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## **Policy & Strategy Committee Meeting Agenda**

**Tuesday, September 16, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**

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

**1. Call to Order**

1.1. Mi'kma'ki Territorial Acknowledgement

**2. Announcements, Acknowledgements, Recognition**

**3. Public Input (15 Minutes)**

**4. Changes/Approval of Agenda (as circulated)**

**5. Approval of Minutes – July 15, 2025 (as circulated)**

**6. Business Arising from Minutes**

**7. Presentations/Scheduled Times - Nil**

**8. Referral from Committees/Council - Nil**

**9. Staff Reports**

**9.1 Administration Department**

9.1.1 Housing Strategy ..... 1-15

9.1.2 Strategic Priorities Update ..... 16-29

**9.2 Planning & Development**

9.2.1 Proposed Municipal Boundary Adjustment – Land Transfer..... 30-40  
MODL to TOL


9.2.2 Repeal & Replace - Building Code By-law ..... 41-45

**10. Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matters - Nil**

**11. Added Items - Nil**


**12. In Camera - Nil**

**13. Adjournment**



# Housing Strategy Report Outline

Policy and Strategy Committee Discussion  
DRAFT Presentation to the Council September 16, 2025



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# Background



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## Demographics

*Data from the Municipal Housing Needs Report (2023) & Community Support and Service-based Count on Homelessness in Western Nova Scotia (2024)*

- **Population size and growth**
  - 2021 population: 25,545; 3% growth since 2016
  - Projected to reach 27,865 by 2032, indicating sustained housing demand
- **Age structure**
  - Older than provincial average; 28% aged 65+ in 2021, projected to be 36% by 2032
  - Seniors (65-84) grew 23% and 85+ grew 8% from 2016-2021
- **Household size**
  - One-person households up 13%, non-traditional households (single, roommate, multi-gen) up 14%
- **Migration trends**
  - Net in-migration of 1,147 in 2021-2022, highest in 20 years; mostly from other provinces
- **Homelessness in the South Shore region**
  - 2024 count found 506 individuals (16+) experiencing homelessness or housing precarity

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## Existing Housing Market

*Data from the Municipal Housing Needs Report (2023) & Canadian Census (2021)*

- **Housing stock**
  - 2021 Census: 11,505 dwellings in MODL, over 90% are owner-occupied; 92% of owned homes are single-family units
  - Rental market: 1,160 units in 2021 (71% single-family homes); new multi-unit projects expected
  - Short-term rentals: 391 units registered in April 2024; potential impact on long-term rental supply is debated
  - Housing construction rates grew 1.1% annually (480 units over 3 years), insufficient to meet estimated needs
- **Housing developers/organizations**
  - Traditional construction: mostly small firms handling small-to-medium projects, sourcing locally and building on-site; large firms rare
  - Modular construction: prefabricated off-site in factor settings, then assembled on-site; similar cost to traditional but faster and more controlled

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## Definitions and Categories

- **Structure of housing ownership**
  - Small scale rental, Large scale rental/REIT, Homeownership and Condo
- **Types of affordable housing**
  - Subsidized private (Tenant-based rent supplements & developer-based rent supplements), Subsidized public, Non-profit, Cooperative, Benefits & Issues
- **Definitions of affordable**
  - Affordability, Deeply affordable and Market rate
- **Types of housing stock/ development patterns**
  - Single family home, Semi-detached/ duplex, “Granny suite”, Cluster development, Land-lease community and Multi-unit buildings
- **Exploration of non-traditional housing & emerging trends**
  - RVs, Modular housing, Tiny homes, Cohousing, Green housing initiatives

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## Housing Stock Estimates

*Data from the Municipal Housing Needs Report (2023) and Canadian Census (2021). Calculations based on CMHC's "Canada's Housing Supply Shortage" Report (2025)*

Type of Housing	Current Units (2021)	Estimated units in 2030 at status quo pace	Estimated units needed: 2030	Shortage
Total private dwellings	14,223	15,551	17,903	2,352
Owner-occupied Units	11,500 (~90%)	12,715	14,622	1,908
Renter-occupied Units	1,160 (~10%)	1,295	1,507	212
Non-Profit	35 (5 for families, 30 for seniors)	-	-	
Estimated new construction	-	1,350 (150 units per year)	2,120 (235.5 units per year)	85 units per year

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## Housing Stock Table Summary

MODL has 12,660 occupied units (as of the 2021 census)

- We are building at an average of 150 units per year

CMHC estimates that Nova Scotia needs to increase construction starts by approx. 64% to restore affordability by 2030

- For MODL, this requires constructing either:
  - 235.5 units per year until 2030
  - 2,120 units total by 2030

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## Housing Affordability Pressure

*Data from the Municipal Housing Needs Report (2023) and Canadian Census (2021)*

Indicator	Value
<b>2022 Median Sale Price (MODL)</b>	\$335,000
<b>Est. Income Needed to Buy Median Home (MODL, 2022)</b> <small>(Source: Statistics Canada, Bank of Canada, NSAR MLS)</small>	\$105,400 (total dwelling)
<b>Est. Actual Before-Tax Household Income (MODL, 2020)</b> <small>(Approximation based on federal and NS tax rates; actual values may vary)</small>	\$88,000
<b>% of Total Households Below Income (MODL, 2022)</b>	76%

- With an estimated before-tax household income of \$88,000, homes in the range of \$264,000 are considered affordable
- Compared with the median sale price of \$335,000, this represents a gap of \$71,000

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## Jurisdiction and Authority

### Federal Government

- Sets national funding programs; provides incentives (loans, grants, tax benefits)
- CMHC - Crown corporation responsible for research, financing, and investment
- Build Canada Homes – Focus on affordability and pace of construction
- National economic policy

### Provincial Government

- Sets framework for municipal government, land-use planning, and building codes
- Provides low income and social housing
- Provincial economic policy
- Labour and trades management (programs, education, labour laws, etc.)

### Municipal Government

- Provision of 'necessary or desirable' *things* to maintain safe and viable communities
- Provides infrastructure (i.e. water and wastewater, transit, solid waste and recycling, etc.)
- Controls local land-use planning and sets property taxes

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## Key Takeaways

### Existing housing market and demographics:

- MODL faces steady growth, an aging population, smaller household sizes, and strong immigration; all contributing to rising housing demand
- Home prices have surged far beyond income growth, leaving most households unable to afford median-priced homes

### Top 3 challenges

1. Lack of supply;
2. lack of different housing types;
3. lack of non-market options

### The municipality's role and scope of strategy:

- Work within provincial frameworks as one piece of the broader housing picture and economic structure
- Manage land use, property taxes, incentives, and infrastructure to encourage development while preserving community character
- Emphasize overall community well-being and sustainable growth

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# Issues and Challenges



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## Housing academic research

- Rural housing construction costs are higher due to materials, labour, and logistics, while most funding programs are designed for urban areas
- Areas with high homeownership rates may oppose higher density/affordable housing projects
- Renters now face higher precarity (e.g. fixed-term leases, renovations) as costs rise and choices shrink
- Primarily financial focus on private development exacerbates crisis
  - Combined with a deep disinterest in the government constructing housing since the 90's
- Due to profit motives, many private incentives do not change development patterns
  - Incentives for the private market usually target new builds while older housing stock is most likely to be affordable
- Lack of strong provincial frameworks (e.g. land trusts and centralized non-profit housing agencies) limits non-profit housing development

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## Stakeholder interviews

### **Private developers**

- Financing barriers include high-interest loans, upfront infrastructure costs, limited mid-scale project funding, and rising land prices
- Rural construction costs the same or more, but sales generally have lower value
- Complex or slow permitting and zoning processes create uncertainty and delays
  - E.g. permit approvals with different response times and windows
- Mismatch between regulations and modern technology requirements
  - E.g. minimum lot size for septic regulations

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## Stakeholder Interviews continued

### **Non-profit housing providers**

- Quick access to capital is the largest barrier
  - Bidding on property acquisition (private firms are faster)
  - Assessing and for acquisition (slow process and unpredictable results)
- Funding is often tied to the construction of housing, leaving a pre-development gap where no funding is available
- Charity status can limit ability to act
- Property taxes and jumps in assessment value hinder growth

### **Navigational/supportive organizations**

- People think regionally, but services are more siloed
- A need for creative funding and governance structures
  - Especially for long-term programs which often require bi-yearly or yearly re-applications
- Building communities, not just units (services, parks, playgrounds, dignity)
- Capacity mismatch: "Let the people who know what they're doing do it best"

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## Key takeaways

### **Financing barriers and cost pressures**

- Private developers face high-interest loans, upfront costs and limited mid-scale funding
- Non-profits lack quick access to capital and face constraints from charity status

### **Regulatory and institutional gaps**

- Outdated, complex, or sequential permitting and zoning processes may slow projects
- Absence of strong provincial frameworks (e.g. land trusts, centralized housing agencies, comprehensive programs) limits coordinated solutions

### **Community-building vs. financial-driven focus**

- Services remain siloed despite regional needs
- Tension between purely financial/development-driven focus and the broader need to build supportive communities with services, parks, etc. that people want to live in

Fulfilling the mandate of building "safe and viable communities" requires encouraging housing development while ensuring community-focused growth that secures high quality of life

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## Solutions



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## Directions

### General Directions - An Environment for Growth

- Continue expanding infrastructure development and regional investment to support growth in MODL's service-centers

### Private Development

- Facilitate the private sector in doubling housing starts

### Non-market Housing

- Wraparound supports to community organizations to achieve non-profit provision of affordable units

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## An Environment for Growth

- Focus infrastructure investments in and around MODL's service centres:
  - New Germany, Bridgewater, Mahone Bay, and Lunenburg areas
- Work collaboratively with partner municipalities in the County to expand supply of centrally serviced land
  - E.g. agree to jointly invest in infrastructure and share tax revenue resulting from that growth
- Establish a land bank, either;
  - Actively acquiring, improving, and selling land
  - Simply managing and dispensing existing land
- Complete the process of establishing a comprehensive land use plan
  - Provide clarity and vision for where higher density is focused

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## Private market actions

- Continue to make municipal land available for development
- Promote development through supportive services/preparatory actions
  - Allow higher density zoning with clear development rules (e.g. as-of-right where appropriate)
  - Continue roundtable discussions with provincial departments to reduce development delays and bottlenecks
- Maintain flexibility and openness
  - Embrace innovative approaches that would significantly increase housing supply or reduce financial barriers to home-ownership (e.g. modular housing, rent-to-own models)
- Address policy and affordability barriers
  - Advocate to the Province about specific policies (e.g. septic system requirements and minimum lot sizes) that are outside municipal control
  - Advocate to CMHC and Build Canada Homes for reforms to program eligibility
    - Reconsider how affordability rates are applied in rural contexts
    - Remove or reduce minimum project size funding requirements to enable smaller-scale development

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## Investment Beyond Underground Services

### Urban/Sub-urban

- Provision of complete municipal services:
  - E.g. Active transportation & transit connections
- Advance regional E-permitting
  - Simplify approvals, increase transparency, and reduce delays

### Rural/Deeply rural

- Provide a secondary dwelling unit top up/facilitation program
  - Provide incentives for homeowners to add secondary units (especially in rural areas)
  - Act as a navigator to guide residents through the process
- Streamline subdivision requirements
  - Simplify and clarify processes (e.g. minimum private road standards)

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## Non-market housing actions

- Adjust policies to prioritize access to municipal land (e.g. first right of refusal, land bank divestment)
- Create a pre-development grant funding program
  - Bridges the gap until CMHC and provincial grant funding kicks in
- Facilitate working connections between non-market housing groups
  - Navigator/facilitation service for community groups
  - Collective site viewings for potential development locations
  - Host/support development negotiations, partnerships, mergers, etc.
  - Host/support regional round-tables, informational sessions, etc.

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## Non-market actions continued

- Establish a guide for how MODL will evaluate development proposals
  - Which supports are available?
  - What conditions are necessary for those supports?
  - What help can MODL provide throughout the process?
- Establish a rebate program to offset residential tax rate for community organizations providing non-market housing
  - E.g. mirroring the current Income Scaled Property Tax Exemption program for homeowners

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## Actions/directions not recommended

- Pursuing ownership of housing
  - Municipal construction of housing units
  - Municipal ownership (or deep supports) of low-income housing
  - Municipal ownership of rental market housing
- Directly financing resident's housing
  - Providing loans or grants for mortgages
  - Owning and operating rent-to-own programs
- Directly financing market-rate housing
  - Providing loans or grants for firms to build market-rate housing
  - Granting tax exemptions for market-rate housing operators

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Type	Option	Implementation	Budget
General actions	Regional cooperation	Ongoing	\$0- Incorporated into existing staff workplans
	Land bank	2026/27	\$0- Establishment and promotion – acquisition and improvement costs will vary
	Land use plan	Ongoing	\$0 – Incorporated into planning
Private market actions	Preparatory actions	Ongoing	\$0 – Incorporated into land-use
	Secondary dwelling program	2027/28	\$50,000
Investment – urban/sub-urban	Improve transit connections	2026/27	\$250,000-300,000
	E-permitting	Complete (2025/26)	\$150,000 (one-time, regional)
Investment – rural/deeply rural	Advocate for policy and funding reforms	Ongoing	\$0 – Incorporated into existing staff workplans
	Private road standards	2026/27	Included in CAO's workplan
Non-market housing actions	Pre-development fund	2027/28	\$100,000-200,000
	Support non-market housing groups	2027/28	\$100,000
	Evaluation guide	2026/27	\$5,000 one-time cost
	Tax rebate program	2027/28	\$50,000-100,000

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## Next Steps

- Refine and finalize a consultative draft of the Housing Strategy
- Public engagement – November 2025
- Council review and refinement
- Adopt finalized housing strategy – November/December 2025



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## Public Engagement

Engagement period November 3 - 28

- Create an Engage page with project information
  - Short video presentation online
  - Option to provide feedback online through Engage
- Hold two open houses; one north of the 103, one south
  - Short presentation
  - Tables to discuss Council's preferred actions



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# Discussion



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# Appendix



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## Summary Table


Type	Option	Description
General actions	<b>Infrastructure investments</b>	Focus infrastructure investments in and around MODL's service centres: New Germany, Bridgewater, Mahone Bay & Lunenburg areas
	<b>Regional cooperation</b>	Municipal cooperation, expand supply of centrally serviced land (e.g. joint infrastructure and tax sharing)
	<b>Land bank</b>	Establish land bank (acquire, improve, manage land)
	<b>Land use plan</b>	Complete comprehensive land use plan
Private market actions	<b>Municipal land</b>	Continue to make municipal land available for development
	<b>Preparatory actions</b>	Pre-zone central land, allow higher density, reduce development delays
	<b>Flexibility</b>	Embrace innovative models (e.g. modular, rent-to-own, etc.)
	<b>Advocate for policy reforms</b>	Advocate to the Province about specific policies (e.g. septic system requirements and minimum lot sizes) that are outside municipal control
	<b>Advocate for reforms to program eligibility</b>	Advocate to CMHC and Build Canada Homes for reforms to program eligibility (e.g. affordability rates, remove/reduce minimum project size funding requirements to enable smaller-scale development)

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## Summary Table Continued


Type	Option	Description
Investment – urban/sub-urban	<b>Complete municipal services</b>	E.g. Active transportation & transit connections
	<b>E-permitting</b>	Advance regional E-permitting to simplify approvals and reduce delays
Investment – rural/deeply rural	<b>Secondary dwelling program</b>	Incentives for homeowners to add secondary units, act as a navigator
	<b>Streamline requirements</b>	Simplify and clarify processes (e.g. minimum private road standards)
Non-market housing actions	<b>Land access</b>	Adjust policies to prioritize non-profits' access to municipal land
	<b>Pre-development fund</b>	Create pre-development fund to bridge early-stage gap
	<b>Support non-market housing groups</b>	Navigator service for community groups; strengthen collaboration among non-profit housing groups
	<b>Evaluation guide</b>	Guide for how MODL will evaluate development proposals; what supports are available, and what criteria will determine eligibility
	<b>Tax rebate</b>	Rebate program to offset property tax for non-profits (e.g. mirroring the current Income Scaled Property Tax Exemption program for homeowners)

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# Projects Update

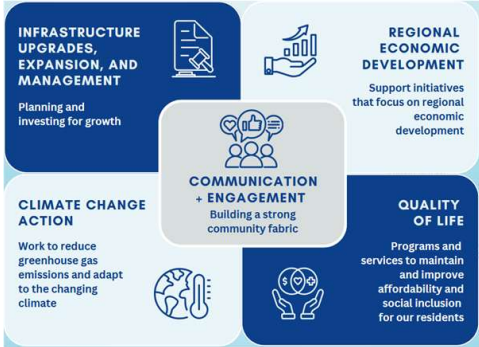
Policy and Strategy Committee  
September 2025



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## Background



- INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES, EXPANSION, AND MANAGEMENT**  
Planning and investing for growth
- REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Support initiatives that focus on regional economic development
- CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION**  
Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate
- QUALITY OF LIFE**  
Programs and services to maintain and improve affordability and social inclusion for our residents

**COMMUNICATION + ENGAGEMENT**  
Building a strong community fabric

- Purpose today:
  - Review completed projects
  - Provide status updates in advance of starting new cycle of strategic planning
  - No decisions required



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## Completed this quarter

- Park Washroom analysis (9)
  - Cluster Development regs (12)
  - Food hub investigation (14)
  - E-bike Loan Program (28)
  - Neighbourhood Nuisance bylaw (22)
  - Pine Grove Park Engagement (34)
  - Uranium Mining Report (\*\*)
  - Vehicle purchasing analysis tool (33)
- Completed by the June update
    - Council lenses (7)
    - Pine Grove Park engagement (34)
    - Neighbourhood nuisance bylaw (22)
    - Cluster development regulations (12)
    - Paved shoulders Wileville (39)



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## Progress on Highest Priority Projects

- Comprehensive Land-use Planning (1):
  - Extensive public engagement ongoing;
  - Council discussion sessions on priority topics have begun;
  - second draft to be prepared for fall of 2025;
  - Second round of public engagement planned.
- Transit Service (2):
  - MODL submitted route proposals to the Town of Bridgewater;
  - MODL & TOB staff conducting route analysis
  - CAO working to smooth regulatory approval
  - Project currently on track for launching in 2026.



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## Progress on Highest Priority Projects

- Housing Strategy (3)
  - Research, stakeholder interviews complete, market study underway;
  - Council discussion session held July;
  - Consultative draft of strategy components prepared for September PSC
- Regional Growth Management Committee (4)
  - Terms of Reference approved by both Councils
  - Initial appointments and meeting complete
  - Priorities for work established and approved by both partner councils



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## Progress on Highest Priority Projects

- Collaborative Health Centre/Community Space (5)
  - Site Preparations for the Collaborative Health Centre ongoing;
  - Building construction now underway
  - Exploration of management partner ongoing.
- Cell Advocacy (6)
  - campaign conducted to encourage residents to identify service gaps;
  - MLA/MP meetings held to impress importance of issue
  - Planning for ministerial/departmental meetings



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## Progress on Q2/3 Projects

- Gender-based Violence Report (17)
  - October PSC
- Quality of Life/volunteer sector report (11)
  - initial objective met - report to council completed;
  - further discussion required to clarify Council's vision and direction on Community Development and quality of life



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## Progress on Q2/Q3 Projects

- Fire service governance items (15)
  - Workshop held with FESC and fire service on a code of conduct and driver training/strategies
  - Options report presented to FESC and referred to the fire service for further engagement
- Evaluation of Climate initiatives (36)
  - Work underway for expanded annual report providing evaluation information



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## Notes & Next Steps

- Tax portal
- Dog Bylaw
- Public Art Policy



Status report will form basis of strategic priorities planning;  
Further update in January 2025 on projects



Strategic planning will feed 2026/27 budget

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Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
7	Implement lenses into staff approach & report templates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Revise RFD template</li> <li>•Develop guide for staff in applying lenses</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q1	<b>complete</b>
9	Local Accessible Temporary Washroom Options/Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Research and report to council on local procurement and accessibility considerations for washroom facilities</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q1	<b>complete</b>
12	Cluster Development Regs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Revisions to draft bylaw based on Council direction</li> </ul>	Planning	2025 Q1	<b>complete</b>
14	Investigate a Food Hub for the Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Complete a feasibility study for a food hub, including public engagement</li> <li>•Council discussion and decision on whether &amp; how to proceed</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	2025 Q1	<b>complete</b>
11	QoL - Volunteer Sector Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Report to Council on Project Volunteer, current initiatives, and options on supporting community connections</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initial objective met - report to council completed;</li> <li>•further discussion required to clarify Council's vision and direction on Community Development and quality of life</li> </ul>
17	Gender Based Violence Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff report on Municipal role in addressing the gender-based violence epidemic</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff assigned; Research and analysis underway; Targeting October PSC</li> </ul>
22	Neighbourhood Nuisance Bylaw	adopt a bylaw to address nuisances	CAO	2025 Q2	<b>complete</b>

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
28	E-bike Loan Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Acquire equipment required for an e-bike loan program</li> <li>•Launch pilot service</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q2	<b>complete</b>
34	Pine Grove Park Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Complete an engagement process with community on neighbourhood park in Pine Grove &amp; report to Council</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q2	<b>complete</b>
39	Paved Shoulders Wileville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Investigate current TPW plans for capital work on 325 connecting Wileville to Town</li> <li>•Options for improving AT in area</li> </ul>	CAO	2025 Q2	<b>complete</b>
NR	Report on Uranium extraction and Mining in the LaHave River Watershed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Report to Council Summarizing the regulatory process and history of uranium mining in NS; as well as a brief summary of possible impacts to the watershed</li> </ul>	Administration	2025 Q2	<b>complete</b>
3	Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a draft housing strategy for Council consideration</li> <li>• complete public engagement on content of draft</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultative draft presentation prepared for Council consideration at September PSC</li> </ul>

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
4	Regional Growth Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop &amp; approve TOR for the JRGM Committee</li> <li>•Committee to Begin work on collaboration (Planning, Transit, Regional industrial park exploration, master water agreement)</li> </ul>	CAO	2025 Q3	<b>complete</b>
15	Fire Governance Issue re: Incident in Cumberland County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Collaborative discussion with Fire service on appropriate system of accountability for Dept. officers, members, Drivers</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•workshop with fire service representatives complete;</li> <li>•Staff preparing options report for fall FESC meeting</li> </ul>
36	Evaluation of Climate Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Review of projects identified in the LCAAP</li> <li>•Identify evaluation measures for projects</li> </ul>	Planning	2025 Q3	will be part of annual update on the Local Climate Change Action Plan;
6	Cell Service Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Follow up on BuildNS advocacy for more detail analysis of the current Cell coverage</li> <li>•Develop advocacy plan</li> <li>•Support &amp; amplify NSFAM advocacy on the issue.</li> </ul>	CAO	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• campaign to encourage residents to report service gaps implemented;</li> <li>• Advocacy meeting with local MLAs held</li> <li>• issue raised with MP</li> <li>•planning for ministerial meetings to raise profile of issue with Cabinet</li> </ul>
7	Municipal App development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Procure app developer</li> <li>•Manage development &amp; integration with website</li> <li>•Train staff on use</li> <li>•Promo plan for launch &amp; use</li> </ul>	Comms	2025 Q4	•RFQ for developer issued and awarded; development underway

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
8	Revised Comms strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Standard criteria for when to do public engagement</li> <li>•Increased tactic use for engagement events</li> <li>•Enhanced civic engagement at Council (Livestream, evening mtgs., in community mtgs.)</li> <li>•Representative polling on MM &amp; Engagement</li> </ul>	Comms	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for Council in the community meetings underway;</li> <li>•improvements to Municipal matters ongoing in response to survey results</li> <li>•municipal app in development</li> </ul>
13	E-Permitting for Building Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Purchase, install and launch an online platform for applying and issuing building permits</li> </ul>	Planning	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Procurement complete</li> <li>•implementation work going well - MODL coordinating with appropriate staff in partner municipalities</li> </ul>
16	Analysis of Small Wastewater Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff report exploring cost comparison, environmental outcomes, benefits and issues with small centralized systems vs. onsite wastewater treatment</li> </ul>	Eng	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Contract with engineering firm in place to conduct analysis;</li> <li>•Report expected within fiscal year.</li> </ul>
18	Criteria for evaluating Recreation investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staff report providing options for Council on developing criteria for assessing proposed investments in Recreation assets.</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report to come to council with recommended criteria in January</li> </ul>
20	Tax Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Purchase, install and launch online portal to access tax account information</li> </ul>	Finance	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff working with Vendor on customer portal implementation.</li> <li>• Testing to begin in October to ensure a seamless experience for users when the system goes live.</li> <li>• Employee portal goes live in early September.</li> </ul>
24	Dog Bylaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Complete an evaluation and update of the Dog bylaw</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q4	Deferred;

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
29	Fire Service Training Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative development and implementation of a strategy to increase training for the volunteer fire service</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently focussing with FESC on code of conduct and driver standards discussion; will return to the training strategy when above issue addressed.</li> </ul>
30	Cape Lahave Conservation Easement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wwh report to council, recommend 1 final public information session;</li> <li>• Enter into agreement with conservation group for the management of the public asset.</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council authorized the execution of the conservation agreement for the islands at the September 9th Council meeting</li> </ul>
31	Review Criminal Record Check Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to Council on criminal record check fees</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project assigned; research underway with report to Council by October 2025</li> </ul>
33	Analysis of Vehicle Types: Costs & Emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracking &amp; Analysis on existing fleet</li> </ul>	Finance	2025 Q4	<b>complete</b>
37	Updated AT Plan for Council Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to Council summarizing the drafted (not adopted) AT plan</li> <li>• Options for proceeding with implementation</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q4	Review of Plan by December 2025
40	Mobile VIC Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish output and outcome measures for VIC services</li> <li>• Report to Council on same</li> </ul>	Rec	2025 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff report in preparation for Council consideration in January</li> </ul>
43	Evaluation of Old Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to Council identifying any items omitted during adoption of provincial code of conduct and analysis on inclusion in other Council policies</li> </ul>	Admin	2025 Q4	Not started

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
2	Transit Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Work with TOB on the expansion of service into MODL</li> <li>•Seek funding for pilot</li> <li>•Secure Vehicle(s) required</li> <li>•Launch service in 2026</li> </ul>	CAO	2026 Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Inter-municipal discussion at staff level on route and implementation plans;</li> <li>•targeting spring 2026 to begin service</li> </ul>
45	Marketing Levy Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Evaluation and adoption or dismissal of levy on room stays to fund tourism initiatives</li> </ul>	Rec	2026 Q1	Deferred;
26	Reduce Wildfire Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Work to eliminate tipping fees on residential brush</li> <li>•Explore options for increasing adoption of Fire Smart program in our communities</li> </ul>	Admin	2026 Q2	
32	Dry Hydrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Collaborative discussion with the Fire service on location and gaps in network of dry hydrants</li> <li>•Explore options to expand network</li> </ul>	Admin	2026 Q2	
1	Comprehensive Land-Use Planning (MODL 2040)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Draft a comprehensive Municipal Planning Strategy and Land-use Bylaw for the entire geography of the Municipality.</li> <li>•Conduct rigorous public engagement</li> <li>•Council adoption of MPS/LUB</li> </ul>	Planning	2026 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Extensive public engagement ongoing</li> <li>•research &amp; options drafting ongoing</li> <li>•revised draft under development; planned for council and public review in fall of 2025</li> </ul>

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
5	Collaborative Health Centre/Community Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Construction of collaborative Health Centre</li> <li>•Consultation on &amp; Development &amp; management of Community space on ground floor</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	2026 Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Site Preparations of Collaborative Health Centre ongoing</li> <li>•Design work for community space underway</li> <li>•Exploration of management partner ongoing</li> </ul>
19	Refresh Open Space Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Using enhanced public engagement &amp; new criteria, establish a refreshed open space strategy</li> </ul>	Rec	2026 Q3	
47	Dangerous and Unsightly Hardship Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•RFD for Council on D&amp;U policies &amp; their impact; options for reducing hardship for lower income/health complications</li> </ul>	Planning	2026 Q3	
10	Establish Formal Regional Economic Development Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Initiate regional discussions on enhanced formal collaboration</li> <li>•Pursue immediate opportunities for joint work</li> <li>•Staff report to stimulate Council discussion and clarification of the municipal role in catalysing economic activity.</li> <li>•Develop joint report for Councils evaluating formal structures &amp; funding opportunities</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	2026 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•preparing for study re: effective model for regional economic collaboration</li> <li>•Grant application being submitted to Municipal Affairs</li> <li>•support indicated from partner units</li> <li>•presentations to mayors and wardens</li> </ul>
25	Personnel Policy Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Complete an evaluation and update of the Personnel Policy</li> </ul>	HR	2026 Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MJSB HR leading a joint project to review partner policies and recommend improvements and harmonization</li> </ul>
35	Evaluation of the CES Lease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Report to Council on the history, current lease terms, issues and benefits of relationship with Reserves</li> </ul>	Eng	2026 Q4	
41	Fire Service Governance - Oakland/Clearland Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Evaluate options to provide appropriate fire tax governance mechanism in place for Clearland</li> </ul>	Admin	2026Q4	
42	Discussion re: Regional Fire Training Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Introduction of concept to Councils</li> <li>•begin regional discussions on components &amp; feasibility</li> </ul>	Admin	2026Q4	

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
38	Development of an Arts and Culture Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Report outlining benefits of and effort required for the development of an Arts and Culture policy</li> </ul>	Rec	2027 Q2	
45	Extension of Central Services Surrounding Mahone Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Work with the town on identifying growth areas</li> <li>•Extension of underground services to permit high density residential development</li> </ul>	CAO	2027 Q4	
48	Floodplain Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Address data gaps and mapping of floodplains to meet provincial requirements around floodplain protections</li> </ul>	Planning	2028 Q1	
51	Municipal Road Condition and Prioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Report to council identifying service levels, condition of municipal roads</li> <li>•Outlining costs, recommendation, and options for capital upgrades</li> </ul>	Eng	N/A	

Rank	Initiative	Scope	Lead Dept	Completion target (FY & Quarter)	Status
21	Investigate a Regional Industrial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included in TOR of the JRGM Committee</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	N/A	
27	Local Immigration Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with South Shore Multicultural Association &amp; municipalities to support the attraction integration and retention of newcomers into the labour market and broader community</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	N/A	
49	Enhanced Comms Strategy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased storytelling</li> <li>Weekly council reporting</li> </ul>	Comms	N/A	
50	Review of Policing Service and Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive review of policing governance, costs, and outcomes considering existing provider or a local force.</li> </ul>	Admin	N/A	Presentation took place in Q2 2025
C	Procurement Evaluation Tool for Vehicle Purchases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to Council on financial and emission analysis for future fleet purchases based on municipal lifecycle costs</li> </ul>	Planning	N/A	
C	Information on Osprey Village Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>marketing includes, business directory, updated area map, community hub promotion and awareness &amp; attraction campaigns</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	N/A	
NR	Council Discussion re: Re-establishing a Sustainability Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to Council outlining costs, benefits and issues, and potential evaluation parameters for establishment of new community committee focused on the local climate change action plan</li> </ul>	Planning	N/A	
23	Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work to promote the zone and attract business &amp; investment in forestry byproduct development</li> </ul>	Ec Dev	Ongoing	
46	Solar Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting Provincial decision on Bid</li> </ul>	Planning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bid unsuccessful</li> </ul>

Policy & Strategy Committee  
Item #: 9.2.1  
Date: September 16, 2025



## **The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg**

### **Request for Decision**

**Report to:** Policy and Strategy Committee

**Submitted by:** Ella R. Gindi, Planner II

**Date:** September 16, 2025

**Re:** Proposed Municipal Boundary Adjustment: Land Transfer from the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg to the Town of Lunenburg

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### **Recommendation**

**That the Policy and Strategy Committee recommend that Council:**

- 1. Support the request from the Town of Lunenburg (TOL) to proceed with a mutual boundary change in the Salt Meadows subdivision area;**
- 2. Mayor and CAO to sign a joint letter with the Town of Lunenburg requesting the boundary change to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board (NSRAB);**
- 3. Direct staff to initiate a limited public engagement process to inform residents and gather feedback.**

### **Executive summary**

This report outlines a proposed boundary adjustment between the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) and the Town of Lunenburg (TOL) under Section 357 of the Municipal Government Act. The request, initiated by the TOL and received by MODL on June 24, 2025, seeks to resolve a jurisdictional anomaly affecting four parcels in the Salt Meadows subdivision. The adjustment would transfer approximately 1.93 acres of land currently split between the two municipalities fully into the TOL.

The proposal aims to improve service delivery, land use planning, and administrative consistency by aligning municipal boundaries with the built environment. The process is considered minor under the MGA and qualifies for a streamlined approval by the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board (NSRAB) if no objections are received during the public notice period.

Impacts to MODL are minimal, with an estimated annual taxation loss of \$146.29 and no expected changes to infrastructure or service levels. A staff planner has been assigned to oversee the process, which will be managed within existing departmental capacity. A collaborative public engagement strategy is recommended to support transparency and communication with affected residents.

### **Background**

On June 24, 2025, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) received a formal letter from the Town of Lunenburg requesting a mutual boundary change under Section 357 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). This request was authorized by TOL Council at its May 27, 2025, meeting. The purpose of the request is to address a jurisdictional anomaly in the Salt Meadows subdivision where Wolff Street and Wood Street currently straddle the municipal boundary.

This situation creates challenges such as inconsistencies in by-law enforcement, property taxation, service delivery, and land use planning. The proposed boundary adjustment would transfer the affected corner lots entirely into TOL jurisdiction, streamlining administration and service coordination.

The area proposed for annexation from the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) to the Town of Lunenburg (TOL) consists of four parcels and covers approximately 1.93 acres in total (see map 1). The first property is a portion (1.82 acres) of a larger undeveloped parcel assessed for resource use (PID 60161155). While municipal records list the parcel at 15.812 acres, assessment data from PVSC and Property Online indicate it is 6.4 acres, and taxes are calculated based on the PVSC-assessed lot size. The second property is a small portion of a developed parcel (PID 60712825), with the majority of the lot already located within the Town of Lunenburg (TOL) boundary. The remaining two parcels (PIDs 60734969 and 60734951) are primarily within the TOL, with only minor portions extending into MODL, and are not currently subject to MODL taxation. Both parcels are undeveloped, although one contains a shipping

container. Surrounding land uses consist of low-density residential development, including single detached homes and townhouse-style dwellings, along with adjacent forested areas.

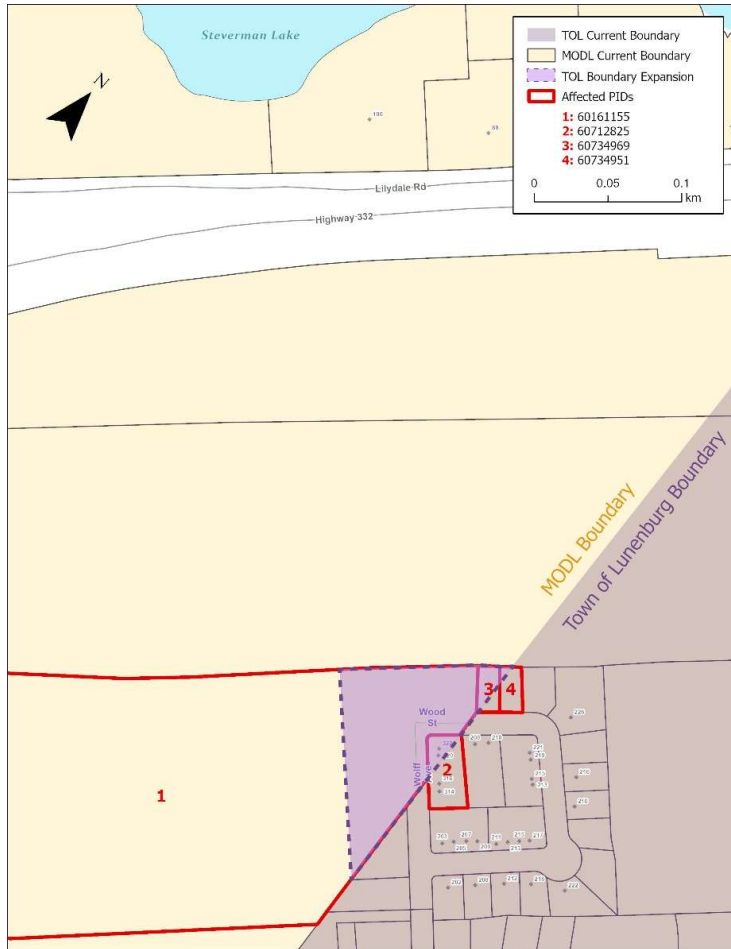


Figure 1 Affected PIDs with the proposed boundary change

### Legislative Framework

Section 357 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) states that the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board (NSRAB) may confirm a mutual boundary change without a hearing if the following conditions are met:

- a) The agreed change or settlement is advertised in a newspaper circulating in the affected municipalities, as directed by the Board;
- b) The advertisement invites objectors to advise the Board of their objections;

- c) Proof of the advertising has been provided to the Board; and
- d) No objections are received by the Board within thirty days after the first advertisement.

This section enables a streamlined process for municipalities that agree on boundary changes, removing the need for a formal hearing when public notice and lack of objections are documented.

Where the application is made by a party other than a municipality or town, it must contain, to the extent possible, the information outlined in Rules 27, 28, and 29(1) of the NSRAB Rules of Practice and Procedure, including Forms C and D. These requirements ensure consistency and transparency in submissions and include:

- A list of polling districts and number of councillors per district (if applicable);
- Descriptions of each area's size, communities, and geographic or social features;
- Latest available population statistics;
- Detailed elector data from the most recent election, including average electors per councillor and deviations;
- Copies of public advertisements and council meeting minutes;
- Maps and descriptions of existing and proposed boundaries;
- Any additional supporting material determined by Council.

Form C is used when polling districts are involved, while Form D applies to towns without districts. These forms help standardize the submission for NSRAB consideration.

Sections 358-363 of the MGA provide the framework for more complex cases involving amalgamation or annexation of the whole or part of a municipality. These sections outline:

- **Section 358:** Who may initiate the process: the Minister, a municipality, or a qualifying group of electors;
- **Section 359:** Requirements for a preliminary order, including:
  - Boundaries of the proposed area;
  - Estimated population;
  - Assessed property values;
  - Financial statements (if a village is included);
  - Reasons and supporting information.
- **Section 360-361:** Notification and hearing process for affected parties and the public.
- **Section 362:** What the NSRAB may require through a preliminary order — such as financial or service delivery studies.

- **Section 363:** The Board's authority to approve annexation or amalgamation, and to determine boundaries, elections, financial adjustments, and transitional arrangements.

These sections are particularly relevant for annexations initiated by non-municipal parties or involving larger-scale boundary or governance restructuring. While not directly applicable to the Salt Meadows case, which is a mutual, minor adjustment under Section 357; understanding these provisions reinforces the broader legal context for municipal boundary changes.

### **Discussion**

The proposed boundary adjustment is relatively minor in land area but carries important implications for governance and service delivery. A single-jurisdiction approach for Salt Meadows would:

- Eliminate confusion for residents and staff regarding which municipality is responsible;
- Simplify enforcement and planning processes;
- Ensure consistency in zoning, service provision, and taxation.

### **Next Steps**

If the Policy and Strategy Committee deems it advisable to recommend council to consider the requested annexation the following will occur:

- Prepare and sign a joint letter with TOL to NSRAB;
- Publish required advertisement and initiate engagement;
- Submit proof of notice and application to NSRAB;
- Await final approval if no objections are received.

### **Strategic Focus**

N/A

### **Budget/Financial Implications**

Expenses for MODL include staff time. Advertising and hall rental costs to be covered by the Town of Lunenburg. No infrastructure work or significant shifts in revenue are anticipated.

Based on current assessment and taxation data, approximately 1.82 acres of the 6.4-acre parcel (PID 60161155, AAN 00143731) fall within the proposed annexation area. This represents 28.44% of the property's total annual tax bill of \$511.28, resulting in an estimated tax loss of \$145.41. For PID 60712825, the portion currently within MODL is taxed at \$0.88 annually. PIDs

60734969 and 60734951 are not taxed by MODL and therefore would not contribute to any loss. In total, the estimated annual tax loss to MODL from the proposed annexation area is \$146.29. Overall, the anticipated taxation losses are minimal and are not expected to have a significant financial impact on the Municipality.

**Climate Change/sustainability**

N/A

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

N/A

**Strategic Communications**

Although not required for approval, public engagement is recommended to maintain transparency. In collaboration with MODL’s Communications and Engagement Manager, staff propose:

- A project page with background, FAQs, and a feedback form;
- Mailed notices to affected residents;
- Social media and news releases;
- Collection of written feedback during the 30-day notice period.

This approach is consistent with MODL’s commitment to openness and transparency.

**Work plan**

The proposed annexation has been integrated into the Planning Department’s work plan. A staff planner has been assigned to lead the process and will continue to support the coordination with the Town of Lunenburg, prepare the necessary documentation, and assist with any procedural requirements. This work is being accommodated within existing departmental capacity, and no significant impact on other planned initiatives is anticipated at this time.

**Alternatives**

The Policy and Strategy Committee may choose to defer the proposed recommendations and can request additional time for further review or clarification before the matter proceeds to Council for consideration.

## Conclusion

The proposed annexation would help resolve longstanding jurisdictional and service delivery issues in the Salt Meadows subdivision by aligning municipal boundaries with the existing built environment. Given the administrative benefits and minimal financial impact, staff recommend that the Policy and Strategy Committee consider supporting the request from the Town of Lunenburg and recommend to Council that the process proceed through a joint submission to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board (NSRAB), along with a limited public engagement process to inform and gather feedback from affected residents.

## Attachments

1. Letter from Town of Lunenburg (June 24, 2025)
2. Map of Proposed Boundary Adjustment
3. Map showing property boundaries with PIDs

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning and Development Services
Report Prepared by	Ella R. Gindi, Planner II
Report Approved by	Jeff Merrill, Director
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

## References

1. Municipal Government Act (Nova Scotia):  
<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/municipal%20government.pdf>
2. UARB Rules under the Municipal Government Act:  
[https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/municipal\\_government\\_act\\_rules.pdf](https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/municipal_government_act_rules.pdf)
3. NSUARB Municipal Boundaries User Guide:  
<https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/mandates/municipal-boundaries/municipal-boundaries-user-guide>



June 24, 2025

119 Cumberland Street  
P.O. Box 129  
Lunenburg, Nova Scotia  
Canada B0J 2C0

[www.townoflunenburg.ca](http://www.townoflunenburg.ca)

Tom MacEwan, LB  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg  
10 Allee Champlain Drive  
Cookville, Nova Scotia  
B4V 9E4

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TOWN OFFICE  
902-634-4410

ELECTRIC UTILITY  
902-634-4410

FIRE DEPARTMENT  
902-634-8343

PUBLIC WORKS  
902-634-8992

RECREATION  
902-634-4006

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FACSIMILE  
902-634-4416

Dear Tom,

At their May 27, 2025 Town of Lunenburg meeting of Council, a motion was passed to have the CAO send a letter to the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Council requesting their support to submit a joint letter to the NSUARB requesting a mutual boundary change between the Town and the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg in the Salt Meadows subdivision. The attached map shows the location of the existing Town/MODL boundary and the requested change.

Currently Wolff Street and Wood Street both cross the municipal boundaries so that a small corner portion of Salt Meadows subdivision is in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg. This creates potential by-law enforcement issues, discrepancies in property taxation, complications for delivery of Town services and zoning questions regarding future development in the area.

Section 357 of the Municipal Government Act stipulates that where two or more municipalities agree to a change in a mutual boundary, the Board may confirm the change without a hearing if

- a) The agreed change is advertised in a newspaper circulating in the affected municipalities, as directed by the Board;
- b) The advertisement invites objectors to advise the Board of their objections;
- c) Proof of the advertising has been provided to the Board; and
- d) No objections are received by the Board within thirty (30) days after the first advertisement.

Town Council respectfully requests support from MODL Council for the change to the mutual boundary in the area described above and agreement to jointly, with the Town, submitting a request to the NSUARB. Please take this request forward to your Council for their consideration.

Sincerely,



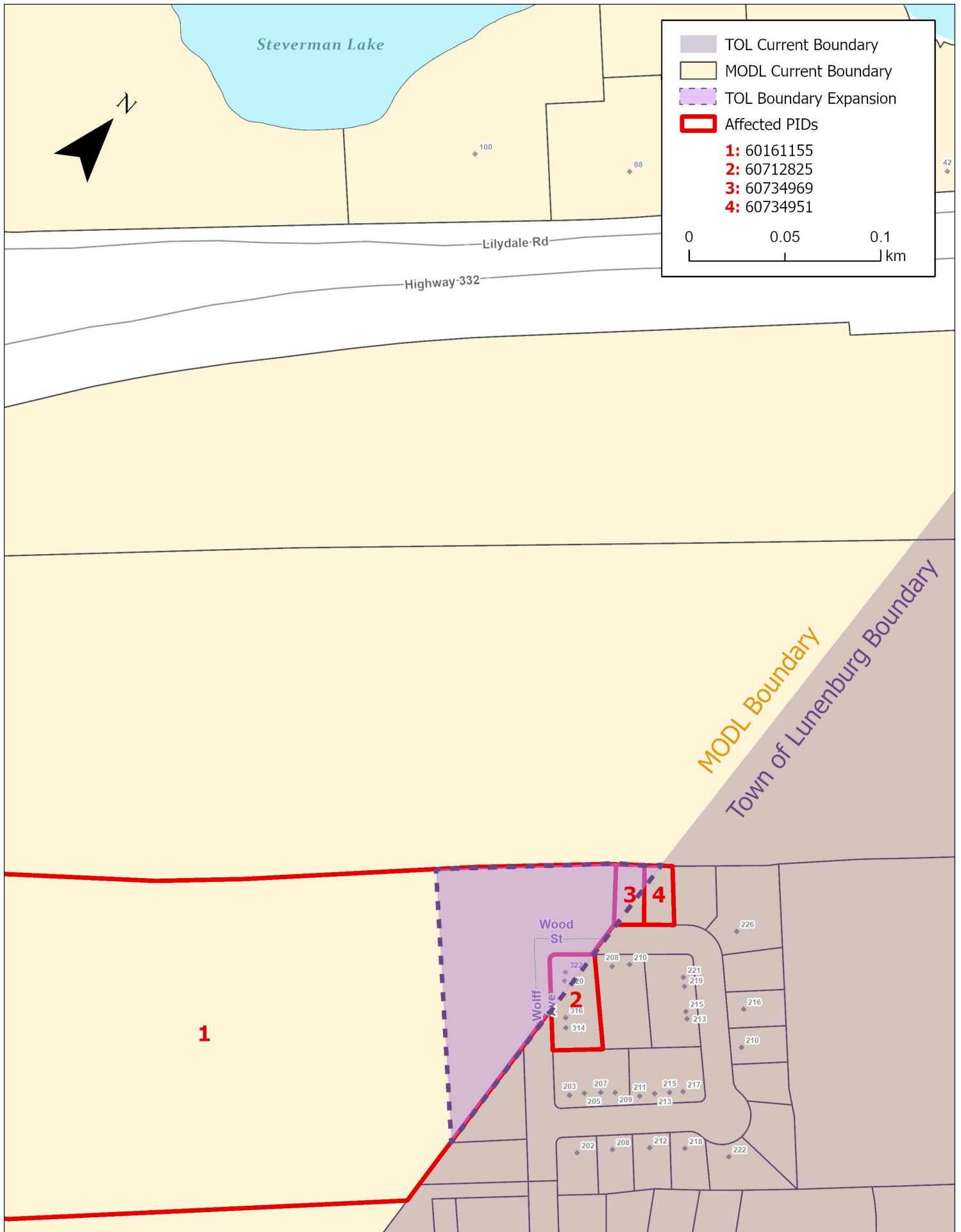
Marvin MacDonald

Interim CAO

cc

Mayor Jamie Myra







## The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

### Request for Decision

**Report to:** Policy & Strategy Committee  
**Submitted by:** Graham Hopkins, Inspection Services Manager  
**Date:** September 16, 2025  
**Re:** Building Bylaw – Repeal and Replace

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#### **Recommendation**

Staff recommend that Council repeal and replace By-law 018 Building Code, as presented, and conduct Second Reading at the September 23, 2025, Council meeting.

#### **Executive summary**

n/a

#### **Background**

The last amendment to the Building Code By-Law was March 18, 2011.

The current Building Code Bylaw for the Municipality does not address the expiry of building permits, renewal of building permits, or revocation of building permits. These clauses are necessary for the implementation of our new building permit tracking system. Also, the requirement for Location Certificates for new residential construction is being added.

This amendment will also remove the Fees from the Building Code Bylaw and add them to Fees Policy 058 – Table 1.

#### **Discussion**

When a building permit is issued, the applicant must demonstrate that the work they wish to undertake complies with The Building Code Act and Regulations, Zoning Controls, and Land Use Bylaws. As well as meeting approval requirements from NS Dept of Environment & Climate Change (on-site sewage) and NS Dept of Transportation and Public Works (driveway permits and working within the right of way).

Building Code changes can affect how a building is constructed. Changes to Land Use Bylaws can affect permissible uses and/or property line setbacks. To avoid being impacted by changes to the Building Code, Development Bylaws, or Land Use Planning regulations—such as those related to cluster developments or coastal protection—permits may be applied for without any genuine intention to begin construction within a reasonable period.

Staff propose amending the Building Code Bylaw to include a one-year expiry for building permits. Two one-year renewal options would be available, with renewal fees limited to the administrative portion of the fee schedule. This change would align the building permit timeline with the one-year validity of a Development Permit, requiring property owners to reapply for a Development Permit if construction has not commenced within that period.

Most new residential construction in the Municipality is completed within a two-year time frame. The additional year would allow property owners a “buffer” of one year, for a three-year total project timeline. Work not completed after the third year would be subject to a new application, only for the work not completed under the original permit.

#### **NEW PERMITS ISSUED AFTER JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2026**

Under the REVISED bylaw, for new permits issued after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026:

- New permits issued after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, effective date, will automatically receive an option to renew at the one-year mark, and again at the second-year mark. At the end of the third year, they will be requested to apply for a new BP for the remaining portion of the work. This can happen immediately or at a later time, should they need to take a pause in construction.
- Work completed previously is not affected by the issuance of the new permit. The addition of expiry dates does not change the authority of the building official to revoke permits, rather it makes it clearer for applicants of the timelines for building.
- Should an applicant need to reapply for a permit that was previously revoked, they will be granted the same renewal options on that permit.
- For some time, building permit intake staff have been informally advising clients that building permits do expire and that they should not take out a permit until such time as they are ready to begin construction.

Timelines currently exist for Development Permits (ONE YEAR), On Site Sewage Permits (THREE YEARS), NS DPW driveway and working within the right of way permits (ONE YEAR), if work has not commenced, these expiry dates are under provincial legislations. The alignment of MODL building permits with these other regulatory permits ensures compliance with all timelines.

Under the NS Building Code Act Section 9(3)(b)(c) the authority having jurisdiction (Building Officials):

Issue of permits

9 (1) The building official shall issue a permit pursuant to Section 8 except where

(3) An [A] building official may revoke a permit

(a) where it was issued on mistaken or false information;

(b) where, after twelve months after its issuance, the construction or demolition in respect of which it was issued has not been seriously commenced; or

(c) where the construction or demolition of the building is substantially suspended or discontinued for more than twelve months.

(4) An [A] building official shall not revoke a permit pursuant to subsection (3) until he has given written notice of his intention to do so to the permit holder and the owner of the building, if the owner is not the permit holder, at least thirty days prior to the proposed date of revocation.

**EXISTING OPEN BUILDING PERMITS**

From 2019 – 2024 under our current permit tracking system, there are 99 Permits issued for Single Dwellings/ Cottages/ Houses/ Recreational Cabins/ Guest Homes/ Mobile Mini Home that have had no inspections, up to and including Sept 10, 2025. Of these 99, 93 currently exceed 1 year without any inspection. Of these 99 – 18 are in areas which a Development Permit is required – with 15 of these DPs currently expired. These 15 permits are invalid without an accompanying Development Permit

The remaining 81 are in areas in which there is currently no zoning or land use by laws, however the Building Official has the authority (NS Building Code Act Section 9(3)(b)) to revoke many of these permits as there is no evidence construction has begun.

Currently there are 480 open permits for residential dwellings in the same time period that have been progressing and will continue to be valid.

- Existing building permits will not automatically be revoked when the Revised Building Code Bylaw becomes effective on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026. Existing permits will continue to be

- valid, as long as work continues. Currently there are 480 open permits for residential dwellings that have been progressing and will continue to be valid.
- Permits issued that have work commenced can be extended with the discretion of the authority having jurisdiction, the building official. There is no intention to cancel permits where work is actively being done.
  - An open permit that has been in effect for more than one year, and where work has not begun, can be reviewed, and may be revoked if work has not begun. Prior to revoking a building permit, the Building Officials will conduct a site visit to determine if construction has begun, and then, if necessary, send a letter to the applicant with Notice of their Intent to Revoke – the applicant has 30 days in which to contact the office to communicate their intentions regarding the project. The building official will then use their discretion to revoke the permit or allow the permit to remain open, in situations where work has not already started.
  - Once a building permit is revoked, the applicant has the option to re-apply for a new permit, when they are ready to begin construction.

Under our regional building services agreement, this would align the Municipality with the Town of Bridgewater and the Town of Lunenburg’s building permit expiry timelines. The Region of Queens Building Bylaw does not address expiry dates, which we expect they will modify in upcoming bylaw amendments.

**Strategic Focus**

n/a

**Budget/Financial Implications**

No expected implications.

**Climate Change/sustainability**

n/a

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

n/a

**Strategic Communications**

This change would be clearly communicated to all new permit applicants, contractors and industry contacts. Relevant sections of the website would be updated to reflect this change, permit application forms would be updated, and building permits would include expiry dates. Further, the upcoming permit tracking system will include expiration of building permits, with reminders to applicants and a mechanism to renew online.

This change would become effective for any permits issued after January 1, 2026. Permits currently open would continue to be valid, as long as work has begun and is progressing.

**Work plan**

No expected impacts on department resources.

**Alternatives**

Council can choose not to proceed with Second reading.

**Conclusion**

Staff recommend Council proceed with the Second reading.

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning & Development
Report Prepared by	Graham Hopkins, Manager
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	