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Municipal Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, February 25, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

MODL Council Chambers – 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville

1.	Call to Order	
1.1	Mi'kma'ki Territorial Acknowledgement	
2.	Announcements, Acknowledgements, Recognition	
3.	Changes/Approval of Agenda (as circulated)	
4.	Approval of Minutes - January 28, 2025 and February 11, 2025	
5.	Municipal Budget	1-18
5.1	Staff Presentation on Budget	
5.2	Expanded Public Input	
5.3	Council Deliberation and Direction to Staff	
6.	Business Arising from Minutes	
7.	Awarding of Tenders/RFPs - Nil	
8.	Presentations/Scheduled Times – Nil	
9.	Consideration of Correspondence - Nil	
10.	Recommendations from Committees & Boards	
10.1	Policy & Strategy Committee	19
10.1.1	Adoption of 2025 Strategic Priorities	20-37
10.1.2	Adoption of Policy 100 Land Conservation Policy	38-52
10.1.3	Policy 058 Fees – Annual Review and Re-adoption	53-58
10.1.4	Pickleball Courts – Proposed Lease Agreement	
11.	Staff Reports	
11.1	Planning & Development	
11.1.1	Proposed Development Agreement Lot FE-1 MacCulloch Road	59-60
11.2	Finance Department	
11.2.1	Proposed One-time Property Tax Rebate	61-62

12. Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matters

- 12.1 LCLC Update
- 12.2 Deputy Mayor's Update
- 12.3 Mayor's Update

13. Added Items

14. In Camera

- 14.1 Land Negotiations under Section 22(2)(a) of the MGA
- 14.2 Land Negotiations under Section 22(2)(a) of the MGA
- 14.3 Land Negotiations under Section 22(2)(a) of the MGA
- 14.4 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA

15. Adjournment

Council
Item #: 5.
Date: February 25, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to: Municipal Council
Submitted by: Elana Wentzell, CPA, CMA, Director of Finance
Date: 2025-02-25
Re: 2025-26 Draft Operating Budget

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council consider the 2025-26 Draft Operating Budget and direct staff to make any changes it feels necessary to support its strategic goals.

Executive summary

The 2025-26 Draft Operating Budget is enclosed for Council consideration. This is a first draft and is not yet a balanced budget. Staff will be reviewing the draft budget in detail with Council looking for direction on revisions.

The draft budget includes an overall summary followed by department budgets.

Each enclosed report is organized in the following manner:

After each line description there are the following columns -

- 2023/24 Actual – actual amounts from fiscal 2023-24
- 2024/25 Annual Budget – approved 2024-25 Budget
- 2024/25 Budget Forecast – forecasted amounts by Department staff to March 31, 2025
- 2025/26 Adjusted Baseline – revised drafts based on existing service levels
- 2025/26 Net Additions - includes deletions and additions for adjustments to service levels
- 2025/26 Proposed Budget – proposed budget for 2025-26 after considering the revised baseline and any additions/deletions
- Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025 – shows the change from year to year

Department budgets will be presented by each Director. There will be an accompanying presentation which will more fully explain any suggested changes, operational impacts and alignment with Council’s Strategic Plan.

The 5-year financial strategy will be discussed at an Operating level as capital budgets are still being finalized.

Staff are pleased to present this draft operating budget for Council consideration.

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

2025/26 DRAFT OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Expenditures							
General Government Services							
Council and Other Legislative Services	\$ 729,703	\$ 846,600	\$ 846,600	\$ 826,400	\$ -	\$ 826,400	-2.39%
Elections	4,676	190,000	170,000	-	-	-	100.00%
Administrative and Financial Services							
- Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	1,957,400	2,205,600	2,219,600	2,286,400	89,800	2,376,200	7.73%
- Advisory Services (legal fees, shared services: HR, EDIA, audit fees)	217,346	412,300	364,100	388,100	69,000	457,100	10.87%
- Municipal Services Building - office expenses, insurance, utilities & maintenance	647,943	730,000	724,400	727,200	-	727,200	-0.38%
- Tax rebates & exemptions, tax sale fees, uncollectible taxes	506,535	1,090,200	917,200	1,083,400	-	1,083,400	-0.62%
- Region 6 grant & Hebbville area rate	37,594	46,300	46,300	39,900	-	39,900	-13.82%
- Data processing & IT shared services	313,532	414,700	414,700	501,400	-	501,400	20.91%
- Government relations, Council Contingency	133,750	189,000	189,000	213,700	61,000	274,700	45.34%
- Safe restart expenses	131,641	110,000	110,000	-	-	-	-100.00%
Grants to Organizations	583,527	723,100	722,700	689,300	15,000	704,300	-2.60%
Assessment Services	690,276	704,200	704,200	725,300	-	725,300	3.00%
	5,953,922	7,662,000	7,428,800	7,481,100	234,800	7,715,900	0.70%
Protective Services							
Police	4,174,624	4,380,100	4,429,700	4,604,200	-	4,604,200	5.12%
Corrections and Other Law Enforcement	428,002	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Water Supply and Hydrant Charges	73,116	73,700	79,500	84,700	-	84,700	14.93%
Fire Protection Rate	4,352,169	4,735,400	4,705,900	5,028,000	-	5,028,000	6.18%
Emergency Measures (REMO/EMO) & Fire Services	667,310	924,100	873,700	1,362,900	-	1,362,900	47.48%
Inspection Services	828,635	885,400	891,000	928,800	(2,000)	928,800	4.90%
Other Protective Services	65,725	70,300	70,300	70,300	-	70,300	0.00%
	10,589,582	11,069,000	11,050,100	12,078,900	(2,000)	12,078,900	9.12%
Transportation Services							
Engineering Services	671,381	777,000	748,800	832,800	-	832,800	7.18%
Roads and Streets	1,412,908	1,894,000	1,853,800	1,589,900	-	1,589,900	-16.06%
Street Lighting	181,050	158,100	158,100	159,200	-	159,200	0.70%
CES Facility	79,822	93,900	93,900	93,500	-	93,500	-0.43%
	2,345,160	2,923,000	2,854,600	2,675,400	-	2,675,400	-8.47%

2025/26 DRAFT OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Environmental Health Services							
Sewage Collections and Disposals	1,054,190	1,085,200	1,174,860	1,245,800	500	1,246,300	14.85%
Garbage Collections	1,305,963	1,575,500	1,570,700	1,704,600	-	1,704,600	8.19%
Waste Site	1,416,247	1,498,900	1,498,900	1,526,000	15,000	1,541,000	2.81%
	3,776,400	4,159,600	4,244,460	4,476,400	15,500	4,491,900	7.99%
Public Health							
Regional Housing	28,950	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Environmental Planning and Zoning							
Planning and Zoning	1,249,788	2,250,600	1,840,400	2,134,800	350,600	2,519,900	11.97%
Community and Economic Development	622,572	1,141,700	1,119,700	515,900	2,035,000	2,550,900	123.43%
	1,872,360	3,392,300	2,960,100	2,650,700	2,385,600	5,070,800	49.48%
Recreation, Culture & Tourism							
Recreation	1,605,422	1,925,400	1,744,765	1,944,700	40,000	1,984,700	3.08%
Active Transportation	7,904	870,000	870,000	-	-	-	0.00%
Tourism	208,423	245,800	235,300	250,200	15,000	265,200	7.89%
Multi-Purpose Facility	912,309	859,800	859,800	1,150,000	-	1,150,000	33.75%
Regional Libraries	199,700	199,700	199,700	199,700	-	199,700	0.00%
	2,933,757	4,100,700	3,909,565	3,544,600	55,000	3,599,600	-12.22%
Education	9,539,851	10,646,800	10,646,800	11,594,400	-	11,594,400	8.90%
Sub Total Expenditures	37,039,982	43,953,400	43,094,425	44,501,500	2,688,900	47,226,900	55.51%
Debt, Financing and Transfers	4,690,174	738,000	733,000	1,828,700	(2,099,200)	(270,500)	-136.65%
Total Expenditures	41,730,155	44,691,400	43,827,425	46,330,200	589,700	46,956,400	5.07%
Revenue							
Tax Revenue	37,773,322	40,442,600	41,322,600	42,619,600	-	42,619,600	5.38%
Non Tax Revenue	3,956,834	4,275,800	4,211,033	4,063,800	35,000	4,098,800	-4.14%
Total Revenue	41,730,155	44,718,400	45,533,633	46,683,400	35,000	46,718,400	4.47%
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ -	\$ 27,000	\$ 1,706,208	\$ 353,200	\$ (554,700)	\$ (238,000)	

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Legislative and Administration**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
REVENUE							
Student Grants	4,200	4,200	4,200	-	-	-	100.0%
Miscellaneous Revenue	6,540	6,300	6,300	6,300	-	6,300	0.0%
	10,740	10,500	10,500	6,300	-	6,300	-40.0%
EXPENDITURES							
General Government Services							
Legislative Services (Council)	725,398	839,200	839,200	820,700	-	820,700	-2.2%
Members-at-Large	4,304	7,400	7,400	5,700	-	5,700	-23.0%
Council Approved Contingency	32,275	80,000	80,000	80,000	-	80,000	0.0%
Government Relations	101,475	109,000	109,000	133,700	61,000 ¹	194,700	78.6%
Grant - SSRH	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	50,000	0.0%
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	1,184,063	1,371,100	1,390,100	1,437,500	89,800 ²	1,527,300	11.4%
Advisory Services (legal fees, shared services: HR, EDIA)	185,085	378,800	324,600	354,600	-	354,600	-6.4%
Office Expense	21,099	34,000	34,000	41,000	-	41,000	20.6%
	2,303,699	2,869,500	2,834,300	2,923,200	150,800	3,074,000	7.1%
Other							
Elections	4,676	190,000	170,000	-	-	-	
Litter Clean Up Program	9,580	10,000	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	0.0%
	14,256	200,000	180,000	10,000	-	10,000	

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Legislative and Administration**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Election Reserve	50,000	(150,000)	(150,000)	50,000	-	50,000	-133.3%
Transfer for Hospital Donation	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	-	(50,000)	0.0%
	-	(200,000)	(200,000)	-	-	-	
	2,317,955	2,869,500	2,814,300	2,933,200	150,800	3,084,000	
NET EXPENDITURES	\$ (2,307,215)	\$ (2,859,000)	\$ (2,803,800)	\$ (2,926,900)	\$ (150,800)	\$ (3,077,700)	7.65%

Notes on additions:

1. Increased Communications
2. Staffing for increased communications

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Protective Services**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
REVENUE							
Fire Protection Area Rates	\$ 4,370,604	\$ 4,735,400	\$ 4,752,600	\$ 5,028,000	\$ -	\$ 5,028,000	6.2%
Police Prosecution Fines & Clearance Certificates	87,434	69,000	69,000	69,000	-	69,000	0.0%
REMO - Partners contribution	94,341	206,300	180,700	189,100	-	189,100	-8.3%
	4,552,378	5,010,700	5,002,300	5,286,100	-	5,286,100	5.5%
EXPENDITURES							
Fire Protection - Volunteer Fire Departments	4,352,169	4,735,400	4,705,900	5,028,000	-	5,028,000	6.2%
Fire Services Administration & Grants	423,586	410,400	410,400	416,100	-	416,100	1.4%
	4,775,755	5,145,800	5,116,300	5,444,100	-	5,444,100	5.8%
Police Protection - RCMP	4,130,648	4,337,100	4,385,200	4,553,900	-	4,553,900	5.0%
Provincial Corrections	428,002	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Senior Safety Coordinator Grant	25,340	25,400	25,400	25,400	-	25,400	0.0%
Other Law Enforcement	43,976	43,000	44,500	50,300	-	50,300	17.0%
	4,627,966	4,405,500	4,455,100	4,629,600	-	4,629,600	5.1%
REMO Personnel & Expenditures	187,991	409,700	359,300	375,500	-	375,500	-8.3%
Local EMO Services	19,828	20,000	20,000	26,000	-	26,000	30.0%
Grants - Comfort Centres & Homless Shelters	22,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	-	24,000	0.0%
Drought Response	13,905	60,000	60,000	521,300	-	521,300	100.0%
	243,724	513,700	463,300	946,800	-	946,800	84.3%
Animal Control	40,385	44,900	44,900	44,900	-	44,900	0.0%

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Protective Services**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Transfer from General Operating Reserve - Drought Financing	-	(50,000)	(50,000)	(521,300)	-	(521,300)	100.0%
Transfer from General Operating Reserve - Regional Fire Training Facility	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Transfer to Fire Training Facility Reserve	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	-	100,000	100.0%
	100,000	50,000	50,000	(421,300)	-	(421,300)	
	9,787,830	10,159,900	10,129,600	10,644,100	-	10,644,100	
NET EXPENDITURES	\$ (5,235,452)	\$ (5,149,200)	\$ (5,127,300)	\$ (5,358,000)	\$ -	\$ (5,358,000)	4.05%

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Engineering, Public Works & Wastewater**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
REVENUE							
Area Rate - Streetlights	\$ 161,800	\$ 138,200	\$ 138,200	\$ 153,400	\$ -	\$ 153,400	11.0%
CES Facility							
Expense Recovery	68,246	77,400	77,400	77,400	-	77,400	0.0%
Rental	86,966	100,700	100,700	100,700	-	100,700	0.0%
	155,212	178,100	178,100	178,100	-	178,100	0.0%
EV Charging Stations	2,050	500	1,600	1,000	-	1,000	
Waste Water Treatment							
Sewer Area Rates	490,492	482,400	526,600	537,300	-	537,300	11.4%
Hydrant Charges	78,311	68,500	68,500	85,000	-	85,000	24.1%
Sewer Interest and permit fees	2,937	2,500	2,500	2,500	-	2,500	0.0%
Sewer Maintenance Fees	39,915	36,000	36,000	71,500	-	71,500	98.6%
	611,655	589,400	633,600	696,300	-	696,300	18.1%
Engineering Services							
Student Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	930,718	906,200	951,500	1,028,800	-	1,028,800	13.5%
EXPENDITURES							
Engineering Services							
Advertising, Legal and Advisory Services	20,153	39,500	107,500	79,500	-	79,500	101.3%
Hydrants	73,116	73,700	79,500	84,700	-	84,700	14.9%
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	648,130	729,500	636,300	748,300	-	748,300	2.6%
Office Expense	3,097	8,000	5,000	5,000	-	5,000	-37.5%
Return of Schools	23,895	31,200	31,000	31,200	-	31,200	0.0%
Garbage Collections	1,305,963	1,575,500	1,570,700	1,704,600	-	1,704,600	8.2%
	2,074,354	2,457,400	2,430,000	2,653,300	-	2,653,300	8.0%

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Engineering, Public Works & Wastewater**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Other Administration							
Municipal Services Bldg - Janitorial	75,095	84,800	91,800	94,500	-	94,500	11.4%
Municipal Services Bldg - maintenance	163,251	176,000	169,500	197,500	-	197,500	12.2%
	<u>238,346</u>	<u>260,800</u>	<u>261,300</u>	<u>292,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>292,000</u>	<u>12.0%</u>
Transportation							
Municipal Road Maintenance	287,710	367,500	306,600	365,500	-	365,500	-0.5%
Provincial Road Contribution	490,372	510,000	510,000	516,200	-	516,200	1.2%
J Class Road Paving	334,237	700,000	700,000	350,000	-	350,000	-50.0%
Street Lighting	181,050	158,100	158,100	159,200	-	159,200	0.7%
	<u>1,293,368</u>	<u>1,735,600</u>	<u>1,674,700</u>	<u>1,390,900</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,390,900</u>	<u>-19.9%</u>
CES Facility							
Building Maintenance	64,996	77,400	77,400	77,000	-	77,000	-0.5%
Non-recoverable expenses	14,826	16,500	16,500	16,500	-	16,500	0.0%
	<u>79,822</u>	<u>93,900</u>	<u>93,900</u>	<u>93,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>93,500</u>	<u>-0.4%</u>
Waste Water Treatment							
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel) & other shared costs	394,700	466,200	472,800	508,800	500 ¹	509,300	9.2%
Hebville	99,915	114,000	109,900	127,100	-	127,100	11.5%
Riverside and Shore Drive	26,465	38,200	42,900	44,300	-	44,300	16.0%
Cookville	227,016	236,500	230,060	264,400	-	264,400	11.8%
New Germany Lift Stations	39,490	49,200	49,200	52,500	-	52,500	6.7%
New Germany Treatment Plant	108,795	126,100	135,000	143,700	-	143,700	14.0%
Sewer Maintenance Costs	157,808	55,000	135,000	105,000	-	105,000	0.0%
	<u>1,054,190</u>	<u>1,085,200</u>	<u>1,174,860</u>	<u>1,245,800</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>1,246,300</u>	<u>14.8%</u>
	<u>4,740,080</u>	<u>5,632,900</u>	<u>5,634,760</u>	<u>5,675,500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>5,676,000</u>	<u>0.8%</u>

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Engineering, Public Works & Wastewater**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Transfer To (From) Sewer Reserves	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	-	175,000	
CCBF Reserve - J Class Roads	-	(334,200)	(334,200)	(350,000)	-	(350,000)	
Other Reserves - J Class Roads	-	(365,800)	(365,800)	-	-	-	
Operating Reserve - Municipal Roads	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	-	25,000	
Operating Reserve -CES	25,000	84,000	84,000	50,000	-	50,000	
	<u>225,000</u>	<u>(416,000)</u>	<u>(416,000)</u>	<u>(100,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(100,000)</u>	
	4,965,080	5,216,900	5,218,760	5,575,500	500	5,576,000	
NET EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ (4,034,363)</u>	<u>\$ (4,310,700)</u>	<u>\$ (4,267,260)</u>	<u>\$ (4,546,700)</u>	<u>\$ (500)</u>	<u>\$ (4,547,200)</u>	<u>5.49%</u>

Notes on additions:
1. Maintenance on portable generator

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Planning, Building Inspection and Zoning**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget
REVENUE							
Private Roads Area Rate	\$ 315,621	\$ 331,900	\$ 354,300	\$ 378,100	\$ -	\$ 378,100	13.9%
Building Permits & Development Fees	101,797	92,500	97,900	82,500	-	82,500	-10.8%
Regional Building Service	111,282	306,000	216,900	282,700	-	282,700	-7.6%
D&U Recovery/Sundry	4,002	-	6,400	-	-	-	0.0%
Civic Numbering	9,755	9,800	9,800	9,800	-	9,800	0.0%
Floodline Mapping Grant	-	500,000	119,100	380,900	-	380,900	100.0%
Public Transit Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wage Offset Grants	14,980	6,000	32,500	25,000	-	25,000	316.7%
	557,437	1,246,200	836,900	1,159,000	-	1,159,000	-7.0%
EXPENDITURES							
Building Inspection - Regional Service							
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	713,213	775,400	771,900	804,000	-	804,000	3.7%
Office, Vehicle Maintenance & Insurance	95,876	100,300	102,000	116,100	(2,000) ¹	116,100	15.8%
	809,089	875,700	873,900	920,100	(2,000)	920,100	5.1%
Building Inspection - MODL							
Office & Legal	19,547	9,700	17,100	8,700	-	8,700	-10.3%
	828,635	885,400	891,000	928,800	(2,000)	928,800	4.9%
Private Roads	300,589	316,500	337,200	358,200	-	358,200	13.2%

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Planning, Building Inspection and Zoning**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget
Planning							
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	953,490	1,063,700	1,049,700	1,086,700	-	1,089,700	2.4%
Legal and Office	62,896	60,600	49,800	41,200	(12,000) ²	50,400	-16.8%
MODL 2040	-	-	-	-	60,000 ³	60,000	
LCCAP Projects	-	-	-	-	25,900 ⁴	25,900	
Housing Strategy	-	-	-	-	90,000 ⁵	90,000	
Climate Protection	3,529	61,300	56,800	51,000	39,700 ⁶	101,000	64.8%
Floodline Mapping Project	-	500,000	119,100	380,900	-	380,900	
Public Transit Grants	65,000	65,000	65,000	75,000	147,000 ⁷	222,000	241.5%
Repayable CEF Grants	164,873	500,000	500,000	500,000	-	500,000	0.0%
	<u>1,249,788</u>	<u>2,250,600</u>	<u>1,840,400</u>	<u>2,134,800</u>	<u>350,600</u>	<u>2,519,900</u>	<u>12.0%</u>
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Clean Energy Financing Program	(80,033)	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	-	(500,000)	0.0%
General Operating Reserves	-	-	-	-	(99,200) ⁸	(99,200)	
	<u>(80,033)</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>	<u>(99,200) -</u>	<u>(599,200)</u>	<u>19.8%</u>
	<u>2,298,979</u>	<u>2,952,500</u>	<u>2,568,600</u>	<u>2,921,800</u>	<u>249,400</u>	<u>3,207,700</u>	
NET EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ (1,741,542)</u>	<u>\$ (1,706,300)</u>	<u>\$ (1,731,700)</u>	<u>\$ (1,762,800)</u>	<u>\$ (249,400)</u>	<u>\$ (2,048,700)</u>	<u>20.07%</u>

Notes on additions: 1. Removed cell boosters 2. Moved MODL2040 and Climate projects to their own accounts, added replacement plotter
3. MODL2024 engagement 4. LCCAP Projects Tree Planting Program-\$12,000; EV education and promotion-\$1,000; Waste Management Awareness-\$3,000; Community Climate Capacity Program-\$500; MODL environmental and resilience champion award-\$1,900; Education on the impact on Climate Change-\$2,500; Youth Engagement-\$1,000; Let it Grow May-\$3,700; Community Pledges-\$300 5. Hire a consultant to complete Housing Strategy
6. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid additional \$50,000; removed \$10,300 from last fiscal. Coastal education and moved Let it grow May and Youth engagement to new Climate account 7. Six months of public transit operating costs 8. Reserve funding for Housing Strategy & Plotter

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Economic Development**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
REVENUE							
Grants & Other Revenue	4,069	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%
	<u>4,069</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	
EXPENDITURES							
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	326,263	351,200	351,200	360,400	-	360,400	2.6%
Legal & Office Expenses	28,688	38,500	16,500	38,500	-	38,500	0.0%
Community HUB	42,304	300,000	300,000	-	2,000,000 ¹	2,000,000	566.7%
Internet Project	200,250	250,000	250,000	-	-	-	-100.0%
Economic Development Strategy	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Community Development Projects	25,068	97,000	97,000	97,000	35,000 ²	132,000	36.1%
Osprey Village Marketing Plan	-	40,000	40,000	20,000	-	20,000	
Immigration Partnership	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	-	
Feasibility Study - Food Hub	-	60,000	60,000	-	-	-	-100.0%
	<u>622,572</u>	<u>1,141,700</u>	<u>1,119,700</u>	<u>515,900</u>	<u>2,035,000</u>	<u>2,550,900</u>	<u>123.4%</u>
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Transfer From Reserves - CCBF	(200,250)	(250,000)	(250,000)	-	(2,000,000)	(2,000,000)	700.0%
	<u>422,322</u>	<u>891,700</u>	<u>869,700</u>	<u>515,900</u>	<u>35,000</u>	<u>550,900</u>	
NET EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ (418,253)</u>	<u>\$ (891,700)</u>	<u>\$ (869,700)</u>	<u>\$ (515,900)</u>	<u>\$ (35,000)</u>	<u>\$ (550,900)</u>	<u>-38.22%</u>

Notes on additions:

- 1. Community Hub fit-up (one time cost)
- 2. Regional Economic Development

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Recreation & Tourism Services**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
REVENUE							
Recreation Fees	\$ 100,172	\$ 78,000	\$ 68,655	\$ 75,000	\$ 35,000 ¹	\$ 110,000	41.0%
ProKids	20,317	20,000	38,000	20,000	-	20,000	0.0%
Rental Revenue	3,659	8,000	9,250	9,000	-	9,000	0.0%
Recreation Grants	188,526	175,000	179,228	179,200	-	179,200	2.4%
Tourism - VIC	9,187	8,100	6,000	6,000	-	6,000	-25.9%
Tourism Marketing Levy	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	321,861	289,100	301,133	289,200	35,000	324,200	12.1%
EXPENDITURES							
General Services							
Sponsor Ad & Municipal Celebration	11,565	16,000	15,000	15,000	-	15,000	-6.3%
Grants to Organizations	498,266	624,400	631,000	597,100	15,000 ²	612,100	-2.0%
Legal	6,652	12,000	8,000	8,000	-	8,000	-33.3%
Insurance & Office Expenses	7,464	10,700	8,700	9,200	-	9,200	-14.0%
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	658,599	701,600	643,300	705,000	-	705,000	0.5%
	1,182,547	1,364,700	1,306,000	1,334,300	15,000	1,349,300	-1.1%
Parks & Recreation Facilities							
Park Maintenance Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	315,018	350,900	334,600	362,400	-	362,400	3.3%
Building, Grounds & Park Maintenance	208,054	346,600	305,200	367,300	-	367,300	6.0%
Building Utilities	16,057	21,900	21,900	21,900	-	21,900	0.0%
Telephone	10,365	11,500	11,500	11,500	-	11,500	0.0%
Insurance	73,928	88,000	88,000	46,900	-	46,900	-46.7%
Office Expense	4,960	9,000	9,000	9,000	-	9,000	0.0%
	628,381	827,900	770,200	819,000	-	819,000	-1.1%

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Recreation & Tourism Services**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
Recreation Programs							
Parks Equipment and Special Programs	126,309	181,500	126,650	197,000	40,000 ³	237,000	30.6%
Winter Programs	8,996	16,600	14,200	19,400	-	19,400	16.9%
Spring Programs	8,789	14,400	14,985	17,400	-	17,400	20.8%
Swimming Program	20,271	22,000	21,300	22,000	-	22,000	0.0%
Summer Programs	129,901	135,000	130,390	138,000	-	138,000	2.2%
Fall Programs	16,940	18,900	17,740	19,400	-	19,400	2.6%
Special Events - supplies & advertising	7,235	7,500	6,000	7,500	-	7,500	0.0%
	318,442	395,900	331,265	420,700	40,000	460,700	16.4%
Active Transportation - paved shoulders	7,904	870,000	870,000	-	-	-	100.0%
Tourism	208,423	245,800	235,300	250,200	15,000 ⁴	265,200	7.9%
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Open Space Strategy	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	-	60,000	0.0%
General Reserves - AT Paved Shoulders	-	(370,000)	(370,000)	-	-	-	
Pinegrove Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Pro Kids	(21,592)	-	(10,000)	-	-	-	
CCBF- Active Transportation	-	(500,000)	(500,000)	-	-	-	100.0%
CCBF- Trail Groups	(62,658)	(74,800)	(74,800)	(82,300)	-	(82,300)	10.0%
	(24,250)	(884,800)	(894,800)	(22,300)	-	(22,300)	-97.5%
	2,321,446	2,819,500	2,617,965	2,801,900	70,000	2,871,900	
NET EXPENDITURES	\$ (1,999,585)	\$ (2,530,400)	\$ (2,316,832)	\$ (2,512,700)	\$ (35,000)	\$ (2,547,700)	0.68%

Notes on additions:

1. Grants for new programs (TBA) 2. 55+ Games \$10,000, Town of Lunenburg \$5,000 3. New Programs (TBA) 4. Major events grants

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Financial Services**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
REVENUE							
Assessable Property	\$ 32,087,929	\$ 34,417,500	\$ 35,213,700	\$ 36,168,200	\$ -	\$ 36,168,200	5.09%
Grant In Lieu	268,565	268,700	268,700	269,600	-	269,600	0.33%
Licenses and Permits	15,194	12,100	14,100	12,100	-	12,100	0.00%
Interest Income	2,300,658	2,002,000	2,303,700	1,773,500	-	1,773,500	-11.41%
Interest on Taxes	369,895	251,500	320,300	335,000	-	335,000	33.20%
Tax Sale Fees	57,425	70,000	70,000	70,000	-	70,000	0.00%
Miscellaneous Revenue	151,924	134,700	139,700	183,100	-	183,100	35.93%
Grants of Farm & Conservation Properties	101,363	99,200	101,100	102,500	-	102,500	3.33%
	35,352,953	37,255,700	38,431,300	38,914,000	-	38,914,000	4.45%
EXPENDITURES							
General							
Personnel (salaries, benefits, training, travel & conferences)	773,337	834,500	829,500	848,900	-	848,900	1.73%
Office & Equipment Expense	165,050	186,600	186,600	208,500	-	208,500	11.74%
Bank Interest and Charges	4,240	4,700	4,700	5,400	-	5,400	14.89%
Audit & Actuarial Fees	27,380	28,500	28,500	28,500	-	28,500	0.00%
Tax Rebate and Exemptions	351,284	868,700	695,300	868,700	-	868,700	0.00%
Advisory Services	4,881	5,000	11,000	5,000	69,000 ¹	74,000	1380.00%
Data Processing & IT Shared Services	313,532	414,700	414,700	501,400	-	501,400	20.91%
Sundry	10,629	1,500	1,900	1,500	-	1,500	0.00%
Tax Sale Expenses	56,496	70,000	70,000	70,000	-	70,000	0.00%

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Financial Services**

	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Annual Budget	2024/25 Budget Forecast	2025/26 Adjusted Baseline	2025/26 Net Additions	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Percent Change Budget 2026 to Budget 2025
LRCRC - Waste Site Costs	1,371,292	1,468,000	1,468,000	1,490,900	15,000 ²	1,505,900	2.58%
LRCRC - Monitoring Costs	36,024	22,400	22,400	26,300	-	26,300	17.41%
Previously Exempt Waste (Parks & Fire Depts)	8,932	8,500	8,500	8,800	-	8,800	3.53%
Region 6 Operating Grant	33,594	42,300	42,300	35,900	-	35,900	-15.13%
Grant Hebbville Area Rate	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	-	4,000	0.00%
Insurance	195,313	212,700	206,800	149,100	-	149,100	-29.90%
Uncollectible Taxes	88,126	150,000	150,000	143,200	-	143,200	-4.53%
Safe Restart Expenses	131,641	110,000	110,000	-	-	-	-100.00%
Debt Service - Principal & Interest	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	3,575,750	4,432,100	4,254,200	4,396,100	84,000	4,480,100	1.08%
Mandatory Contributions							
Assessment Services	690,276	704,200	704,200	725,300	-	725,300	3.00%
Regional Housing	28,950	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
Regional Library	199,700	199,700	199,700	199,700	-	199,700	0.00%
Education	9,539,851	10,646,800	10,646,800	11,594,400	-	11,594,400	8.90%
	10,458,777	11,550,700	11,550,700	12,519,400	-	12,519,400	8.39%
Multi-Purpose Facility Costs	912,309	859,800	859,800	1,150,000	-	1,150,000	33.75%
Transfers to (from) Reserves & Funds							
Depreciation, Interest, Site Monitoring, LCLC							
Depreciation Reserve, Safe Restart, Future Capital	4,669,706	2,938,800	2,943,800	2,872,300	-	2,872,300	-2.26%
	19,616,543	19,781,400	19,608,500	20,937,800	84,000	21,021,800	6.27%
NET SURPLUS (EXPENDITURE)	\$ 15,736,410	\$ 17,474,300	\$ 18,822,800	\$ 17,976,200	\$ (84,000)	\$ 17,892,200	2.39%

Notes on additions:

1. Procurement Shared Service
2. Increased disposal costs to remove tipping fees from brush disposal



Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, Nova Scotia, Canada, B4V 9E4
Phone: 902.543.8181 Fax: 902.543.7123 Web Site: www.modl.ca

February 18, 2025

To Her Worship, Mayor McLean-Wile, and Councillors
of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

The Policy & Strategy Committee, in session on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, made the following recommendations to Council:

1. That Municipal Council adopt the amended Strategic Priorities as discussed.
2. That Municipal Council adopt the lenses for evaluating projects and proposals as presented.
3. That Municipal Council adopt Policy 100 – Land Conservation Policy, as presented, and hereby give seven days’ notice of its intention to adopt the policy on February 25, 2025.
4. That Municipal Council make no adjustments to the service fees in MODL Policy 058 – Fees.
5. That Municipal Council rescind the motion made on January 28, 2025, which states “that Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and direct staff to draft a 5-year Management Agreement with the South Shore Pickleball Club for establishing six outdoor pickleball courts on PID 60413234, part of the Municipal Activity Recreation Complex (MARC), and further, that the agreement be brought back to Council for final approval.
6. That Municipal Council authorize staff to draft a lease agreement with the South Shore Pickleball Club for the purposes of establishing six outdoor pickleball courts on PID 60413234, part of the Municipal Activity Recreation Complex (MARC), and that the agreement be brought to Council for final approval, and furthermore that the agreement states that the Municipality will provide the funding upfront outlining the expectations of the amount to be paid back to the Municipality over the agreed lease period.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairperson and Members
Policy & Strategy Committee

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Council

Item #: 10.1.1

Date: February 25, 2025

Authorization: T. MacEwan



Council's Strategic Vision

Vision

The breathtaking, natural beauty of the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg is home to thriving communities with unique cultural identities. Growth centres support our diversified economies, driven by our residents' passion for the place they call home.

With our strong economy, we can live, work and raise families here. We are a destination for visitors, attracted to our vibrant parks, beaches, and hiking trails. As leaders in sustainability, we passionately protect our natural environment.

Mission

We are:

- Responsible financial managers
- Strategic planners
- Sustainable community builders
- Collaborative engagers
- Values

Values

- **Thriving Communities:** We encourage meaningful connections.
- **Act with Integrity:** We are accountable and strive to provide exceptional leadership within our municipality.
- **Respect and Kindness:** We value the uniqueness and diversity of our communities, welcoming everyone with respect and kindness.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** We take action to change and grow to be a truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive municipality.
- **Ready for Action!:** We are innovators, economic leaders, and collaborative partners.

Strategic Priorities for 2025

Regional Economic Development

Support initiatives that focus on regional economic development

- Commercial development (zoning, advocate for small business)
- Advocate for improved cell service
- Regional industrial park (investment for future tax benefit)
- Establish region economic development platforms

Infrastructure Upgrades, Expansion, and Management

Planning and investing for growth

- Collaborate regionally to expand infrastructure that supports growth
- Create a plan that identifies needed infrastructure to support all types of housing
- Strengthen recreational assets to support our growing diverse communities, with a focus on access to waterways

Quality of Life

Programs and services to maintain and improve affordability and quality of life for our residents

- Address loneliness, reconnect community, and improve social inclusion
- Recreation, parks and programs
- Celebrating and preserving communities

Communication and Engagement

Building a strong community fabric

- Improve and increase public communication
- Improve and increase public engagement
- Focus on rebuilding community fabric

Climate Change Action

Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate

- Reduce the District's corporate emissions
- Invest in climate resilient infrastructure
- Help residents adapt to a changing climate and food security issues in the region



Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Report to Council

Report To: Policy & Strategy Committee
Submitted By: Alex Dumaresq, Deputy CAO
Date: February 18, 2025
Re: Engagement Report on Draft Strategic Priorities

Proposed Motions

- 1) Move that Council adopt the amended strategic priorities as discussed at the Policy and Strategy Committee.

Background

In preparation for the 2025-26 budget deliberations, Council is establishing a statement of strategic priorities. At the January Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, staff prepared a report on Council's proposed strategic priorities. The original report can be found on the municipal website: https://modl.ca/index.php?option=com_docman&view=list&slug=2025-01-21&Itemid=693&layout=table.

Public Engagement Summary

Following the January PSC meeting an engagement page was established to summarize council's draft statements and solicit input from residents: https://engage.modl.ca/budget2025?tool=forum_topic#tool_tab. In addition, an in person open house was held on February 6, 2025. The engagement efforts yielded good participation:

- 1025 unique visits were made to the project page
- 108 residents downloaded documents, visited multiple pages on the microsite, or contributed a comment
- 40 residents attended open house.

An appendix at the conclusion of this report includes all comments received from residents. The remainder of this report summarizes the input and offers options for Council to consider.

Analysis and Discussion

The quality of input received from residents was excellent. The comments were wide-ranging and thoughtful. The input provided an array of creative, analytical and helpful insights to inform municipal actions. The engagement information will be used in two ways: First, it will help inform Council's decision on finalizing the strategic priorities. Second, the verbatim comments will be provided directly to municipal staff working in these areas to preserve the richness of the qualitative input and inform future staff reports.

Coding for Trends

To provide some information on trends in the qualitative data, staff categorized comments into themes and noted whether the comments were supportive or in opposition to the identified theme.

For example, a sticky note added to the Quality of Life board at the open house stated, "Events & recreational buildings for youth/teens". This comment was coded as supportive of enhancing connections because it shows a resident providing an example of a program/service they would like to see that matches the strategic direction to offer programming and initiatives that focus on addressing loneliness, reconnecting community.

Conversely, a comment was posted to the online forum for communications and engagement that read, in part, "Please do not spend taxpayer money to develop an app to better communicate with us. Tools aplenty exist, and government apps do not have a great track record." This comment was coded in the opposition column to reflect that comments were received speaking against at least one element of the draft content. Many of the comments were detailed and covered more than one topic. In these circumstances the comment was coded for each topic identified.

While imperfect, the coding system provides a short hand for identifying insight into what is on the minds of the engaged citizens. The most common topics of discussion related to regional economic development, infrastructure investments, and climate change. The table below shows a summary of the coding results.

Topic	supportive	opposition
Regional Economic Development	21	5
Infrastructure Investments	17	7
Climate Change Work	22	n/a
Enhancing Connections	19	n/a
Community Engagement	12	3
Housing	12	n/a
Proposed Lenses	10	1
Comprehensive Land-Use Planning	10	n/a
Affordability/Tax Policy	8	n/a
Transit	3	1

Miscellaneous	5
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There is some caution and context required in interpreting the results in this way. First, judgment is required when creating quantitative results out of qualitative data. Care was taken to fairly characterize the statements, but it is ultimately a subjective process. Second, the engagement format did not limit, and in fact encouraged, multiple comments from the same participant, therefore the totals do not represent unique instances of different citizens providing input, merely the total number of times the comment was provided. Third, voluntary engagements do have the limitation of a self-selection bias, that is, the municipality is hearing from a subset of the citizenry who were motivated to engage. There is no statistically reliable way to extrapolate these results to the wider population of the municipality.

The true value of the data is in the quality of the commentary received. With this in mind a short summary of the comments in each theme is presented below before considering options.

Regional Economic Development

A total of 26 statements were coded to regional economic development, 21 being affirmative, and 5 opposing specific elements or examples proposed.

- 7 comments supported working towards improved cell service
- 4 comments supported business retention and expansion efforts
- 4 comments supported regional cooperation
- 3 comments were supportive of work to connect small agricultural producers to larger markets and improving food security
- 2 comments references support for the tourism industry
- One comment requested more small business networking opportunities

One comment was received indicating concern that regional economic development work could prove costly without a clear payoff. 3 comments were provided opposing MODL pursuing a bio-economy development zone. One comment opposed the marketing levy's application to small operators.

Infrastructure Investments

24 comments were received regarding infrastructure investments, with 17 of them being coded as supportive of Council's draft statements. The most common items cited were:

- Access to waterways (4);
- Access to Sherbrooke lake (3);
- Connectivity of Active Transportation routes (2); and
- Sidewalks in New Germany (2).

Other items noted in the comments were: a green space next to the collaborative health centre, invest in roads, water filling stations, and traffic improvements in Osprey Village.

Climate Change

22 responses were received that indicated action on climate change was important. Of note, 7 comments explicitly noted that climate change action should be a priority not a lens, versus 2 comments supporting climate as a lens. 7 comments were also received noting the importance of climate resilient infrastructure and/or more broadly addressing climate change adaptation. Additional comments on climate noted general support for climate action, and including climate change action within the quality of life statement.

Enhancing Connections

The theme of enhancing connections within the quality of life and communications priorities resonated with many commenters.

- 11 comments suggested additional programming and support for reconnecting community (e.g. youth/senior programming, family programming, community dinners)

- 4 comments suggested grant program expansion/adjustment (e.g. community facilities and programming, fire dept. capital and training, and favouring MODL-based over town applicants)
- 3 comments identified that the municipality is well positioned to be a facilitator as opposed to a deliverer of community connections.
- One comment suggested an improved community calendar on the municipal website
- One comment noted that signs prohibiting overnight parking and camping in parks is unwelcoming and unkind

Engagement

12 comments were coded as supportive of the focus on communications and engagement. These comments indicated support for:

- Existing efforts at engagement (2)
- More opportunities for public input (2)
- Conversational as opposed to adversarial engagement opportunities (e.g. open house on general topics to stimulate discussion vs. a public hearing pitting one perspective against another)(2)
- Consultations held in more diverse locations in the District (2).
- Council in the community and evening meetings (1)
- More demonstration of how input influenced decisions (1)
- A municipal app (1)
- A quick link on the website home page for the next Tuesday's agenda (1)

There were also three comments noting concern with an element of the communications and engagement statements. Two comments opposed the concept of an app over value for money and demographics concerns. One comment opposed the municipal use of social media platforms which do not have guidelines in place to curtail hate speech.

Housing

12 comments were received relating to housing, all of them supportive of municipal action. These comments focused on the need for affordable housing in the region, the need for municipal investment in infrastructure for housing and working with partners to create more housing units, and the need for the development of a strategy to guide municipal action.

Lenses

11 comments were received regarding the proposed lenses for Council decision-making. Of these one was a general statement in support of the proposed lenses; 9 more specifically supported a lens for inclusion, diversity, equity and/or accessibility.

One comment opposed the proposed lenses generally, noting that they appeared to be an attempt to bind the new council to decisions of past councils.

Tabulation Note: Comments relating to climate change as a lens versus a priority are covered above. The comments in this section referred to all other non-climate input received about lenses.

Comprehensive Land-Use Planning

10 comments were coded as supportive of land-use planning. These fell into two categories: expressing the need for managing coastal development/protection (3) and balanced management of growth (7), including commentary on the impact of increased density and traffic, protecting the rural character of communities, and managing the pace of growth. It is important to note that several of the comments did not in and of themselves reference land-use planning but directly address development controls and the need for managing growth.

Affordability/tax policy

8 comments were made relating to tax policy and affordability. 6 of these comments related to no increase in residential tax, decreasing expenditures, or providing property tax relief. One suggested different indicators for a property tax rebate to improve public health, and one suggested growing the tax base to reduce pressure on existing tax accounts.

Public Transit

3 comments were made supporting the expansion of public transportation options for MODL residents. One comment questioned fixed route transit in collaboration with the Town of Bridgewater, if the cost-sharing formula was not favourable to MODL.

Miscellaneous

There were an additional 5 comments coded as miscellaneous, referring to infrastructure owned by other organizations, opposed to the LCLC, opposed to municipal borrowing, and encouraging the municipality to explore well-being economies.

Key takeaways and options

Confirmation of direction

Taken as a whole, staff believe that the public input validates Council's proposed direction. There appears to be general enthusiasm and support for the 4 strategic priority areas identified

by Council. In addition, the comments generally indicate support for the adoption of the proposed lenses.

However, the comments indicate that climate change remains a concern for the residents who engaged and there is some lively discussion over how to situate the municipal response to climate change. In addition, there are some themes that emerged that Council may wish to incorporate into the statements on the priority areas. Below are some options for Council to consider.

Recommended Revision 1 – Advocate for improved cell service

Given the frequency of the comments received, Council may wish to include cell service as a separate bullet as opposed to a subordinate note within the commercial development line.

Recommended Revision 2 – Affordability

In the drafting process there was some debate about the inclusion of the word affordability in the Quality-of-Life statement. At the January meeting of this Committee, it was decided to defer a decision on including affordability until after the engagement sessions. While the Municipality does have limited ability to impact overall affordability (e.g. municipal taxes represent an average of less than 3% of household income), it is clear that affordability is an important issue for residents and its inclusion is warranted amending the subheading for quality of life as follows: **Programs and services to maintain and improve affordability and quality of life for our residents.**

Recommended Revision 3 - Access to Waterways

Several comments identified that a central focus in recreation infrastructure should be access to lakes, rivers and the ocean, and it is critically important that the municipality work to preserve public access to waterways. This theme has been identified in previous strategic work by Council including the Open Space Strategy and the Active Transportation strategy. Council may wish to reflect this important facet of recreation infrastructure by adding a phrase to this effect to the recreational assets item.

Option 4 – Social inclusion – Not Recommended

At the January 2025 meeting of this Committee, there was discussion on the use of the term social inclusion in the strategic priority statements. As with affordability, the Committee deferred a decision on the term until after public engagement. An operational definition of social inclusion from social sciences research is: “the process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights” (Saran, Hunt, White & Kuper, 2021). It is clear that a range of initiatives in the draft priorities address social inclusion, for

example, community programming for seniors, public transit, and targeted property tax rebates. However, staff do not recommend adding the term to the priorities statement for accessibility purposes: the term is not commonly used in everyday language; adding terminology that requires an operational definition from research to be interpreted is unlikely to help communicate council's priorities to the general public. Should Council wish to add the term it could be added to the loneliness phrase, i.e.: Address loneliness, reconnect community and improve social inclusion.

Optional revision 5 - Climate Change Action

Option A – Adjust climate change from a lens to a separate priority area. For example, a statement could read “Climate Change Action: Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate”. Examples of projects would be from the climate change action plan such as focus on elements including corporate emission reduction, climate resilient infrastructure and food security initiatives.

Rationale: Climate Change remains a persistent global issue with direct local impacts. Resident input indicates it is still a concern in our community. Establishing it as a separate priority may help to communicate the importance of the issue to the public.

Option B – keep climate change as a lens.

Rationale: after declaring a climate emergency in 2019, Council developed a Climate Change Action Plan. Adopting climate change as a lens follows the continuum of an initiative beginning as a standalone strategic project and evolving into an embedded process that is factored into the various aspects of municipal operation. This change is happening organically, for example, Council created a Sustainability Committee to advise on the development of the action plan but determined that a committee was no longer required after the adoption of the plan.

Council's Revised Strategic Vision

Based on the input provided through the engagement session the below text shows the potential revisions provided for Council to consider:

Regional Economic Development

Support initiatives that focus on regional economic development

- Commercial development (zoning, advocate for small business)
- Advocate for improved cell service
- Regional industrial park (investment for future tax benefit)
- Establish region economic development platforms

Infrastructure Upgrades, Expansion, and Management

Planning and investing for growth

- Collaborate regionally to expand infrastructure that supports growth
- Create a plan that identifies needed infrastructure to support all types of housing
- Strengthen recreational assets to support our growing diverse communities, with a focus on access to waterways

Quality of life

Programs and services to maintain and improve affordability and quality of life for our residents

- Address loneliness, reconnect community, and improve social inclusion
- Recreation, parks & programs
- Celebrating & preserving communities

Communication & Engagement

Building a strong community fabric

- Improve and increase public communication
- Improve and increase public engagement
- Focus on rebuilding community fabric

Climate Change Action

Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate

- Reduce the District's corporate emissions
- Invest in climate resilient infrastructure
- Create opportunities for more food security in the region

Budget Implications

The intention of the strategic priorities is to drive the creation and approval of the 2025-26 budget. The proposed engagement elements of the work are included in the 2024-25 administration department budget.

Alternatives

See options, outlined above

Conclusion

Establishing strategic priorities is an important governance exercise. The district has now completed public engagement on the draft priorities statement and considered changes based

on those options. The statements that are approved by Council will provide helpful evaluative criteria as Council works through policy and governance questions. These statements will also be critical in guiding staff in preparing budget materials for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

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

Copy

APPENDIX A – Comments received via public engagement open house and the engage.modl.ca forum

Regional Economic Development

- I see these projects as ways to spend more & more tax payer dollars. In addition where is there real time benefits to the north eastern parts of MODL. To me its all about building up the golden circle ... 5 miles or 5 minutes from Bridgewater. There appears to be no end to generating ways to spend our property tax money.
- The marketing levy has gotten negative feedback. There was an assumption it would apply to hotels and motels and instead is applied across the board. People trying to generate some extra income by renting a cottage through the summer are now faced with a reporting burden and fines/leas against properties should they fail to report monthly. This is too onerous. The bio-economy development zone... sounds like at aligns very well with the Premier's new mission statement to extract all value from NS natural resources. New bio tech is always interesting, but the existence of one requires the production of the other. The concern becomes that in order to maintain those flashy new high tech products/processes, you need the continual feed provided by clearcutting. Sounds like something coming directly from Forestry NS.
- Do our forests have the capacity to sustain a large scale bio economy (pulp mill) project? Do we want Paper Excellence in our region after their track record in Pictou Harbour. How does this project align with climate or biodiversity loss crises? What level of pollution from the site, and degraded wood lands will this create and for whom? How has cell service still not been sorted out? It's been years and millions spent. Such a tired goal. Nothing on Tourism here, seems like a major draw.
- Missing from the Strategic Priorities altogether is any reference to climate change adaptation. As noted, coastal protection is an issue, but it is also only one aspect. Another is wildfire mitigation and prevention. These are going to have to be addressed through long-term inter-governmental planning and multi-phased implementation but planning and budgeting must start now. These initiatives are going to be a real drain on the tax base at all levels of government.
- There should be a budget item for implementation of Coastal Protection that was just off loaded by Tim and Tim to municipal units. There should be priority projects that align with it including acquisition of strategic coastal public access and maintenance of them. You need a gis analyst to staff the project for where and how the new development rules are applied. You might need better training for other staff on the ground for

building close to waters. The same is true for implementation and maybe exceeding the fairly vanilla climate action plan which could be bolder. Where is green procurement as a lens or sustainable energy strategy for all public buildings? Coastal protection could also be a lens for section 5. Equity is an obvious one but I assume that is in place.

- Agree, 100%. How are we going to implement our new municipal Coastal Protection legislation without continuing the focus of climate? We need education for real estate agents, contractors, homeowners re how the new coastal protection regulations apply. We need flood prevention assessment and planning, emergency preparedness for extreme weather and fire, etc. We also need to prioritize wetland and forest conservation and water source protection. In the face of climate change, the proposed strategic priorities do not address the most pressing issue of our time and which will/is impacting our County significantly.
- There are positive ideas here, though it feels a bit like a business class brainstorm. I am not sure this sounds like a #1 priority, esp bio tech (meaning biomass burning or what, not sure). This does sound like a lot of investment and infrastructure dev for unclear payoff.
- I like where you are headed with making our area attractive to new businesses and retaining the ones we already have. The more businesses invest... the more our community doesn't need to rely on tourism to survive. Grow our communities, and we grow our tax base... and hopefully bring taxes in our area down? I agree on that we must all contribute to taxes, however, I don't agree in the current climate we should be increasing the residential tax.
- The Osprey Village project contains a marshland (feeding into the LaHave River) which MODL seems intent on destroying. When they purchased the property it had a wetland which was declared as an "Environmentally Sensitive Zone". MODL had it resurveyed and discovered that the wetland was larger than first thought. MODL then dumped the Environmentally Sensitive designation by creating a "Significant Watercourses "map. Look at their presentations now and the wetland is shown as an R3 zoning which means high density housing. WHAT NEXT - fill in the LaHave River for housing. There needs to be some respect for our environment ahead of the almighty dollar.
 - I agree with you. I have wondered why that has been allowed to happen. Wetlands may seem like wasted land, they are anything but.
 - I also wondered about this. Osprey seems to have been developed with a goal of using as much land as possible and to encourage as much driving as possible. The "enhancement" plan is an opportunity for leading-edge sustainable planning. Osprey *could* be a destination and part of reconnecting community. Right now it's a place to drive to, buy stuff, drive home.
- Leverage provincial and federal economic programs – Advocate for MODL's inclusion in programs such as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) funding streams or

- Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) initiatives. Develop a regional business retention and expansion strategy – Conduct targeted outreach to identify challenges and opportunities for local businesses. Address transportation barriers by supporting mobile markets or cooperative delivery systems for rural farmers (Maybe this is FoodHub?) Leverage regional partnerships to make the most of shared resources and avoid duplicating economic development efforts across small communities.
- Agree with others saying that climate change mitigation and adaptation should continue to be a priority for MODL. Listening to some council statements it seems like the existing Climate Action Plan is at risk of being quietly tossed aside and not implemented. If there is a push for MODL council to add climate change as a strategic priority now there is clear direction for council that climate change is an important consideration and a greater barrier to abandoning the climate action plan. MODL has a chance to be a leader in local-level climate mitigation and adaptation. We are on the right page with the existing coastal protection policies and by-laws and coastal action plan; lets keep moving in that direction.
 - Climate justice absolutely needs to be a priority. The most important legacy of our times will be whether municipalities adequately decarbonize and adapt their communities to avoid the worst case climate scenarios by the end of the century. The livability of world that our children and grandchildren inherit depend on it, and history will judge us according to how well we do. Does this council want to be remembered as one where in a time when most action was needed, we didn't even bother to make climate change a priority?
 - I'm very curious how you partner with TOB for a Regional Industrial Park, who funds it, which municipality is it in/who reaps the benefits? I oppose the Osprey Village Enhancement Plan, especially the leasing of space for the Lumia Health Centre. I don't understand why we would pay \$300,000 for a leasehold, then pay to develop the building, then pay for space to rent the building. I understand that we need medical care for all of the residents of MODL, but the reality is, New Germany was able to do it without the municipality subsidizing it (in fact they built it without any government funding whatsoever), and the extreme costs associated with this project aren't justified when there are alternative avenues to recruit healthcare providers to the area. If it means cutting our losses at the leasehold, so be it, I see no reason to lease space in that building.
 - Support and promote local businesses
 - Advocate for better cell service. Dayspring Pine Grove
 - cell service Lr Br Rd to Hwy 10 very unpredictable & reliable
 - Better cell service Middle LaHave
 - better cell service
 - cell & internet essential but also roads

- To create healthy, sustainable communities we need to prioritize health over profits. I encourage the Municipality to explore 'well-being economies' and 'solidarity' economies. We can have positive growth while promoting health
- More focus on attracting/supporting local less large corporations; prevent economic leakage as much as possible
- Good to see cooperation between town and county
- Small scale affordable housing business

Infrastructure

- In order to enhance the quality of life in Osprey Village going forward, a serious effort must be made to connect with the existing public transit available in Bridgewater. Any future system must be on a cost shared basis that reflects the actual realities going forward. Basically MODL/Osprey Village needs access to public transit to not only transport the pending 700+ immediate residents of Osprey Village into Bridgewater, you need it to give easier access to the services in the "village" to the 9,000 + residents of Bridgewater. The only benefits for the town of Bridgewater currently would be enhancement of the quality of life to its residents providing easier access to the services in the "village". Also the prospect of an infusion of cash towards the operation and maintenance of the system. They would need to illustrate the future benefits to the Bridgewater business community of access to the planned and pending future population in and around the "village". Also, the potential to reduce the bottle neck that presently exists on Aberdeen Road & North Street. This will require tough negotiations and a great selling job illustrating the benefits going forward for both parties. MODL will need to anti-up some serious cost sharing initially to kick start any agreement.
- Collaborate, Create, Strengthen, Explore, Leverage wonderful words indeed. In 2016 MODL bought land at Sherbrooke Lake for development of a public park. Mayor Downe proudly announced at Council we are on our way to Sherbrooke Lake. All Council members agreed with this action of Council. Then the new Mayor & the new Council threw the file in with the garbage on its way to the landfill. How are residents in the north eastern part of MODL where the Sherbrooke Lake saga has been playing out for the past 40 years to believe anything Council proclaims? Collaborate, Create, Strengthen, Explore, Leverage. Give me a break. I say prove these words by actions.
- There is an immediate lack of affordable housing options in the region. What are the aspects of expanded infrastructure presented here that will help to target that immediate need? I am concerned that the points only say "create a plan that identifies

needed infrastructure to support all types of housing", which seems two steps removed from providing practical assistance to families and individuals who are actively experiencing housing insecurity.

- This 2nd priority is stacked with items/ideas that are difficult to tease out. It's like some (half?) of them belong in the 1st economic/regional development priority, and others belong in a separate strategic priority -- a suggestion for the missing Priority: Protecting and Enhancing Natural Assets. Under this priority: parks and rec areas creation, water protection, coastal protection education and action, water agreement, parks project, regional investment in natural assets and rec opportunities (& tourism!) County-wide, programs to engage new Lunenburg County residents, especially immigrants, in funded recreation opps, encourage wetland protection with tax breaks for landowners who steward natural wetland, coastlines and intact forest on property, enhance and encourage active transportation, health and wellness by making outdoor recreation available to all residents and creating/ensuring public access to rivers, lakes, beaches.
 - Absolutely agree that there is a missing priority: environment, climate, sustainability. This has to be more than a "lens" if MODL is to reach its goal of net zero by 2050
- Develop a Rural Infrastructure Strategy: Identify and prioritize infrastructure needs across all communities to ensure equitable investment. Explore public-private partnerships for servicing expansion: Leverage partnerships with developers to extend water and sewer to designated growth areas while maintaining affordability. Expand Multi-Use Trails & Active Transportation Networks : Connect communities with better walking, biking, and ATV-friendly routes (I live just outside of Bridgewater and would love to cycle into town more often, but do not feel safe to do so along HWY 3) - Are there partnership options to increase this connectivity? Expand Climate Resilient Infrastructure Planning: Ensure water, wastewater, and transportation upgrades factor in climate adaptation, such as flood prevention and stormwater management. Expand Well Water Protection & Septic Support Programs Continue to support rural homeowners with well and septic maintenance programs to ensure safe drinking water.
- I don't necessarily agree with public transit connecting Town of Bridgewater to Cookville, but if you do, there needs to be an evaluation of what residents it's really helping. Folks in MODL live on the Cookville side near the industrial park. Is the ridership going to be primarily MODL residents, or will the majority be Town of Bridgewater residents? TOB should be paying for their percentage of benefit if this project is moving forward. There also should be an attempt to make it financially sustainable on its own, and if you're looking to grow public transit, I certainly hope it isn't just going to be along the 103 where folks can more easily access resources, do not forget folks in more rural areas shouldn't be subsidizing benefits that they aren't able to utilize themselves. I look at the failure of the LCLC, and the idea of partnering further with the Town of Bridgewater is incredibly concerning. If Council chooses to go this route for any projects

the costs need to be analyzed by benefit of percentage of residents in each municipality (not just a 50/50 split), clear financial expectations outlined, and there needs to be an escape clause. Development of Sherbrooke Lake Park is long overdue. I oppose the Osprey Village Enhancement Plan, especially the leasing of space for the Lumia Health Centre. I don't understand why we would pay \$300,000 for a leasehold, then pay to develop the building, then pay for space to rent the building. I understand that we need medical care for all of the residents of MODL, but the reality is, New Germany was able to do it without the municipality subsidizing it (in fact they built it without any government funding whatsoever), and the extreme costs associated with this project aren't justified when there are alternative avenues to recruit healthcare providers to the area. If it means cutting our losses at the leasehold, so be it, I see no reason to lease space in that building. I'm very curious how you partner with TOB for a Regional Industrial Park, who funds it, which municipality is it in/who reaps the benefits? -While you're looking at wastewater treatment upgrades, an attempt needs to be made to make the ones operating at a deficit more financially sound. Residents of the municipality shouldn't have to subsidize sewer systems they aren't using. Last year Council looked at the EV charging stations, and established a fee schedule that should make them cost neutral, but I'm fairly certain that there was no discussion as to whether or not that fee would also be enough to cover maintenance and repair/eventual replacement of those charging stations. I look at our EV charging station budgets, and they are not cheap. Folks who can't afford an EV shouldn't be subsidizing this in any way, not even the capital costs for these charging stations. It's time to let the LCLC go. Failing that, you should have the LCLC provide data that illustrates what percentage of residents from MODL vs TOB utilize the LCLC. My guess is MODL is paying 50% of the deficit while a much smaller percentage of our residents are utilizing it when compared to TOB. This information should be public, for transparency purposes. -The signs posted in the parks saying that parking overnight and camping are prohibited are TERRIBLE. This Council needs to endeavour to build public trust, and to be more kind as a whole. Those signs are incredibly unwelcoming, and uncalled for. I am certain you can find a better way forward.

- All infrastructure projects & community services should have built-in leeway for higher water levels, higher risk of fires, higher temperatures in summer. We need to be PROACTIVE, not reactive
- Need to consider traffic egress/flow commerce vs/w/ residential
- I'd like to see more investment or commitment to affordable housing and affordable housing
- Developments
- Affordable housing info/supports \$ to afford
- Slow down growth! Too much too fast; It's getting crowded; traffic is crazy and dangerous

- Affordable Housing Land & Supports
- Increase availability of affordable housing
 - Encourage or create incentives for non-profits to develop long-term affordable housing
 - Donate land for such developments
 - Offer grants based on number of units created
 - Provide building fund to provide access to immediate funding for start-ups, possibly on loan basis
 - Low interest loans give incentives to local home owners to develop apartments on their property suitable for renters or lower income individuals
- MODC & MODL move Sherbrooke access ahead -start <= basics

Quality of life

- Expand Intergenerational & Social Connection Programs: Develop programs that connect seniors with youth through mentoring, storytelling, or skill-sharing initiatives. Host Community Gathering Events in Small Villages & Rural Areas: Support pop-up community dinners, storytelling nights, or cultural events to bring people together. Create a Rural Volunteer Match Program: Connect residents who want to volunteer with local non-profits, seniors in need, or community organizations - there's so much going on throughout the district that can be harnessed and MODL as a matchmaker for these groups rather than MODL taking on the programming Support local arts!
- If Council is unable or unwilling to add climate change/sustainability as an individual priority I believe it could fall under this strategic priority of Quality of Life. Climate change is likely the most important threat to communities' quality of life (QOL). MODL will not be maintaining or improving residents' QOL without addressing climate change/sustainability. MODL has an existing climate action plan lets see it implemented.
- Food Vibes sounds like an amazing project, and food security definitely needs to be a part of your priorities, but it shouldn't be isolated to Riverport. The 644 has a very similar project, and there should be funds to assist other communities in rolling out these types of projects as well. -Your Homeowner Clean Water and Energy Financing Program is ok, for those that are willing and able to take out a loan, but most folks aren't in that position. If you want to make an impact with water, you should have public access points for filling jugs throughout the municipality. Town of Bridgewater has offered a fill station at Shipyards Landing in the past, and there's no reason MODL couldn't do so year round, at various locations (perhaps pay to have fill stations set up at fire departments and pay for the estimated cost and maintenance of the equipment). I live without water at home, and fill jugs to bring home water for myself and my farm

animals. I drive from Hemford to BRIDGEWATER to get water on a regular basis (and of late it's been even more difficult with a torn rotator cuff). Whenever I go to the water fill location next to Andy's Tire there is always, no matter what time of day I go, a lineup year round. I also dump my black water tank at the Irving in Bridgewater, and I have seen folks queuing at the dump site to use the black water tank flushing hose to fill jugs to take home. Folks are DESPERATE, and I can only imagine what life is like for folks who struggle with this while also not having reliable transportation. Your Active Transportation Strategy NEEDS to include a real sidewalk on School Street in New Germany IMMEDIATELY. You can read my update on potential new school locations here and find additional information on the topic here and here. This street is dangerous for the students, and New Germany has waited long enough. If you can afford to spend money on sidewalks and beautification of Osprey Village, you can afford a sidewalk on School Street in New Germany. Regarding the Grants- I believe in order to prevent the insufficiencies experienced in the last fiscal year, there need to be changes made in advance of the budget meeting. I believe the grant policy needs to be changed, and the rubrics for eligibility needs to be updated to prioritize organizations that are within our municipality and those that provide financially accessible community opportunities, and also that budget needs to be increased. --The signs posted in the parks saying that parking overnight and camping are prohibited are TERRIBLE. This Council needs to endeavour to build public trust, and to be more kind as a whole. Those signs are incredibly unwelcoming, and uncalled for. I am certain you can find a better way forward. -Regarding funding for fire departments, there should be a larger budget for training, and it should be useable for more than just MODL provided training. Firefighters should be able to apply for training grants for relevant training where need is demonstrated. For example, if one of my departments needs more drivers/pump operators I should be able to apply for funding for the Fire School Pump Ops Course, not necessarily exclusively leadership training courses. What is the point in having lots of "leaders" if there is nobody to drive the truck? Priorities here are backwards. Also, MODL could use the CCBF grant monies for fire department capital projects. I believe that should be implemented immediately through a grant basis for departments demonstrating need.

- Clearly name equity and supporting diversity
- celebrate/preserve community [is] language use by hate group
- Celebrate/preserve communities is a dog whistle leaving equity community members felt unsafe. If the intent is to ensure wellbeing of rural communities say that. Be more explicit in community standing for equity and division. Make equity & inclusion part of strategic priorities and ensure your standing for legal protections of equity groups especially as hate groups fester/grow momentum in community.
- hate groups on rise in MODL
- Explicit language

- Property tax relief
- address loneliness
- does the county have a wellness call out
- reconnecting community – updates
- Reduce speed on Pine Grove Rd change the entering & exiting of Walmart
- Consider more opportunities to engage whole families in recreation and civics. (eg open gym spaces that are not age restricted - badminton, basketball, etc.)
- Up to date community calendar on web - not a fan updated clear ways to submit
- Stop yearly home property tax increases. Property yearly evals go up without good reason
- Organization to help co-habitation between neighbours to resolve conflict before it gets out of hand
- we want our area to be as it is. RURAL. Too much growth way too fast
- Events & recreational buildings for youth/teens
- Community conversations to identify trends versus advisory committee style participation
- More community events -community dinners? - community conversations
- Consider reviewing formula/indicators used to determine property tax rebates. Public Health could assist with this process/help with indicators
- Sidewalks in New Germany
- Property Tax
- Climate Change should be a major consideration
- Climate change should be a major consideration in all future development.
- Walmart shelves are empty food not enough! Noise in neighbourhood we moved for quiet
- standardizing parks is not essential - Basics-picnic table & portapotty @ sherbrooke access
- Re Property tax high due to paying taxes to provide services not used or needed by myself.
- Celebrate and preserve communities (be more specific in what this means)

Communication and Engagement

- Please do not spend taxpayer money to develop an app to better communicate with us. Tools aplenty exist, and government apps do not have a great track record. This priority feels more like how to improve Council and Councillor effectiveness than municipal priority. We need housing, support for new immigrants, yes programs to reduce loneliness and enhance connection esp within the entire municipality. Outreach and

- supports for elderly living at home. Programming for young people to have opportunity to do community work supported by funding
- While digital tools can enhance outreach, I don't think an app is the best fit for MODL (senior/rural). Instead, a localized alert system for essential information (emergencies, road closures, service disruptions, etc.) could provide direct and relevant updates without needing to regularly check an app. Public engagement should be more than just sharing information. It should give residents real ways to connect, participate, and see their input reflected in decisions. While advisory committees have their place, they can be formal, rigid, and not always accessible to a broad range of residents. A more flexible, inclusive public participation strategy would be lovely. After collecting public input, it would be cool to see closed feedback loops (you said, we did, here's why) that shows how feedback influenced Council decisions.
- Consultations need to be held in other communities in addition to Cookville.
- MODL: To have an update for the app. Also update Newsletter -we use the Bridgewater sites for both daily. The Post/Rent
- Doing quite well in this area -keep up the great work. Only comment would be to continue to prioritize accessibility
- Easier to find agendas weekly on Home page -Hyperlink next weeks meetings/agendas
- I am new to the province & the MODL the communications have been excellent since the election (I moved in summer 2024)
- Have public meetings for input. Don't make decisions without speaking to those who live there
- More public engagement events would be great.
- What are options for public participation vs. public engagement?
- community engagement directed @ equity and inclusion
- More community networking events for local & small businesses to socialize & promote with the public events
- Explicit on ensuring minimizing hate
- implement regular evening Council meetings, including in-community meetings

Lens

- Love these strategic lenses in general! They seem to provide good framing for Council decision-making. However, I think sustainability/climate change should be a strategic priority rather than a strategic lens. I believe climate change as a priority can lead to different decisions than climate change as a strategic lens. For example, climate change

as a lens may lead to more minor green-washy climate actions like using "sustainable materials" for projects vs. climate change as a priority could consider the bigger picture like using flood and other hazard mapping for project placement etc.

- Strategic Lens for Evaluation - I see these are staff recommendations, several of which appear to be attempts to lock Council into the previous Council's plans; I believe the 5 year plan that Council put forward last year should almost entirely be scrapped. I would not agree to any priorities that force you to move forward on these. Council - please remember that you make the decisions (staff can only make recommendations), do not give them all of the power. A new Council was elected to ensure MODL takes a different direction, you will need to think for yourselves in order to get the municipality back on track. Do not borrow any money. There is no need for MODL to borrow, we should only take on projects within our means.
- Very important to use an equity lens/prioritize health and well-being
 - *I like this also (re: above comment on using an equity lens)
- Adaptation for climate & housing
- We have concerns over how much land is being developed. Where will the wildlife go?
- Climate needs to be a municipal priority - not just a lens- we are in a climate crisis
- Make Climate & Environment a Priority
- be clear about what parts of sustainability -> enviro? -> accessibility? We are in a climate crisis
- I remain concerned about coastal protection including flood plains
 - 1) Ensuring our bldg setbacks, etc, address risk. We need to have a long-term outlook.
 - 2) Preserve, where possible, public access to the water. Not every access need be a developed park
- (a participant noted with a sticky note that they agree with the comment directly above).
- Equity & inclusion intersects with sustainability
- What are the priorities & values of council? Family first? Economic vs growth?
- *A couple of things I'd like to see on the strategic plan
 - 1) green space, in building the community health centre adjacent to the MODL - please consider green space- do not make snap decision about utilizing that space for other things, we need a green space
 - 2) Where is Climate change noted on the plan??
 - 3) Low income housing not community services housing but affordable 1 & 2 bedroom housing \$600 or \$700 month rent/near amenities, services.
- *Sustainability needs to include all facets of life.
- Bigger priority needs include long term transportation & infrastructure impacts. Minimize pavement.

- Communication and Public Engagement: How will it be communicated to residents? (But how will they be engaged too?)

Major Projects

- Social Housing?
- Stop using platforms where hate festers "X" Twitter and rely on alternative comments website, email newsletter, app esp as community leaves platforms where hate festers
- 2x Daily run on #10 from NG to B'water to establish behavior relying on public transportation
- Public participation in housing strategies, ensuring communities don't change drastically
- Survey was done on water access - what happened to that? access to lakes, improve boat launch Wentzell Lake
- Housing Strategy - Need to prioritize this - would be best if it could be a regional plan.
 - (A second sticky was added by another resident noting agreement with the commenter)
- We like to keep our area RURAL we do NOT want to be a city! There is too much land being sold
- Need to do something about the Mill Brook Bridge on Pine Grove Rd. Too narrow & too dangerous
- The col-Heathcare Centre centre providing some Pro Bono services would be good.
- No comment

NOTE: an additional email was sent to council members from a resident regarding the strategic priorities engagement. It was forwarded to staff who compared it against comments submitted by that resident to the online forum and included any topics not already covered in the summary tabulation.



Council
Item #: 10.1.2
Date: February 25, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Report to Council

Report To: Mayor and Council
Submitted By: Abhimanyu Jain, Manager of Climate Change and Sustainability
Date: February 25, 2025
Re: Proposed Policy 100 Land Conservation Policy

The Policy & Strategy Committee, in session on February 18, 2025, reviewed the proposed Policy 100 Land Conservation Policy and made a motion to give notice of its intention to adopt the policy at the February 25, 2025 Council meeting.

The Policy establishes an approach to evaluate and acquire lands for conservation by providing assessment criteria, guiding principles, and defined processes for land conservation.

After receiving feedback from the Policy and Strategy Committee and stakeholders, the following changes were made:

1. Definition of 'Proponent': Revised for grammatical accuracy.
2. Section 10: Protective Measures Review for Municipal Properties: Heading updated from "Post-Acquisition Zoning Review" to "Protective Measures Review for Municipal Properties" to clarify that it applies to both newly acquired and existing municipal properties.

Section 48(1) of the **Municipal Government Act** states, "Before a policy is **passed**, amended or repealed, the Council shall give at least seven days' notice to all council members." Therefore, in accordance with Section 48(1), the attached Policy 100, will be presented for Council's approval at the February 25, 2025 Council meeting. The Policy and Strategy Committee meeting of February 18, 2025 was considered as Council's notice.

If Council approves Policy 100, the following motion would be necessary:

“that Municipal Council adopt MODL Policy 100 Land Conservation Policy, as presented”.

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning & Development Services
Report Prepared by	Abhimanyu Jain, Manager of Climate Change and Sustainability
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Policy Details	
Name	Land Conservation Policy
Number	100
Legislative Authority	Municipal Government Act s. 24, 50, 143, 144
Effective Date	February XX, 2025

Purpose

1. The Municipality's Land Conservation Policy aims to increase conserved land within its boundaries, foster connections between people and nature, enhance community resilience, and ensure responsible stewardship for future generations.

Goal

2. To conserve 20% of land and watersheds within the Municipality by 2030, as outlined in the Local Climate Change Action Plan 2030. This includes municipally, provincially, and federally protected lands, as well as lands conserved by other organizations with legal mechanisms for perpetual protection.

Overview

3. **The Land Conservation Policy outlines the Municipality’s conservation values and assessment process.** It ensures municipal lands are evaluated for conservation before being declared surplus, requires staff to regularly review tax sale properties for alignment with conservation values prior to auction or public tender, and provides a framework for assessing external requests to conserve land or support conservation efforts within the Municipality.

Definitions

4. (1) In this Policy
 - a) **Conservation Easement** means a legally binding agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization or government entity that restricts certain development and land use to align with conservation values. The landowner retains ownership but must adhere to the easement’s terms, ensuring perpetual preservation of the land’s natural, ecological, and cultural features.
 - b) **Conservation Land** means land permanently protected to preserve biodiversity, ecological integrity, and natural features. These areas are managed to safeguard ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and cultural values while supporting low-impact recreation, such as hiking and birdwatching, with minimal environmental disturbance. Protection is provided through legal mechanisms, including

conservation easements, partnerships with land trusts, or government designations, ensuring long-term stewardship for future generations.

- c) **Municipality** means the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.
- d) **Proponent** means an individual or organization, such as a non-governmental organization (NGO) or land trust, requesting the Municipality to support the conservation of land within its boundaries.
- e) **Species at Risk** means species facing significant threats to survival, classified as endangered, threatened, or vulnerable under provincial or federal designations.
- f) **Stewardship** means responsible management, care, and monitoring of land to ensure its natural, ecological, and cultural values are preserved or enhanced over time.
- g) **Surplus Land** means land declared surplus by the Council and no longer required for municipal purposes.
- h) **Tax Sale** means the sale of property by public auction or tender to recover unpaid taxes.
- i) **Zoning** means the classification of land that regulates its use, development, and building standards within the Municipality.

Conservation Values

- 5. (1) **Protection of Biodiversity** - Conserving natural systems to support diverse species and maintain ecological balance. Key priorities include:
 - a) Intact Natural Areas: Preserving landscapes with minimal human disturbance to maintain their ecological integrity.
 - b) Habitat Restoration: Restoring degraded habitats to support species recovery and improve ecological resilience.
 - c) Species at Risk: Prioritizing conservation efforts for habitats that support at-risk species identified under provincial or federal designations.
 - d) Critical Ecosystems and Richness: Protecting ecosystems that are essential for biodiversity and support areas with high species diversity or ecological significance.
- (2) **Enhancing Resilience and Reducing Risks** - Conserving land to protect communities and ecosystems from environmental pressures and promote long-term sustainability. Key priorities include:

- a) Flood and Storm Protection: Preserving wetlands and coastal buffers to reduce the impacts of flooding, storm surges, and erosion.
 - b) Temperature Regulation: Protecting forests and natural areas to moderate local temperatures, provide shade, and reduce the impacts of extreme heat.
 - c) Wildlife Adaptation: Conserving connected landscapes and critical habitats that allow wildlife to move freely, find resources, and adjust to environmental changes.
 - d) Water Security: Safeguarding wetlands and watersheds that ensure clean water and help prevent droughts.
- (3) **Protecting Ecosystem Services** - Maintaining the natural processes that provide essential benefits to communities, wildlife, and the environment. Key priorities include:
- a) Pollination Support: Conserving habitats that support pollinators is essential for food production and ecosystem health.
 - b) Carbon Capture: Protecting forests, wetlands, and grasslands that absorb and store carbon naturally.
 - c) Soil and Erosion Control: Preserving landscapes that prevent soil degradation and maintain land stability.
 - d) Air and Water Filtration: Protecting ecosystems that naturally clean air and filter water.
- (4) **Social and Community Benefits** - Conservation of land that reduces hazard-related risks to communities (e.g., flooding, wildfire, extreme heat). Enhancing community well-being through equitable access to conserved lands and collaboration. Key priorities include:
- a) Low-Impact Recreation: Conserving lands that support activities like hiking and birdwatching while protecting natural ecosystems.
 - b) Equity and Inclusion: Prioritizing conservation efforts that benefit equity-deserving groups, including Mi'kmaq communities and African Nova Scotians, and ensuring green spaces are distributed equitably across all communities in the Municipality.
 - c) Collaborative Partnerships: Working with land trusts, NGOs, First Nations, and other stakeholders to conserve and steward land.
 - d) Health and Well-being: Improving quality of life through access to natural spaces that support physical and mental health.

Principles

6. (1) The Municipality is committed to treating all proponents with fairness and respect throughout the land conservation process, ensuring transparent and equitable interactions during assessments and acquisitions. The Municipality strives to ensure the land conservation process is inclusive and accessible to all.

- (2) Situated on unceded Mi'kmaw territory, the Municipality prioritizes partnerships with Mi'kmaw communities, recognizing their sovereignty and essential role as stewards of the land.
- (3) The Municipality values the rich history of African Nova Scotian communities and prioritizes requests from these groups, honouring their deep and significant connections to the land.

Land Conservation Mechanisms

7. (1) **Municipally Owned Lands**

- a) **Reallocation of Municipal Property:** The Municipality may designate existing municipal property to conservation land if it aligns with conservation values. The Municipality will evaluate properties for conservation potential before declaring them surplus, including their ability to protect natural areas, support wildlife, enhance resilience, and preserve ecosystem services.
- b) **Trading Land:** The Municipality may consider trading surplus land for property with higher conservation value.
- c) **Donations:** The Municipality may accept land donations, either in full or as a partial donation, for conservation purposes.
- d) **Purchase:** The Municipality may purchase land for conservation purposes. This includes:
 - (i) **Tax Sale Properties:** Staff will regularly review tax sale properties prior to auction or public tender to assess their alignment with conservation values. If deemed appropriate, the Municipality may bid on and acquire these properties to support conservation goals, as permitted under Sections 143 and 144 of the Municipal Government Act.
 - (ii) **Co-ownership and Joint Purchases:** The Municipality may collaborate with partners such as land trusts, NGOs, cultural institutions, or the Province to co-own or jointly purchase property for conservation purposes. In such arrangements, any party may hold the property title, depending on the terms of the agreement. The Municipality may contribute a portion of the total funds and work with the titleholder to ensure the land remains protected for conservation. Roles and responsibilities, including management and stewardship, will be clearly defined in a legal agreement between all parties to ensure effective protection and long-term conservation of the property.

(2) **Externally Owned Conservation Lands**

- a) **Conservation Easements:** The Municipality may enter into conservation easements with private landowners to ensure long-term protection of ecologically significant areas.

- b) **Donation to Other Entities:** The Municipality may donate land it owns to other entities, such as NGOs or land trusts, for conservation purposes.
- c) **Support for External Conservation Efforts:** The Municipality may provide financial or other forms of support to entities seeking to acquire and conserve land within municipal boundaries.
- d) **Zoning for Conservation:** The Municipality may re-zone conserved areas, upon request by conservation entities, to formalize their status and apply appropriate land-use restrictions.

Land Conservation Process

Initiation of Process

8. (1) The Land Conservation Process can be initiated internally or externally. Externally, it begins when a proponent requests the Municipality to conserve or assist in conserving land within its boundaries along with submission of a completed application. Internally, it is initiated through the annual assessment of tax sale properties, or identification of high conservation value Municipal properties.

Preliminary Review and Report to Council

- (2) Staff will review the proposed property and application (if applicable) to assess alignment with the Municipality's conservation values, stewardship capacity, and protection options, such as land purchase, designation, zoning, or other legal mechanisms. Based on this review, staff will prepare a report for Council outlining their findings and providing a preliminary recommendation on whether to proceed with the land acquisition or conservation process.

Council Decision

- (3) The Council may choose to either decline further pursuit of the conservation request or direct staff to conduct a detailed site assessment before making a final decision.

Detailed Site Assessment

- (4) If directed, staff will oversee a detailed site assessment and present their findings to Council to determine whether the Municipality will acquire the property. A detailed site assessment may include:
- a) Appraisal
 - b) Ecological site assessment
 - c) Financial review
 - d) Hazard assessment
 - e) Legal review
 - f) Protected area designation and zoning considerations
 - g) Public Engagement
 - h) Site visit
 - i) Species at risk assessment
 - j) Stewardship considerations

Funding and Incentives for Land Conservation

9. (1) The Municipality will support the Land Conservation Policy through strategic budgeting, external funding opportunities, and contributions from municipal resources, partnerships, and proponents, while recognizing that support may vary based on available resources and priorities.

Prioritization of Land Acquisition Proposals

- (2) The Municipality may prioritize land acquisition proposals from proponents who:
 - a) Contribute matching funds or a portion of acquisition costs, determined on a case-by-case basis.
 - b) Contribute matching funds or a portion of the costs for required studies, such as ecological assessments, species-at-risk evaluations, environmental impact studies, climate adaptation assessments, or cultural heritage reviews.
 - c) Secure external funding, confirmed grants, or partnerships to help cover acquisition, required studies, or long-term management costs.

Tax Exemptions for Conservation Easements

- (3) The Municipality encourages landowners with conservation easement agreements to explore tax exemption eligibility under the Nova Scotia Conservation Property Tax Exemption Act. Landowners should contact Nova Scotia Environment to determine if their property qualifies. These exemptions are subject to approval by the Minister of Environment.

Protective Measures Review for Municipal Properties

10. Planning staff will evaluate newly acquired and existing municipal properties to determine if they require rezoning under the Municipal-wide Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw or other protective measures, such as conservation easements. The Council will determine the most suitable zoning or legal protections based on the property's conservation values.

Stewardship of Municipal Conservation Lands

Lands Managed with a Partner

11. (1) The Municipality prioritizes acquiring conservation land where management responsibilities are shared with or handled by a partner. Partnering with organizations brings additional expertise and resources, ensuring effective and sustainable stewardship.

Lands Managed by the Municipality

- (2) The Municipality may independently manage conservation lands if staff possess the required technical expertise and capacity to fulfill stewardship responsibilities.

Long-term Protection of Conservation Lands

(3) Conservation lands recognized under the Land Conservation Policy are protected in perpetuity, with restrictions remaining permanent and irrevocable. If the Municipality, a co-owner, or a land management partner is no longer able to manage the property, it may be transferred to another qualified entity. The receiving entity must uphold all existing restrictions and assume full conservation responsibilities.

Review and Revision

12. The Municipality will review the Land Conservation Policy every five (5) years to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with current conservation practices and community needs. Reviews of the Land Conservation Policy will include input from stakeholders, such as the public, landowners, and conservation partners, and will consider changes in environmental regulations, land management practices, and conservation science. Revisions will be made as needed to address new challenges and opportunities in land conservation and stewardship.

Policy Adoption	
Date of Original Passage	
Date of Notice of Intent to Consider	February 18, 2025
Date of Council Approval	
Date of Effective Date (if different from approval date)	
I certify that this Policy 100 Land Conservation Policy was adopted by Municipal Council as indicated above.	
Signature of Municipal Clerk	Date

Version	Amendment Description	Approval Date
Original V1	Land Conservation Policy	



The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to: Policy and Strategy Committee

Submitted by: Abhimanyu Jain, Manager of Climate Change and Sustainability
Hayley Drapeau, Climate Lead, Community Climate Capacity Program

Date: February 18, 2025

Re: Policy 100 - Land Conservation Policy

Recommendation

That the Policy and Strategy Committee recommend to Municipal Council that Municipal Council adopt Policy 100 - Land Conservation Policy, as presented, and hereby give seven days' notice of its intention to adopt the policy on February 25, 2025.

Executive summary

The Land Conservation Policy establishes a structured, transparent, and consistent approach to evaluating and acquiring lands for conservation. Currently, there is no formal framework in place, resulting in piecemeal decision-making when assessing conservation priorities.

The policy provides clear assessment criteria, guiding principles, and defined processes for land conservation, ensuring that future decisions align with the Municipality's goals - particularly the target of conserving 20% of lands and watersheds by 2030, as outlined in the Local Climate Change Action Plan 2030. This framework will streamline conservation efforts, improve decision-making, and enhance environmental stewardship.

Discussion

Municipal Council directed staff to develop a Land Conservation Policy in response to ongoing challenges in assessing conservation land acquisitions. Proponents, such as land trusts and NGOs, frequently request municipal contributions toward land purchases. However, without

guiding principles, Council has struggled to determine appropriate funding amounts and project priorities.

Additionally, environmentally sensitive properties have, in some cases, been auctioned at tax sales, leading to ecological damage. In at least one instance, a newly acquired property was infilled, resulting in the loss of a portion of the pond’s sensitive habitat. This policy ensures that tax sale properties with high conservation value are reviewed before they are put up for auction or public tender, allowing the Municipality to take proactive steps to protect key environmental assets.

Budget implications

There are no direct budget implications in adopting the policy. However, for implementation, Council may withdraw funds from the Climate/Sustainability Reserve to support land conservation and acquisition requests as outlined in the policy’s framework.

Strategic plan

N/A

Alternatives

Council may direct staff to make changes to the policy as deemed appropriate.

Conclusion

Adopting the Land Conservation Policy will provide a structured and consistent approach to land conservation, ensuring that the Municipality’s decisions align with environmental, social, and climate resilience priorities. The policy addresses gaps in the current ad-hoc approach, strengthens conservation efforts, and enables better management of municipal land acquisitions, surplus land evaluations, and tax sale property reviews.

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee recommend that Municipal Council adopt Policy 100 - Land Conservation Policy as presented and give seven days’ notice of its intention to adopt the policy on February 25, 2025.

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning and Development Services
Report Prepared by	Abhimanyu Jain, Manager of Climate Change and Sustainability and Hayley Drapeau, Climate Lead, CCC Program
Report Approved by	Jeff Merrill, Director
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Policy Details	
Name	Land Conservation Policy
Number	100
Legislative Authority	Municipal Government Act s. 24, 50, 143, 144
Effective Date	February XX, 2025

Purpose

1. The Municipality's Land Conservation Policy aims to increase conserved land within its boundaries, foster connections between people and nature, enhance community resilience, and ensure responsible stewardship for future generations.

Goal

2. To conserve 20% of land and watersheds within the Municipality by 2030, as outlined in the Local Climate Change Action Plan 2030. This includes municipally, provincially, and federally protected lands, as well as lands conserved by other organizations with legal mechanisms for perpetual protection.

Overview

3. **The Land Conservation Policy outlines the Municipality's conservation values and assessment criteria.** It ensures municipal lands are evaluated for conservation before being declared surplus, requires staff to regularly review tax sale properties for alignment with conservation values prior to auction or public tender, and provides a framework for assessing external requests to conserve land or support conservation efforts within the Municipality.

Definitions

4. (1) In this Policy
 - a) **Conservation Easement** means a legally binding agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization or government entity that restricts certain development and land use to align with conservation values. The landowner retains ownership but must adhere to the easement's terms, ensuring perpetual preservation of the land's natural, ecological, and cultural features.
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disturbance. Protection is provided through legal mechanisms, including conservation easements, partnerships with land trusts, or government designations, ensuring long-term stewardship for future generations.

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- i) **Zoning** means the classification of land that regulates its use, development, and building standards within the Municipality

Conservation Values

5. (1) **Protection of Biodiversity** - Conserving natural systems to support diverse species and maintain ecological balance. Key priorities include:
 - a) **Intact Natural Areas**: Preserving landscapes with minimal human disturbance to maintain their ecological integrity.
 - b) **Habitat Restoration**: Restoring degraded habitats to support species recovery and improve ecological resilience.
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- (2) **Enhancing Resilience and Reducing Risks** - Conserving land to protect communities and ecosystems from environmental pressures and promote long-term sustainability. Key priorities include:

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 - c) Soil and Erosion Control: Preserving landscapes that prevent soil degradation and maintain land stability.
 - d) Air and Water Filtration: Protecting ecosystems that naturally clean air and filter water.
- (4) **Social and Community Benefits** - Conservation of land that reduces hazard-related risks to communities (e.g., flooding, wildfire, extreme heat). Enhancing community well-being through equitable access to conserved lands and collaboration. Key priorities include:
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 - b) Equity and Inclusion: Prioritizing conservation efforts that benefit equity-deserving groups, including Mi'kmaq communities and African Nova Scotians, and ensuring green spaces are distributed equitably across all communities in the Municipality.
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 - d) Health and Well-being: Improving quality of life through access to natural spaces that support physical and mental health.

Principles

- 6. (1) The Municipality is committed to treating all proponents with fairness and respect throughout the land acquisition process, ensuring transparent and equitable interactions during assessments and acquisitions. The Municipality strives to ensure the land conservation process is inclusive and accessible to all.

- (2) Situated on unceded Mi'kmaq territory, the Municipality prioritizes partnerships with Mi'kmaq communities, recognizing their sovereignty and essential role as stewards of the land.
- (3) The Municipality values the rich history of African Nova Scotian communities and prioritizes requests from these groups, honouring their deep and significant connections to the land.

Land Conservation Mechanisms

7. (1) Municipally Owned Lands

- a) **Reallocation of Municipal Property:** The Municipality may designate existing municipal property to conservation land if it aligns with conservation values. The Municipality will evaluate properties for conservation potential before declaring them surplus, including their ability to protect natural areas, support wildlife, enhance resilience, and preserve ecosystem services.
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(2) Externally Owned Conservation Lands

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- b) **Donation to Other Entities:** The Municipality may donate land it owns to other entities, such as NGOs or land trusts, for conservation purposes.
- c) **Support for External Conservation Efforts:** The Municipality may provide financial or other forms of support to entities seeking to acquire and conserve land within municipal boundaries.
- d) **Zoning for Conservation:** The Municipality may re-zone conserved areas, upon request by conservation entities, to formalize their status and apply appropriate land-use restrictions.

Land Conservation Process

Initiation of Process

8. (1) The Land Conservation Process can be initiated internally or externally. Externally, it begins when a proponent requests the Municipality to conserve or assist in conserving land within its boundaries along with submission of a completed application. Internally, it is initiated through the annual assessment of tax sale properties, or identification of high conservation value Municipal properties.

Preliminary Review and Report to Council

- (2) Staff will review the proposed property and application (if applicable) to assess alignment with the Municipality's conservation values, stewardship capacity, and protection options, such as land purchase, designation, zoning, or other legal mechanisms. Based on this review, staff will prepare a report for Council outlining their findings and providing a preliminary recommendation on whether to proceed with the land acquisition or conservation process.

Council Decision

- (3) The Council may choose to either decline further pursuit of the conservation request or direct staff to conduct a detailed site assessment before making a final decision.

Detailed Site Assessment

- (4) If directed, staff will oversee a detailed site assessment and present their findings to Council to determine whether the Municipality will acquire the property. A detailed site assessment may include:
- a) Appraisal
 - b) Ecological site assessment
 - c) Financial review
 - d) Hazard assessment
 - e) Legal review
 - f) Protected area designation and zoning considerations
 - g) Public Engagement
 - h) Site visit
 - i) Species at risk assessment

- j) Stewardship considerations

Funding and Incentives for Land Conservation

9. (1) The Municipality will support the Land Conservation Policy through strategic budgeting, external funding opportunities, and contributions from municipal resources, partnerships, and proponents, while recognizing that support may vary based on available resources and priorities.

Prioritization of Land Acquisition Proposals

- (2) The Municipality may prioritize land acquisition proposals from proponents who:
- a) Contribute matching funds or a portion of acquisition costs, determined on a case-by-case basis.
 - b) Contribute matching funds or a portion of the costs for required studies, such as ecological assessments, species-at-risk evaluations, environmental impact studies, climate adaptation assessments, or cultural heritage reviews.
 - c) Secure external funding, confirmed grants, or partnerships to help cover acquisition, required studies, or long-term management costs.

Tax Exemptions for Conservation Easements

- (3) The Municipality encourages landowners with conservation easement agreements to explore tax exemption eligibility under the Nova Scotia Conservation Property Tax Exemption Act. Landowners should contact Nova Scotia Environment to determine if their property qualifies. These exemptions are subject to approval by the Minister of Environment.

Post-Acquisition Zoning Review

10. After acquiring land, planning staff will evaluate the newly acquired property and recommend to the Council whether it requires rezoning under the Municipal-wide Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw or other protective measures. The Council will determine the most appropriate zoning or legal protections based on the property's conservation values.

Stewardship of Municipal Conservation Lands

Lands Managed with a Partner

11. (1) The Municipality prioritizes acquiring conservation land where management responsibilities are shared with or handled by a partner. Partnering with organizations brings additional expertise and resources, ensuring effective and sustainable stewardship.

Lands Managed by the Municipality

(2) The Municipality may independently manage conservation lands if staff possess the required technical expertise and capacity to fulfill stewardship responsibilities.

Long-term Protection of Conservation Lands

(3) Conservation lands recognized under the Land Conservation Policy are protected in perpetuity, with restrictions remaining permanent and irrevocable. If the Municipality, a co-owner, or a land management partner is no longer able to manage the property, it may be transferred to another qualified entity. The receiving entity must uphold all existing restrictions and assume full conservation responsibilities.

Review and Revision

12. The Municipality will review the Land Conservation Policy every five (5) years to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with current conservation practices and community needs. Reviews of the Land Conservation Policy will include input from stakeholders, such as the public, landowners, and conservation partners, and will consider changes in environmental regulations, land management practices, and conservation science. Revisions will be made as needed to address new challenges and opportunities in land conservation and stewardship.

Policy Adoption	
Date of Original Passage	
Date of Notice of Intent to Amend/Repeal/Consider	
Date of Council Approval	
Date of Effective Date (if different from approval date)	
I certify that this Policy XXX was adopted by Municipal Council as indicated above.	
Signature of Municipal Clerk	Date

Version	Amendment Description	Approval Date
Original V1	Land Conservation Policy	

Council
Item #: 10.1.3
Date: February 25, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Policy & Strategy Committee
Item #: 9.4.1
Date: February 18, 2025

Report to: Policy & Strategy Committee
Submitted by: Elana Wentzell, CPA, CMA, Director of Finance
Date: February 18, 2025
Re: Policy 058 Fee Policy Review

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommend Municipal Council make no adjustments to the service fees in Policy 058.

Executive summary

The Fee Policy was developed to house all fees for municipal services in one document. Fees have been periodically increased, based on staff recommendations or Council direction. In 2019, Staff were directed to look at increasing fees on a 3-year cycle. In 2022, Council felt that 3 years might be too long to review the fees, however, no fee increases were made at that time. Based on the discussion in 2022, staff review fees annually and make recommendations to change individual fees based on jurisdictional scans or increased costs.

Discussion

The fees in Policy 058 represent 0.88% of municipal revenue (approximately \$350,000). Annual increases can be a barrier to residents who are already burdened with other cost-of-living expenses. The fees should represent a reasonable cost for the service and be consistent with other similar jurisdictions.

A copy of the policy is attached for information. Staff have reviewed the fees and are not recommending any changes at this time.

Budget implications

If Council determines that rates should be adjusted, staff will adjust their department draft budgets accordingly.

Conclusion

Staff recommend that no changes to the existing fees be made; staff will continue to annually monitor fees and make recommendations as required.

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

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Policy Details	
Name	Fees Policy
Number	058
Legislative Authority	Municipal Government Act, subsections 48(3), 132(2), 150(2), 206(4), clauses 49(1)(c), 211(1)(b), and subclause 172(2)(e)(i), Private Roads By-law, Section 12
Effective Date	March 26, 2024

Title

- 1 This Policy is titled the Fees Policy.

Administration

- 2 This Policy must be referenced in related By-laws concerning the service identified.

Purpose

- 3 The Municipality must provide clarity to citizens as to the various fees it charges on the various government services.

Fees

- 4
 - (1) The fees for Planning and Development Services are as set out in Table 1.
 - (2) The fees for Recreation Services are as set out in Table 2.
 - (3) The fees for Administration and Finance Services are as set out in Table 3.
 - (4) The fees for Engineering Services are as set out in Table 4.

Exempted Organizations

- 5 Active non-profit organizations registered under the **Societies Act** are exempt from paying those fees identified under subsection 4(1) of this Policy, with the exception of the Private Road Maintenance & Improvement Administration Fee Rate.

Table 1 Planning and Development Services Fees

Services	Fees
Amendments to a Planning Strategy or a Land Use By-law	\$525.00 + advertising fee
Development Agreement	\$525.00 + advertising fee
Development Permit	\$26.00
Fire Inspection	\$210.00
Map Book	\$25.00
Map Reproduction	\$11.00 + \$0.55 per square feet
Planning documents	\$11.00
Private Road Maintenance & Improvement Administration Fee Rate	5% of the total expenditures in the annual private road budget
Property Record Certificate	\$58.00
Subdivision, Final Plan (+ each lot after 2 lots)	\$105.00 +\$26.00
Variance	\$79.00
Zoning Certificate	\$53.00

Table 2 Recreation Services Fees

Services	Fees
Ballfields	\$21.00 per hour + HST
Ballfield League	\$19.00 per hour + HST (if paid by May 1)
One-day ballfield tournament	\$135 per field per day + HST
Two-day ballfield tournament	\$115 per field per day + HST
Charitable cause one-day ballfield tournament	\$65 per field per day +HST
Charitable cause two-day ballfield tournament	\$60 per field per day + HST
Minor Sport ballfield rentals (18 & under)	Free of charge
Sawpit Floating Docks	\$125.00/season + HST

A "charitable cause" refers to either a charitable or non-profit organization, or to individuals who have experienced recent hardship.

Table 3 Administration and Finance Services Fees

Services	Fees
Dog Tag - Replacement	\$1.00
NSF Cheques	\$15.00
Tax Certificate	\$42.00
Tax Sale Administration Fee	\$160.00
Verbal Tax Information	\$11.00
Potable Water Supply Upgrading Administration Fee	\$250.00
Clean Energy Financing Administration Fee	\$250.00

Table 4 Engineering Services Fees

Services	Fees
Electric Vehicle Charging Station	\$1.50 per hour
Sewer Permit	\$120.00

Policy Adoption	
Date of Original Passage	January 11, 2011
Date of Notice of Intent to Amend	March 19, 2024
Date of Council Approval	March 26, 2024
Effective Date (if different from Approval Date)	N/A
I certify that this Policy 058 Fees was amended by Municipal Council as indicated above.	
Signature of Municipal Clerk <i>April Whyne Roberts</i>	Date March 26, 2024

Version	Amendment Description	Approval Date
Original V1	Policy 058 fees	January 11, 2011
V2	Fees for development related applications – planning areas	May 10, 2011
V3	Allows for all fees, except those included in other by-laws in one policy, and fee increases	February 12, 2019
	Effective date for V3	April 1, 2019
V4	Clarity that the 5% administrative fee for Private Road Maintenance & Improvement Charge is not exempted	February 25, 2020
V5	Housekeeping, addition of fee for Electric Vehicle Charger Charging Station	September 14, 2021
V6	Remove MARC housing, and fax/photocopying fees from Tables 2 and 3	February 8, 2022
	Effective date of V6	April 1, 2022
V7	Add Sawpit Floating Dock fees to Table 2, Recreation	January 10, 2023
V8	Add Potable Water Supply Upgrade and Clean Energy Financing administration fees to Table 3.	July 25, 2023

V9	Add new ballfield fees to Table 2 and defined "charitable cause"; amend EV charging station fee to \$1.50.	March 26, 2024
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Council
Item #: 11.1.1
Date: February 25, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to: Mayor and Municipal Council
Submitted by: Ella R. Gindi, Planner II
Date: February 25, 2025
Re: Development Agreement to a proposed Cluster Development on Lot FE-1 MacCulloch Road (PID 60709383)

Recommendation

That Municipal Council refer the proposed development application to the Planning Advisory Committee for review and direct staff to hold a Public Information Session prior to the committee meeting.

Background

The subject property, located on Lot FE-1 MacCulloch Road in Cookville, Nova Scotia (PID: 60709383), is planned for a cluster development land-lease community with up to 23 modular single-family residential units.

The site is currently unzoned. However, following the Municipal Council's first reading of the Cluster Development regulations on January 28, 2025, the project qualifies as cluster development and must comply with municipal-wide land use bylaw regulations. As a result, it requires approval through the Development Agreement process, ensuring it meets criteria designed to protect surrounding land uses.

Planning staff have reviewed the application and determined that, since the proposed development exceeds six units, it qualifies as a cluster development. As a result, it must follow the development agreement process in accordance with applicable regulations.

Next Steps

The proposed cluster development requires thorough evaluation to ensure compliance with municipal regulations and infrastructure capacity. It must align with MODL’s cluster development regulations outlined in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of the Municipal Planning Strategy, as well as the development agreement process detailed in Section 6.

To support a transparent and informed decision-making process, staff recommends that Municipal Council:

- Refer the application to the Planning Advisory Committee for review and discussion; and
- Direct staff to hold a Public Information Session in accordance with MODL Policy 066, Section 8 – Public Engagement Policy and Section 200(4) of the Municipal Government Act.

This approach ensures community engagement and regulatory compliance while facilitating a well-informed review of the proposed development.

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning & Development
Report Prepared by	Ella R. Gindi
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

Council
Item #: 11.2.1
Date: February 25, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to: Municipal Council
Submitted by: Elana Wentzell, CPA, CMA, Director of Finance
Date: February 25, 2025
Re: Proposed One-time Property Tax Rebate

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council determine whether it wants to proceed with the rebate and if so, how it will be applied.

Executive summary

At the February 4, 2025 Finance Committee, staff were asked to determine if a one-time rebate for residential properties could be granted based on the collection of deed transfer tax that exceeded the annual budget. It was clarified that this would only apply to residential assessed properties that had a dwelling unit.

Discussion

Staff have confirmed that the software could apply a predetermined credit amount to specific properties based on this criteria.

Staff received a list from PVSC of all residential properties that had dwelling units. There were 14,698 properties on the list. There are 183 properties on the list assessed with 0 dwelling units, 555 properties with multiple dwelling units, and 13,960 assessed as single dwellings.

Staff have determined that in 2024-25 there was \$412,249 collected in deed transfer tax over the budgeted amount, and to date in 2025-26 there is \$677,653 collected over the budgeted amount.

Alternatives

Based on this information, staff have developed the following table of options for consideration. Two amounts were used for Deed Transfer Tax based on collections over the past 2 fiscal years:

2025-26 DTT Credit for Rebate		\$500,000	\$1,000,000
PVSC Report:			
	# units	Rebate Amount	Rebate Amount
Total dwelling units (includes properties with multiple units would receive a rebate based on dwelling unit count)	14,515	\$34	\$69
Total based on one rebate per property	13,966	\$36	\$72
Total based on single dwelling units only	13,960	\$36	\$72

Budget implications

Budget reserve projections would be affected by the option Council selects. In the 5-year strategy, it would mean those funds would not be available for future project work.

Conclusion

Staff has presented these options based on direction from the Finance Committee for Council’s consideration.

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