleveraging
    - Excessive debt may weaken financial indicators such as the debt servicing ratio.
    - Higher debt could result in more expensive future borrowing or reduced access to credit.

4. Potential for Future Tax Increases
    - Debt payments may require raising taxes, especially if:
        - Assessment growth is low
        - Operating costs are rising
        - Other revenues decline.

5. Public Perception and Political Risk
    - Residents may perceive borrowing as poor fiscal management.
    - Political environment may discourage debt use even when financially sound.

6. Regulatory or Policy Constraints
    - Provinces impose limits on municipal borrowing (e.g., Nova Scotia's FCI 15% of revenue)
        - Borrowing requires Council Resolution and approval of the Provincial Minister.
    - This adds time, complexity, and potential uncertainty.

When Debt Financing Makes Sense

Municipalities often choose debt when:

- The project is long-lived (20+ years).
- Interest rates are favorable.
- Reserve balances need to be preserved for other priorities.
- The project supports growth or essential services.
- The municipality has capacity under debt limits and stable revenue outlooks.

When Debt May Not Be Advisable

Debt may not be appropriate when:

- The asset has a short lifespan (e.g., vehicles, equipment).
- The municipality is close to its debt limit.
- Debt servicing would create structural fiscal pressure.
- Interest rates are high or rising.

Conclusion

The District of Lunenburg uses its 5-year Capital Strategy and forecasting model to ensure that the pros and cons of using debt financing are considered.

- ✓ Used for long term assets to support growth and essential services (wastewater treatment infrastructure)
- ✓ Maintains infrastructure without large tax shocks
- ✓ Ensures intergenerational equity
- ✓ Preserves cash and reserve funds
- ✓ Supports economic development & growth
- ✓ Supports predictable long-term budgeting

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

Finance Committee
Item: 9.2.1
December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Information Report

Report to:	**Finance Committee**
Submitted by:	**Kelly Cunningham, Active Living Coordinator**
Date:	**December 2, 2025**
Re:	**Active Transportation Plan 2024**

Executive summary

Urban Systems Ltd. developed the recommended Active Transportation Plan in accordance with the scope of work outlined in the RFP. A variety of public engagement tools were used to gather input and feedback from community members, ensuring that the Plan reflects the community's preferred routes. The report outlines short-, medium-, and long-term actions to enhance active transportation within the District of Lunenburg, including improvements to existing infrastructure, development of new infrastructure, and initiatives to educate and equip residents to engage in a wider range of active transportation modes. High-level cost estimates for implementing the Plan are included, with a note that actual costs may vary and more detailed designs would be required to determine precise implementation expenses. The report is intended to guide Council in making informed decisions regarding active transportation improvements throughout the Municipality.

Background

On July 11, 2023, Council awarded the refresh and development of an Active Transportation Plan that would reflect the input from an extensive community engagement process to Urban Systems Ltd. The scope of work involved looking at best practices, community engagement, developing a plan that includes recommended routes, strategies and actions and class D budgets for the recommended routes.

On June 25, 2024, the proposed Active Transportation Plan was presented to Municipal Council. At that time, the following motions were carried:

2024-130 Moved and seconded that Municipal Council direct staff to change the wording of the vision statement of the Active Transportation Plan to say: "By 2035, we will strive to have our communities connected by well-maintained routes that make walking, wheeling, and cycling in MODL a safe, easy, and convenient choice for all." Carried unanimously.

2024-131 Moved and seconded that Municipal Council receive the June 2024 Active Transportation Plan, as presented. Carried unanimously.

Discussion

The proposed Active Transportation Plan circulated in the agenda package includes the revised vision statement as directed by Council in June 2024, which added the words "strive to" after the word "will".

The Plan has also been revised to include an "Opportunities" section, listed after the "Recommended Active Transportation Network" on page 78.1 of the document. As opportunities arise to enhance or expand active transportation networks within the Municipality, staff will evaluate these opportunities for inclusion, even if they are not outlined in the current Active Transportation Plan. This approach supports ongoing improvement of connectivity, safety, and accessibility for all users. An example of this is the consideration of paved shoulders in Wileville if the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Public Works includes the major road repaving in its Five-Year Highway Improvement Plan. The Wileville area has a dense community and is located near the major hub of the Town of Bridgewater, providing strong potential for active transportation connections for walking and cycling.

The communities included in the Plan and presentation were identified through public engagement or selected due to their proximity to existing trails. Phase 1 communities were chosen based on the prioritization matrix and represented the most frequently identified areas. Road safety considerations were also factored into the selection process.

Council may direct staff to include additional active transportation recommendations into the Plan for other areas across the Municipality.

Strategic Focus

The proposed Active Transportation Plan aligns with Councils strategies priorities of Infrastructure Upgrades, Expansion and Management; and Quality of Life.

Budget/Financial Implications

There would be no impact on the 2025–2026 budget. However, based on the report, Council may need to consider revising the 5-year capital plan to implement the recommendations, while continuing to allocate funds in the operating budget for maintenance of active transportation infrastructure and for public education and training initiatives.

Climate Change/sustainability

NA

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA@MODL)

MODL is committed to making our community more inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible (IDEA). An Active Transportation Plan supports a more inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible community by designing streets and trails that enable people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to move safely and comfortably.

Strategic Communications

Work plan

Implementing the Active Transportation Plan would be led by the Active Living Coordinator but would involve all the departments within the Municipality to include in their work plans as well.

Conclusion

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg was among the first rural municipalities in Canada to develop an Active Transportation Plan in 2010. Now fifteen years old, the Plan required updating to reflect advancements in knowledge on active transportation across Canada, as well as the ongoing growth and development within the Municipality. The updated Plan will guide the Municipality in becoming more livable by supporting all modes of transportation and promoting equitable transportation infrastructure, extending beyond vehicle-focused road networks.

Report Preparation	
Department	Recreation, Parks and Tourism
Report Prepared by	Kelly Cunningham, Active Living Coordinator
Report Approved by	Trudy Payne, Director of Recreation, Parks and Tourism
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

Active Transportation Plan

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Prepared June 2024
Updated December 2025

Prepared for

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
10 Allee Champlain Drive
Cookville, NS | B4V 9E4

Prepared by

Urban Systems Ltd.
300-123 Bannatyne Ave
Winnipeg, MB | R3B 0R3

Contents

This page intentionally left blank.

Executive Summary

Since it's inception in the late-1800's, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) has had a strong background of supporting Active Transportation, exemplified by their historical and ongoing support of long-established recreational trails throughout the municipality. While this impressive history has enabled the creation of a solid "spine" of recreational trails that run both North-South and East-West through the Municipality, there are many residents within the 130 communities that comprise MODL that do not currently have easy or convenient access to comfortable walking, wheeling or cycling facilities.

In an effort to improve the health, well-being, and safety of the community, the municipality worked with transportation planning and design professionals to develop an updated Active Transportation (AT) Plan to help guide investments, policies, and programming to help improve and expand transportation options for local residents and visitors alike.

As part of the development of this new Active Transportation Plan, extensive engagement with local community members, stakeholders, council members, and administration was conducted. Through these conversations., it became clear that there exists a strong desire amongst community members to be able to access local and regional amenities and services via walking or cycling, make available transportation options for those community members unable to afford the very significant costs associated with vehicle ownership and maintenance, and provide safe, healthy, and sustainable active transportation options for residents and visitors (and children and seniors in particular) to be able to spend time outside supporting their mental and physical well-being.

Since the development of the previous Active Transportation Plan in 2010, much has changed (and is still changing) both in the municipality as well as in the field of Active Transportation. While the prior plan recommended long portions of roadway be widened with paved shoulders to allow for cyclist and pedestrian use, current design standards dictate the separation of vulnerable road users from vehicles where vehicle volumes and speeds are high – as is the case along many roads in the municipality. In addition, given the significant financial costs associated with the prior plan ($50 million to fully implement the 2010 Plan with paved shoulders only) and the fact that very little of the proposed infrastructure improvements have been built over the past 14 years, this current plan has been developed in a manner that better reflects the financial realities and capacity of the community to implement. Instead of focusing on constructing over 200 kms of widened shoulders (that are typically used by only very confident road cyclists - a quite narrow segment of the population) as in the 2010 AT Plan, the 2024 AT Plan focuses on shorter, community identified corridors (and all ages and abilities infrastructure) in key locations that will increase transportation options for residents and visitors alike. This updated plan is also a more financially feasible and achievable plan that is much more likely to be actioned and implemented over the next 10 years given the more modest financial investment required.

In addition to feasibility of implementation, another important consideration that came up repeatedly in the community consultation was the significant transportation challenges facing local residents who were or are unable to afford the cost of private vehicle ownership. Based on 2024 data from Auto Trader, the average cost of a new car in Canada is currently around $67,817 (as of September 2023). Coupled with October 2023 statistics from Statistics Canada, indicating an average APR of 8.19% on new auto loans, the typical new car now requires approximately $1,091 monthly to finance over eight years. Used cars are not much cheaper - the current average price for a used car is $39,155, and used car loans have higher interest rates with six-year repayment periods, resulting in an average monthly car payment of $765.

Whether financing a new or used car, these numbers represent a significant financial burden upon MODL residents (as well as all Canadians), and efforts should be made to ensure that those who are unable to afford private vehicle ownership are not left out of transportation planning and design initiatives in MODL.

More and more Canadians are opting for lower cost transportation options such as e-bikes to help combat the significant cost of living increases over the past few years, and the Municipality will need to consider and address the needs of these transportation systems users as soon as possible – many engagement session attendees indicated that they have already purchased e-bikes and are finding the gaps in the current network quite challenging.

With the community's stated goals of community health and well-being, climate change mitigation and adaptation, fiscal prudence, and community safety (including road safety), it is hoped that the Municipality will endeavour to action these identified goals - as implementing the recommendations contained within the active transportation plan will directly support all of the community goals identified above. All of the actions and strategies in this plan are intended to help build a safer, more sustainable, healthier, and financially responsible transportation system for MODL in the years ahead and have been fully informed by community feedback and engagement.

With exciting new development, a growing population, and supportive local and Provincial partners, the Municipality is very well positioned to create a community where residents of all ages and abilities can move about freely and safely on foot or bicycle, resulting in a more connected, healthier, and safer MODL for everyone.

Introduction

Located along Nova Scotia's South Shore, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) is a growing rural community that offers an exciting mix of coastal and forested areas. The variety in geography provides MODL's approximately 25,000 residents with a wide array of recreation and tourism opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and interests. MODL has recently experienced modest population growth, increasing in population by 3% between 2016 and 2021.

Covering more than 432,000 acres, the municipality has many parks and trails that are popular for both residents and visitors; there are also several Provincially designated Blue Routes that run through the municipality, making the area a popular destination for cyclists. While the municipality already offers a variety of parks and trails for recreation, there is limited infrastructure to support people walking and wheeling within their communities to access these parks and trails, as well as other key destinations in the municipality - including schools, groceries, and retail centres.

The updated Active Transportation Plan (ATP) will build on progress made from the Municipality's 2010 Active Transportation plan and is intended to create a roadmap for continuing to improve active transportation and road safety through future projects, policies, and programs. The ATP will act as a roadmap for identifying opportunities to improve accessibility, as well as recommend key pedestrian and bicycling safety improvements that can enhance and improve conditions for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

As a largely rural community, many of the recommendations in the Plan will require support from and collaboration with key partners - including the Provincial Public Works department, neighbouring municipalities, and local community organizations. As such, the updated ATP will help to both identify opportunities for partnerships as well as clearly articulate how recommended projects will benefit community members, visitors, and local businesses.

What is active transportation?

Active transportation is any human-powered mode of transportation, such as walking, cycling, paddling, or using a mobility aid. It describes any active trip you make to get from one place to another, whether it be work, school, the store, or spending time with family and friends in nature. Other new and emerging transportation modes such as e-bikes and e-scooters can also fit in this category and may use the same trails and pathways.

Creating more spaces and opportunities to participate in active transportation helps to create healthy, vibrant, and livable communities. The updated ATP will help MODL set a clear path for the future and ensure people of all ages and abilities can safely and comfortably enjoy walking, cycling, and wheeling in the community.

The ATP has been divided into six sections:

- **Introduction** highlights the overall purpose, process, and community engagement activities that have taken place to develop the Active Transportation Plan.
- **Active Transportation Today** outlines the conditions and considerations for active transportation in MODL today. These are the factors that shaped and influenced the plan's themes and actions. It also outlines trends in active transportation, including understanding demographic and land use trends, connections to other relevant programs and policies, and existing conditions for walking, biking, and wheeling in MODL.
- **Future Directions** outlines the future directions of active transportation in MODL based on the ATP's core themes of *Connect*, *Experience*, and *Encourage*. This section also includes specific strategies and actions for improving active transportation in MODL.
- **Active Transportation Network and Priority Projects** includes the recommended long-term active transportation network and the priority projects, as well as the funding opportunities to be able to implement. The recommended network was developed based upon input from community members and key stakeholders, and reflects the identified corridors and improvements expressed by these groups and local residents.
- **Implementation and Monitoring** outlines a plan for putting the themes, strategies, and actions into practice. This includes prioritizing actions and active transportation facility improvements, laying out a timeline and method of implementation, and identifying internal and external leads to guide the implementation of each action. This section also outlines high level infrastructure cost estimates and funding strategies.
- **Closing** summarizes the plan and outlines the next steps for ensuring the ATP is successfully implemented.

Plan Process

The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) was developed over a 10-month time frame. Development of the ATP included a variety of opportunities for community members to participate in the planning process and provide input. The development of the ATP included four distinct phases:

Phase 1
Project Launch & Learn
September 2023

Phase 2
Background Research & Public Engagement #1
October - November 2023

Phase 3
Plan Development & Public Engagement #2
December 2023 - May 2024

Phase 4
Draft and Final ATP
June 2024

Plan Purpose and Objectives

Building on best practices, the plan identifies policies, programs, and initiatives to encourage active transportation. The objectives of the ATP are to:

- Encourage more people to walk and wheel (travel by scooter, wheelchair, mobility aid etc.), through the provision of comfortable and safe travel options throughout the Municipality.
- Identify a network of walking and cycling facilities that provides active travel connections that are ideally accessible year-round (when and where possible with existing resources) and encourages all community members to be more physically active.
- Identify supporting policies and programs that are prioritized and incorporated into an actionable implementation plan.
- Reduce the impacts of transportation poverty in MODL and support community members to fully participate in their community.
- Identify options to promote and encourage visitors to use active transportation, considering wayfinding and end-of-trip facilities (safe bicycle parking, storage, and other amenities).

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Community and stakeholder engagement was a critical part of the development of the ATP. A variety of in-person and virtual engagement opportunities were available to community members, including two online surveys, an interactive map, three community pop-ups, and two open houses.

Round 1: Understanding Current Conditions

The first round of engagement took place between September and November of 2023, and focused on understanding current active transportation habits, challenges, and priorities for the future. Community members were able to provide input through an online survey, interactive map, and at several pop-up sessions. The project team also hosted two stakeholder meetings to introduce the project, share feedback from community members, and learn about the projects and initiatives key stakeholders were working on. The Round 1 engagement summary can be found in Appendix A.

Round 2: Gathering Feedback on the Draft Plan

The second round of engagement was designed to gauge community support for the preliminary recommendations as well as understand the types of projects community members would like to see prioritized. Feedback from community members and stakeholders helped the project team to gauge support for the community identified corridors in the Plan and make adjustments as needed to these recommended active transportation improvements. The Round 2 engagement summary can be found in Appendix B.

Active Transportation Today

This section sets the stage for the recommendations and directions outlined in the AT Plan. It outlines the current state of active transportation in MODL and highlights opportunities to build on current projects, as well as existing plans and policies.

The Case for Active Transportation

In recent years communities of all sizes across North America have seen increasing interest in shifting away from a reliance on automobiles towards active forms of transportation, including walking, wheeling, and cycling. This shift can help communities move towards more balanced transportation systems that encourage healthy and active living, create more livable environments, and contribute to cost-effective and efficient infrastructure solutions.

The benefits of encouraging and enabling active modes of transportation include:

- **Health Benefits:** While the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg has an extensive local and regional trails network, there are currently limited formal biking facilities within the community itself. Investing in active transportation has been shown to create more physically active communities, which can in turn improve psychological well-being and reduce the risk of numerous chronic diseases including Type 2 Diabetes and heart disease. Walking can be the easiest and most affordable way for people in MODL to add exercise to their daily routines. 2021 census data shows that approximately 95% of the Municipality's employed labour force commute by automobile.[1] Since 2016, the average age of the population and the number of residents over the age of 65 has decreased.[2] Additional active transportation infrastructure will demonstrate commitment to the health of the population and promote aging in place.

  Grey Bruce Public Health provided the following summary on why Active Transportation in rural communities is important:

  - People who commute for 30 minutes a day by walking or cycling show a 35% reduction in risk for diabetes.
  - For every kilometre walked per day, risk of obesity declines by 5%. For each hour spent sitting in a vehicle, risk of obesity increases by 6%.
  - If Canadians increased their physical activity by just 10%, direct healthcare costs could be reduced by almost $150 million yearly. Switching to active transportation modes from driving increases physical activity levels.
  - Residents of rural areas are more likely to be injured or die from motor vehicle collisions. Compared to urban Canadians, their odds of dying are 60-90% higher for men aged 45-64 and 70-200% higher for women aged 45-64. Therefore, reducing the amount of driving in rural communities is one way to reduce death and injury from collisions (ITSR, 2014).

1 Main mode of commuting, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/page.cfm?topic=13&lang=E&dguid=2021A00051206001. Census Profile, 2021.

2 Age characteristics, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. Census Profile, 2016, 2021.

- **Safety Benefits:** Properly designed active transportation facilities that provide dedicated spaces for active transportation users and make people more visible within the roadway have the potential to reduce the risk of collisions, thereby creating a safer transportation system for all road users. Roads designed for slower motor vehicle speeds have been shown to decrease the probability of serious injury and death for active transportation users, and they are much more comfortable for people walking, wheeling, and cycling. Road safety improvements are important; RCMP data shows there has been no decrease in the number of collisions between 2019 and 2023.
- **Economic Benefits:** Neighbourhoods, streets, and other destinations that are attractive and accessible for people walking, wheeling, and cycling can invite more visitors, who will in turn be patrons of local services and amenities. Investing in active transportation produces a more balanced and equitable transportation system that can move more people for less cost, allowing people of all socioeconomic backgrounds to travel safely throughout the municipality. With the Municipality aiming to boost tourism in both winter and summer, an active transportation network can also help decrease traffic volumes during seasonal peaks, help attract seasonal workers, and grow tourism in a sustainable way.

- **Environmental Benefits:** The transportation sector, especially motor vehicles, is one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases in Nova Scotia with 30% of all Provincial emissions related to the transportation sector. Active transportation is a zero-emissions mode that can help to reduce emissions and air pollution while also helping to address motor vehicle traffic congestion. Encouraging more trips by active modes is an important part of climate change resilience strategies and aligns with provincial and federal climate change initiatives.

  At a local level, in November of 2022, Municipal Council approved MODL's Local Climate Action Plan 2030 (LCAP 2030). This approved plan highlights the fact that "Municipal Council has set the target to reduce its community emissions by 30% below 2019 baseline emissions level by 2030, 65% below 2019 levels by 2040, and achieve net-zero community emissions by 2050." This plan also calls for MODL to "continue to develop a region-wide connected AT network of on-road and off-road facilities that are convenient, accommodate the needs of existing and future users, and promote an increase in non-motorized vehicle travel, particularly for short distance trips." "Supporting cycling and pedestrian friendly infrastructure" was also listed as a "High Priority" action in the LCAP 2030.

  LCAP 2030 also notes that 29% of all emissions in MODL are created by "Community Vehicles" (i.e. Transportation sector); shifting as many of these emission producing trips to active transportation will greatly assist in helping the community meet the targets set by Council in the fall of 2022.

- **Societal Benefits:** Active transportation enables and encourages social interaction, which helps to build trust, respect, understanding, and a sense of co-operation within a community. Studies show that these important social interactions diminish when motor vehicle volumes increase and walking infrastructure decreases.[3] These interactions are vital for people of all ages and abilities. In addition, providing more active transportation infrastructure can benefit equity-seeking groups in MODL, such as the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) community, women, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and individuals with mobility and cognitive impairments, by creating safer spaces, lower transportation costs and improving access.

3 Lucas, Karen & Peter Jones. Social Impacts and Equity Issues in Transport: An Introduction (guest editorial). *Journal of Transport Geography*. 2012, Vol 21. doi:10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2012.01.032.

- **Transportation Poverty:** Research has shown transportation as being the second highest cost driver for low-income households across Canada, and according to 2024 data from Auto Trader, the average cost of a new car in Canada is currently around $67,817 as of September 2023. Coupled with October 2023 statistics from Statistics Canada, indicating an average APR of 8.19% on new auto loans, the typical new car now requires approximately $1,091 monthly to finance over eight years. Used cars are not much cheaper - the current average price for a used car is $39,155. Used car loans have higher interest rates with six-year repayment periods, resulting in an average monthly payment of $765.

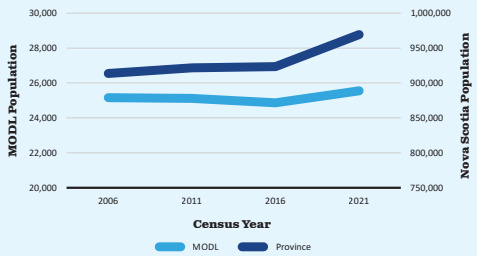
  Public transit passes average $940 per year in Canada, while the cost of owning and maintaining a bike averages $300 per year (https://bikehub.ca/research/pedaling-towards-equity-analyzing-transportation-access-in-metro-vancouvers-cycling-network). With Nova Scotia leading all Provinces in rates of poverty at 13.1%, and food insecurity at 28.9%, local governments can help reduce transportation sector related costs by providing low or no cost transportation options. With the presently low population density in MODL, public transit may be challenging to initiate and maintain. The explosion in the sales of electric bikes (e-bikes), along with increased range and decreasing purchase prices have greatly reduced transportation costs (and emissions) for many Canadians. With a strong existing trails network, MODL is well positioned to expand this network in the coming years as part of their efforts to reduce the cost of living for residents in MODL, specifically those costs related to the transportation sector.

Community Context

"The Mi'kmaq are the founding people of Nova Scotia and remain the predominant Aboriginal group within the province. The Mi'kmaw nation has existed in what is now Nova Scotia for thousands of years and is made up of thirteen Bands/First Nations, each of which is governed by a Chief and Council. All thirteen Chiefs in Nova Scotia come together on a regular basis as the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs. The Assembly plays a significant role in the collective decision making for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, particularly on issues pertaining to Mi'kmaq rights, negotiations, consultation, and governance."[4]

While the area has been occupied for 12,000 years, the Municipality was incorporated in 1879 and surrounds the separately incorporated Municipality's of Bridgewater, Lunenburg, and Mahone Bay. The municipality is characterized by small farms within expansive forested areas with scattered rural residential development.

Figure 1: MODL Population 2006 - 2021



4 Province of Nova Scotia. *Key Facts: Nova Scotia's Aboriginal Population* [Online] 2014 https://novascotia.ca/abor/docs/demographics/NSMikmaqFactSheet2014.pdf

MODL's population decreased slightly between 2006 and 2016 but grew between 2016 and 2021 during a period of significant growth at the provincial level. The Municipality has a stable but aging population.

MODL offers several opportunities for recreation and activity, including:

- Beaches / waterfront amenities
- Hiking trails
- Parks
- Golf courses
- Campgrounds

While there are several opportunities for both indoor and outdoor recreation, this Plan seeks to enhance opportunities for active transportation throughout the municipality to accommodate active commutes and lifestyles.

Equity Considerations

Nearly 40% of Nova Scotians over the age of 15 live with one or more disabilities.[5] Additionally, a significant majority of Nova Scotians believe accessibility is a human right (90%) and say that accessibility is very important to them personally (80%).[6]

Because transportation costs are tied to location and availability of services or infrastructure, they can be seen as a component of housing costs. Those living in areas without public transport or access to safe and convenient active transportation infrastructure face the higher transportation costs of car ownership. For those who are unable to drive, such as those too young to hold a drivers license or those with health situations that prevent them from safely operating a vehicle, the costs or impacts to access basic needs and services can be even greater. Affordable transportation options can be a key component of affordable and accessible housing.

5 Province of Nova Scotia, *About disability in Nova Scotia*. https://accessible.novascotia.ca/about-disability-nova-scotia#:~:text=Almost%202%20in%205%20Nova%20Scotians%20lives%20with%20a%20disability&text=37.9%25%20of%20Nova%20Scotians%20aged,with%20one%20or%20more%20disabilities

6 Province of Nova Scotia, *Accessibility is Important to Nova Scotians*. https://accessible.novascotia.ca/sites/default/ files/2023-08/Accessibility%20is%20Important%20to%20Nova%20Scotians_2022.pdf

Demographics

The population of MODL remained relatively stable between 2006 and 2021, growing by about 1.5% over a 15-year period. MODL is home to an aging population with nearly 30% of residents over the age of 65 (29% vs 22% in Nova Scotia), with more than half of residents being over the age of 50 (55% vs 45% in Nova Scotia).

The average age of 48.7 years in MODL is well above the provincial average (44.2 years) and significantly older than the national average (41.9 years). The MODL median age of 53.6 years is 8 years older than the provincial median age and 12 years older than the national median age. Understanding that MODL is home to an older population, it is important that the Municipality consider the unique needs of older residents when planning future infrastructure improvements.

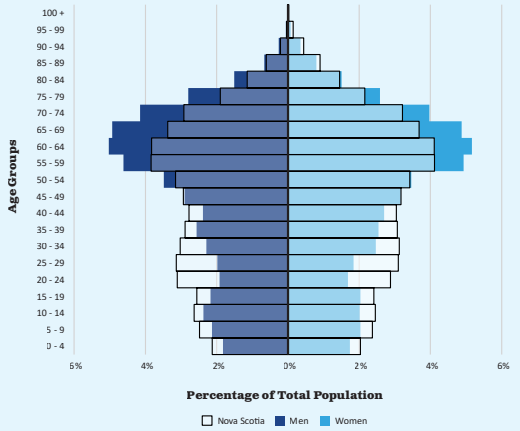
MODL is a quiet and beautiful community that is attractive to retirees and young families alike. Its close proximity to several commercial areas in the South Shore provides a high level of services and amenities. As the population continues to age, creating infrastructure to serve their needs will provide continued independence and improve the quality of life.

Considering community demographics is crucial for creating an equitable transportation system that is safe, comfortable, and accessible for all. It is especially important to understand the transportation needs of marginalized populations, which may include women, seniors, the BIPOC community, immigrants, and refugees, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and people who are socio-economically disadvantaged or experiencing homelessness or addiction.

Based on 2021 Census data,

- About 1.5% of the MODL population identify as a visible minority.
- About 3.5% of the population identify as Indigenous, mainly First Nations and Métis.
- About 5.8% of the MODL population are immigrants or non-permanent residents.
- Nearly 15% of the population is considered low income using the LIM-AT measure.
  - The highest rates of low-income status are among those 65 years of age and older.
- According to Statistics Canada's 2022 *Canadian Survey on Disability*, 37.9% of Nova Scotians aged 15 and older live with one or more disabilities.

Figure 2: MODL Population Pyramid, 2021 (Source: Statistics Canada).



Land Use

The majority of land in MODL is not currently subject to any land use or zoning control. The municipality has eight planning areas: Hemford Forest, Princes Inlet, Oakland, Blockhouse, Riverport & District, Hebbville, Osprey Village, and Lunenburg Municipal Industrial Area. These differ from typical zoning areas in that they describe different places rather than different uses.

For example, the Blockhouse Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) address the specific history of the Blockhouse community and establishes objectives, goals, and land use controls. The Blockhouse area includes a Rural (RU) Zone that establishes size and intensity thresholds for different uses.

The Blockhouse SBS addresses transportation with two policies, but does not discuss active transportation:

6.2.1 It shall be the policy of Council to encourage the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal continue to maintain the existing roads and signage to an acceptable level.

6.2.2 It shall be the policy of Council to support, not necessarily financially, initiatives to promote public transportation, including transportation for seniors.[7]

7 Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Zoning, https://modl.ca/zoning.html

Existing Travel Patterns

According to the 2021 Census data, approximately 95% of employed MODL residents over the age of 15 travel to work in a vehicle – 89% as a driver and 6% as a passenger. About 2% of MODL commuters walk to work and 3% use another mode (i.e., not driving, walking, public transit, or cycling). Less than 1% of MODL commuters use public transit or ride a bike to get to work (approx. 0.4% and 0.2%, respectively).

Figure 3: Main Mode of Commuting, 2021 (Source: Statistics Canada).

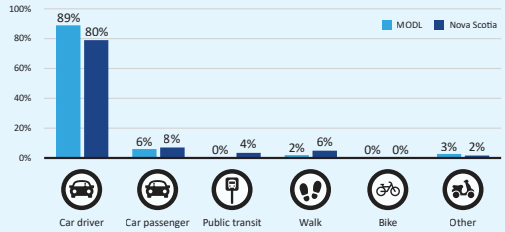
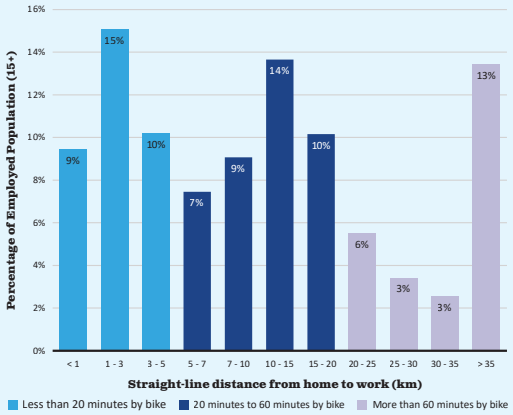


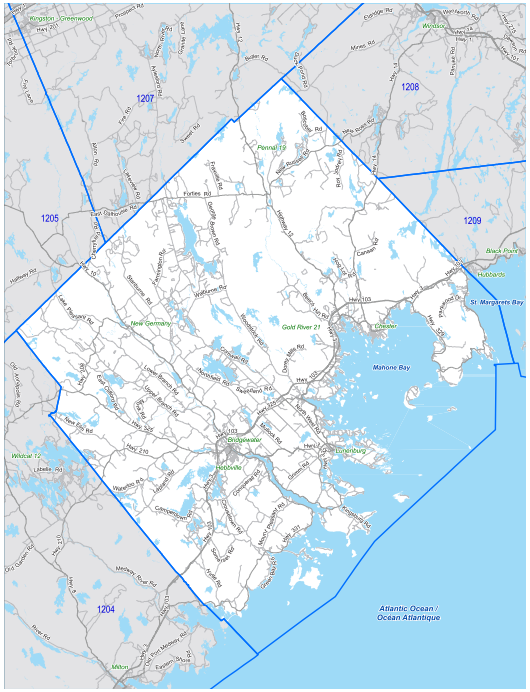
Figure 4: Straight-line distance from home to work, Lunenburg, 2021 (Source: Statistics Canada).



Statistics Canada does not collect some commuting data at the Census Subdivision (CSD) level. The straight-line distance commuting data is only available for the entirety of the Lunenburg Census Division, which includes the population centres adjacent to MODL. For this geographic area, the breakdown among employed residents over the age of 15 is shown above in Figure 4.

More than a third of commuters (35%) live less than 5 km in a straight line from their usual place of work. This translates to longer actual commute distances, but still represents a group for whom active modes of travel are a relatively feasible option. Those living between 5 and 20 km from their usual place of work might face additional challenges in attempting to commute via active modes and are less likely to choose active transportation as their primary commuting mode. Finally, those living more than 20 km in a straight line from their place of work are the least likely to choose to commute using active transportation modes.

Figure 5: Lunenburg Census Division (Source: Statistics Canada).



Existing Transportation Network

MODL is serviced by key routes including:

- Highway 103, which runs along the South Shore and connects through Mahone Bay and Bridgewater.
- Trunk 10, which runs east to west from Bridgewater and through New Germany.
- Trunk 3, connecting Mahone Bay, Lunenburg, and Bridgewater.
- Route 331, which runs along the south side of the LaHave River from Bridgewater, down to LaHave and past Voglers Cove.
- Route 332, which runs on the north side of the LaHave River from Bridgewater to Riverport and connects back with Trunk 3 just outside of the Town of Lunenburg.

More than 99% of the roads in MODL are owned and maintained by the Province of Nova Scotia. The Municipality works closely with the Public Works team to identify opportunities to incorporate active transportation infrastructure into road renewal projects throughout the region.

Osprey Village in Cookville is the commercial centre of MODL, located at Exit 12 off Highway 103. This is a popular destination for residents in MODL as well as residents from neighbouring communities who travel to Osprey Village to access a variety of retail centres, including Canadian Tire, Walmart, and Staples. One of the few hotels in the region is also located in Osprey Village.

Other areas of higher density include New Germany and along the 331 between Bridgewater and LaHave. These hubs are served by schools, churches, grocery stores, and a variety of local businesses.

These hubs are consistent with where we heard community members would most like to see active transportation improvements and align with the community identified routes included in the active transportation network plan.

Active Transportation Network

The active transportation network in MODL currently includes a robust trails network and the Nova Scotia Blue Route. The existing trails network includes a series of established trail spines that are maintained by volunteer associations. These trails provide key north-south and east-west shared use connections throughout MODL. The shared use trails are able to be used by people walking, wheeling, and cycling, as well as people on off-highway vehicles.

Figure 6: MODL Parks and Trails Map (Prepared by: Planning & Development Services, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg).

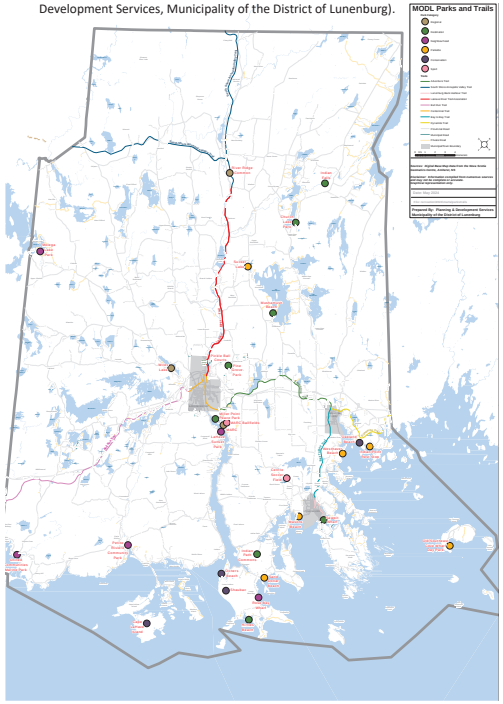


Figure 7: MODL Active Transportation Network as of February 2023 (Map from MODL 2040 Plan).

A key part of the Municipality's active transportation network is its connections to the Blue Route. Currently, the Blue Route runs along the South Shore, along the north side of the LaHave River, around the Town of Lunenburg, and along Route 208 from New Germany to Colpton. In 2024, there is an additional 80km of new Blue Route sections planned for MODL, most of which will include clear signage identifying the road as part of the Blue Route to improve the quality of cycling in MODL.

Figure 8: Blue Route corridors within MODL. The dark blue dotted lines are "Planned Road" facilities, while the light blue doted lines are "Planned Trail" facilities.

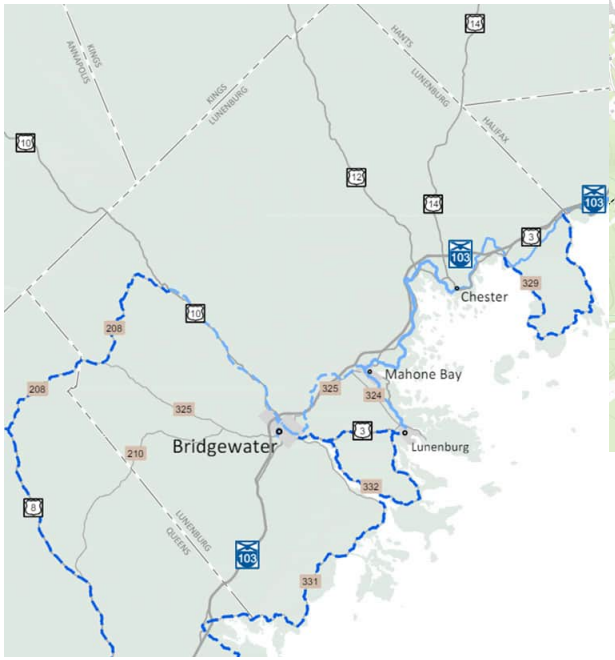


Figure 9: Existing Sidewalk network in MODL (black lines).

While the existing sidewalk network in MODL is quite small, new developments such as Osprey Village will include provisions for sidewalks to be installed, resulting in a significant increase in the overall length of the sidewalk network. The Municipality is also planning on expanding the existing sidewalk network near Centre Scolaire de la River Sud in 2025, so more facilities will be created in the coming years that support walking as a means of transportation to and from community amenities.

Safety

Between 2019 and 2023, the RCMP has record of 61 collision incidents involving people walking, cycling, or using off highway vehicles (OHV's) in Lunenburg County. Most incidents involved OHVs or motorcycles/dirt bikes, but there were 18 incidents involving pedestrians and cyclists, 2 of which resulted in fatalities. We know though community consultation that most residents do not commute by active transportation, which could contribute to there being fewer reported incidents involving pedestrians or cyclists. This safety data relies on residents reporting their incidents and injuries, therefore some accidents may go unreported.

Identified Issues & Opportunities

Residents were asked to provide input on their experience with active transportation in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg and share what initiatives and infrastructure would get them moving. The questions posed to participants were:

What are the barriers for walking and cycling more often than you do in MODL?

What types of walking or cycling infrastructure would encourage you to walk or cycle more in MODL?

Factors that prevent community members from walking, wheeling, or cycling more included a lack of active transportation facilities, the condition of existing facilities, the lack of separated bike routes, and the speed, noise, and volume of motor vehicle traffic. Most of these concerns will require new or improved active transportation facilities.

Community members shared that providing paved road shoulders, sidewalks, separated bike lanes, and multi-use pathways (paved and unpaved) would increase active transportation usage among residents.

Relevant Plans, Policies, and Bylaws

Regional, Provincial, and Federal Plans & Policies

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Active Transportation Plan (2010)

MODL adopted the first fully rural active transportation plan in Canada in 2010. Despite this progressive first step, however, the plan remains largely unimplemented. The plan focused heavily on recommending Rails to Trails projects and paved shoulders to complete an active transportation network. The 2010 ATP recommended that the network establish connections between the communities within the municipality and create a number of recreationally focused trail loops.

The cost of implementing the paved highway shoulders component of the 2010 ATP was prohibitive. The Plan recommended up to about 180 km of paved shoulders along highways in the municipality. Using today's unit costs for paved shoulders, the full network would cost more than $50 million to implement. In addition to cost, the plan acknowledged that the Municipality required extensive collaboration with provincial departments to implement the plan as nearly all roads in the Municipality are under provincial control.

Municipal Road Design and Construction Standards (2018)

Establishes design standards for different street types, design speeds, and cross sections. Does not address cycling or pedestrian facilities.

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg: Active Living Strategic Plan (2022)

The MODL Active Living Strategic Plan promotes health, education, social connection, GHG emissions reductions, and tourism within the Municipality. The Plan identifies five key outcomes:

1. Physical environment supports for walking
2. Social supports for walking
3. Physical environment supports for other less structured physical activity
4. Social supports for other less structured physical activity
5. Policies to support physical activity

IDEA @ MODL

MODL's IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility) Strategic Plan for 2024-2028 sets out a goal for the Municipality "to advance an environment with a fundamental shared commitment to respectful engagement and human dignity."

The plan establishes a timeline for implementation and identifies key action items within core categories in order to achieve the Municipality's vision. The plan does not discuss transportation equity specifically, but does commit to identifying and addressing obstacles and barriers in its mission statement:

> *"We envision—and will cultivate—a community that recognizes equity and diversity as fundamental to achieving inclusive excellence in service and community engagement. We acknowledge that this commitment requires identifying and addressing obstacles, barriers, and biases that limit equitable and accessible opportunities."*

Province of Nova Scotia

Connect2

Nova Scotia's Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism And Heritage offers the Connect2 grant program to support increased active transportation community initiatives for Nova Scotians. The program funds up to 75% of eligible project costs. Eligible project categories include Active Transportation Infrastructure & Design, Shared Mobility, and Capacity Building and Community Engagement.

Table 1: Summary of Connect2 Funded Projects

Funding Year	Total Grants Awarded	Number of Projects Funded
2012/2013	$850,855	26
2013/2014	$1,486,946	36
2014/2015	$681,123	17
2015/2016	$545,345	26
2016/2017	$646,188	30
2017/2018	$625,539	22
2018/2019	$584,257	19
2019/2020	$680,477	17
2020/2021	$655,760	14
2021/2022	$349,400	7
2022/2023	$351,247	6
Grand Total	**$7,457,137**	**220**

Bill 121

Bill No. 121 (2022), which would have been known as the Active Transportation Act, received first reading in 2022, but has not yet received further readings or royal assent. The bill that received first reading committed the Nova Scotia government to support active transportation plans for all municipalities and First Nations in the province, and to use the principles of equity, climate change reduction, and accessibility in active transportation planning.

The bill also committed Nova Scotia to completing a province-wide active transportation network by 2030, requiring funding starting in 2023. One component of the network would have been paved shoulders or separated bikeways included in all provincial paving projects.

Government of Canada

National Active Transportation Strategy (2021)

Canada has set a target to cut its GHG emissions by 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2030. To support this effort, Canada has recently established a federal National Active Transportation Strategy and National Active Transportation Fund to encourage and support investments in pathways and trails for cycling, walking, wheelchairs, e-bikes and scooters, to give everyone the opportunity to be active and access public transportation. The strategy ensures that communities of all sizes can look to incorporate more active transportation in their everyday lives through new partnership opportunities that can help finance transformational active transportation infrastructure programs for communities with shovel-ready projects that meet the goals of making active transportation safe, comfortable, and connected.

In the spring of 2021, in support of Canada's National Active Transportation Strategy, the Government of Canada launched the Active Transportation Fund (ATF), a $400 million investment over five years to make travel by active transportation easier, safer, more convenient, and more enjoyable. The Active Transportation Fund invested in projects that build new and expanded networks of pathways, bike lanes, trails, and pedestrian bridges, in addition to supporting active transportation planning and stakeholder engagement activities. The ATF was heavily oversubscribed, with $1.3 billion in applications, and the entire $400 million was fully allocated within two years instead of five as initially planned.

In the spring of 2024 and in conversations with the Canadian Active Transportation Alliance, Infrastructure Canada announced that starting in 2026, the National Active Transportation Fund will become a part of the Permanent Transit Fund – a $3 Billion per year fund aimed at supporting sustainable transit solutions. While no formal allocation for Active Transportation has been identified, INFC staff have indicated a floor of roughly 10% of the total funding amount will be allocated for Active Transportation projects across the country. For all Capital funding applications, a completed Active Transportation Plan must be in place, so MODL is well positioned to apply for and receive these funds.

Future Direction

Vision

A vision statement was developed with Municipal staff based on key themes from community input and builds on MODL's commitments as outlined in other strategic plans (including the Active Living Strategy, Climate Action Plan, and MODL2040). To guide future investments, the ATP is structured around the following vision statement:

> *"By 2035, our communities will be **connected** by **well-maintained routes** that make walking, wheeling, and cycling in MODL a **safe**, **easy**, and **convenient choice for all**."*

Guiding Principles

Throughout the planning process, it was important that recommendations would support MODL in creating an inclusive and equitable active transportation culture and network. The development of the ATP was guided by the following principles:

- **Active transportation is for everyone.** MODL offers a wide range of active transportation opportunities that support mobility independence at any age.
- **Active transportation is a safe option for residents and visitors.** Active transportation improvements will be designed and built to be safe and comfortable for all users. Community members should feel safe using the active transportation network regardless of their mode, time of day, or time of year.
- **MODL is a livable and well-connected area.** The active transportation network is able to connect community members to key destinations. Transportation modes are integrated to facilitate multi-modal travel and support access for all to recreation and essential destinations throughout the region, regardless of physical ability or economic situations.
- **Active transportation improvements will not come at the expense of the environment.** Active transportation improvements will maintain or restore wildlife and aquatic habitats. Investing in the active transportation network will help to increase the number of zero-emissions trips.
- **Active transportation improvements will support our community's overall health.** Improving access to active transportation opportunities is one part of supporting our community's physical and mental health.
- **Include achievable and aspirational recommendations.** It is important that the Plan include recommendations that can be achieved in the short- and medium-term so that community members can see and experience active transportation improvements quickly. It is also important to include longer-term and aspirational recommendations that will have a large impact but may take more funding and rely on collaboration with key partners.

Themes

Building from the guiding principles along with feedback from community members and stakeholders, three themes were identified to support the Municipality in achieving its active transportation goals. The three key themes are:

- **Connect:** Focuses on providing safe and comfortable connections throughout MODL and identifies strategies to improve access to active transportation facilities as well as recreation and community destinations.
- **Experience:** Focuses on improving the experience for people walking, wheeling, and cycling, making active transportation an easy and reliable way to move and explore in MODL.
- **Encourage:** Focuses on creating a culture around active transportation, making walking, wheeling, and cycling more common in MODL through wayfinding, awareness, celebration, and promotion.

Each theme includes several strategies and detailed actions that will support active transportation improvements in MODL.

Vision

> *"By 2035, our communities will be connected by well-maintained routes that make walking, cycling, and wheeling in MODL a safe, easy, and convenient choice for all."*

Theme
Connect

Strategy 1:
Develop a complete active transportation network that connects to key destinations throughout the municipality.

Strategy 2:
Improve Regional Connections.

Strategy 3:
Explore opportunities to include active transportation facilities in all road renewal, new development, and construction projects.

Strategy 4:
Celebrate Active Transportation.

Theme
Experience

Strategy 5:
Support effective land-use planning to build an environment that makes walking, cycling, and wheeling more convenient and enjoyable.

Strategy 6:
Maintain the active transportation network year-round.

Strategy 7:
Support Active School Travel and age friendly planning.

Strategy 8:
Provide an active transportation network that is safe and accessible for everyone.

Theme
Encourage

Strategy 9:
Create active transportation opportunities that are equitable.

Strategy 10:
Further develop cycle tourism and other local and regional active tourism opportunities.

Strategy 11:
Foster a culture of support and use of active transportation.

Strategy 12:
Improve the pedestrian and cycling experience.

The following sections expand on the ATP themes and introduces the actions. Later in the document is an implementation plan that includes next steps, prioritization, and outlines estimated costs and potential funding strategies for implementing the ATP.

Strategies and Actions

Theme
Connect

The theme **Connect** is focused on improving active transportation routes in MODL and creating safe and comfortable connections between key destinations that are accessible for everyone, year-round. Within the Connect theme, there are 4 strategies and 22 actions.

Strategy 1:
Develop a complete active transportation network that connects to key destinations throughout the municipality

Action 1.A: Enhance existing pedestrian and cycling facilities throughout the municipality.

To ensure the active transportation network is accessible to residents and visitors of all abilities, the Municipality will work to provide high quality active transportation facilities. To support this, the Municipality will ensure the existing inventory of active transportation facilities (sidewalks, paved shoulders, bike lanes, etc.) is integrated with the existing GIS inventory.

Based on a condition assessment of the active transportation facilities, the Municipality will formalize a prioritization process for the replacement and enhancement of existing pedestrian and cycling facilities. The Municipality will also capitalize on opportunities to require higher quality facilities be implemented as part of new developments and road renewal projects throughout the municipality.

Action 1.B: Integrate active transportation connections into the Municipality's existing parks and trails.

The Municipality will seek to ensure that existing and planned trails within MODL parks and community hubs connect to the broader active transportation network. This will ensure active transportation users are able to seamlessly connect to active transportation corridors within MODL parks, encourage residents to utilize active transportation when visiting these facilities, and encourage increased usage as residents walk or bike to these recreational destinations.

Action 1.C: Report annually to Council and community members on the growth of the active transportation network as well as annual spending on active transportation.

Municipal staff should report back on active transportation statistics and trends to Council and residents. This information can be shared through various means including social media and future Active Transportation report cards, an annual report being produced in many communities across Canada. The Municipality should develop a program for reporting back to the public information that indicates annual spending on active transportation and growth in the active transportation network.

Action 1.D: Fill gaps in the pedestrian and cycling networks based on priority.

Safe and comfortable routes for pedestrians and cyclists are the backbone of a well-connected active transportation network for people of all ages and abilities. The Municipality will work to fill gaps in the pedestrian and cycling networks to create a walking, wheeling, and cycling environment that is accessible to all and connects residents and visitors to key destinations throughout MODL. High priority locations have been identified in the Active Transportation Network Plan. In addition to these locations, there are opportunities to fill gaps in the active transportation network through new developments and road renewal projects.

Action 1.E: Investigate opportunities within existing utility, railway, alleyways, and abandoned road right of way to develop new pathways.

Some of the most popular trails in the municipality already follow old rail lines. There may be opportunities for the Municipality to take advantage of other unused corridors, including utility corridors, alleyways, and abandoned roads to expand the active transportation network. If these rights-of-way can provide a more convenient connection that is away from high speed or high traffic roads, then the Municipality should consider how these areas could be used for active transportation routes. To aid in this decision-making process, the Municipality should develop a formal evaluation process to determine which corridors should be considered for obtaining required right-of-way.

Action 1.F: Identify major barriers in the pedestrian and cycling network, including (but not limited to) railways, waterways, and major roadways.

There are a number of major barriers to expanding and enhancing the active transportation network in MODL, including working with limited right-of-way, major roadways, and routes interrupted by privately owned land. When exploring new active transportation routes, the Municipality should identify any major barriers to implementing the routes, assess the feasibility of working within the limitations or explore alternative routes.

Where routes are unable to be consistent or joined, providing improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists at key locations will help to make walking, wheeling, and cycling more attractive for all as active transportation routes are made safer and more direct.

Action 1.G: Maintain dedicated funding programs to improve, maintain, and develop new pathways and trails.

The Municipality already provides funding for various non-profit and charitable organizations to support the development of new and maintenance of existing recreation facilities and programs. Maintaining a dedicated funding program will ensure that the Municipality is able to support the improvement, maintenance, and development of new active transportation pathways and trails.

Strategy 2:
Improve Regional Connections

Action 2.A: Implement new and upgrade existing trail connections as outlined in the Active Transportation Network Plan.

Expand and connect the trail network by implementing new and improving existing connections throughout the municipality as identified in the Active Transportation Network map. It is important to note that the recommended active transportation improvements in Figure 10 are desire lines showing network connections. In many cases, they are not located on property under the Municipality's jurisdiction. This means the alignment of these trails has not been determined and are longer-term projects. Priorities should focus on improving active connections to key destinations, such as schools, grocery stores, and retail and commercial centres.

Action 2.B: Ensure future active transportation connections are well integrated throughout the region.

As the region continues to grow, the Municipality should seek opportunities to expand the active transportation network and ensure any new pedestrian or cycling routes connect with the existing active transportation network. Building upon the existing network will help to create an active transportation network that is connected throughout the region, making it easy and convenient for residents to choose active modes and visitors to explore the region by walking, wheeling, or cycling.

Action 2.C: Develop a region-wide network of bicycle routes that are comfortable for everyone.

Develop a network of dedicated bicycle lanes, multi-use paths, and bike-friendly routes to encourage cycling as a viable mode of transportation. Install bicycle racks and bicycle parking facilities at strategic locations throughout the municipality. The Municipality should continue to follow guidelines such as the Transportation Association of Canada's Geometric Design Guide standards for the design and installation of cycling infrastructure to ensure that new cycling facilities in the municipality are reflective of current design standards, and congruent with cycling facilities in other parts of Nova Scotia.

Action 2.D: Develop a region-wide network of pedestrian routes that is comfortable for everyone.

Create a network for pedestrian infrastructure, including sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use paths, trails, and other pedestrian-friendly pathways. Ensure that these facilities are accessible, well-lit, and connected to key destinations such as schools, parks, and retail and commercial centres. The Municipality should work to identify areas where sidewalks or pedestrian pathways would most improve the pedestrian experience. The Municipality should also continue to ensure that pedestrian facilities are included in any new developments and road renewal projects.

Action 2.E: Coordinate with neighbouring communities to create and support a region-wide active transportation network.

The Municipality will work closely with neighbouring communities to better align active transportation connections and partner on construction efforts where practical. For this action, the Municipality should connect with neighbouring communities, including the Town of Bridgewater, the Town of Lunenburg, the Town of Mahone Bay, and the Municipality of the District of Chester, on a regular basis (i.e., quarterly) to share progress updates and upcoming initiatives.

Action 2.F: Explore the feasibility of a public transit (bus) system to provide accessible and convenient connections throughout the region.

Public transit is a key component of a vibrant, interconnected, healthy, and sustainable community. The Municipality is currently exploring a public transit system for Osprey Village and nearby communities that will connect with the Town of Bridgewater's transit system. The Municipality is currently serviced by Lunenburg County Wheels, which provides pre-booked, door-to-door transportation services. This is a great service for supporting community members who do not have access to or are unable to operate a vehicle; however, the service can be cost prohibitive for some and has limited service times.

The Municipality will explore the feasibility of organizing and operating a public transit system that is accessible, affordable, and connects community members with key destinations.

Strategy 3:

Explore opportunities to include active transportation facilities in all road renewal, new development, and construction projects

Action 3.A: Work with Public Works and other agency partners to ensure high quality active transportation standards are incorporated into all regional roadway projects.

The majority of roads in MODL are under the jurisdiction of Nova Scotia Public Works. The Municipality will continue to work with Public Works to advocate for active transportation improvements and provide context specific feedback for all regional road renewal projects. This approach also applies to other agency partners that may be involved in road renewal projects or new developments.

Action 3.B: Develop guidelines for the installation of public amenities through capital projects and developments.

To help guide the installation of public amenities, the Municipality will develop guidelines for the design, placement, and installation of public amenities (such as seating and washrooms) and landscaping, through capital projects and developments. These guidelines can also provide guidance for procuring and installing public art.

Action 3.C: Create process for implementing sidewalks for new developments.

The Municipality should create policies and processes to ensure that all new developments include (at a minimum) facilities for pedestrians, and preferably for cyclists as well. For example, language in MODL's Zoning Bylaws could include the requirement that universally accessible, direct pedestrian routes be provided from the main entrance of at least one principal building to the adjacent public sidewalk, and transit stop if available. Requiring a minimum clear width of 1.5 m or greater, and that all walkways must be free of any vertical objects such as signs, lamp posts, bike racks (and bikes locked to them) and protruding objects will help ensure that the full sidewalk width is always available for safe pedestrian movement.

Enshrining these requirements into Zoning bylaws will help ensure that all new residential, commercial, and industrial developments include safe, separated facilities for people on foot or bike, and advance the development of a comprehensive and connected AT network in the municipality.

Action 3.D: If and when a Development Manual is created, ensure the Municipality's Development Manual considers and follows current design guidance for active transportation facilities.

The Municipality should continue following guidelines such as the Transportation Association of Canada's *Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads* for the design and installation of future bicycle and walking infrastructure to ensure facilities in MODL are reflective of current design standards, and are constructed to the highest standards of road safety and professional knowledge.

Action 3.E: Incorporate active transportation facilities (including bike parking and end-of-trip facilities) as part of new infrastructure projects, as well as in conjunction with other projects, plans, and developments.

The Municipality should ensure considerations for active transportation facilities are made in the design and implementation of new and upgraded roads, as well as other infrastructure and development projects. This will require collaboration with a variety of departments and agencies, as well as external partners, to work together to share information on appropriate opportunities to incorporate various components of the Active Transportation Plan into all new infrastructure projects. The Municipality should also seek to integrate active transportation facilities, such as sidewalks, multi-use paths, and bike lanes, into all future projects, plans, and developments.

Action 3.F: Follow complete street principles in all new development and road projects.

As the Municipality plans for the future, it should ensure that all new road projects and developments consider the installation of complete streets as part of these projects. This will help ensure consistency in road design and help create a predictable and connected walking and cycling network. This will also help ensure that new communities and roads in MODL provide safe and efficient facilities for those on foot and bike, and encourage the use of these transportation modes.

Strategy 4:

Celebrate Active Transportation

Action 4.A: Educate community members on the benefits of active transportation.

A key component to encourage a culture of active transportation is to demonstrate the benefits of active transportation to residents and help individuals see how it can fit in their everyday lives. Community-wide communications and marketing efforts that feature a diversity of ages, genders, and ethnicities as regular users of active transportation can help illuminate the benefits of active transportation as part of everyday travel.

The Municipality will actively engage with local partners to help educate residents on the benefits of active transportation for everyone.

Action 4.B: Celebrate the launch of new facilities and programs with the community.

An important component of encouraging a culture of active transportation is ensuring residents are aware of new active transportation infrastructure projects. The Municipality will celebrate new active transportation facilities and programs through website materials, social media, events, and activations that get people excited about the implementation of the Active Transportation Network.

When constructing active transportation infrastructure, a portion of the capital costs can be allocated to education and awareness. Funding for education and awareness initiatives can also come from a wide variety of sources including grants, community partners, the business community, and others.

Increasing awareness about the opportunities to walk, wheel, and cycling in daily life can encourage more active trips. The Municipality and partner organizations will look for opportunities to promote walking and cycling to the grocery store, eating out, running errands and appointments through various campaigns such as Nova Scotia Bike Week.

Action 4.C: Work with Bridgewater and Area Chamber of Commerce and other community partners to activate public spaces.

The Municipality should work with community organizations to develop a program for activating public spaces. This program would outline cost-effective strategies to experiment with developing new or existing public spaces and street improvements to energize the public realm, such as pilot projects and temporary installations.

Theme

Experience

The theme **Experience** is focused on improving the experience for people walking, wheeling, and cycling, making active transportation an easy and reliable way to move and explore in MODL. Within the Experience theme, there are 4 strategies and 13 actions.

Strategy 5:

Support effective land-use planning to build an environment that makes walking, cycling, and wheeling more convenient and enjoyable

Action 5.A: Encourage active transportation in land use planning.

The Municipality should incorporate active transportation considerations into all land use planning and development processes and ensure that new developments are designed to be walkable, wheelable, and bike-friendly, with amenities and services easily accessible by pedestrians and cyclists.

Action 5.B: Support higher density mixed use infill development that promotes and encourages active transportation.

Higher density and mixed-use developments can support active transportation by providing more destinations within a shorter travel distance. Areas that contain a mix of commercial, institutional, and recreational uses allow residents the opportunity to live, work, and play in the same area and to move between activities conveniently by walking, wheeling, or bicycling. Where space is available and zoning is appropriate, encouraging higher density developments (such as what is planned for Osprey Village) is recommended to help generate more active trips.

Action 5.C: Ensure future population and employment areas are integrated with the existing and planned active transportation and transit network.

As the municipality continues to grow, it will be important to ensure new developments and retail and service hubs are connected to the Active Transportation Network. Providing safe, convenient, and comfortable pedestrian and cycling routes to future population and employment areas will encourage new and existing residents to more frequently choose active transportation for their daily trips.

Strategy 6:

Maintain the active transportation network year-round

Action 6.A: Provide accessible detours for people walking and wheeling during construction and maintenance.

Ensuring accessible detours includes providing adequate information and advance notice that a sidewalk or bicycle route is closed, as well as providing adequate detour information to bypass the construction zone. Signage should also display alternate routes. Municipal departments can require contractors to establish temporary paths where necessary and implement a penalty structure for those who do not comply. Detours should be provided for users of all ages and abilities. The Municipality should review current construction policies and develop guidelines for contractors and Municipal departments to ensure that they represent best practice for accommodating all active transportation users.

Action 6.B: Seek to standardize maintenance practices and procedures for the active transportation network.

To help provide a consistent experience throughout the active transportation network, the Municipality should develop a minimum standard for maintenance practices and procedures. Any new active transportation facilities should be constructed to these recommended standards. It is recommended that the local Trail Associations work to meet the recommended minimum standards as well.

Action 6.C: Review, update, and create (if necessary) current minimum maintenance standards and ice/snow removal requirements for active transportation infrastructure including sidewalks and pathways.

Updating the Municipality's maintenance practices and procedures in conjunction with the implementation of the active transportation network will be an important component to ensuring facilities can be used year-round and are kept in a state of good repair. In addition to the capital cost of implementing the infrastructure projects identified in the Active Transportation Network Plan, the ongoing operations and maintenance costs need to be considered as part of the Municipality's annual budget. The following actions identify opportunities to improve maintenance practices and procedures for the active transportation network:

- Design active transportation facilities that consider all types of weather and facilitate drainage, snow removal, and snow storage. This includes considerations about facility type, buffer space for snow storage, and proper drainage.
- Review and update current maintenance and operating policies and procedures for active transportation infrastructure, including sidewalks, paved shoulders, and multi-use pathways to ensure year-round use.
- Work with partners (such as Cycle Nova Scotia and regional Trail Associations) to develop a map that shows the location of winter-maintained trails and active transportation routes.
- Provide accessible detours for people walking and bicycling during construction and maintenance by reviewing current construction detour policies and developing new guidelines for contractors and Municipal departments to ensure that they represent best practice for accommodating all active transportation users during construction and maintenance.

Action 6.D: Design pedestrian and bicycle facilities to ensure proper drainage and snow removal, and pursue alternate snow storage.

One of the best ways to facilitate the removal of snow from active transportation routes is through thoughtful design. Active transportation facilities can often become a snow storage area for vehicle travel lanes, and can accumulate debris and gravel. Where possible, the Municipality should plan for active transportation facilities to be maintained year-round and account for snow and ice removal.

Strategy 7:

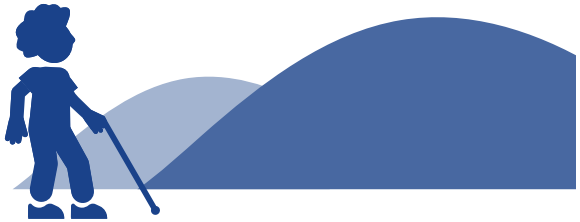
Support Active School Travel and age friendly planning

Action 7.A: Provide bicycle education and training for students in elementary and secondary schools.

Hands-on bike skills courses offered at schools (including those participating in Active and Safe Routes to School programs) help students gain the confidence and skills to ride to school. Bike skills programs can teach and encourage students to bicycle for transportation and recreation. Programs are often offered around grades 6 through 8 and provide students with the valuable life skill of being able to ride a bike comfortably and confidently on roads with vehicles present.

Action 7.B: Support Active and Safe Routes to School programs and initiatives.

Active and Safe Routes to School is a community-based initiative that promotes the use of active transportation for daily trips by children to and from school. Active and Safe Routes to School programs typically focused on the 6 E's: engineering, education, encouragement, equity, enforcement, and evaluation. Initiatives such as in-class curriculum, walking clubs, walking/cycling school buses, no-idling campaigns, active transportation-based field trips, and road safety education for secondary students supports active transportation education and uptake among students. This action should also include the creation of active transportation / school travel plans for all new or refurbished schools in MODL.



Strategy 8:

Provide an active transportation network that is safe and accessible for everyone

Action 8.A: Implement traffic calming measures near community destinations.

The Municipality will look to install traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, raised crosswalks, curb bump outs, and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), to create safer and more pedestrian-friendly streets. These measures can help reduce vehicle speeds and improve the overall safety of active transportation users. Traffic calming measures should be considered and prioritized near community destinations such as schools, churches, community and recreation centers, and retail and commercial hubs.

Action 8.B: Adopt a formal Vision Zero Policy.

The Municipality will consider adopting a formal "Vision Zero" policy that seeks to eventually reduce all serious road injuries and deaths to zero. Vision Zero is a program launched in Sweden in 1997 that has at it's core the belief that life and health are paramount over any other benefit to society. There are many major cities across Canada that are adopting formal Vision Zero Policies, but MODL would be one of the first rural communities in Nova Scotia to pursue this. Adopting a formal Vision Zero Policy will help guide future road planning and design, as the goal of achieving zero road deaths and serious injuries is paramount over all other considerations. Using the principles that make up Vision Zero policies will also serve to improve the pedestrian and cycling experience in MODL through the reduction of motor vehicle speeds and the separation of active transportation users at high-risk areas.

As part of this action, the Municipality will continue to monitor hot spot collision locations and identify safety mitigation measures for these locations.

Action 8.C: Enhance the safety, accessibility, and visibility of intersections and crossings.

The Municipality will work with Public Works to enhance accessibility while also improving safety at intersections. This can include installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), audible pedestrian signals, and new or updated curb ramps where appropriate.

Action 8.D: Seek funding opportunities to support the installation of infrastructure that improves the safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists.

While the primary responsibility for funding active transportation infrastructure falls onto local governments, other levels of government can and often do assist with the expense of building safer and healthier transportation systems. Existing funding programs include the Government of Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) and National Active Transportation Fund, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund, and the Government of Nova Scotia's Connect2 Grant Program.

The Municipality should continually explore funding opportunities to help support the creation of safe, separated infrastructure that will improve road safety, provide more opportunities for healthy activities such as walking and cycling, and reduce air pollution. This will require regular check-ins from staff and council to ensure that all funding programs are being explored and applied to when permitted, and regular funding being provided from the Municipality to ensure all matching grant programs can be submitted to in an effort to reduce the costs borne by local government.

Theme

Encourage

The theme **Encourage** is focused on creating a culture around active transportation, making walking, wheeling, and cycling more common in MODL through wayfinding, awareness, celebration, and promotion. Within the Encourage theme, there are 4 strategies and 24 actions.

Strategy 9:

Create active transportation opportunities that are equitable

Action 9.A: Work with equity seeking groups, including newcomers to Canada, children, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities, to understand their key challenges with active transportation.

Many equity seeking groups are often under-represented in community consultation and planning processes as they can experience more barriers to participation and may have a difficult time fully conveying their needs in transportation planning projects. The Municipality should conduct comprehensive and meaningful consultation with these groups to ensure that their needs are being addressed in the design of active transportation infrastructure. This action will help to ensure that all residents, regardless of their background, feel included in the planning process and that they feel ownership, inclusion, and connection to MODL facilities that they have had input in creating.

Action 9.B: Ensure best practices in accessibility are considered for new transportation infrastructure projects and upgrades, following standards identified under the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act and the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan.

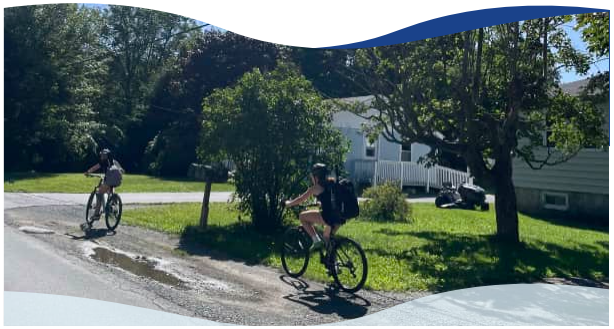
The Municipality will follow the standards set out in the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act and Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan to ensure new and upgraded active transportation facilities are accessible for everyone.

Action 9.C: Apply an intersectional, equity-focused lens to the planning, design, and implementation of all active transportation facilities, amenities, and programs to support equity-seeking groups.

The Municipality will work with stakeholders, including marginalized and under-represented groups, to develop a checklist of different lenses and factors that are considered during the design and implementation of all active transportation facilities, amenities, and programs. The Municipality will conduct targeted communication and engagement on active transportation projects with equity seeking groups to understand their unique needs and issues.

Action 9.D: Support the Lunenburg County Accessibility Committee in representing vulnerable and under-represented groups to identify their unique needs.

The Municipality will continue to work with the Lunenburg County Accessibility Committee to consult with vulnerable and under-represented groups on all active transportation projects, seeking their input on proposed designs, and ensuring that these designs are inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities. This action will help to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors with disabilities and help to create an active transportation network that is equitable and accessible for all.



Strategy 10:

Further develop cycle tourism and other local and regional active tourism opportunities

Action 10.A: Work with partners to develop engaging maps to promote active trips and key destinations.

The Municipality should develop a map for community members and visitors that highlights active transportation routes and popular community destinations. This will be a useful tool for visitors planning a trip to the area and is an opportunity to promote local activities and support local businesses. The map should be available online and in hard copy at popular destinations and visitor information areas.

Action 10.B: Support programs that encourage adults to bicycle and promote road safety.

It's never too late to learn to ride a bike. Adult bicycle skills courses and basic maintenance workshops recognize that cycling education is important at all ages. Many riders may be interested but do not feel confident or comfortable to try cycling on their own or to make it a part of their everyday routine without support. Providing training for adults that can be tailored for unique groups and settings (e.g., seniors, newcomers to Canada, etc.) can help participants feel comfortable and build confidence using a bicycle as a means of everyday transportation. Partnerships with local bicycle shops and Cycle NS can help educate adults about different types of bicycles and how they can be adapted to suit different mobility needs.

The Municipality will encourage and support local partners in the development of programs and initiatives that encourage adults to bicycle.

Action 10.C: Explore opportunities to promote experiential tourism activities that celebrate the region.

Promoting active transportation from a tourism perspective can provide a variety of benefits to the local economy. MODL has much to offer – from scenic shorelines, beautiful forests, and river routes to exciting local and community owned businesses and experiences. The Municipality should explore partnering with local businesses and organizations to promote active transportation options, such as walking and cycling tours and activities for visitors.

Action 10.D: Continue to support the Blue Route throughout the region.

The Blue Route is a province-wide network of continuous bike routes that are safe and well-connected. The Municipality should continue working with Cycling Nova Scotia and the Department of Public Works to expand the Blue Route in MODL and explore funding opportunities for constructing higher-quality bicycle routes throughout the municipality.

Action 10.E: Pursue partnerships with private operators to provide a public bike and/or e-bike sharing program.

Public bike share programs provide community members with temporary access to a bicycle through payment for short-term, on-demand rental periods. There are a variety of public bike share programs across Canada, each with their own unique characteristics which range from a variety of ownership and operation models, user experiences, distribution and integration with other modes and systems, among other factors. Public bike share programs can make it more convenient and enjoyable for those that do not have access to a car or are unable to drive themselves. The Municipality should explore options for implementing a public bike share program, especially in community hubs and developing areas.

Action 10.F: Create, update, and maintain a GIS map of the Municipality's active transportation network, including locations of amenities and features.

Providing details about active transportation facilities, amenities and features for community members and visitors can make planning trips by walking, wheeling, and cycling more convenient and accessible. The Municipality should inventory existing active transportation routes, trails, pathways, and amenities and features to be included in a GIS based web-application that community members and visitors to MODL can use to help plan their trips. Knowing what amenities and features are available along or near trails and pathways can allow people to choose the routes that are most accessible for them and feel confident in their ability to walk, wheel, or cycle on specific routes.

Strategy 11:

Foster a culture of support and use of active transportation

Action 11.A: Promote active transportation education and awareness.

Launch educational campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits of active transportation and provide information on safe walking and cycling practices. Offer workshops, seminars, and community events to educate residents about active transportation options and encourage behaviour change. Campaigns could be run seasonally, annually, or as part of existing events, such as Bike to Work Week or Bike Week.

Action 11.B: Ensure a dedicated and stable annual funding is allocated to education, awareness, and encouragement - including road safety.

In addition to allocating funds to constructing active transportation facilities, the Municipality should also ensure there is funding available for community education, awareness, and encouragement campaigns. Promoting the benefits of walking, wheeling, and cycling as well as opportunities for participating in active transportation will help to encourage community members to consider choosing active transportation more often.

Action 11.C: Demonstrate the impacts of vehicle emissions on local air quality and highlight the positive impacts of active transportation on air quality in reducing overall vehicle emissions and improving public health.

Most Canadian's are exposed to traffic-related air pollution on a daily basis. Travelling in vehicles, working or living near busy roads and being outdoors near traffic are all ways community members can be exposed to Traffic Related Air Pollution (TRAP). Health Canada evaluated the link between TRAP exposure (living or working within 250 metres of a major roadway), and found that this type of prolonged TRAP exposure:

- causes lung cancer in adults
- causes the development and worsening of asthma symptoms in children
- reduces lung function
- likely causes childhood leukemia
- may cause allergies to worsen
- may cause breast cancer in adults
- may cause worsening of asthma symptoms in adults

It is important that community members are educated about the impacts of vehicle emissions on local air quality and are provided information on how active modes of transportation can have positive health impacts for both individuals and the wider community.

Action 11.D: Establish a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program to work with local businesses to encourage employees to use sustainable modes of transportation.

This action includes the promotion of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs and initiatives that encourage employees to use active forms of transportation. This includes supporting employers in MODL to provide amenities and benefits that help to encourage employees to travel by sustainable modes. This can include providing secure bicycle parking, showers, and storage lockers for employees. This can also include encouraging employers to consider flexible work schedules and work from home policies, promoting carpooling and ride share arrangements, allowing for tele-commuting options and managing on-site parking.

Action 11.E: Lead by example to encourage and incentivize Municipal employees to walk or wheel to work.

Using similar TDM tools as those used by other employers in Nova Scotia, the Municipality itself should expand its efforts to encourage and motivate its own civic employees to walk or wheel as much as possible. Undertaking this action will help to shift Municipal employees out of their personal vehicles and into other more sustainable forms of transportation, and studies have shown that this modal shift results in improved physical and mental health, and a reduction in illness and employee absenteeism rates. Actively demonstrating a commitment to sustainable transportation through the adoption of this policy will show that the Municipality is committed to a healthier and less polluted community, and "walks the talk" when it comes to reducing the use of single occupancy vehicles.

Action 11.F: Create a permanent Active Transportation Committee of Council to advance active transportation programs and infrastructure.

This committee could be a committee of Council, or as a sub-committee of community members and organizations. This committee should meet on a regular basis to review the Municipality's progress on achieving all of the recommendations and infrastructure improvements outlined in the ATP, seek new opportunities for funding and programs, and actively promote active transportation within the municipality.

Action 11.G: Allocate FTE time for Municipal staff to implement the Active Transportation Plan.

To help ensure progress is made on the recommendations in the Active Transportation Plan, the Municipality should allocate dedicated FTE time for Municipal staff to implement the Plan. This responsibility can be shared between employees and regular check-ins should be set up to track progress.

Strategy 12:
Improve the pedestrian and cycling experience

Action 12.A: Install public amenities including benches, street trees, lighting, drinking fountains, washrooms, and recycling bins where appropriate along pedestrian and cycling facilities and trails.

Simple improvements to the right-of-way can vastly improve the pedestrian experience and help to encourage residents to go for a walk, wheel, or bike ride along routes that support these activities. Amenities such as benches provide a space for people to rest; street trees can provide valuable shade on a hot day and limit noise from vehicles; lighting can help create a safer environment; washrooms allow for longer walking trips; and recycling bins can encourage the proper disposal of used containers. Installing these amenities in the public right-of-way will demonstrate the Municipality's commitment to supporting active transportation as a recognized form of transportation. These amenities help create more attractive, convenient, and lively public spaces that encourage people to spend more time outdoors and to provide more opportunities for people to rest and socialize.

Action 12.B: Ensure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities are provided at all MODL owned and operated facilities.

Bicycle parking and other end-of-trip facilities encourage people to bicycle as a primary mode of transportation by providing a secure place to leave their bicycle and a place to tidy up and/or change upon arrival at their destination. Installing and improving existing bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities at MODL owned and operated buildings demonstrates leadership, and reinforces to residents, developers, and private business owners that bicycle parking is important. Adequate bicycle parking at libraries, recreation centres, and other civic facilities will benefit employees, residents, and visitors and support access to these facilities using active transportation.

The type of bicycle parking provided at each location will be dependent on the anticipated demand, available space, and financial resources. As part of this action, the Municipality should also identify an annual budget for the installation of bike parking and end-of-trip facilities.

Action 12.C: Provide more bicycle parking and end-of-trip options throughout the Municipality and at special events.

Providing more bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities throughout the Municipality can be done in several ways. Firstly, the Municipality will ensure high-quality bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities are installed at MODL owned and operated facilities. In partnership with local volunteer trail organizations, the Municipality will also review existing bicycle parking facilities at parks and trail heads and develop a list of amenities that could be implemented by trail maintenance organizations at these locations with Municipal support. Based on the use of the trails, the review will identify where trail head amenities could be installed (trail head amenities include washrooms, drinking fountains, bicycle and motor vehicle parking, bicycle repair stations, etc.). The Municipality will also work with local businesses and community partners to provide secure bicycle parking at retail and service hubs, as well as explore providing secure bicycle valet parking at special events.

Action 12.D: Enhance and expand active transportation wayfinding and signage in areas with high pedestrian and cyclist activity.

The Municipality will work with local businesses and community organizations to create wayfinding and kiosks identifying key information, such as popular destinations, community facilities and businesses, as well as a map with "you are here" locators with five-minute walking distance walksheds (sites within five, ten, and fifteen minute walking distance). This should be implemented consistently throughout the region at key community hubs and trail heads.

Action 12.E: Provide landscaping in the right-of-way.

Streetscape enhancements such as plants, trees, street banners and public art are aesthetically appealing and can improve the look and feel of community spaces, making them more inviting for residents and visitors to travel through. Especially around community hubs and new developments, the Municipality should provide streetscape enhancements where space is available within the public right-of-way. Through this action, the Municipality will need to consider the ownership and responsibility of maintenance for public art and other amenities within the right-of-way.

Action 12.F: Enhance visibility through lighting improvements along sidewalks, pathways, trails, and intersections where appropriate.

Strategically placed lighting along active transportation facilities may help to both reduce the impulse for persons to engage in criminal acts if they feel they will be seen, as well as increase the feeling of safety and comfort for the users of these facilities. This allows for safe and comfortable use of active transportation routes both day and night. This is especially important during the winter months when hours of daylight are at a minimum.

Action 12.G: Improve safety along active transportation facilities by improving visibility, sightlines, and access where appropriate.

There are many locations throughout the region where active transportation facilities cross or intersect with a roadway. The Municipality should identify locations that would benefit from additional or improved pedestrian crossings, such as locations that will provide a continuation to the active transportation network, locations where active transportation facilities intersect with the roadway without an established crossing, in areas of high pedestrian activity or with a high concentration of vulnerable road users.

Active Transportation Network Plan

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg's Active Transportation Plan (ATP) proposes to use the existing recreational trails system to develop a fully integrated network for walking and cycling throughout the Municipality. Recommendations in the Plan follow national and international best practices to create an all ages and abilities (AAA) network.

- **Regional Connector:** These facilities provide the regional links to surrounding areas beyond Municipal boundaries. Because they are major links, some of the regional connectors are destination trails, offering experiences of natural features of ecological significance. Most of the Regional Connectors in MODL are currently shared-use recreational trails used by pedestrians, cyclists, and people on OHVs. These regional connectors include the South Shore Annapolis Valley Trail (that connects to other trails to the north and northwest of MODL in Queens and Annapolis)), the Bull Run Trail (that connects to the Municipality of Queens in the west), and the Dynamite Trail (that connects to the Municipality of Chester in the east).
  - Recommended Facility Types: Trails, multi-use pathways.
- **Community Connector:** These provide the major links within the Municipality, such as from residential areas to community amenities. Many of these facilities will follow road corridors, since the roads already provide links, and they provide access across challenging terrain. Even though a route may follow a road, the facility can be located off of and separated from the road surface.
  - Recommended Facility Types: Multi-use pathways, sidewalks, local street bikeways.
- **Neighbourhood Connector:** These routes are the "local" links in the system, connecting neighbourhoods to the regional and community connectors and serving local needs, e.g., safe routes to schools.
  - Recommended Facility Types: Sidewalk, Multi-use pathways, traffic calmed streets.

Figure 10: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Network in MODL

Recommended Active Transportation Network

The recommended active transportation network is designed to build off of the existing active transportation network that is the extensive trail system running throughout the municipality, as well as build sections of infrastructure in area of greatest demand. These 9 recommended corridors are described in greater detail below, along with an explanation for why each corridor was selected, along with recommended facility types to help inform the future study and design process required for each corridor.

All of the corridors included in the Recommended Active Transportation Network were identified by community members and stakeholders as part of the public and stakeholder engagement process. Each corridor was then assessed in terms of feasibility, community benefits, network integration, and community demand.

Overall, the Recommended Active Transportation Network will expand the existing trail and sidewalk network to connect directly with more residential and commercial areas, close significant and ongoing gaps in the trail system, and create opportunities for residents and visitors alike to connect with the municipality in all it's forms at a more human scale. Creating spaces for people to walk, wheel, and cycle by constructing the recommended network will help promote tourism, support improved community health, and improve road safety for all road users.

Note:

While many of MODL's current trails are shared-use (allowing OHVs), the recommended active transportation improvements included in this plan are focused on providing multi-use pathways which would serve pedestrians and cyclists. This would align with the direction other neighbouring municipalities are taking to help improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Approximate Total Network length: 34.15 kms

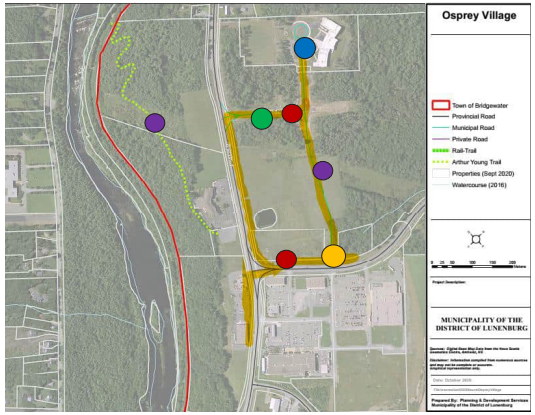
Recommended Facility Types:

- Neighbourhood Greenways
- Multi-Use Paths
- Trails
- Sidewalks
- Paved Shoulders

Cookville

Rationale: As an area of present and future residential development, the largest commercial area in the municipality, a major educational facility, and the proximity of these major trip generating facilities to the Town of Bridgewater (another trip generating area itself) and the close proximity of all of these areas, it is imperative that MODL provide facilities that allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists – including improved and clearly marked crossings at intersections and mid-block where warranted. Given the small distances between these residential, commercial, and educational facilities – people **will** walk, wheel, or cycle to move between these facilities.

An additional rationale for these facilities was provided by the students at Centre-Scolaire Du River Sud, who in 2021 worked with the Ecology Action Centre to develop and write a *Youth Walkability Audit* for their school. As shown on the map below, these students were very clear in where they feel sidewalks and crosswalks are needed in the Osprey Village area:



● = Sidewalk needed
● = Crosswalk needed
● = School Signage improvement
● = Potential Pathway
● = Bike Racks Needed

These students also noted the lack of sidewalks "on Highway 10 past the Pinegrove intersection – this discourages use of AT into Bridgewater as well as to the nearby amenities (Boston Pizza, Staples, other stores). There are also no sidewalks on Pinegrove and Nathan Cirrillo. If sidewalks/pathway existed on Highway 10 to Bridgewater, there would also need to be walker/cyclist lane on the Hwy 10 vehicle only bridge."

The same sentiments about the lack of pedestrian and cycling facilities to connect to these important community amenities was also heard in stakeholder sessions, through the online survey, and in-person engagement.

Corridor Length:
Approximately 3.1 kms, including section across Hwy 103 to connect to Bridgewater Town Limits

Recommended Facility Types:
Sidewalks and Multi-Use Path where feasible along Hwy 10

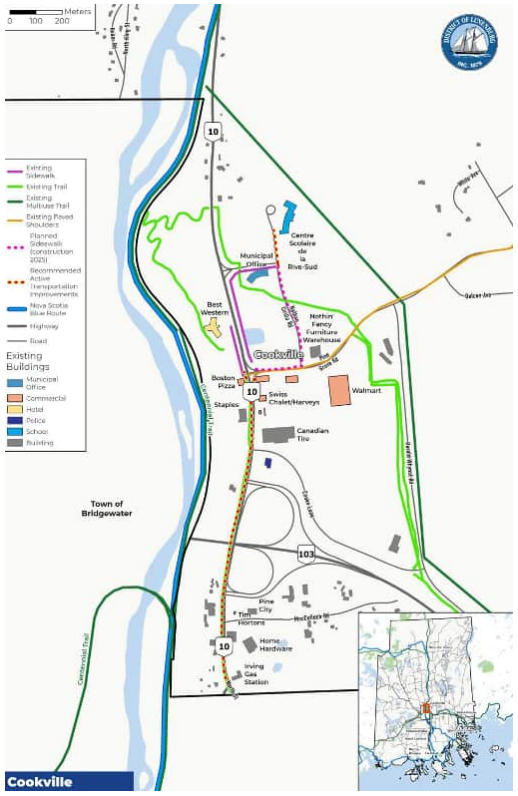


Figure 12: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities in Cookville

New Germany

Rationale: The need for corridor improvements in this area was identified repeatedly in the online survey and was the main focus of conversations during the in-person engagement held in the community in early 2024.

The need for active transportation improvements in the commercial core of New Germany as well as to provide safe routes to school for the students and families in the area was identified in the 2010 AT Plan as well, but no improvements had been made as of summer 2024.

Community feedback also expressed support for connecting the AT network to other trip generating and commercial facilities along Highway 10 – the Shopper's Drug Mart, the Food Bank, as well as the Freshmart further south. Local residents indicated that they have noted increasing numbers of people walking along or on the roadway to access these amenities. Local volunteer groups also indicated that many people in the region do not own vehicles, and from an equity perspective they would like to see safe walking and biking routes for those who cannot afford to own a private vehicle.

In discussion with the Province of Nova Scotia's Public Works, they did express support for AT improvements in this area, so there is an opportunity to work with the Province to create safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. They did indicate that vertical deflections such as speed humps are currently not permitted on trunk roadways, but that horizontal traffic calming measures such as curb bump outs and lane narrowing would be permitted. A preference for multi-use paths as opposed to paved shoulders was also expressed, as was a willingness to design School Street as a 30 km/hr traffic calmed street to support Safe Routes to School. A new Traffic Calming Policy for the Province is currently in draft form, so this may assist with this process once completed. Lastly, it was noted that the Blue Route runs along much of the proposed corridor improvement areas, so this presents another opportunity to work with the Province on funding and/or designing road safety improvements in this area.

One important factor that should be considered moving forward is the location of the new school panned for this area. However, given the expressed willingness of Public Works to support a 30 km/hr designed and constructed street on School Street overall, the Municipality can move forward with calming traffic on this section of the corridor regardless of the new school location.

Corridor Length: 3.1 kms

Recommended Facility Types: Neighborhood Greenway, Multi-Use path where feasible

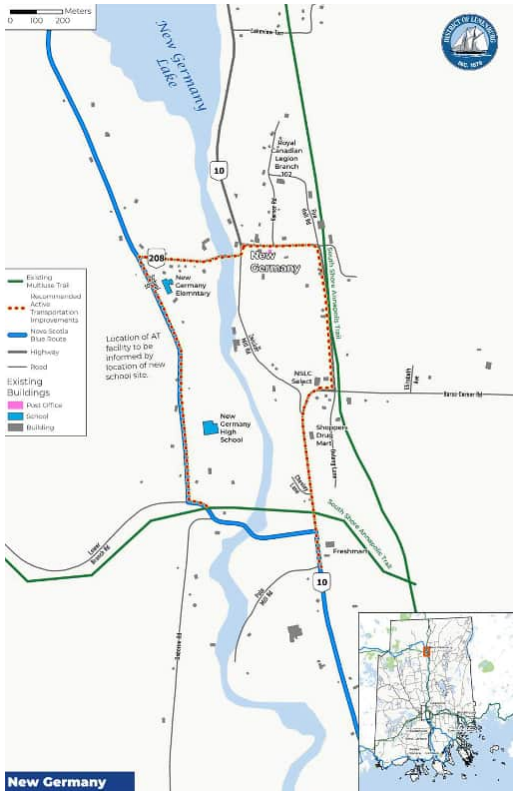


Figure 13: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities in New Germany

Blockhouse

Rationale: Through the online survey and community engagement, the popularity of this area as an important commercial core of the Municipality was repeatedly emphasized. The close proximity of the Adventure Trail provides an excellent core AT facility upon which to build connectors from.

With the popularity of the Boulangerie La Vendeenne and Ali's General Store, providing comfortable connections to separated walking and cycling facilities from the Adventure Trail will help this area become a draw for many residents as visitors alike.

Lastly, creating improved pedestrian and cycling access for the students at the South Shore Waldorf School will not only allow these students to access the store and bakery, but will also provide safe access to the Adventure Trail itself, providing an opportunity for an enhanced outdoor education program at this educational facility.

Corridor Length:
1.2 kms

Recommended Facility Types:
Neighbourhood Greenway,
Multi-Use path where feasible

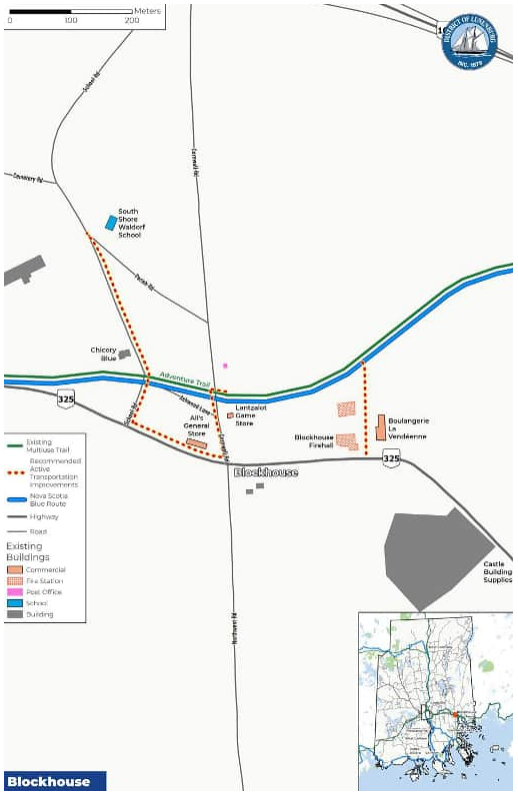


Figure 14: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities in Blockhouse

Petite Rivière

Rationale: As many residents and visitors alike can attest, Petite Rivière offers not only wonderful views of the Petite Rivière itself, but also an important and popular launch point for personal watercraft travelling up and down the river.

Feedback collected in the online survey in particular indicated support for an expansion of the existing sidewalk network on the bridge crossing itself to connect to the general store, local fire/community hall, and the popular community park/picnic area/boat launch to the west of the bridge.

Future connections to the Petite Rivière Elementary School (500 metres northwest of the bridge) should also be considered once the first section of pathways have been built, as this would provide not only a Safe Route to School for the students at this school, but also an opportunity to access the park, bridge, and store via foot, bike, or mobility device.

Corridor Length:
0.21 km

Recommended Facility Types: Multi-Use Path, Neighbourhood Greenway

Figure 15: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities in Petite Rivière

MARC Connector

Rationale: The MARC is a very popular community amenity for residents of MODL itself, as well as a draw for residents in neighbouring communities. Given its close proximity to population centres in the region and nearby active transportation facilities, this short stretch of multi-use path or neighbourhood greenway would help extend the existing regional active transportation network and provide an active transportation corridor for nearby communities.

In addition, this stretch will link up with Highway 3, a new section of the Blue Route being designated in 2024. Blue Route sections of roadway have an increased likelihood of support (financial, design, and road renewal projects that includes AT facilities) from Public Works and the Provincial government, and as such has a strong possibility of connecting to future AT facilities along Hwy 3.

There is also a planned connector trail from the Bridgewater Centennial Trail to the north of the MARC that would provide an additional connection to the bike trails in the northern section of the MARC. The exact routing and land procurement has yet to be determined, but this planned connector trail would also improve access for people travelling on foot or bicycle from nearby communities and beyond.

Corridor Length: 0.16 kms

Recommended Facility Types: Multi-Use Path, Neighbourhood Greenway, Trail

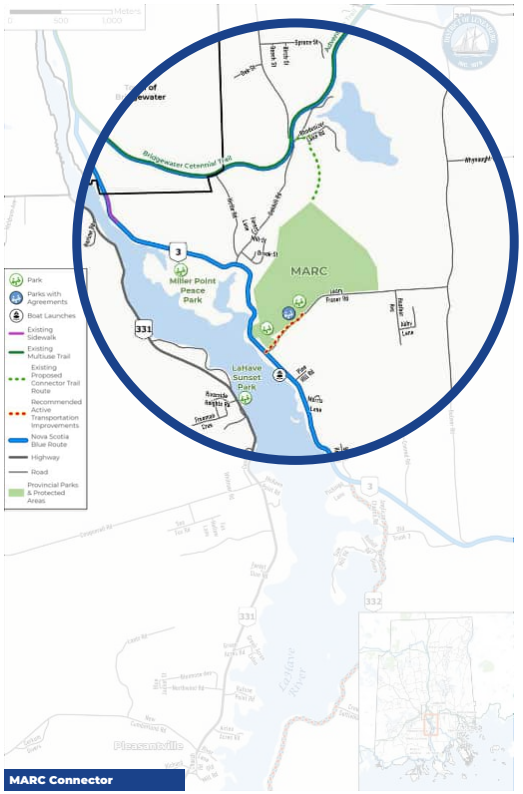


Figure 16: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities near the MARC

LaHave and Riverport

LaHave section

Rationale: LaHave has become renowned as a great spot to stop and tour for many visitors to the region - particularly for the delicious baked goods found at the LaHave Bakery. Given this popularity and the close proximity to the nearby Fort Point museum, engagement session attendees and those who responded online expressed a desire to see a walking, wheeling, and cycling route being created to allow visitors and locals alike to visit the bakery and then stroll over to enjoy the vista of Fort Point Museum itself.

In addition, the recommended corridor for the section includes a terminus at the intersection of School House Road and Hwy 331 to the south. This would create a full loop as walkers, wheelers, and cyclists then travel the School House Road loop back towards the north. School House Road is already a low-volume, low speed corridor, so limited interventions would be required to turn this into a comfortable space for cyclists and pedestrians.

Lastly, the recommended AT corridor would extend 325 metres to the northwest to connect to the Lunenburg-LaHave ferry – part of the Provincially designated Blue Route Cycling Route. This positions this section for external (Provincial) support as Blue Route improvements are made, including shoulder widening and/or the installation of multi-use paths where feasible.

Corridor Length: 1.8 kms

Recommended Facility Types: Sidewalk, Multi-Use Path, Neighbourhood Greenway

Riverport Section

Rationale: Based upon the information collected in the online survey, residents in this area expressed strong support for improved walking and cycling amenities in their area.

With a stunning view of Ritcey Cove to the north, and a number of community amenities in the Riverport District Community Centre and the Riverport Fish Company (along with a cluster of residences), the relatively higher density of this community makes it a good candidate for increased rates of active transportation.

Although quite short in length, creating a walking/cycling loop from the Riverport District Community Center to the Riverport District Fire Department Building would provide visitors with a safe way to move amongst community amenities, increase the possibility of economic development in the area as more visitors can get out of their vehicles, and provide improved walking, wheeling, and cycling facilities for local residents as well.

Corridor Length: 0.68 kilometres

Recommended Facility Types: Neighbourhood Greenway, Multi-Use Path where feasible

Figure 17: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities in LaHave and Riverport

Big Mushamush Lake

Rationale: In the process of developing the Active Transportation Plan, the project team was asked to consider how the Municipality could improve access and connections to waterways. This question was asked in the online survey, and the location most commonly indicated for future connections was Big Mushamush Lake, and to Mushamush Beach in particular.

With the rapidly growing popularity of electric bikes and the massive increase in riding range that they offer, providing comfortable pedestrian and cycling facilities that connect to the Adventure Trail to the south will create a new, safe, and comfortable route to a popular natural asset in the region.

Creating this active transportation facility will also provide visitors to Mushamush Beach with a direct link to a walking, wheeling, and biking trail through the nearby forest, adding to the list of activities to do at this location, and creating another draw for visitors to the area from across the Municipality and beyond.

Corridor Length:
8 kms

Recommended Facility Types: Multi-Use Path, Neighbourhood Greenway, Trail

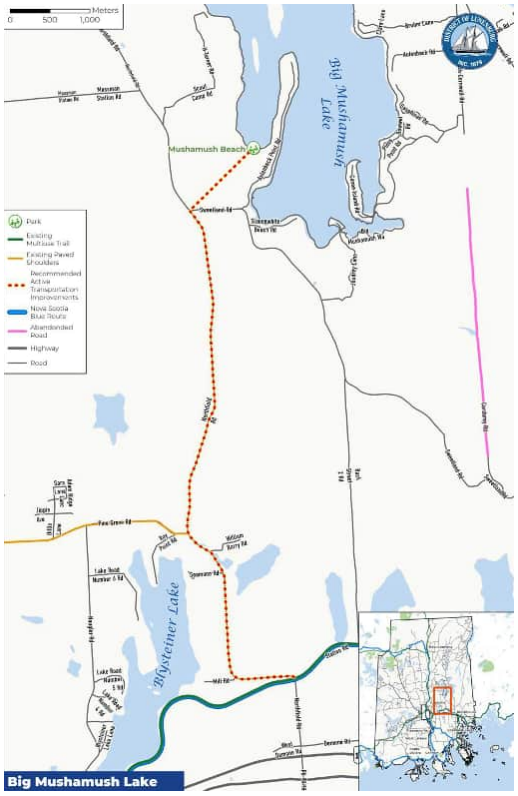


Figure 18: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities to connect to Big Mushamush Lake

South LaHave

Rationale: As part of consultation with the Public Works department of the Province of Nova Scotia, it was conveyed that Hwy 332 from Riverport to the Town of Bridgewater was going to be a part of the Blue Route Cycling Route starting in 2024. This designation provides MODL with an opportunity to access funding and support from other levels of government (particularly the Provincial government) to improve and install new cycling and pedestrian facilities along this corridor.

Creating this route would not only expand and improve the Blue Route itself, but also prove a beautiful cycling route along the South LaHave River for locals and visitors alike. This is a very feasible distance for many cyclists, and could become a popular cycling route/loop due the riverside route and existing amenities at either end.

It should be noted that due to a very constrained right-of-way in many sections, making this corridor more comfortable for cyclists and pedestrians will be a significant undertaking, requiring extensive land acquisition, drainage upgrades, and relocated utilities and signage. However, given the strong upside of creating such a beautiful and well-situated cycling route – these challenges can and should be creatively solved in the years ahead.

Corridor Length:
15 kms

Recommended Facility Types:
Paved Shoulders, Multi-Use Path where feasible

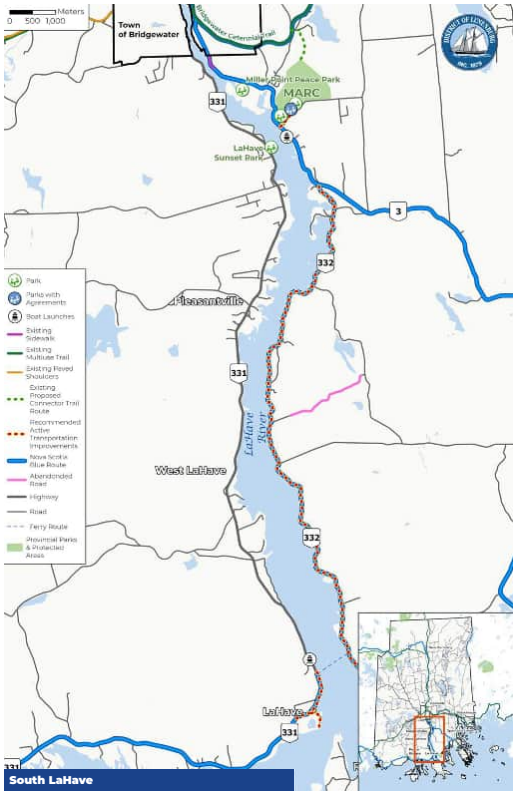


Figure 19: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities along the South LaHave River

LaHave River Trail

Rationale: Throughout the consultation process (both online and in-person), a common refrain from residents and stakeholders was "when are the gaps in the LaHave River Trail going to be closed?". This very popular trail is a critical north-south active and off-road vehicle transportation corridor for the Municipality and Region, and the lack of facilities in these two sections forces trail users onto busy Highway 10, with no facilities to keep them comfortable and removed from vehicles.

These significant gaps in the network were also identified in the original 2010 Active Transportation Plan, but challenges in procuring land for the continuation of the trail has made improvements very difficult. If a straight-line alignment is not possible due to a difficulty in procuring space for continuation of the trail, alternative alignments should be explored as soon as possible. Closing these gaps will not only provide a truly continuous north-south recreational trail for the municipality, but greatly improve road safety for all transportation users in the area as different modes are separated.

Corridor Length:

- Section 1: Bruhm Road to Salmon Run Road – 1.35 kms
- Section 2: Southern Trail Terminus to Veinot Road – 2.59 kms

Recommended Facility Types: Multi-use path, Trail

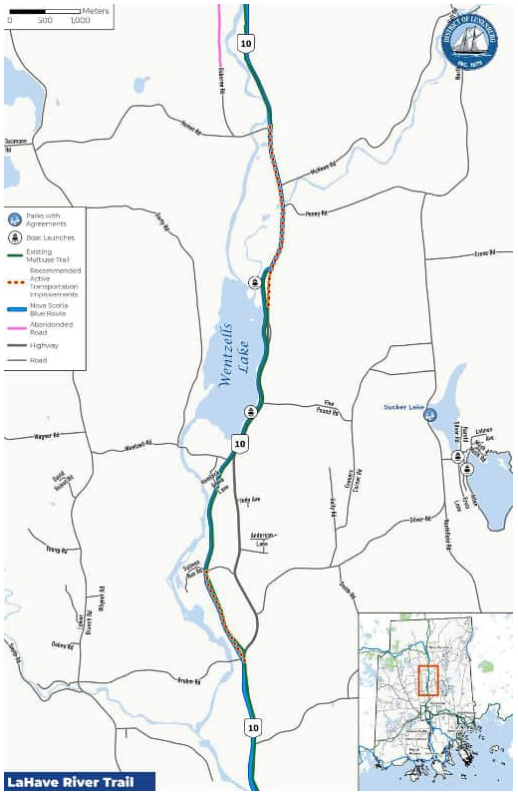


Figure 20: Map of Recommended Active Transportation Facilities along the LaHave River Trail

Highway 3 from Lunenburg to the Town of Bridgewater

(Not shown on Maps but still recommended for long-term implementation)

Rationale: As part of the Province of Nova Scotia's Blue Route, this section of highway is a good candidate for improved cycling facilities. In addition to greatly expanding the cycling and pedestrian network in the Municipality, this route would also improve road safety (particularly for vulnerable road users on foot or bicycle) as well as connect two important communities in the region.

Corridor Length:
17.9 kms

Recommended Facility Types:
Paved shoulders

Opportunities

As opportunities arise to enhance or expand active transportation networks within the Municipality, staff will evaluate these opportunities for inclusion, even if they are not outlined in the current Active Transportation Plan. This approach supports ongoing improvement of connectivity, safety, and accessibility for all users.

An example of this is the consideration of paved shoulders in Wileville if the Province of Nova Scotia's Department of Public Works includes the major road repaving in its Five-Year Highway Improvement Plan. The Wileville area has a dense community and is located near the major hub of the Town of Bridgewater, providing strong potential for active transportation connections for walking and cycling.

Network Prioritization

The recommended long-term Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP) for the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg identifies new and improved pedestrian facilities, multi-use paths, bicycle routes, and trails. This magnitude of improvement will require significant financial investment and may take several years for the Municipality to fully implement. Priorities have been established to focus improvements on high demand and high need areas that either currently experience, or have the potential for generating, the highest levels of active trips. The purpose of this section is to outline the methodology that may be used to identify priorities for implementation and construction of the active transportation network over the next 10 years.

Common criteria for the prioritization of active transportation infrastructure are shown in the following table (Table 2) and include road classification, connections to key trip generators such as schools, parks, and other destinations, network need and connectivity, equity, and safety. By identifying and analyzing these criteria for specific corridors and comparing them to each other, priority projects may be identified.

It is important to note that through additional planning work, feasibility studies, feedback from residents, and alignment with other plans and capital projects that some routes may be re-prioritized. There are also other variables that need to be considered which may not be able to be fully accounted for at this time, such as pressing and potentially unforeseen accessibility and equity considerations, damaging weather events, as well as funding and resource constraints. Additional engagement with targeted groups may be required to ensure that equity is fully considered when prioritizing projects, and priorities may shift as critical needs arise.

Table 2: Prioritization Criteria

Factor	Description	Priority
Roads	Rural Collector	Highest
	Rural Local Road	Lowest
Schools	Directly adjacent to any school	Highest
	School within 200m	
	School within 400m	Lowest
Active Transportation Generators	Directly adjacent to/within any key destination or commercial area	Highest
	Key destination/commercial area within 200m	
	Key destination/commercial area within 400m	Lowest
Network Connectivity	Connects to existing facility on both ends	Highest
	Connects to existing facility on one side	
	Does not connect to an existing facility	Lowest
Network Need	No active transportation facility on either side	Highest
	Active transportation facility already on one side	
	Active transportation facility on both sides	Lowest
Equity	Located in area of high equity need	Highest
	Located in area of moderate equity need	
	Located in area of low equity need	Lowest
Population Density	Located in Area of High Population Density	Highest
	Located in Area of Moderate Population Density	
	Located in Area of Low Population Density	Lowest
Safety	Located in area with history of safety concerns	Highest
	Located in area with no history of safety concerns	Lowest

Facility Types

Facility Types

Selecting the appropriate active transportation facility is essential for creating a safe and convenient environment for pedestrians and cyclists. When considering the design and location of the facility, several factors come into play. Motor vehicles speeds and volumes are a primary consideration when determining the appropriate facility type. The higher the vehicle speeds and the higher the volumes of traffic, the more separation and protection is needed for a cycling facility in order to be safe and comfortable for all users. On streets with low motor vehicle traffic volumes and low motor vehicle traffic speeds, separated cycling or pedestrian facilities may not be necessary to provide a safe and comfortable environment, however interventions may be needed to ensure that traffic speeds and volumes are both low.

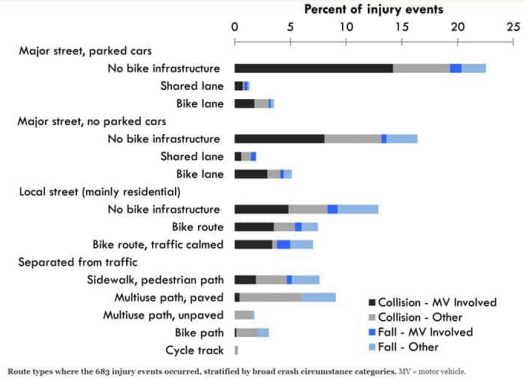
Other considerations include the connections to (and continuity of) adjacent facilities. Active transportation facilities should be easily accessible and well-connected to key destinations such as residential areas, schools, workplaces, and recreational areas. By providing a comprehensive network of cycling facilities, this will encourage more people to choose cycling as a mode of transportation, leading to reduced congestion and improved air quality.

Community engagement and feedback should also be considered in the facility selection process. Consulting with local residents, cycling organizations, and other stakeholders helps to understand their needs and preferences, ensuring that the chosen facility type aligns with the community's vision for cycling infrastructure.

Figure 21: Continuum of Bicycle Facilities

Risks associated with various facilities should also be considered as part of the design process. Various facility types are associated with a greater risk of injury. Figure 22 below shows the risk of injury posed by various facilities. As clearly conveyed in the figure below, separating users from motor vehicle traffic greatly reduces the risk of injury for vulnerable road users.

Figure 22: Injury events by facility type



Source: Teschke, K., Frendo, T., Shen, H. et al. Bicycling crash circumstances vary by route type: a cross-sectional analysis. BMC Public Health 14, 1205 (2014).

Design Guidance

Urban Systems project team members acted as expert advisors for the soon to be released Infrastructure Canada (INFC) funded *Cycling in Diverse Environments: A Supplement to The Canadian Bikeway Comfort and Safety (Can-BICS) Classification System Report* being developed by the Cities, Health & Active Transportation Research (CHATR) Lab at Simon Fraser University.

In 2019, the CHATR Lab developed the Canadian Bikeway Comfort and Safety (Can-BICS) classification system, with support from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). Can-BICS categorizes cycling infrastructure into five cycling facility types and three comfort classes. These facility categories and comfort classes were informed by our review of professional guidelines for cycling facility design and public health literature on the impact of various cycling facility types on road safety for people cycling and as motivators to cycling participation. The classes are:

- **High Comfort Bikeways** include low stress routes comfortable for most people.
  - Cycle tracks alongside busy roads
  - Local street bikeways
  - Off-road bike paths (paved)
- **Medium Comfort Bikeways** are low to medium stress routes which can be considered comfortable for some people
  - Multi-use paths (MUP) (paved)
- **Low Comfort Bikeways** are a high stress route comfortable for few people.
  - Painted bike lanes

Certain facility types did not reach the standards of comfort and safety used in the Can-BICS classification system. These include signed-only local street shared roadways and major street shared lanes marked with sharrows. While these routes may function as connectors within designated routes, they have limited comfort and safety (real or perceived) benefits.

The aim of the 2024 report is to provide a supplement to the Can-BICS classification system that clarifies how the classification system applies in small towns, rural, and remote communities. The 2024 report also includes the following high-level summary of cycling facilities by street class.

Table 3: Summary of Can-BICS cycling facilities relevant in the context of small towns, rural, and remote communities, ordered by street class.

Street Class	Operational Context (14)	Motor Traffic Volumes and Speed	Cycling Facility
Local Street	Roads without lanes (undivided central traffic path) where motor traffic volumes and speeds are low. Primary function is adjacent land access.	Very low volume - Walking pace	Residential Shared Street[8,9] New route type for context of small towns, rural, and remote communities
		Low volume - Low speed	Local Street Bikeway
Collector Street	Two and three-lane roads with moderate motor traffic volumes and speed. Carries local trips within neighbourhoods and connects local streets to arterials.	Moderate volume and speed	Painted Bike Lanes
Arterial Street	Multi-lane roads with high motor traffic volumes and speeds. Primary mobility function. Carries municipal and regional trips.	High volume - High speed	Cycle Track or Multi-Use Path
N/A	Independent corridors away from roads.	N/A	Bike Path or Multi-Use Path[10]

The Can-BICS update also includes a new facility type for small towns, rural, and remote communities' contexts – Residential Shared Streets. These are defined as residential streets without curbs or sidewalks and a narrow profile intended for people driving, cycling, and walking (including using a mobility aid) within the same undifferentiated travel space. Signage and pavement markings provide wayfinding support and inform road users that cyclists and pedestrians are the primary users of the street and that **cars are guests**. Pavement surfacing materials may be varied to differentiate road spaces, but the entire roadway remains accessible to all users. Staggered landscaping, street furniture (e.g., bollards, planters, cycle parking), and on-street motor vehicle parking, if present, supports a narrow roadway profile that restricts motor vehicle flow, helping to keep speeds at a walking pace (≤ 10 km/h). This new facility type is covered under the Neighbourhood Greenways category below.

8 Motor vehicle volumes subordinate to pedestrian and cylist volumes.
9 Heavy agricultural traffic (≥ 10 vehicles/peak hour) preclude use of residential shared roadways (p.34)(2).
10 Separate walking and cycling paths based on user volume and mix thresholds in Part IV.

Neighbourhood Greenways

Neighbourhood greenways, also known as neighborhood bikeways or local street bikeways, are cycling and pedestrian facilities on streets that are designed to prioritize and enhance bicycle and pedestrian travel. These greenways aim to provide safe and convenient routes for cyclists and pedestrians while also minimizing conflicts and risks associated with high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic. Neighbourhood greenways are generally considered on streets with low traffic volumes (<2,500 vehicles per day) and low traffic speeds (<40 km/h).

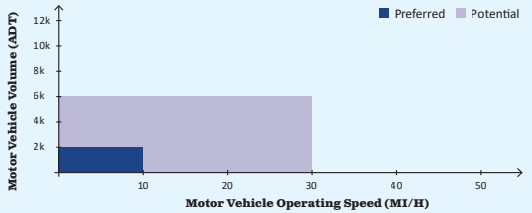
Benefits of Neighbourhood Greenway facilities include:

- Increases comfort for people cycling by reducing motor vehicle operating speeds and volumes.
- Improves conditions for pedestrians when implemented with sidewalks and enhanced pedestrian crossings.
- Improves the quality of life for residents through calmer traffic and safer crossings.
- Connects local residential roads to commercial corridors and community services such as schools.
- May reduce the incidence of serious injuries through reduced travel speeds.
- Less visually impactful than separated facilities.

Key considerations include:

- May require additional paved surface to provide sidewalk space for pedestrians.

Figure 23: Preferred and Potential Vehicle Volumes and Speeds for Neighbourhood Bikeways



Neighbourhood bikeways typically feature a combination of traffic calming measures and design elements to help create a comfortable and low-stress environment for cyclists. Some common features of neighbourhood bikeways include:

- **Traffic Calming:** speed tables and raised crosswalks to slow down motor vehicle traffic and create a safer environment for cyclists.

Figure 24: Examples of Traffic Calming. L: Speed table on a Rural Road, R: Raised crosswalk (Photo credit: Small Town and Rural Design Guide)

- **Typical cross section required:** Not applicable as these facilities fit within the existing roadway, and do not require any extra right of way.
- **Intersection Improvements:** To enhance safety at intersections, neighbourhood bikeways may have traffic signals with bicycle-specific features, such as advanced stop lines or bike boxes. These features give cyclists priority and improve their visibility to motorists. Other intersection improvements include painted crosswalks, crosswalks with rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs), and pedestrian corridors, all of which improve pedestrian and cyclist safety at major intersections or crossing points. A separated facility with a half-signal to stop vehicle traffic while pedestrians and cyclists cross can be seen in Figure 25 below.
- **Wayfinding and Signage:** Clear signage and wayfinding markers are often installed along neighbourhood bikeways to guide pedestrians and cyclists and indicate the preferred route. This helps cyclists navigate and connect to other cycling infrastructure or destinations.

Figure 25: Signalized (half signal) bicycle and pedestrian crossing (Photo credit: Jamie Hilland, Urban Systems)

Figure 26: Wayfinding Signage (Photo credit: Halifax Regional Municipality)

Table 4: Cost, Comfort, AAA (All Ages and Abilities), Road Safety Rating for Neighbourhood Bikeways

Cost (Low/Med/High, per km)	Level of Comfort (Low/Med/High)	All Ages and Abilities (Y/N)	Road Safety Level (Low/Med/High)
Low - $52,000 per km	Medium - (if vehicle speeds and volumes reduced to <1500 VPDs and average vehicle speeds <30 km/hr)	Yes – if vehicle volumes and speeds meet design targets	Medium – no physical separation between cyclists and vehicles

Paved Shoulders

Paved shoulders are cycling and pedestrian facilities that are just as they sound – expanded shoulders on roadways that can serve as a functional space for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel in the absence of other facilities with more separation.

These facilities are often popular in rural areas with available right-of way, challenging topography, and limited available funding for separated facilities. While these facilities are lower cost and therefore easier to implement, it should be noted that paved shoulders are not considered AAA facilities as they are not comfortable for many pedestrians and cyclists as they offer no protection and often very limited separation from vehicles. However, there are several design features that can improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists using these facilities:

- Edge line rumble strips: these can alert drivers to the fact that they are entering a pedestrian/cycling zone, and also alert drivers who may be drowsy and drifting off of the travel lane.
- Contrasting pavement: As an aesthetic treatment, colored or contrasting pavement increases contrast between the shoulder and the roadway.
- Bicycle accommodation: Cyclists should travel in the same direction as the adjacent lane.
- Enhanced Longitudinal Markings: Wide solid white lines or buffers areas serve to enhance visual separation.
- Land Use: Appropriate outside and within built up areas, near school zones and where there is expected pedestrian and cycling activity. Walkable shoulders should be provided along both sides of county roads and highways routinely used by pedestrians.
- Speed and Volume: Appropriate on roads with moderate to high volumes and speeds and on roadways with a large amount of truck traffic. May function on multi-lane roads with heavy traffic but fails to provide a low-stress experience in this condition.

Benefits of Paved Shoulder facilities include:

- Improves cyclist experiences on roadways with higher speeds or traffic volumes.
- Reduces pedestrian “walking along roadway” crashes.
- Provides advantages for all roadway users, by providing space for cyclists, pedestrians, and motor vehicles.
- Provides a stable surface off the roadway for pedestrians and cyclists to use when sidewalks are not provided.
- Can reduce “cyclist struck from behind” crashes, which represent a significant portion of rural road crashes.

Key considerations include:

- Enhancements with increased levels of striping and signs may interfere with the low-clutter character of a rural environment.
- Requires a wider roadway to provide an accessible shoulder space.

Figure 27: Preferred and Potential Vehicle Volumes and Speeds for Paved Shoulders

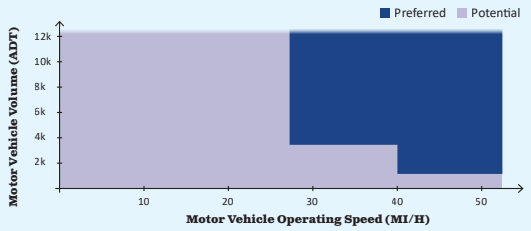


Figure 28: Pigmented, stamped asphalt mimicking bricks is used as emphasis on a paved shoulder. (Photo Credit: Small Town and Rural Design Guide).

Figure 29: A buffered rumble strip zone creates a more comfortable paved shoulder. (Photo credit: Small Town and Rural Design Guide)

Contrasting or colored pavement materials may be used to differentiate the shoulder from the adjacent travel lanes. Colored pavement in a paved shoulder is an aesthetic treatment to enhance awareness and is not intended to communicate a regulatory, warning, or guidance message to road users.

Table 5: Recommended Minimum Paved Shoulder Widths by Roadway conditions (Calculations assumes 1 travel lane per direction, outside lane width of 3.35 metres, 2 percent heavy vehicle mix, average pavement quality, and no on-street parking).

Functional Classification	Volume (Average Annual Daily Traffic or AADT)	Speed (km/hr)	Recommended *Minimum* Paved Shoulder Width
Minor Collector	Up to 1100	55 km/hr	1.5 m
Major Collector	Up to 2600	70 km/hr	2.0 m
Minor Arterial	Up to 6000	90 km/hr	2.1 m
Principal Arterial	Up to 8500	100 km/hr	2.4 m

Clear Paved Shoulder Area

Any amount of clear paved shoulder width can benefit pedestrians and cyclists, however, to be fully functional for their use, the paved shoulder area should be wide enough to accommodate the horizontal operating envelope of these users.

To accommodate cyclist and pedestrian use of the shoulder, provide a minimum width of 1.2 m adjacent to a road edge or curb, exclusive of any buffer or rumble strip.

Where possible, provide greater width for added comfort, user passing, and side-by-side riding.

Rumble Strips

Rumble strips are a proven safety countermeasure for reducing roadway departure crashes. Research has shown that installing rumble strips can reduce severe crashes but may negatively impact cycle travel if they are poorly constructed.

If rumble strips are desired on cycling network routes, it is important to optimize the dimension, design, and placement of rumble strips to be more tolerable to cyclists.

- 0.3 m spacing center-to-center
- 0.15 0.2 m long, perpendicular to roadway
- 15 cm wide, measured parallel to roadway
- 1 cm deep

Place rumble strips to overlap with the roadway edgeline, also known as edgeline rumble strips or rumble stripes.

Provide a cycling gap pattern to allow access into and out of the shoulder area by cyclists. The gap pattern consists of a 3.3 m clear gap followed by rumbles, typical 12.1–18.2 m (NCHRP Synthesis 490, 2016).

Multi-use Paths

A multi-use path refers to an off-street pathway that accommodates multiple modes of non-motorized transportation, such as pedestrians, cyclists, skaters, and joggers. These pathways provide a safe and convenient space for active transportation and recreation.

Key characteristics of multi-use paths include:

- **Shared Space:** Multi-use paths (MUPs) are designed to be shared by different user groups, allowing pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized users to coexist in a single corridor. The pathways are wide enough to accommodate various modes of transportation comfortably. Best practice is to ensure sufficient width for marked, separated pedestrian and cycling facilities to reduce conflict and the risk of injury posed by mixing users operating at different speeds.
- **Surface and Width:** Multi-use paths can be constructed using various materials, including asphalt, concrete, or compacted gravel, depending on the context and available budget.
- **Separation from Motor Vehicles:** One of the primary purposes of a multi-use path is to provide a safe and separated space away from motor vehicle traffic. They are often located away from roadways or have physical barriers, such as curbs or landscaping, to create a distinct separation from motorized vehicle lanes.
- **Signage and Markings:** Multi-use paths typically have signage and markings to guide users and indicate appropriate usage. This can include signs indicating right-of-way, speed limits, directional arrows, and designated areas for specific activities and modes of travel.
- **Accessibility:** Multi-use paths are designed to be accessible to users of varying abilities. They often incorporate features such as tactile indicators to accommodate individuals with disabilities or mobility aids.
- **Amenities:** Along multi-use paths, amenities may be provided to enhance user experience and convenience. These can include rest areas, benches, water fountains, bike racks, and lighting for safety during low-light conditions.

Multi-use paths are commonly found in parks, urban areas, suburban neighborhoods, and recreational areas.

Benefits of Multi-Use Path facilities include:

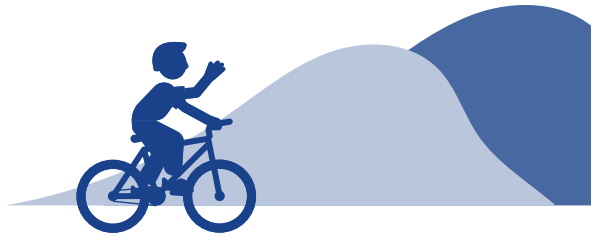
- Provides a dedicated facility for users of all ages and abilities.
- Provides, in some cases, access to areas that are otherwise served only by limited-access roadways.
- Provides non-motorized transportation access to natural and recreational areas, which can especially help low-income people obtain access to recreation.
- Provides, in some cases, a short-cut between cities or neighborhoods.
- Supports tourism through convenient access to natural areas or as an enjoyable recreational opportunity itself.
- Paths have a small footprint and can display a distinctly rural character.

Key considerations include:

- Enhancements with increased levels of striping and signs may interfere with the low-clutter character of a rural environment.
- Requires a wider roadway to provide an accessible shoulder space.

Table 6: Multi-use paths Design Guidance

Item	Industry Standards	Notes
Multi-use path Width	2.5 – 4.5 m	• 2.5m acceptable in constrained locations • 4.5m width includes 3.0m painted bikeway and 1.5m painted walking path



Geometric Design

The geometric design of multi-use use paths should support the speed and volume of expected user types.

- 3.0 m width is recommended in most situations and will be adequate for moderate to heavy use.
- A 0.6 m shoulder should be provided on each side of the path, kept clear of vertical elements or obstructions.
- 2.4 m is the minimum allowed for a two-way bicycle path and is only recommended for low traffic situations or for short lengths.
- 3.6–4.3 m is recommended for heavy use situations with high concentrations of multiple users.
- Wider paths are useful to accommodate maintenance vehicles; on steep grade to allow for comfortable passing and meeting; and through curves to provide more operating space.

Volume and User Mix	Recommended Minimum Path Width
Low volume (less than 50 users in one direction per hour), low mix (75 percent cyclists, 25 percent pedestrians).	2.4–3.0 m
Low volume (less than 50 users in one direction per hour), heavy user mix (50 percent cyclists, 50 percent pedestrians).	3.6 m
High volume (150 or more users in one direction per hour), low mix (75 percent cyclists, 25 percent pedestrians).	3.6–4.2 m

Vehicle Speeds and Volumes

Multi-use paths operate in independent corridors and are fully separated from traffic. Facility provision is based on opportunity and connectivity rather than roadway context. In some cases, an independent corridor may offer similar connectivity and access to destinations as a nearby roadway.

Markings

- Striping: **Under most conditions, center line markings are not necessary, and path users** will naturally keep right except to pass. On shared use paths with heavy peak hour and/or seasonal volumes, the use of a center line stripe may help organize pathway traffic.
  - When striping is required, use a 10 cm broken yellow center line stripe with 10 cm solid white edge lines.
  - Solid center lines can be provided on tight or blind corners and on the approaches to roadway crossings.
  - Mark edge lines on paths expecting evening use.
- **Signs:** In a mixed user environment, yield etiquette signs may be used. Many communities have created customized signage to reflect local user groups and conditions. Bikes Yield to Peds (R9-6) signs may be used at the entrances of path segments to remind bicyclists of the requirement to yield.

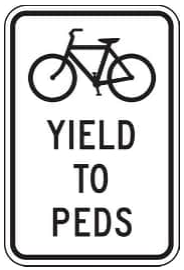


Figure 30: Signs can clarify yielding rules in shared-use environments, and may be modified based on expected user types.

Figure 31: Multi-use paths

Note: the pathway on the left is multi-use and not separated by mode, while the pathway on the right has a larger space and uses different materials to separate pedestrians and cyclists.

Trails

The Trans Canada Trail defines a "Trail" as *"a defined type of infrastructure that is purposefully designed and used for one or more recreation activities or for active transportation. To be recognized as a trail, it must be approved by the landowner, mapped and marked, as well as actively managed and maintained."*

Trails most often refer to pathways or routes that are designed and designated for recreational activities, outdoor exploration, or transportation on foot, bicycle, or other non-motorized means. Trails offer numerous benefits, including physical fitness, mental well-being, access to nature, environmental education, and recreational opportunities.

Trails can be found in a variety of settings, including urban areas, parks, forests, valleys, and rural landscapes. They provide opportunities for individuals to connect with nature, engage in physical activity, and explore the outdoors. Trails come in different types and may serve specific purposes or cater to particular user groups. Here are some common types of trails:

- **Hiking Trails:** These trails are primarily designed for pedestrians and hikers. They vary in difficulty, ranging from easy and well-groomed paths suitable for beginners to rugged and challenging routes for experienced hikers. Hiking trails often lead to scenic viewpoints, natural landmarks, or points of interest.
- **Biking Trails:** Biking trails are specifically designed for cyclists and mountain bikers. They can range from paved paths suitable for casual riders to single-track trails with technical features for more experienced riders. Biking trails may be found in parks, forests, or dedicated biking areas.
- **Multi-Use Trails:** Multi-use trails accommodate various activities and users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians. These trails typically have wider paths to accommodate different modes of transportation and may include specific design features to ensure safe interactions among users.
- **Nature Trails:** Nature trails are designed to provide an educational and interpretive experience by highlighting the natural features, flora, and fauna of an area. They often have informative signage, observation points, or guided tours to enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation of the environment.
- **Urban Trails:** Found in urban areas, urban trails provide opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate through the Municipality, as well as connect parks, waterfronts, or neighborhoods. These trails often promote active transportation and provide alternative routes for commuting or leisure activities.

Trans Canada Trail has also developed a "Recreation Setting Spectrum" to help determine the appropriate facility type and level of development based upon the recreation setting:

Figure 32: TCT "Recreation Setting Spectrum" for Trails

Given the level of development and recreation setting that currently exists in MODL, most trails in MODL can be considered as either "Developed", "Frontcountry" or "Midcountry". There are a few truly "backcountry" trails to be found in the Municipality, but these are largely unmaintained and infrequently travelled.

Described below are the current trail conditions and specifications in MODL:

- The majority of the trail network in MODL is **built on old rail lines** which already have a substantial base as well as a wide corridor, although vegetation has been creeping in on sections which the volunteer trail maintenance groups are working to address.
- **The ideal trail width is 3.5 metres with a 0.5 metre shoulder** on each side, but most of MODL's trails are shared use, which includes motorized vehicles.
- **All trail surfaces are gravel**, but different groups have different preferences as to the type of gravel used. The topcoat is generally a rolled and compacted crusher dust.
- **Signage varies from trail to trail.** Rail trails do have rough requirements from the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) regarding placement of stop and yield signs, and the Municipality is working on developing internal wayfinding as well.
- **The only trail crossing with a signal** is on the Bay to Bay Trail in Mahone Bay. All other trail crossings only have stop signs before crossing a roadway.
- **Trail grade** varies as much of it follows the old rail lines. The Municipality has been using US Forestry Service standards for trail development within municipal spaces.
- There are **numerous bridges and crossings** with many variations, from very large structures like the Martin's River bridge on the Dynamite trail, to small crossings and culverts.
- After the weather events in the summer of 2023, volunteer trail groups are **still working on significant trail repairs**.

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg has an extensive network of recreational trails running roughly east-west and north-south throughout the region, connecting to both surrounding municipalities to the east, west, and north, as well as to the ocean via the Town of Lunenburg and along the Dynamite Trail near Narrows Basin.

With a robust trail system, existing design and maintenance standards, and dedicated volunteer groups, MODL has an excellent core network of active transportation facilities along these trails. Future investments in active transportation should consider how to leverage this existing asset to connect more residents to the trail system and ensure that the volunteer trail associations have the resources (capacity, materials, equipment, and funding) to properly maintain these important community amenities.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks provide dedicated space intended for use by pedestrians that is safe, comfortable, and accessible to all. Sidewalks are physically separated from the roadway by a curb or unpaved buffer space.

Characteristics:

- Sidewalks are desirable to support pedestrian safety and comfort in areas with a mix of land uses and also in areas of the community where the roadway network connections generally have high motor vehicle traffic volumes or speeds.
- Legal crosswalks often exist at all intersections, whether marked or not. A crosswalk at an intersection is defined as the extension of the sidewalk across the intersection.
- Unmarked Crosswalks - Lane markings, stop lines, yield lines, or other traffic control markings should be placed outside of the unmarked crosswalk area. The only way a crosswalk can exist at a midblock location is if it is marked.
- Marked crosswalks are at intersections or midblock crossings based on engineering judgement. They are not to be used indiscriminately.
  - The minimum width for a marked crosswalk is 1.8 m
  - For improved visibility, the preferred crosswalk marking pattern at uncontrolled and midblock locations is the high visibility "continental" crosswalk marking. If placed to avoid the wheel track, these markings may last significantly longer than transverse line crosswalks.
  - Use of transverse line crosswalk markings should be limited to signalized intersections, or crossings of side streets controlled by stop signs.
  - Minor crossings of local streets may be unmarked.
  - Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) have become extremely popular as they are relatively inexpensive, can be solar-powered (so can be installed anywhere), and have proven to dramatically increase vehicular stopping compliance rates.
- Sidewalks are appropriate on all types of roadways where pedestrian activity is likely.
- Sidewalks are strongly recommended inside of built-up areas. They may also serve short distance travel between built up areas – for example, along or near highways in rural areas near pedestrian-generating development, such as neighborhoods, schools, and businesses.

Benefits of sidewalks include:

- Provides a dedicated place within the public right-of-way for pedestrians to safely travel and reduces pedestrian collisions in rural areas.
- Reduces "walking along roadway" crashes.
- May notably increase levels of walking in areas with high traffic speeds and/or volumes.

Considerations

- Sidewalks may not support a rural visual character when configured with curb and gutter and no landscaped separation.
- Requires a moderate-width roadside environment to provide for separation and sidewalk area outside of the adjacent roadway.

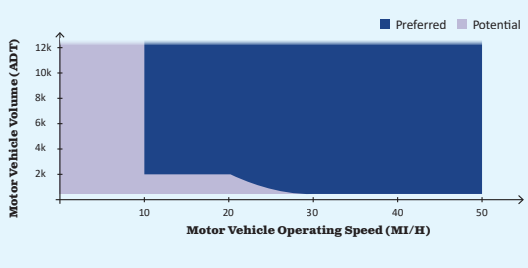


Figure 33: Sidewalks are recommended on all but the lowest speed and low volume roadways

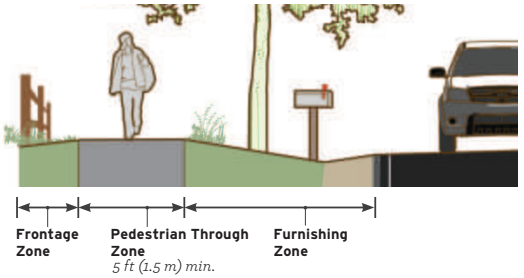


Figure 34: Sidewalks should be physically separated from the roadway by an unpaved buffer separation, barrier or curb edge. (Source: Small Town and Rural Design Guide)

Figure 35: Sidewalk in smaller community setting

Long-Term Active Transportation Network Cost Estimates

Unit Costs

The ATP includes order-of-magnitude capital cost estimates and ongoing operating and maintenance cost estimates for the implementation and maintenance of active transportation corridor routes. The cost estimates presented below are based on typical unit costs and recent construction and operation and maintenance pricing within Nova Scotia. The unit costs that were used as the basis to generate cost estimates are shown in Table 7. Intersection enhancements are also proposed as part of the ATP, however the specific treatment at crossing locations is context specific and will require additional study. Intersection enhancements can range from $5,000 for a marked crosswalk to $500,000 for traffic signals (Table 8).

Table 7: Corridor Treatment Capital and Operating Unit Costs

Facility Type	Capital Cost (per km)	Assumptions	Annual Operating and Maintenance Unit Cost (per km) – year-round maintenance
Neighbourhood Bikeway Greenway	$40,000	Assumes improvements limited to signage, pavement markings, and speed humps.	$2,000
Multi-use path Adjacent to roadway (new)	$500,000	Assumes no curb and gutter or drainage modifications required. Excludes lighting and property impacts.	$10,000
Multi-use path Adjacent to roadway (utility relocation /drainage required)	$1,000,000	Excludes property acquisition.	$10,000
Sidewalk (curb and gutter)	$870,000	Excludes property acquisition.	$1,000
Paved Shoulders	$160,000	Includes utilities and drainage improvements and 50 mm asphalt depth	$2,000
Trails	$20,000	Assumes no trail amenities or fixtures such as garbage cans, lighting, benches, bike racks, etc. will be provided. TCT Trail Costing Calculator used for cost estimates.	$6,800

Table 8: Intersection Treatment Capital Cost

Intersection Enhancement	Cost Per Location
Marked Crosswalk (one crosswalk)	$2,500 to $5000
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) / Enhanced Crosswalk	$20,000 to $75,000
Full Signal (four-way traffic signal)	$250,000 to $750,000
Curb Extensions (one side of crossing)	$10,000 to $20,000

The cost estimates have been provided to identify the relative cost for planning purposes only and should not be used for budgeting purposes as actual costs may vary significantly. Additional costs not included in these cost estimates can be significant and include detailed project design, retaining walls, utility pole removal or replacement, etc. As a result, at locations where these types of treatments are required the cost per kilometre will be significantly higher.

The Municipality should continue to seek out new opportunities to work with developers, other agencies, and other levels of governments to establish cost-sharing agreements, or to seek grant opportunities to offset total project costs. Cost estimates have been developed for facilities on both Public Works and Municipality-owned roadways.

As seen above in Table 8, there is a range of costs associated for each of the different facility types depending on the materials used and the existing conditions. The recommended active transportation network is approximately 34 kilometres.

Recommended Priority Projects

During the development of the Active Transportation Network Plan , several existing priority corridors were identified for active transportation Network improvements. These form both an east-west and north-south spine through the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.

Active Transportation Network Infrastructure Projects Timeline

The recommended active transportation improvements included in this Plan cover approximately 34 kilometres of new pedestrian facilities, cycling facilities, and traffic calmed streets.

The estimated capital costs have been provided to identify relative cost for planning purposes only and should not be used for budgeting purposes as each corridor will require further feasibility studies and actual costs may vary significantly.

Phase 1 (Short Term, 1 to 2 years)

The estimated capital cost of the Phase 1 Active Transportation Network expansion is $6.3 to $9.9 Million.

Corridor Name	Facility Type	Length (km)	Estimated Capital Cost
Cookville (Nathan Cirillo Road, Pine Grove Road, Hwy 10)	Sidewalk	3.1	$2,697,000
	Multi-use Path (new)		$1,550,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$3,100,000
LaHave River Trail	Multi-use Path (new)	3.94	$1,970,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$3,940,000
MARC Connector (Leary Fraser Road)	Multi-use Path (new)	0.16	$80,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$160,000
	Neighbourhood Greenway		$6,400
		Estimated Total Cost	**$6.3M to $9.9M**

Phase 2 (Medium Term, 2 to 5 years)

The estimated total cost of the Phase 2 Active Transportation Network expansion is $4.9 to 7.9 Million.

Corridor Name	Facility Type	Length (km)	Estimated Capital Cost
New Germany (Hwy 10, Route 208, school Street)	Neighbourhood Greenway	3.1	$124,000
	Multi-use Path (new)		$1,550,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$3,100,000
LaHave Route 331, Fort Point Road)	Sidewalk	1.8	$1,566,000
	Multi-use Path (new)		$900,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$1,800,000
	Neighbourhood Greenway		$72,000
Blockhouse (School road, Route 325, Cornwall Road, new connector)	Neighbourhood Greenway	1.2	$48,000
	Multi-use Path (new)		$600,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$1,200,000
		Estimated Total Cost	**$4.9M to $7.9M**

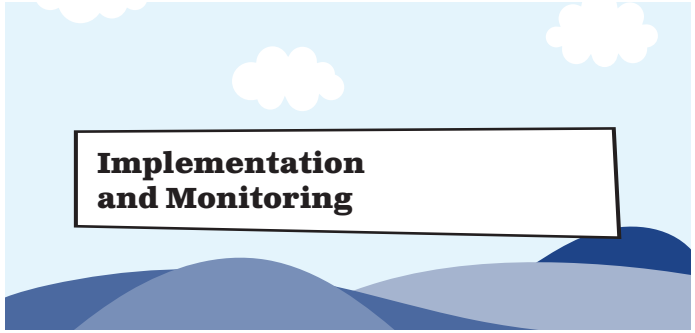
Phase 3 (Long Term, 5+ Years)

The estimated total cost of the Phase 3 Active Transportation Network expansion is $15.5 to 27.4 Million.

Corridor Name	Facility Type	Length (km)	Estimated Capital Cost
South LaHave (from Bridgewater to LaHave Ferry Terminal)	Paved Shoulder	15	$2,400,000
	Multi-use Path (new)		$7,500,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$15,000,000
Big Mushamush Lake (Northfield Road)	Multi-use Path (new)	8	$4,000,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$8,000,000
	Neighbourhood Greenway		$320,000
	Trail		$160,000
Petite Riviere (Petite Riviere Road, Route 331)	Multi-use Path (new)	0.21	$105,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$210,000
	Neighbourhood Greenway		$8,400
Riverport	Neighbourhood Greenway	0.68	$27,200
	Multi-use Path (new)		$340,000
	Multi-use Path (utility relocation/ drainage required)		$680,000
		Estimated Total Cost	$15.5M to $27.4M

The total estimated cost to fully implement the Active Transportation Network Plan ranges from a low of $26.7 million to a high of $45.2 million – largely based on the type of facilities selected for the identified corridors. As this plan was envisioned to be implemented over a 10-year time frame, this would require funding in the amount of anywhere from $2.7 million to $4.5 million in annual funding from all 3 levels of government.

For comparison, if all of the proposed routes from the 2010 Active Transportation Plan were to be implemented today, it would cost more than $50 million for mostly just paved shoulders.



Implementation and Monitoring

Through the active transportation planning process, we have learned what active transportation improvements are most important to community members and have developed a series of strategies and actions for the Municipality to implement the Plan. The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) is intended to guide the Municipality's policy, planning, and infrastructure investments over the next ten years and beyond. While the ATP has been developed as a long-term plan, it will be important to allocate financial and staff resources to prioritize and action improvements in the short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (2-5 years), and the long-term (5+ years). As recommended in Action 1c, the Plan should be reviewed annually to track progress and make sure appropriate resources are allocated for the coming years to continue implementing the plan and ensure that recommendations in the Plan still align with the Municipality's priorities and align with current design standards.

This chapter includes both an implementation and monitoring strategy to help ensure that the ATP is being actioned and progress is being made towards creating a more livable and sustainable MODL.

Implementation Plan

The implementation plan was developed based on the following guiding principles:

- **The ATP is just the first step in improving transportation options in MODL - there is more work to be done.** The strategies and actions outlined in the ATP describe the steps the Municipality should take to achieve the vision and goals identified by community members and stakeholders. While the actions lay the groundwork for implementing the ATP over the next ten years, now if the time to work towards implementing the Plan, as this will take significant time, investment, and resources. Implementing the Plan will include investments in new and updated infrastructure, ongoing maintenance of existing and newly built facilities, resources for developing new standards and policies, funding for new programming and public education, and staff resources. Achieving the vision and goals in the ATP will require the ongoing support of the Municipality, Mayor and Council, and strategic partners - including community organizations, neighbouring municipalities, and the Provincial Government.
- **Community and stakeholder feedback will continue to be critical to improving active transportation in MODL.** Many of the recommended active transportation improvements, strategies, and actions identified in the ATP will require additional technical work and community input. The Municipality will need to work closely with strategic partners, community members, and stakeholder groups to make progress with implementing the ATP and ensuring ATP initiatives are effective and successful.
- **The implementation plan is focused on creating active transportation opportunities in high priority areas over the next ten years.** The ATP has been designed as an action-oriented document, with an emphasis on implementing high priority infrastructure projects in the near term as well as the short-, medium-, and long-term actions following.
- **The ATP is a living document and should be reviewed and updated regularly.** As a long-range Plan, we understand that community interests and priorities may change. While many priorities may remain consistent (as we saw when comparing the 2010 ATP community priorities to current community priorities), there is also flexibility regarding the specific routes, strategies, and actions. The Municipality will need to review the feasibility of each recommended corridor and facility type, and develop functional and detailed designs for the recommended active transportation improvement within the ATP; community and stakeholder input will also be required for each of these projects. The Municipality will also need to regularly review and update the ATP to track progress and ensure recommendations and actions are continuing to align with the Municipality's priorities.

Monitoring Strategy

Monitoring and reporting back to Council and community members about how the ATP is being implemented is essential in ensuring progress is being made towards the vision and goals; it will also support the Municipality in appropriately allocating financial and staff resources towards implementing the prioritized actions and improvements. Monitoring progress on the ATP will also help the Municipality with identifying changing conditions and community or Council priorities, which may require changes or updates to the ATP. Monitoring needs to be:

- **Meaningful.** Monitoring should yield meaningful results and point to the success in achieving the vision, goals, and targets of the Active Transportation Plan.
- **Measurable.** Monitoring needs to establish criteria that are measurable and for which data or information can be readily obtained.
- **Manageable.** Monitoring implementation needs to consider resource limitations and identify measures where information is accessible, or data is simple to collect.

Metrics of Success

The monitory strategy for the ATP focuses on identifying 'measures of success' for two components:

- The degree of progress in implementing the Plan.
- The outcomes and impact of the Plan.

Measures of success are described in the tables below, including the indicator metric and data sources.

Measure of Success	Indicator	Source
Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling Mode Share (commuting)	%	Statistics Canada Census
Proportion each of women, children, and seniors walking, wheeling, and cycling (commuting)	%	Statistics Canada Census
Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling Volumes on Key Corridors	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Active Transportation Funding Levels (% of total budget)	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
MODL Staff resources dedicated to Active Transportation (FTE)	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Transportation sector GHG Emissions	Tonnes CO_2	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Theme 1: Connect

The success metrics for **Connect** are focused on establishing a complete, connected, and convenient network of active transportation facilities. The following measures of success will help the Municipality determine if it is achieving the goals of the ATP.

Measure of Success	Indicator	Source
Total length of active transportation facilities (by facility type)	Total km	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of streets with a pedestrian facility on at least one side	% of all streets	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Length of completed recommended active transportation improvement projects	Total km	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of MODL's total jobs and population within 400 metres of active transportation facilities	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of MODL's total land area within 400 metres of active transportation facilities	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of MODL's total jobs and population within 400 metres of public transit stops	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Theme 2: Experience

The success metrics for **Experience** are focused on designing or redesigning active transportation routes to ensure that community members and visitors can safely and comfortably travel in MODL, no matter the mode.

Measure of Success	Indicator	Source
Number of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, RCMP
Proportions of all collisions involving people walking and cycling	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Total length of active transportation facilities constructed around new developments	Total kms	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Number of school aged students participating in an education and cycling skills training course	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Total length of traffic calmed streets	Total kms	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Number of audible pedestrian signals	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of intersections with curb ramps and pedestrian crossings to connect all active transportation routes	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Theme 3: Encourage

The success metrics for **Encourage** are focused on making active travel a part of everyday life for residents and visitors.

Measure of Success	Indicator	Source
Total number of public wayfinding displays	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, RCMP
Amount of funding allocated for promotion and education	$	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Number of people who participated in a bicycle education program	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Number of new programs or initiatives designed to encourage active transportation	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Number of views or downloads of online maps and active transportation resources	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of Municipal staff who travel to work by walking, wheeling, cycling, carpooling, or transit	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of active transportation routes that include public amenities (benches, lighting, washrooms, recycling bins, etc.)	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Number of new public amenities installed along active transportation routes	#	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Proportion of MODL's facilities and businesses with bike parking or end-of-trip facilities within 100 metres	%	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Funding Strategy

Although the Active Transportation Plan is estimated to cost approximately between $26.7 million and $45.2 million over the next 10 years, these costs can (and should) be shared by pursuing external funding from other levels of governments, partnerships with other organizations and the development industry, and the integration of cycling and pedestrian projects within other community and transportation plans and projects.

This section describes several strategies that the Municipality may consider accessing to help leverage its investments and maximize its ability to implement active transportation improvements.

Capital Planning

The Municipality should incorporate the Active Transportation Plan recommendations into its Operating and Capital Budgets to ensure that projects are accounted for in the Municipality 's capital planning process.

In this regard, the Municipality should seek changes to its Operating and Capital Budget for 2024/2025 and beyond to fund implementation of the Active Transportation Plan.

Integration

When and where (and as much as) possible, the Municipality should integrate cycling and pedestrian improvements with other plans and capital projects. There are active transportation components associated with many upcoming and planned road renewal programs, development projects and major capital projects which have been identified as a part of the Municipality 's active transportation network. The best opportunities to provide safe and convenient active transportation facilities is during the initial planning and design of these projects.

Wherever possible, the Municipality should seek out opportunities to integrate active transportation facilities with new infrastructure or renewal and rehabilitation projects, such as major road resurfacing and servicing upgrades. The Municipality needs to also make necessary amendments to existing policies and standards to ensure opportunities to integrate recommended active transportation projects are required as new developments occur.

External Funding Sources

The costs of implementing the improvements identified in the Active Transportation Plan can be significantly reduced by pursuing external funding sources and partnership opportunities for many of the identified projects. This section describes some funding strategies and potential funding sources that the Municipality may want to consider accessing to help leverage its investments and maximize its ability to implement transportation improvements. While the Municipality already regularly checks grant funding opportunities, MODL should also pursue all available sources of funding for transportation infrastructure and programs, including the programs identified below (Note: as funding opportunities change regularly, the information in this section is subject to change):

- **Provincial Programs and Initiatives.** The Province of Nova Scotia provides funding through the Connect2 program "for active transportation projects that improve connectivity within and between communities and have the potential to reduce emissions and increase physical activity." Funding can be used for community planning, feasibility studies, learning by doing, public engagement sessions, program promotion and demonstration projects.
  - **Active transportation infrastructure and design** projects may include the temporary installation of bike lanes, public space and active transportation routes, core active transportation network infrastructure or design, as well as engineering or feasibility studies. Grants of up to 75% of total project costs to a maximum of $100,000 per project are available in this category.
  - **Shared Mobility and bicycle Fleets** projects may include shared mobility services pilot projects as well as bicycle fleet pilot projects. Grants of up to $75,000 are available in this category.
  - **Capacity building and community engagement** projects may include municipal staff training, capacity building, or networks; marketing and communications – social marketing, and public engagement activities. Grants of up to 75% of total project costs to a maximum of $50,000 per project are available in this category.

- **Federal Funding.** There are several programs that provide funding for environmental and local transportation infrastructure projects in municipalities across Canada. Typically, the federal government contributes one-third of the cost of municipal infrastructure projects. Provincial and municipal governments contribute the remaining funds, and in some instances, there may be private sector investment as well.
  - **National Active Transportation Fund.** In 2022 the Federal Government launched the National Active Transportation Fund (ATF), with an allocation of $400 million over 5 years. This fund was heavily oversubscribed with over $1.3 Billion in applications for both the capital and planning streams - including funding for the development of this Plan. However, the entire funding allocated for this fund was used up in the 2022/2023 calendar year, except for $20 million remaining for Indigenous Communities. In discussions with Infrastructure Canada staff, they indicated that the ATF will be permanently embedded within the Permanent Public Transit Fund (PPTF). The PPTF has an annual allocation of $3 Billion per annum, and a portion of this fund will be dedicated to Active Transportation, with new applications being accepted as of 2025.
  - **Green Municipal Fund.** The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) manages the Green Municipal Fund, with a total allocation of $550 million. This fund is intended to support municipal government efforts to reduce pollution, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve quality of life. The expectation is that knowledge and experience gained in best practices and innovative environmental projects will be applied to national infrastructure projects. In conversation with FCM staff they indicated that a new fund focused on rapid implementation projects (including tactical urbanism projects), is currently being developed, with an expected launch date in late 2024.
- **Developers.** The Municipality should explore opportunities for road improvements to be constructed as development occurs within or adjacent to Municipality of the District of Lunenburg. This process could be formalized through an update to the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg's Official Plan or through individual negotiations.
- **Private sector.** Many corporations wish to be good corporate neighbours — to be active in the community and to promote environmentally beneficial causes. Bicycle and pedestrian routes and facilities are well-suited to corporate sponsorship and have attracted significant sponsorship both at the local level and throughout North America.
- **Service Clubs.** In many communities, service clubs (including the Lion's Club and Rotary) have been involved in funding and building bicycle infrastructure and facilities including pathways and bicycle parking.

Staff Resources

Implementation of the Active Transportation Plan requires not only additional financial resources, but significant Municipal staff resources to implement the various strategies. Given the current staffing structure, the Municipality should designate a lead staff person to implement the Active Transportation Plan. Based upon feedback from Municipal staff and community stakeholders, the responsibility for implementing the Active Transportation Plan (as well as promoting and encouraging active transportation) would likely be best suited for the municipality's Active Living Coordinator position.

The Active Living Coordinator should work with the numerous departments within MODL to enact the plan and increase active transportation related tourism activities, including but not limited to:

- Engineering and Public Works
- Recreation, Parks, and Tourism
- Economic Development
- Administration
- Planning and Development Services
- Climate Change and Sustainability

Active Transportation Committee

Given the need for ongoing, concerted action to achieve the goals, targets, and outcomes of the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), it is recommended that the Municipality support the efforts of the Transportation Committee as they support the development and expansion of sustainable transportation options (including transit and active transportation) within MODL. Regular check ins and monitoring are required, as well as regular reporting back to council on the implementation status of the ATP. It is recommended that quarterly updates be provided to council along with an annual summary of programs, policy changes, and new infrastructure that supports implementation of the ATP.

Summary and Closing

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg is heading into an exciting time with new developments and significant growth anticipated over the next decade. The ATP provides the Municipality with a comprehensive roadmap for creating a more livable, sustainable, connected, and active community. The Plan includes recommendations for expanding the existing active transportation network, as well as developing new policies and programs that will support and encourage community members to choose active travel modes. Implementing the recommendations and actions included in the ATP will improve the accessibility, comfort, convenience, and safety of community members who choose to actively travel in the municipality.

The ATP is just one step towards improving active transportation in MODL but is not the last. The strategies and actions identified in the ATP create a roadmap for the Municipality to follow over the next ten years. This includes investments in new and upgraded infrastructure, ongoing maintenance of active transportation facilities, funding new programs, and considerable staff resources. Implementing the Plan will also require close collaboration with the Government of Nova Scotia's Department of Public Works, as well as continued coordination with community organizations and various stakeholders.

While the ATP was developed in part based on extensive technical work, the Plan would not have been possible without the valuable input and feedback of community members, local stakeholders, council, and administration. We would like to thank all community members for their participation in the planning process and for the valuable input used to develop the ATP, and look forward to seeing MODL become an even better place to walk, wheel, and enjoy active travel in the years ahead.

This page intentionally left blank.

Appendix A

Round 1 Engagement Summary

Active Transportation Plan

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Appendix B

Round 2 Engagement Summary

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Appendix C

Recommended Active Transportation Network Maps

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Finance Committee
Item #: 9.2.2
Date: December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to:	**Finance Committee**
Submitted by:	**Tissy Bolivar, Program Coordinator**
Date:	**December 2, 2025**
Re:	**PRO Kids Reserve Budget Request**

Recommendation

That the Finance Committee recommends to Municipal Council that Municipal Council approves up to $21,418.99 in additional funds for the PRO Kids program for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, and further, that these funds come out of the PRO Kids Reserves.

Executive summary

[a short overview of the key elements of your report; only used for long reports]

Background

To date in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, staff have processed over 350 applications, representing nearly 200 individual applications, for a total approved amount of $83,559.26. In addition to Council's contribution to the program, we have raised just over $23,000 in grants and donations to support the program.

Applications are still being received; however, our current budget is depleted. To process additional applications, more funds are required. The PRO Kids reserve has $21,418.99 in funds, which represents an accumulation of funds over various budget years when all the budgeted funds were not required. For example, if in one fiscal year we had a budget of $50,000 and had applications in that year that only required $40,000, the $10,000 remaining budget was allocated to the PRO Kids reserves. 2023 was the first year we needed to use funds in this reserve to accommodate applicants' requests.

Discussion

PRO Kids is a program that provides financial assistance to children and youth from the Municipality of Lunenburg who, due to lack of funds, are not able to participate in sport, recreation, and cultural activities. This program strives to remove financial barriers to ensure every child and youth has an opportunity to participate.

We continue to see significant increases in the cost of registration fees for programs, as well as an increase in applications year after year. As such, staff are actively seeking additional revenue sources to sustain the program long-term.

In the meantime, the ability to access the funds in the PRO Kids reserve would allow staff the flexibility to support additional applications this fiscal year.

Strategic Focus

PRO Kids supports families and improves quality of life by making it easier for everyone to join activities that support health, happiness, and connection. When cost isn't a barrier, people can stay active, meet others, try new things, and feel more involved in their community. This leads to better well-being and a stronger sense of belonging for everyone.

Budget/Financial Implications

To continue processing more applications, more budget is required. A budget up to $21,418.99 would allow staff to cover any additional applications until the fiscal year-end, without having to request additional funds later in the fiscal. Any unspent funds would remain in the PRO Kids reserve for future use.

The PRO Kids Reserves currently has $21,418.99.

Climate Change/sustainability

N/A

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA@MODL)

PRO Kids directly supports EDIA (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) by reducing barriers that prevent people from fully participating in recreation programs. When cost is removed or reduced, more individuals, regardless of income, background, abilities, or life circumstances, can access meaningful recreation opportunities. This creates a more inclusive environment where diverse community members feel welcomed, represented, and supported. Financial assistance can help level the playing field, ensuring that participation is based on

interest and need rather than financial capacity, which strengthens equity and promotes fair access for everyone.

Strategic Communications

N/A

Work plan

Administration of the PRO Kids program is within the current work plan of the Recreation, Parks, and Tourism staff.

Alternatives

Council could decide not to allow staff to access reserve funds to support the PRO Kids program.

Conclusion

Staff recommend that the Finance Committee recommends to Municipal Council to approve up to $21,418.99 in additional funds for the PRO Kids program from the PRO Kids Reserve. This would allow staff to fund additional applications received until the fiscal year-end.

Report Preparation	
Department	Recreation, Parks, and Tourism
Report Prepared by	Tissy Bolivar, Program Coordinator
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

Finance Committee
Item #: 9.3.1
Date: December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to:	**Finance Committee**
Submitted by:	**Susan Berry, Supervisor Corporate Services & Communications**
Date:	**December 2, 2025**
Re:	**Bylaw 017 – Police Clearance Certificate Application Fees Bylaw**

Recommendation

Should Council wish to remove the fee for all criminal records checks staff recommends the repeal of Bylaw 017 Fees Charged for Police Clearance Certificate Applications to remove the fee for Police Clearance Certificates.

Background

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) currently has Bylaw 017 Police Clearance Certificate Application Fees. This Bylaw outlines the fee charged by MODL for the RCMP to process a police clearance certificate, commonly known as a criminal record check, for residents of MODL. The Bylaw does not require fees for any volunteer for a non-profit organization or for students. For all other purposes the fee is $25. This fee has remained unchanged since 2008.

The current process is a resident who is not a student, or a volunteer for a non-profit organization, comes in person to the Municipal Services building to pay the $25 and obtain a receipt. This receipt is presented to the RCMP detachment that serves the community where the resident resides.

The burden of having to go to two different locations and pay a fee for a criminal record check has been raised by Council which has directed staff to examine the feasibility of removing the fee for criminal record checks for employment.

In Lunenburg County both the District of Lunenburg and the Town of Bridgewater charge for criminal record checks for residents who are not students and volunteers. The Town of Mahone Bay, the Town of Lunenburg, and the Municipality of Chester do not charge any fees.

	District of Lunenburg	Municipality of Chester	Town of Bridgewater	Town of Mahone Bay	Town of Lunenburg
Fee – employment	$25.00	Free	$30.00	Free	Free
Fee – volunteer/students	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free

The Municipality of Chester, Town of Mahone Bay and Town of Lunenburg all use the RCMP for policing services. The Town of Bridgewater employs its own municipal police force.

Further, across the province there is a variety of fees charged by municipalities, although most consistently do not charge a fee for students or volunteers.

Municipality	**Criminal Record Check Fee for Employment**	**Criminal Record Check Fee for Students/Volunteer**
Municipality of the County of Antigonish	$25.00 (free if employment is with the police or federal government)	free
Municipality of East Hants	free	free
Municipality of Colchester	free	free
West Hants Regional Municipality	$33.90 + tax via Globeia	free
Municipality of the County of Kings	free	free
Municipality of the District of Yarmouth	$33.90 + tax via Globeia	free
Town of Annapolis	$38.95	$8.95 fee for online application, free in person
Town of Kentville	free	free
Town of Pictou	free	free
Municipality of Barrington	free	free

Discussion

Criminal record checks have become a standard part of the employment process and as such, the revenue generated has been increasing over the past few fiscal years. This revenue, although small in comparison to the overall budget, is still revenue that should be taken into consideration during the evaluation of the fee for the criminal record check.

Several considerations arise when evaluating the current process and exploring alternative options. The requirement for applicants to physically visit the Municipal Services Building and pay the $25 fee can pose challenges, particularly for individuals seeking employment who may face financial constraints. The $25 fee can pose a prohibitive barrier to an essential step in securing employment. This disproportionately impacts equity-seeking groups who may already face financial hardship. This burden includes the fee and transportation to the Municipal Services Building. For those entering the workforce, the $25 fee can be a significant financial hurdle.

The revenue generated also represents staff time. In 2024/25 MODL collected $15,925 in fees, which represents a minimum of 637 interactions at the front counter of the Municipal Services Building. This is time that staff could shift to increased responsiveness for other resident interactions and inquiries.

Strategic Focus

The removal of the fee associated with criminal record checks would have a small impact quality of life by improving affordability for residents and simplifying the process of getting a required records check.

Budget/Financial Implications

Below is a table outlining the revenue associated with the criminal record check fees for the past five fiscal years.

Fiscal Year	Revenue
2024/25	$15 925.00
2023/24	$18 070.00
2022/23	$14 825.00
2021/22	$11 225.00
2020/21	$9 800.00

Climate Change/sustainability

Removing the additional step of coming to the Municipal Services building will slightly reduce the amount of driving required of individuals needing a record check.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA@MODL)

Challenges identified through the IDEA lens are highlighted above in the discussion.

Strategic Communications

There are no communications issues under the current recommendation.

Work plan

Slight increase in staff availability to respond to other inquiries, due to the elimination of roughly 650 counter visits.

Alternatives

- Direct staff to investigate online provider of criminal record checks
- Leave the bylaw as is

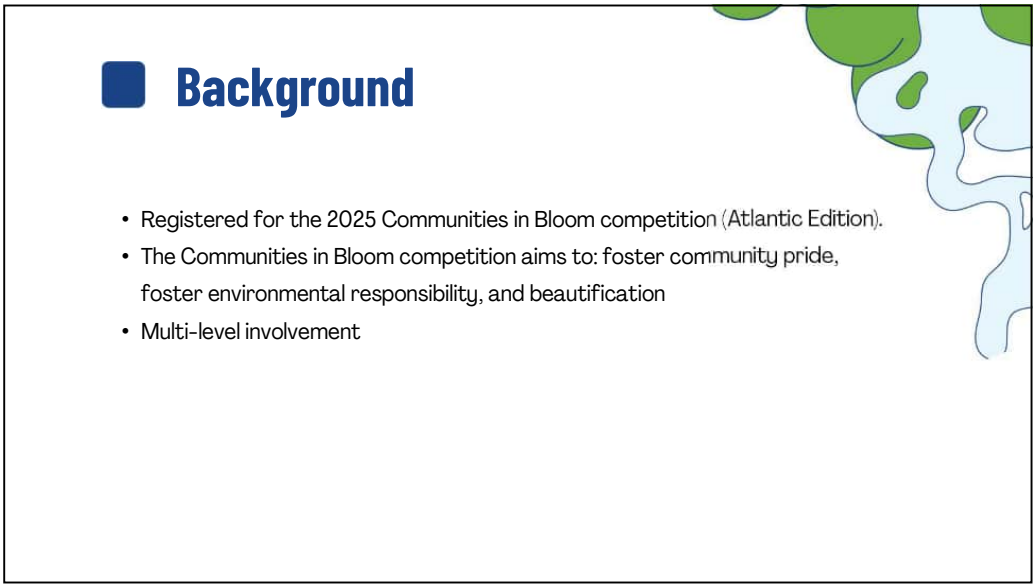
Conclusion

There are benefits to repealing the bylaw and removing the fee associated with criminal record checks, and would provide minor improvements to resident's quality of life and greenhouse gas emissions. Eliminating the fee would represent a loss of revenue in the range of 10,000 to 15,000.

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

Finance Committee
Item #: 9.4.1
Date: December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

1

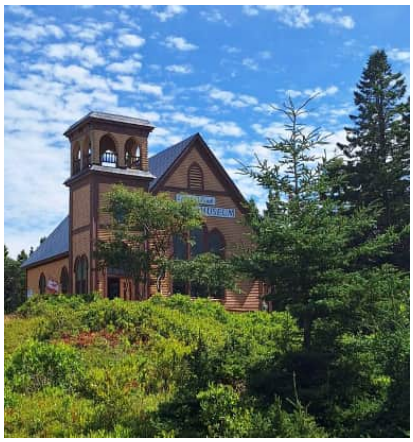


2

Objective

To receive a comprehensive and honest assessment of how MODL is perceived and provide us a baseline for the future, all for the $795 registration fee.

We also took this valuable opportunity to receive feedback on Osprey Village.



3

The Process

1. Prepare Community Profile
2. Plan the Judge's Itinerary
3. Engage with the Judges
4. Showcase the Community
5. Receive Feedback
6. Receive Blooms award 1-5

Growing Great Places Together
CiB Cef
CANADA
Cultivons ensemble de beaux espaces

4

The Judges

Our judges had great pedigree!

Susan Ellis

- Ottawa Valley Tourism Association
- Ontario East Economic Development Commission (President)
- Creative Economy, Ottawa Valley
- Manager of Economic Development, Recreation and Tourism with the City of Pembroke.

John Lohuis

- Administrator positions in parks and recreation since 1977
- CEO of the Niagara Parks Commission
- An adjunct lecturer for the University of Waterloo

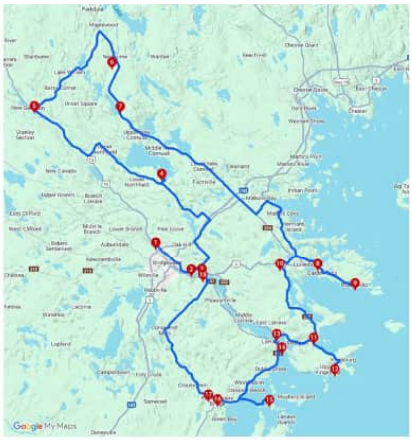
5

The Itinerary

We covered 207 kms in one day and took the judges through almost all of the Council Districts.

We visited

- 8 municipal parks
- 5 local businesses
- 2 museums
- 2 “destinations”
- 1 beach
- 1 ferry



6

Highlights en Route

We also highlighted the following en route:

- Heritage Properties
- Accessibility
- Local industry
- Blockhouse business district
- Stewardship partnerships
- Public Art Projects
- The Blue Route
- Community Involvement

7

The Judging

The judging process involves evaluation of the Community under various sections:

- Community Appearance
- Environmental Action
- Heritage Conservation
- Tree Management
- Landscape
- Plant & Floral Displays

8

Evaluation - Community Appearance

Observations –

- Most properties are clean, litter-free and well-cared for
- Many small hamlets showcase unique offerings of NS living and culture.
- Special mention of the new park furniture and waste receptacles.

9

Evaluation - Environmental Action

Observations

- AT Plan supported by over 110kms of trails
- Commended on comprehensive waste facility
- Municipal beach was clean and well-maintained.
- Electrifying small tools
- Climate Change Action Plan update

10

Evaluation - Heritage Conservation

Observations

- LaHave Ferry
- Strong municipal grant funding
- LaHave Islands Marine Museum
- Fort Point Museum

11

Evaluation - Tree Management

Observations

- Professional tree services
- Abundant native forest
- Exotic Fruit Nursery

12

Evaluation - Landscape

Observations

- Completion of Parks & Open Space Guidelines
- Accessibility Training (Rick Hanson standards)
- Use of reclaimed asphalt for parking areas
- Qualified assessments and inspections of playgrounds
- Blue Biking Route
- Natural landscapes and shorelines

13

Evaluation - Plant & Floral Displays

Observations

Very few formal floral and plant displays

Special mention for Swiss Chalet

14

Recommendations

Several of the recommendations

- Beautification recognition program
- Fire Smart Training
- Bioswale ditching
- Mitigating Heat islands
- Façade Improvement Program
- Public Art Banner project
- Summer Events/Music Festival
- Widen inclusive programming
- Adopt-a-Tree Program
- Shade in Public Areas
- CNLA Landscape Design standards
- Benchmarking against other districts
- More floral pots, hanging baskets or planted medians
- Low-maintenance property borders
- Encourage Community Pride from the Big-box retailers
- Weed-free traffic islands

15

Evaluation Scores

We received the following scores in each section.

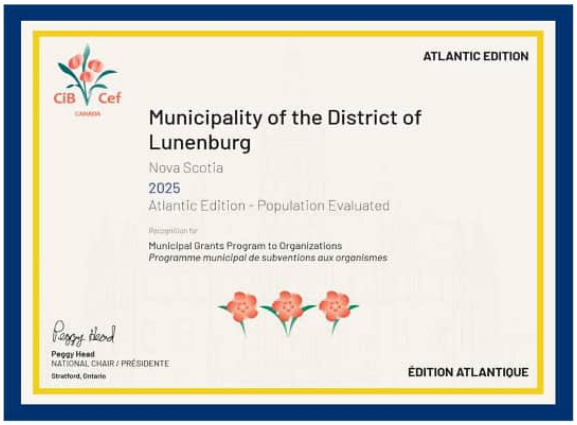
• Community Appearance	103 / 150
• Environmental Action	109 / 150
• Heritage Conservation	105 / 150
• Tree Management	N/A
• Landscape	105 / 200
• Plant & Floral Displays	N/A

The municipality achieved the overall score of 422 / 650 which equates to an award of 3 Blooms

16

Special Recognition

We received special recognition for our Municipal Grants Program to Organizations.



17

Next Steps

1. Review and evaluate recommendations
2. Look at how we can use a Community Development lens
3. Consider a future submission in 2 or 3 years

18

The End...or is it?

19

Evaluation Form

2025

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia

Communities in Bloom® Collectivités en fleurs
ATLANTIC
Growing Great Places Together
Cultivons ensemble de beaux espaces

2025 Evaluation Form

2025 Evaluation Form

Community:	**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg**
Province:	**Nova Scotia**
Country:	**Canada**
Category:	**Atlantic Edition - Population**

CiB recognizes efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change which is reflected in several criteria including: Environmental Action; Preservation of Natural Heritage; Tree Management and Landscape

Disclaimer:

Please note for this evaluation, the criteria *Tree Management* and *Plants & Floral Displays* have been removed from the grid. This adjustment was made to ensure the community is not penalized in areas that do not apply. Scores and ratings are therefore based on the remaining four criteria.

Community Appearance	**103.00**	/	**150.00**
Environmental Action	**109.00**	/	**150.00**
Heritage Conservation	**105.00**	/	**150.00**
Tree Management	N/A	/	N/A
Landscape	**105.00**	/	**200.00**
Plant and Floral Displays	N/A	/	N/A
Total	**422.00**	/	**650.00**

Percentage: **64.92%**

Bloom rating: **3 Blooms**

Bloom rating: Provincial, National and International Participants
Up to 55%: 1 bloom. 56% to 63%: 2 blooms. 64% to 72%: 3 blooms 73% to 81%: 4 blooms. >82%: 5 blooms.

Mention: Municipal Grants Program to Organizations

Representative (s) of Community

Name:	Dave Waters	Function:	Director, Economic Development
Name:	Sandra Challis	Function:	Admin. Ass't to Rec. & Ec. Dev.
Name:		Function:	

Judges

Name:	Susan Ellis	Name:	John Lohuis

Evaluation date: July 9,10, 2025

2025 Evaluation Form

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Evaluation is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community.

Evaluation is also adjusted to match the capacity of a community population to the achievements in all criteria – i.e. evaluate what they do (achieve) with what they have (population/ resources).

Some aspects of the evaluation might not be applicable: scoring will be prorated.

The score will vary from the previous year based on the facts that the evaluation form is subject to modifications each year and that the scores are based on the perception of the current judges.

SECTORS OF EVALUATION

Municipal:

- Municipal properties, parks and green spaces, streets, streetscapes
- Properties owned and run by municipality such as museums, historical sites

Business and Institutions:

Properties owned and managed by

- **Business:** commercial sector, shopping centres, Business Improvement Areas (BIA), industrial parks, manufacturing plants
- **Institutions:** schools, universities, churches, hospitals, service and community organization buildings (such as YMCA, Legion), private museums, Government and Crown Corporations buildings (such as Canada Post, provincial and federal parks, etc.)
- **Tourism bureaus and Chamber of Commerce offices**
- **Farms:** in rural communities, farms can be considered in this section

Residential:

- Citizens and citizen groups acting within their own properties
- Residential property owners, rate payer groups including condos and co-ops

Community Involvement:

The principle of community involvement is so fundamental to the program that it is considered in each segment of the evaluation.

- Individuals, community organizations, citizen groups (includes youth programs) – all contributing to various aspects of community improvement, including municipal spaces maintained through the efforts of volunteers and community
- Organized clubs such as horticultural societies, garden clubs, community associations, school groups
- Service clubs such as Rotary, Lions, Optimist
- Participation (financial and/or in-kind or employee participation) by the municipality, businesses and institutions.

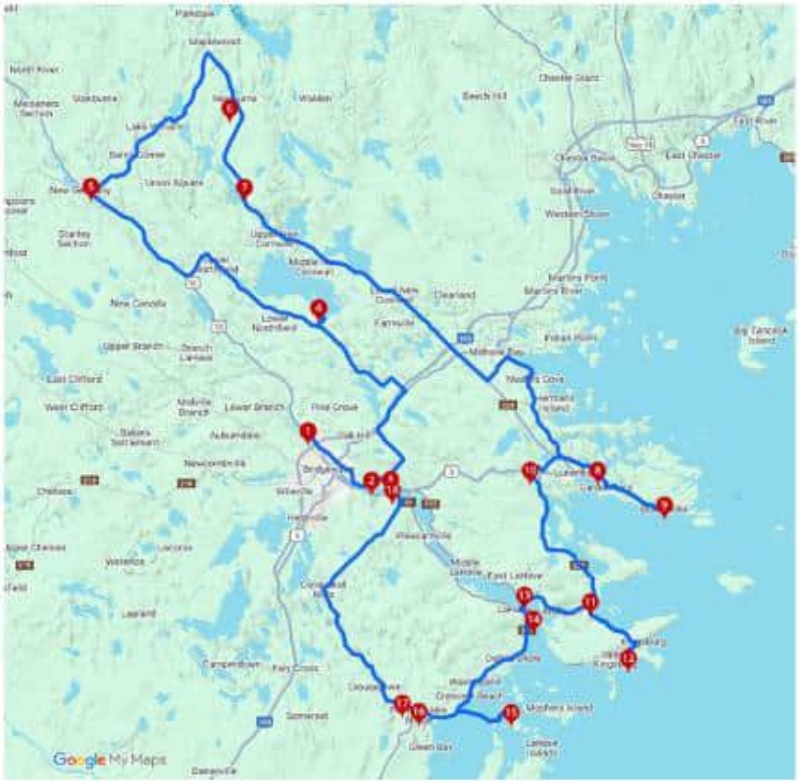
2025 Evaluation Form

GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Thanks to the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) for participating in your inaugural Communities in Bloom assessment in the Atlantic Edition Population category. We are pleased to have offered our observations and recommendations based on: **Appearance, Environmental Action, Heritage Conservation, Tree Management, Landscape and Plants/Floral.** Each of these elements review the contributions through the Municipality, Businesses & Institutions, Residential and Community Involvement. There are in total 78 specific evaluation elements within the assessment grid.

Congratulations on achieving **Three Blooms** in your first year of Provincial assessment!
Our visit was well planned and showcased the range of the many hamlets and areas of interest within the municipality as noted below to achieve this score.

Route Map



2025 Evaluation Form

MAP LEGEND			
1	Best Western Plus, Cookville	2	Miller Point Peace Park, Dayspring
3	M.A.R.C., Dayspring	4	Mushamush Beach Park, Sweetland
5	Hummingbird Café, New Germany	6	Indian Falls, Newburne
7	Church Lake Park, Newburne	8	Sawpit Wharf Park, Garden Lots
9	Blue Rocks	10	Exotic Fruit Nursery, Front Centre
11	Rose Bay Bistro, Rose Bay	12	Hirtle's Beach
13	LaHave Ferry	14	Fort Point Museum, LaHave
15	LaHave Islands Marine Museum, LaHave Isl.	16	Petite Riviere Community Park
17	Maritime Painted Saltbox, Petite Riviere	18	LaHave Sunset Park, Conquerall Mills

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, Canada 2025 25

As the Municipality grows in population, service levels will need to be reset and articulated to community residents. The Municipality is in an enviable position with no debt, largely to a conservative approach to service provision levels and arrangement of joint agreements with the Municipality of Bridgewater for many services such as sewage, water, arenas and community centres.

The many grants provided by MODL to community groups and sport teams/associations add to the community desirability and quality of life. It is clear that residents treasure the natural beauty of the area and are cautious about how the municipality is to grow in the future.

The museums and lighthouses described the evolution of this area and recognize the Mi Maq indigenous population.

The many trails within MODL have well-described trailheads and are well maintained and were a highlight on our visit.

The overall scores did not include Tree Management nor Plants/Floral scores for this first iteration of CiB assessment given the rural nature of the municipality at this time.

Susan Ellis
National Judge

John Lohuis
National Judge

2025 Evaluation Form

2025 Evaluation Form

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Community appearance reflects an overall effort by the municipality, businesses, institutions and the residents throughout the community to create great first impressions and a sense that there is continuous attention and upkeep to critical elements of a community that benefit quality of life and economic vitality Elements for evaluation are: parks and green spaces, medians, boulevards, sidewalks, streets; municipal, commercial, institutional and residential properties; ditches, road shoulders, vacant lots, signs and buildings; weed control, litter clean-up (including cigarette butts and gum), graffiti prevention/removal and vandalism deterrent programs.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Gateway Impressions First impressions of the community including gateway/entrance landscape treatments	10	5
Overall Impressions Order, cleanliness, curb appeal and first impressions	10	6
Anti-litter/Graffiti Prevention and Removal Community anti-litter/graffiti awareness programs	10	9
Regulations Effective bylaws, programs and policies and enforcement; litter control, private property maintenance by-laws, vandalism, graffiti prevention and eradication, graffiti removal kits to residents	10	7
Asset Appearance Includes public green infrastructure: parks, streetscapes (sidewalks, planters, urban signage and furniture such as benches, litter and recycling containers etc.)	10	7
Municipal Properties Appearance Visual appeal and condition of municipal buildings and municipal owned properties	10	7
Business & Institutions		
Overall Impressions Curb appeal, order, and cleanliness	15	8
Site Conditions Condition of buildings (exterior maintenance), grounds, sidewalks and parking lots	15	7
Furniture/Amenities Appearance Condition of urban furniture: benches, litter and recycling containers	5	3
Residential		
Overall Impressions Curb Appeal, order and cleanliness	20	17
Property Conditions Condition of buildings, grounds and yards	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public Participation In community, neighbourhood or individual streets, clean-up programs, activities and annual maintenance (including promotion, organization, innovations involving youth and seniors, etc.)	10	6
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses service groups, and institutions for community clean-up programs.	10	9
Community Appearance Total	**150.00**	**103.00**

2025 Evaluation Form

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Observations:

Municipal, residential and most commercial properties are clean, litter free and well-cared for. There are many small hamlets that showcase unique offerings of Nova Scotia living and culture. These make the visits through rural Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) memorable.

The many trail systems and adjacent amenities are well-cared for and attractive with clean waste receptacles, provision of doggie do bag dispensers.

It is somewhat difficult for MODL to set up gateway signage to the municipality given constraints of provincial highway regulations and the absence of a large urban core. A local group(s) could adopt a Welcome Sign to MODL with a significantly planted floral/ground cover bed at appropriate sites(s).

Private residential properties are well maintained, while commercial properties need attention.

Vacant properties do lack attention and dangerous unsightly by-laws are not being enforced at this point as they are complaint driven only.

New benches are being installed in the parks with long-lasting composite materials. Many of the benches are proudly sponsored by individuals.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that MODL adopt a comprehensive signage and wayfinding strategy that provides guidance to all residents and sectors in the community. Ensure that attention is also brought to tourism-related sites requiring attention.

It is also recommended that utility boxes (traffic signals, hydro, cable, etc.) make use of vinyl wraps utilizing public art or historic streetscapes/landscapes be used to lessen the impact of rusting infrastructure.

It is suggested that the municipality commence recognition programs for beautification efforts within MODL; such contests could include best residential, institutional and/or commercial properties. As MODL has many small hamlets, perhaps these small hamlets could each enter a friendly competition for best appearance while providing visitors with a tourism route on the results.

2025 Evaluation Form

Improve site appearance by enforcing basic standards relating to appearance at the commercial properties of Osprey Village (east side).

Review policies and enforcement of how vacant lots are managed.

2025 Evaluation Form

2025 Evaluation Form

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Environmental action pertains to the impact of human activities on the environment and the subsequent efforts and achievements of the community with respect to environmental stewardship, policies, by-laws, programs and best practices for waste reduction and landfill diversion, composting sites, landfill sites, hazardous waste collections, water conservation, energy conservation, and activities under the guiding principles of sustainable development pertaining to green spaces.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Sustainable Development Strategies Policies, programs, guidelines, long-term planning/vision; effective bylaws/policies and their enforcement; and public education programs and activities. This includes activities such as: the creation of Active Transportation networks, fleet management, and recognition of the importance of biodiversity to mitigate and adapt to climate change.	20	15
Waste Reduction Reduction of waste going to landfill and results (3-R: reduce, reuse and recycle), municipal composting programs, including activities such as composting sites, yard waste collections, plastics reduction programs, mulching of wood debris (Christmas trees, hedge trimmings, etc.) and reclamation of cut trees. Handling of hazardous waste including e-waste collection and reuse of compost material. Officially mandating the greening of public events such as on-site recycling bins, biodegradable drink containers, food service dishes, utensils, etc. to minimize the use of plastic.	20	16
Water Conservation Use reduction programs such as promotions, efficient irrigation, use of non-potable water, water restriction policies	15	12
Energy Conservation Programs such as alternate forms of energy (ex. geothermal, biomass, wind, solar) and initiatives such as: energy-efficient appliances, shielding for night skies, efficient street lighting	15	12
Environmental Initiatives, Innovations and Actions - Development and expansion of sustainable mobility and active transportation networks such as bike lanes, multi-use commuter pathways, and recreational trails - Horticultural practices such as planned biodiversity, green roofs, green walls, green lanes, living fences, buffer zones; re-use of sites; engineered wetlands, bioswales, permeable surfaces and rainwater management - Brownfield redevelopment, remediation, land reclamation - Air quality programs such as alternate energy sources, sustainable design of facilities, sustainable fleet management, reduction of greenhouse gas emission (carbon reduction), anti-idling by-laws.	10	7
Business & Institutions		
Participation in The Environmental Effort Waste management (reduce, reuse and recycle), water conservation, energy conservation and audits (fleet management, electric conservation), brownfield management	10	6
Corporate Environmental Initiatives and Action Innovation/stewardship, initiatives, activities (for example: environmental clean-up activities, plastic reduction) carbon emissions, green roofs	10	7
Residential		
Participation in Environmental Initiatives 3-R (reduce, reuse and recycle), composting	10	6
Water & Energy Conservation Practices such as water use reduction, rainwater collection and rain gardens, alternate forms of energy, thermostat reduction	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public Participation – Civil Action Participation in public forums and policy development on environmental issues, such as climate change adaptation and mitigation	5	3
Public Participation in Activities Community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual street environmental activities and programs (including promotion, organization and evidence of taking ownership, etc.)	10	6
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions in public environmental activities and programs	10	7
Environmental Action Total	**150.00**	**109.00**

2025 Evaluation Form

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Observations:

The Active Transportation plan for MODL is supported by over 110 km of trails throughout the district.

The municipality recently invested in additional waste pickups, to reduce dumping along roadways and streets.

There are two recycling/transfer stations that accept all forms of recycled materials and are very comprehensive.

The municipal beach area was clean and well-maintained for swimmers.

The municipality should continue to convert to electric grass trimmers and small tools and toward appropriate additions of electric vehicles to the fleet; many municipal operations have vehicles at a location unnecessarily idling.

It is noted that the municipal Climate Action plan is being updated.

Recommendations:

Use of organized trade and swap meets for household goods and items can reduce waste going to the landfill.

Offer municipal Fire Smart training programs to residents.

Encourage more conversions of ditches into bioswales by planting low-maintenance shrubs or nitrogen-fixing plants.

Continue to utilize permeable surfaces to reduce storm water runoff.

Consider mitigation of heat islands created in paved parking lots by installing bushes, shrubs and trees in the existing medians.

Perform and update energy audits of all municipal facilities/fleet to lower overall greenhouse gas emissions.

Consider municipal provision of residential compost containers and water barrels.

2025 Evaluation Form

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Heritage conservation includes efforts to preserve and protect both natural and cultural heritage within the community. Preservation of natural heritage pertains to policies, plans and actions concerning all elements of biodiversity including flora and fauna ecosystems and associated geological structures and formations. Cultural conservation represents the "persona" of a community and refers to the heritage that helps define the community including the legacy of tangible (built/hard assets) elements such as heritage buildings, monuments, memorials, cemeteries, artifacts, museums and intangible elements such as traditions, customs, festivals and celebrations. The participation of groups such as historical societies, traditional cultural groups, and conservation groups is considered.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Natural Heritage Plans Management and preservation policies, plans, programs and initiatives: including eco systems, eco parks, trail networks, grasslands, naturalization, wetlands, urban agriculture/farming, wildlife and wildlife corridors, protection of sensitive habitats, species at risk and support for at risk pollinators.	20	15
Natural Heritage Promotion Management and promotion of natural heritage (through communications, information and support programs, economic development/tourism) including year-around activities and programs for education and use of natural heritage sites (including trail networks) for and by the public.	15	9
Cultural Heritage Plans Policies, by-laws, plans, and preservation initiatives for heritage buildings, cemeteries, artifacts, museums, monuments, heritage trees and gardens, including their integration with streetscapes and landscape	15	9
Cultural Heritage Activities Initiatives throughout the year including festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	15	9
Business & Institutions		
Natural Heritage Assets Conservation, restoration and integration of natural heritage, including eco parks, conservation areas, trails, heritage gardens, trees and landscapes.	10	8
Cultural Heritage Assets Conservation, restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and artifacts including their integration with the built/hard, streetscapes and green landscapes	10	7
Residential		
Cultural Heritage Initiatives Conservation/restoration and reuse of heritage buildings and artifacts on residential lands	10	8
Community Involvement		
Natural Heritage Public Participation Participation in community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual natural heritage programs and initiatives including developing policies and plans, site improvements (including trails, eco parks, reforestation and management, maintenance, conservation and education initiatives	20	15
Natural Heritage – Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions (including environmental groups) in community-initiated natural heritage activities and programs	10	7
Cultural Heritage - Public Participation Participation in community (including children/youth), neighbourhood or individual cultural heritage programs including year-round heritage community events/activities, festivals and celebrations along with preservation of traditions and customs	15	11
Cultural Heritage - Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions (including historical societies) in community-initiated cultural heritage activities and programs	10	7
Heritage Conservation Total	**150.00**	**105.00**

2025 Evaluation Form

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Observations:

The LeHave Ferry in itself is a heritage attraction and an excellent addition to tourism infrastructure.

The LaHave Islands Maritime Museum is an excellent resource to help interpret the strong nautical background of this area with well-placed exhibits and signage.

Strong municipal grant funding for community groups with a heritage or historical emphasis allows sustainability, continuity and awareness by residents and visitors.

Fort Point Museum at LaHave is also a wonderful resource in recognition of the importance of lighthouses in the past.

Recommendations:

A lot of the commercial properties in the small hamlets would benefit from a Facade Improvement program.

We suggest that a public art project by local artists could help develop a banner program highlighting celebrations of local life in MODL past and present.

Provide more summer event and/or music festival programs offered to the public throughout the parks in MODL, specifically on municipal property near the service centre (town hall).

Consider inclusion of heritage properties with the Municipal Heritage Asset Inventory to showcase these valuable components of MODL history.

Encourage development and implementation of a programs that help recognize Indigenous populations as well as new Canadian residents within the municipality.

2025 Evaluation Form

TREE MANAGEMENT

Woodlands, Canopy Management, Urban and Rural Forestry includes the efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and residents with regards to written policies, by-laws, standards for tree management protection (selection, planting, and maintenance), long and short-term management plans, tree replacement policies, pollinator-friendly tree selection, tree inventory including heritage, memorial, and commemorative trees, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Overall Impression Overall impact, benefit and first impression of the urban forest	10	7
Strategic Plans Policies, regulations and tree by-laws, tree protection and planting on public and private lands	15	5
Urban Forestry Plan Plan, design and inventory management including integration with overall green infrastructure landscape plan, and measures to preserve, protect, manage and expand overall tree inventory, including woodlots and managed forests	20	4
Plan of Action Procurement, species diversity (including native trees), selection of hardy and pollinator habitat tree species, recommended tree list and tree planting standards.	10	4
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) / Plant HealthCare (PHC): plan of action for invasive pest detection and control, information on current infestations and diseases	10	7
Public Information Programs Provides information on good planting techniques, best practices and maintenance programs	15	5
Maintenance Quality Best practices with demonstrated results	10	3
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff and/or qualified experienced contractors) and/or in place training programs	5	2
Business & Institutions		
Tree inventory Contribution to expanding overall tree inventory and canopy, management of hedgerows and forests, with consideration of design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees, on properties owned by businesses and institutions.	15	0
Maintenance Quality Programs, best practices with demonstrated results: watering, pruning, IPM	10	3
Residential		
Tree Planting Contribution to expanding overall tree inventory, with consideration of design and diversity including native and hardy species of trees on residential properties	15	10
Maintenance Quality Best practices with demonstrated results	10	7
Community Involvement		
Public Participation Participation (including children/youth) in tree planting and conservation programs such as Green Streets Canada, Arbor Day, Maple Leaf Day, and other tree planting and maintenance programs and activities on public lands (including promotion, organization etc.)	20	10
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation or promotion by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community tree planting and conservation programs on public lands	10	5
Tree Management Total	**175.00**	**72.00**

Please note, although *Tree Management* was not included in the official scoring for this evaluation, the judges have provided observations and recommendations as a reference point. These comments are intended to highlight the community's current status and to offer guidance for future planning and development.

2025 Evaluation Form

TREE MANAGEMENT

Observations:

The municipality does retain a tree service for removal of hazard trees; suggest a program where critical pruning may be added to the service contract (under a qualified Arboriculturalist or Registered Professional Forester).

It is noted that several areas of MODL have balsam trees for sale as the "Christmas Tree Capital of the World".

There are few municipally planted trees; however, the native coniferous forest population is abundant and forms an important role in retention of soils and helping to offset air pollution.

Hazard trees are removed under contract by an established local tree contractor.

The visit to the Exotic Fruit Nursery was a fabulous exposure to fruit tree diversity in particular. The nursery will eventually provide local residents a great opportunity to enjoy various fruits on their own property!

Recommendations:

Adopt a Tree Management Program to care for the trees in the hamlets of MODL, that includes a tree Inventory in the local parks.

Provide more shade trees planted in public areas, such as perimeters of ball fields, sports fields and playgrounds and parking lots.

Encourage service clubs and youth groups to plant trees and create a guide for appropriates species for the micro-climate of Nova Scotia.

Create special seasonal celebratory events between local tree growers and the municipality to encourage diversity of plantings (particularly more deciduous, and fruit bearing species)

Provide a pruning guide for hydro arborists to ensure that the work is done with tree health in mind.

2025 Evaluation Form

LANDSCAPE

Landscape includes planning, design, construction and maintenance of parks, green spaces and cemeteries suitable for the intended use and location on a year-round basis. Elements for evaluation include native and introduced materials; biodiversity, materials and constructed elements; appropriate integration of hard surfaces and art elements, use of turf and groundcovers. Landscape design should harmonize the interests of all sectors of the community and provide safe and secure public spaces. Standards of execution and maintenance should demonstrate best practices, including quality of naturalization, use of groundcovers and wildflowers along with turf management.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Sustainable Designs – Soft Landscape Sustainable designs: energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, suitable plant varieties (including pollinator friendly), traffic calming, bank stabilization	15	8
Sustainable Designs - Hard Landscape Urban and civic design standards for streetscape and public places including considerations for public safety: flags, banners, public art, fountains, site furnishings, signage including wayfinding and directional, seasonal design and décor, walkways and paving materials including use of artificial turf and its protocols	15	7
Landscape Plan Integrated and implemented throughout the municipality	10	5
Landscape Management Programs Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Plant Health Care (PHC), alternative solutions to diseases and infestations when appropriate, Invasive Species Management, increased naturalization and adapted maintenance programs	10	4
Landscape Maintenance Policies, Standards, Best Practices and Programs including irrigation water management	10	5
Landscape Quality Landscape maintained to appropriate standards, specs and best practices, as an example as shown in the Canadian Landscape Standards	5	2
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or in place training programs and/or qualified experienced contractors	10	3
Year-round use Demonstrated year-round opportunities and programs for education and people being active and using parks and green spaces (urban agriculture, community gardens, parks and recreation programs and accessible public washrooms)	10	6
Business & Institutions		
Sustainable Designs Energy efficient, use of green materials, naturalization, xeriscaping, alternate groundcovers, urban agriculture	10	3
Integrated Plan Contribution to urban & civic design and public green spaces above requirements: such as public art, streetscape, site furniture, fountains & innovation in concept & design	15	6
Maintenance Quality Adequate ongoing life cycle management (ongoing maintenance, ground & asset management, rehabilitation & replacement) of all landscape elements	10	6
Residential		
Streetscape Appeal Residential yards (year-round, seasonal, themed)	15	12
Maintenance Quality Lawn care, trees and shrub maintenance (with demonstrated results)	15	12
Plant Selection Selection of plant material (native, local, innovative, edible & pollinator friendly plants)	10	7
Community Involvement		
Public Participation in community programs (including children/youth) such as: urban agriculture, community gardens, "yard of the week", volunteer park maintenance, holiday illumination and decoration (promotion, organization, etc.)	20	7
Volunteer Succession Plan and Recognition Succession Plan and Recognition (by municipality and/or volunteer groups) of volunteer efforts in all aspects of the Communities in Bloom program including activities in all evaluated criteria	20	12
Landscape Total	**200.00**	**105.00**

2025 Evaluation Form

LANDSCAPE

Observations:

It is noted that MODL has completed Parks & Open Space Standards and Guidelines in 2023. This forms a great basis for provision of services based on 5 Goals: Active Living, Inclusion & Access, Connecting People and Nature, Support Environments and Recreation Capacity. Some of these principles could well be transported toward the Planning activities of MODL, especially those with Active Living and Inclusion and Access requirements for citizens.

The certification of MODL staff in accessibility training (Rick Hanson Standards) clearly shows results with the recent installation of a wheelchair accessible kayak ramp and dock. Kudos for this initiative along with provision of wheelchair accessible outdoor toilets. There are adequate numbers of placements of benches and waypoints along the trails to make such trips repeatable many times!

Hirtle's Beach is a true treasure for local residents seeking swimming opportunities.

The municipality utilizes reclaimed asphalt at some parking areas and some lanes/roads. This is a good use of resources both from an environmental and financial perspective. A qualified playground inspector regularly assesses playgrounds at public playground areas.

The Blue Biking route is a great asset to the community and features recent wider, paved shoulders increasing bicycling safety and assists in the municipal Active Transportation plan.

The natural landscapes and shorelines of the community are a valued component of MODL and BE sure to engage visitors at each treasured location.

These natural landscapes should be preserved for future generations wherever possible.

2025 Evaluation Form

Recommendations:

With the community-wide provision of trails, it may be useful to measure the frequency, timing (days/hours of) usage by residents. The use of infrared trail counters is now much more affordable and can be moved to various trails to determine public usage statistics.

Consider a speed limit on the multi-use trail winding through Osprey Village.

Suggest use of the CNLA landscape design standards document that can be accessed through the CiB program. Review risk management implications of use of Hirtle's Beach (swimmer safety signage).

We also suggest benchmarking best practices used by other districts, towns and villages (Yarmouth, Mahone Bay, Pugwash) to help landscape designs being implemented in the community.

More banners, floral pots, hanging baskets or median planted strips should be implemented within commercial properties to make them more inviting for customers. Some of these could be sponsored by local groups if the corporate retailers provide limited support.

Look at the potential for creation of low-maintenance (requiring less watering) low-lying shrub beds and groundcovers in areas between housing and coniferous trees to act as a partial barrier to fire spread.

2025 Evaluation Form

2025 Evaluation Form

PLANT AND FLORAL DISPLAYS

This category evaluates the efforts of the municipality, businesses, institutions and residents to design, plan, execute, and maintain plant and floral displays of high-quality standards. Evaluation includes the design and arrangements of flowers and plants (annuals, perennials, bulbs, ornamental grasses, edible plants, water efficient and pollinator friendly plants) in the context of originality, distribution, location, diversity and balance, colour, and harmony. It also pertains to flowerbeds, carpet bedding, containers, baskets and window boxes.

	Max	Actual
Municipal		
Floral Display Plan of Action Integration into overall landscape plan and distribution through community. Concept and design including sustainable design	15	5
Diversity of Displays Flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, mosaics	20	6
Diversity of Plants Annuals, perennials, bulbs, grasses, woody plants, natural flora, pollinator friendly plants	10	4
Maintenance Quality Maintenance to appropriate specifications and standards, best practices: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc.	20	12
Qualified Resources Qualified personnel (including seasonal staff) and/or in place training programs and/or qualified experienced contractors	10	6
Business & Institutions		
Concept and Design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on grounds	15	5
Overall Plan Contribution to, and integration with, overall community plant and floral program	10	3
Maintenance Quality of planting and maintenance: watering, weeding, edging, dead heading, etc. with demonstrated results.	10	3
Residential		
Concept and Design (including arrangement, diversity, colour of display and plants) on residential properties including Pollinator gardens and/or inclusion of pollinator plants in gardens	20	16
Maintenance Quality of planting and maintenance with demonstrated results.	15	12
Community Involvement		
Public Participation in community projects, volunteer initiatives (including children/youth), outreach programs in plant and floral displays (including promotion, organization, etc.)	15	8
Community Support Financial and/or in-kind or participation by the municipality, businesses and institutions for community plant and floral displays activities	15	8
Plant and Floral Displays Total	**175.00**	**88.00**

Please note, although *Plant & Floral Displays* was not included in the official scoring for this evaluation, the judges have provided observations and recommendations as a reference point. These comments are intended to highlight the community's current status and to offer guidance for future planning and development.

2025 Evaluation Form

PLANT AND FLORAL DISPLAYS

Observations:

There were a few floral and plant displays at the LeHave Museum, MARC and at the MODL service building entrance and add to the appearance of residents visiting municipal departments.

The floral beds at the new properties at Osprey Village and to the south for the Best Western Premiere are attractive and very well maintained.

Swiss Chalet deserves plaudits for the only floral presence in the entire east part of Osprey Village.

The Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre and Library offer great views of the natural landscape from inside and with benches outside.

There is vegetation on some curbed traffic islands near the CTC, however, the potential positive impacts are undone by the appearance of the rusty sea container beside the structure.

Recommendations:

The commercial properties (Walmart, Canadian Tire, etc.) to the east side of Osprey Village would do well to utilize the quality types of landscaping seen at Osprey West and to the South at Best Western, Staples and Boston Pizza. The commercial retail big box properties do not meet the standards that CiB has observed at similar properties at other communities.

Traffic islands should be free of weeds through regular use of electric string trimmers and/or steam & vinegar applications.

On roundabouts and some shoulders of major arterials, due to the danger by traffic some communities are making use of robot mowers which mitigate potential accidents with work crews.

Look at instituting a community food garden program near food bank locations that uses both in-ground plantings and table-top planters to allow seniors/disadvantaged to participate.

2025 Evaluation Form

Communities in Bloom® Collectivités en fleurs
ATLANTIC
Growing Great Places Together
Cultivons ensemble de beaux espaces

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT

"Within the context of climate change and environmental concerns, communities involved in the Communities in Bloom program can be proud of their efforts, which provide real and meaningful environmental solutions and benefit all of society."

COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM IS MADE POSSIBLE BY

The commitment of local, provincial and national volunteers

The support of elected officials and of staff in municipalities

The dedication of our judges, staff and organizations

The contributions of our sponsors and partners

Finance Committee
Item: 11.1
December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

Request for Agenda Items under Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matters

To	Chief Administrative Officer
From	Councillor Alison Smith
Date	November 21, 2025

1. Agenda Item

Councillor Matters: Letter of Support for Seniors Safety Program

2. On what agenda do you want the item placed? Committee/Date

Finance Committee December 5, 2025

3. Do you have written material to circulate with the agenda? Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, please attach it to this form. If no, please explain below.

The Lunenburg County Seniors Safety Society will be sending a letter to the province to request an increase in funding. The LCSSS is requesting that MODL contribute a letter of support.

4. What is its relevance to Council/Committee?

The Seniors Safety Program is an important service in our county. More residents could be supported with an increase in funding.

5. What outcome(s) are you seeking?

A letter of support.

Alison E. Smith
Councillor's signature

Approved Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, reason for denial.

Mayor or Chair of Committee

Date

Finance Committee
Item: 14.2
December 2, 2025
Authorization: Elana Wentzell

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Direction Report

Report to: **Finance Committee**

Submitted by: **Planning Staff**

Date: **December 2, 2025**

Re: **Municipal-Wide Land Use Planning – Council Direction Report #2**

Introduction

In 2018, the Province of Nova Scotia passed legislation requiring all municipalities to adopt comprehensive planning documents that apply to all lands within their jurisdiction. In response, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) launched a project to create a unified Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) for the entire Municipality. These new documents will extend planning to all areas of the municipality, providing a consistent framework to guide future growth and development.

As outlined in the Municipal Government Act (MGA), the MPS and LUB must meet the requirements of the Statements of Provincial Interest which include Drinking Water, Flood Risk, Agricultural Land, Infrastructure, and Housing. The documents must also meet provincial Minimum Planning Requirements that include policies and regulations to address several different land uses (residential, commercial, etc.), as well as other aspects such as mapping, review periods and contextual information. In addition, the provincial regulations outline several topics that are considered discretionary content such as environmental protection, heritage preservation and transportation.

Public engagement began in 2020, with subsequent rounds in 2025 focused on reviewing a first draft of the proposed documents. Input collected through surveys, workshops, and stakeholder meetings informed the What We Heard Report (WWHR) 2025, which summarized community priorities and concerns.

This second Council Direction Report provides an overview of land use designation and zoning. Each section includes an overview of the topic and policy direction options for Council's consideration.

This report covers the following topics:

- Environmentally Protected Areas
- Built-up Areas
- Future Uses

In the coming weeks, one additional Council workshop will also be held, discussing other topics that focus on other land-use related issues.

The purpose of these reports is to support informed decision-making by identifying where policy adjustments may be warranted before preparing Draft 2 of the MPS and LUB. Staff have outlined several options for each topic from which Council may provide direction to guide the preparation of Draft 2. The anticipated release of Draft 2 is in February 2026. This will be followed by a final round of public information sessions prior to adoption and submission to the province for final approval.

At the last Council meeting, which took place on November 25, 2025, Council provided preliminary direction on several rural and agricultural matters. Council directed staff against creating categories for livestock and placing limitations on livestock operations, including backyard agriculture. Additionally, Council discussed possible setback distances for new residential development near existing agricultural uses, with further refinement required for Draft 2. Council also emphasized the importance of protecting agricultural land and reviewed options for limiting subdivision activity within agricultural zones. Initial direction was provided on the seasonal habitation of RVs and home-based businesses. However, Council's direction to regulate home-based businesses in specific residential zones to a minimal extent is dependent on the outcome of the workshop on December 2nd. If Council chooses to not establish residential-only zones in the workshop on December 2nd, the regulations around home-based businesses would not apply.

Several topics originally planned for the November 25th workshop were not touched on but will be discussed at the next Council workshop on December 2nd. These include campgrounds and RV parks, inland watercourses, and wetlands.

The Rural General Zone is expected to be the most straightforward zone to implement. Much of MODL's rural land base remains undeveloped or used for traditional resource-based activities,

and Council has indicated a desire to maintain minimal regulation in these areas to preserve rural character and flexibility. As such, the Rural General Zone requires less detailed discussion than the more targeted environmental and lakeshore-related zones, which require specific policy direction from Council. Other zones could layer on additional regulations depending on the direction of Council and how Council would like to meet the Statements of Provincial Interest.

The following sections of this report present the key decision points, policy options, and staff recommendations needed to guide the development of Draft 2.

Feedback

Throughout a series of public engagement activities conducted over the Spring and Summer of 2025, staff received a significant amount of feedback about the general provisions proposed in the first draft of the Municipal-wide Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. As discussed with Council on November 25, residents had strong reactions to the provisions on livestock operations, home-based businesses, and the habitation of RVs, among other topics. Some residents shared opinions about the zoning framework of Draft 1, but this aspect of the project did not receive nearly as much attention as the general provisions. However, zoning is an important component of land use planning, and some of the general provisions interact with, and depend on the zoning framework that is established. The connection between a residential-only zone and home-based businesses is a prime example of this overlap.

Some stakeholders and residents provided feedback about specific zones contained in Draft 1. These comments are reflected in the sections below. While many commented on the planning approach more generally, some residents shared concerns about the number of proposed zones and how zones impact property values and uses. Others expressed support for zoning and emphasized the importance of protecting communities and providing a sense of predictability. Similarly, many residents noted that the Municipality should not apply a blanket approach to land use planning in MODL. Zones are one tool that can help appreciate and maintain the unique aspects of different communities.

Topic: Environmentally Protected Areas

Overview

MODL contains a wide range of ecologically important landscapes, including lakes, rivers, wetlands, forests, and coastal areas. These natural features support biodiversity, help maintain water quality, and contribute to the overall health and well-being of communities. As development continues across the Municipality, Council may wish to consider whether

additional land use tools are needed to protect sensitive natural areas and guide growth in a sustainable way.

This section seeks Council direction on several potential environmental protection tools, including:

- **A potential zone for lakefront areas**, which could help manage development pressures around lakes and support the long-term health of lake ecosystems;
- **Potential protected watershed zoning**, which could help safeguard drinking-water sources and manage land uses within watershed boundaries to be consistent with the Statement of Provincial Interest on Drinking Water;
- **A potential watershed overlay**, offering broader, flexible protection across natural watershed areas; and
- **A potential Conservation Zone**, which could recognize lands already protected by governments or conservation organizations and limit activities to low-impact or conservation-related uses. This zone could apply to both public lands and privately owned lands subject to environmental protection.

At this stage, staff are seeking Council's direction on these potential environmental protection approaches. Council's decision will determine which regulations are included, adjusted, or not pursued at all, and this direction will inform the policy and regulatory frameworks brought forward in Draft 2.

Potential Policy Direction: Inland Waterfront Areas

A Lakeshore Residential Zone is a potential zoning tool that could help manage development pressures around MODL's inland lakes. MODL has over 135 lakes that provide important ecological functions and support recreational, seasonal, and permanent residential uses. Naturally vegetated lakefront areas help maintain water quality, stabilize shorelines, and reduce erosion and flooding risks. As development pressures increase, disturbance of these shoreline areas can lead to greater runoff, erosion, and long-term impacts on lake health and surrounding properties.

A Lakeshore Residential Zone would introduce more restrictive development standards in sensitive lakefront areas, such as larger lots, greater setbacks, limits on vegetation removal, and fewer permitted uses than in other residential zones. These measures aim to protect lake ecosystems and manage development impacts. This section seeks Council direction on whether such a zone should be pursued, modified, or removed from consideration.

Options

Council could direct staff to:

1. **No Lakeshore Residential Zone.** Development around lakes would instead be managed through consistent inland watercourse protections such as setbacks and/or natural vegetation requirements applied to all lakes and rivers, provided that Council decides to include those protections. (Minimum planning)

2. **Apply the Lakeshore Zone to selected lakes only.** This option could apply the Lakeshore Zone to some, but not all, of the 69 lakes targeting lakes with the highest development pressure or environmental sensitivity. Further analysis would be required and cannot be completed within the current project timeline.

3. **Establish a Lakeshore Residential Zone.** If Council selects this option, the Lakeshore Residential Zone could apply to 69 lakes identified as experiencing development pressure or located near transportation routes or population centres. Under this option, the zone could include:

- **Applicability:** Applied to 69 lakes where additional environmental safeguards may help manage development impacts.
- **Development Standards:** The zone could require larger lots and greater development setbacks than those permitted in the Rural Zone, helping to maintain low-density development, reduce environmental impacts, ensure appropriate separation from lakefront features, and support the protection of naturally vegetated shoreline areas.
- **Permitted Uses:** The zone would primarily permit low-density residential uses, limited recreational uses, and select community-oriented uses appropriate for lakefront environments. Development would occur on larger lots with greater frontage requirements than in other residential zones to help protect lake health and maintain natural character. More intensive or commercial uses would generally be limited or not permitted, recognizing the sensitivity of lakefront environments.

Staff recommend that Council proceed with **Option 3**, establishing a Lakeshore Residential Zone for the identified 69 lakes. These lakes were originally selected due to their existing or anticipated development pressure, proximity to transportation routes, and location near established or emerging communities. In the absence of municipality-wide inland watercourse regulations, a lakeshore-specific zone would provide a structured mechanism to guide development in these higher-pressure areas and help manage land use in a consistent and predictable manner.

Potential Policy Direction: Protected Watershed Areas

A safe supply of drinking water is a basic requirement for all Nova Scotians. The Municipality encompasses three provincially designated Protected Water Areas, which provide clean and reliable drinking water to Bridgewater, Lunenburg, and Mahone Bay, as well as to MODL residents including Osprey Village. Because these drinking-water sources originate entirely within MODL, the Municipality plays a key role in protecting their long-term health and availability. As climate change brings more frequent droughts, lower lake levels, dry wells, and added stress on water systems, safeguarding watershed lands is becoming increasingly important. Strong land-use protections can help safeguard long-term drinking-water quality for MODL and the surrounding towns.

The Protected Water Areas include:

- **Hebb, Milipsigate, and Minamkeak Lakes** (serving Bridgewater and nearby communities, including Osprey Village)
- **Dares Lake** (serving Lunenburg)
- **Oakland Lake** (serving Mahone Bay)

Within these provincially designated Protected Water Areas, provincial regulations govern activities such as boating, fishing, swimming, animal grazing, forestry operations, and other water-related actions. Complementing this, the *Environment Act* mandates that municipalities regulate land use, determining where development is appropriate, and what types of development may proceed to ensure drinking-water protection.

Significant portions of the broader natural watershed lie outside the provincially regulated areas and currently have no municipal land-use controls. Land use in these unregulated areas such as agriculture, residential development, or land alteration can directly influence water quality and long-term drinking-water security.

Under the Statement of Provincial Interest (SPI) on Drinking Water, municipalities must protect drinking-water supplies through measures such as restricting high-risk land uses, balancing density and lot creation with water-quality risks, establishing setbacks from watercourses, and applying erosion and land-alteration controls. The SPI also recognizes that smaller watersheds may require more stringent protection than larger ones due to their limited ability to absorb cumulative impacts.

In light of MODL's obligations under the Statement of Provincial Interest, the growing effects of drought, and the region's dependence on these lakes for safe drinking water, Council direction is required to determine how watershed protection regulations will be integrated into Draft 2.

Feedback

Many residents commented on the importance of protecting drinking-water sources and the watersheds that supply them. Feedback included concerns about development near lakes and rivers, loss of natural vegetation, and risks of runoff or contamination. Some supported stronger protection such as setbacks or limits on new development while others cautioned against applying uniform restrictions to all properties.

Environmental organizations emphasized the need for strong, science-based watershed protection, including setbacks and controls on higher-risk land uses. They noted that gaps in existing land-use regulation can leave water sources vulnerable and encouraged MODL to align with best practices.

Council discussed the limitations of existing provincial watershed boundaries and the distinction between provincial activity regulations and municipal land-use responsibilities. Members also noted low public awareness of watershed boundaries and considered how setbacks, agricultural practices, and grazing requirements could be implemented and enforced. Council emphasized protecting drinking-water sources while ensuring regulations remain practical and understandable for residents.

Options

Council could direct staff to:

1. **Establish Two Watershed Zones Only (no overlay).** Council may direct staff to establish two watershed zones without creating a watershed overlay. Under this approach:
    - A high-protection watershed zone would apply to:
        - The smaller Protected Water Areas (e.g., Dares Lake and Oakland Lake), and
        - Privately owned lands within the larger Protected Water Area (Hebb, Milipsigate and Minamkeak Lakes) where heightened protection is appropriate.
    - An intermediate-protection watershed zone would apply to the remaining portions of the larger watershed systems (e.g., Hebb, Milipsigate, and Minamkeak Lakes), allowing development to occur in a manner that does not compromise water quality.
    - This tiered structure is consistent with the Statement of Provincial Interest regarding Drinking Water, which directs municipalities to consider watershed size, vulnerability, and appropriate land-use controls. Regulations would focus on the provincially regulated Protected Water Area boundaries, with land-use controls scaled to each watershed's sensitivity and capacity. This option provides a graduated level of protection while maintaining a simpler regulatory framework than Option 2,

though it does not extend additional protection to the broader natural watershed outside the provincial boundaries.

2. **Establish Two Watershed Zones + a Watershed Overlay.** Council may direct staff to create a tiered watershed zoning system that includes two distinct watershed zones.
   - The two zones would:
     - Apply a higher level of protection to smaller or more vulnerable watersheds.
     - Apply an intermediate level of protection to larger watershed systems with different land-use contexts.
     - Reflect the Statement of Provincial Interest on Drinking Water, which encourages regulations that consider watershed size, sensitivity, and appropriate land-use controls.
   - A Watershed Overlay could also be established to:
     - Apply additional environmental requirements such as livestock fencing setbacks or runoff-management measures outside the prescribed protection water areas.
     - Extend protection to the broader natural watershed, including areas outside provincially regulated boundaries.
     - Provide safeguards beyond the minimum SPI requirements**.**
   - This approach creates a graduated regulatory framework that allows regulations to be calibrated to different watershed conditions and addresses water-quality impacts both within and outside the designated Protected Water Areas.

3. **Establish One Watershed Zone (consistent with Region of Queens).** Council may direct staff to create a single Watershed Zone that applies uniformly to all Protected Water Areas, regardless of watershed size or sensitivity. (Minimum planning)
   - This approach would be consistent with the Region of Queens model, where only Municipal Water Treatment Facilities are permitted as-of-right, and all other land uses are restricted.
   - A single zone would offer consistent regulations across all watershed areas and would be straightforward to map and administer. This option provides a clear and uniform framework, though it may offer less flexibility for addressing the differing contexts of larger and smaller watershed areas.

Staff recommend that Council move forward with a two-zone watershed protection approach (**Option 1**) for Draft 2. This approach establishes a high-protection watershed zone for the smaller and more vulnerable Protected Water Areas as well as privately owned land within the larger Protected Water Areas and an intermediate-protection zone for the remaining portions

of the larger watershed systems. This structure allows development to continue in select areas without compromising water quality, while ensuring stronger safeguards where the risk to drinking-water sources is greatest.

A two-zone approach is consistent with the Statement of Provincial Interest on Drinking Water, reflects differences in watershed size and sensitivity, and provides a clear, defendable regulatory framework without introducing the broader implications of a watershed overlay. It balances environmental protection, clarity for landowners, and practical implementation as MODL prepares Draft 2.

Potential Policy Direction: Conservation Zone

MODL contains a variety of ecologically sensitive landscapes such as wetlands, forests, and shorelines that support biodiversity, reduce flooding and erosion, and contribute to long-term environmental health. A Conservation Zone could be used to protect these areas by limiting permitted uses to low-impact activities such as passive recreation, research, and education.

This zone would primarily apply to publicly owned conservation lands, lands owned by environmental organizations, and privately owned lands subject to provincial protection tools such as the Beaches Act (e.g., areas like Cherry Hill). Conservation efforts could also be supported through mapping sensitive features, maintaining natural vegetation, and encouraging voluntary tools such as conservation easements.

Staff are seeking Council's direction on whether and how a Conservation Zone and related conservation tools should be incorporated into Draft 2.

Options

Council could direct staff to:

1. **Do not Establish a Conservation Zone.** Council may direct staff not to include a Conservation Zone in Draft 2. Under this approach, conservation-related objectives would continue to be supported through other tools (e.g., setbacks, mapping, education, and voluntary stewardship mechanisms), without adding a dedicated zone to the Land Use By-law. (Minimum planning)

2. **Establish a Conservation Zone.** Council may direct staff to create a Conservation Zone that recognizes lands already set aside for environmental protection by various levels of government or conservation organizations. This zone would limit activities to low-impact or conservation-related uses and could apply to both public lands and privately owned lands that are subject to environmental protections, such as those regulated under the Beaches Act or held by land trusts.

- Based on current mapping, the Conservation Zone would apply to approximately 96 properties, including 72 publicly owned parcels and 22 privately owned parcels. Of the privately owned parcels, 8 have civic addresses.

Staff recommend that Council proceed with **Option 2** and establish a Conservation Zone. Creating this zone would provide a consistent mechanism for recognizing lands already protected by various levels of government and conservation organizations and would ensure that these areas are limited to low-impact or conservation-related uses. Establishing a Conservation Zone would also support MODL's broader environmental objectives by reinforcing stewardship efforts and providing clear, transparent protection for both public and privately owned conservation lands in Draft 2.

Topic: Built-up Areas

Villages/Hamlets

Overview

Although MODL is largely characterized by its rural landscapes, the municipality has many established communities that contribute to its rich cultural and historic identity. Several village-like communities (or hamlets) act as local service hubs and provide residents with a range of amenities. These settlements typically include a central main street area that contains a mix of land uses including local businesses, community uses, emergency service facilities, and even some industrial uses. These core areas are often surrounded by defined, less mixed-use residential neighbourhoods.

These areas are key locations for future growth and are likely places for the expansion of public services. They offer important social and community spaces in a rural setting, and their unique character contributes to MODL's historic identity. Examples of this settlement type include New Germany, Petite Riviere, Lahave, and Broad Cove.

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) states that a municipal planning strategy must contain statements of policy regarding residential uses, commercial and industrial uses, institutional uses, recreational facilities and public open spaces, and resource uses. While it is not specified how these land uses should be managed, built-up areas usually contain a mix of these land uses, therefore, planning considerations may need to account for the built-up areas to some extent.

Feedback

We received limited resident feedback on the hamlet zoning approach. A few residents specifically mentioned support for the Hamlet Residential Zone, saying it would encourage a

safer environment by limiting certain types of conflicting land uses. Some questioned the grandfathering clause, wondering how it would apply to the hamlet areas. While another comment noted that New Germany is distinct from other communities, suggesting that future zoning should reflect these differences.

Potential Policy Direction: Villages/Hamlets

Well-defined villages or hamlets typically include a centre or main street area that contains a mixture of land uses, surrounded by a less mixed residential area. To accommodate this land use pattern, a zoning approach could include having separate zones for these distinct areas that permit appropriate land uses. For instance, the central area could be designated as a Hamlet Centre Zone that permits a range of commercial, industrial, community, and institutional uses. While the adjacent residential area could be designated as a Hamlet Residential Zone that permits fewer uses, aiming to limit land use conflicts. The following options are intended to seek Council direction on whether the villages/hamlets of MODL should be zoned differently from the rural areas, and if so, to what extent.

Options

Council could direct staff:

1. **To have no additional controls for defined villages and to treat them the same as the rural areas**. The zone that is applied to the rural areas would also be applied to the villages. In this case, there would be no ability to limit certain land uses within villages. (Minimum planning)

2. **To have additional controls that apply to defined villages, but do not distinguish between the centre and the residential areas.** This option would combine the two Hamlet zones into a single zone that applies to the entire community. While this approach would not distinguish between the central area and the surrounding residential area, it would help to set the community apart from rural areas and allow for more tailored land use controls. This option could also involve limiting the number of communities designated as villages or hamlets, ensuring that some communities are subject to specific land use controls while others are zoned the same as the rural areas.

3. **To establish distinct controls for the village centre and the surrounding residential area.** This option would involve having two separate zones, each with a unique set of provisions. The centre area of the community could be zoned to accommodate a mix of uses, including commercial and industrial activities, while the surrounding residential area could be zoned to accommodate residential uses and limits other types of uses to reduce land use conflicts.

Staff recommend **Option 2** - To create a single zone that applies to some of the communities in MODL. This approach would help to differentiate the villages or hamlets from the rural areas with unique land use regulations that are tailored towards established and growing communities. To further simplify the approach, Staff also suggest limiting the number of villages or hamlets included in the zone to the most identifiable and established communities, such as New Germany, Lahave, and Petite Riviere.

Rural Subdivisions

Overview

MODL has several compact, primarily residential neighbourhoods that consist of a higher-density development pattern compared to the surrounding rural areas. These residential settlements typically consist of compact single-unit homes, can include an internal road or shared driveway, and are often the result of a subdivision development. Examples of this settlement pattern include the subdivisions in Pine Grove, Conquerall Bank, and Lower Branch.

Residential uses tend to be the predominant land use in these areas, which makes these places more susceptible to land uses conflicts with incompatible activities. Although home-based businesses are relatively common in these neighbourhoods, land use conflicts can still arise if the operation is not suitable for the context of the residential subdivision.

Most land in MODL is unserviced by municipal water, therefore rural developments are often serviced by a dug or drilled well. Groundwater supply issues have been rising over the past few years, which, when combined with increased development, puts added pressure on water resources. Existing residents close to new developments can be negatively impacted when multiple new wells are drilled to accommodate new homes. To help address this issue, certain planning processes such as rezoning can allow for additional oversight at the beginning stages of a development as Council can request water studies to confirm adequate groundwater. A similar approach to development is already in place for cluster developments.

Feedback

Feedback from the developers' stakeholder event suggested that triggering a rezoning process for new rural residential subdivisions is generally a reasonable approach for attaining the appropriate water studies. However, some cautioned about the related costs for these studies and the additional time that may be added to the rezoning process if such studies are a requirement.

Potential Policy Direction: Rural Residential Subdivisions

Rural subdivisions within MODL contain primarily compact residential land uses, which increase the likelihood for land use conflicts from incompatible land uses. To address this, an approach could include the creation of a distinct zone, such as a Rural Residential Zone, that is applied to rural residential subdivisions and is distinct from the rural areas. This approach would enable tailored land use regulations that fit a denser primarily residential context. For example, a Rural Residential Zone could restrict certain commercial or industrial activities, such as auto repair shops, salvage yards, and excavation operations. Additionally, a dedicated Rural Residential Zone for rural subdivisions would provide a framework to regulate home-based businesses.

Given the potential implications around groundwater that can occur when residential subdivisions are developed in rural areas, a Rural Residential Zone would enable an approvals process to help address such issues. With this approach, proposed subdivision developments would need to undergo a rezoning that would create a public process and include hydrogeological studies to ensure that the development is suitably located with enough groundwater resources to support it.

Another consideration is the possible expansion of the Rural Residential Zone should the Lakeshore Residential Zone and the Hamlet Residential Zone be removed. This may require additional residential subdivisions or neighbourhoods to be added to the Rural Residential Zone to account for the loss of other residential zones. However, expansion of this zone would involve additional analysis which may not be feasible within the current project timeframe.

Options

Council could direct staff:

1. **To have no additional controls for rural subdivisions and to treat them the same as the rural areas.** This option would mean that the rural zone is also applied to rural residential subdivisions. With this approach, there would be no ability to limit certain land uses or regulate home-based businesses within these residential subdivisions. There would be no public process for large-scale developments and water studies couldn't be required. (Minimum planning)

2. **To have additional controls that apply to rural subdivisions and to require residential subdivisions of 6 or more lots to go through a rezoning process.** This would involve establishing a zone for rural residential subdivisions that permit certain land uses to minimize land use conflicts. It would also involve requiring residential subdivisions with 6 or more lots to be rezoned. The rezoning process would provide Council with

additional oversight and allow for certain technical documents such as hydrogeological studies to be requested to ensure the adequacy of water resources.

Staff recommend **Option 2** - To have additional controls that apply to rural subdivisions and to require new residential subdivision developments of 6 or more lots to undergo rezoning. This approach would allow for tailored land use controls for both existing and new rural residential subdivisions, setting them apart from the rural areas. Having additional controls would help to address land use conflicts by restricting certain land uses that are incompatible within a residential subdivision. This zoning approach would also provide a framework that supports the regulation of home-based businesses within some residential areas, which was indicated as a decided direction by Council at the November 25th workshop.

As groundwater is a factor for new residential development, this option would also ensure that assessments, such as hydrogeological studies, can be attained throughout the approvals process. This process is a key component if Council wants to consider groundwater as a factor for new developments.

Osprey Village, Cookville

Overview

There is a Provincial Statement of Interest Regarding Infrastructure. The goal of this Statement is to make efficient use of municipal water supply and municipal wastewater disposal systems. The basis for this Statement is that unplanned and uncoordinated development increases the demand for costly conventional infrastructure. The province suggests the following measures to address this statement:

- encouraging maximum use of existing infrastructure by enabling infill development on vacant land and higher density development;
- discouraging development from leapfrogging over areas served by municipal infrastructure to unserviced areas;
- directing community growth that will require the extension of infrastructure to areas where serving costs will be minimized. The use of practical alternatives to conventional wastewater disposal systems should be considered;
- identifying known environmental and health problems related to inadequate infrastructure and setting out short and long-term policies to address the problems including how they will be financed.

Osprey Village is a centre for economic development and services for the region. Much of the area is already subject to the Osprey Village Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. However, there are parts of Cookville that are serviced that do not fall within the Osprey Village Plan Area. Centralized services are expensive to maintain, requiring a substantial portion of the municipal budget. Therefore, it would be beneficial to direct denser developments to the unplanned parts of Cookville that have access to centralized sewer and water services or could feasibly connect to those services over time.

This could be achieved through the creation of a zone, such as a Mixed Use Serviced Zone. This Zone could prioritize high-density, mixed-use development and require new development to connect to central services. A Mixed Use Serviced Zone could permit a variety of land uses including large scale commercial, residential, and institutional uses. It could establish minimum density requirements for residential developments to ensure the creation of walkable, complete communities and the efficient use of municipal services. New, large format commercial development could be regulated through the site plan approval process or another level of municipal oversight.

Feedback

Meetings with stakeholders in the housing, development, and real estate sector over the Summer of 2025 suggested that there was interest in directing growth to certain areas in MODL. Stakeholders mentioned the importance of a diversity of housing options, stating that affordable and accessible housing options should be close to amenities. Some real estate agents noted that regulations would be helpful for predictability.

Public feedback also highlighted that residents want to see strategic planning of large-scale infrastructure, more housing, and sustainable transportation options – all of which are made easier with density. Residents called for thoughtfully planned communities, ensuring that large-scale commercial uses are suitable for a given area.

Potential Policy Direction: Osprey Village/Cookville

Options

Council could direct staff to:

1. **Apply a General Rural Zone to the unplanned parts of Cookville, enabling almost any type of development in the area.** This option may not align with the Provincial Statement of Interest regarding the efficient and cost-effective use of municipal infrastructure as it would allow low-density developments to occur on serviced land. (Minimum planning)

2. **Establish a Mixed Use Serviced Zone to encourage density near serviced areas of the Municipality in Cookville, permitting new large format commercial development as-of-right.** This option would restrict 1–2-unit dwellings in the area but permit most other uses.

3. **Establish a Mixed Use Serviced Zone to encourage density in the serviced areas of the Municipality in Cookville, requiring new large format commercial development to meet comprehensive site plan requirements.** This option would promote density around Cookville, restricting 1-to-2-unit dwellings in the area and promoting mixed use development. Large format commercial development would be subject to a set of requirements outlined by the site plan approval process including layout and design (e.g., vehicular access), circulation, landscaping, and stormwater management.

Staff recommend **Option 3**. Option 3 best aligns with the Statement of Provincial Interest regarding Infrastructure. It also ensures that large format commercial development incorporates site features such as landscaping and pedestrian walkways. Including these components in the site plan approval process in addition to layout and design and stormwater management would fit with the findings from the public engagement conducted over Spring and Summer 2025. While there was little desire for regulation in rural areas, some residents wanted thoughtful planning of growth areas and wanted commercial uses that would align with the character of the community they fall within. When asked about planning and economic development, one resident said “The Municipality should ensure commercial developments are appropriate to the area in which they want to operate. Taking into account neighbors rights to the enjoyment of their property”. Another said “Carefully and thoughtfully. Streetscapes, neighbourhoods, heritage, appropriately selected”.

Topic: Future Uses

Overview

Given that industrial and large-scale commercial uses can generate conflict with surrounding land uses, it is important to have regulatory tools that make space for these activities. While Council could permit a range of industrial and large-scale commercial uses within zones that also permit residential development, there may be value in creating separate “future use” zones that reserve land exclusively for future industrial or large-scale commercial activities such as salvage yards or solid waste disposal facilities. “Future use” zones could be applied to existing parcels of land that are deemed optimal for such a use or left undesignated until needed. In the latter approach, the zone would be applied when a proposal for such a use

comes forward. The latter option is the more efficient and practical of the two as it is quite difficult to accurately identify all the land that is suitable to designate such a specific zone. Draft 1 of the proposed Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law identified several potential "future use" zones to address several different uses:

Commercial Recreation Zone (CR)

A Commercial Recreation Zone could be established to permit large-scale tourist accommodations (including those with 12 or more units).

General Commercial Zone (C)

A General Commercial Zone could be established to permit a variety of businesses – commercial land uses, small-scale industrial uses, certain natural resource related and accessory residential uses.

Light Industrial Zone (LI)

A Light Industrial Zone could be established to regulate light industrial uses and other non-hazardous or non-obnoxious uses. The zone could require additional setbacks and buffers for industrial type uses. Light industrial uses with less than 1000m^2 of gross floor area (GFA) could be permitted as of right, whereas light industrial uses with a gross floor area greater than 1000m^2 could be permitted by site plan approval. Within this Zone, accessory residential uses and accessory commercial uses could be permitted.

Heavy Industrial Zone (HI)

A Heavy Industrial Zone could accommodate existing and future high-impact industrial developments – permitting a range of heavy industrial land uses, other types of high-impact land uses, and accessory commercial uses. Additional buffering and setback requirements could be established for industrial uses adjacent to non-industrial uses and watercourses. Although heavy industrial uses can be permitted in a rural zone, a separate zone could allow for a more concentrated area of heavy industrial uses.

Fisheries and Marine Zone (FM)

A Fisheries and Marine Zone could be established to permit the industrial component of fisheries and marine operations, such as boat and building repair shops and/or fish processing facilities. In Draft 1, this zone was proposed to accommodate such uses throughout the rural and hamlet areas of MODL. These uses would be subject to additional buffering and setback

requirements when adjacent to non-industrial uses. This is like the approach taken by the Region of Queen's Municipality.

Comprehensive Development District Zones (CDD)

A Comprehensive Development District Zone could be applied to a community that is undeveloped or set to be redeveloped to help establish thriving communities in serviced areas. This would limit development in the community until it can be comprehensively designed and developed, requiring a closer review of aspects such as municipal servicing, mixture of land uses, transportation links, and public space. Development in a Comprehensive Development District Zone could be permitted only by development agreement. This type of zone may be helpful for large land parcels around the perimeter of the Town of Bridgewater.

Potential Policy Direction: Future Use Zones

Options

Council could direct staff to:

1. **Not establish any future use zones and regulate specific industrial or large-scale commercial uses by site plan approval**. With this option, industrial and commercial uses would be permitted in a rural zone. Certain industrial and large-scale commercial uses could be permitted by site plan approval, providing a development officer with control over aspects like lighting, signage, egress, parking, and more. (Minimum planning)

2. **Not establish any future use zones and regulate specific industrial or large-scale commercial uses by site plan approval and development agreement**. For example, a light industrial use could be permitted by site plan approval, whereas a heavy industrial use could be permitted by development agreement.

3. **Establish a comprehensive suite of future use zones.** This option would establish a list of future use zones like that described in the overview of this section, except for the Commercial Recreation Zone. The Commercial Recreation Zone would not be necessary because it was not included as a recommendation to accommodate campgrounds and RV parks in the report for the November 25 workshop with Council, despite being originally proposed in Draft 1.

Staff recommend **Option 2**. Option 2 allows for a scaled approach to regulating uses that have high potential to create land use conflicts, such as manufacturing and aggregate mining operations. By using both the site plan approval mechanism and the development agreement

mechanism, Option 2 ensures that lighter industrial uses are reviewed by staff, but that heavier uses require Council approval and a public hearing.

If Council wishes to adjust Option 2, Council could decide to remove the site plan approval component, permitting a light industrial use as-of-right in a rural zone, and a heavy industrial use by development agreement.

If Council opts for Option 3, it is worth noting that Council can establish future use zones and permit certain industrial and/or large-scale commercial uses in rural zones through site plan approval or development agreement. However, allowing a specific use only through a future use zone may contradict Section 220(3) of the Municipal Government Act, which states: “A land-use by-law may regulate or prohibit development, but development may not be totally prohibited, unless prohibition is permitted pursuant to this Part”.

By only allowing a use through a future use zone, there is an implicit prohibition on that use until the rezoning process is complete.

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning and Development Services
Report Prepared by	Planning Staff
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	