



Special Town Council Meeting

May 12, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Via – Virtual Zoom Meeting

Agenda

Call to Order

1. Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Special Town Council Meeting, April 28, 2020
- b. Special Town Council In-Camera, April 28, 2020

3. Comments from the Mayor

4. New Business:

- a. RFD 025-2020– Stay Healthy Main Street
- b. RFD 024-2020 – Property Tax Instalment Policy – Draft Proposal
- c. Verbal Update – Business Development Area Rate

5. Correspondence:

- a. Jessica Mahaney – Knocking on Doors
- b. Daniel Costello – Protest Permit
- c. Bruce MacArthur – Updated Database for COVID19 & Virtual Volunteering

6. Adjournment to In-Camera under the Municipal Government Act Section 22(2)(c):



a. Personnel

7. Adjournment of In-Camera

8. Regular Meeting Reconvenes

9. Regular Meeting Adjourned

REQUEST FOR DECISION 025-2020

Title: Stay Healthy Main Street
Date: 2020-05-12 Department:
Planning & Development



SUMMARY

'Stay Healthy' Main Street – COVID-19 and Social Distancing

[Physical distancing](#) is going to be our new normal for the foreseeable future. [The World Health Organization](#) recommends “where feasible” to consider riding bicycles or walking (see image to right).

Creating additional space for people (pedestrians) to move freely through our downtown core will be important for the health and safety of our residents and the viability of businesses. As the Covid-19 situation evolves, it will be essential to be flexible and be clear with residents and businesses on any interventions pursued.

Staff have included various discussion items for Council’s consideration and have attempted to expedite a report to provide informed direction. This report presents options for creating more space on Main Street, focused on:

- Health and safety: create more space for physical distancing;
- Active transportation: encourage safe daily physical activity; and
- Equity: look to consider the needs of all users of Main Street, regardless of ability.

Staff are recommending to create limited, temporary spaces for safe physical distancing and enhanced pedestrian experience on both sides of Main Street by using existing parking stalls, along with enhanced bicycle infrastructure, while maintaining the accessible parking, limited loading/drop-offs and the KTA bus stop.

This report comes from a ‘Request for Agenda Item’ from Councillor Brian at the [May 28th, 2020 Special Council meeting](#). From discussion at this meeting, Staff were directed to explore creating additional opportunities on Main Street for better physical distancing and active transportation. The recommendation from the ‘request for agenda item’ is as follows:

To temporarily and inexpensively close the parking lane on one side of Main Street to allow better distancing opportunities while walking and cycling for transportation and moderate exercise.



Whenever feasible, consider riding bicycles or walking.

This provides **physical distancing** while helping you to meet the minimum requirement for daily physical activity, which may be more difficult due to increased teleworking, and limited access to sport and other recreational activities.

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Figure 1 – Context Map: Staff have looked at the area on Main Street between Highland Ave and Willow Park (green dashed line) for enhanced pedestrian and physical distancing opportunities.

DRAFT MOTION:

That Council:

1. Direct staff to create limited, temporary spaces for safe physical distancing and enhanced pedestrian experience on both sides of Main Street using existing parking stalls between Highland Avenue and Willow Park. Included shall be enhanced bicycle infrastructure, enhanced accessible parking, limited loading/drop-offs and the KTA bus stop.
2. Direct Staff to include in the 2020-2021 Operations Plan a project that focuses on meaningful Active Transportation improvements and bring forward recommendations that can be included both in the 2021-2022 Budget process and earmarked for longer-term actions.
3. Work collaboratively with other Municipal partners toward the creation of an Integrated Mobility Plan for the Region.

Note: Student resources and/or the pursuit of external funding (e.g. grants) to support this work may be utilized by Staff.

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1) CAO COMMENTS

The CAO supports the recommendations of staff. It was clear from the discussion at Council that there is an interest not only on a short term solution to improve social distancing opportunities along Main Street, but to also identify and implement longer-term solutions to improve the pedestrian and cycling experience in the downtown core. The latter will take more discussion, research and resources to fully design and implement. Therefore, the staff recommendations are two-fold: they provide short term relief for the current situation and definitive direction to enable action on a longer-term solution over the coming months, which will inform future capital planning in 2021-22.

2) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The *Municipal Government Act* provides authority for Towns to create, alter, repair sidewalks and streets. The Motor Vehicle Act (through our local Traffic Authority) is also relevant.

3) STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff are recommending that Council, in the short-term, focus on creating space for physical distancing on both sides of Main Street through the following initial actions:

1. Assess the area between the East End Gateway and Highland Avenue for areas where distancing would be difficult and implement a limited, temporary measure that uses the adjacent parking stall(s). Example:



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2. Approach the Restaurants that already install a sidewalk extension as part of their seasonal “Sidewalk Café” (Joes, Kings Arms, Paddys, etc) and work with them to install these components in the short-term to create additional space – just the sidewalk extension part. People are already accustomed to this (and we approve them annually) and we may be able to incentivize them to do this with the WBDC. Example:



Example of sidewalk extension portions of existing sidewalk cafes.

3. Install seasonal Bike Parking corrals with provision of sidewalk extension where possible. Proposed are in front of Annapolis Cider Company and We’re Outside, subject to discussion with owners. Example:

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4. Work with the WBDC to implement more permanent, seasonal installation(s) that both address physical distancing and can further Council's goals around walkability and pedestrian friendly streets. Meeting the needs of businesses to re-open gradually, and allowing patrons to wait comfortably and safely outside should be thought of. An example, suitable to our Main Street, could be as shown here:

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5. Install temporary signage to communicate key messages (see examples below under communication).
6. Maintain accessible parking, limited loading/pick-ups/drops and other elements (e.g. KTA bus stop) in partnership with the WBDC.
7. Promote alternative cycle routes and other safe ways to get around/stay physically active.
8. Commit to evaluating the effectiveness of measures and adjust as needed. This evaluation will also inform potential longer-term solutions.

REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

- May 28, 2020 Special Council Meeting (found [here](#)).
- Excerpts from 2015 AT Plan (Attached)
- AT User Preference examples (Attached)

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4) OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

A spectrum of options can be considered, some more realistic and practical than others, outlined here:

Option	Description
1. Do Nothing	Maintain status quo. Given the unanimous support from Council to improve the Main Street experience and the real concerns around physical distancing/health/safety this option is not recommended.
2. Use existing parking stalls on one side of the street	This approach is consistent with the 'request for agenda item' where Staff could look to extend the sidewalk along one side of Main street into the adjacent parking stalls (temporarily) to create more space for physical distancing in the form of a linear corridor. Given accessible parking stalls, the KTA bus stop, existing bump outs and other features the approach to create a temporary linear corridor is not recommended by Staff.
3. Use existing parking stalls on both sides of the street	This approach allows Staff to create safe pedestrian spaces on both sides of the street for enhanced pedestrian experience and physical distancing while adapting to the needs of merchants and users on both sides. The Staff recommendation (above) outlines some ways this could be accomplished.
4. Create a cycle track (2-way or 1-way) on one side of the street or both	This is a more ambitious option that would require additional resources, planning, and budget. This option is not recommended at this time.
5. Close the street (or other more ambitious options)	This is a more ambitious option that would require additional resources, planning, and budget. This option is not recommended at this time.

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Main Street Existing Conditions



5) DISCUSSION

Background

The initial idea/motion was to look at expanding the sidewalk on one side of Main Street to facilitate physical distancing through the core. Staff are looking at the area from the East End Gateway/Willow Park to Highland Avenue.

Based on information gathered from different department heads and other stakeholders, creating opportunities for physical distancing on both sides of the street seems more practical to achieve the desired outcomes (health and safety) while maintaining accessible parking and other elements/limited 3 hr parking (e.g. no contact pick-ups from businesses; KTA bus stop when resumed, etc). Businesses – like Carl’s – are already creating defined space.

Staff require clear direction so we can work out additional details/address concerns and further refine the approach so that something cohesive can be communicated and implemented successfully.



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Communications and Signage

Once direction is provided, additional communication will be required with the business community. Key messages:

- We're creating more space for physical distancing.
- Slow Down. The space being created is for all users to comfortably maintain distancing requirements.
- Practice Physical Distancing – pedestrians use caution.

Some limited signage and communication (social media, etc.) will be rolled out once direction is provided by Council. The Parks and Recreation team has already been putting up fun, inspirational, health and wellness focused signage to enhance the walking experience in Town. Some potential examples here:



Existing Sidewalk Widths

Our sidewalks in the downtown core have a range of widths. Some from building face to curb are up to ~ 4.5m (15') others down to 2.5m or less (<6-8'), depending on placement of trees, garbage receptacles and other items. When you consider groups of people (couples or families) walking together, people with mobility aids, people walking dogs, people standing on the sidewalk chatting, and other stuff on the sidewalks (garbage cans, etc) space gets eaten up pretty quickly.

In some areas, the building edge and curb are "hard" edges but in many places (e.g. Post Office, Shoppers, sidewalk bump outs, frontage of Town Hall/Fire Hall, area in front of Ritas, etc) there are areas where additional space is available for physical distancing.

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Adjusting to Changing Social and Economic Conditions

Physical distancing will be the new norm for the foreseeable future. Staff feel that smaller interventions to create space can be more easily adjusted or moved than a full linear corridor. Creating conditions for success for our businesses, as they start to reopen, will be important. As this evolves our approach will have to be evaluated.

Parking Management

Staff and Council have had many discussions on parking management, parking utilization rates and strategies for continuous improvement.

Parking demand will clearly be reduced from workers commuting into Town, and reduced tourism and activities in the short-term. Staff do not feel removing parking stalls to better ensure physical distancing will be an issue.

There is a lot of available parking in and around Main Street that would continue to be available. See [here](#) for a map of public parking.

Loading and unloading zones (designated) are not proposed to be impacted.

Accessibility

The recommended approach (creating additional physical distancing space on both sides of Main Street) would maintain the existing Accessible parking spots and look to create other opportunities (accessible or drop/pick-ups). The Town's [Accessibility Plan](#) states that Council "is committed to ensuring equitable access to community life and participation in society for all people, regardless of their abilities. We are committed to helping all people maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusion."

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There are areas of our sidewalks that may present challenges for people to pass comfortably while maintaining physical distancing guidelines. Whether it is individuals walking out into vehicular traffic to avoid run-ins with others or simply breaking physical distancing measures, the lack of space to safely navigate poses avoidable risks to public health. These risks are only exacerbated if you are a child, an older adult, or rely on a mobility support aid as your ability to detour around others is limited.

The preliminary review of accessible parking in the downtown core last year indicated the need to improve existing accessible on street parking, including curb cuts, and proper size and signage adjustments. Closing the parking lane on the south side of Main Street would eliminate/block the initial focus of planned improvements.

Mental Health and Wellness

There is an obvious anxiety associated with physical distancing, yet most residents will be required to go into this part of Town for essentials, at a minimum. It is hoped that by providing additional space, some anxiety can be alleviated, and better health outcomes achieved by having people walk and cycle in the core more easily.

Longer-term Active Transportation (Linear Cycle Track)

Staff are not looking at this project as a linear cycle track (eg unimpeded movement for cyclists). It is acknowledged that this may be a great longer-term idea but is very complicated to implement in a safe way as a temporary measure, without additional resources and budget or without other trade-offs.

The Town conducted an Active Transportation Study/Plan in 2015 with WSP Engineering. Some of the outputs of that study are included as Attachment 1 for reference.

The recommended "physical distancing spaces" along Main Street would create additional shared areas for cyclists to use and also slow car traffic on the street. Most of our cyclists would feel a lot more comfortable using an enhanced Main Street versus the status quo Main Street on-road or Front Street. Attachment 2 shows, for reference, a spectrum of AT facilities and preference from users. Staff are proposing to place at least 2 Bike Parking Corrals (similar to last years pilot) as part of the recommended actions as well. These will encourage cyclists to dismount on the edges of Town and navigate the core on foot, taking advantage of increased physical distancing opportunities.

Staff feel that the Active Transportation plan and associated actions should be revisited with the incoming Council with new priorities established, aligned with our updated Municipal Planning Strategy (once approved).

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WBDC

Staff have discussed the intent with the WBDC President and will discuss with their executive at the upcoming WBDC meeting and gather additional feedback. Early feedback indicates general support for the idea, subject to details being provided.

Staff feel some of the proposed measures are a positive partnership opportunity with the WBDC, as outlined in the recommendation (e.g. the walking portion of the sidewalk cafes, partnering on other elements such as the large bench/sidewalk extension example).

Human Resources/Capacity/Materials

Both the Public Works and Parks crews are operating with reduced Staff. How, who and of what materials we will execute any interventions with will be finalized once direction is provided from Council. Staff feel what is being recommended can be implemented with the resources we have.

Staff were already planning the installation of bike parking corrals on Main Street and would attempt to create spaces (additional sidewalk space) that are safe, functional and provide opportunities for healthy physical distancing.

Liability and ensuring safety/clear demarcation of space created

There is potential for increased liability risk in at least two ways:

- Depending on the nature of temporary delineation between the automobile lane and new walkway corridor, risk of injury from automobiles may increase.
- The change in height of surface being created for pedestrians/cyclists would include a potential trip hazard (curb). Acceptable tolerances for surface imperfections of sidewalks is far less than the height of a curb. Although it may seem that citizens would not make that an issue, the Town receives trip/fall claims each year which result in cost of investigating under the insurance policy.

Other Jurisdictions

Many other jurisdictions are doing things to adjust to these unprecedented times. Some places, depending on population density and context, are looking at options around:

- Road closures
- Local Traffic Only Streets
- Reclaiming Space for pedestrians and active transportation for better physical distancing and/or mobility and health outcomes (e.g. extra lanes or parking; expediting AT plans)

See examples [here](#). Most places where immediate action has been taken (New York, etc) have far higher population and business density but many small urban communities, like Wolfville, are formulating responses to our new normal as well.

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6) SUMMARY

Staff feel the recommended approach:

- Provides for additional physical distancing to keep residents safe and healthy through a series of extra-wide sidewalk “bump outs” by expanding pedestrian space into adjacent parking stalls.
- Helps to alleviate the anxiety associated with physical distancing with areas to ‘duck out’ as the weather warms and inevitably more people are in this area.
- Embraces our accessibility focus by still having parking for those with mobility challenges. “We’re all in this together”/ an approach for those with all abilities is essential.
- Is flexible for the evolving needs of businesses (e.g. no contact pick-ups) versus a linear corridor on one side.
- Makes it easier to “ease out” of this approach as things evolve over the summer by removing, moving, or adding sections.
- Can be supplemented with courtesy signage.
- Will include additional bicycle parking that will also create physical distancing space and encourage cycling generally.
- Will serve as a stepping stone towards longer-term improvements surrounding AT opportunities within our downtown.

7) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At first glance, the costs of incorporating a temporary change as discussed at the April 28th Council meeting may seem minimal, however there are a couple of points for Council to consider.

To the degree that the liability/safety factor is addressed and risks minimized, the costs are likely to increase. Staff would look to Council for direction on how much costs would be considered for temporary solution to an issue.

In a normal year, the additional costs may seem reasonable and within the capacity of the operations budget. In this particular year, the economic impact of COVID is negative to both residents and the Town. As previously discussed with Council in April, the Town stands to potentially lose significant dollars in revenue this year. Senior Management has been working to reduce costs where possible to offset the expected losses. In addition, all municipalities expect cash flow reductions as residents and businesses struggle to pay bills. Any unbudgeted spending, of which the proposal would fall under, only adds to cuts that may be needed in other areas.

To the extent that the costs of the temporary solution can be minimized, at the same time that safety is maximized, the implementation of the solution will be manageable. If a solution utilizing existing infrastructure is possible, then there may be no added costs to the Town.

8) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

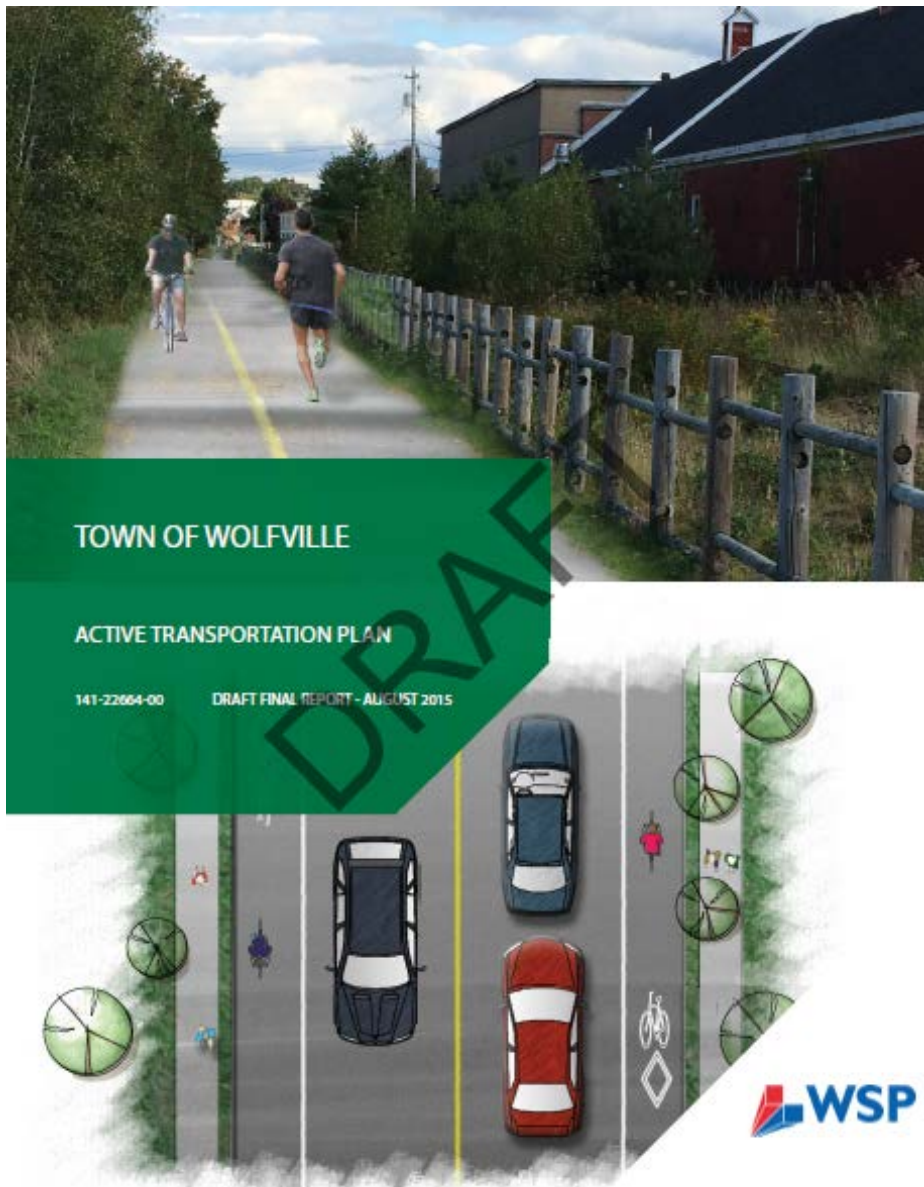
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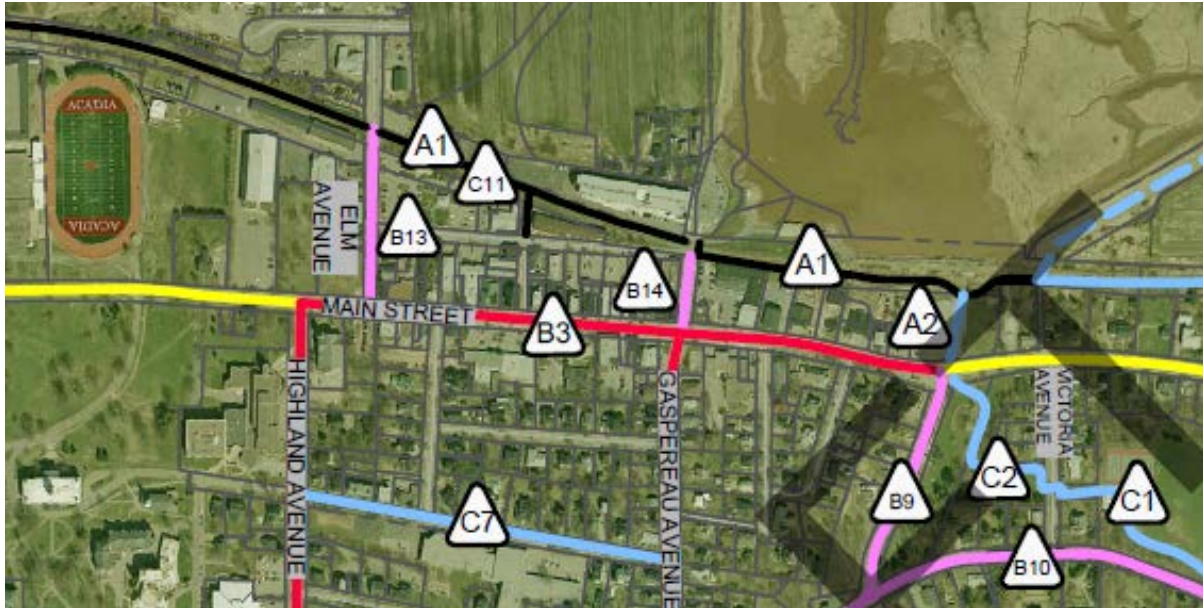
This is a response to the current Covid-19 pandemic, obviously not contemplated in Council’s strategic plan.

ATTACHMENT 1 – EXCERPTS FROM ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2015)


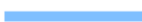
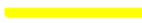





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LEGEND:

-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Trail Connection
-  Reserved Bicycle Lane
-  Proposed Shared Use Lanes
-  Proposed Signed Bicycle Route
-  Recommendation Number

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
FIGURE: 6 - 1 RECOMMENDED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

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#	Recommendation	Street Name	Section	Length
B3	Install Single File Shared Use Lanes	Main Street	Highland Avenue to Locust Avenue	450m
B4		Highland Avenue	Main Street to Skyway Drive	1km
B5	Install Side-by-Side Shared Use Lanes	Gaspereau Avenue	Main Street to Pleasant Street	1.2km
B6		University Avenue	Main Street to Campus Physical Plant	650m
B7		Sherwood Drive	Main Street to Pleasant Street	850m
B8		Skyway Drive / Pleasant Street	Kent Avenue to Sherwood Drive	2.3km

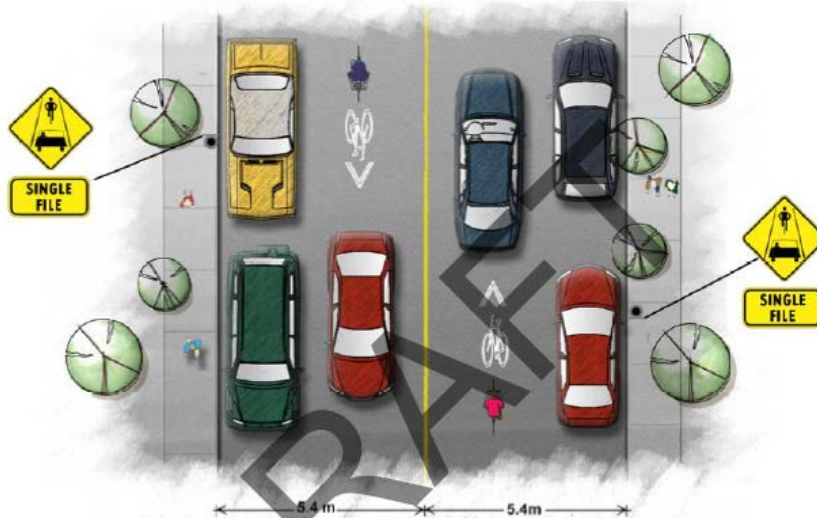


Figure 7-3: Typical Cross Section with Sharrows (Single File Application)

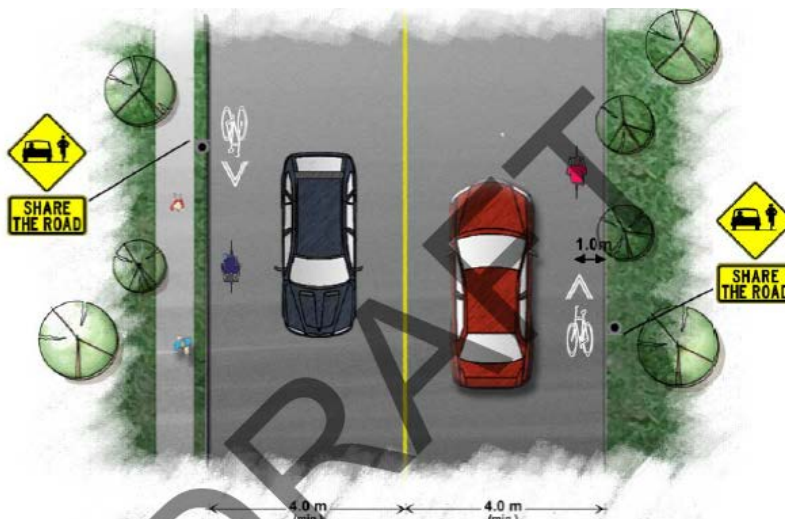


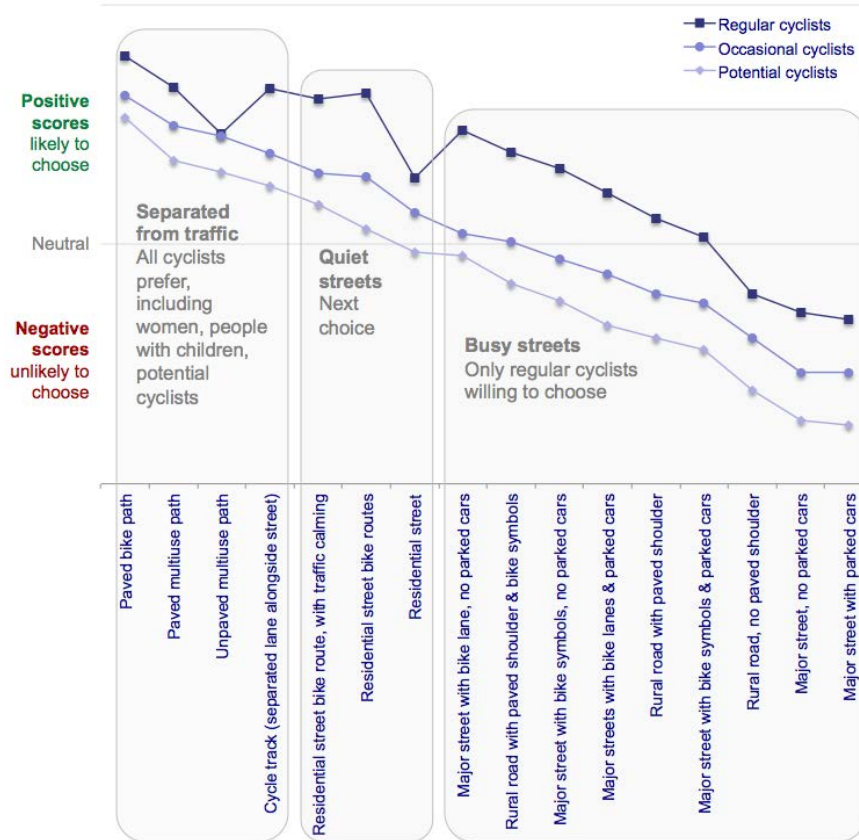
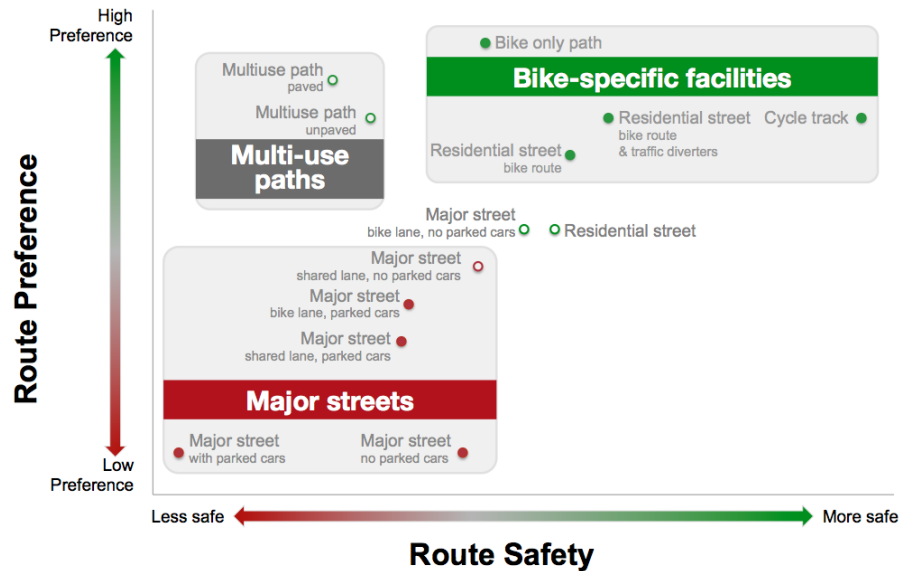
Figure 7-2: Typical Cross Section with Sharrows (Side-by-Side Application)

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ATTACHMENT 2 – USER PREFERENCE INFORMATION (CYCLING)



SOURCE: <http://cyclingincities.spph.ubc.ca>

REQUEST FOR DECISION 024-2020

Title: Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Date: 2020-05-12

Department: Finance



SUMMARY

Property Tax Financing Program Policy

As members of Council are aware, individual municipalities, the Association of Municipal Administrators (AMA), and the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) have been looking at avenues to assist taxpayers impacted by the economic downturn related to the COVID pandemic. The Town of Wolfville took initial steps at the March 27th Council meeting approving temporary measures dealing with Tax and Water customer accounts in arrears. The relief at that time included waiving interest on arrears temporarily for the coming months.

Over the past month, the NSFM and AMA have been in discussions with the province exploring other options municipalities may be able to take. In some areas, taxpayers have asked for partial tax relief or grants, and some asked that full tax relief be provided for the year. At this point in time, an option that has been developed into a draft policy format, with a commitment from the Province to make available line of credit funding, provides a framework to allow taxpayers more time to pay their tax bill at a lower interest rate than typically applied. The draft policy covered under this RFD represents that framework.

It is important to note that the proposal does not provide direct tax relief. ***It is not a reduction in property taxes but rather an installment plan for qualifying taxpayers spreading 2020/21 property taxes over a 30 month period of time.*** This Policy intends to establish ***a one-time*** property tax installment payment program for owners of residential and commercial properties negatively affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Beyond the temporary ability to delay payment of taxes when due for a portion of the community, there is a consistent message to keep in mind

- The Town requires cash flow to enable ability to provide essential services
- Those that can pay are encouraged to pay by due dates
- We're all in this together

DRAFT MOTION:

Draft motion to be developed **if** direction provided by Council is to develop a formal draft policy for consideration.

Final draft policy would be brought forward to a future Council meeting for adoption OR staff will bring a report updating how taxes will be managed if no policy adopted.

REQUEST FOR DECISION 024-2020

Title: Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Date: 2020-05-12

Department: Finance



1) CAO COMMENTS

The CAO supports the comments of staff contained in this RFD. This RFD, informed by direction from Council, will be revisited at the May 19, 2020 Council meeting.

2) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- Municipal Government Act (MGA) Sections 72(7), & 111 – 113

3) STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff currently recommend Council provide direction as to desire to adopt a tax installment policy.

If Council feels such a policy is not in the Town's and community's best interest overall, then provide direction to staff that no further work be undertaken related to the draft policy at this time.

If Council wishes to pursue adoption of a policy, provide staff input on possible criteria definition. Direction on criteria would be incorporated into a draft policy developed specific to Wolfville, based on the general draft model policy developed by the AMA.

4) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

- RFD 017-2020 Payment Relief Measures
- Draft Property Tax Installment Payment Policy (attached)
- Draft Policy footnotes (attached)

5) DISCUSSION

The global COVID health emergency has also resulted in an economic downturn. As stated in RFD 017-2020, *"Everyone is impacted, or will be impacted, by the economic slowdown. All levels of government are being asked to provide relief to citizens and businesses alike."* The issue facing municipalities is what, if any, options fall within the municipal legislative mandate to assist the community in terms of shrinking incomes. The ongoing challenge for Council is to ensure essential services are maintained, while at the same time considering options to assist members of the community.

Two key issues facing municipalities will be (i) potential slow down in cash flow receipts and (ii) permanent loss of some expected revenues this year. Lost revenues will only be made up by offsetting expense savings/new revenue streams. The cash flow issue is what this RFD and draft policy address.

A draft policy has been developed by the AMA & NSFMM which provides an option to taxpayers for the current 2020/21 fiscal year.

- Option to provide a formalized **installment plan for up to 30 months** for **qualifying** taxpayers impacted by COVID economically.

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Title: Property Tax Financing Program Policy

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- Criteria based aimed at helping those significantly financially impacted by COVID-19
- Financing program, **NOT tax forgiveness**
- Criteria includes residential option and commercial option
- Cost of borrowing during period financed to be tied to MFC line of credit at 1.1% plus an optional administrative fee, eg. 0.25%
- Only applies to 2020/21 property taxes

In terms of scope, the draft policy Section 4.1 deals with residential properties. Key elements to consider include:

- Residency – could be limited to owners that are residents of NS, or perhaps further refined to include only owner/occupied residences
- Focused on residents who have lost their job due to COVID State of Emergency restrictions
- Include registered Tourism NS locations
- Credit risk assessment – proposed draft policy looks to property tax account must be in good standing, i.e. no balance outstanding
- Exclude:
 - Vacant land
 - Non-resident, or outside other residency criteria

Section 4.2 deals with commercial properties. Key elements to consider include:

- Setting the threshold for qualifying assessment level. At what level of assessment would a property not qualify? See section of 4.2.1 of draft policy.
- Focused on businesses who have lost financial hardship due to COVID State of Emergency restrictions
- Properties that would qualify regardless of assessed value. Would relate to selected commercial sectors specifically directed to shut down/scale back under State of Emergency.
- Exclude:
 - Property owners receiving compensation from Business Interruption insurance towards property taxes
 - Provincially subsidized daycares
 - Properties used parking and commercial vacant land
 - Properties with active tax agreement with Town through legislation or bylaw
 - Municipally funded NPO's with taxes already partially exempted by the Town
 - All properties managed under Payment in Lieu (PILT) programs

REQUEST FOR DECISION 024-2020

Title: Property Tax Financing Program Policy

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The intended benefit of the Policy is to reduce the immediate financial pressure that taxpayers may experience during this time of economic downturn resulting from the COVID pandemic and State of Emergency restrictions. It allows those who qualify to repay their 2020/21 property taxes over a period of up to 30 months. At first glance, this appears to be beneficial. One issue staff have some concern over is the unintended consequence that taxpayers are effectively adding to their household debt without necessarily the capacity to manage higher debt.

- For a household that qualifies under a tax instalment policy, they will be paying 2020/21 property taxes at the same time they will have to pay 2021/22 taxes (first year of installment process) and 2022/23 (second year of installments).

The best practice being recommended is that a taxpayer must have their property account in good standing, no arrears.

- How “good standing” is defined will be important. Is an account that has been in arrears for the last year, but paid up just before policy adoption, in good standing? Or should it be accounts that have no arrears for at least the past 6 months. The ability to manage debt is likely different in each situation.

With regard to commercial assessments, careful consideration of inclusion/exclusion criteria needs to occur. The intent of the Policy is to have objective criteria applicants have to meet. In terms of assessment thresholds, the analysis carried out in developing the draft policy notes \$5 million as a potential starting point.

- In Wolfville, \$5 million dollar commercial assessment threshold would include all commercial properties, notwithstanding other criteria requirements
- Only 6 commercial assessments are in excess of \$1 million on the 2020 Assessment Roll

Wolfville’s commercial sector is likely more appropriately evaluated in relation to the business sector they operate in. COVID restrictions have varied impacts depending on the nature of the business. Some sectors have been effectively shut down temporarily (eg. hotels, hairdressers) while others continue to operate (eg. banks, law firms, accounting firms).

Regardless of which criteria are applied to commercial businesses, there is an issue around businesses that would otherwise fit Council’s criteria but they do not own the building where they operate. The Policy provides relief to the property owner, not the tenant. In addition, a landlord may have multiple commercial tenants and only one of them meets the criteria of the Policy. It is unclear how the installment policy would apply. One suggestion might be that commercial landlords are excluded in the Policy. Those landlords would have to rely on federal or provincial relief programs.

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Title: Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Date: 2020-05-12

Department: Finance



Other factors to consider;

- The AMA is working on the development of a central web portal to receive applications. This should assist municipalities in collecting application at a time Town Halls are closed to the public.
- Evaluation of applications will still be the responsibility of individual municipal units. Depending on the volume of applications and the complexity of the qualifying criteria, ***the administrative burden may be beyond current staff resources.***
- Two receivable processing streams will be created for one class of receivable, i.e. taxes. The ability of the Town's financial software to manage two "types" of property tax collections has yet to be determined. Effectively the Town would need to develop a process to separate a property owners tax account in order to apply two different interest rates. One for the 2020/21 taxes under the COVID installment plan, and the other for future tax years under the regular arrears interest rate.
- Property taxes largely relate to provision of essential services, and are typically considered part of a basic household expenses. The federal government has taken steps to provide financial relief to those who have lost jobs (eg. CERB) and those programs are intended to assist people in meeting their basic living expenses.
- The draft policy assumes that a municipality's program is secured through a one-time arrangement with the Municipal Finance Corporation's line of credit COVID option. Draft projections were provided to the AMA/NSFM working group earlier in April. Based on the assumptions used Town cash flows could be adversely impacted up to \$2 million. The assumptions were broad based, not Town specific and actual results could vary from those numbers.

6) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If adopted, a tax financing policy should have a positive impact on the Town as it relieves the immediate cash flow pressure that might be faced by lower customer receipts on tax billings.

If qualifying taxpayers default on the installment plan over the 30 month term, the cash flow needed by the Town to repay the MFC operating line of credit will be impaired. Regardless the Town would still be required to pay down their line of credit as scheduled.

There is some risk 2 to 3 years down the road related to any taxpayer who finds themselves unable to stay current on their installment plan under the Policy and stay current on their 2021/22 and 2022/23 taxes. ***One cash flow issue may be replaced by a post COVID cash flow issue.***

7) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

Nothing provided at this time.

REQUEST FOR DECISION 024-2020

Title: Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Date: 2020-05-12

Department: Finance



8) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

Nothing provided at this time. Communications details will be developed before adoption of the Policy, if Council decides to move forward with a draft proposal for Wolfville.

9) ALTERNATIVES

Council may decide not to pursue adoption of a Property Tax Financing Program Policy. It is difficult at this point in the year to know what financial impact that decision might have on cash flows. Factors that will have a material impact on this decision:

- What percentage of the Town's tax base will be able to pay their taxes without adoption of the Policy? Currently, those that can pay are encouraged to do so.
- Will the provincial line of credit thru MFC be available to municipal units that do not adopt a Financing Policy? Early indications were the Policy would be required prior to ability to access the line of credit. More recent indications are that the Policy will not be a requirement to access the MFC line of credit.
- Can Town staff facilitate payment programs on an as needed basis in discussion with individual taxpayers? This may be the preferred approach, especially so once interest on arrears is re-established. Part of this approach may be the lowering of the Town's current interest rate on arrears.

Chapter [--]

COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Title

1. This Policy is entitled the “COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program Policy.”
2. **Objective:**

[Enter Municipality Name Here] is concerned about the health and safety of residents. [Enter Municipality Name Here] recognizes that facilitating the payment of property taxes in installments will better allow Nova Scotians to follow the public health directives endorsed by the Government of Nova Scotia. This Policy responds to that need by establishing a one-time property tax installment payment program (the “Program”) for owners of residential and commercial properties negatively affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic.
3. **Authority:**

Sections 111 and 112 of the *Municipal Government Act* give Council the authority to provide for the payment of taxes by installments.

Section 113 of the *Municipal Government Act* allows Council to charge interest for non-payment of taxes when due, at a rate determined by policy.
4. **Scope:**
 - 4.1 Residential - The following owners of residential property are eligible to participate in the Program:
 - 4.1.1 An owner of a residential property that is the owner’s primary residence, where the owner has experienced financial hardship through a significant reduction in income due to the State of Emergency declared by the Government of Nova Scotia in response to COVID-19, demonstrated through receipt of Provincial or Federal program assistance, or a Record of Employment (ROE) demonstrating layoff from employment after March 15, 2020;¹

¹ Facilitating residential property tax installment payments is expected to help residents stay home and weather the pandemic in place. As written here, the criteria for eligibility request a demonstration of hardship. However, it

4.1.2 An owner of a residential property where the owner was a registered Tourism Operator with Tourism Nova Scotia for the 2019 tourist season (excluding AirBNBs);²

[4.1.3 An owner of a residential property that is rented to one or more tenants, where the owner has experienced a significant reduction in rental income from the property due to the State of Emergency, demonstrated through the following:

[4.1.3.1....insert any criteria that the owner must meet and/or documentation they must provide to be eligible]]³

4.2 Commercial - The following owners of commercial property are eligible to participate in the Program:

4.2.1 An owner of a taxable commercial property where the property has a total taxable 2020 property assessment value equal to or less than **[insert value here]**⁴ and where the owner's business or building located on the property has experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency, demonstrated through the following:

[4.2.1.1.... insert any criteria that the owner must meet and/or documentation they must provide to be eligible]⁵

4.2.2 An owner of a taxable commercial property who has experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency, regardless of the assessed value, where:⁶

is recommended that these criteria be interpreted loosely: although targeted approaches are desirable in principle, they are difficult to enforce effectively. The primary deterrent against program participation for those not actually requiring this help is the interest rate on the funding envelope making this program possible. March 15, 2020 has been selected as this was around the time that COVID-19 related layoffs began, but a different date could be used here.

² The consequences for the tourism industry are expected to be significant.

³ Include 5.1.3 if the policy is to apply to residential rental properties. Municipalities will have to determine what criteria will apply and the documentation they will require for rental properties to be eligible. This could include things like a maximum assessed value, similar to with commercial, to exclude larger apartment buildings etc. It could also include a requirement that the rental income from the property be down by a certain amount, for example by at least 30% in May and June vs February.

⁴ Municipalities are encouraged to carefully consider the implications of setting a threshold for inclusion or exclusion of commercial properties in this program. Based on a province-wide analysis of assessments in Nova Scotia and a scan of similar proposals across Canada, a suggested starting point for consideration is \$5 million in commercial assessment.

⁵ If municipalities want to include criteria for a commercial property to be eligible (other than a simple statement that they have suffered financial hardship due to a loss in revenue), they will have to identify that criteria and insert it here.

⁶ Section 4.2.2 does not intend to limit program participation only to the listed businesses. The classes of businesses flagged for inclusion without assessment criteria are those specifically targeted for shutdown or service reductions by the public health directives endorsed by the Government of Nova Scotia, and this list may expand per those directives.

- 4.2.2.1 The owner of the property is a tourism operator registered under the *Tourist Accommodations Registration Act* and the property is used for tourist accommodations (e.g., hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts);
- 4.2.2.2 The owner of the property carries on the business of an automotive or leisure/recreational vehicle dealership on the property;
- 4.2.2.3 The owner of the property uses the property as a private or non-profit recreation facility (e.g., golf courses, indoor playgrounds, campgrounds, racing venues);
- 4.2.2.4 The owner of the property carries on a business on the property in the hospitality industry, including bars, cafes, and coffee shops;
- 4.2.2.5 The owner of the property carries on a business on the property in the service industry, including hairdressers, nail salons, gyms, tattoo parlours;
- 4.2.2.6 The owner of the property carries on a business on the property as a health care provider (including, but not limited to, dentists, naturopaths, chiropractors, physiotherapists, physicians and other doctors), where that business has been required to reduce hours as a result of the State of Emergency.

4.3 Exclusions: Regardless of sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this policy, the following are not eligible to participate in the Program:

- 4.3.1 Property owners who have not experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency;
- 4.3.2 Property owners who have received compensation from Business Interruption Insurance towards the payment of property taxes;
- 4.3.3 Properties occupied by daycare centres in receipt of federal or provincial funding, or those in receipt of other emergency funding;
- 4.3.4 Properties used for landfill, pipeline, managed forest, parking, and commercial vacant land;
- 4.3.5 Properties for which there is an active tax agreement with the Municipality through legislation or bylaw;
- 4.3.6 Properties owned by non-profit organizations that are funded by the Municipality or that are partially exempted from property tax;
- 4.3.7 All properties managed under payment-in lieu-programs.⁷

⁷ Municipalities may want to add to the list of excluded uses or industries in 4.3 if additional federal or provincial financial support programs for those industries are introduced after the creation of this program.

4.4 General Requirements

4.4.1 Installments shall be payable by the person, company or other entity assessed for the property for the current fiscal year.

4.4.2 In order for taxes for a property to qualify for the Program, the taxes for the property must not be in arrears at the time of application.

4.5 Application

4.5.1 Property owners wishing to apply to participate in the Program for a property must complete and submit to the Municipality an application in the form attached as Schedule “A” to this policy.

4.4.3 The application deadline to participate in the Program is June 30th, 2020.

5. Administration

5.1 Tax Installments

5.1.1 For applications meeting the Program criteria set out above, property tax payments normally due between April 1st, 2020 and September 30th, 2020 for approved properties may be paid in installments as follows.⁸

5.1.2 For each property, Program participants will pay tax installments as follows:

5.1.2.1 Payments of \$25 per month for six months, payable on or before the last day of each month, commencing in the month the property tax payment is normally due.⁹

5.1.2.2 Following these six months at \$25 per month, monthly payments equal to 1/24th of the balance of the amount eligible for the Program plus interest as set out below. These monthly payments are payable on or before the last day of each month and continue for 24 months.

5.1.4 The rate of interest for the Program will be 1.35% per year.¹⁰

5.1.5 Interest on amounts owing under the Program will be calculated commencing on the date the property tax payment is normally due and continuing until all installments have been paid.

⁸ Municipalities have a variety of tax billing dates and are encouraged to alter the details of the dates listed in 5.1.1 as required. The intent is to provide taxpayers with a window of time in which their property taxes are eligible for the installment program.

⁹ The \$25 figure listed here is a suggestion and may be altered to fit municipal need.

¹⁰ This rate of 1.1% is the Municipal Finance Corp interest rate and is specific to this program alone.

5.2 Terms of the Program

5.2.1 The Treasurer, or his or her delegate, shall approve qualifying applicants.

5.2.2 Payments under the Program must remain in good standing with the municipality throughout the duration of the Program.

5.2.3 Default in payment of an installment when due will result in the following:¹¹

5.2.3.1 The balance of outstanding taxes on the applicable property and interest will become immediately due and payable; and¹²

5.2.3.2 The outstanding taxes and interest then owing will become subject to the municipality's regular rate of interest for overdue taxes of **[insert rate here]**.¹³

5.2.4 All amounts owing and payable on the property tax account that are not included in the Program are due on their normal dates and any amounts not paid when due will be subject to the municipality's regular rate of interest for overdue taxes of **[insert rate here]**.

5.2.5 Payments received by the municipality from a property owner will first be applied to any installments due under the Program, in priority to any other taxes or other amounts owing by the owner to the municipality.¹⁴

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Council will:

7.1.1 Monitor the implementation and administration of this policy and make any amendments required for the effective and efficient operation of the Program.

7.2 The **[Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk-Treasurer]** will:

7.2.1 Be responsible for the administration and implementation of this policy and the Program; and

7.2.2 Identify necessary amendments to this policy in consultation with Council and managerial staff and make recommendations accordingly to Council.

¹¹ The wording here is only a suggestion. Your municipality may prefer to use a "two strikes and you're out" or "three strikes and you're out" arrangement for missed payments.

¹² The wording of section 5.2.2 assumes program funding is secured through a one-time arrangement with the Municipal Finance Corporation, under which municipalities would be required to agree to terms for borrowing. After making that arrangement, the Municipality will be obligated to repay the borrowed monies to MFC at the agreed-upon schedule and rate of interest, even if individual taxpayers crash out of the program.

¹³ The suggestion of a compound rate described here will help avoid complications in calculating interest for those leaving the program at different times.

¹⁴ Your own municipal approach may differ from the one described here. You are encouraged to carefully consider and set a prioritization schedule for receivables throughout the Tax Installment Payment Period.

7. **General Provisions**

Payments received by mail are deemed to be paid on the date received by the Municipality.¹⁵

DRAFT

¹⁵ This general provision is intended to serve as an example.

Application for COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program

Residential Property

Civic address of property: _____

Assessment Account Number (as it appears on your tax bill): _____

Name of owner (as it appears on your tax bill): _____

Mailing address (include civic number): _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

I declare that:

- a) I have not received compensation from business interruption insurance toward payment of property taxes in relation to the above property;
- b) The property is not occupied by a daycare centre in receipt of federal or provincial funding or other emergency funding;
- c) The property is not used for a landfill, pipeline, managed forest, or parking, and is not commercial vacant land;
- d) There is no active tax agreement in place with the Municipality with respect to property taxes for the property through legislation or bylaw;
- e) The property is not owned by a non-profit organizations that is funded by the Municipality and the property is not partially exempted from property tax; and
- f) The property is not managed under a payment-in lieu-program.

Complete one of I, II, or III below

I. Owner-occupied residence

I also declare that:

- a) I reside in the above property;
- b) I have experienced financial hardship through due to a significant reduction in income as a result of the State of Emergency declared by the Province of Nova Scotia related to COVID-19; and
- c) I am receiving federal or provincial financial assistance related to COVID-19 OR I was laid off from my employment after March 15, 2020.

Dated this __ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

Enclose: Documentation (email, letter, payment statement, or other) showing that you are in receipt of federal or provincial financial assistance related to COVID-19 OR enclose a Record of Employment indicating that you were laid-off from your employment after March 15, 2020.

II. Registered tourism operator

I also declare that:

- a) I was a registered Tourism Operator with Tourism Nova Scotia for the 2019 tourist season with respect to the above property;
- b) There is no current agreement in place with the Municipality regarding payment of property taxes;
- c) I have experienced a significant reduction in income from the property as a result of the State of Emergency declared by the Province of Nova Scotia related to COVID-19; and
- d) The property is not used as an AirBnB.

Dated this __ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

Enclose: Documentation showing registration as a Tourism Operator with Tourism Nova Scotia for the 2019 tourist season.

III. Rental residential property

I also declare that:

- a) I rent the above property to one or more residential tenants;
- b) I have experienced a significant reduction in income from the property as a result of the State of Emergency declared by the Province of Nova Scotia related to COVID-19;
- c) **[any other criteria to qualify for the program for residential rental properties]**

Dated this __ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

Enclose: **[list of documents and information to show the applicant meets any criteria listed in 4.1.3]**

Application for COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program

Commercial Property

Civic address of property: _____

Assessment Account Number (as it appears on your tax bill): _____

Name of owner (as it appears on your tax bill): _____

Mailing address (include civic number): _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

I declare that:

- g) I have not received compensation from business interruption insurance toward payment of property taxes in relation to the above property;
- h) The property is not occupied by a daycare centre in receipt of federal or provincial funding or other emergency funding;
- i) The property is not used for a landfill, pipeline, managed forest, or parking, and is not commercial vacant land;
- j) There is no active tax agreement in place with the Municipality with respect to property taxes for the property through legislation or bylaw;
- k) The property is not owned by a non-profit organizations that is funded by the Municipality and the property is not partially exempted from property tax; and
- l) The property is not managed under a payment-in lieu-program.

Complete one of I or II below

I. I also declare that:

- a) I have experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue of my business or building located on the property as a result of the State of Emergency declared by the Province of Nova Scotia related to COVID-19;
- b) The total taxable 2020 assessed value for the property is equal to or less than **[insert the threshold value from 4.2.1]**;
- c) **[any other criteria to qualify for the program for commercial properties assessed at less than the threshold value]**

Dated this ___ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

Enclose: [list documents and information that the owner must provide to show they meet any criteria listed in 4.2.1]

II. I also declare that:

- a) I have experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue of my business or building located on the property as a result of the State of Emergency declared by the Province of Nova Scotia related to COVID-19;
- b) The total taxable 2020 assessed value for the property is greater than [insert the threshold value from 4.2.1], but (choose any of the following that apply):
 - ___ (i) I am a tourism operator registered with the *Tourist Accommodations Registration Act* and the property is used for tourist accommodations (e.g., hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts);
 - ___ (ii) I carry on the business of an automotive or leisure/recreational vehicle dealership on the property;
 - ___ (iii) I use the property as a private or non-profit recreation facility (e.g. golf course, indoor playground, campground, racing venue);
 - ___ (iv) I carry on a business on the property in the hospitality industry (eg. bar, café, restaurant, coffee shop);
 - ___ (v) I carry on a business on the property in the service industry (eg. hair salon, nail salon, gym, tattoo parlour);
 - ___ (vi) I carry on a business on the property as a health care provider (eg. dentist, naturopath, chiropractor, physiotherapist, physician), and that business has been required to reduce hours as a result of the State of Emergency.

Dated this ___ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

MEMO: COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Footnotes

Scope

Residential

Facilitating residential property tax installment payments is expected to help residents stay home and weather the pandemic in place. As written here, the criteria for eligibility request a demonstration of hardship. However, it is recommended that these criteria be interpreted loosely: although targeted approaches are desirable in principle, they are difficult to enforce effectively. The primary deterrent against program participation for those not actually requiring this help is the interest rate on the funding envelope making this program possible. March 15, 2020 has been selected as this was around the time that COVID-19 related layoffs began, but a different date could be used here.

The consequences for the tourism industry are expected to be significant.

Include 5.1.3 if the policy is to apply to residential rental properties. Municipalities will have to determine what criteria will apply and the documentation they will require for rental properties to be eligible. This could include things like a maximum assessed value, similar to with commercial, to exclude larger apartment buildings etc. It could also include a requirement that the rental income from the property be down by a certain amount, for example by at least 30% in May and June vs February.

Commercial

Municipalities are encouraged to carefully consider the implications of setting a threshold for inclusion or exclusion of commercial properties in this program. Based on a province-wide analysis of assessments in Nova Scotia and a scan of similar proposals across Canada, a suggested starting point for consideration is \$5 million in commercial assessment.

If municipalities want to include criteria for a commercial property to be eligible (other than a simple statement that they have suffered financial hardship due to a loss in revenue), they will have to identify that criteria and insert it here.

Section 4.2.2 does not intend to limit program participation only to the listed businesses. The classes of businesses flagged for inclusion without assessment criteria are those specifically targeted for shutdown or service reductions by the public health directives endorsed by the Government of Nova Scotia, and this list may expand per those directives.

Exclusions

Municipalities may want to add to the list of excluded uses or industries in 4.3 if additional federal or provincial financial support programs for those industries are introduced after the creation of this program.

Administration

Tax Installments

Municipalities have a variety of tax billing dates and are encouraged to alter the details of the dates listed in 5.1.1 as required. The intent is to provide taxpayers with a window of time in which their property taxes are eligible for the installment program.

The \$25 figure listed here is a suggestion and may be altered to fit municipal need.

This rate of 1.1% is the Municipal Finance Corp interest rate and is specific to this program alone.

Terms of the Program

The wording here is only a suggestion. Your municipality may prefer to use a “two strikes and you’re out” or “three strikes and you’re out” arrangement for missed payments.

The wording of section 5.2.2 assumes program funding is secured through a one-time arrangement with the Municipal Finance Corporation, under which municipalities would be required to agree to terms for borrowing. After making that arrangement, the Municipality will be obligated to repay the borrowed monies to MFC at the agreed-upon schedule and rate of interest, even if individual taxpayers crash out of the program.

The suggestion of a compound rate described here will help avoid complications in calculating interest for those leaving the program at different times.

Your own municipal approach may differ from the one described here. You are encouraged to carefully consider and set a prioritization schedule for receivables throughout the Tax Installment Payment Period.

General Provisions

This general provision is intended to serve as an example.

Amanda Brown

Subject: RE: Knocking on doors

-----Original Message-----

From: jessicamahaney

Sent: April 30, 2020 1:57 PM

To: Town Council <towncouncil@wolfville.ca>

Subject: Knocking on doors

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

I am writing this email in regards to the town by law officer. During this time of a global pandemic any issues regarding a resident should be dealt with via email or phone call. I did not appreciate having a man knocking on my door today (about spring clean up items which of course were dealt with) but with a newborn baby at home I answer the door for NO ONE. I'm sure if he knocks on the door of someone else, compromised or not, they too will not be happy. I normally wouldn't complain but this is the second time he knocked at our door (when garbage day was changed too) and about an hour later we get an email. Please just send the email and stop knocking on doors during a pandemic when our government has told us to isolate. Hopefully for his future endeavors he will stop scaring people and use technology like every other person/business ect....

Thanks.

Amanda Brown

Subject: RE: Protest Permit Required

From: Daniel Costello
Sent: May 1, 2020 1:31 PM
To: Town Council <towncouncil@wolfville.ca>
Subject: Protest Permit Required

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Councillors:

I would like a permit to protest:

-Acadia University
-Office of local MLA

Purpose:

Have been a protestor of Tiananmen Square Massacre since 1989 and since then of CCP China human rights violations related to:

1. **China Tribunal:** Verdict Guilty (review the evidence, always insufficient for communist apologists)

<https://chinatribunal.com>

2. **CCP Organ Harvesting of:**

-Falun gong
-Underground Church Catholics
-Christians
-Muslims
-Buddhists
-Ethnic Minorities

(Caution use apple products to access, site hacked likely by CCP)

<http://www.stoporganharvesting.org>

3. **Religious Persecution:** Sufficient video evidence alone.

<https://bitterwinter.org>

Content: My protests will be critical of academic, institutional and media silence on these human rights issues, despite being informed that it would be a good idea to inform the public of the truth. Failing to do so is lying by omission. There will be no expletives.

Duration: No more than 30 minutes for each, each week.

Method: Sidewalk in front of establishment (campus, office)

Frequency: No more than once a week.

Tools: Bullhorn.

Notes: Please mail the permit to my address

35 George Street, New Minas, NS, B4N-4E2

My request is that you permit my lawful protest, so I may avoid any nuisance or mischief bylaws that would otherwise see me fined \$5000 or 5 years in jail.

Some of your councillors may be in conflict of interest given local media have been provided ample means to report on these CCP organ harvesting atrocities and human rights violations and have failed to do so.

Am recent co-winner of the George Jonas Freedom Award 2020 from JCCF Canada.

Am a lifetime member of SAFS.ca

Kings County has given me permission to conduct similar protests at their office and in front of the Roman Catholic Church in Kentville. The Church is also suppressing this data in their own Vatican News, as Pope Francis signed a deal with Chairman Xi which has only hastened and increased horrendous state persecution against the Underground Church.

The County recommended that I ensure compliance and permission from various authorities before I proceed, thus this letter. Happy Belated Easter. Christ is Risen.

Best regards,

Dan Costello
Qualified International Trade Specialist
Qualified Research Project Manager
Acadian Patriarchy Descendant

PS If you would be so kind as to mark a white square on the side walk in front of each "authority" where I am permitted to peacefully protest with my bullhorn, without the threat of arrest, I would be grateful.

Sent from my iPad

Amanda Brown

Subject: RE: Updated Database for COVID19 & Virtual Volunteering

From

Sent: May 4, 2020 5:32 PM

To:

Subject: FW: Updated Database for COVID19 & Virtual Volunteering

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To All,

Below is a message regarding the recently updated Volunteer Nova Scotia website that Kings Volunteer Resource Centre has been operating now for the past 16 months. Our Coordinator, Karrie- Ann Wilkie has been working on this project in cooperation with Provincial authorities for the past few weeks and it is being distributed Province -wide this week to invite groups and individuals interested in volunteering in these challenging times to assist in the effort to deal with the many issues Covid19 has created in Nova Scotia.

We invite you to pass this message on to any groups or individuals who may be interested in using VolunteerNS as a tool to attract volunteers to their project/activities or as a way of Nova Scotian's to determine which volunteer positions/opportunities are open to those who wish to help.

Kings Volunteer Resource Centre is pleased to be able to contribute through its operation of the VolunteerNS website, in the effort to deal with the Covid19 situation here in Kings County, the Valley and Province of Nova Scotia. If you have any questions on the updated VolunteerNS site, please do not hesitate to contact Karrie -Ann Wilkie as indicated at the end of the message below.

Hope all of you are staying well.

Thankyou.

Bruce MacArthur
Treasurer,
Kings Volunteer Resource Centre



Updated Database for COVID-19 & Virtual Volunteering Opportunities

Over the last few weeks, we have heard from the non profit sector that there is an increased need for volunteers to continue essential services, such as meal delivery, in communities across Nova Scotia.

To help address this need, VolunteerNS.ca has **recently re-tooled our database to accommodate COVID-19 Volunteer Opportunities** and we want to help Nova Scotians understand that there are volunteer opportunities with organizations like yours to continue essential services during the pandemic.

Our next step is to **populate the site with Essential Service volunteer opportunities** across the Province - which is where you come in. Some examples of essential service volunteers may be delivering meals to seniors, decreasing social isolation, mental health initiatives or packing food for distribution to name a few.

If **you** have a need for essential service volunteers we encourage you to go to www.volunteerns.ca and create an opportunity now. These opportunities will be featured on our site, easily accessible for the community, and promoted on all our social media channels. If you are already a member, simply create a new position description with your username and password. If you are not a member, don't worry we can fast track you in creating an organizational profile

[Volunteer NS Organizational Profile](#) .

Please be aware **these positions are for Essential Service Volunteering only** and you will be asked to verify that your organization is able to address Public Health Guidelines per the Health Protection Act. If you need to review those please click here [Health Protection Act Order](#).

In addition however to Essential Service, you will also see a dedicated spot to populate Virtual Volunteer Opportunities, which we encourage you to consider as well.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me at info@volunteers.ca and I can help answer your questions and/or fill out any of the forms on the site.

Finally, we want to let you know that this is a **soft launch only** – which is an opportunity for groups to populate the site with volunteer positions. We will be talking about the changes publicly in a few days with a hard launch and official announcement then.

We hope VolunteerNS.ca can help you, as you help others in these unprecedented times.

Karrie-Ann Wilkie

Communications and Outreach Officer, Volunteer Nova Scotia

Kings Volunteer Resource Centre

902.385.4950

Email: info@VolunteerNS.ca

Click on the images below to follow us on Social Media



Click on our logo below to connect to our website



I acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship"

I use her/she pronouns.