



# Committee of the Whole

January 13, 2026

8:30 a.m.

Council Chambers, Town Hall  
359 Main Street

## Agenda

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### Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

#### 1. Approval of Agenda

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Committee of the Whole Minutes, December 2, 2025
- b. Committee of the Whole In Camera Minutes, December 2, 2025
- c. Special Committee of the Whole Minutes, December 3, 2025
- d. Special Committee of the Whole Minutes, December 16, 2025

#### 3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

#### 4. Presentations

- a. Chad West, County of Kings, Valley Community Fibre Network

#### 5. Public Input

##### PLEASE NOTE:

- *Reminder to all speakers that the Town conducts its business with the seven sacred teachings in mind, truth, honesty, love, courage, respect, wisdom and humility.*
- *Members of the public participating in public input sessions will conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful to the public, council and staff. Should this not occur, the Chair will advise them to end their questions and/or comments immediately.*
- *You have up to 5 minutes to provide input to be directed to the Chair.*

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*Lead with care, creativity and purpose – honour our past, enrich our present, and shape a resilient future*



- *Responses will be provided after the meeting either via email or in person and may be included in a future report.*
- *Any input that relates to personnel, current or potential litigation issues, or planning issues for which a public hearing has already occurred, but no decision has been made by Council, will not be responded to.*

## 6. Staff Reports for Discussion

- a. RFD 001-2026: Land Acknowledgement
- b. RFD 002-2026: Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan
- c. IR 001-2026: Accessibility Year End Report
- d. IR 002-2026: Equity & Anti-Racism Year End Report
- e. IR 004-2026: Initial 2026-27 Budget & Operations Plan Discussion

## 7. CAO Report

## 8. Committee Reports (Internal)

- a. Accessibility Advisory Committee
- b. Audit Committee
- c. Equity & Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
- d. RCMP Advisory Board
- e. Source Water Protection Advisory Committee

## 9. Committee Reports (External)

- a. Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition (AVTC)
- b. Valley Regional Services (VRS)
- c. Valley Community Fibre Network (VCFN)

## 10. Adjournment to In-Camera Meeting under *section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act.*

- a. Contract Negotiations

## 11. Adjournment of In-Camera Meeting

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**12. Regular Meeting Reconvened**

**13. Motions from In-Camera Meeting**

**14. Regular Meeting Adjourned**

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## Strategic Priorities At-A-Glance

**Fiscal Responsibility:** *Ensure organizational sustainability and deliver public services using sound financial decision-making, through:*

- 1) Asset Management: Collect accurate and timely data to make informed decisions that inspire trust and confidence.
- 2) Community Focus: Make Investments in public services reflective of community need.
- 3) Financial Planning and Management: Collect, administer, and manage funds in a transparent manner.

**Prosperous Economy:** *Foster a diverse and resilient local economy that supports entrepreneurship, innovation, sustainable development, and contributes to a vibrant community, through:*

- 1) Holistic Planning: Municipal Planning Strategy and development processes that enables investment, foster multiple and complimentary uses of property, and supports a growing population.
- 2) Partnerships: Foster partnerships that promote Wolfville and create value.
- 1) Placemaking for a Vibrant Community: Enhancing public spaces to support community connections.
- 2) Event Attraction: Positioning Wolfville as an inclusive, supportive partner for events

**Inclusive Community:** *Build a safe and inclusive community and be a leader in meaningful engagement, through:*

- 1) Inclusivity: Nurture a sense of belonging for all.
- 2) Engagement: Listen and provide opportunities for the community to participate.
- 3) Safety: Keep our community safe and supported with our partners.

**Sustainable Environment:** *Lead climate action through integrated mobility and environmental protection, through:*

- 1) Climate Action: Reduce emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change.
- 2) Environmental Protection: Protect and sustain our natural assets and biodiversity.
- 3) Mitigating emissions: Lead and influence through programs and education.
- 4) Integrated Mobility: Determine alternative options for moving around the Town for all ages and abilities.

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*Lead with care, creativity and purpose – honour our past, enrich our present, and shape a resilient future*

**REQUEST FOR DECISION 001-2026**

Title: Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Recognition

Date: 2026-01-13

Prepared by: Barb Shaw, Manager of Communications & Strategic Initiatives

Contributors: Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee

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## SUMMARY

### Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Recognition

Within Wolfville's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan, a commitment was made to explore a land acknowledgement as well as a recognition of African Nova Scotians.

The Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee, staff and members of Council worked to draft the presented land acknowledgement.

The Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee also recommended Council add a statement of recognition of the contributions of African Nova Scotians to be read after a moment of reflection following the land acknowledgement. A statement has also been drafted for this important recognition.

### DRAFT MOTION:

THAT COUNCIL ADOPT THE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO BE USED IN ACCORDANCE WITH TOWN POLICY #110-002 COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS POLICY.

AND FURTHER, THAT COUNCIL ADOPT THE STATEMENT RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN PEOPLE.

AND FURTHER, THAT THE STATEMENT RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN PEOPLE BE READ FOLLOWING A MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION THAT FOLLOWS THE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

## REQUEST FOR DECISION 001-2026

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### 1) CAO COMMENTS

CAO reviews all reports and submits comments in support of the report

### 2) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Policy 110-002 Council and Committee Proceedings

### 3) STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff are confident that the work done by committee and members of Council has delivered a recommendation that is in accordance with the spirit of the Equity and Anti-Racism Plan.

### 4) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

1. [Wolfville's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan](#)

### 5) DISCUSSION

Land acknowledgements are an important act of reconciliation, allowing for recognition of our colonial past and acting as a commitment to a shared path forward. This acknowledgement is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory we reside on, and also, a way of honouring Indigenous people who have been living on and caring for these lands since time immemorial.

While Wolfville has used land acknowledgements in Committee of the Whole and Council meetings, there was still some question regarding when, where and what should be said. Because of this, a land acknowledgement was included in Wolfville's first Equity and Anti-Racism Plan.

Since the Plan was adopted, The Council and Committee Proceedings Policy 110-002 was approved by Council. This policy maps when a land acknowledgement should be used, and that a consistent version should be spoken but, the content of the land acknowledgement was not determined.

The Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee shared and reviewed multiple versions of land acknowledgements that embodied meaning and feeling. Through dialogue and discussion, with support from members of Council, a draft version was written.

Wolfville's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan also called for consideration of a recognition of African Nova Scotians. This idea was firmly embraced by the Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee, who felt that it was important to regularly provide recognition of the 400 years of African Nova Scotian contributions.

## REQUEST FOR DECISION 001-2026

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Contributors: Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee

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While this statement of recognition is not a land acknowledgement, and is not part of a land acknowledgement, the time following a pause for silent reflection created by the land acknowledgement provides an important moment to share this recognition before returning to the business of Council or committee.

This statement of recognition shows continued recognition for the Black community, who have been marginalized, who continue to face barriers, and who continue to navigate anti-black racism in Nova Scotia.

## 6) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

## 7) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

- *Inclusive Community: Build a safe and inclusive community and be a leader in meaningful engagement, through:*
  - 1) *Inclusivity: Nurture a sense of belonging for all.*
  - 2) *Engagement: Listen and provide opportunities for the community to participate.*
  - 3) *Safety: Keep our community safe and supported with our partners.*

## 8) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

This work will be contained in the 2026 report-back to the Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee in accordance with the Equity and Anti-Racism Plan.

## 9) ALTERNATIVES

Council may provide direction to staff if they have additional requests.



## **Land Acknowledgement**

The Town of Wolfville acknowledges that we are located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

As a town committed to reconciliation and respectful governance, we ask that all who live, work, and gather here do so with the Seven Sacred Teachings in mind: Truth, Honesty, Love, Courage, Respect, Wisdom, and Humility.

These teachings guide us in building a community rooted in understanding, fairness, care for one another, and for the land.

Please pause for a moment of reflection - How can we be good guests on this land?

## **Recognition of historic contributions**

We also acknowledge the histories, contributions and legacies of the African Nova Scotian people who have shared these lands for over 400 years, and we acknowledge the shared ancestry of all people of African descent in Nova Scotia.

**REQUEST FOR DECISION 002-2026**

Title: Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan

Date: 2025-01-13

Prepared by: Mark Fredericks, Senior Planner

Contributors: Devin Lake, Director of Planning and Public Works



## SUMMARY

The Town of Wolfville has developed an Urban Forest Policy and a companion Work Plan (2026–2031) to guide the protection, maintenance and growth of Wolfville's urban forest. These documents aim to expand tree canopy cover, improve tree health, support biodiversity, and engage the community in urban forest stewardship and with regular tree planting events.

Approval of these documents will enable the Town to implement a structured approach to urban forest management, aligned with climate resilience and sustainability. Staff believe that they have covered the important issues with this work, and welcome Council's input on priorities, actions and direction of the Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan.

**DRAFT MOTION:**

That Council endorse staff sharing the draft Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan on Wolfville Blooms for a period of community consultation, with final versions of these documents to be brought back to Council for approval at a future meeting.

## REQUEST FOR DECISION 002-2026

Title: Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan

Date: 2025-01-13

Prepared by: Mark Fredericks, Senior Planner

Contributors: Devin Lake, Director of Planning and Public Works



### 1) CAO COMMENTS

The Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan represent a proactive approach to sustainability and climate resilience. These documents align with Council's strategic priorities and provide a clear roadmap for implementation, monitoring, and community engagement. The CAO supports the recommendation of staff.

### 2) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The *Municipal Government Act* provides authority for municipalities to regulate tree planting, maintenance, and protection. The Town's future Engineering Specifications document, Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw updates will also reference this Policy and Work Plan.

### 3) STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the attached Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan be shared for community consultation if it captures the priorities and intentions of Council in managing the urban forest appropriately.

### 4) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Urban Forest Policy
- Attachment 2 - Urban Forest Work Plan (2026 - 2031)

### 5) DISCUSSION

#### INVENTORY

Wolfville's urban forest is a valued community asset that provides ecological, social, and economic benefits. The urban forest is comprised of all trees located in Wolfville, which can range from an individual street tree to densely packed wooded parks and ravines. In 2023, the Town commissioned a tree inventory that recorded nearly 1,500 trees across municipal streets and certain parks, representing over 100 different tree species. This work was done with Peter Duinker and his consulting team (Sylveritas Ltd). The inventory revealed that Wolfville has high tree canopy cover in most residential areas but low coverage in the downtown core and Acadia's main campus.

The Urban Forest Policy sets objectives to maintain residential canopy cover and focuses on increasing tree canopy cover downtown and in all new developments, as well as parks and streets where suitable.

#### POLICY

## REQUEST FOR DECISION 002-2026

Title: Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan

Date: 2025-01-13

Prepared by: Mark Fredericks, Senior Planner

Contributors: Devin Lake, Director of Planning and Public Works



The policy is guided by climate resilience, equity and biodiversity/conservation. Intentionally prioritizing new trees in certain areas of Wolfville can help ensure that all residents benefit from the urban forest. The policy identifies longer term goals like woodland management, establishing a tree nursery and utilizing certain trees for their lumber. When appropriate, harvesting selected trees and milling them for timbers to be used as park signage, playgrounds or other trail infrastructure is considered. The policy also aims to improve woodland areas through species management, to support biodiversity and build more wildlife habitat. The policy emphasizes planting native trees and a willingness to consider near-native species as an adaptation approach to climate change. The policy also addresses the removal of invasive species and the importance of engaging the community through programs like tree giveaways, community tree planting opportunities, and educational workshops.

The objectives of the policy include:

1. **Tree Canopy Cover:** Maintain residential canopy and increase downtown coverage to 30% by 2050.
2. **Tree Health and Maintenance:** Annual inspections, pruning, and pest management (e.g., Hemlock Woolly Adelgid).
3. **Biodiversity and Conservation:** Plant only native and near-native species; remove invasive species like glossy buckthorn and Norway maple.
4. **Community Engagement:** Programs such as tree giveaways, Adopt-a-Tree, and educational workshops.
5. **Stormwater Management:** Integrate tree planting into infrastructure projects to reduce runoff.
6. **Integration with Regulations:** Update planning documents to require tree planting in new developments, specifications to protect existing trees during construction, and street design to provide more room for street trees.

## WORK PLAN

The purpose of the 5-year work plan is to outline Wolfville's main urban forest intentions from 2026 to 2031. These include tree planting events, invasive species management, monitoring systems, and street and park tree planting locations. It also includes initiatives like an Adopt-a-Tree program, treatment of hemlocks and new tree plantings in equity driven locations like Basin Drive Park.

## REQUEST FOR DECISION 002-2026

Title: Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan

Date: 2025-01-13

Prepared by: Mark Fredericks, Senior Planner

Contributors: Devin Lake, Director of Planning and Public Works



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The Work Plan operationalizes the Policy by setting annual milestones and specific actions. Staff have prepared a timeline with urban forest related work for the next five years, although these lists may grow or be adjusted, as needed.

For example, in 2026 the Work Plan identifies the following actions:

- *Integrate urban forest requirements into updated planning documents.*
- *Refine monitoring to accurately record digital data on new tree plantings, health/size, and any tree removals.*
- *Host Earth Day and National Tree Day planting events.*
- *Launch Adopt-a-Tree Program to involve residents in caring for street trees.*
- *Begin treatment of hemlocks in Rawding Ravine.*
- *Plant trees in priority locations: Kent Ave, Earnscliffe Ave, Basin Drive Park, West End Park, and downtown.*

The full 5-year work plan is attached to this report.

## 6) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Community consultation of these documents will have no financial implications. However, eventual implementation of the policy and work plan priorities will require annual budget allocations for tree planting, maintenance, and monitoring. Additional funding may be sought through grants such as the [Green Municipal Fund's urban forest program.](#)

Staff are preparing budget numbers for 2026/27 for Council's consideration through the budget process. Staff expect an annual budget ask of ~\$50,000 to make effective impact throughout the Town's parks, streets and public spaces. Community Volunteers, contracted services, and the Town's Parks/Public Works staff are all expected to participate in tree planting, which will help efficiently utilize any budget.

## 7) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

**Sustainable Environment** – managing the urban forest is an important aspect of building biodiversity and addressing invasive species. Trees are natural assets that improve air quality and capture carbon from the atmosphere, helping to address climate change and protect wildlife habitat.

**Inclusive Community** – The Urban Forest Policy intends to equitably distribute street trees and park trees, to provide the benefits to all residents of Wolfville.

## REQUEST FOR DECISION 002-2026

Title: Urban Forest Policy and Work Plan

Date: 2025-01-13

Prepared by: Mark Fredericks, Senior Planner

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**Prosperous Economy** – Trees can also contribute to the local economy by creating high value properties that are appealing places where people want to be. Adding more trees downtown can help reduce energy and infrastructure costs (through shading) and support tourism and local business by further enhancing Wolfville's public spaces and streetscapes.

## 8) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

Once approved the Policy and Work Plan will be communicated through the Town's website, social media, and public engagement events. Annual progress reports will also be shared with Council and the community.

## 9) ALTERNATIVES

Council may approve the draft motion or not. If Council does not approve the motion, feedback on specific areas for revision would be appreciated.



# Wolfville Urban Forest Policy – Pxx-00x

*Drafted by Mark Fredericks (Town of Wolfville) and Peter Duinker (Sylveritas Ltd.)*

| <b>Urban Forest Policy</b>           |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Policy Number:</b><br>XXX-XXX     | <b>Supersedes Policy Number:</b><br>Not Applicable |
| <b>Effective Date:</b><br>2026-XX-XX | <b>Approved by Council Motion Number:</b>          |



# 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Wolfville Urban Forest Policy is:

**To protect, enhance, and grow Wolfville's urban forest to promote a resilient, healthy, and biodiverse community for all native plant species.**

Planning for sustainable urban forest management, allows communities to:

- Prioritize new trees where they are needed most.
- Prepare for storms and pests that may impact the urban forest.
- Identify tree related issues that matter most to the community.
- Provide everyone with opportunities to enjoy public trees and green spaces.
- Improve neighborhoods and the downtown with more greenery and canopy cover.

# 2. Scope

The policy covers all trees within the boundary of the Town of Wolfville, with emphasis on those trees growing on municipal land including streets, parks and other public open spaces.

Most of the land in Wolfville is under private ownership. Managing the urban forest is a shared responsibility. The Town will manage trees on Municipal land such as parks, woodlands and public streets. On private land, trees are managed by property owners.

# 3. References

*Canadian Urban Forest Research Group. 2013. [In Support of Trees in the City: A Message for Municipal Councillors, Developers, and NGOs](#). CUFRG, School for Resource and Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada.*

*Duinker, P.N., C. Ordóñez, J.W.N. Steenberg, K.H. Miller, S.A. Toni, and S.A. Nitoslawski. 2015. [Trees in Canadian cities: indispensable life form for urban sustainability](#). Sustainability 7:7379-7396. doi:10.3390/su7067379*

*Duinker, P.N., K.E. Turner, and D.E. Foster. 2023. [Wolfville Street and Park Tree Inventory](#). Report to the Council, Town of Wolfville. Sylveritas Ltd., Halifax, NS.*



## 4. Definitions

**“Town”** means the Town of Wolfville

**“Council”** means the Council of the Town of Wolfville;

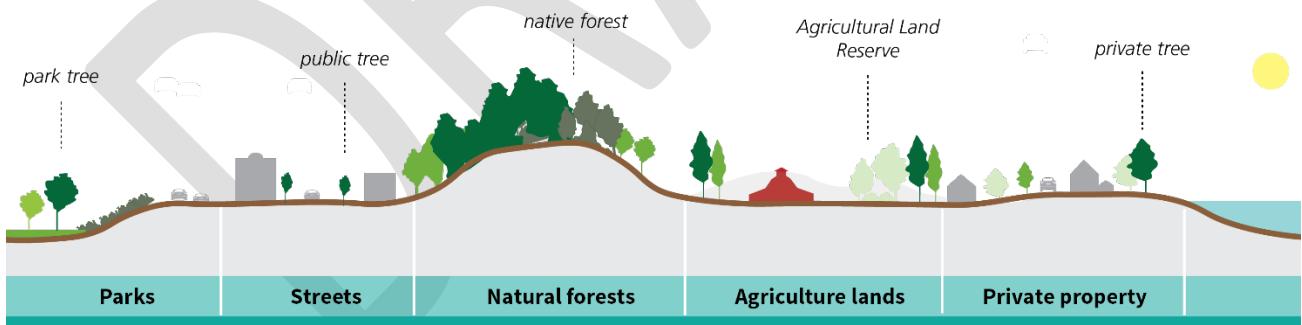
**“Urban Forest”** means all Trees, forests, green space and related abiotic, biotic and cultural components in and around cities and communities. It includes trees, forest cover and related components.

**“Native species”** means species that occur in Nova Scotia by nature, without any assistance from people.

**“Near-native species”** means tree species that are native to Northeastern North America but not to Nova Scotia.

**“Non-native species”** means species that do not naturally occur in Nova Scotia. If they are here, it usually means that people have brought them here, either intentionally or inadvertently.

**“Invasive species”** means non-native species that reproduce prolifically and dominate the ecosystems where they occur to such an extent as to harm the existence of native species.



## 5. Policy

### 5.1 Introduction and Background

#### What is the urban forest?

An urban forest is made up by all the trees found within a community, both private and public. Urban forests are complex and constantly evolving in their species mix, tree size and integration with the built environment. Managing urban trees sustainably requires a focus on the ecological, economic, and social benefits they offer, with particular emphasis on human health.

Trees in urban areas contribute to civic pride, quality of life, and well-being of residents and visitors. These trees also provide ecosystem services like building wildlife habitat, supporting local biodiversity and sequestering carbon. They also enhance air quality, increase energy efficiency through shading, deliver stormwater management benefits, and reduced noise pollution.

#### Jurisdictional Authority

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) provides authority to municipalities to enact by-laws and other provisions concerning the placement, maintenance and protection of trees within their boundaries. The Town has authority to regulate trees through the MGA.

The Town also has authority to regulate the types, location and numbers of trees planted for new development. The Town's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) are both being reviewed and updated in 2025/26. These planning documents will increase the required number of trees to be planted for new development. These documents will also reference this policy and associated work plan for urban forest related matters.

#### Implementation note

Implementation of this Urban Forest Policy will be supported by a work plan that establishes specific actions during 2026-2031. The Urban Forest Work Plan will outline the actions and the approach for reaching the goals and objectives of this Policy.



## 5.2 The Urban Forest - today

### Importance and benefits of urban forests

The Town of Wolfville faces an important balancing act in its urban development. As the Town continues to grow and evolve, the need for an urban forest policy becomes increasingly urgent. Without a proactive approach to managing and preserving its urban forest, Wolfville risks losing its unique abundance of trees and canopy cover. Wolfville's trees are threatened by certain development forms, climate change, and urbanization. If these trees are lost, a reduction in forested area and canopy cover can lead to decreased air quality, increased flood risk, and a loss of biodiversity. By establishing an urban forest policy, Wolfville can protect these natural assets, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and ensure a healthy, sustainable, and resilient forest community for generations. A forward-thinking urban forest policy is crucial to preserving Wolfville's character as a vibrant, tree-rich Town.

Urban forests can sequester carbon dioxide, reduce urban heat islands, and provide habitat for wildlife, while also enhancing community resilience and well-being. Street trees and urban woodlands can help improve air quality, reduce noise, offer opportunities for education and recreation, and increase residents' physical/mental health, property values, and quality of life (*for a comprehensive list of urban-forest benefits, see the papers by Canadian Urban Forest Research Group, 2013; and Duinker and others, 2015*). Well established trees and vegetation systems can also form part of a stormwater management system by reducing overland flow and minimizing damage from significant storm events.

Globally, we are dealing with consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss, with far-reaching impacts on ecosystems, human health, and the economy. Rising temperatures and extreme weather events are altering ecosystems, leading to biodiversity deficiencies. By acting locally, Wolfville can contribute to global solutions and create a resilient forest community. By prioritizing the preservation and expansion of our urban forest, Wolfville can help protect biodiversity and enhance the natural environment where residents interact most often.

### Status of Wolfville's Municipal Trees in 2023

To support the development of this Policy, the Town commissioned a [tree inventory](#) in 2023. It was undertaken by Sylveritas Ltd. and reported to Council in November of that year (*Duinker and others, 2023*). The findings of this inventory are summarized below.

#### Inventory of Planted Trees in Municipal Rights-of-way and Parks

The inventory contains the location and key characteristics of almost fifteen hundred trees of more than a hundred species; all planted in public parks, open spaces and streets. As is normal for most urban forests, a few species comprise most of the trees – the **four most abundant species are Norway maple, white ash, littleleaf linden, and red maple**. Most of the trees are relatively small



(i.e. under 50 cm diameter at breast height) but in good condition. One issue with the tree population is the high abundance of stems of species from other continents (these are called non-native species, some of which are invasive, including the Norway maple).

## Canopy Cover Analysis

The Town's residential areas have relatively high canopy cover, with the lowest neighbourhood possessing over 45% cover. The downtown area has a cover lower than 20%, and the main part of the Acadia campus has a cover of just over 25%. **This Policy aims to preserve the canopy cover in the residential neighbourhoods and increase that of the downtown, municipal parks, and the university campus.**

The Town's residential neighbourhoods benefit from relatively high canopy cover and given the enormous range of benefits to the residents from this canopy cover, the Town does not want to experience an erosion of the quantity, quality, and distribution of that canopy. For those benefits to continue, the trees forming the canopy must be kept in good health through maintenance. The canopy must also be populated predominantly by tree species that are native or near-native to Nova Scotia so that native biodiversity can be protected. Since the trees in Wolfville are on public and private lands, the Town commits to engaging its citizens in fulsome and diverse ways to ensure high canopy cover is maintained.

## Plantable Spots along Streets and in Parks

Using a rapid assessment approach, the theoretical number of spots where street trees could be planted was estimated as part of this inventory. That number was approximately 3200 trees along public streets. A realistic number may be lower than this, when we include underground and overhead infrastructure that could be impacted by newly planted street trees. Some streets have powerlines, or water/sewer/storm water infrastructure underground and placing trees in certain locations can limit future maintenance. Additional planting locations are found within many public parks and open spaces. There are plenty of opportunities for the Town to increase the streetside and park tree population.

The existing parks range from urban squares (e.g. Clock Park) to woodland areas (e.g. Reservoir Park, Rawding Ravine) and many of these spaces suffer from invasive species dominance. The areas most impacted by invasive species are recognized as additional opportunities for planting of native tree species, following the removal of the non-native invasive species.



## 5.3 Objectives

The goal of the Wolfville Urban-Forest Policy is:

***To protect, enhance, and grow Wolfville's urban forest to promote a resilient, healthy, and biodiverse community for all native species.***

This will be achieved by focusing on the following objectives:

### 1. Tree Canopy Cover

The Town will strive for no net loss of canopy cover in residential neighbourhoods and increase the canopy cover in the downtown business district to 30% by 2050, while also increasing the native tree population within municipal streets, parks and open spaces.

### 2. Tree Health and Maintenance

The Town will strive to maintain all public trees in good health and condition. Regular maintenance, including pruning, treating and other tree care will be done annually. Potential threats including diseased trees and pest infestations (e.g. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Emerald Ash Borer) will be removed, treated, or managed.

### 3. Biodiversity and Conservation

The Town will plant trees only of native and near-native species, thereby supporting native species biodiversity. The Town will actively remove problematic invasive species from public land where they pose the greatest risk. The Town will also work with and support volunteer/community groups to do the same invasive species management, provided a re-planting plan will utilize native tree species and understory plantings.

### 4. Community Engagement

The Town will engage its citizens in diverse activities related to trees on both public and private land including awareness and learning programs, tree give aways, hands-on participation in tree planting and maintenance. It will also explore a community tree/plant nursery concept to grow trees and other plants from seeds or seedlings.

### 5. Stormwater Management and Resilience

Recognizing that trees and other vegetation can aid in reducing stormwater flows, the Town will integrate tree plantings and other native plant species into all stormwater management plans and future infrastructure projects.



## 6. Integration with Planning and Development Regulations

The Town will amend and create planning documents that regulate tree-planting and maintenance requirements for new development.

DRAFT



## 5.4 Principles of Sustainable Urban-Forest Management

Principles are statements addressing key concepts that guide the setting of policy, creating plans, and implementing actions of an asset such as trees and the urban forest. The Town adopts the following principles to provide such guidance.

### Climate Change

**All decisions related to the Town's tree assets will be made with full consideration of the expectation that the Town will experience climatic change through the 21<sup>st</sup> century and perhaps beyond.**

The inevitability of a rapidly changing climate worldwide is broadly accepted and demands immediate attention if towns like Wolfville are to thrive through the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Urban forest managers must do their part to sequester and store more carbon from the atmosphere in trees. Despite efforts in this regard, the climate will still change because reducing that change requires global efforts in all sectors, particularly the energy sector. Of greater significance is the role of trees in managing changing weather conditions. For example, the shade provided by a tree during a heat wave, or the water holding capacity of a woodland during heavy rain events. Trees can make a community much more livable as the climate changes, but they can only do so if they remain alive and healthy.

### Equity

**All decisions related to the Town's tree assets will be made with full consideration of the right of all citizens to have equitable access to the full range of benefits available from the urban forest.**

In relation to health care, social and economic security, education, and much more, all humans must be considered as equals. Capturing benefits from municipally owned trees is not just for the well-to-do but should benefit all residents equally. Everyone has the right to share the benefits of public trees and participate in decisions about how the tree assets are distributed and managed throughout the Town's streets, parks, and open spaces.

### Biodiversity and Invasive Species Management

**All decisions related to the Town's tree assets will be made with full recognition of the value of conserving native biodiversity across all species and ecosystems as well as accounting for the biodiversity implications of a changing climate.**

As with carbon capture and storage in trees, every municipality needs to make its contribution to the conservation of biodiversity. The Town has no moral obligation to conserve wild species native



to other countries or continents, but it does for the species native to Nova Scotia and the Acadian / Wabanaki forest. Because of the control humans have over tree populations, and because trees provide habitat for such a wide range of other species, it benefits the Town to create favorable conditions for all native species that depend on trees. This means limiting new tree plantings to native and near-native species as well as taking action to discourage both the deliberate and inadvertent establishment of non-native species, particularly invasive ones.

Currently, species like Norway Maple, multiflora rose, Japanese knotweed, and buckthorn are commonly found in Wolfville. This policy will reference the current listing of the Nova Scotia Invasive Species Council when considering tree/plant removal in lieu of listing them in this document.

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## 5.5 Implementation

### Tree Canopy Cover

**Objective: The Town will strive for no net loss of canopy cover in residential neighbourhoods and increase the canopy cover in the downtown business district to 30% by 2050 while also increasing the native tree population within municipal parks and open spaces.**

Implementation: Despite its shortcomings as a quantitative indicator of urban forests, canopy cover gives a sense of the raw abundance of trees in an urban neighbourhood. The Town distinguishes several types of land use and land ownership when considering canopy cover: (a) municipal rights of way; (b) municipal parks; (c) other municipal properties; and (d) private residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional properties.

#### (a) Municipal Rights of Way

Within the public right-of-way (i.e. streets), The Town will:

1. Remove trees from municipal rights of way only if a tree is (a) dead, (b) irrevocably diseased or injured, (c) structurally unsound and therefore a safety hazard, or (d) represents a significant risk to surrounding biodiversity. When uncertain conditions exist, judgements by an arborist duly certified to render such assessments, shall be used.
2. Use the plantable spots inventory to set priorities on streets eligible for near-term increases in the number of trees through planting.
3. Protect all streetside trees during physical works in the rights of way (e.g., road recapitalization, sewer and water-supply work) to the standards outlined in the Engineering Specifications.
4. Plant trees only of native and near-native species using locally sourced, large potted stock if available.
5. Aim for a linear street-tree density of a minimum of 10 trees per 100 metres of street per side.
6. Require proponents of new developments, at their expense, to install new trees as per the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw and Engineering Specifications.
7. Plant trees in any one year at a rate exceeding by at least twenty, the number of trees removed in the previous year. (new trees each year = removals + 20 minimum)
8. Within the downtown, experiment with engineered soil environments such as open and closed bottom planter boxes, structural soil and soil cells installations to provide non-compacted soils for new planted trees to succeed and grow in this tough urban environment.
9. Within the downtown, consider closed bottom (movable) tree planters as a second stage nursery for small/medium trees to grow for several years until they become stunted by limited soil conditions, at which time they be transplant into a park or



streetscape. The planter box can then be re-used for a young tree in a new location as needed.

### **(b) Municipal Parks**

Within the municipal Parks, the Town will:

1. Naturalize open areas that are currently mowed and could be treed without disturbing the current and expected uses made of the areas.
2. Plant trees to provide comprehensive shade at all municipally owned playgrounds.
3. Remove invasive species and replace them with native trees and understory plantings.
4. Support volunteer groups to engage in native species planting and invasive species removal in Town Parks where appropriate.

### **(c) Other Municipal Properties**

On any other municipal property, the Town will:

1. Remove invasive species and increase and improve the health and diversity of the native tree populations. This process may include thinning or selective cutting of undesirable trees or plants to support the growth of healthy native stock.

### **(d) Private Properties**

Within private land ownership, the Town will:

1. Assist property owners to learn more about the Wolfville urban forest and the values it brings to the residents and visitors, as well as the means whereby they can become exemplary stewards of the trees on their properties.
2. Encourage property owners to conserve their native trees and to improve both the quantity and quality of these trees on their respective properties.
3. Consider ways of providing direct assistance to property owners keen to plant more trees, e.g., seedling giveaways, cost-sharing programs for saplings.
4. Work cooperatively with owners of large land parcels (e.g., Acadia University) to act toward improvement of their tree canopies, especially through creation of their own tree plans.
5. Review the Dutch Elm Disease program currently used in the Town on private lands.

## **Tree Health and Maintenance**

**Objective: the Town will strive to maintain all public trees in good health and condition.**

Implementation: The Town will:



1. Make a cursory condition assessment on all its planted trees each year. This can be done by Parks staff or other departments. Trees assessed as declining or in poor health will be assigned for detailed assessment by a qualified, certified arborist.
2. Prioritize saving failing trees if feasible. If this cannot be done, tree removal may take place.
3. Consider woodland management and silviculture approaches, including harvesting, pruning and thinning select trees from public woodlands, if this can build biodiversity and achieve a wider range of tree species. This approach will be utilized in locations with poor species mix or areas with one dominant species that is at risk due to pests like the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.
4. Consider milling of usable logs that are generated by tree removal of public tree(s).
5. Maintain thorough and comprehensive records on all removals of municipal planted trees.
6. Re-measure the municipal planted-tree population in summer of 2028 (thus, on a five-year cycle), again in 2033, and update the digital inventory asset database accordingly.

## Biodiversity Conservation

**Objective: The Town will plant trees only of native and near-native species, thereby supporting a rich range of tree-dependent biodiversity.**

### Implementation:

The Town will:

1. Source potted planting stock within the Maritimes if possible, choosing stock of known origin.
2. Choose only native and near-native species as defined in this Policy.
3. Aim for representation of all tree species native to Nova Scotia, thus enhancing public learning opportunities locally.
4. In the absence of legal requirements, strongly discourage local nurseries and garden centres from stocking plant materials of alien species, particularly those deemed invasive by the NS Invasive Species Council.
5. On municipal lands, work with partners to treat high-priority hemlock trees against hemlock woolly adelgid and ash trees against emerald ash borer. Consider similar treatments for future, as-yet unidentified invasive alien disease and insect pest species.

## Community Engagement

**Objective: The Town will engage its citizens in a range of activities related to trees on both public and private land including awareness and learning programs, information and input sessions, hands-on participation in tree planting and maintenance, and others.**



### **Implementation:**

The Town of Wolfville will:

1. Sponsor/lead the delivery of a variety of public programs associated with learning about and caring for trees.
2. Partner with local schools and Acadia University to develop programs of learning about trees in the Town.
3. Develop a range of engagement mechanisms for the Town's citizens to make their voices heard on all matters related to implementation of this Policy.
4. Work with and support volunteer/community groups to help the Town achieve the above goal and objectives.

## **Stormwater Management and Resilience**

**Objective: Recognizing that trees and other vegetation can aid in stormwater flow reduction, the Town will integrate tree cover into all stormwater management plans.**

### **Implementation:**

The Town will:

1. Require that trees be considered an integral component of any stormwater management plans extant or to be prepared for/by the Town.
2. Consider stormwater reduction potential, as influenced by tree species and location selection, when planting new trees on municipal property.

## **Integration with Planning and Development Regulations**

**Objective: Consistent with the above objectives, The Town will amend and create planning and engineering documents to regulate tree-planting requirements for various forms of development.**

### **Implementation:**

The Town will:

- Ensure that trees are a high priority in the design and execution of development plans within Town limits.
- Establish increased tree planting requirements for all new development.
- In the design and construction of new roadways, the land between curb and sidewalk (known as the median or tree lawn) will be 1.5 m-2.0 m wide where feasible and will be composed of uncompacted soil amenable to the growth of healthy trees.



- Ensure that new electrical distribution lines are not located directly above the tree lawn. When possible, align sidewalks with the side opposite any overhead power distribution lines.

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## 5.6 Responsibilities for Implementation

### **Responsibilities of Municipal departments in Urban Forest Management**

Effective management of the urban forest requires collaboration across various municipal departments. The following outlines the primary responsibilities of each department involved in the urban forest management.

#### **Planning and Public Works Department**

The Planning and Public Works Department is the lead for the urban forest policy and its implementation, and this department ensures that urban forest principles are integrated into zoning regulations and individual development projects.

The Planning and Public Works Department manages the infrastructure that interacts with the urban forest and is responsible for mitigating conflicts between trees and various forms of infrastructure.

- Participate in locating new street trees, ensuring they do not interfere with roads, sidewalks, utilities, or traffic signage.
- Review proposed developments to ensure that the urban forest goal and objectives are incorporated into new development and redevelopment projects.
- Identify hazard trees that pose a risk of falling due to disease or other damage
- Integrate urban forests into stormwater management systems to improve water retention, reduce runoff, and prevent erosion.
- Ensure trees do not obstruct visibility for drivers, cyclists, or pedestrians at intersections and along roadways.
- Ensure that infrastructure and construction projects consider the urban forest, making provisions for protection of existing street trees and planting new trees as a priority.
- Manage tree roots that may damage sidewalks, curbs, or underground utilities.
- Incorporate urban forestry as part of broader climate resilience strategies, focusing on reducing heat islands, enhancing air quality, and improving overall ecosystem services.
- Promote the importance of urban forests in achieving sustainability goals and advocate for community support for tree preservation and planting.
- Monitor the health of urban ecosystems and ensure that the urban forest contributes to biodiversity by selecting native and near-native species and managing invasive species.
- Provide educational programs that promote the ecological value of trees and forests, as well as volunteer opportunities for residents to participate in conservation efforts.



## **Parks and Public Works**

The Parks and Public Works staff are critical to implementing this urban forest policy. These team members are often the ones installing and caring for newly planted trees. These staff also manage, prune, and thin existing trees, and forested areas while keeping updated records of trees in poor condition, and other monitoring efforts.

- Oversee the planting, care, and maintenance of trees in public parks, streetscapes, and open spaces.
- Regularly assess trees for safety concerns, such as weak branches that could fall during storms or trees near power lines, sidewalks or other public places.
- Tree removal or pruning as needed or as identified by Parks staff or other departments
- Maintain the 2023 inventory of all trees planted and pruned, or removed from public spaces, including data on species, health, size, and location.
- Participate with public volunteer tree-planting events to engage residents in maintaining and expanding the urban forest.
- Work to ensure that the urban forest principles are incorporated into new park spaces and any restoration projects.
- Minimize forest fire risk by implementing fire risk reduction strategies for wooded parks.

## **4. Finance Department**

- The Finance Department is responsible for managing budgets and any outside funding streams for urban-forest-related initiatives.
- Allocate resources for tree planting, maintenance, and monitoring as part of the yearly budget.
- Assist with applications for external funding opportunities, such as grants or green infrastructure projects, that support urban forest initiatives.



## 5.7 Monitoring and Reporting

### Monitoring

Monitoring is an ongoing necessity with an urban forest. Complete and accurate records are required on all actions taken by the Town to implement the Policy. Additionally, periodic measurements are required on the state, health, and condition of all planted trees on municipal properties. Appropriate inventories are needed for all municipally owned woodlands. These inventories are intended to be completed in 2027. New trees planted on municipal property will be measured and the data entered into the planted-tree inventory database within the calendar year of planting. An updated inventory on all municipal planted trees will be undertaken no later than October 2028. Details of the monitoring program are specified in the **Urban Forest Work Plan 2026-2031**.

### Reporting

Reporting to Council on Work Plan implementation will take place annually, for the calendar year, no later than March of each year. Details are specified in the **Urban Forest Work Plan 2026-2031**.

An evaluation of this Policy will be reported to Council no later than March of 2031.

## 6. Review of Policy

The Town of Wolfville will review, potentially revise, and renew this Policy no later than April 2031 and on a 10-year cycle or as otherwise needed.





# Wolfville Urban Forest Work Plan

*Drafted by Mark Fredericks (Town of Wolfville) and Peter Duinker (Sylveritas Ltd.)*

*This document is a companion to the Town of Wolfville Urban Forest Policy.*

## Work Plan (2026 – 2031) Urban Forest Intentions

1. Policy Goal and objectives
2. Annual milestones and actions
3. Monitoring



The goal of the Wolfville Urban-Forest Policy is:

***To protect, enhance, and grow Wolfville's urban forest to promote a resilient, healthy, and biodiverse community for all native species.***

This will be achieved by focusing on the following objectives:

## 1. Tree Canopy Cover

The Town will strive for no net loss of canopy cover in residential neighbourhoods and increase the canopy cover in the downtown business district to 30% by 2050, while also increasing the native tree population within municipal streets, parks and open spaces.

## 2. Tree Health and Maintenance

The Town will strive to maintain all public trees in good health and condition. Regular maintenance, including pruning, treating and other tree care will be done annually. Potential threats including diseased trees and pest infestations (e.g. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Emerald Ash Borer) will be removed, treated, or managed.

## 3. Biodiversity and Conservation

The Town will plant trees only of native and near-native species, thereby supporting native species biodiversity. The Town will actively remove problematic invasive species from public land where they pose the greatest risk. The Town will also work with and support volunteer/community groups to do the same invasive species management, provided a re-planting plan will utilize native tree species and understory plantings.

## 4. Community Engagement

The Town will engage its citizens in diverse activities related to trees on both public and private land including awareness and learning programs, tree give aways, hands-on participation in tree planting and maintenance. It will also explore a community tree/plant nursery concept to grow trees and other plants from seeds or seedlings.

## 5. Stormwater Management and Resilience

Recognizing that trees and other vegetation can aid in reducing stormwater flows, the Town will integrate tree plantings and other native plant species into all stormwater management plans and future infrastructure projects.

## 6. Integration with Planning and Development Regulations

The Town will amend and create planning documents that regulate tree-planting and maintenance requirements for new development.



## Annual Milestones & Actions

### 2025: Foundation & Policy Development

- **Earth Day:** Co-host a tree planting day (April 26<sup>th</sup>) in a recently cleared section of Reservoir Park. This land was cleared of wind blown/storm damaged trees and opened a large area for new trees to be planted. Over 30 native trees were planted, including white pines, sugar maples, birch and willows.
- **Finalize Urban Forest Policy:** Collaborate with Sylveritas Ltd. to complete the policy draft, incorporating public feedback from walkabouts, stakeholder interviews and consultation with other municipal urban forest professionals.
- **Plant trees:** Utilize the allocated budget to plant native and near-native trees in the following locations:
  - Parking lot at 282 Main Street / Rec Hub
  - Willow Park where trees were removed due to poor health
  - Lower end of University Avenue
  - Main Street between Highland Avenue and University Avenue
- **Support Invasive Species Management:** Fund the ongoing volunteer work to remove glossy buckthorn, Norway maple, and multiflora rose in Reservoir Park and replant these areas with native tree species. *This funding may be contingent on a successful Green Municipal Fund grant application.*
  - Reservoir Park – ongoing volunteer project
  - Millennium trail near Sherwood Drive – ongoing volunteer project
  - Pollinator Garden on Harvest Moon Trail – ongoing volunteer project
- **Reporting to Council:** An update on Work Plan implementation will take place annually, for the calendar year, no later than March of each year.

### 2026: Planting & Community Engagement

- **Integrate into planning documents:** Ensure urban forest considerations are included and enhanced in the updated planning documents through the Housing Accelerator Fund program.
- **Refine Monitoring system:** Improve the monitoring and digital tree data including new tree plantings, tree removals, tree health and size conditions.
- **Earth Day:** Co-host a tree planting day in Reservoir Park or other public park to engage with members of the public tree planting opportunities and forest enhancements.
- **National Tree Day:** Host a tree planting event to celebrate Tree Day (September)
- **Trial an Adopt-a-Tree program:** run an outreach program to enable residents to self-select in caring for a street tree that the Town would locate in front of their home, within the road right-of-way in exchange for watering and care from the property owner.
- **Treat Hemlocks:** begin treatment of the Rawding Ravine hemlock trees to protect them from the invasive pest Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA).



- **Plant trees:** Utilize the allocated budget to plant native and near-native trees in the following locations:
  - Kent Ave – where sidewalk was replaced
  - Earnscliffe Ave – street reconstruction to include tree planting
  - Basin Drive Park
  - West End Park
  - Downtown trees – improve health and conditions for existing downtown trees including drilling aeration holes, adding permeable surfaces, and boxing trees that have exposed root issues.
  - Other locations as identified
  - Park trees as determined a priority
- **Develop Monitoring Systems:** Establish protocols for digital tracking and assessment of tree health, growth etc.
- **Reporting to Council:** An update on Work Plan implementation will take place annually, for the calendar year, no later than March of each year.

## 2027: Infrastructure Integration & Monitoring

- **Earth Day:** Co-host a tree planting day in Reservoir Park or other public park to engage with members of the public tree planting opportunities and forest enhancements.
- **National Tree Day:** Host a tree planting event to celebrate Tree Day (September)
- **Review Dutch Elm approach:** Review and revise the Town's approach to the Dutch Elm Disease currently applied to Elm trees on private lands.
- **Host Educational Workshops:** Conduct workshops on tree care, invasive species identification, native species identification and tree planting process and best practices.
- **Treat Hemlocks:** continue/complete treatment of the Rawding Ravine hemlock trees to protect them from the invasive pest Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA).
- **Inventory municipal woodlands:** Town-owned woodland inventory including Reservoir Park, Rawding Ravine and other woodlands owned by the Town.
- **Plant trees:** Utilize the allocated budget to plant native and near-native trees in the following locations:
  - Victoria Avenue, Gaspereau Ave, Maple Ave or other street reconstruction project as budgeted to include tree planting
  - Downtown trees – improve health and conditions for existing downtown trees including drilling aeration holes, adding permeable surfaces, and boxing trees that have exposed root issues.
  - Harvest Moon Trail – between Elm Ave and Harbourside Drive
  - Skyway Drive
  - Main Street
  - Other locations as identified
  - Park trees as determined a priority
- **Reporting to Council:** An update on Work Plan implementation will take place annually, for the calendar year, no later than March of each year.



## 2028: Education & Policy Refinement

- **Earth Day:** Co-host a tree planting day in Reservoir Park or other public park to engage with members of the public tree planting opportunities and forest enhancements.
- **National Tree Day:** Host a tree planting event to celebrate Tree Day (September)
- **Plant trees:** Utilize the allocated budget to plant native and near-native trees in the following locations:
  - Priority streets that are scheduled for street reconstruction as budgeted, to include tree planting
  - Other locations as identified
  - Park trees as determined a priority
- **Native Planting nursery:** Establish a Town-operated nursery or partner with a local tree nursery to establish a long-term supply of key native and near-native tree species to be planted in future years.
- **Inventory municipal playgrounds and mowed areas:** Town owned grassy areas that are mowed, to be identified and select spaces can be planned for conversion to a forested area requiring less maintenance over time.
- **Strengthen Partnerships:** Collaborate with local organizations, Acadia University, local schools, and businesses to enhance urban forest initiatives.
- **Reporting to Council:** An update on Work Plan implementation will take place annually, for the calendar year, no later than March of each year.

## 2029 - 2031: Evaluation & Renewal

- **Plant trees:** Utilize the existing budget to plant native and near-native trees in key locations including the
  - Priority streets that are scheduled for street reconstruction as budgeted, to include tree planting
  - Other locations as identified
  - Park trees as determined a priority
- **Review and Update Policy:** Assess the effectiveness of the Urban Forest Policy and make necessary adjustments based on monitoring data and community feedback. Open this work plan to discussion with Council, staff, and interested citizens, revise the plan as appropriate, and add additional year(s) of proposed activities.
- **Conduct Comprehensive Review:** Evaluate the success of the Urban Forest Policy in achieving its goals. include potential revisions to the Policy and recommitment by Council to the Policy
- **Report to Council and Community:** Share outcomes, lessons learned, and future directions with stakeholders.



## Contact Information

For more details, or to get involved:

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

Title: IR 001-2026 Accessibility Plan Update – To Dec. 31, 2025

Date: 2026-01-13

Prepared by: Barbara Shaw, Manager of Communications & Strategic Initiatives

Contributors:

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## SUMMARY

### Accessibility Plan Update to December 31, 2025

Wolfville's Accessibility Plan 2025 – 2028 is less than a year old, but progress on our commitments is measurable. This attached report provides an overview of accomplishments over the past year.

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*Lead with care, creativity and purpose – honour our past, enrich our present, and shape a resilient future*

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### 1) CAO COMMENTS

This report is for information purposes only. The CAO thanks and acknowledges staff, the Accessibility Committee and Council for their leadership in making Wolfville more accessible.

### 2) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

[Wolfville's Accessibility Plan 2025 – 2028](#)

[Accessibility Act, Nova Scotia](#)

### 3) DISCUSSION

This past year was a good example of taking intentional action on community concerns, such as sidewalk condition, and e-scooters, while also realizing the Council commitment of having an accessible washroom and change station built in Reservoir Park.

The attached report highlights our accomplishments over the past year in relation to action items listed in our third Accessibility Plan. This shows that the responsibility of identifying, removing and preventing barriers is being shared by all members of our organization, from Council to staff.

Staff wish to acknowledge the on-going contributions of the Accessibility Advisory Committee and their continued support of this important work.

### 4) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### 5) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

- ***Fiscal Responsibility:*** *Ensure organizational sustainability and deliver public services using sound financial decision-making, through:*
  - *Community Focus: Make Investments in public services reflective of community need*
- ***Prosperous Economy:*** *Foster a diverse and resilient local economy that supports entrepreneurship, innovation, sustainable development, and contributes to a vibrant community, through:*
  - *Placemaking for a Vibrant Community: Enhancing public spaces to support community connections.*
- ***Inclusive Community:*** *Build a safe and inclusive community and be a leader in meaningful engagement, through:*
  - *Inclusivity: Nurture a sense of belonging for all.*

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*Lead with care, creativity and purpose – honour our past, enrich our present, and shape a resilient future*

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- *Engagement: Listen and provide opportunities for the community to participate.*
- *Safety: Keep our community safe and supported with our partners.*
- ***Sustainable Environment:*** *Lead climate action through integrated mobility and environmental protection, through:*
  - *Integrated Mobility: Determine alternative options for moving around the Town for all ages and abilities.*

## 6) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

This report to Council fulfills our annual requirements.

## 7) FUTURE COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

Council are invited to recommend future areas of focus, through an accessibility lens.



## **Progress Reporting for the Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Wolfville's Accessibility Plan 2025 – 2028 is less than a year old but progress on our commitments is measurable. This report provides an overview of accomplishments over the past year. The contents of this report and any additional comment from the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be shared with Council before the end of March, 2026.

### **Built Environment**

#### **Sidewalks**

Throughout the Town, sidewalk condition remains a concern. In August 2025, Safesidewalks Canada worked on target areas that were identified in a 2024 assessment that identified 109 defects in 141 sidewalk panels that were considered as "vertical displacement" defects. Vertical displacement means how far a panel of sidewalk has moved up or down over time.

The majority of sidewalk panels that were repaired by grinding down uneven, potential trip hazards were in the main downtown core street(s), with secondary locations being other high traffic sidewalk segments near churches, senior centers, medical facilities, schools, parks, athletic facilities, post offices, etc.

In the year ahead, Safe Sidewalks Canada is returning to do 5 days of accessibility grinding. Pleasant and Skyway will also be a focus for sidewalk replacement with concrete being poured, as the asphalt sidewalk on these streets is in very poor condition.

Earnscliffe will be receiving new concrete sidewalk in conjunction with the full street rebuild scheduled for 2026.

The focus for 2027, pending approval from Council, will be replacing asphalt sidewalk with concrete on the east end of Main Street in hopes that this section of the street will be resurfaced with new curb in 2026.

## **Public Washroom Assessment**

A public washroom accessibility audit has been completed by Houdini Architects. Washrooms in Town Hall, the Recreation Centre, the public works building, the Wolfville Library and at RailTown were assessed. None of the washrooms met the current accessibility standards and steps for compliance were laid out in the report that was delivered in August 2025.

The Town is now working on a larger assessment of all Municipal facilities to help develop a plan for the future use of town buildings. The washroom assessment is being rolled into this project and will inform this work. The consultants working on the facilities review are using the current accessibility built standards as a minimum requirement for any renovations or new builds for the Town.

## **Reservoir Park Accessible Washroom and Change Station**

Our newest public washroom opened to the public in October. The new building in Reservoir Park offers a fully accessible washroom and the building also has a large covered patio area that will provide shade.

In the spring, the Town will work to source a Mobi-mat. A Mobi-mat is a portable, non-slip, roll-out access mat that creates a stable pathway over challenging surfaces, like sand or gravel, for people using wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, or beach carts. This will help improve access to those who would like access from the new change station and washroom to the water's edge.

The accessible washroom will be open year-round to ensure the park remains an inclusive and welcoming space for all people.

## **Automatic Door Opener at Recreation Centre**

The automatic door opener at the Recreation Centre was finally activated and made operational. Unfortunately, over the summer months, numerous incidents involving forced entry occurred in the space, resulting in vandalism and property damage. The door that was connected to the automatic opener was damaged and needs repair.

## **Upgrades to the downtown portion of the Harvest Moon Trail**

The section of Harvest Moon Trail that runs through Wolfville's downtown is being re-built to provide a safer, visually pleasing, linear parkway for those who wish to roll and stroll through Town. This re-build includes a new 3-metre-wide concrete parkway that will run from the West end of the Wolfville Farmers' Market to the intersection of Front and Harbourside Drive. The remaining greenspace will be cleaned-up, levelled and landscaped and the original railway tracks will be topped with crusher dust, to provide another surface for folks moving through Town.

Concrete, not asphalt, is being used along this popular section of the trail to provide more support to those who roll and stroll in alignment with the Town's commitment to use concrete over asphalt whenever possible.

The trail work happening beside the Wolfville Farmers' Market will include brush clearing. Seating and lighting will also be added as the project progresses.

Trail crossings at Elm and Harbourside will be better defined and well marked, increasing safety for both trail users and motorists. The sidewalk at Harbourside will also be connected to the existing sidewalk on Front Street.

The improvements in this corridor are intended to connect to the Main Street bike lanes, at the Recreation Hub, at 282 Main Street, at the East end of Waterfront Park. To the West, the trail will also re-connect with Main Street.

This new parkway will provide more space for people to safely share the trail and enjoy the Town's active transportation network, which is being built to support safer rolling and strolling throughout our community.

## Communications

Plain language, captioning of videos, and image descriptions on social media remain as our usual practices. Braille is now found on most Town business cards.

### **Council Chambers Audio/Video System**

After on-going complaints and concerns about guest experience when watching Council and committee meetings online or from chambers, the Town is now exploring a full replacement of our audio/video system. The system being considered by the Town is like what is used by the County of Kings.

## Employment

### **Human Resources Service Review**

The Town has been involved in a human resources service review that is being facilitated by Doane Grant Thornton. This process is being completed collaboratively with Kentville and Berwick and a joint approach to human resources management may be considered in the year ahead.

### **Wolfville endorses inclusive employment initiative**

In September, Council motioned support for a new inclusive employment initiative in Wolfville that L'Arche Homefires is working on with the purposeful group. This will position Wolfville as a model Inclusive Employment Community – a place where individuals of all abilities can thrive through meaningful employment. This model is built around the creation of local “carved employment” opportunities.

Carved employment is a supported employment strategy that creates tailored jobs for individuals, often those with disabilities, by analyzing existing jobs, identifying non-specialized or transferable tasks, and combining or modifying them to fit the specific skills and needs of a job seeker and the goals of an employer.

With carved employment opportunities, individuals who may currently lack choice and who may be excluded from community, have an opportunity to experience the benefits of meaningful work, social inclusion and personal growth.

The proposed program will provide employers with support to create and maintain real jobs within various work environments. Endorsement of this program will have the Town officially recognized as a supporter and authorize staff to provide feedback to program officials in an advisory capacity. The Town will also look into opportunities to participate in the program.

## Goods and Services

### **Electric Scooters**

E-Scooters returned to Wolfville in the spring and were even more popular than in the 2024 season. This year, staff worked with the program operator to ensure the scooters were returned to virtual corrals after use. These designated parking spots through the Town allowed for the e-scooters to be parked in a more deliberate way, with less impact to public walkways.

Helmet use was an on-going issue and a solution is being negotiated for next season, before the e-scooters are deployed in the Spring of 2026.

### **Bike Loan Program**

The Town's new recreation hub's equipment loan program offered bicycles, on loan, as an important part of Wolfville's active transportation development project. Wolfville's Active Transportation Network will see more than 10 kilometres of routes created throughout the community in the years ahead to support rolling and strolling.

Wolfville's new bicycle fleet features many electrified models plus a specialized e-trike with bench seating to ensure every member of our community will have an opportunity to get around Town on the new network, that is being developed for all ages and abilities of users.

Staff worked hard through the summer and fall to keep up with demand and the accessible trike was a hit with families who felt welcome and included in this unique recreational program.

### **Soups and Sides**

Soups and Sides is a barrier free community meal that runs for 30 weeks each year. While this program is named in the Town's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan, the welcoming and inclusive environment has allowed folks of all ages and abilities to enjoy this delicious form of community building.

With L'Arche core members attending the meal each week, volunteers worked to create a special "reserved" table that would welcome the L'Arche community, even when there was a big crowd already gathering. This allows core members to arrive on a more relaxed schedule and no one must struggle to find seating.

### **Transportation**

#### **Active Transportation Network**

The Town is continuing to build-out an active transportation network to support rolling and strolling through our community. Full details of the project and all the connecting pieces can be found on [WolfvilleBlooms.ca](http://WolfvilleBlooms.ca).

#### **Micro-Transit**

In the spring, staff visited Bridgewater and Yarmouth to learn everything about their Micro-Transit systems. With new information gathered, staff have requested an updated feasibility study from consultants to move this project closer to a pilot stage.

Seeing the accessible busses, chatting with bus riders, drivers and riding the bus routes helped to build staff's excitement for this project that will be designed to support all people who live, work, study and play in Wolfville.

An innovation challenge was also launched to ensure that the Town had fully engaged the campus community in the work happening at this stage of the project.

In November, staff, along with members of Council and our Accessibility Advisory Committee were excited to work with students through a Launch Box Innovation Challenge that focused on Micro-Transit.

Five student teams presented their micro-transit ideas on Nov. 20, and the quality of presentations exceeded expectations. Students focused on routes, ridership and accessibility. Many provided schedules, financial modelling, digital apps and websites.

The top two teams have been invited to present to Council in the new year, and their work will be shared with our consultants who are currently updating our micro-transit feasibility study.

**INFORMATION REPORT**

Title: IR 002-2026 Equity & Anti-Racism Plan Update to Dec. 31, 2025

Date: 2026-01-13

Prepared by: Barb Shaw, Mgr. Communications & Strategic Initiatives

Contributors:

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## SUMMARY

### Equity & Anti-Racism Plan Update to December 31, 2025

Wolfville's Equity & Anti-Racism Plan 2025 – 2028 set out a list of items that were to be actioned over the life of the plan. This attached report provides an overview of accomplishments over the past year.

## INFORMATION REPORT

Title: IR 002-2026 Equity & Anti-Racism Plan Update to Dec. 31, 2025

Date: 2026-01-13

Prepared by: Barb Shaw, Mgr. Communications & Strategic Initiatives

Contributors:



### 1) CAO COMMENTS

This report is for information purposes only. The CAO thanks and acknowledges staff, the Equity & Anti-Racism Committee, Committee and Council for their leadership in making Wolfville more accessible.

### 2) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

[Wolfville's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan](#)

[Dismantling Racism and Hate Act, 2022](#)

### 3) DISCUSSION

Thanks to the efforts of many, Wolfville is making progress on its first Equity and Anti-Racism Plan. Policy review and re-writing is underway with input from our advisory committee, staff, Council and members of the Council policy task force. We have had interest and input from Acadia students and Soups and Sides, which was written into the plan, has seen a remarkable increase in guests.

There will always be more work ahead but as we build our knowledge, awareness and comfort in tackling this messy, and emotionally challenging subject matter, all people who live, work, study and play in Wolfville will experience the benefits.

Staff wish to acknowledge the dedicated work of our first Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee. The knowledge these citizen members share, through passionate discussion, is making an impact. These committee meetings have created a space for exploration, learning and true community development.

### 4) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### 5) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

- ***Fiscal Responsibility:*** *Ensure organizational sustainability and deliver public services using sound financial decision-making, through:*
  - *Community Focus: Make Investments in public services reflective of community need*
- ***Inclusive Community:*** *Build a safe and inclusive community and be a leader in meaningful engagement, through:*
  - *Inclusivity: Nurture a sense of belonging for all.*
  - *Engagement: Listen and provide opportunities for the community to participate.*
  - *Safety: Keep our community safe and supported with our partners.*

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*Lead with care, creativity and purpose – honour our past, enrich our present, and shape a resilient future*

## INFORMATION REPORT

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## 6) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

This report to Council fulfills our annual requirements.

## 7) FUTURE COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

Council is invited to recommend future areas of focus.



## **Update to the Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee**

As outlined in [Wolfville's Equity and Anti-Racism Plan](#), that was adopted in March of 2025, staff must report to the committee on progress by December 31 of each year, and then to Council before March 31. In this report, you will find a brief description of what we have achieved since April 1, 2025.

**Policies to be reviewed, revised or drafted within the three years of the plan include:**

Policy 610-004 Street naming policy has been merged with 120-007 Municipal lands and facilities naming policy and are now known as the Municipal Asset Naming Policy. This has been developed and reviewed by Committee and referred to the Council Policy Task Force. This policy will be at Committee of the Whole on December 2.

Policy 710-003 Grants to organization and the Strategic partnerships program has been reviewed by staff and the CAO. This will be discussed at the Equity and Anti-Racism Committee in 2026.

Land acknowledgement (no current policy) and recognition of the contributions of Black Nova Scotians (no current policy) is before the Equity and Anti-Racism Committee on December 1.

Hate speech guidelines (no current policy) – This semester, students at Acadia University, studying with Dr. Cynthia Alexander, have spent time with the Town's first Equity and Anti-Racism Plan. In response to the work the Town is doing, and in support of it, students from disciplines and programs across campus will be presenting work they have developed with a focus on advancing cultural competency which promotes public safety and civic literacy through self-awareness, knowledge, and skills to bridge cultural divides, understand diverse perspectives, and foster more equitable, respectful community relationships.

The students' work will include some reflection on hate speech guidelines, which will come back to the Committee.

## **Vision Statement**

Council completed their strategic planning process and approved the following:

Wolfville is committed to the seven sacred teachings: truth, honesty, love, courage, respect, wisdom & humility. Those teachings shape our vision, mission, values and acts.

A vision statement describes a desired future state; it reflects what Wolfville aspires to become: **An inclusive and vibrant community where natural beauty, heritage, innovation, and well-being bloom.**

A mission statement is a declaration of the Town's purpose and approach to serve the community: **Lead with care, creativity, and purpose – honour our past, enrich our present, and shape a resilient future.**

Values are deeply held beliefs and ideals that guide the Town's actions, decisions, and interactions: **Accessibility, Collaboration, Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, Informed Decision-Making, Innovation, Safety, Stewardship and Trust.**

You can review the [strategic plan by clicking here.](#)

## **Soups and Sides**

Soups and Sides has been busy this season with just under 1,500 guests in our first 10 weeks. We continue to be supported by student volunteers and Community Development students successfully ran our “sides” over four weeks. Staff are grateful to our campus champions who continue to promote the weekly community meal. Extra soup is also being provided to the ASU Food cupboard.

## **Restorative Communities Project – now called CIRCLES-NS**

Staff from the Town have been participating in some of the preliminary work of the CIRCLES-NS Living Lab that is part of our restorative community project. Acadia is also involved in this work.

## **Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #57**

On September 29 the Town offered two blanket exercise sessions with the support of Santelle's Healing Circles. This has increased awareness of staff and Council and has provided increased awareness of the history of Indigenous experiences in Canada.

## **Non-Market Housing Strategy**

This piece of work is wrapping up and will be presented to Council in early 2026 as part of the final deliverables for the Housing Accelerator Fund project that Wolfville has been engaged with.

## **Community events and programming**

Translations - The Town funded a special screening of Shelley Thompson's docuseries, "Translations," that was made available to the community in the spring of 2025. Every seat in the Al Whittle was filled and extra guests stood to watch the screening.

Period Positivity Workshops - In this Town-funded workshop we are re-storying menstruation and the female body for pre-teens. Topics like menstruation, ovulation and female reproductive anatomy are normalized explicitly as vital body functions that are not only a part of living a healthy life but help keep you healthy. Together we explore why and how that is.

Indigenous Film Mawiomi – A week of indigenous films was screened at Acadia at the end of September, in partnership with the Town and the University. The films were free to community members and well attended.

## INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026

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## SUMMARY

### 2026-27 Budget Process and Preliminary Information

The purpose of the following Information Report (IR) is to provide Council with information on the 2026-27 Operations Plan and Budget planning processes. Focus on financial metrics, budget pressures, timelines, expected revenues, and planned capital priorities are the goal for the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Committee of the Whole (COW).

At COW, staff shall provide Council with solid foundational information as to the financial health, tax roll information, financial indicators, and relevant budget and operational planning requirements for the upcoming fiscal year. The budget process approach has been created to prepare Council for the demands on Town services and future fiscal management. In addition, staff have developed a planning calendar (presented below) to enable Council and residents to have a clear understanding of planning timelines and the importance of maintaining and achieving budget milestones to ensure the budget's final adoption, expected in early April 2026. From January through March, Council shall be afforded the opportunity to review, discuss, set decision criteria and priorities that best align with operational and strategic goals as decided by Council.

Below is a draft copy of the **Operating Plan and Budget Process Timeline**:

- November 12** Preliminary Capital Investment Plan Discussion
- December 2** Quarterly Ops Plan Update
- December 18** 2025/26 Q2 Budget Update to Audit Committee
- December 23** Submissions of draft Project Charters to CAO
- January 6** SLT Review of draft Project Charters
- January 8** Submission of budget templates to Director of Corporate Services
- January 13** Regular COW (Agenda: Budget Process & Operational Plan Preliminary Discussion)
- January 20** SLT Review of draft Operations Plan
- January 27** SLT Review of draft Budget
- February 3** Regular COW (Agenda: Review of draft Operations Plan)
- February 24** Special Budget COW (Agenda: Review of draft Budget)
- March 3** Regular COW (Agenda: Second Review of draft Operations Plan)
- March 24** Special Budget COW (Agenda: Second Review of draft Budget)
- April 2** Special Council (Agenda: Final Budget Approval)

**Key discussion topics in this IR include:**

- I. Operations Planning Process

## INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026

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- II. Budget Processes
- III. Year-to-date Financial Information (completed Q2)
- IV. Financial Condition Indicators (FCIs)
- V. 2025 Tax Roll Changes & Estimated Revenues for Draft 2026-27 Budget
- VI. Draft 2026-27 Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

As expressed at the onset of any budget process, all items will not be finalized in the first draft of the budget. It is important to draw upon many participants and consider new and developing factors prior to completing a budget. Council is the principal driver in developing each iteration of the budget. This preliminary stage of the budget process is meant to brainstorm and allow for an exchange of needs and wants. No financial information presented has been finalized. This includes the capital investment plan presented in the latter part of the presentation.

**Also Important to Note: No formal motion of COW/Council is required at this stage.**

Staff shall be seeking consensus from members of Council on overall budget goals as we move towards future COW meetings relating to the Operational Plan and 2026-27 Budget.

While all feedback is welcome, please give specific consideration to the following questions:

- Are there specific initiatives from the Strategic Plan Council would like to have considered in the 2026-27 Ops Plan?
- As it relates to current service offerings, does Council wish to consider an increase in service levels? If so, in what service area?
- Does Council wish to consider a decrease in service levels? If so, in what service area?
- Does Council wish to consider expenditure cuts? If yes, in what areas?
- Does Council wish to consider holding, increasing, or reducing either the commercial or residential tax rates?

## INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026

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### 1) CAO COMMENTS

This report and ensuing discussion are Council's first opportunity to participate in the 2026-27 operations and budget planning process. It builds on previous discussions related to strategic and capital planning. It is intended to provide a grounding in our planning context and process, and an opportunity to discuss the key strategic / high-level outcomes Council would like to pursue in 2026/27.

### 2) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

- IR 003-2026 Second Quarter Financial Update for 2025-26
- 2026 Assessment Roll Data
- Financial Condition Indicators (FCI) data issued by Province of Nova Scotia for 2023-24
- [Town of Wolfville Strategic Plan, 2025-2029](#)
- [Town of Wolfville Operations Plan, 2025-2026](#)
- [Wolfville Municipal Planning Strategy](#)
- [Wolfville Accessibility Plan, 2025-2028](#)
- [Wolfville Equity and Anti-Racism Plan, 2025](#)

### 3) DISCUSSION

#### I. Operations Planning Process

The format of the Ops Plan is proposed to remain the same as the 2025/26 version, with the following changes:

- Narrative sections (introduction, town operations, program & service delivery, etc...) will be updated as appropriate.
- Highlights of and a link to the Town of Wolfville Strategic Plan, 2025-2029, will replace the references to the 2024-2028 plan.
- Financial sections will be updated to the current year, or latest year for which information is available.
- Project summary tables will be updated to reflect the current year. Staff are assessing options to further improve these tables to provide accurate and descriptive information, communicate both one-time and ongoing initiatives, connect work to strategic documents (Strategic Plan, Municipal Planning Strategy, Accessibility Plan, etc...) and improve effective reporting.

When the Committee receives the first draft of the Ops Plan on February 3, it is intended to include for consideration, initiatives that:

- Reflect both one-time projects and ongoing initiatives,
- Carry forward work that began in 2025/26 and will continue in 2026/27,

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- Council deferred during 2025/26 for consideration in 2026/27,
- Activate priorities identified in the Town of Wolfville Strategic Plan, 2025-2029,
- Activate operational priorities.

Additionally, the 2026/27 Ops Plan will aim to incorporate the following learnings from the 2025/26 Ops Plan:

- A significant amount of “everyday” core operational work is not captured in the Ops Plan. Thought will be put into how that is captured and communicated.
- The Town is putting a greater emphasis on relational approach to its work, which takes a greater investment of time and effort.
- Unforeseen events (Ex: unplanned staff vacancies, emergency events, decisions by key partners, changes in provincial policy, etc...) are inevitable and require time and attention.
- Working with partners can create value but introduces risk, as they are subject to the same inevitable unforeseen events as the Town.
- Care must be taken to ensure staff are not overextended by taking on too many concurrent projects.
- The local government environment is becoming increasingly brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible (BANI), which must be considered in the context of our budget and operations planning.

## II. Budget Processes

Over the following eight to ten weeks, Council will participate in multiple Operations Plan and Budget Discussions. The first budget-related discussion was held in November when the Committee provided preliminary feedback on the proposed capital plan. Today, the Committee will focus primarily on current financial results, year-end forecasting, financial condition indicators and other analytics, historical practices. The Committee will also see an updated version of the draft capital investment plan based on the November discussion.

Following this COW meeting, there will be four (4) additional COW meetings, which will tie in the budget working papers and the operational plan, with the expectation of a final budget presentation on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Staff is seeking an open discussion of preliminary considerations for operational requirements, service levels, and tax rates. Each year it is the desired outcome to plan for enhanced service levels, with no increase tax rates. In theory, this premise cannot always be fulfilled due to the volatility of environmental factors and unpredictable demands on supply chain and servicers. Therefore, it is not always reasonable to principally focus on tax rates without full consideration of future service and capital needs within a focused timeframe.

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Staff are looking for general direction from Council on the desired approach for staff in developing the detailed budget (to be presented in February). Definitive answers are not required at this stage, as the budget process envelopes, more data shall become available to allow for better informed decisions. Staff plan to have the majority of all budget data available for the February Special Committee of the Whole when a complete and detailed budget package is to be presented to Council.

### III. Year-to-date Financial Information (completed Q2):

In this section, summarized financial information for quarter two is presented. A more detailed financial and variance package was provided in the information report, IR 003-2026 Q2 Financial Update, and presented to the Audit Committee on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025. December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, results are still being tabulated and once finalized shall be presented to the Audit Committee in early February.

**Town of Wolfville**  
**Financial Results for the Period Ended September 30, 2025**

|                       | Actual<br>Sep. 30, 2025 | Budget<br>Sep. 30, 2025 | Variance<br>over/(under) | Forecast<br>Mar. 31, 2026 | Budget<br>Mar. 31, 2026 | Variance<br>over/(under) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Revenues              | 13,257,685              | 13,308,726              | (51,041)                 | 16,784,955                | 16,398,511              | 386,444                  |
| Expenditures          | 6,916,990               | 7,309,269               | (392,279)                | 15,463,143                | 16,390,012              | (926,869)                |
| Net Surplus (Deficit) | 6,340,695               | 5,999,457               | 341,238                  | \$ 1,321,812              | \$ 8,499                | \$ 1,313,313             |

#### Key Revenue Highlights for Q2:

Total revenues forecasted at this time amount to \$16.78 million, over budget by \$386,444. Key revenue highlights include:

- Taxes and Grants in Lieu of Taxes
  - Though this is forecasted to be over budget by March 31<sup>st</sup>, it is primarily related to increases in assessment values, as well as adjustments on one large commercial account from Property Valuation Services (PVSC).
  - We are not seeing the same value in Deed Transfer Taxes as previous years, with it forecasted to come just barely above the budgeted amount. This will need to be something we carefully consider in our upcoming budget discussions.
- Provincial & Federal Grants
  - The Town was fortunate to qualify for two Provincial grants that were unbudgeted in 2025-26. The HR Assessments Grant and a Rec Programming Grant.
  - We are in a position to pull more revenue from the Housing Accelerator Fund to match the expenses for 2025-26.

#### Key Expense Highlights for Q2:

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Total expenses forecasted at this time amount to \$15.46 million, coming in \$926,869 under budget. The favorable variance was driven by:

- Salaries, Wages, & Benefits
  - Forecasted to be under budget by \$633,251 due largely to deferred hiring and unplanned staffing changes.
  - Not included in this figure is unused vacation or any overtime that will be accrued to continue maintaining the service and program levels for the remainder of 2025-26.
- Repairs and Maintenance
  - Costs here are forecasted to be \$19,337 over budget at March 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - This has resulted from contracted service providers have less availability, and Town employees taking on more of the work.
- Contracted Services
  - Costs here are forecasted to be \$131,795 under budget at March 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - Connected to repairs and maintenance, some of these savings are due to the Town taking on more of the work internally when contracted service providers have been unavailable.
  - Further savings come from the RCMP annual contract being budgeted at the 2024-25 rates, when the 2025-26 contract is approximately \$50,000 less quarterly.

### Net Surplus

After accounting for capital projects and reserve allocations, the net surplus forecast stands at \$1.32 million. In summary, the quarter ending September 30, 2025, shows a strong financial position, with revenues exceeding expectations and expenses well-controlled. The Town is on track to have a net surplus at year-end. The positive variances in revenue categories and prudent management of expenses reflect well on the financial health and operational efficiency of the Town.

### Water Utility

The Water Utility's financial results for the period ending September 30, 2024, reflect a forecasted operating surplus of \$409,866, \$347,466 greater than budgeted.

#### Key Revenue Highlights for Q2:

Total revenues are forecasted to amount to \$1.62 million, slightly less than the budgeted \$1.66 million. Key revenue highlights include:

- Metered Sales

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- We are seeing lower than expected consumption, resulting in a forecast of \$40,340 less than the budget.
- Job Cost Billings
  - Currently exceeding budget by \$26,000.

### Key Expense Highlights for Q2:

Expenses are forecasted to amount to \$1.21 million, which is \$392,987 below budget. Key variances include:

- Salary, Wages, & Benefits
  - March 31<sup>st</sup> is forecasted to be \$226,252 under budget.
- Vehicle Repairs & Maintenance
  - March 31<sup>st</sup> is forecasted to be \$80,828 over budget.
  - This is related to utility employees taking on more work than budgeted due to third-party contractor availability.
- Contracted Services
  - March 31<sup>st</sup> is forecasted to be \$141,668 under budget.
  - This is related to third-party contractor availability and utility staff taking on more of the work than budgeted.

### IV. Financial Condition Indicators (FCIs)

In December 2025, the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing released Wolfville's draft 2023-24 financial indicators report (please see below chart). Once again Wolfville shows strong financial health, reporting medium risk in only one indicator, improved from two indicators in the prior reporting year. All other indicators show low risk and significant positive variances from threshold values.

The moderate risk indicator is **Residential Tax Effort**, which relies heavily on taxable assessment values, and how the growth our municipality compares to the forty-eight other Nova Scotia municipalities. This indicator measures total residential tax revenue per dwelling unit as a percentage of median household income.

$$\frac{\text{Total residential tax revenue per dwelling unit}}{\text{Median household income}} = \text{Residential Tax Effort}$$

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Staff note that in future years, projected capital expenditures could shift debt service ratios into moderate or high-risk categories should the Town not budget sufficient capital reserves and funding that can sustain long-term capital needs.

| Risk Indicator Legend       | Financial Condition Indicators<br>Years 2019-20 through 2024-25 |         |         |         |         |                   |
|-----------------------------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------|
|                             | Per PNS Publication   |         |         |         |         | FIR<br>Submission |
|                             | 2019-20   | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |                   |
| Reliance on Gov't Transfers | 2.0%  | 3.9%    | 3.3%    | 2.4%    | 1.3%    | 4.3%              |
| Uncollected Taxes           | 7.0%  | 7.0%    | 6.1%    | 8.1%    | 3.5%    | 5.4%              |
| 3 Yr Change in Tax Base     | 4.6%  | 6.9%    | 9.6%    | 9.4%    | 21.1%   | 31.3%             |
| Reliance on Single Business | 0.6%  | 0.6%    | 0.6%    | 0.6%    | 0.5%    | 0.5%              |
| Residential Tax Effort      | 4.3%  | 4.5%    | 4.1%    | 4.3%    | 4.9%    | 5.3%              |
| # of deficits               | -   | -       | -       | -       | -       | -                 |
| Liquidity Ratio             | 3.6%  | 2.7%    | 2.6%    | 2.5%    | 2.1%    | 1.9%              |
| Operating Reserves          | 25.1%   | 30.0%   | 25.8%   | 21.3%   | 22.1%   | 26.3%             |
| Combined Reserves           | 46.7%   | 53.3%   | 51.5%   | 55.4%   | 62.1%   | 71.4%             |
| Debt Servicing Ratio        | 7.3%  | 7.4%    | 7.6%    | 7.8%    | 7.0%    | 6.6%              |
| Outstanding Operating Debt  | 0.0%  | 0.0%    | 0.0%    | 7.6%    | 6.8%    | 6.0%              |
| Undepreciated Assets        | 58.3%   | 59.1%   | 57.1%   | 56.9%   | 56.1%   | 54.6%             |

### V. 2025 Tax Roll Changes & Estimated Revenues for Draft 2025-26 Budget

#### Assessment Changes 2025-26 to 2026-27

The Assessment Roll is provided by Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC). On an annual basis, PVSC delivers an assessment roll for forty-nine municipalities, over 650,000 assessment notices, and bases their property assessment valuations from internationally accepted valuation methodologies (sales, income, and cost methodologies). PVSC administers the Capped Assessment (CAP) on behalf of the Nova Scotia Government and administers all appeals.

**Notice of assessments were distributed to property owners on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026, for the 2026 tax year.**

In 2025-26, property taxes comprised 74.4% of the Town's total revenues, and as such is pivotal in determining the Town's revenue and subsequent expense capacity. The chart below summarizes the taxable assessment changes for 2026-27. As indicated, residential assessment accounts have increased

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by 8.33%, commercial accounts have increased by 4.28% and resource has decreased by 29.79% from 2025-26.

The Capped Assessed Program (CAP) rate for 2026 is 2.6%. In 2025, over 81% of all residential properties in Wolfville were in the CAP.

**2026-27 General Operating Budget  
Taxable Assessment Change**

| <b>Total Assessment</b>       | <b>2026-27</b>     | <b>2025-26</b>     | <b>Change</b>     | <b>% Change</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Residential Taxable @ Market  | \$ 317,089,600     | \$ 290,076,500     | \$ 27,013,100     | 9.31%           |
| Residential Taxable @ CAP     | \$ 368,152,400     | \$ 342,469,200     | \$ 25,683,200     | 7.50%           |
| <br>Total Taxable Residential | <br>\$ 685,242,000 | <br>\$ 632,545,700 | <br>\$ 52,696,300 | <br>8.33%       |
| Taxable Commercial            | \$ 45,945,300      | \$ 44,060,100      | \$ 1,885,200      | 4.28%           |
| Taxable Resource              | \$ 587,700         | \$ 837,100         | \$ (249,400)      | -29.79%         |

**Points to Highlight:**

- The increase in commercial assessment is largely due to the change in treatment of the assessment on vacant commercial lots.
- In the resource category, we had three parcels of land move from resource to residential, resulting in a decrease in our resource assessment.

Using 2025 tax rates, the Town should expect to see the following increase in tax revenue in the 2026-27 year:

|             | <b>Tax Rate</b> | <b>2026 Assessment</b> | <b>2026 Revenue</b> |  |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
|             |                 | <b>Change</b>          | <b>Increase</b>     |  |
| Residential | 1.4655          | \$ 52,696,300          | \$ 772,264          |  |
| Commercial  | 3.5655          | \$ 1,885,200           | \$ 67,217           |  |
| Resource    | 1.4655          | \$ (249,400)           | \$ (3,655)          |  |
|             |                 |                        | <b>\$ 835,826</b>   |  |

**VI. Draft 2026-27 Capital Investment Plan (CIP)**

**INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026**

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Author: Diana Gibson, Director of Corporate Services  
Glenn Horne, Chief Administrative Officer  
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Following our Special COW for Capital Budget in November, staff have compiled the following draft Capital Investment Plan for 2026-27. These projects will continue to be fine-tuned and reviewed over the coming weeks before the final budget presentation to Council in late March.

**2026-27 Capital Investment Summary**

| Project Description                     | 2026-27        | Notes            |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| <b>IT</b>                               | <b>101,306</b> |                  |
| Hardware                                | 46,306         |                  |
| Plotter Scanner                         | 25,000         |                  |
| iPhone Replacements                     | 30,000         |                  |
| <b>Municipal Buildings</b>              | <b>425,000</b> | Awaiting Pricing |
| Town Hall                               |                |                  |
| Salt Shed Renovation & Garage/Bay Doors | 300,000        |                  |
| Storage Shed at Robie Tufts/Oven        | 15,000         |                  |
| Bus Shelters/Covered Bike               | 60,000         |                  |
| New Parking Lot                         | 50,000         |                  |
| <b>Fire Services</b>                    | <b>30,000</b>  |                  |
| Misc. Fire Equipment                    | 30,000         |                  |

**INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026**

Title: Initial 2026-27 Budget & Ops Plan Discussion  
Date: 2025-01-13  
Author: Diana Gibson, Director of Corporate Services  
Glenn Horne, Chief Administrative Officer  
Contributors: Senior Leadership Team

**2026-27 Capital Investment Summary, continued**

| <b>Public Works Fleet</b>                       | <b>1,205,000</b> |
|---|------------------|
| Gas Powered Post Pounder                        | 3,000            |
| Jump Jack (Tamper/Rammer)                       | 4,000            |
| #39 - 2015 JD Mower x730 Replacement            | 18,000           |
| Robot Mower Pilot                               | 20,000           |
| #40 - 2015 JD Tracker 2015 with Cab Replacement | 45,000           |
| John Deere 105 R Tractor                        | 50,000           |
| #22 - F150 2x4 Replacement                      | 60,000           |
| #19 - 2017 2/4 Ton Crew Cab Replacement         | 90,000           |
| #21 - 2015 3/4 Ton 4x4 with Dump Body           | 140,000          |
| MultiHog - Street Sweeper & Vacuum              | 250,000          |
| Caterpillar Loader - 938 Wheel Loader           | 510,000          |
| Truck Hoist for #32 - 2017 F250 3/4 Ton 4x4     | 15,000           |
| <b>Roads Infrastructure</b>                     | <b>5,452,000</b> |
| Crosswalk, Intersection & Active Transportation | 800,000          |
| Earnsliffe Ave. Main St to EKM (340m)           | 2,400,000        |
| East Main Street Rehabilitation                 | 1,300,000        |
| West Main Sidewalks                             | 130,000          |
| University Avenue Resurfacing                   | 102,000          |
| Victoria Avenue Resurfacing, Curb               | 300,000          |
| Victoria Avenue Sidewalk                        | 70,000           |
| Street Design/Investment Readiness              | 350,000          |
| <b>Stormwater Management</b>                    | <b>800,000</b>   |
| Allowance for Design & Project Delivery         | 800,000          |
| <b>Sewer</b>                                    | <b>732,500</b>   |
| Lift Stations - Assessments & Upgrades          | 150,000          |
| Lift Stations - SCADA Upgrades                  | 65,000           |
| UV Bulb Replacement                             | 50,000           |
| Barge/Boat for Lagoons                          | Awaiting Pricing |
| New Service Laterals                            | 20,000           |
| Wolfville Sewer System Rehabilitation           | 447,500          |

## INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026

Title: Initial 2026-27 Budget & Ops Plan Discussion  
Date: 2025-01-13  
Author: Diana Gibson, Director of Corporate Services  
Glenn Horne, Chief Administrative Officer  
Contributors: Senior Leadership Team



### 2026-27 Capital Investment Summary, continued

| <b>Water</b>                                      |  | <b>2,330,300</b>  |
|---|--|-------------------|
| Water Treatment Process & Monitoring Equipment    |  | 40,000            |
| Distribution - Earnscliffe Main to EKM            |  | 447,500           |
| Remote Meter System                               |  | 30,000            |
| Meter Replacement Program                         |  | 20,000            |
| Security Upgrades at Reservoir                    |  | 30,000            |
| Well 1 & 2 Compenet & Infrastructure Intregration |  | 45,000            |
| Production Well 3                                 |  | 1,717,800         |
| <b>Parks</b>                                      |  | <b>645,000</b>    |
| Waterfront Park                                   |  | 80,000            |
| Old Burying Ground                                |  | 50,000            |
| West End Parkland                                 |  | 200,000           |
| Floating Dock @ Waterfront                        |  | 20,000            |
| Reservoir Park - Beach, Landscape, Seating        |  | 30,000            |
| Nature Trust - Monitoring & Project Development   |  | 50,000            |
| Basinview Park                                    |  | 100,000           |
| Woodman Park                                      |  | 10,000            |
| Olsen Park - Pathway, Signage                     |  | 40,000            |
| Urban Forest Initiatives                          |  | 50,000            |
| Rec Hub - Wash Pad & Repairs                      |  | 15,000            |
| <b>Recreation</b>                                 |  | -                 |
| <b>Total 2026-27 Capital Investment</b>           |  | <b>11,721,106</b> |

During budget deliberations, staff will provide Council with a five (5) year Capital Investment Plan for review. This plan will include funding information, as well as more details on the projects.

## 4) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At the time of this report, there are no financial implications to be considered. Staff will bring forward all suggestions and recommendations as we proceed into the budget deliberations over the next several weeks.

## 5) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

As outlined above, both the budget and ops plan aim to activate multiple strategic documents and report.

## INFORMATION REPORT 004-2026

Title: Initial 2026-27 Budget & Ops Plan Discussion  
Date: 2025-01-13  
Author: Diana Gibson, Director of Corporate Services  
Glenn Horne, Chief Administrative Officer  
Contributors: Senior Leadership Team

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## 6) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to Committee of the Whole meetings that are open to the public, Wolfville Blooms will continue to host all budget and ops plan documents and timeline, allowing community members to participate at their convenience. A Soups & Sides Listening Session is also scheduled for January 26 at 5pm at the Wolfville Farmers Market. Many of the specific initiatives authorized by the budget and ops plan will include their own communications or engagement plans.

## 7) FUTURE COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

Council will play a critical role throughout the budget process with ultimate decision-making authority. It is intended that the operational plan and budget process follow the timeline presented in the IR Summary on page 1 of this document.

**No formal motion of COW or Council is required or sought at this stage.**

Staff are seeking consensus from Council on 2026-27 budget goals and priorities, and for Council to consider the following key questions:

- The first draft of the Ops Plan will include staff understanding of Council's priorities for 2026-27.  
**Are there specific initiatives from the Strategic Plan Council would like to have included in the 2026-27 Ops Plan?**
- As it relates to current service offerings, does Council wish to consider an increase in service levels? If so, in what service area?
  - Does Council wish to consider a decrease in service levels? If so, in what service area?
- Does Council wish to consider expenditure cuts? If yes, in what areas?
- Does Council wish to consider holding, increasing, or reducing either the commercial or residential tax rates?

Important to note again, staff and Council are striving to have an approved budget by April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026. Ensuring this deadline can be met provides the catalyst for staff to commence the new fiscal year with authorization on key projects already set, allowing for continuity of partnership funding, service levels, and early queuing of tendered projects, which improves the Town's chances of timely execution competitive bidding with contractors.



# Municipal Report



**Town of Wolfville**

**Department of Municipal Affairs**

Municipal Profile and  
Financial Condition Indicators Results  
2023-24



## Table of Contents

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| <b>Introduction</b> .....                                    | Page 1  |
| <br>   |         |
| <b>Chapter 1</b>   |         |
| Municipal Profile .....                                      | Page 2  |
| About the Municipality .....                                 | Page 3  |
| Population Highlights .....                                  | Page 4  |
| Population Trends .....                                      | Page 5  |
| Population Comparison .....                                  | Page 6  |
| Age Group Comparison .....                                   | Page 7  |
| Population Outlook.....                                      | Page 8  |
| Economic Indicators .....                                    | Page 9  |
| <br>   |         |
| <b>Chapter 2</b>   |         |
| Assessment Information .....                                 | Page 10 |
| <br>   |         |
| <b>Chapter 3</b>   |         |
| Financial Information .....                                  | Page 11 |
| Financial Highlights .....                                   | Page 12 |
| Consolidated Revenue .....                                   | Page 13 |
| General Operating Revenue .....                              | Page 14 |
| Consolidated Expenses .....                                  | Page 15 |
| General Operating Expenses .....                             | Page 16 |
| Comparison to Provincial Average .....                       | Page 17 |
| Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) .....                          | Page 18 |
| Debt .....   | Page 19 |
| <br>   |         |
| <b>Chapter 4</b>   |         |
| Financial Condition Indicators: House Model .....            | Page 20 |
| Overall Assessment .....                                     | Page 21 |
| Financial Condition Indicators: Highlights & House .....     | Page 22 |
| Two-Year Comparison of Financial Condition Indicators .....  | Page 23 |
| Base FCI: Reliance on a Single Business or Institution ..... | Page 24 |
| Base FCI: Three-Year Change in Tax Base .....                | Page 25 |
| Base FCI: Residential Tax Effort .....                       | Page 26 |
| Structure FCI: Uncollected Taxes .....                       | Page 27 |
| Structure FCI: Operating Reserve .....                       | Page 28 |
| Structure FCI: Debt Service .....                            | Page 29 |
| Structure FCI: Outstanding Operating Debt .....              | Page 30 |
| Structure FCI: Undepreciated Assets .....                    | Page 31 |
| Roof FCI: Reliance on Government Transfers .....             | Page 32 |
| Roof FCI: Number of Deficits in the last 5 Years .....       | Page 33 |
| Roof FCI: Liquidity .....                                    | Page 34 |
| Roof FCI: Combined Reserves .....                            | Page 35 |
| <br>   |         |
| <b>Appendix I - Additional Resources</b> .....               | Page 36 |
| <b>Appendix II - Municipal Website</b> .....                 | Page 36 |
| <b>Contact Municipal Affairs</b> .....                       | Page 36 |

## Introduction

The Department of Municipal Affairs compiles municipal indicators on behalf of the Nova Scotia Government and the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) that focus on three areas:

- financial matters;
- administration of the municipality; and
- characteristics of the community.

This report creates a snapshot from those financial and demographic statistics to help community members and decision makers better understand:

- the municipality in which they live;
- the municipality's key characteristics; and
- the municipality's financial risks.

For example, the snapshot makes it easy to:

- compare the Three-Year Change in Tax Base indicator to understand the municipality's revenue growth in comparison to cost of living; and
- use the change in population to indicate whether a community's population is growing or declining and its potential impact on municipal revenues and expenses.



## Chapter 1 - Municipal Profile

Municipalities are diverse and operate within unique demographic and economic characteristics. These characteristics have a significant impact on municipal performance and subsequent strategies required to ensure a sustainable environment. This chapter outlines the unique demographic and economic characteristics of the Municipality, specifically its composition, population trends, demographics, median household income levels, employment rates, and educational attainment. The municipal profile trends could have impacts on the current and potential future tax base for a municipality.



## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### About the Municipality

Located in: Kings County

Approximate size: 6 km<sup>2</sup>

Number of dwellings\*: 3,048

Government: 7 Elected councillors (including the Mayor)

**Nova Scotia Town of Wolfville**



*Figure 1 - Location of Municipality*

\*Number of Dwellings Data Source: 2023 Property Valuation Services Corporation filed roll

## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### Population Highlights

|                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Municipal Population 2021 Census:  | 5,057  |
| Percent of Provincial population:  | 0.53%  |
| Municipal Population 5-year trend: | 20.55% |
| County's 5-year trend:             | 6.59%  |

Since the last census in 2016, **862** more people live in the Municipality

### Population Change from 2016 to 2021

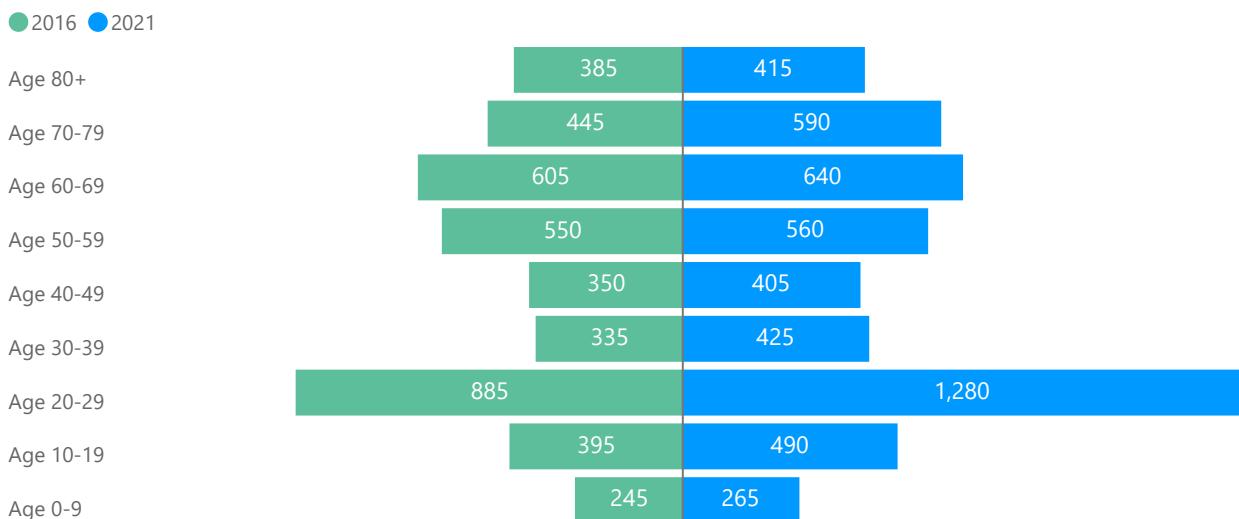


Figure 2 - Population Change from 2016 to 2021 (rounded to nearest five). Source: Statistics Canada

## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### Population Trends

20-year trend: Growing (supported by Figure 3 below)

Highest Age Bracket: 20-29 years of age (supported by Figure 4 below)

### Population Trend from 2001 to 2021

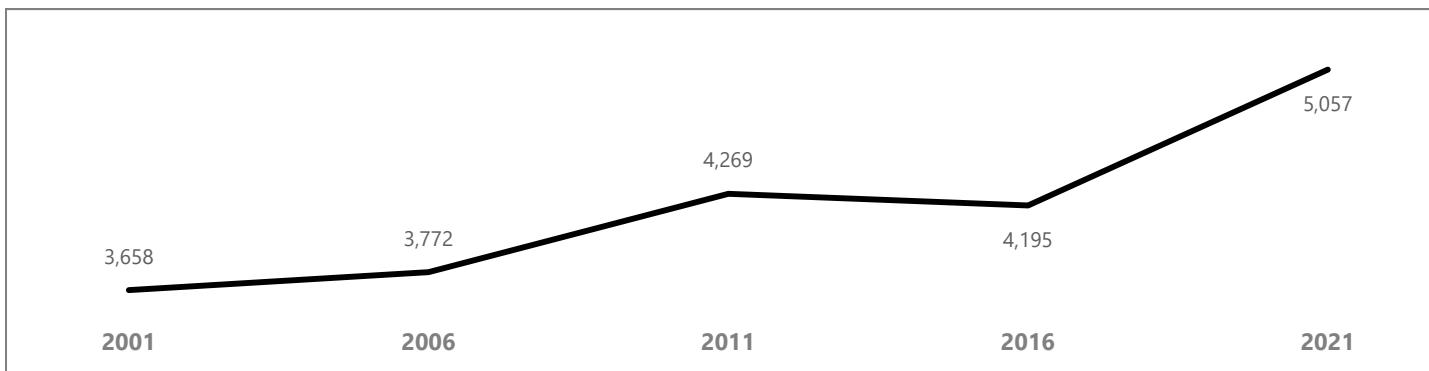


Figure 3 - Population from 2001-2021. Source: Statistics Canada

### Population Change from 2016 to 2021

Year ● 2016 ● 2021

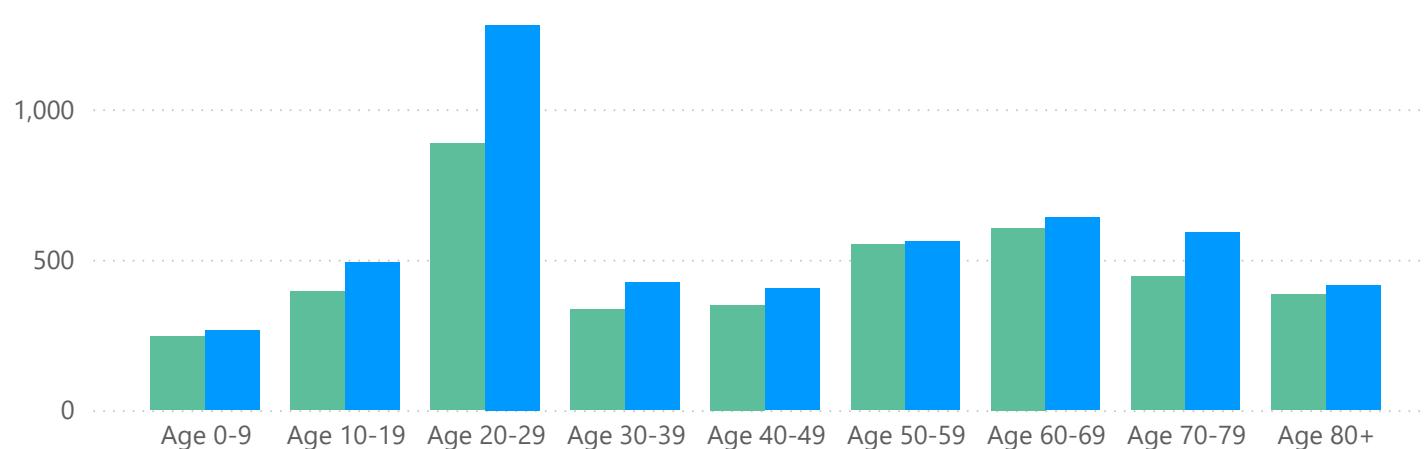


Figure 4 - Population by Age Group from 2016 to 2021. Source: Statistics Canada

## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### Population Comparison

#### Comparison of the Town of Wolfville vs. the Town Average

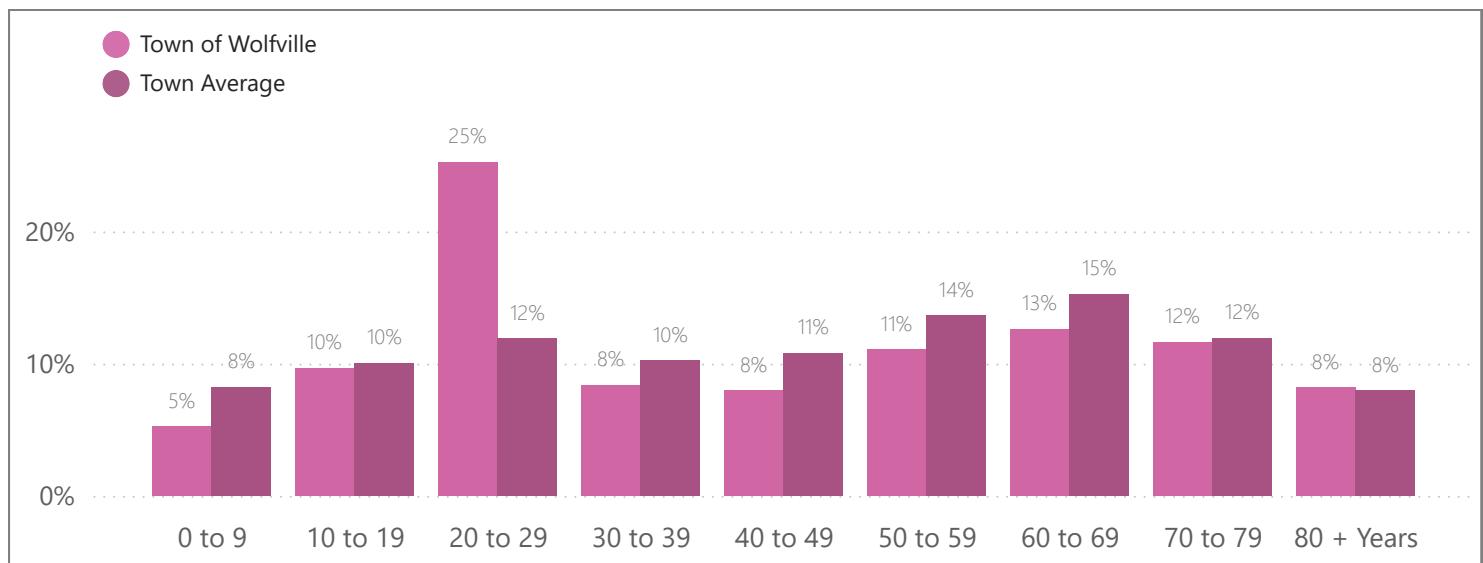


Figure 5 - Population by Age Group. Source: Statistics Canada

#### Comparison of the Town of Wolfville vs. the Provincial Average

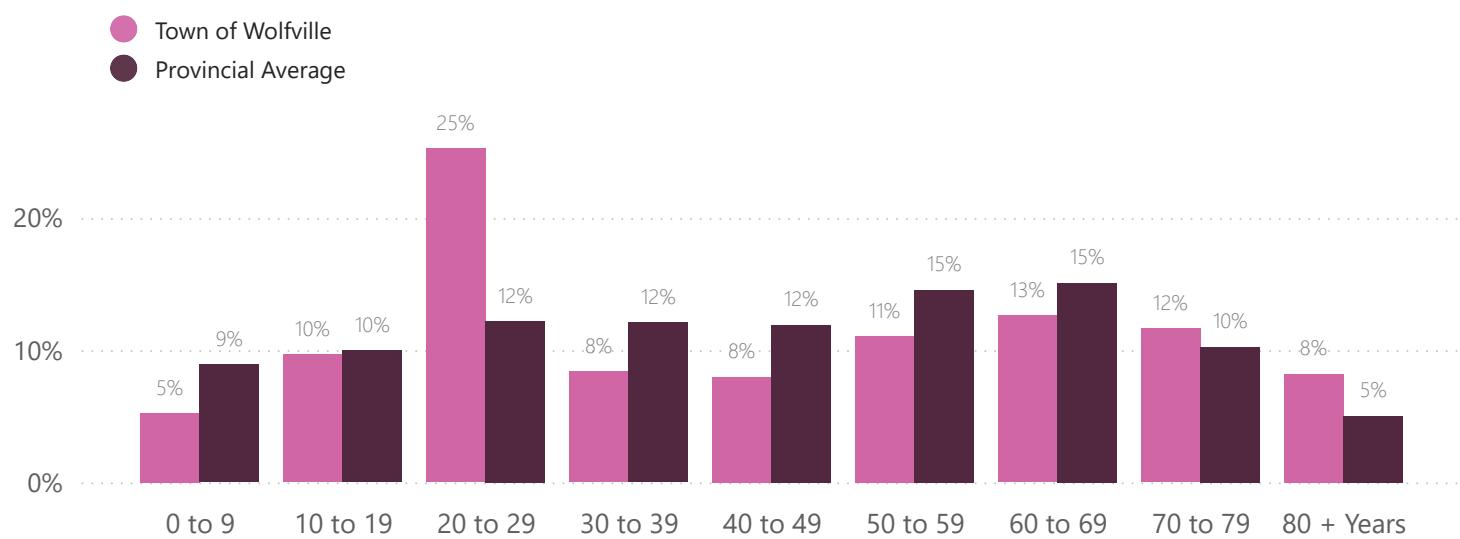


Figure 6 - Population by Age Group. Source: Statistics Canada

## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### Age Group Comparison

#### Population Age Groups

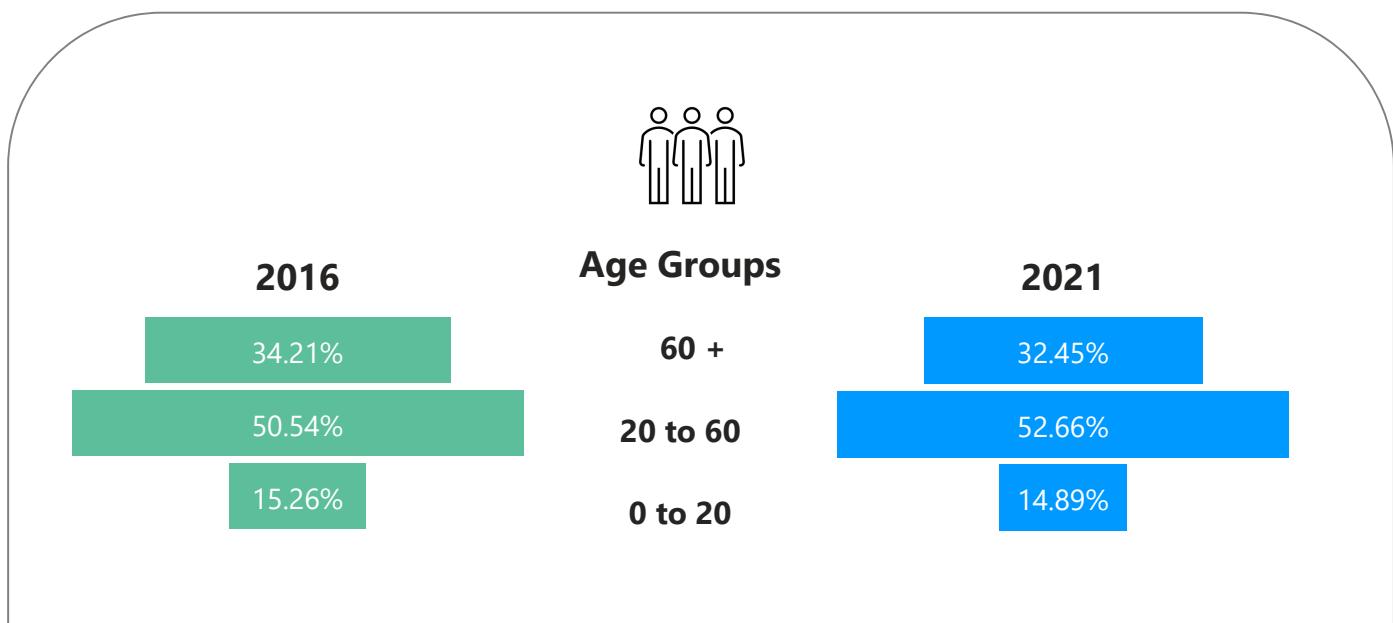


Figure 7 - Population by Age Group 2016 vs 2021. Source: Statistics Canada

#### Generational Groups

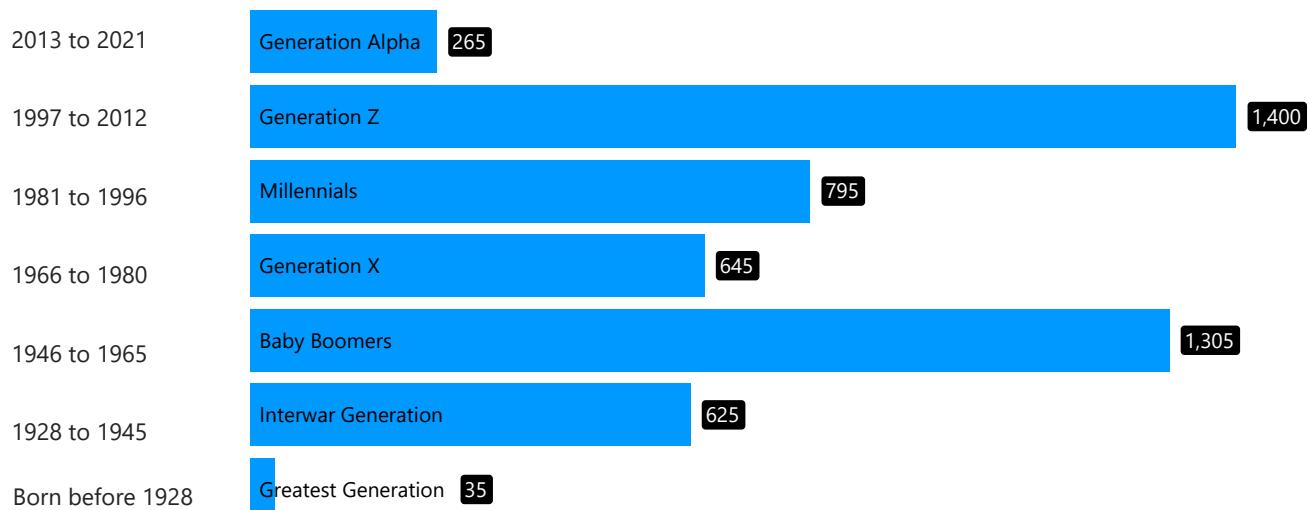


Figure 8 - Population by Generation for 2021 (rounded to nearest five). Source: Statistics Canada

## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### Population Outlook

#### Population Trend 2001 to 2021 (Actuals) and 2022 to 2024 (Estimates) Town of Wolfville

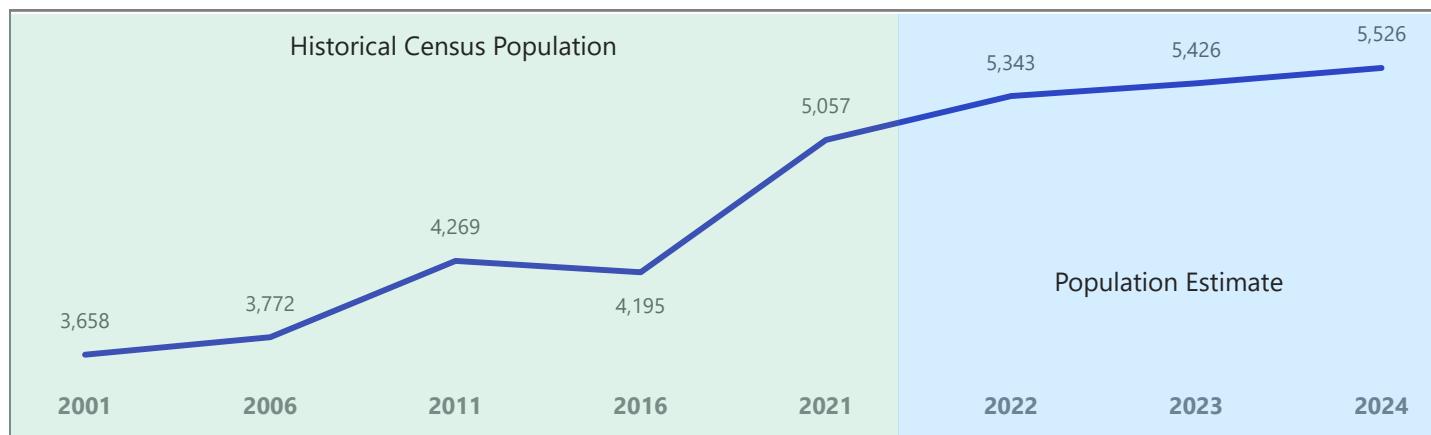


Figure 9 - Historical population from 2001 to 2021 is based on census data. Population estimates for 2022 to 2024 are based on the projections released January 16, 2025. Source: Statistics Canada

#### Population Trend 2001 to 2021 (Actuals) and 2022 to 2024 (Estimates) Nova Scotia

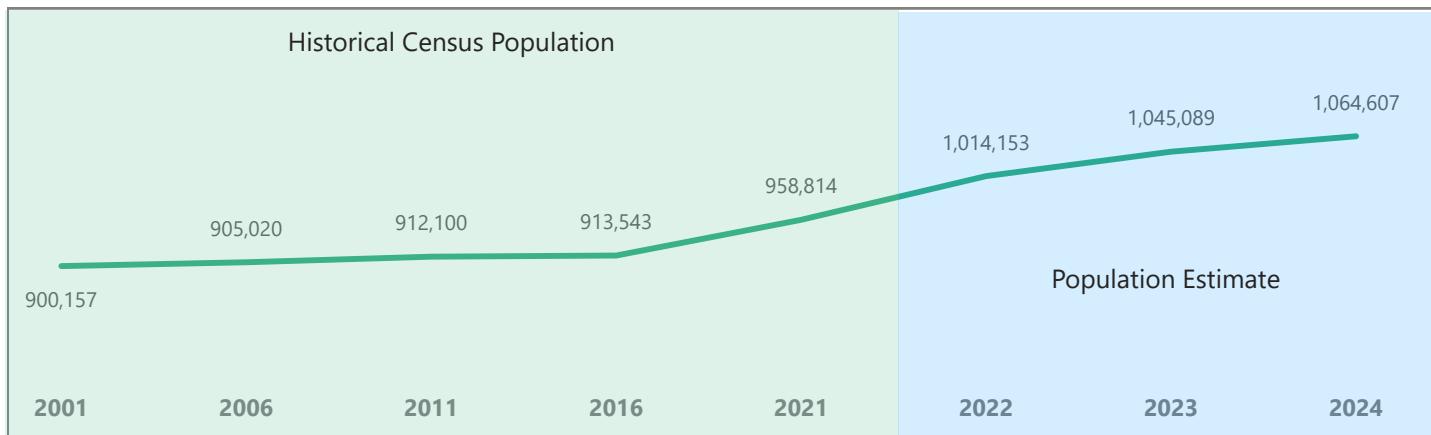


Figure 10 - Historical population from 2001 to 2021 is based on census data. Population estimates for 2022 to 2024 are based on the projections released January 16, 2025. Source: Statistics Canada

## Municipal Profile - Highlights

### Economic Indicators

Along with population trends, employment rates and median household income are important economic indicators. Education levels can also play a crucial role in economic and social progress and can help improve income distribution. These factors provide an indication of the wellbeing of the economy and labour force.

|                          | 2016<br>Census  | 2021<br>Census  | +/-            | Provincial<br>Average |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Median household Income: | <b>\$53,362</b> | <b>\$58,400</b> | <b>\$5,038</b> | <b>\$61,724</b>       |
| Employment rate:         | <b>46.6%</b>    | <b>47.4%</b>    | <b>0.8%</b>    | <b>46.2%</b>          |
| Education level:         | <b>65.7%</b>    | <b>61.2%</b>    | <b>-4.5%</b>   | <b>50.5%</b>          |

Figure 11 - 2021 Census; Source: Statistics Canada

Median household Income: Town of Wolfville median household income increased since 2016.

Employment rate: The employment rate at the Town of Wolfville increased since 2016.

Education level: The education level at the Town of Wolfville decreased since 2016.

## Chapter 2 - Assessment Information

Since property taxes are a primary source of revenue for most municipalities, special emphasis has been placed on reviewing assessment trends. For more information about the following financial indicators, please refer to Chapter 4 - Financial Condition Indicators.

Three-year change in

Tax Base (Uniform Assessment<sup>1</sup>):

21.1% Growth is keeping pace with the cost of living

Reliance on a Single Business or Institution: 0.5% Not dependent (Low Risk)

Residential Tax Effort:

4.9% Limited flexibility (Moderate Risk)

The line graphs below show the five-year trend of residential and commercial portion of the municipality's taxable assessment.

### Residential and Resource Taxable Assessment Trend



Figure 12 - Residential taxable assessment over the last five years. Source: 2019-20 to 2023-24 Statement of Estimates - Assessment

### Commercial Taxable Assessment Trend

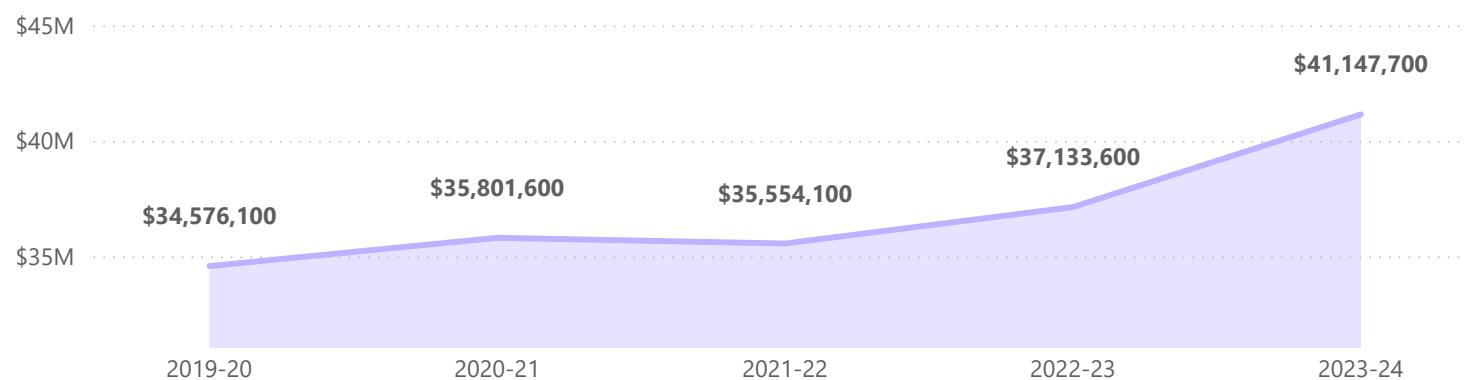


Figure 13 - Commercial taxable assessment over the last five years. Source: 2019-20 to 2023-24 Statement of Estimates - Assessment

<sup>1</sup> Uniform assessment is the value of a municipality's taxable property assessment plus the capitalized value of payments in lieu of taxes.

## Chapter 3 - Financial Information

### General Overview

Audited financial statements are presented on a consolidated basis. These consolidated financial statements present all municipal entities as one single reporting entity:

- all the individual funds managed by the Municipality
- organizations or enterprises that the Municipality owns or controls, such as:
  - N/A

The Municipality's non-consolidated financial statements present the individual funds managed by the Municipality, such as the General Operating Fund, General Capital Fund, Non-operating Reserve Fund, Operating Reserve Fund and, if applicable, Water Operating Fund, Water Capital Fund, Water Reserve Fund, Electric Operating Fund, Electric Capital Fund, and Electric Reserve Fund. Non-consolidated financial statements are reconciled but not audited<sup>2</sup>.

### Financial Reporting Compliance

#### Legislated Requirements

Submitted before deadline<sup>3</sup>:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| ◦ Audited Consolidated Financial Statements   | <b>No</b> |
| ◦ Financial Information Return (FIR)          | <b>No</b> |
| ◦ Statement of Estimates - Assessment (SOE-A) | <b>No</b> |
| ◦ Statement of Estimates - Budget (SOE-B)     | <b>No</b> |
| ◦ Management Letter/Internal Control Letter   | <b>No</b> |
| ◦ Summary Report of Expenses                  | <b>No</b> |
| ◦ Summary Report of Hospitality Expenses      | <b>No</b> |

Financial Statements include:

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| ◦ Unqualified Audit Opinion                   | <b>Yes</b> |
| ◦ Elected Officials remuneration and expenses | <b>Yes</b> |

Expense and Hospitality report posted online quarterly **Yes**

<sup>2</sup> Please be advised that, although the Department of Municipal Affairs reconciles, at a high level, a municipality's non-consolidated financial statements to the consolidated financial statements, the non-consolidated financial statements are usually not audited nor presented in full accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

<sup>3</sup> Annually, municipalities are required to submit their financial information by Sept 30th.

## Financial Highlights

### Revenue

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Total consolidated revenue:                 | \$14.1 Million                                       |
| Revenue generated from own source revenue*: | \$13.3 Million                                       |
| Total general operating revenue:            | \$12.5 Million                                       |
| Largest general operating revenue:          | 83% Net property taxes and payments in lieu of taxes |

### Expenses

|                                    |                         |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Total consolidated expenses**:     | \$12.8 Million          |
| Total general operating expenses:  | \$10.3 Million          |
| Largest general operating expense: | 28% Protective services |

### Annual Surplus

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Annual consolidated surplus (deficit):      | \$1.3 Million    |
| Consolidated accumulated surplus (deficit): | \$34.1 Million   |
| Annual general operating surplus (deficit): | \$249.8 Thousand |

### Debt

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Total consolidated long-term debt:         | \$9.5 Million |
| Total general capital fund long-term debt: | \$8.3 Million |
| General operating fund bank indebtedness:  | \$0           |

\* Total consolidated revenue excluding government transfers

\*\* Net of extraordinary and special revenue item(s)

## Revenue

# \$14.1M

## 2023-24 Consolidated Revenue

|  |                |  |
|--|----------------|--|
| Total consolidated revenue:                | \$14.1 Million |  |
| Largest revenue:                           | \$10.3 Million | Net property taxes and payments in lieu of taxes |
| Revenue generated from own source revenue: | 94.92%         |  |

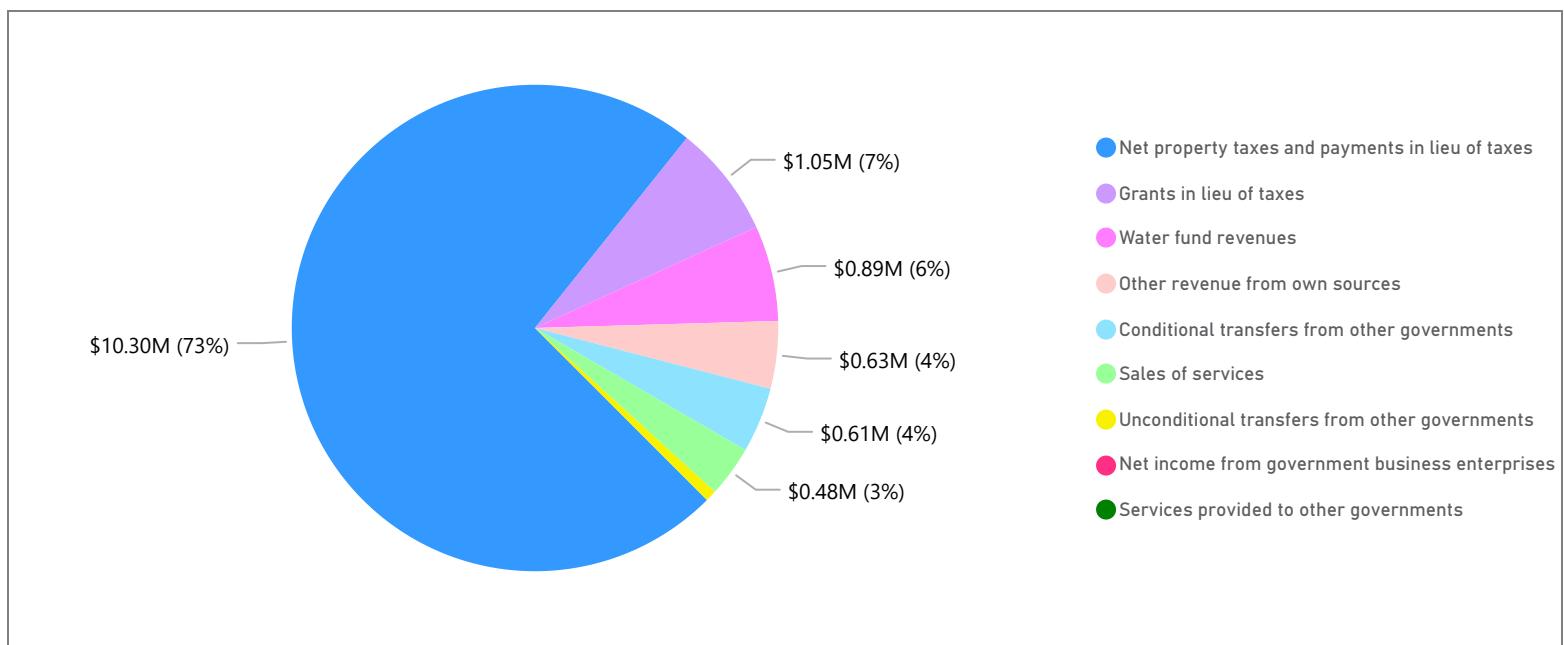
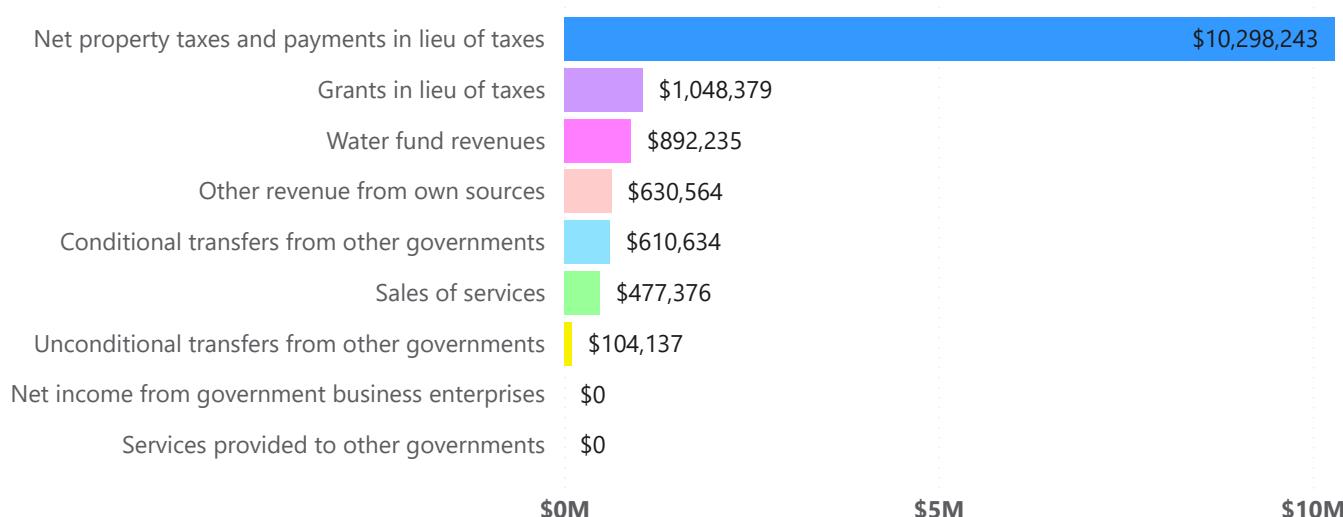


Figure 14 - Consolidated Revenue Source: 2023-24 Financial Information Return

The graphs above and below show the Municipality's consolidated revenue divided into categories.

## Consolidated Revenue



## Revenue

# \$12.5M

## 2023-24 General Operating Revenue

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Total general operating revenue:                       | \$12.5 Million                                       |
| Largest general operating revenue:                     | 83% Net property taxes and payments in lieu of taxes |
| Uncollected Taxes Financial Condition Indicator (FCI): | 3.5%   |
| Reliance on Government Transfers (FCI):                | 1.3%   |

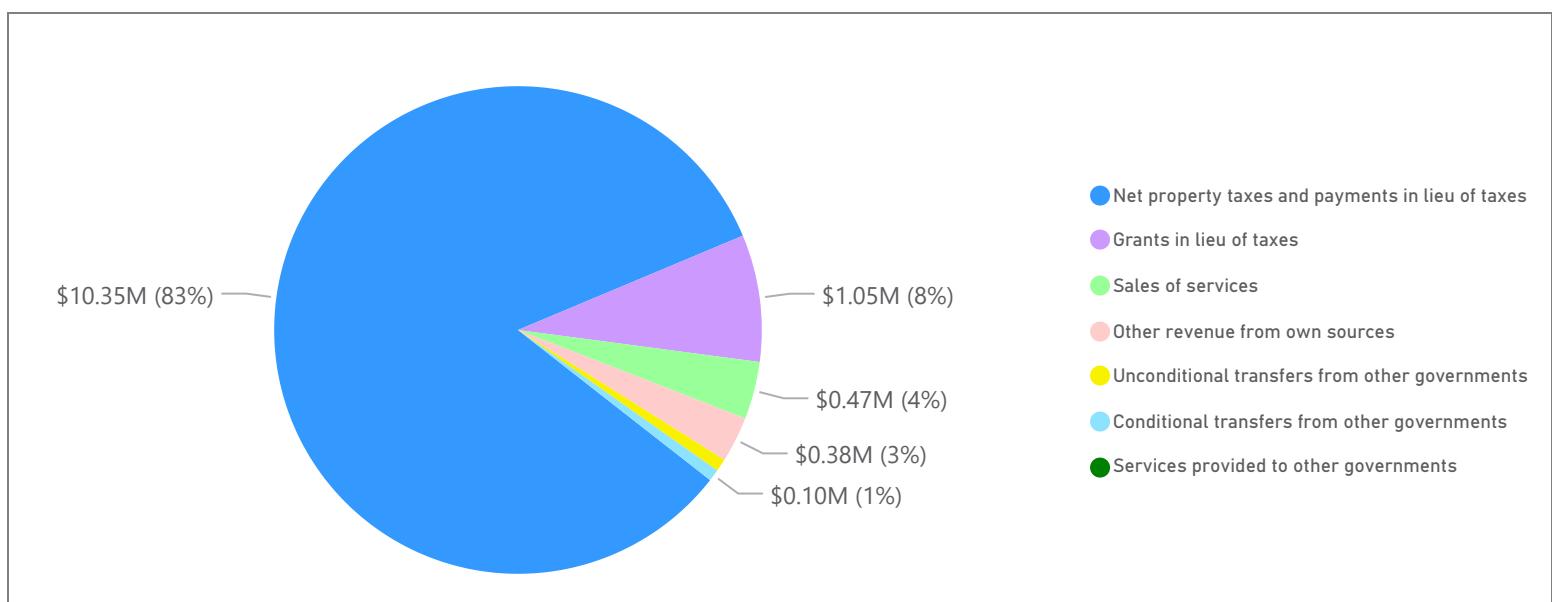
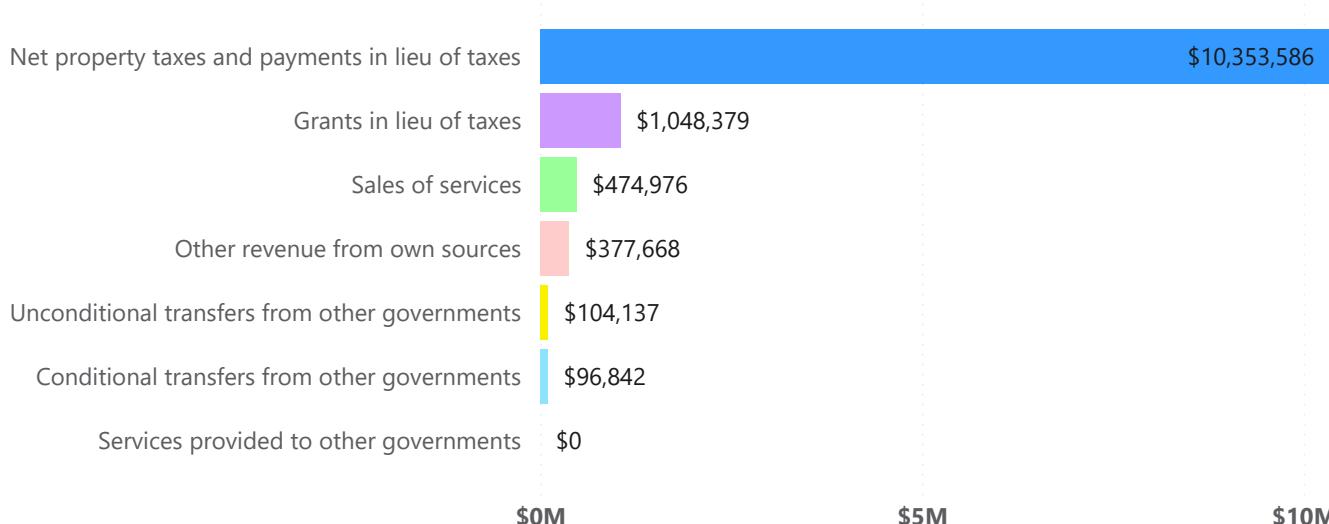


Figure 15 - General Operating Fund Revenue: 2023-24 Financial Information Return

The graphs above and below show the Municipality's general operating fund revenue divided into categories.

## General Operating Revenue



## Expenses

# \$12.8M

## 2023-24 Consolidated Expenses

Total consolidated expenses: \$12.8 Million

Largest expense: 22% Transportation services

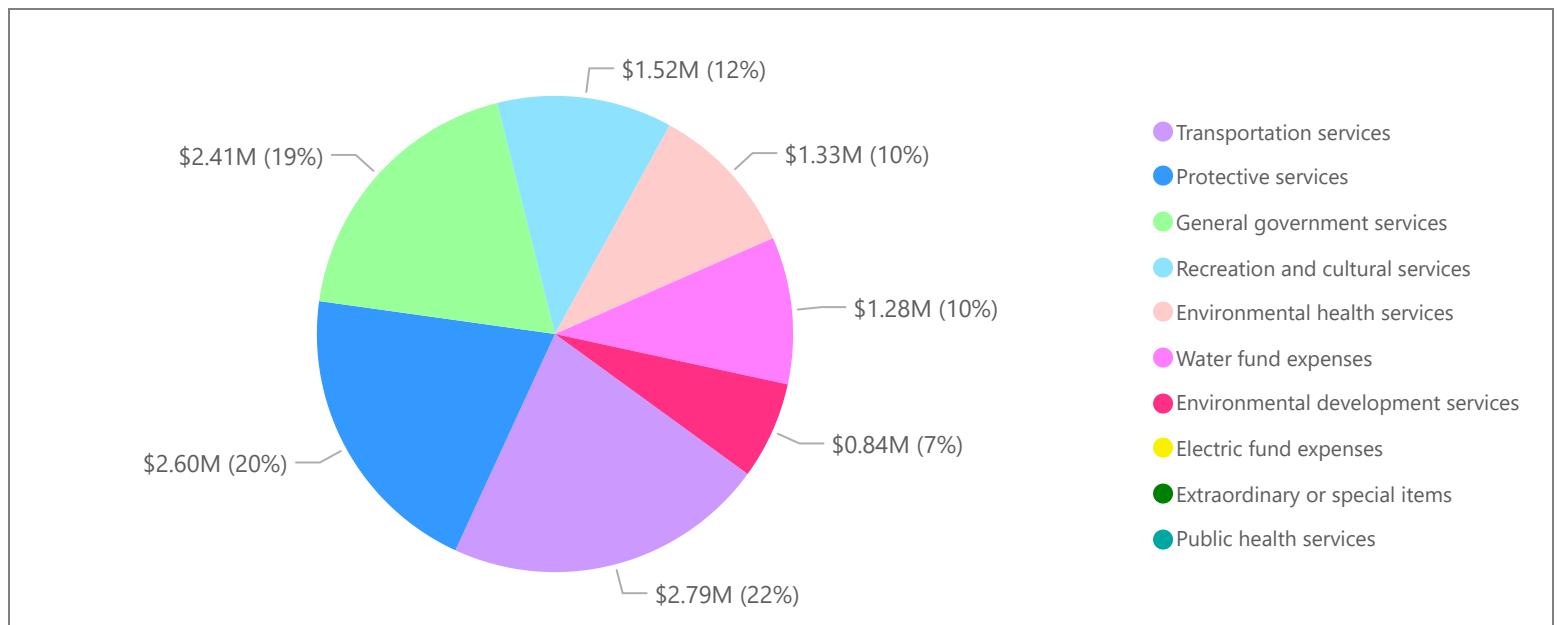
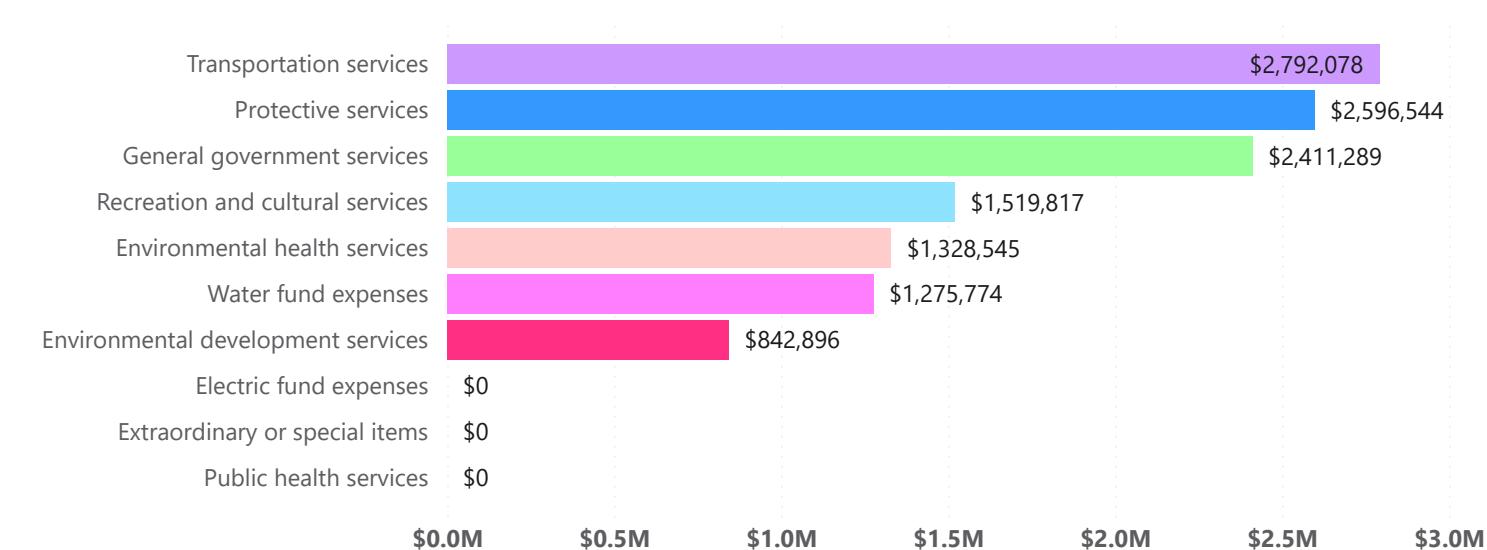


Figure 16 - Consolidated Expenses Source: 2023-24 Financial Information Return

The graph above and table below show the Municipality's consolidated expenses divided into categories.

## Consolidated Expenses



## Expenses

# \$10.3M

## 2023-24 General Operating Expense

Total general operating expenses: \$10.3 Million

Largest general operating expense: 28% Protective services

General operating reserves as a percentage of total general operating expenses: 22.1%

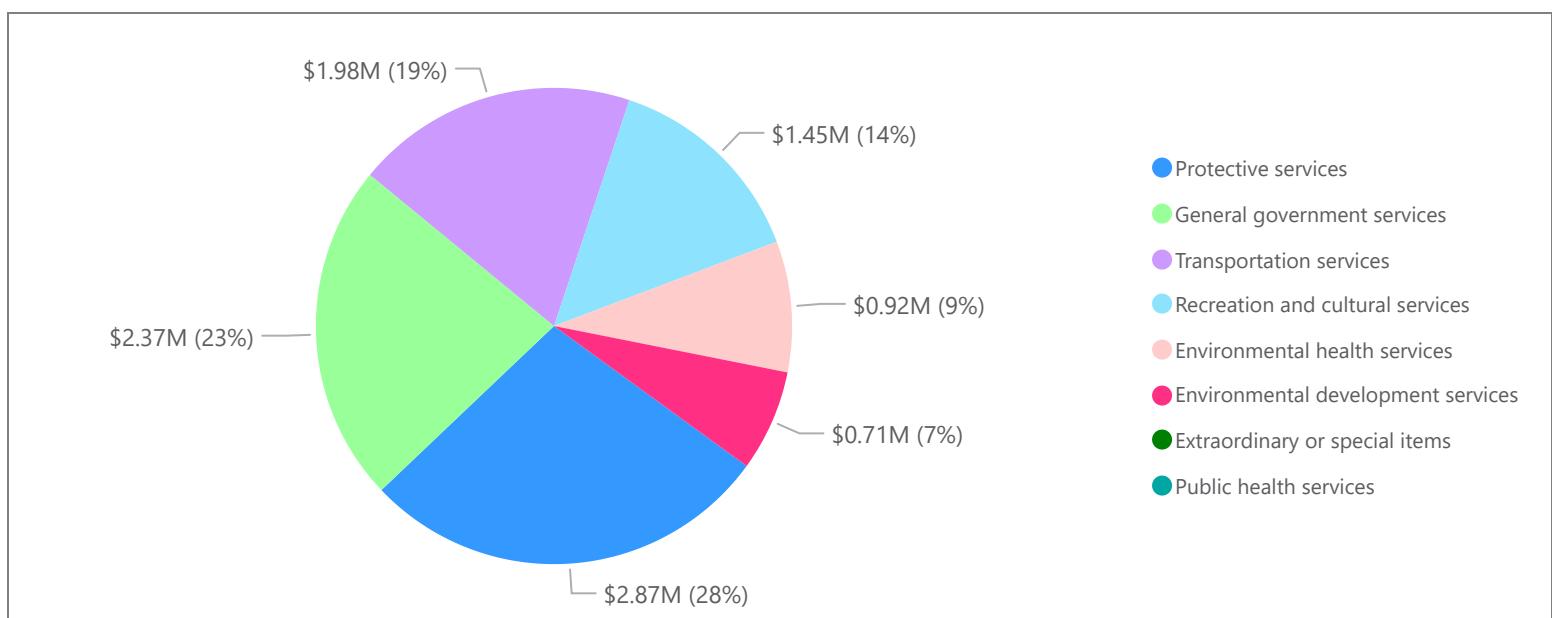
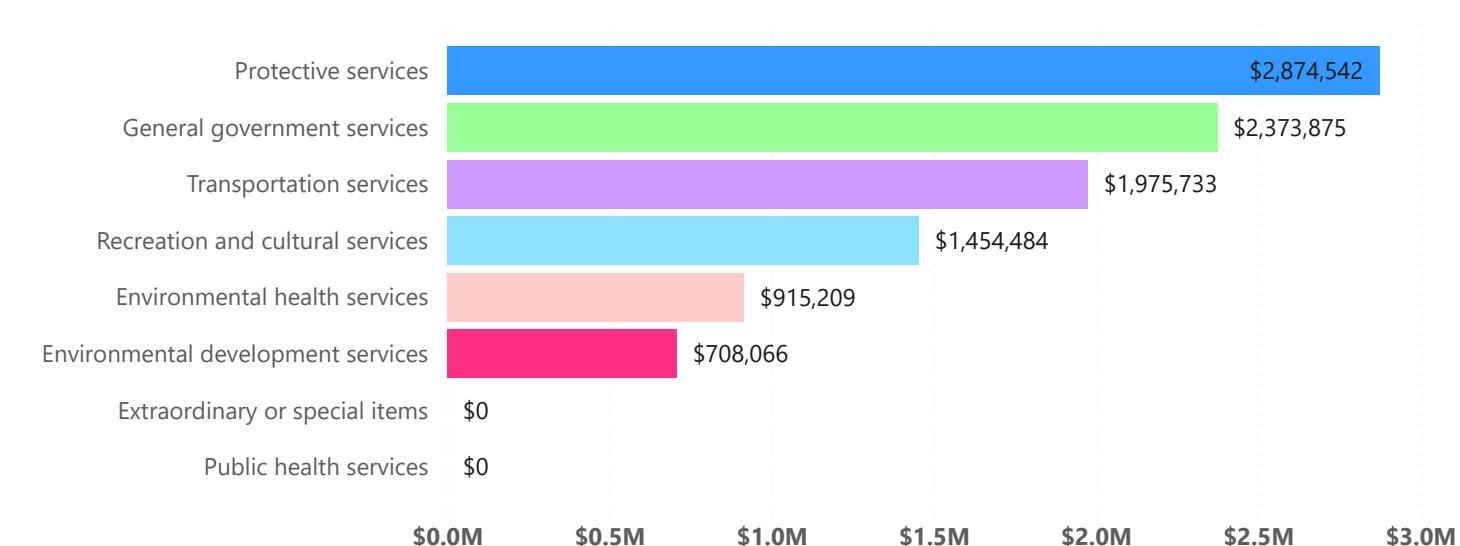


Figure 17 - General Operating Fund Expenses: 2023-24 Financial Information Return

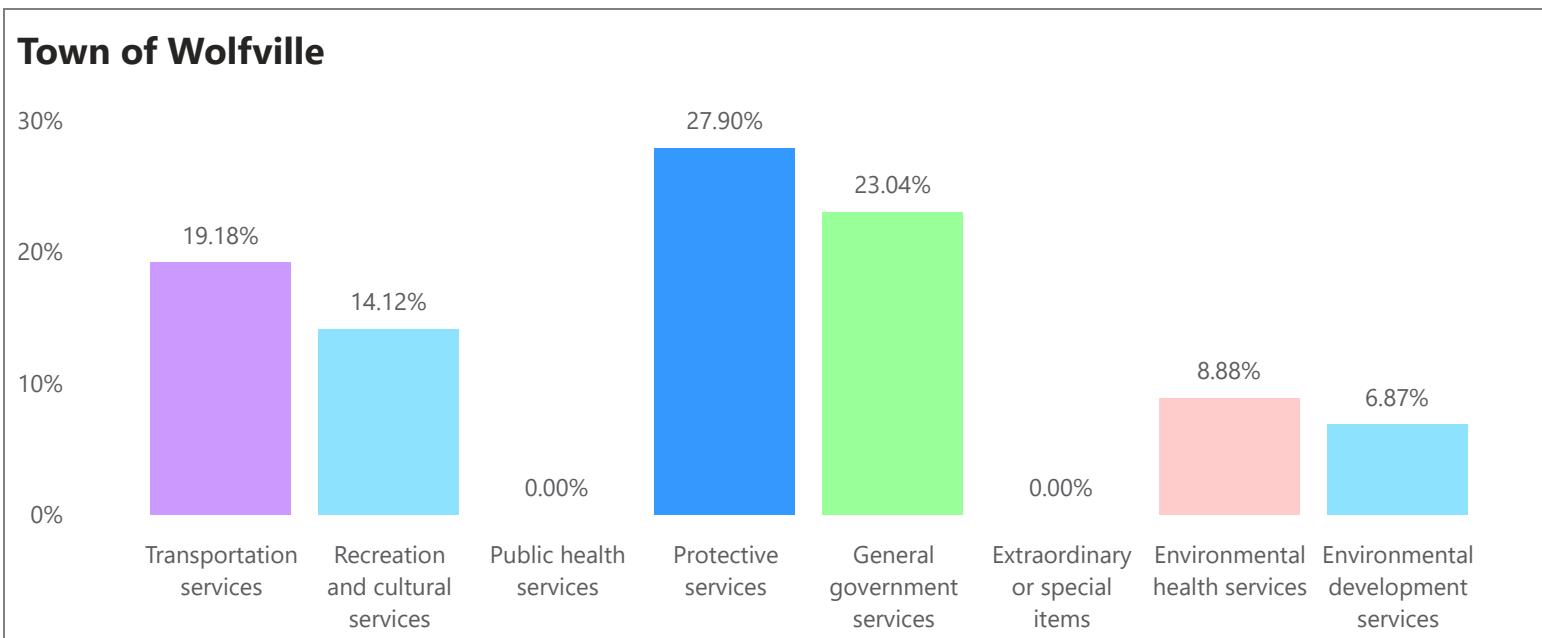
The graph above and table below show the Municipality's general operating fund expenses divided into categories.

## General Operating Expenses

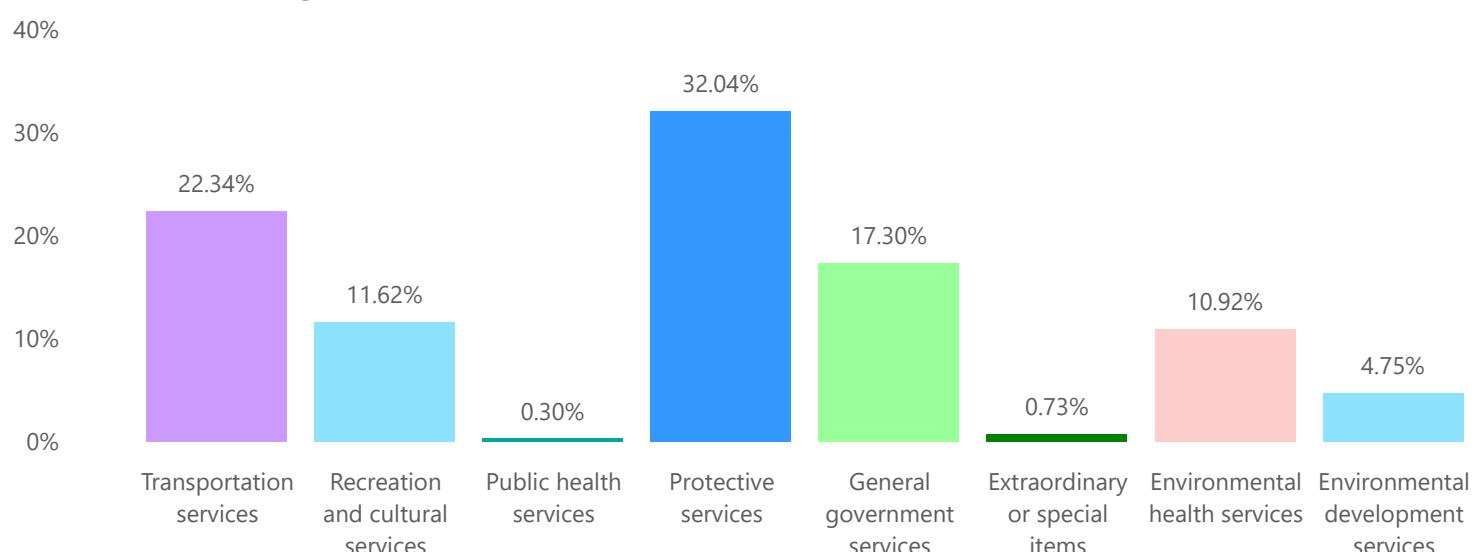


## 2023-24 General Operating Expenses Comparison to the Provincial Average

The graph below shows the expense by function for the municipal operations or General Operating Fund expenses compared to the Provincial Average.



## Provincial Average



\*Please note, these results do not include details from the Town of Mahone Bay due to outstanding financial reporting.

Figure 18 - Comparison of General Operating Fund Expenses to Provincial Average. Source: 2023-24 Financial Information Return

## Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)

Annual surplus (deficit): Revenue - Expenses

Note: Annual surplus (deficit) is added to the accumulated surplus (deficit)

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Annual consolidated surplus (deficit):                                      | \$1.3 Million    |
| Consolidated accumulated surplus (deficit):                                 | \$34.1 Million   |
| Annual general operating surplus (deficit):                                 | \$249.8 Thousand |
| Number of Deficits in the Last 5 Years Financial Condition Indicator (FCI): | 0                |

### Consolidated Accumulated Surplus by Fund

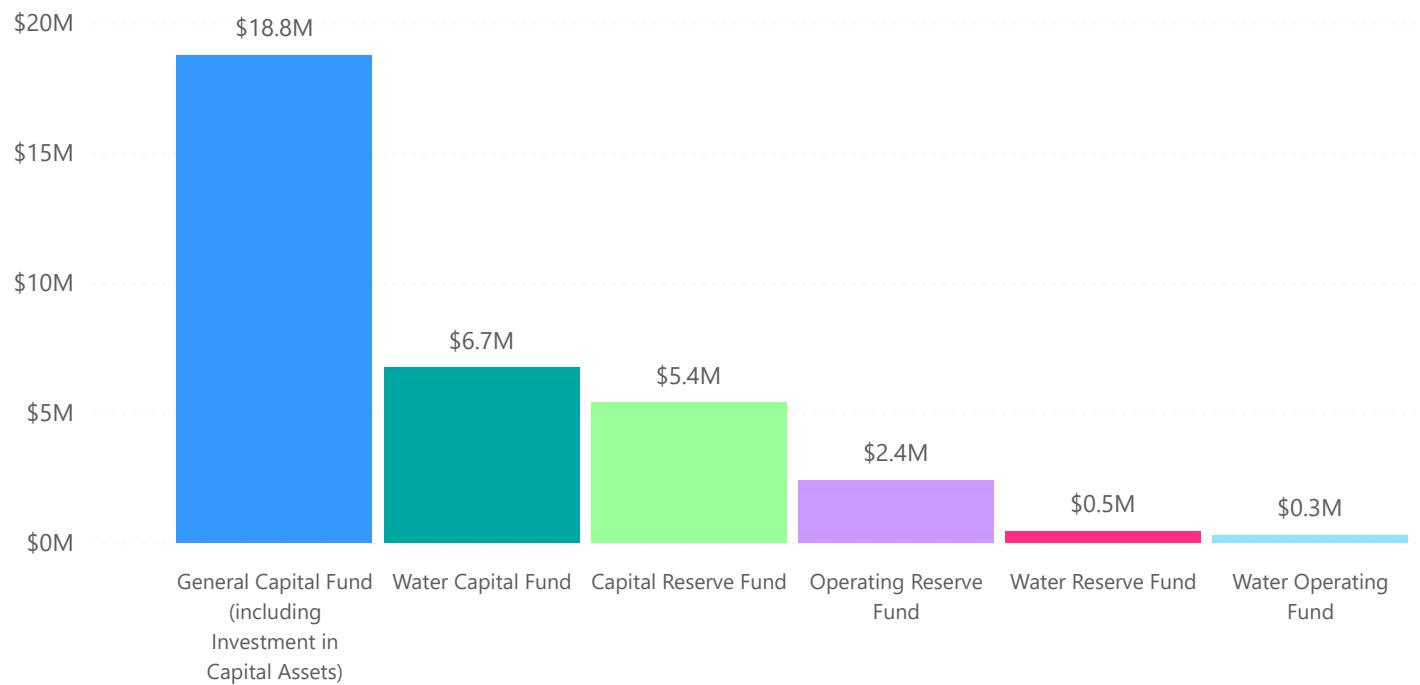


Figure 19 - Consolidated Accumulated Surplus by Fund. Source: 2023-24 Financial Information Return

## Debt

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Total consolidated long-term debt:   | \$9.5 Million |
| Total general capital fund long-term debt:   | \$8.3 Million |
| Debt Service Financial Condition Indicator (FCI):  | 7.0%          |
| Operating fund bank indebtedness:  | \$0           |
| Outstanding Operating Debt FCI (as a percentage of Net Property Taxes/Payment in Lieu of Taxes, Grants in Lieu of Taxes and Government Transfers): | 6.8%          |

## Chapter 4 - Financial Condition Indicators: House Model

The Financial Condition Indicators (FCIs) condense multiple sources of information into a single visual "House Model" graph. The House Model gives a quick visual of a municipality's strengths and possible areas where a municipality may want to focus its attention.

### The Model:

The Model consists of twelve indicators organized into base, structure and roof, focusing on:

- Base: Three indicators relating to internal and external factors that could impact the municipality's revenue stream.
- Structure: Five financial indicators that concern management and debt; and
- Roof: Four key performance indicators, that reflect the municipality's ability to meet current and future needs in a balanced and independent manner.

### Risk thresholds:

Each indicator is assessed against a risk threshold:

- low risk (**green**);
- moderate risk (**yellow**) ; and
- high risk (**red**).

### Overall assessment:

The Department calculates an overall assessment for fiscal instability:

- low risk (**green**): 9-12 FCIs meet low risk threshold;
- moderate risk (**yellow**) : 7-8 FCIs meet low risk threshold; and
- high risk (**red**): 6 or less FCIs meet low risk threshold.

## Overall Assessment

**Overall Assessment for:** Town of Wolfville

**Financial Condition:**

**Low Risk**

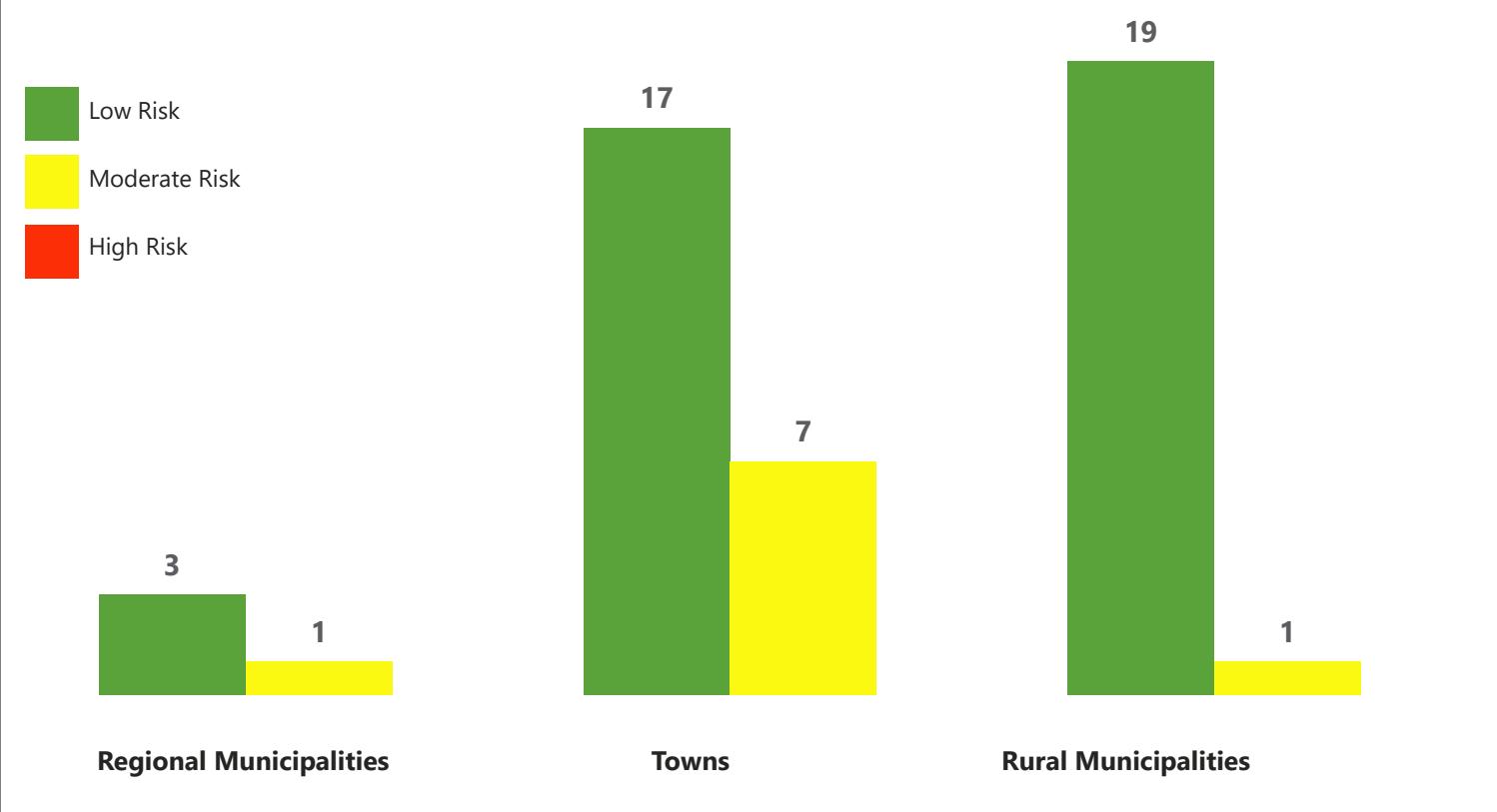
The overall Financial Conditions Index assessment for the Town of Wolfville is Low Risk.

This means that while the Municipality might face some challenges, it is considered low risk for fiscal instability.

**Comparison:**

The majority of Municipalities are at low risk (see chart below).

### Overall 2023-24 Results for Nova Scotia Municipalities\*



\*Please note, these results do not include details from the Town of Mahone Bay due to outstanding financial reporting.

## Financial Condition Indicators Highlights for 2023-24

### Overall Assessment

#### Green (Low Risk)

The overall Financial Conditions Index assessment for the Town of Wolfville is Green (Low Risk).

This means that while the Municipality might face some challenges, it is considered low risk for fiscal instability.

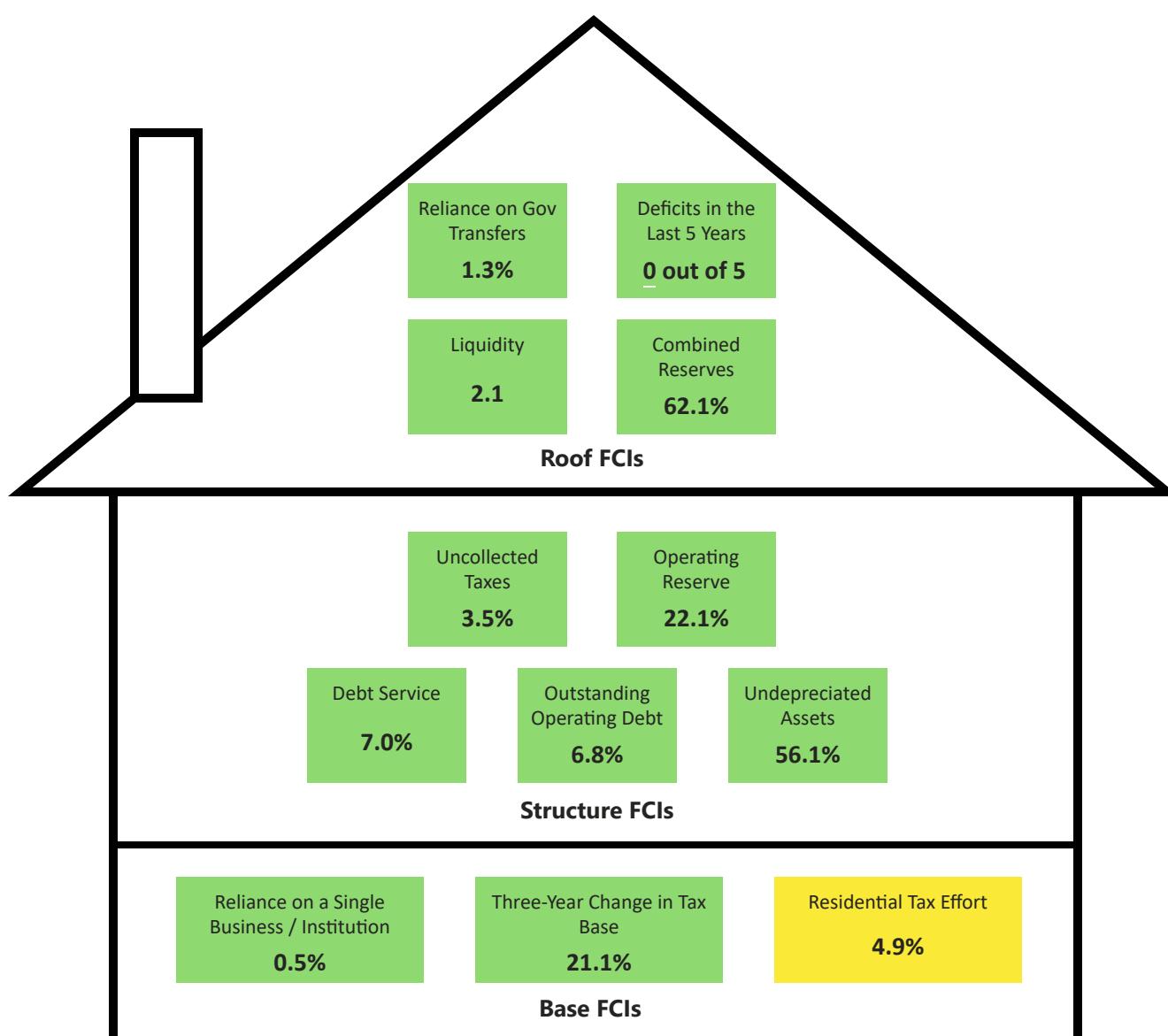
As shown in the House model below, the Town of Wolfville's FCIs are comprised of:

Low Risk (green): 11 Indicators

Moderate Risk (yellow): 1 Indicators

High Risk (red): 0 Indicators

Individual FCI results are presented in the House below and are compared to last year's result on the next page.



## Two-Year Comparison of Financial Condition Indicators

| BASE   | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | +/-   |
|--|---------|---------|-------|
| Reliance on a Single Business or Institution | 0.5%    | 0.5%    | 0.0%  |
| Three-Year change in Tax Base*               | 13.9%   | 21.1%   | 7.2%  |
| Residential Tax Effort                       | 4.3%    | 4.9%    | 0.6%  |
| STRUCTURE                                    | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | +/-   |
| Uncollected Taxes                            | 8.1%    | 3.5%    | -4.6% |
| Operating Reserve                            | 21.3%   | 22.1%   | 0.8%  |
| Debt Service                                 | 7.8%    | 7.0%    | -0.8% |
| Outstanding Operating Debt                   | 7.6%    | 6.8%    | -0.8% |
| Undepreciated Assets                         | 56.9%   | 56.1%   | -0.8% |
| ROOF   | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | +/-   |
| Reliance on Government Transfers             | 2.4%    | 1.3%    | -1.1% |
| Number of Deficits in the Last 5 Years       | 0       | 0       | 0     |
| Liquidity                                    | 2.5     | 2.1     | -0.4  |
| Combined Reserves                            | 55.4%   | 62.1%   | 6.7%  |

\*For 3-year Change in Tax Base, CPI change for 2022-23 was 13.3% and for 2023-24 was 16.7%.

## Base FCI Indicator - Municipal Revenue Dimension

### Reliance on a Single Business or Institution

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 0.5 %**

The largest single commercial or institutional account is 0.5 % of the Municipality's total Uniform Assessment.

What does it mean? The Municipality is showing no vulnerability in this area. The Municipality's tax base is not dependent on one single business or institution.

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Taxable assessment value of the largest business or institution}}{\text{Uniform assessment}} = 0.5\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Less than 10%
- █ Moderate: 10% to 15%
- █ High: Greater than 15%



## Base FCI Indicator - Municipal Revenue Dimension

### Three-Year Change in Tax Base

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 21.1 %**

What does it mean? Growth is above the CPI % change of 13.3%.  
The Municipality's tax base is in a strong position to cover the cost of municipal services and programs.

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Current uniform assessment} - \text{Uniform assessment 3 years prior}}{\text{Uniform assessment 3 years prior}} = 21.1\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Equal or above CPI % change (Three Year CPI 2023-24: 16.7 %)
- █ Moderate: Below CPI % change, but not negative growth
- █ High: Negative growth

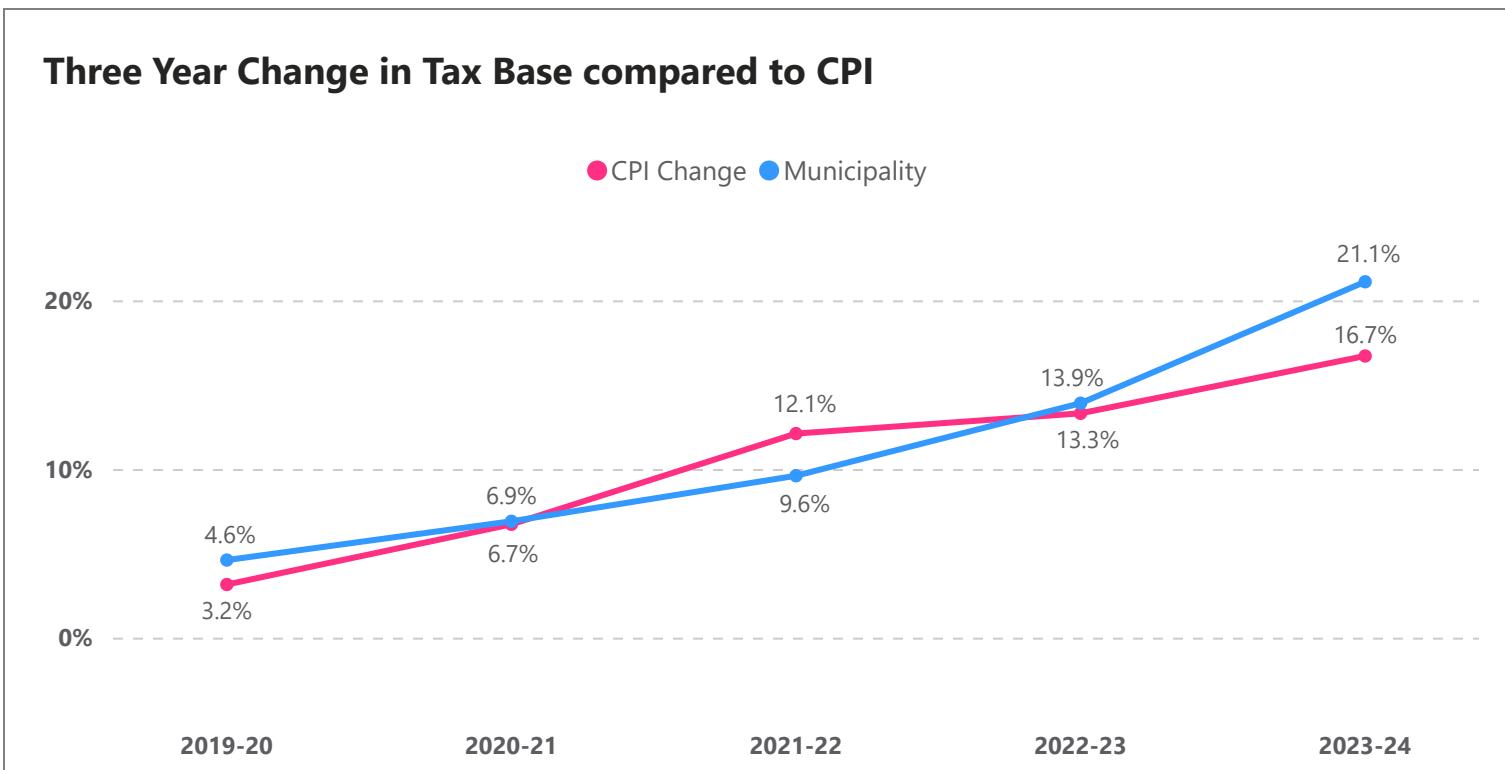


Figure 20 - Three-year change in Uniform Assessment in comparison to three-year change in CPI for the last 5 years.  
Source: Statement of Estimates-Assessment and Statistics Canada

## Base FCI Indicator - Municipal Revenue Dimension

### Residential Tax Effort

2023-24 Results: **Moderate Risk 4.9 %**

4.9 % of median household income is required to pay the average tax bill.

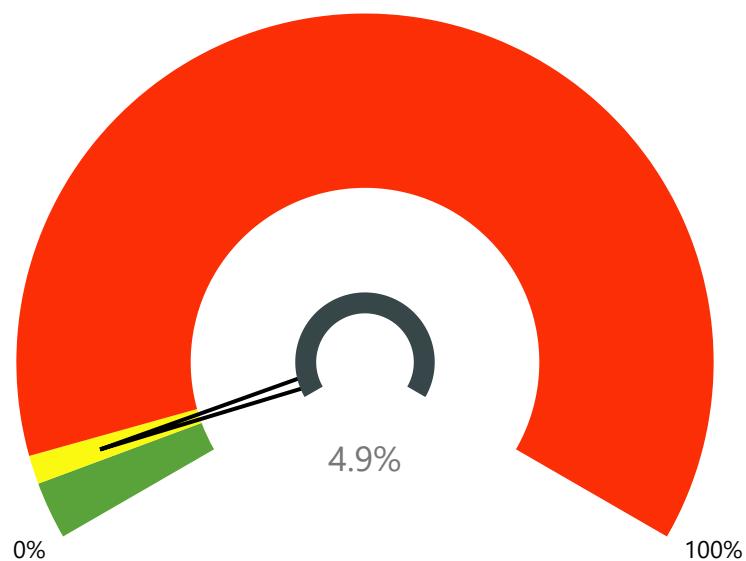
What does it mean? The Municipality has limited flexibility to increase the taxes, if required.

This indicator helps council assess the affordability of municipal taxes in relation to the current service levels.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Total residential tax revenue per dwelling unit}}{\text{Median household income}} = 4.9\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Less than 4%
- █ Moderate: 4% to 6%
- █ High: Greater than 6%



## Structure (Management) FCI Indicator - Municipal Management Dimension

### Uncollected Taxes

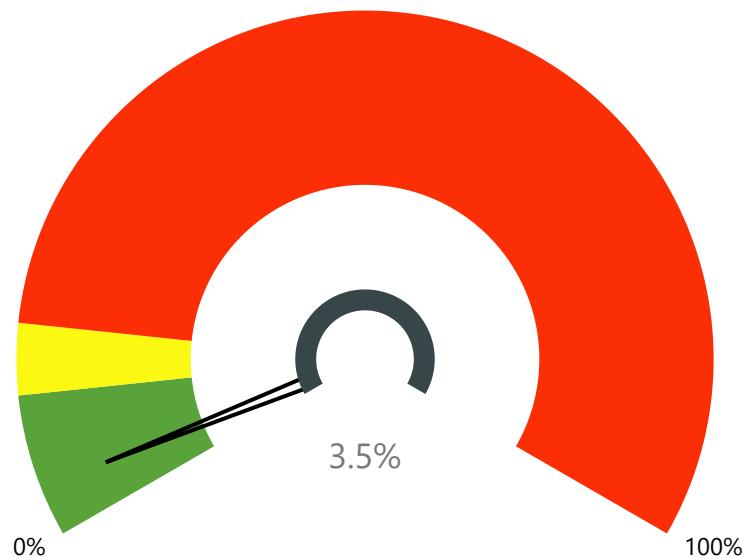
2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 3.5 %**

What does it mean? The Municipality is managing tax revenue collection.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Total cumulative uncollected taxes}}{\text{Total taxes billed in current fiscal year}} = 3.5\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Less than 10%
- █ Moderate: 10% to 15%
- █ High: Greater than 15%



## Structure (Management) FCI Indicator - Municipal Management Dimension

### Operating Reserve

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 22.1 %**

What does it mean? The Municipality is setting aside sufficient funds to help mitigate any unforeseen risks or future needs.

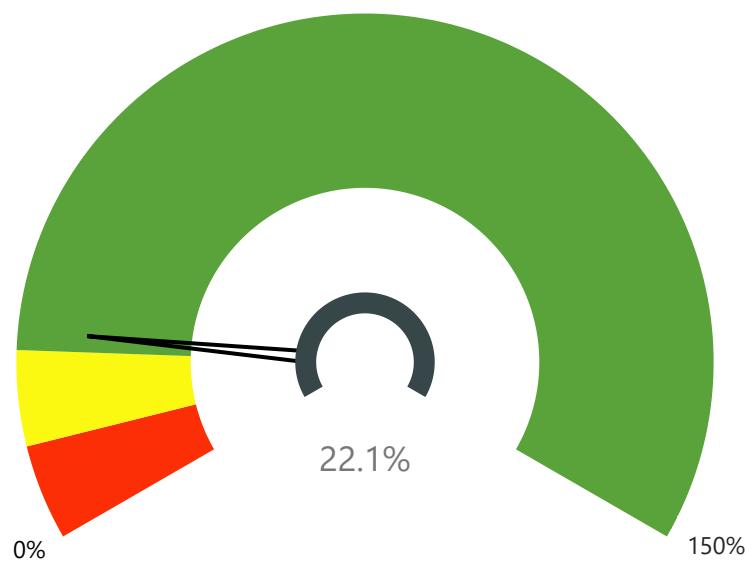
This indicator provides the value of funds set aside for planned future needs, to smooth expenses, or for unexpected expenses.

Calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Total operating reserve fund balance}}{\text{Total operating expenditures}} = 22.1\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Greater than 20%
- █ Moderate: 10% to 20%
- █ High: Less than 10%



## Structure (Management) FCI Indicator - Municipal Management Dimension

### Debt Service

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 7.0 %**

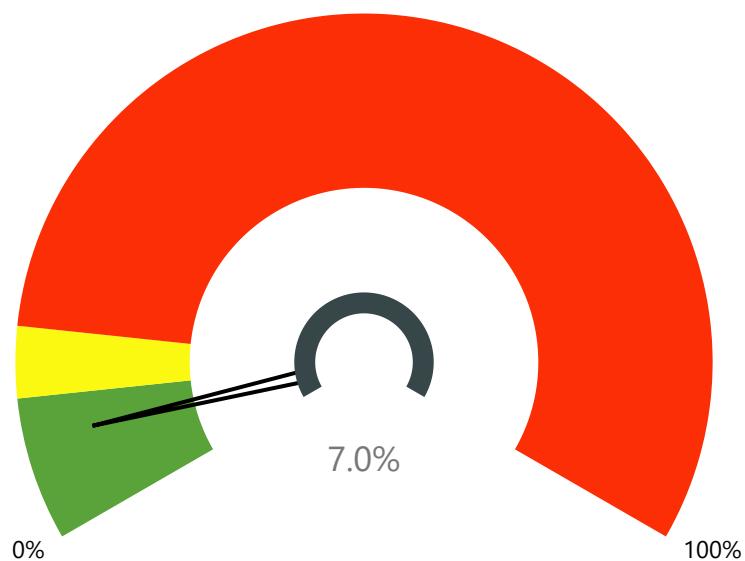
7.0% of own source revenue is spent on principal and interest payments.

What does it mean? With adequate cash flow, the Municipality may have the flexibility to increase borrowing levels to help finance future capital expenditures.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Principal and interest paid on long-term debt}}{\text{Total own source operating revenue}} = 7.0\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Less than 10%
- █ Moderate: 10% to 15%
- █ High: Greater than 15%



## Structure (Management) FCI Indicator - Municipal Management Dimension

### Outstanding Operating Debt

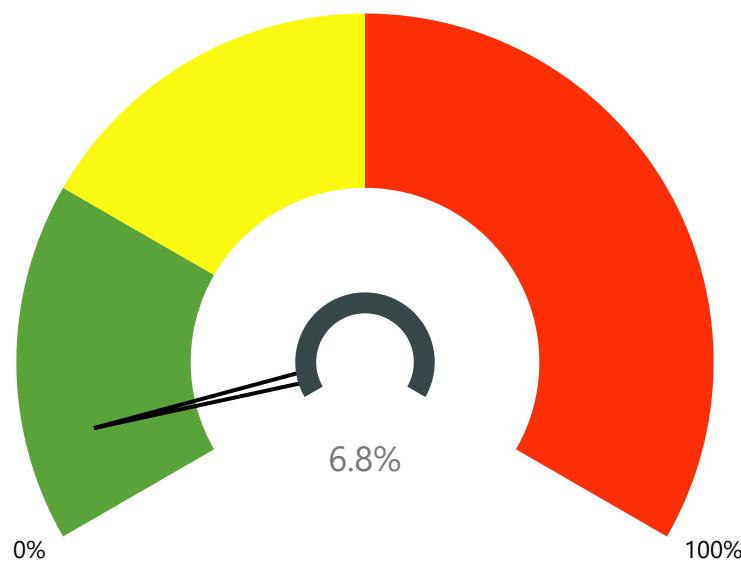
2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 6.8 %**

What does it mean? The Municipality is carrying operating debt.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Total outstanding operating debt}}{\text{Total own source operating revenue}} = 6.8\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Less than 25%
- █ Moderate: 25% to 50%
- █ High: Greater than 50%



## Structure (Management) FCI Indicator - Municipal Management Dimension

### Undepreciated Assets

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 56.1 %**

What does it mean? This indicator estimates that the Municipality's capital assets have 56.1 % of their useful life remaining

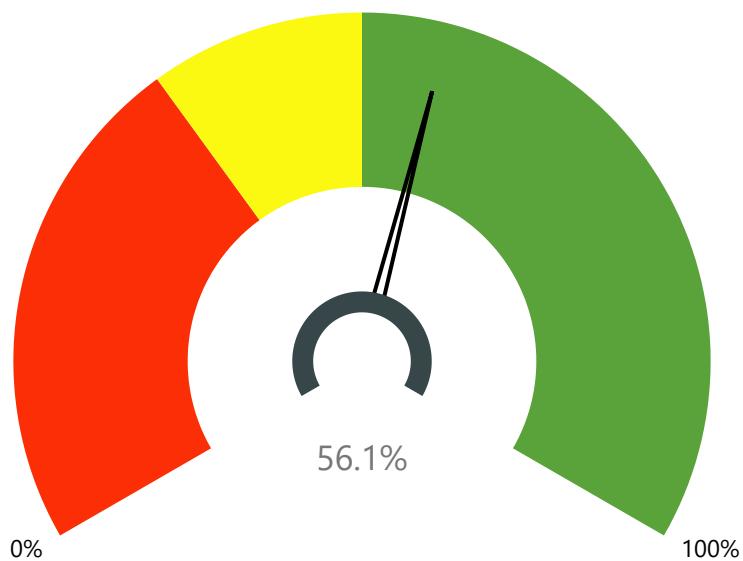
Municipalities across Canada are facing significant infrastructure challenges. This indicates that the Municipality may be experiencing less of an infrastructure challenge than other municipalities.

While this indicator provides an estimate of the useful life left in the Municipality/Town's recorded capital assets, it does not necessarily indicate the condition of those assets. For instance, some older assets could still be in good working condition, while the opposite could also be true.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Total net book value of capital assets}}{\text{Gross costs of capital assets}} = 56.1\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Greater than 50%
- █ Moderate: 35% to 50%
- █ High: Less than 35%



## Roof (Key Performance) FCI Indicator - Overall Assessment Dimension

### Reliance on Government Transfers

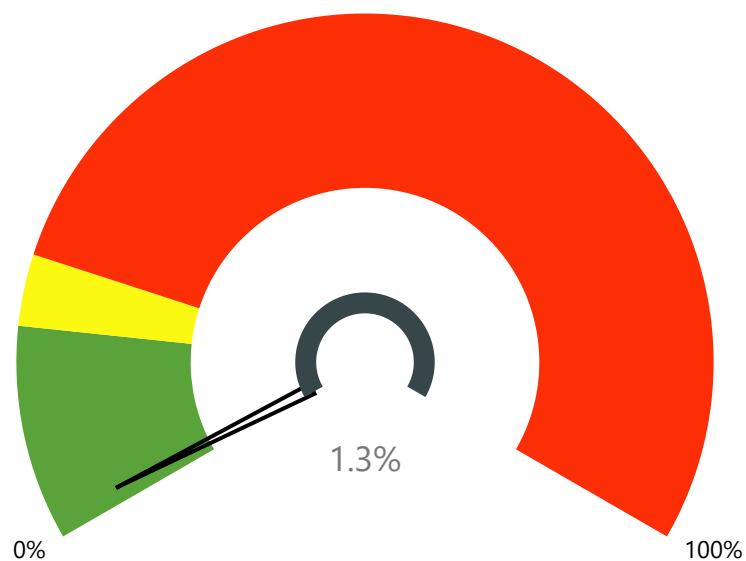
2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 1.3 %**

What does it mean? The Municipality is not dependent on another level of government to meet its service obligations.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Total government transfers}}{\text{Total revenue}} = 1.3\%$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Less than 15%
- █ Moderate: 15% to 20%
- █ High: Greater than 20%



## Roof (Key Performance) FCI Indicator - Overall Assessment Dimension

### Number of Deficits in the last 5 Years

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk: 0 Operating deficit in the last five years**

What does it mean? Deficits are important indications of financial health. The result indicates that the Municipality is able to meet its needs in a balanced manner and maintains a balanced budget.

Calculation: Number of non-consolidated operating deficits in the last five years = 0

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: 0 in the last five years
- █ Moderate: 1 or more in the last 5 years
- █ High: 1 or more in the last 2 years with one material deficit (0.5% of operating expenses)

### Surplus/(Deficit) for the last 5 Years

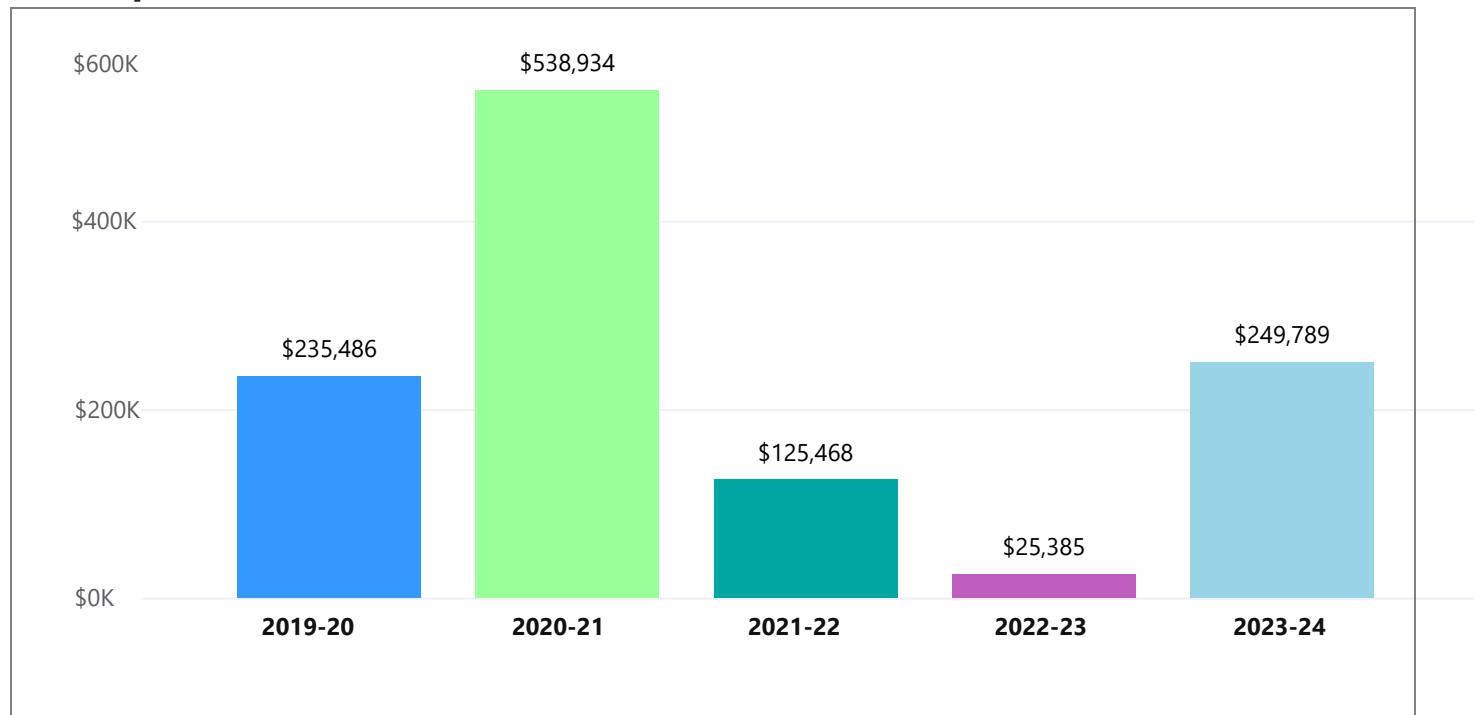


Figure 21 - Annual operating fund surplus (deficit) for the last 5 years. Source: Financial Information Return

## Roof (Key Performance) FCI Indicator - Overall Assessment Dimension

### Liquidity

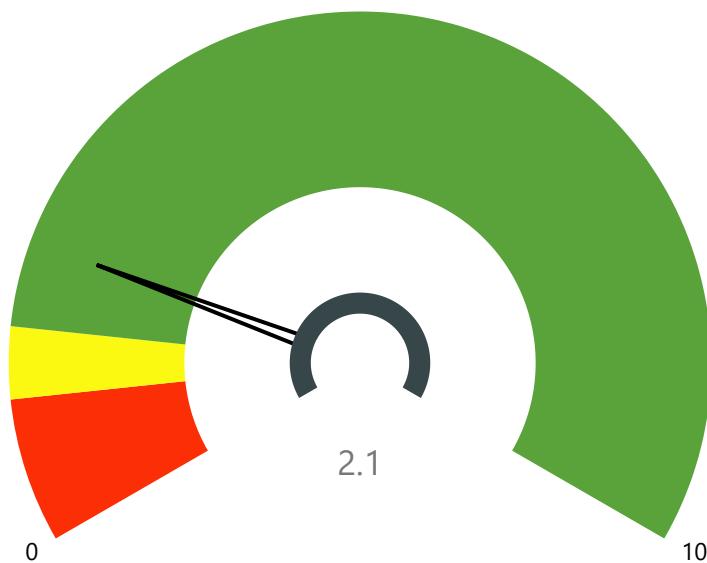
2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 2.1**

What does it mean? Liquidity is key to financial performance. The result indicates that the Municipality does not have a cash flow problem and is able to meet its service obligations.

Calculation: 
$$\frac{\text{Total current financial assets}}{\text{Total current liabilities}} = 2.1$$

Risk Thresholds:

- █ Low: Greater than 1.5
- █ Moderate: 1 to 1.5
- █ High: Less than 1



## Roof (Key Performance) FCI Indicator - Overall Assessment Dimension

### Combined Reserves

2023-24 Results: **Low Risk 62.1 %**

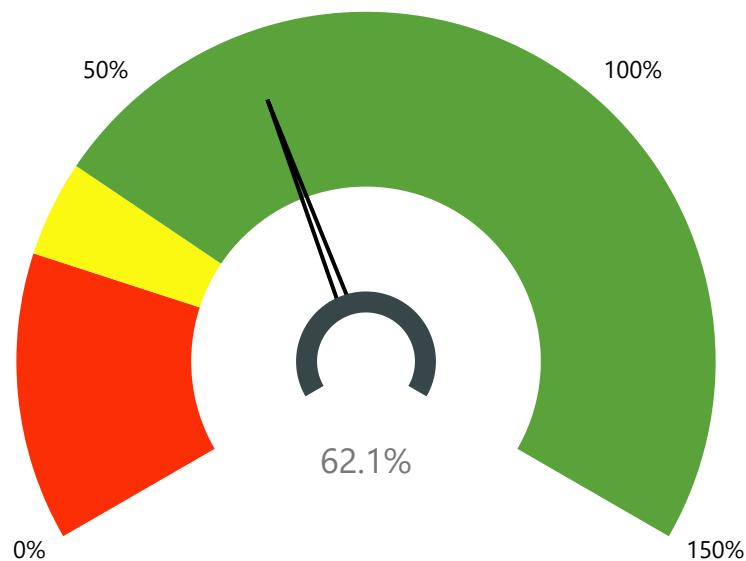
What does it mean? This result indicates that the Municipality does appear to have sufficient reserves needed to address unexpected events or provide flexibility to address future projects.

Calculation: Reserves are critical components of a municipality's long-term sustainability. This indicator shows the value of the funds held in the reserves compared to a single year's operation including amortization expenses.

Risk Thresholds:

|  |   |       |
|--|---|-------|
| Total operating and capital reserves               | = | 62.1% |
| _____  |   |       |
| Total operating expenses plus amortization expense |   |       |

- Low: Greater than 40%
- Moderate: 30% to 40%
- High: Less than 30%



## Appendix I - Additional Resources

Nova Scotia Government's Open Data Portal ([data.novascotia.ca](http://data.novascotia.ca))

This portal provides access to various government data in a free, accessible, machine-readable format.

Financial datasets currently published through the Nova Scotia Government's Open Data Portal:

- Consolidated Revenues and Expenses by Municipality
- Municipal Affairs Funding Programs
- Farm Land Grant
- Financial Condition Indicators by Municipality
- Municipal Contributions to Roads
- Municipal Financial Capacity Grant
- Municipal Operating Fund- Summary of Revenue and Expenses by Municipality
- Municipal Operating Expenses by Function - 10 Year Summary
- Municipal Operating Revenue by Source - 10 Year Summary
- Municipal Property Tax Rates
- Nova Scotia Power Grant-in-Lieu
- Uniform Assessment

## Appendix II - Municipal Website

The municipal website is [wolfville.ca](http://wolfville.ca)

A municipality's website can be a helpful resource to access various financial information. Currently, most municipal websites provide:

- Audited Financial Statements
- Approved Operating Budget
- Quarterly Municipal Councilor and CAO Expense Report
- Quarterly Municipal Hospitality Expense Report

## Contact Municipal Affairs

For more information, for support in action plan development, or to obtain a guide on action plan development:  
[municipalfinance@novascotia.ca](mailto:municipalfinance@novascotia.ca).





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### **Wolfville Volunteer Fire Department**

- December – 36 calls
- Incident Hours Logged (During Reporting Period) – 644 Hours
- Members assisted with the search for Tristan Doucet, a total of 130 personnel hours were logged for this incident.
- 278 incidents logged in 2025, making it the busiest year on record.
- The Santa letter initiative was a huge success; 131 letters were received and shared with Santa. Once Santa replied to the kiddos, fire volunteers got letters returned to homes around the community.
- Planning for the 2026/27 operational and capital budget has begun.
- Airbags arrived from our capital purchases and will put in service in the new year.
- 156 Regular Training Hours and 58 Meeting Hours in December.

### **Winter Parking Regulations**

With some stormy weather hitting the Town in December, staff were out ticketing cars that stayed parked on Town streets overnight. The most challenging streets this season have been Summer, Westwood, Prospect and Main, with plowing impacted by the parked cars.

### **Planning and Development - Housing Accelerator Fund**

Following several months of work and revisions, Council have provided staff with direction to make amendments to the draft planning documents to implement the housing accelerator fund action plan and other planning document changes. Council will participate in a workshop with Staff in the new year to review the amendments, and the documents will then proceed through Council and public hearing process prior to being adopted.

### **Site Plan Approvals under review**

- 90 Highland Avenue – 8 Dwelling Units

### **Subdivision**

- Harvest Heights (Kenny Crescent) street/services takeover package review
- East side of Maple Ave tentative subdivision application review

### **Development**

Recently approved <https://wolfville.ca/current-planning-applications>

- 5 units at 250 Main
- 28 units between 65 and 73 Highland Ave

## CAO REPORT

January 13, 2026

Office of the CAO



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### Open planning applications

- 8-unit at 90 Highland Ave
- **NEW** 12-unit on Hillside - Student Housing NS project to be considered by development agreement

### Fire and Building Inspections

- 45 Inspections, site visits or consultations since last report (Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>)
- 292 Main Street 4<sup>th</sup> floor mostly drywalled and moving quickly towards partial occupancy
- MURB at Lot M1 on Maple Avenue drywall underway for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors
- 6-Unit residential building on Lot 3 Pleasant Street partially-approved for drywall
- Permit submitted by Landmark East for new gymnasium building
- Occupancy issued for 4-unit townhouse on Jessie Jaggard

### Public Works and Utilities

- Hydrant winterizations now 100% complete
- Quarterly water meter reading completed
- Two emergency water main breaks repaired (Grandview and Huron)
- Wickwire well pump pulled for new video of well screens after cleaning done in July
- Working with CBCL on the water transmission main tender. Aiming for January for tender release
- Continued work with consultants on the Wolfville Lift Station Assessments.
- Working with consultants at the Kenny Crescent (Harvest Heights) development - water distribution lines are being pressure tested and disinfected
- Getting the downtown section of the Harvest Moon Trail finished to Elm before shutting down the project for the winter, to resume in the early spring
- Coordinating and assisting NS Power and Amico with getting the electric service installed to 292 Main
- Finalizing data for the Earnscliffe Reconstruction project for Hatch

### Parks

- Night of lights was completed and successful.
- Year-end playground inspections were carried out and the report has been filed.
- Tennis nets and screens were removed for the winter season and stored.

## CAO REPORT

January 13, 2026

Office of the CAO



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- Continuous maintenance of the Night of Lights setup is being carried out as weather causes issues with the setup on a daily basis.
- Urban forestry meeting was attended by all staff involved. This will aid in future planting and maintenance of urban forestry expansion.
- The majority of the Parks staff have been laid off for the winter season.
- The remaining staff have been diligently dealing with the snow removal as required.
- Nature Trust trails were assessed for access and there is a lot of debris to be removed over the winter season.
- Millenium trail bridge repairs have begun. This will be a total replacement as the wooden structure has deteriorated with age.
- Historic burial ground fence has been installed, and staff have been instructed to maintain all growth under the fence to be removed as it emerges.
- Reservoir washrooms have been handed over to the town and daily maintenance is being carried out by Parks staff.
- Solid waste pickup and street debris cleaning is ongoing.
- Waste stations in areas that are not accessible in the winter months have been removed and stored for the season.
- Benches, picnic tables and other town infrastructure that can be damaged by snow removal have been stored for the season.

### GIS and Asset Management

- Permittable Permit Activity Report Dashboard has been completed and is now fully operational.
- Bylaw Enforcement Activity Report has been activated, improving visibility into enforcement trends.
- Stormwater and Sanitary invert data and inspection photos have been integrated into the Engineering GIS application pop-ups.
- Improvements to vehicle inspection tracking have been implemented to strengthen reporting and follow-up.
- Ongoing PVSC reporting for the period has been completed.
- Property and Civic Address updates continue as part of routine maintenance.
- Stormwater dataset updates remain ongoing to support engineering and planning needs.
- Services Locate Requests continue to be supported through GIS workflows.

### Wolfville Business Development Corporation Grant Renewal

The Wolfville Business Development Corporation (WBDC) has been an essential part of the Wolfville business community for over 40 years. The WBDC is financially supported through a grant from the Town of Wolfville, which comes from the commercial area rate.

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## CAO REPORT

January 13, 2026

Office of the CAO



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The current funding agreement between the Town and the WBDC is up for renewal, and the Town needs to hear from the business community before a new agreement is approved so a project area is launching on Wolfville Blooms in early January to allow the business community to provide feedback and recommendations. A listening session is also scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, that will help Council get a sense of WBDC support and serve as a pre-budget listening session with the business community.

### **Lease renewal keeps WBDC in Willow Park**

A lease renewal will keep the Wolfville Business Development Corporation working in the Visitor Information Centre until April 30, 2026, while the 2025 VIC Operating Agreement is being assessed.

### **Pre-budget listening session at Soups and Sides on January 26**

After a successful session in 2025, Council will be back at Soups and Sides on Monday, January 26 to connect with community and to facilitate some activities to get feedback in advance of budget. Everyone is invited to attend this relaxed check-in on all things Wolfville.

### **Staffing**

Processes are underway or nearing completion for the following positions:

- Wolfville Fire Department Mechanic / Operator
- Manager of Emergency Planning & Coordination (formerly Regional Emergency Management Coordinator)
- Finance Clerk

### **Audit Services Request for Proposals**

A RFP for a new five-year engagement for the Town's audit services closed on December 23. Proposals are being reviewed by staff; a recommendation will be made to the Audit Committee at its next meeting on Friday, January 16.

### **Valley Waste and Tidal Transit Budget Development**

The CAOs Working Group continues to work with officials at both Valley Waste and Tidal Transit (formally Kings Transit) on the development of 2026/27 operating and capital budgets. These budgets are anticipated to be before the Valley Regional Services Board in the near future for consideration.

### **Labour – Management Committee**

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## CAO REPORT

January 13, 2026

Office of the CAO



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The Labour – Management Committee met on Wednesday, January 7, to share information between the Town's management and unionized employees. By all accounts, the communication and cordiality at this table and between the Town and Union is exceptional. The current collective agreement expires on March 31, 2026; preparations are being made by both the Town and SEIU members to negotiate a new collective agreement in the coming months.

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: Accessibility Advisory Committee

Date: January 13, 2026

Department: Committee of the Whole



### Accessibility Advisory Committee

Committee members met on Dec. 22, 2025, and received a progress report on the town's accessibility plan from Staff Liaison, Barb Shaw.

Employment possibilities were discussed, along with the work thus far on a potential micro-transit project for the town.

The chair described attending an Acadia University accessibility meeting. A conference to be held on campus in May was noted. She shared some issues for patrons trying to use the Festival Theatre.

Accessibility activist Gerry Post let the chair know he'd had a positive experience utilizing the new toilets at Devour Studios. Wayfinding signage was the only concern he raised.

During the 'round table' the committee heard from Barb about folks at the Trans Canada Trail reaching out. Apparently Wolfville could be part of a three-year trial for an app called Blind Square. It would be a pilot also involving the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and a section of the Harvest Moon Trail.

The next meeting of the committee is currently set for Monday, Feb. 9, 2026

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Wendy Elliott**

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: Audit

Date: January 13, 2026

Department: Committee of the Whole



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Meeting held on December 18, 2025 in Wolfville council chamber.

Diana Gibson, Director of Corporate Services, presented Second Quarter Financial Updates and Q1 Council Expenses. (reports attached). No excepts noted.



2025\_12\_18 Audit  
Committee Agenda Package for Committee.pdf

Audit Committee Agenda Dec 18, 2025

Next meeting, January of 2026

Respectfully Submitted

Ian Palmeter

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: Equity & Anti-Racism Committee  
Date: December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
Department: Committee of the Whole

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### Equity & Anti-Racism Committee

Meeting was called to order at 4:32

Regrets from Laura S., Councillor Van Neikerk and Roody

Agenda and Minutes approved with no amendments. No Public Input

Chairperson's comments consisted of welcoming our newest committee member Miranda Eggertson. We are so excited to have Miranda's voice and her experiences at the committee table. Chair also mentioned some events that have occurred with welcoming and inclusive tones such as Soups and Sides, Night of Lights, Holiday Free Films.

Barb Shaw updated our committee on the progress of some initiatives within our Equity plan including some collaborations with Acadia, the movement of Policies: Naming of Municipal Lands and Facilities, and reviews of Grants policy and Strategic plan initiatives. She mentioned the blanket exercise held at the Wolfville Fire Department as well as the many community events being supported by the Town.

Our Land Acknowledgement discussion was held but corrected from the agenda as not a POLICY discussion but more with an advisory lens to provide staff with guidance for how the committee wished the acknowledgement to be constructed.

The discussion was wonderful, with much feedback and many voices including correspondence from missing committee members who emailed previously.

Committee decided on acknowledgment of Indigenous history for the land, the seven sacred teachings, as well as the contributions of the African Nova Scotian communities. Input was positive and was always led with the desire to have a genuine acknowledgement and affirmation for our folks to read at meetings. It was one of our best meetings so far.

Barb will compile our thoughts and the "draft acknowledgement" we composed and it will then move to Committee of the Whole in the new year.

Respectfully Submitted  
Councillor Mike Butler (He/Him)

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## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: RCMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Date: December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Department: Committee of the Whole

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## RCMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RCMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE met in Chambers on Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

- All Committee members were present including Mayor MacKay virtually, meeting commenced at 10:04
- Agenda and Minutes approved with no amendments
- No presentations, no public input
- Chairperson welcomed folks to the final committee meeting of the year, giving thanks for their efforts and the Chair gave a special acknowledgement to the commitment of Emily Kathan and David MacKinnon as their terms on the committee have come to an end.
- New business consisted of two brief reports on a future presentation for Streets Crime Unit with feedback given to Sgt. Pelletier for more news on frauds and break & enters, and other pressing items.
- Police Advisory Board Orientation and Strategic Planning meetings have been scheduled for January 5 and 7, 2026 open to council and others. Details to come.
- Sgt. Pelletier introduced Inspector Bill Collier who came to us from Kings to discuss his role. He indicated he would be present at more meetings and the committee welcomed him.
- The Quarterly report was present, and Sgt. Pelletier entertained any questions or concerns from the group, to which there were none. With the winter months upon us, he put an emphasis on the amount of Mental Health calls they're expecting to receive as this is a normal trend.
- No round table and no next meeting date is set as of yet.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:18

Respectfully Submitted  
Councillor Mike Butler (He/Him)

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: Source Water Protection Committee  
Date: COW Meeting of January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Department: Committee of the Whole



## SOURCE WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The meeting was largely concerned with discussion of the CBCL consultancy report presented by Colin Walker that related to recent and past rainfall totals, the occurrence and drivers of drought, and associated groundwater levels. These data provided input to a discussion concerning the need for water conservation regulations regarding water use during periods of drought.

Director of Planning, Devin Lake, presented a draft copy of potential amendments to the Kings County Land use by-law 106 to include Wellfield Protection overlays relating to protection of groundwater recharge areas and storage of potentially hazardous materials, by zone.

**ACTION ITEM:** Staff to direction CBCL consultant Colin Walker to provide a guidance report on conservation measures.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** March 11, 2026, 2:30-4:30

**Respectfully submitted**  
**Cllr. HOWARD WILLIAMS**

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition  
Date: COW Meeting of January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Department: Committee of the Whole



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### ANNAPOLIS VALLEY TRAILS COALITION (AVTC): PLANNING SESSION

This workshop follows from a similar one in early September 2025, facilitated by a consultant, Bette Watson-Borg. The aim of the meeting was to arrive at a decision regarding the future of the organisation.

Kevin Waters, Recreation Programmer, Town of Wolfville, and the writer joined with another 20 participants from the various municipalities and stakeholders in the Valley that have interest in the Harvest Moon Trail. A consensus-decision making process was used to determine an appropriate model for the governance of what is currently known as the AVTC.

Bette Watson-Borg, of Maple Key Coaching & Leadership, introduced participants to the process of consensus-decision making, presented two alternative governance models:

- an updated AVTC Board of Directors as a Registered non-profit society, and;
- a Collective Impact framework.

These two presentations were followed by a robust round table discussion that identified the risks, benefits, opportunities and drawbacks of the two models. The following text in *italics* is an AI description of the *Collective Impact framework, as a structured approach for multiple sectors (government, business, non-profits, citizens) to tackle complex social problems by uniting around a common agenda, using shared measurement, coordinating mutually reinforcing activities, ensuring continuous communication, and relying on a dedicated backbone organization for coordination, leading to large-scale, lasting social change. It moves beyond traditional collaboration by requiring deep alignment and centralized infrastructure to overcome silos and drive systemic solutions, not just isolated programs.*

Participants then indicated their preference for one or other of the models, which was a unanimous support for the Collective Impact framework.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Not decided.

**Respectfully submitted**  
**Cllr. HOWARD WILLIAMS**



# VALLEY REGIONAL SERVICES BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Summary of Meeting based on December 17, 2025, Valley Regional Services Board Meeting at 10:00am in the Valley Waste-Resource Management Board room with virtual attendance option

## KINGS TRANSIT AUTHORITY



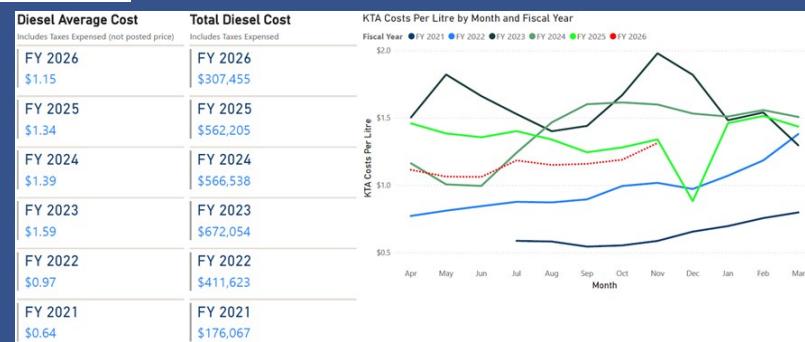
Under the leadership of General Manager Hodges, the following items of interest are underway:

### General Manager Updates:

- The G2 route remains suspended due to ongoing bus shortage due to repairs. The route is expected to remain offline into the New Year.
- Bus 59 experienced a severe engine failure and its repair is anticipated to result in a significant budget overage for the current fiscal year.
- Fuel expenditures are currently lower than anticipated.
- November's ridership is substantially lower compared to the same period last year likely due to the suspension of the G2 route and recurring reliability issues.
- Snow plans and procedures to ensure fleet and passenger safety include detoured snow routes in adverse weather
- The official transition from Kings Transit Authority to Tidal Transit Authority is underway and will require a resolution to be signed by all participating municipalities.
- The F2027 budget preparation, in consultation with CAOs, should be finalized for the January Board meeting.
- A new ridership survey is available on the KTA website with a link to the survey results in the meeting package.
- Updates to the KTA website are ongoing.
- A redesigned schedule featuring large print has been prepared for implementation when the G2 route returns.
- An RFP for hybrid buses is being developed with the assistance of Colliers and transit agencies.
- Interviews for the mechanic's position are currently underway



### Fuel Costs & Ridership





Under the leadership of General Manager Andrew Garrett, the following items of interest are underway:

#### **General Manager Updates:**

##### **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging & Printed Paper**

- Valley Waste has finalized a long-term agreement with Circular Materials for curbside collection of residential recycling. This contract will result in substantial saving as it covers all collection costs, including recycling, overhead, education, customer service, and finance.
- EFR Environmental will introduce a new fleet of collection trucks over the next three months to support the new recycling contract.
- Scotia Recycling has reached an agreement with Circular Materials to process residential recycling from western Nova Scotia for 16 months. After this, processing will transition to a new facility in Dartmouth.
- Valley Waste has secured an agreement with Circular Materials for post-collection services, utilizing the Eastern and Western Management Centres as transfer facilities and will also receive compensation for these services.
- Effective December 1st, residential recycling fees at the Management Centres were eliminated at Management Centres.
- Work on the FY2027 budget continues in consultation with CAOs, with finalization expected for the January Board meeting.
- Residents are encouraged, but not required, to bring certain materials (e.g., Styrofoam™, chip bags, aerosol cans) to Drop-Off Depots. There are currently four depots in the Valley region.
- The 2026 Valley Waste Calendar has been distributed and includes new recycling details. Education staff are preparing community presentations for January and are available to accommodate requests.

#### **Operations**

- Fall Clean-up tonnage increased this year by 30% this year, attributed to a later schedule and wet conditions
- A Request for Proposals for the transportation of ground wood closed on December 4<sup>th</sup> with four proposals received.

## **BOARD DECISIONS**

#### **Valley Waste-Resource Management**

- The Valley Regional Services Board of Directors approved the award of a contract for the provision of transportation of wood waste for a 5-year period to John's Towing and Transport Ltd. of South Berwick, based on their submission to Request for Proposals, VWRP2512, which closed on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

## **2025-2026 CAPITAL PROJECTS**

Roscoe Construction was awarded the contract to construct the rear tunnel door at the Western Management Centre, with completion expected in March.

Construction of the HHW building shelter at the Western Management Centre is underway by Div Con Construction and is scheduled for completion in March.

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: VCFN

Date: January 13, 2026

Department: Committee of the Whole



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Meeting held on December 4, 2025, Municipality of Kings council chamber.

Chad West presented operations update. No major outages reported. Contract with Rogers is with their legal department for review. No update on pole count with NSP.

Tyler Honeywood presented annual business plan, report attached.

Next meeting TBD, March of 2026

Respectfully Submitted

Ian Palmeter

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|                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>TO</b>           | VCFN Board                            |
| <b>PREPARED BY</b>  | Chad West and Tyler Honeywood         |
| <b>MEETING DATE</b> | December 4, 2025                      |
| <b>SUBJECT</b>      | Proposed 2026/27 Annual Business Plan |

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**ORIGIN**

- First introduction.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the VCFN Board receive the briefing on the proposed 2026/27 Annual Business Plan as information.

**DISCUSSION**

This document outlines the proposed 2026/27 Annual Business Plan, which as per the VCFN Agreement, would serve as the 2026/27 operating budget and three-year capital plan.

The proposed plan includes \$60,000 for a network operations service, \$30,000 for a capital plan to upgrade the common internet and a plan to eliminate the accumulated deficit by 2033.

The proposed plan includes the following notable differences from the current state:

1. A reduction in anticipated interest revenue due to declining interest rates.
2. An increase in recurring fees due to the addition of new dark fibre leases.
3. Elimination of project management fees associated with the Xplore service contract that was terminated in 2025.
4. A budget of \$15,000 to cover repairs and maintenance, which would be sufficient to cover a significant repair event should one occur during the year.
5. \$60,000 for a network operations service.
6. \$30,000 capital plan to upgrade the common internet.

The detailed proposed 2026/27 Annual Business Plan is attached.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- Partner contributions would remain fixed at their current levels:

|                                     |          |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Acadia University                   | \$21,067 |
| NSCC                                | \$21,067 |
| Municipality of the County of Kings | \$13,978 |
| West Hants Regional Municipality    | \$5,113  |
| Town of Wolfville                   | \$1,306  |
| Town of Berwick                     | \$670    |

**ALTERNATIVES**

- Partner contributions could be reduced by removing the network operations service, however this would come at increased risk of not meeting contractual service level obligations.
- Reserves could be invested in a GIC for higher returns.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

- Board to provide feedback on suggested amendments by December 31, 2025.
- Updated 2026/27 Annual Business Plan to be circulated based on suggested amendments.
- Representatives to submit the 2026/26 Annual Business Plan to each of the Parties for approval.
- 2026/27 Annual Business Plan to be approved at the March 2026 meeting of the Board.

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: 2026/27 Annual Business Plan
- Appendix B: 2027/27 Capital Plan

## Appendix A: Annual Business Plan

| VCFN - Budget              |                |                |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                            | 2026/27        | 2027/28        | 2028/29        |
| Common internet fees       | 18,600         | 18,600         | 18,600         |
| Installation fees          | 16,190         | 16,190         | 16,190         |
| IRU fee                    | 61,790         | 61,790         | 61,790         |
| Interest                   | 28,490         | 39,980         | 42,100         |
| Operating Contributions    | 63,200         | 63,200         | 63,200         |
| Recurring fees             | 172,000        | 172,970        | 173,320        |
| <b>Revenue</b>             | <b>360,270</b> | <b>372,730</b> | <b>375,200</b> |
| Amortization               | 51,649         | 51,643         | 51,649         |
| Pole Fees                  | 141,190        | 145,430        | 149,790        |
| <b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>  | <b>192,839</b> | <b>197,073</b> | <b>201,439</b> |
| <b>Gross Margin</b>        | <b>167,431</b> | <b>175,657</b> | <b>173,761</b> |
| Accounting                 | 17,500         | 17,500         | 17,500         |
| Bank charges               | 190            | 200            | 210            |
| Dues and fees              | 1,370          | 1,410          | 1,450          |
| Fibre network              | 13,260         | 13,660         | 14,070         |
| Insurance                  | 7,500          | 7,730          | 7,960          |
| Legal                      | 2,500          | 2,630          | 2,760          |
| Repairs and maintenance    | 15,000         | 15,300         | 15,610         |
| Telephone                  | 400            | 410            | 420            |
| Network Operations         | 60,000         | 60,000         | 60,000         |
| <b>Operating Expenses</b>  | <b>117,720</b> | <b>118,840</b> | <b>119,980</b> |
| <b>Net Income</b>          | <b>49,711</b>  | <b>56,817</b>  | <b>53,781</b>  |
| Deficit, beginning of year | (345,125)      | (295,414)      | (238,597)      |
| Deficit, end of year       | (295,414)      | (238,597)      | (184,816)      |

## Appendix B: 2027/27 Capital Plan

### Valley Community Fiber Network

Project Justification Sheet  
2025/26 to 2029/30 Capital Budget & Forecast

#### PROJECT Common Internet Upgrade

|                        |                          | ONGOING PROGRAM         | <input type="checkbox"/> NEW PROJECT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CARRYOVER PROJECT | GL ACCOUNT #               |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| DEPARTMENT             | NEW OR REPLACEMENT ASSET | PROJECT #               | PRIORITY                             | ASSET CATEGORY  | Computer Hardware/Software |
| Information Technology | Replacement              | 26-01                   | High                                 | EXPECTED LIFE   | 7 years                    |
|                        |                          | LEVEL OF SERVICE IMPACT | Maintain level of service            |   |                            |

#### DESCRIPTION

Upgrade core network and edge component of the VCFN Common Internet service to support 10Gbps internet speeds.

#### NEED FOR PROJECT

The Cisco switches which are currently used on the VCFN core network are approximately 15 years old and are well past their useful service life. Risk of a critical failure of this core service without an upgrade is high.

#### CARRYOVER DETAIL

First introduction of project.

#### FUNDING SOURCE DETAIL

Project to be funded with cash on hand.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| MAINTAINS A CORE PROGRAM OR SERVICE             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| MANDATED BY LAW OR CONTRACT                     | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| REPLACING END OF LIFE ASSET                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| REQUIRED FOR HEALTH & SAFETY                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT - PREVENTION OR MITIGATION | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IF DEFERRED                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| IMPACTS OTHER GOVERNMENTS                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| PREVIOUSLY COMMITTED                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

#### ESTIMATED IMPACT ON OPERATING BUDGET

|                   | 1st Year | 2nd Year |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| GOODS & SERVICES  | 30,000   | -        |
| OTHER DIRECT COST | -        | 30,000   |
| FINANCING COST    | -        | -        |
| DEPRECIATION      | 4,286    | 4,286    |
| INDIRECT COST     | 4,286    | 4,286    |
| TOTAL COST        | 34,286   | 4,286    |
| REVENUE           | -        | -        |
| NET COST          | 34,286   | 4,286    |

#### FIVE YEAR PROJECT FORECAST

|                        | 2026/27       | 2027/28  | 2028/29  | 2029/30  | 2030/31  | Total         |
|------------------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| ESTIMATED PROJECT COST | 8,000         | -        | -        | -        | -        | 8,000         |
| Engineering/Consulting | 22,000        | -        | -        | -        | -        | 22,000        |
| Equipment              | -             | -        | -        | -        | -        | -             |
| Construction           | -             | -        | -        | -        | -        | -             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>30,000</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>-</b> | <b>30,000</b> |

| FUNDING SOURCE | From Operating | Fed/Prov Grants | Reserves - Capital | Reserves - Operating | Debt | Other Revenue | TOTAL  |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|------|---------------|--------|
|                | 30,000         | -               | -                  | -                    | -    | -             | 30,000 |
|                | -              | -               | -                  | -                    | -    | -             | -      |
|                | -              | -               | -                  | -                    | -    | -             | -      |
|                | -              | -               | -                  | -                    | -    | -             | -      |