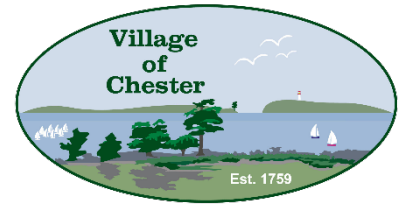


Agenda

Village Commission Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, April 9, 2025 @ 6:00 pm



In-Person & Virtual Meeting

Village Commission Office, 27 Pleasant Street, Chester

Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81480733054> or YouTube Live

1.0 Call to Order/Land Acknowledgement

- *As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.*

2.0 Public Forum

- *In-person or over Zoom: Members of the public are welcome to speak and/or ask questions of the Village Commission (10 min)*

3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

p. 1

4.0 Approval/Amendment of Minutes

- 4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: Mar 12, 2025 p. 3
- 4.2 Special Commission Meeting: Mar 26, 2025 p. 10

5.0 Business Arising

- 5.1 2025/26 Village Commission Budget – Revised p. 13
- 5.2 Memo: Saltscapes Expo Premiums p. 25

6.0 Correspondence

- 6.1 Minister of Municipal Affairs re: Mandatory Code of Conduct Training p. 29

7.0 Reports and External Committees

- 7.1 Report from the Chair
- 7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Report
- 7.3 Chester Fire Services Committee – Minutes for information p. 31
- 7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Committee – Chair Pauley: 2025-2028 Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan (Final) p. 36
- 7.5 MODC Village Planning Advisory Committee – Vice-chair O'Malley p. 72
- 7.6 MODC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee – Commissioner L. Mulrooney: 2025 EDI Action Plan (Final) p. 73

8.0 New Business

8.1 Request for Decision: 2025 Audit, AGM, and Election Dates p. 100

9.0 Commissioner Roundtable

10.0 In-Camera – Nil

11.0 Resumption of Public Meeting – Nil

12.0 Adjournment

Next Meeting(s)

- Monthly: May 21, 2025 @ 6:00 pm – 27 Pleasant St & Livestream
- Monthly: Jun 18, 2025 @ 6:00 pm – 27 Pleasant St & Livestream

Schedule 4.1

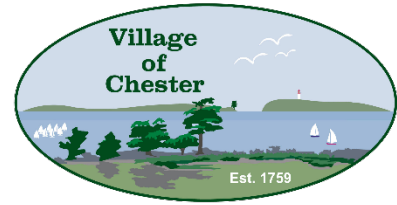
Minutes DRAFT

Village Commission Monthly Meeting Wednesday, March 12, 2025 – 6:00 pm

In-Person & Virtual Meeting

27 Pleasant Street, Chester

Video Archive <https://www.youtube.com/@villageofchesterns>



Present: Geraldine Pauley, Chair
Randall O'Malley, Vice-chair
Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner
Tom Mulrooney, Commissioner
Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

Staff: Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

Guest: Councillor Tom Bremner, MODC District 3

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the Mar 12, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 6:00 pm.

Chair Pauley stated the Land Acknowledgement:

As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.

2.0 Public Forum – Councillor Tom Bremner thanked the Village welcoming him to attend these meetings.

3.0 Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

Motion #25-010: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner Mulrooney seconded: That the Agenda of the Mar 12, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Review/Approval of Minutes

4.1 Special Commission Meeting: Wednesday, Feb 19, 2025

Clerk/Treasurer (C/T) McCallum noted an error on the date of the meeting.

Motion #25-011: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner L. Mulrooney seconded: That the Minutes of the Feb 19, 2025 Special Commission Meeting be approved as amended.

Motion carried unanimously

4.2 Monthly Commission Meeting: Wednesday, Feb 19, 2025

C/T McCallum noted an error on the date of the meeting. Vice-chair O'Malley noted there was no VPAC meeting in February, not January.

Motion #25-012: Vice-chair O'Malley moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Minutes of the Feb 19, 2025 Monthly Commission Meeting be approved as amended.

Motion carried unanimously

4.3 Committee of the Whole Meeting: Wednesday, Feb 26, 2025

Motion #25-013: Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded: That the Minutes of the Feb 26, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 Municipal Code of Conduct: Appointment of Investigator

C/T McCallum reported that the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) has completed their short-list of qualified investigators (*Schedule 5.1*). The Commission is not obligated to contract one of these.

Action: The Commission agreed to table this item until the mandatory training has been completed (date TBD). The Clerk/Treasurer will request the checklist of investigator qualities used by AMANS.

6.0 Correspondence

6.1 Municipality of the District of Chester (MODC) Planning re: Maple Cottage

The notice of a March 13th Public Hearing was provided for information (*Schedule 6.1*). Maple Cottage is on 75 Regent Street.

6.2 MODC Planning re: Public Hearing on Village Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw

The notice of a March 20th Public Hearing was provided for information (*Schedule 6.2*).

Vice-chair O'Malley reported that this is draft five of the Village Land Use By-law. MODC Council wishes to proceed with the new by-law to provide up-to-date requirements for developments.

6.3 MODC Planning re: Short-term Rentals

The notice was provided for information (*Schedule 6.3*).

6.4 Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)

A letter was received requesting action on the potential re-opening of fracking and uranium mining in Nova Scotia (*Schedule 6.4*) after an all-party ban in 2014.

Motion #25-014: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded: That the Chester Village Commission send a letter of support for the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment to the Premier.
Motion carried unanimously.

6.5 Chester Yacht Club: Invitation to Appreciation Social for Fire Department

The invitation was received for an event in July (*Schedule 6.5*).

Each Commissioner will individually RSVP for the event. The Commission will host a fire prevention-related Children's Poster Event; details to be determined at a later meeting.

7.0 Reports

7.1 Report from the Chair

Chair Pauley reported that she consulted the Village's legal advisor and insurer about maintenance and insurance responsibilities for the current Chester Fire Station on Central Street.

The Village owns the building and carries property insurance on the building. Under the Intermunicipal Fire Services Agreements, however, the building and its contents are in the "care, custody and control" of the Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC). The CFSC carries property insurance on the contents and liability. The Agreement also states that the Fire Committee should be covering all fire service-related insurance premiums.

Maintenance of the fire station is legally the responsibility of the CFSC due to the “care, custody and control” designation. Chair Pauley noted that any maintenance concerns about the fire station should be addressed to the CFSC in writing.

The Clerk/Treasurer will draft a letter to the Chair of the CFSC from Commission Chair Pauley with this information and note the future billing of the property premium.

The other outstanding issue is the trunk radio tower, which was damaged in a storm in 2019 and only partially repaired. An insurance claim paid out to the Village and eventually went to the CFSC as part of the accumulated surplus. C/T McCallum and Chief Stevens are seeking a condition evaluation and repair estimate, which will be included in the CFSC’s budget.

Chair Pauley met with Robin Carling, Chester Merchants Association (CMA), and she is very enthusiastic about the proposed Village-run Visitor Information Centre. Chair Pauley will attend the next CMA meeting to discuss plans with them.

7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Activity and Financial Reports

C/T McCallum presented the monthly activities and financial overview reports (*Schedule 7.2*). She noted that a Special Commission Meeting on March 26, 2025 has been scheduled for both the 2025/26 Fire & Emergency Services Budget and Village Budget approvals.

7.3 Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC)

The CFSC’s approved minutes of Feb 5 and the AGM of Feb 11, 2025 were shared for information. (www.chesterfirecommittee.ca)

7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)

Chair Pauley reported on the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan Draft.

The LCAAC minutes of Feb 5, 2025 were shared for information. (www.accessiblelunenburgcounty.ca)

7.5 MODC Village Planning Advisory Committee (VPAC)

Vice-chair O’Malley noted that the meeting minutes were from its January meeting. Municipal Council declined to take up recommendations from the Advisory Committee regarding the Draft Village Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. Some Committee members are hoping for an explanation from Council.

At their March 11th meeting, development agreements were addressed on two properties on Valley Road.

There VPAC minutes of Jan 14, 2025 were shared for information.
(Chester Village Planning Advisory Committee 2025)

7.6 MODC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee (EDIAC)

Commissioner L. Mulrooney reported that, as she is new to the Committee, she met with Jen Webber from MODC on the Draft EDI Policy. There is a Provincial requirement to have this Policy submitted to the Province by April 1st. The draft will be presented to Municipal Council at their March 13, 2025 meeting.

Commissioner L Mulrooney will be attending online welcome ambassador training through the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS).

The EDIAC minutes of Feb 4, 2025 were shared for information.
(EDI Advisory Committee 2025)

8.0 New/Other Business

8.1 Property Tax Records from MODC

Commissioner T. Mulrooney expressed concern that the Village does not have enough information to determine if the property tax received from the Municipality is correct and noted that there had been instances of some properties not being taxed in the past.

In response to a question, Municipal Councillor Tom Bremner confirmed that the property assessment roll comes from the provincial Property Valuation Services Corporation, and that received revenue is included in the Municipality's annual financial audit.

C/T McCallum noted that the Municipality's Finance Department provides her with spreadsheets containing figures per quarter and broken out by residential and commercial.

Action: The C/T will prepare a summary of the 2024/25 information.

8.2 Spring Street Cleaning

Commissioner T. Mulrooney suggested that the Village contract a supplier to provide street cleaning this spring. He understood that Mahone Bay and Lunenburg use a supplier from Bridgewater.

C/T McCallum reported that she contacted the Town of Mahone Bay and received the information that the Bridgewater supplier no longer offers the service. Mahone Bay purchased a sweeper attachment for one of their trucks, and apparently Lunenburg has done the same.

Action: As Chester streets are a Provincial responsibility, Chair Pauley will call the District Superintendent of Public Works to see if this work can/will be done this spring.

9.0 In camera – per Section 408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act

Motion #25-015: Commissioner Nauss moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded: That the Commission move in camera as per Section 408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act to discuss contract negotiations.

Motion carried unanimously

The Commission recessed at 7:00 pm.

10.0 Resumption of Public Meeting – report in public session per Section 408B (3) of the Municipal Government Act.

The Commission resumed the public meeting at 7:42 pm.

10.1 Agreement: Sharon LeBlanc

Action: The Commission agreed by consensus to engage Sharon LeBlanc for a Commission workshop for a fee of \$450 + HST. The date of May 14, 2025 from 2-5 pm and a backup date of May 20th will be requested.

10.2 Agreement: Chester District Swimming Program

Motion #25-016: Vice-chair O'Malley moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Lido Pool swimming lessons proceed in the 2025 Lido pool season on their usual split schedule of 9 am - noon and from 2 pm - 5 pm, and that the swimming lesson schedule be consolidated to a continuous block of time from noon - 6 pm beginning in the 2026 season.

Motion carried; Commissioner T. Mulrooney voted in opposition.

Action: Chair Pauley will draft a letter for the Swimming Program with the update.

10.3 Agreement: Maintenance Service Renewal

Motion #25-017: Commissioner L. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Chester Village Commission approve the renewal of the Intermunicipal Service Agreement with the Municipality of the District of Chester for 2025/26 Maintenance Services with the amendment of Article 12 back to 90 days.

The Chair and Clerk/Treasurer shall sign the agreement, and the Clerk shall apply the Village seal.

Motion carried unanimously.

11.0 Committee of the Whole Discussion

11.1 2025/26 Village Budget DRAFT – Revisions

C/T McCallum walked through the revised draft budget (*Schedule 11.1*) and noted that some cost quotations are still expected to come in.

Action: An updated draft will be brought to the Special Meeting on Mar 26, 2025 for review and/or approval.

12.0 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Next meeting(s):

- Special Meeting (Budgets) on March 26, 2025 at 6:00 pm
 - Regular Monthly Meeting on April 9, 2025 at 6:00 pm
- **Commissioner Nauss requests that Commissioners to bring any items for the Saltscapes event giveaway basket to this meeting.*

Commission Chair
Geraldine Pauley

Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

Minutes DRAFT

Village Commission Special Meeting (Budgets) Wednesday, Mar 26, 2025 – 5:00 pm

In-Person Meeting
27 Pleasant Street, Chester



Present: Geraldine Pauley, Chair
Randall O'Malley, Vice-chair
Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner
Tom Mulrooney, Commissioner
Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

Staff: Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

Guest: Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer, Chester Fire Services Committee
Norm Countway, Vice-chair, Chester Fire Services Committee
Wilson Fitt, Fire Station Project Director, Chester Fire Services Committee
Cody Stevens, Fire Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department

1.0 Call to Order/Land Acknowledgement

Chair Pauley called the Mar 26, 2025 Special Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 6:00 pm.

“As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.”

2.0 Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

Clerk/Treasurer McCallum noted that item 4.1 on the Agenda has been withdrawn from this meeting.

Motion #25-016: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded: That the Agenda of the Mar 26, 2025 Special Meeting be approved as amended.
Motion carried unanimously.

3.0 Business Arising

3.1 Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC): 2025/26 Fire & Emergency Services Draft Budget

Mr. Collicutt presented the 2025/26 Fire & Emergency Services Budget.

Regarding the capital budget, Commissioner T. Mulrooney would like to see supporting data for the planned replacement 541 truck.

Action: Mr. Countway requested that the Commission prepare a list of questions to submit to the CFSC.

Motion #25-017: Commissioner L Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Village of Chester Commission approves the Chester Fire Services Committee's 2025/26 Fire & Emergency Services Budget and its proposed rate of 0.114 per \$100 of assessment.

Motion carried; Commissioner T. Mulrooney voted in opposition.

Regarding the new fire station project, the ownership/borrowing issue was discussed, and several scenarios were reviewed. In response to a question, Mr. Collicutt confirmed that the Chester Fire Services Committee prefers 'Scenario A.'

Motion #25-018: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded: That the Village of Chester Commission support 'Scenario A' as proposed by the Chester Fire Services Committee 2025/26 draft budget report: "If [the station is] in the name of the Committee – therefore owned 50/50 Municipality and Village – the Committee will need borrowing powers it does not currently have."

Motion carried; Commissioner T. Mulrooney voted in opposition.

The guests from the CFSC and CVFD departed the meeting.

3.2 2025/26 Village Draft Budget

C/T McCallum walked through v.3 of the Draft Budget.

Motion #25-019: Commission Nauss moved; Commissioner T Mulrooney seconded: That the Village of Chester Commission approves the 2025/26 Village Commission Budget and its proposed unchanged tax rate of 0.077 per \$100 of assessment.

Motion carried unanimously.

It was noted that the planned 2024/25 transfers to capital reserves must be made this week.

Motion #25-020: Commissioner Nauss moved; Commissioner O'Malley seconded: That C/T McCallum send a letter to the bank requesting transfers be made to reserve accounts before March 31, 2025.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Pauley provided an update on furniture and equipment purchasing for the

Visitor Information Centre. C/T McCallum noted that some of the costs will be captured in the 2024/25 fiscal year which has Tourism budget funds remaining.

Commissioner T. Mulrooney commented that he has found a supplier for street cleaning and will ask them to send their quote to the Clerk/Treasurer.

[Note: Whether the Province plan to do this work this Spring or not is TBD.]

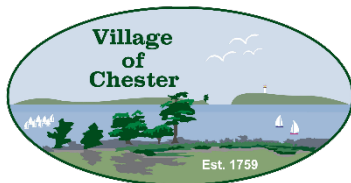
4.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

Commission Chair
Geraldine Pauley

Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

Schedule 5.1



Village of Chester Commission

Memorandum

April 9, 2025

RE: 2025/26 Village Budget – Revised

Issue Summary

An error was discovered after the fact in Draft v. 3 of the 2025/26 Village Operational Budget, approved on March 26, 2025. The Capital Budget and EHS Building Budget are fine.

Background

The Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) portion of employee salaries and office overhead was counted twice. These figures were newly included in Revenue since the services are now invoiced, but they had also been backed out of Operational Expenses lines #5440 and #5430 already per past practice, with only the Village portion showing. It has to be one or the other!

In keeping with past practice, the Revenue figures of \$49,100 and \$4,800 respectively were deleted from Revenue and recommended adjustments have made throughout the Operations Budget to reduce expenses accordingly and balance the budget. Notes have been updated with the changes. The Commission may wish to proceed with the recommendations in Draft v.4 or prefer different adjustments.

Draft Motion

That the Village of Chester Commission approves the revised Draft 4 of the 2025/26 Village Commission Budget as presented OR amended, and its proposed unchanged tax rate of 0.077 per \$100 of assessment.

Attachments

- 2025/26 Village Budget Draft v.4, with changes highlighted for review.
- The General Government/Operations Budget v.3 is attached for comparison.

Attach A

Village of Chester Commission
 2025/26 Village Budget Draft - SUMMARY REVISED
 v. 4 | Apr 9, 2025

	Budget		
	2025/26	Notes	Page
REVENUE SUMMARY			
GENERAL GOV'T / OPERATIONS BUDGET	\$420,517.35	Based 0.0777 property tax revenue (unchanged)	p. 2
CAPITAL BUDGET	\$185,248.86	Federal/Provincial capital grants and Reserve funds only	p. 5
EHS BUILDING BUDGET	\$21,260.00	EMS rental of building income only; no public funds	p. 6
TOTAL REVENUE	\$627,026.21		
EXPENSE SUMMARY			
GENERAL GOV'T / OPERATIONS BUDGET	\$420,079.29	Disbursement of tax revenue income is contained here	p. 2-4
CAPITAL BUDGET	\$185,248.86	Lido restoration & Lido/Public Washroom accessibility	p. 5
EHS BUILDING BUDGET	\$21,260.00	Operations and maintenance from rental income	p. 6
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$626,588.15		
DIFFERENCE (+surplus or -deficit)	438.05	Subject to change	

Village of Chester Commission
 2025/26 Village Budget Draft - GENERAL GOVERNMENT / OPERATIONS BUDGET
 v. 4 | Apr 9, 2025

	Year-to-Date Feb 28, 2025 <i>(8.33% remaining)</i>	Budget 2024/25 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Budget 2025/26 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Notes	
REVENUE - General Gov't Operations					
Revenue Sources					
4100	Village General Govt Property Tax	409,300.00	408,476.05	413,047.35	1.01
4100	Grants in Lieu (GIL)	744.99	0.00	745.00	1.02
4116	Eastlink Rental/Tower	2,479.40	2,615.00	2,615.00	
4201	HST Offset Grant	3,867.92	1,710.00	1,710.00	1.03
4225	Transfer fr Federal Govt-Grant (Lifeguards)	5,185.42	2,400.00	2,400.00	1.04
Revenue Total		448,249.58	415,201.05	420,517.35	
TOTAL REVENUE		\$448,249.58	\$415,201.05	\$420,517.35	

EXPENSES - General Gov't Operations					1.10
Governance					
5450	Annual General Meeting	511.82	350.00	1,500.00	1.11
5477	Commissioner Honorarium	8,462.20	10,820.00	11,070.00	1.12
5461	Commissioner Meeting Pay	690.28	2,160.00	2,580.00	1.13
NEW	Secure Laptop/Tablet(s)			3,335.00	1.14
5431	Low-Income Property Tax Exemptions	2,702.12	5,000.00	4,000.00	1.15
5432	Non-Profit Tax Exemptions	1,337.83	3,000.00	2,000.00	1.16
5496	Election Expense	505.57	2,625.00	2,600.00	1.17
Governance Total		14,209.82	23,955.00	27,085.00	
Administration					
5430	Village Office Rent	13,389.49	16,000.00	15,020.00	1.18
5428	Village Office Cleaning	3,742.21	4,070.00	3,760.00	1.19
5435	Audit Fees	4,831.35	4,200.00	5,000.00	1.20
5440	Employee Wages (VOC Portion)	65,168.87	68,000.00	64,635.00	1.21
5445	Office Supplies & Expenses	3,474.19	4,000.00	4,000.00	
5447	Employment Insurance	2,858.46	2,300.00		1.22
5448	Canada Pension Plan	5,669.27	4,500.00		1.23
NEW	Community Newsletter (Quarterly)			4,000.00	1.24
5455	Advertising	549.47	2,000.00	3,000.00	1.25
5460	Membership & Dues	946.42	1,500.00	1,200.00	
NEW	ANSV Staff Coordinator - Cost Share			3,500.00	1.26
5465	Training & Travel	2,463.41	4,000.00	5,660.00	1.27
5470	Bank Charges	249.41	300.00	350.00	
5472	Consultants	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	
5475	Legal Fees	917.72	3,000.00	3,000.00	
5476	Medical Insurance (Telus Health-VOC portion)	8,707.79	6,250.00	7,650.00	1.28
5478	Employee Benefits (RSP)	3,768.00	4,060.00	4,149.30	1.29
5480	Office Phone & Internet	2,161.12	2,200.00	2,400.00	
5481	IT Support & Website	8,701.48	6,700.00	9,040.00	1.30
5490	Insurance (Liability & Property)	19,518.17	24,300.00	22,000.00	1.31
5492	Cyber Insurance	2,400.00	2,500.00	2,570.00	1.32
5495	Office Equipment & Programs	5,526.13	5,000.00	6,200.00	1.33
Administration Total		155,042.96	167,880.00	170,134.30	

	Year-to-Date Feb 28, 2025 <i>(8.33% remaining)</i>	Budget 2024/25 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Budget 2025/26 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Notes	
Protection					
5501	Street Lights Power	7,153.60	12,625.00	8,000.00	1.34
5526	Street Lights Maintenance	10,298.21	10,300.00	5,100.00	1.35
5540	Crossing Guards	9,948.26	11,500.00	16,000.00	1.36
	Protection Total	27,400.07	34,425.00	29,100.00	
Beautification					
5565	Flower Baskets	22,689.68	23,000.00	23,530.00	1.37
5570	Wreaths	3,780.25	5,000.00	5,000.00	1.38
5582	Community Celebrations/Grants	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	1.39
	Beautification Total	36,469.93	38,000.00	38,530.00	
Economic Development					
5590	Tourism Attraction Projects	0.00	10,000.00	2,500.00	1.40
NEW	Visitor Information Center (VIC)			10,000.00	1.41
NEW	Wayfinding Consultation & Plan			0.00	
NEW	Highway Directional Signs			4,200.00	1.42
	Economic Development Total	0.00	10,000.00	16,700.00	
Operations					
5575	Summer Compost Collection	20,266.20	22,310.00	24,475.00	1.43
5585	Property Maintenance/Landscaping	5,608.13	4,000.00	7,450.00	1.44
5560	Public Washroom Operation/Maintenance	12,434.52	15,000.00	14,200.00	1.45
	Operations Total	38,308.85	41,310.00	46,125.00	
Jib Lot					
5405	Jib Lot Maintenance	2,253.14	1,500.00	3,000.00	1.46
NEW	Jib Lot Fence Removal			3,700.00	1.47
5410	Land Taxes (Waste Collection)	631.39	650.00	650.00	
5415	Water Lot Taxes (Waste Collection)	138.58	150.00	150.00	
	Jib Lot Total	3,023.11	2,300.00	7,500.00	
Lido Pool					
5910	Lido Maintenance & Operations	45,605.15	32,000.00	32,750.00	1.48
5925	Lido Insurance	3,980.01	5,100.00	4,800.00	1.49
5935	Life Guard Wages	26,323.18	25,500.00	32,975.00	1.50
5940	Supervisor/Security (Race Week)	1,838.04	1,600.00	1,880.00	1.51
5945	Lido Taxes (Waste Collection Fee)	1,159.88	1,200.00	1,200.00	
	Lido Pool Total	78,906.26	65,400.00	73,605.00	
Reserves (Planned)					
5743	Gen Gov't Operating Reserve Deposit	0.00	1,931.05	TBD	1.52
5742	Utility Reserve Deposit			1,300.00	1.53
5937	Lido Reserve Deposit	0.00	30,000.00	10,000.00	1.54
	Reserves Total	0.00	31,931.05	11,300.00	
TOTAL EXPENSE		\$353,361.00	\$415,201.05	\$420,079.29	

DIFFERENCE (+surplus or -deficit)

438.05

Village of Chester Commission
 2025/26 Village Budget Draft - CAPITAL BUDGET
 v. 4 | Apr 9, 2025 (Unchanged)

	Year-to-Date Feb 28, 2025 <i>(8.33% remaining)</i>	Budget 2024/25 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Budget 2025/26 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Notes	
REVENUE - Capital					
Revenue Sources					
2200	Deferred Revenue-Provincial Grant (CCTH)	123,703.28	150,000.00	26,296.72	2.01
2200	Deferred Revenue-Federal Grant (EAF)	6,152.86	100,000.00	93,847.14	2.02
4223	Provincial Grant (GRID)			TBD	2.03
4170	Transfer from Lido Reserve	0.00	65,105.00	65,105.00	2.04
	Revenue Total	129,856.14	315,105.00	185,248.86	
TOTAL REVENUE		\$129,856.14	\$315,105.00	\$185,248.86	
EXPENSES - Capital					
Capital Projects					
5915	Lido Capital Repairs	123,703.28	150,000.00	26,296.72	2.05
5916	Lido/Washroom Accessibility Retrofit	6,152.86	165,105.00	158,952.14	2.06
5916	Lido Facility Accessible Entrance			TBD	2.07
	Capital Projects Total	129,856.14	315,105.00	185,248.86	
TOTAL EXPENSE		\$129,856.14	\$315,105.00	\$185,248.86	

Village of Chester Commission
 2025/26 Village Budget Draft - EMC BUILDING BUDGET
 v. 4 | Apr 9, 2025 (Unchanged)

	Year-to-Date Feb 28, 2025 <i>(8.33% remaining)</i>	Budget 2024/25 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Budget 2025/26 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Notes	
REVENUE - EMC Building					
Revenue Sources					
4110	Rental income - EMC	19,243.84	21,260.00	21,260.00	3.01
4180	Transfer from EHS Reserve	13,875.00	13,875.00		
Revenue Total		33,118.84	35,135.00	21,260.00	
TOTAL REVENUE		\$33,118.84	\$35,135.00	\$21,260.00	

EXPENSES - EMC Building

EMC Building					
5705	EMC Maintenance & Repairs	2,437.01	3,500.00	8,500.00	3.05 3.06
5710	EMC Insurance	1,151.76	1,200.00	1,250.00	3.07
5715	EMC Taxes (Property & Waste)	5,149.30	5,260.00	5,270.00	
EMC Building Total		8,738.07	9,960.00	15,020.00	
Reserves (Planned)					
5720	EMS Reserve Deposit	0.00	11,300.00	6,240.00	3.08
Reserves Total		0.00	11,300.00	6,240.00	
Capital Projects					
5709	EMC Roof Replacement	12,042.13	13,875.00		3.09
Capital Projects Total		12,042.13	13,875.00	0.00	
TOTAL EXPENSE		\$20,780.20	\$35,135.00	\$21,260.00	

Village of Chester Commission
2025/26 Village Budget Draft - NOTES
v. 4 | Apr 9, 2025

GENERAL GOVERNMENT / OPERATIONS BUDGET

- 1.01 2025 preliminary property assessments provided by Municipality (subject to appeals); minus 2024/25 overpayment \$6,353.09.
- 1.02 Grants in Lieu of property tax: Federal government, Provincial government, and NS Power properties in the Village.
- 1.03 Provincial grant based on spend two fiscal years past; award variable depends on the number of applicants and funding pool. Estimate based on half of last year's grant.
- 1.04 Canada Summer Jobs application for Summer 2025 lifeguards (applied for 2 lifeguards, 1 records student); assumes one is approved.
- 1.10 The 2024 Nova Scotia Annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) 2.3% - this is tracked throughout.
- 1.11 Based on actual cost in 2024 and adding a notice flyer mailout to improve reach.
- 1.12 Increased by CPI. Honorarium model to be considered this fiscal year.
- 1.13 Increased by CPI to \$61.40; based on 3 external committees' monthly meetings and annual workshops.
- 1.14 Village-owned secure tablets for Commissioner use (Android x2) and replacement laptop for Clerk/Treasurer.
- 1.15 Reduced projection a based on previous uptake to date.
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- 1.17 Based on 2022 actual costs plus CPI - two seats are up for election this year.
- 1.18 Based on 75% of rent (3-year lease 22-25). 2025 cost is \$1,591.35 + payable HST = \$1,668.69/month total. (Note: Village portion only is included here. Chester Fire Services Committee portion is 25%.)
- 1.19 Commercial cleaning service (Inside Out) 2025 rate.
- 1.20 Restored to previous level based on use.
- 1.21 Incl. CPI salary increases for staff and 2025 WCB, EI, and CPP payments. (Note: Village portion is 60% CT + 50% Admin Asst - included here. Chester Fire Services Committee portion is 40% CT + 50% Admin Asst = \$49,100.)
- 1.22 Moved to include Employment Insurance (EI) in all wage lines: Employees, Crossing Guards, Summer Students/Lifeguards.
- 1.23 Moved to include Canada Pension Plan (CPP) in all wage lines: Employees, Crossing Guards, Summer Students/Lifeguards.
- 1.24 NEW quarterly print newsletter; based on printing and Post Office distribution (x4). Writing is in-house.
- 1.25 Increased to allow for one notice flyer distribution.
- 1.26 Placeholder until funding model comes from the Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV)..
- 1.27 Includes estimated costs for the Clerk/Treasurer and 5 Commissioners to attend the 2025 ANSV Conference.
- 1.28 Based on quoted rate effective April 1 2025; 60% employer portion. **Employee portion comes off payroll.**
- 1.29 6% RSP per Clerk/Treasurer contract.
- 1.30 Incl. AMANS website fees and re-design of site; IT back-end management & security
- 1.31 Projected increase by 7% (minus Fire Station property premium billed to Chester Fire Services Committee).
- 1.32 Projected increase by 7%.
- 1.33 Based on 2024 actuals estimate plus CPI; significant inflation in this area. Incl. software licenses for Adobe, Canva, etc.
- 1.34 Reduced from 2024 erroneous power rate increase.
- 1.35 Quotation for replacement purchase of 2 remaining decorative fixtures; installation of 1.
- 1.36 Increased by CPI (\$17.45/hr) + 6% vacation pay; incl. vacation pay, WCB, EI, and CPP.
- 1.37 Incl. 75 hanging flower baskets + CPI; investigating a combination of hanging baskets and planters for next year (to be determined).
- 1.38 Incl. 50 holiday wreaths.
- 1.39 Same as 2024. Increased grant pool and revised timing to be considered next year.
- 1.40 Fund for promotional premiums and marketing opportunities.
- 1.41 Incl facility rental \$3,700/year; fund for insurance, sign, furnishings, office equipment, visitor materials. Summer staff \$3.5K portion of expected cost share from Municipality.
- 1.42 Placeholder for two replacement Highway 3 directional signs to Village.
- 1.43 Per cost estimate (GE Environmental) for **Jun 15-Sep 15** supplementary collection; includes fuel surcharge 42% (currently 41%) + HST.
- 1.44 Increase based on previous year actual + CPI and replacement 3-stream waste bin \$1,700.
- 1.45 Based on previous year actual + CPI and roof insulation \$1,430.

- 1.46 Increase based on actual last year + CPI and a placeholder for filling post holes (see note 1.48).
- 1.47 Cost for removal of existing picket fence. Filling post holes left behind is not included.
- 1.48 Typical operations costs + CPI; addition of pool chemical shed and replacement of awning fabric.
- 1.49** 2024 actual + 7% insurance increase rate.
- 1.50 Based on full staffing with 50c/hr increase, and incl. vacation pay, WCB, EI, and CPP. Awaiting news of Canada Summer Jobs grant to offset some of the cost.
- 1.51 Based on 2024 actual (travel fees now applicable) + CPI; organized through the Chester Yacht Club.
- 1.52 Amount to be determined - this deposit comes from previous year's operating surplus, if any.
- 1.53 Per Reserve Funds & Investment Policy, figure is approx. 10% of streetlight spend; transferred in final month of fiscal year.
- 1.54** Per Reserve Rund & Investment Policy required \$30,000 or as directed by Commission; transferred in final month of fiscal year.

CAPITAL BUDGET

- 2.01 Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage grant for Lido Pool capital repairs received in 2023 and extended. Most work completed in Fall 2024; final part to come in May 2025. Closeout report to CCTH due Jul 15, 2025.
- 2.02 Federal "Enabling Accessibility Fund" grant for Lido Pool and Public Washroom accessibility retrofits received in 2023 and extended. Work scheduled to take place in 2025. Closeout report due 30 days after completion.
- 2.03 Municipal Affairs "Growth & Renewal for Infrastructure Development Program" awarded in 2025 for final phase of Lido Pool accessibility retrofits. Grant covers 50% of project up to a maximum of \$242,000. Actual spend TBD.
- 2.04 \$65,105 contribution req from Enabling Accessibility Fund granter. Subject to change: may adjust to match actual cost.
- 2.05 2024/25 Final piece of the work to take place in Spring 2025: interior wall repairs, sanding, and coating.
- 2.06 Phase 1 Public Washroom accessibility retrofits and Phase 3 pool deck ramp into Lido water & accessories. Pricing based on Class D estimate. Subject to change when RFPs awarded with Class A costs in April.
- 2.07 Phase 2 access from parking lot to pool deck - Class D \$350K + contingency; firm costs required through a public request for proposals process.

EMC BUILDING BUDGET

- 3.01 Contract (2018-28) indicates same rent figure for duration: \$1,749.44/month.
- 3.05 Operations funded by rental income only; no tax revenue dollars.
- 3.06 Regular maintenance level with additional \$5K for exterior painting.
- 3.07 2024 actual + 7% insurance increase rate.
- 3.08 Per the Reserve Funds & Investment Policy, any operational surplus goes to EHS Reserve for future needs; transferred in the final month of fiscal year.
- 3.09 No capital work required at this time.

Attach B

Village of Chester Commission
 2025/26 Village Budget Draft - GENERAL GOVERNMENT / OPERATIONS BUDGET
 v. 3 | Mar 21, 2025

	Year-to-Date Feb 28, 2025 <i>(8.33% remaining)</i>	Budget 2024/25 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Budget 2025/26 <i>(Tax rate 0.0777)</i>	Notes	
REVENUE - General Gov't Operations					
Revenue Sources					
4100	Village General Govt Property Tax	409,300.00	408,476.05	413,047.35	1.01
4100	Grants in Lieu (GIL)	744.99	0.00	745.00	1.02
4050	CFSC Management/Admin Income	22,674.16	0.00	49,100.00	1.03
4118	CFSC Rent Income	3,997.69	0.00	4,800.00	1.04
4116	Eastlink Rental/Tower	2,479.40	2,615.00	2,615.00	
4201	HST Offset Grant	3,867.92	1,710.00	1,710.00	1.05
4225	Transfer fr Federal Govt-Grant (Lifeguards)	5,185.42	2,400.00	2,400.00	1.06
	Revenue Total	448,249.58	415,201.05	474,417.35	
TOTAL REVENUE					
		\$448,249.58	\$415,201.05	\$474,417.35	
EXPENSES - General Gov't Operations					
Governance					
5450	Annual Public Meeting	511.82	350.00	1,500.00	1.11
5477	Commissioner Honorarium	8,462.20	10,820.00	11,070.00	1.12
5461	Commissioner Meeting Pay	690.28	2,160.00	2,580.00	1.13
NEW	Secure Laptop/Tablet(s)			3,335.00	1.14
5431	Low-Income Property Tax Exemptions	2,702.12	5,000.00	4,000.00	1.15
5432	Non-Profit Tax Exemptions	1,337.83	3,000.00	2,000.00	1.16
5496	Election Expense	505.57	2,625.00	2,600.00	1.17
	Governance Total	14,209.82	23,955.00	27,085.00	
Administration					
5430	Village Office Rent	13,389.49	16,000.00	16,000.00	1.18
5428	Village Office Cleaning	3,742.21	4,070.00	3,760.00	1.19
5435	Audit Fees	4,831.35	4,200.00	5,000.00	1.20
5440	Employee Wages	65,168.87	68,000.00	64,650.00	1.21
5586	Summer Student (Records)				
5445	Office Supplies & Expenses	3,474.19	4,000.00	4,000.00	
5447	Employment Insurance	2,858.46	2,300.00		1.22
5448	Canada Pension Plan	5,669.27	4,500.00		1.23
NEW	Community Newsletter (Quarterly)			4,000.00	1.24
5455	Advertising	549.47	2,000.00	3,000.00	1.25
5460	Membership & Dues	946.42	1,500.00	1,200.00	
NEW	ANSV Staff Coordinator - Cost Share			3,500.00	1.26
5465	Training & Travel	2,463.41	4,000.00	5,660.00	1.27
5470	Bank Charges	249.41	300.00	350.00	
5472	Consultants	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	
5475	Legal Fees	917.72	3,000.00	3,000.00	
5476	Medical Insurance (Telus Health)	8,707.79	6,250.00	7,330.00	1.28
5478	Employee Benefits (RSP)	3,768.00	4,060.00	4,150.00	1.29
5480	Office Phone & Internet	2,161.12	2,200.00	2,400.00	
5481	IT Support & Website	8,701.48	6,700.00	9,040.00	1.30
5490	Insurance (Liability & Property)	19,518.17	24,300.00	24,300.00	1.31

	Year-to-Date Feb 28, 2025 (8.33% remaining)	Budget 2024/25 (Tax rate 0.0777)	Budget 2025/26 (Tax rate 0.0777)	Notes
5492 Cyber Insurance	2,400.00	2,500.00	2,570.00	1.32
5495 Office Equipment & Programs	5,526.13	5,000.00	6,200.00	1.33
Administration Total	155,042.96	167,880.00	173,109.99	
Protection				
5501 Street Lights Power	7,153.60	12,625.00	8,000.00	1.34
5526 Street Lights Maintenance	10,298.21	10,300.00	5,000.00	1.35
5540 Crossing Guards	9,948.26	11,500.00	15,255.00	1.36
Protection Total	27,400.07	34,425.00	28,255.00	
Beautification				
5565 Flower Baskets	22,689.68	23,000.00	23,530.00	1.37
5570 Wreaths	3,780.25	5,000.00	5,000.00	1.38
5582 Community Celebrations/Grants	10,000.00	10,000.00	15,000.00	1.39
Beautification Total	36,469.93	38,000.00	43,530.00	
Economic Development				
5590 Tourism Attraction Projects	0.00	10,000.00	2,500.00	1.40
NEW Visitor Information Center (VIC)			14,500.00	1.41
NEW Wayfinding Consultation & Plan			8,450.00	1.42
NEW Highway Directional Signs			4,200.00	1.43
Economic Development Total	0.00	10,000.00	29,650.00	
Operations				
5575 Summer Compost Collection	20,266.20	22,310.00	34,600.00	1.44
5585 Property Maintenance/Landscaping	5,608.13	4,000.00	5,750.00	1.45
5960 Public Washroom Operation/Maintenance	12,434.52	15,000.00	15,000.00	1.46
Operations Total	38,308.85	41,310.00	55,350.00	
Jib Lot				
5405 Jib Lot Maintenance	2,253.14	1,500.00	3,000.00	1.47
NEW Jib Lot Fence			3,700.00	1.48
5410 Land Taxes (Waste Collection)	631.39	650.00	650.00	
5415 Water Lot Taxes (Waste Collection)	138.58	150.00	150.00	
Jib Lot Total	3,023.11	2,300.00	7,500.00	
Lido Pool				
5910 Lido Maintenance & Operations	45,605.15	32,000.00	32,750.00	1.49
5925 Lido Insurance	3,980.01	5,100.00	4,800.00	
5935 Life Guard Wages	26,323.18	25,500.00	32,975.00	1.50
5940 Supervisor/Security (Race Week)	1,838.04	1,600.00	1,880.00	1.51
5945 Lido Taxes (Waste Collection Fee)	1,159.88	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Lido Pool Total	78,906.26	65,400.00	73,605.00	
Reserves (Planned)				
5743 Gen Gov't Operating Reserve Deposit	0.00	1,931.05	TBD	1.52
5742 Utility Reserve Deposit			1,300.00	1.53
5937 Lido Reserve Deposit	0.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	1.54
Reserves Total	0.00	31,931.05	31,300.00	
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$353,361.00	\$415,201.05	\$469,385.00	
DIFFERENCE (+surplus or -deficit)			5,032.35	1.55

Village of Chester Commission
2025/26 Village Budget Draft - NOTES
v. 3 | Mar 21, 2025

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- 1.42 Based on quotation received; further requests for quotation and potential cost sharing to be explored.
- 1.43 Placeholder for two replacement Highway 3 directional signs to Village.

- 1.44 *Per cost estimate (GE Environmental) for Jun 1-Sep 30 supplementary collection; includes fuel surcharge 45% (currently 41%) + HST.*
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- 1.54 *Per Reserve Rund & Investment Policy required figure; transferred in final month of fiscal year.*

CAPITAL BUDGET

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Schedule 5.2



**Village of Chester Commission
Memorandum
April 9, 2025**

RE: Branded Premiums for Saltscapes Expo

Issue Summary

The Saltscapes Expo takes place on May 9-11, 2025. A pop-up banner will be needed for Village identity at the show, and some branded premiums (i.e., giveaways, swag, etc.) should be procured. Below are

1. Retractable Banner

A pop-up banner is an indoor portable format for a 33"x80" banner with built-in retractable hardware.

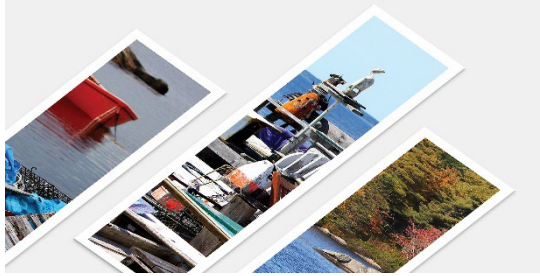
A Village-branded banner can be re-used after Saltscapes at any public meeting or event where the Commission has a presence.

Cost: 1 unit = \$203.36



2. Print Collateral (suggest one of below)

<p>Postcards 4x6" (1 design)</p>		<p>100 units = \$130.36 250 units = \$164.25</p>
<p>Postcards 4x6" (4 designs, 25 qty/ea)</p>		<p>100 units = \$133.44</p>

<p>Bookmarks 2x7" (one design)</p>		<p>100 units = \$174.16 250 units = 213.79</p>
<p>Bookmarks 2x6" (4 designs, 25 qty/ea)</p>		<p>100 units = \$203.36</p>

3. Premiums: Outdoor Accessories (suggest 1-2 of below)

<p>Lip Balm</p>		<p>150 units = \$181.46</p>
<p>Pedometer</p>		<p>150 units = \$418.18</p>
<p>Engraved Carabiner Keychain</p>		<p>150 units = \$251.85</p>
<p>Engraved Flashlight Keychain</p>		<p>150 units = \$342.58</p>

<p>Green Spearmints, individually wrapped</p>		<p>Case of 1000 = \$298.16</p>
<p>Recycled Plastic Water Bottle</p>		<p>75 units = \$320.41</p>

Considerations

- Financial Impacts
 - A marketing material allotment is in the 2025/26 Budget in the amount of
- Creative
 - A simpler logo would be needed for the premiums. The Commission could consider (a) using this alternate that was created by one of the proposed Village pin suppliers or (b) create a black & white alternate that could also be used on Visitor Information Centre signage, or (c) just a wordmark.



(b) *TBD*



Request for Direction

The Commission is asked to provide direction to the Clerk/Treasurer regarding the print materials and premiums order(s) for Saltscapes.

Further, the Commission is asked to comment on logo format preference.



**Municipal Affairs
Office of the Minister**

PO Box 216, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2M4 • Telephone 902 424-5550 Fax 902 424-0581 • novascotia.ca

March 19, 2025

Dear Mayors, Wardens and Chairs:

I am writing to update you about the progress related to the mandatory Code of Conduct (Code) training for all local elected officials in Nova Scotia.

As you are aware, in December, all municipalities and villages adopted the provincial Code of Conduct. I would be remiss in not recognizing the hard work and commitment from councils and commissions that have been put forth in this effort.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) is leading the design, development and delivery of the training. To support elected officials in understanding the requirements under the Code, the NSFM organized in-person training sessions across the province and created an online training module that must be completed by all elected officials. For more information about the online training module please visit the NSFM website at <https://nsfm.ca/municipal-code-of-conduct-in-person-training-sessions.html>

The Code regulations will be amended on April 1, 2025, to make this online training mandatory. Following the recommendation from the Code of Conduct Working Group, this online training must be completed within 30 days. The regulations will also require that any newly elected official must complete this training within 30 days of being elected. A failure to complete the training within this timeframe will be considered a breach of the Code.

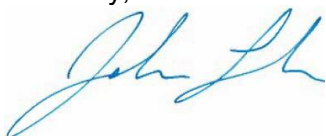
The Code framework and training module are based on the recommendations put forth by the Working Group. As with any new framework, time and experience will be instrumental in its evaluation.

I would also like to mention that the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) has developed a list of qualified individuals whom municipalities and villages may appoint as Code investigators. The list can be found on their website at <https://amans.ca/amans-qualified-list-of-investigators-municipal-code-of-conduct.html>.

Mayors, Wardens and Chairs
Page 2

In closing, I would like to extend my appreciation to both the NSFM and AMANS for their collaborative efforts and leadership in the implementation of the Code. This initiative is an example of how we can collectively foster a positive environment and enhance accountability around council tables.

Sincerely,



Honourable John Loh
Minister of Municipal Affairs

c: Chief Administrative Officers
Village Clerk Treasurers
Juanita Spencer, Chief Executive Officer, NSFM
David Campbell, Executive Director, AMANS



Minutes

Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 5:00 pm

Village Commission Boardroom, 27 Pleasant Street, Chester

- Present** Norm Countway, Vice-chair
 Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer-Secretary
 Wilson Fitt
 Nancy Hatch
 Colin MacDonald (via Zoom; left meeting at 6:00 pm)
 James Robert (via Zoom)
- Other** Cody Stevens, Fire Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD)
 Greg Conron, Deputy Fire Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department
 Heather McCallum, Administrator (Clerk/Treasurer, Village of Chester (VOC))
 Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary (Admin Assistant, Village of Chester)
- Guest(s)** Tom Bremner, Chester Municipal Councillor, District 3
 Randy O’Malley, Chester Village Commissioner

#	Agenda Item
1.	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>The meeting was called to order by the Vice-chair at 5:00 pm.</p>
8.	<p>In-camera – per Section 22/408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act <i>*Due to time constraints on some of the members, the In-camera session was held first, and some other agenda items were shuffled.</i></p> <p>It was decided by consensus that the Committee to move in-camera first, to discuss (a) the acquisition, sale, lease and security of municipal/village property; (g) legal advice; and (e) contract negotiations.</p> <p>Staff and Guests left the room. The Committee recessed at 5:01 pm.</p>

9.	<p>Resumption of Public Meeting – per Section 22/408B (3) of the Municipal Government Act</p> <p>The Committee resumed the public meeting at 5:25 pm.</p> <p>MOTION: Mr. Countway moved; Ms. Hatch seconded: That the Chester Fire Services Committee continue the contractual relationship with the Village of Chester for the provision of administrative support services. The Committee will negotiate a renewed agreement for a five-year term with Village staff before the expiration of the current agreement on October 16, 2025.</p> <p><i>Motion carried.</i></p>
2.	<p>Approval of Agenda</p> <p>MOTION: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Collicutt: That the Committee approves the Agenda of the Tuesday, March 11, 2025 Monthly Meeting as presented.</p> <p><i>Motion carried.</i></p>
3.	<p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>3.1 Regular Meeting: Feb 5, 2025</p> <p>Mr. Robert noted that he was not in attendance at this meeting and should be listed in Regrets.</p> <p>MOTION: Moved by Mr. Collicutt; seconded by Ms. Hatch: That the Committee approves the Minutes of the Wednesday, February 5, 2025 Monthly Meeting as amended.</p> <p><i>Motion carried.</i></p> <p>3.2 Annual General Meeting: Feb 11, 2025</p> <p>MOTION: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Fitt: That the Committee approves the Minutes of the Tuesday, Feb 11, 2025 Annual General Meeting as presented.</p> <p><i>Motion carried.</i></p>
4.	<p>Business Arising</p> <p>4.1 2025/26 Draft Budget – Approve/Amend for Submission to Council and Commission</p> <p>Mr. Collicutt reviewed the updates to the Draft Fire & Emergency Services Budget. Discussion was held on increasing the fire tax rate further, as was suggested by a Municipal Councillor at the AGM, but it was agreed to leave the rate at the level proposed of \$0.114 per \$100/assessment.</p>

	<p>Mr. Fitt noted that the Phase 2 Requests for Proposals (RFPs) cannot go out until the path to paying for the work is clear. It was agreed that a loan amortization line will be added for the cost of borrowing, even as the potential borrowing is TBD. A few other minor revisions will be done. <i>(Schedule 4.1 attached is the final draft that went to Council & Commission for approval.)</i></p> <p>MOTION: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Robert: That the Chester Fire Services present the proposed 2025/26 Fire & Emergency Services Budget to Municipal Council and the Village Commission for their approval.</p> <p><i>Motion carried.</i></p>
6.	<p>Reports</p>
6.4	<p>Fundraising Sub-Committee</p> <p>Mr. MacDonald commented that he will begin Fundraising efforts upon his return.</p> <p>The event at the Chester Yacht Club, <i>'Invitation to Appreciation Social for the Fire Department'</i> (see Correspondence item 7.1) could serve as a launch of the capital campaign. Michael Broley, our webmaster, could be present to take photos and post to the website and social media.</p> <p>Mr. Countway reported that the Committee has received confirmation from the Canada Revenue Agency that this Committee, Chester Fire Services, is now registered as a qualified donee, so can receive donations and issue tax receipts. Fundraising, however, cannot be done by the Committee itself.</p>
6.2	<p>New Fire Station Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Swap Update <p>Mr. Robert reported that the two lawyers are now in contact, so the process is moving. An unneeded 'right-of-way' was addressed.</p> <p>ACTION: Mr. Robert continues to reach out/wait for lawyers' responses.</p>
5.	<p>Chester Volunteer Fire Dept: Activity Report</p> <p>Chief Stevens presented his monthly report <i>(Schedule 5)</i>.</p>

<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p>Reports – <i>continued</i></p> <p>Treasurer-Secretary</p> <p>Mr. Collicutt presented his monthly report (<i>Schedule 6.1</i>).</p> <p>ACTION: The 2024/25 budgeted deposits to reserve funds to be completed before March 31st. ACTION: Ms. McCallum will continue to seek legal clarification regarding fundraising. ACTION: A separate CFSC bank account to for the purpose of accepting donations will be opened. Then letters will be sent to the CVFD and Municipality to request transfer of donations for the fire station received by them to date.</p> <p>Ms. McCallum provided a draft of a proposed Request for Decision to Council and the Commission for the budget approval, including a new ask for borrowing powers.</p> <p>MOTION: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Robert: To approve the Request for Decision to Council and the Commission for Chester Fire Services Committee borrowing powers. <i>Motion carried.</i></p>
<p>6.2</p>	<p>New Fire Station Project, <i>continued</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP Status <p>Mr. Fitt reported that Phase 2 RFPs have been vetted by Municipal Procurement and are now in legal review. The only major amendment was to add professional liability insurance terms to the draft Project Management contract.</p> <p>The RFPs will stipulate designing to a number, so that number needs to be decided on. That number will be driven by the appetite for tax rate increases and fundraising expectations. He also cautioned that the U.S. tariff situation may have an impact on the project.</p>
<p>6.3</p>	<p>Communication Sub-Committee</p> <p>Mr. Countway reported that the Committee is planning several firefighter story videos made by the end of March for social media. The shoot will take place at the fire station.</p>
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p>New Business</p> <p>Correspondence: Chester Yacht Club</p>

	<p>Invitations from the Yacht Club to the Chair of the Fire Committee and Chief of the Fire Department was provided for information (<i>Schedule 7.1</i>). There will be an opportunity for remarks about the new fire station project. Mr. Broley will be asked to attend to take photos.</p> <p>Mr. Robert raised the question of branded merchandise as a possible tactic for later discussion.</p>
10.	<p>Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis Communications Response <p>Mr. Fitt noted that in the near future a discussion needs to be held on the role of the four organizations – Committee, Fire Department, Village and Municipality – as to who responds to media inquiries in a crisis. There needs to be some agreement on crisis management, and pre-determined action plan.</p> <p>This was prompted by the recent situation in Collingwood. Ms. McCallum has requested comment from the insurer and both legal advisors on the responsibilities in such a scenario. Tabled for later discussion.</p>
11.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.</p>

Important dates:

- **Present 2025/26 Budget to Village Commission:** March 26, 2025 at 6:00 pm
- **Present 2025/26 Budget to Municipal Council:** March 27, 2025 at 9:15 am
- **Rescue Boat Report before Municipal Council:** March 27, 2025 at 9:15 am

Next meetings:

- **Regular:** April 2, 2025 at 5:00 pm; Village Commission boardroom
- **Regular:** May 7, 2025 at 5:00 pm; Village Commission boardroom

CFSC Secretary
Kirk Collicutt

VOC Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan

~~Perfection~~
progress

2025-2028

Submitted to the Province of Nova Scotia on April 1, 2025



Acknowledgements

First, we acknowledge the Mi'kmaq, the First People of this land they've nurtured, that experienced the first and continuous inequities. As we acknowledge the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed, we recognize that as we do this work as Treaty People, we have a responsibility to intentionally, thoughtfully, and deeply engage to move forward this work of truth, reconciliation, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Often in the presence of inequity lies resilience. We acknowledge the resilient African Nova Scotian community we also serve, that has been in Nova Scotia for over 400 years. We not only honor and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent who came before us to this land but also continue to work to dismantle the centuries long hate and racism that has shaped present day inequities. We acknowledge that, to do this work and move forward, one must acknowledge true history, which is often unwritten. So, we continuously work towards respectfully engaging with and hearing the experiences of the descendants of these communities.

We acknowledge that we work in affirmation that accessibility is a human right. We also recognize that barriers to accessibility are greater for people who are typically marginalized in our society.

Introduction

The five municipalities in Lunenburg County are working together to improve and develop equity within our region. The five municipalities include: Municipality of Chester (including the Village of Chester), Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (including the Village of Hebbville), Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, and Town of Mahone Bay.

Background

In 2021, we worked with the Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee to develop the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan. The plan outlined the overarching commitments for improving accessibility in all of Lunenburg County and some of the actions we would take to reach those commitments.

Objective

We know that inclusive communities are stronger communities and we are committed to working individually and as a region to make our municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities more accessible, equitable and inclusive.

This plan looks ahead to the next three years (April 2025-March 2028). The Accessibility Plan updates information from the first plan and outlines specific actions we will take to help us reach our long-term goals.

Provincial Legislation

Under the *Accessibility Act* (2017), we must update the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan. The focus is development of a plan that will identify and address barriers to access in public policies, programs and services.

Key strategies

We commit to taking actions to encourage a culture of equity in our organizations and communities. We believe in supporting staff, Councils, and the people in our communities to not only become aware of inequities but become educated and equipped on how to remove and prevent barriers, while creating a culture of continuous learning.

Note: We recognize that language around equity work is always evolving and that people have different preferences about how to describe themselves. Although we intend to be respectful and inclusive, we know our language choices may not fit for everyone. If you have feedback about our choices, please let us know.

What We Believe

The first Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan was created using some key principles. We have continued to use and add to the list of these principles as we do our work around equity development. We plan to use them as we implement the 2025-2028 Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan.

1

Equitable Access

Working towards equitable access for everyone in our community means that every person has access to opportunities and is treated fairly. Equitable access means understanding that a person's individual circumstances will impact what barriers they might face and what we can do to remove those barriers. Creating equity doesn't mean treating everyone the same.

2

First Voice

It is essential to include first voice perspectives of people who have lived experience in our work. That means hearing first voice perspectives on our plans, the work we have already done, and our decision-making processes.

It also means working to make our processes more accessible and equitable so we hear from persons from equity deserving groups about all our work, not only related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA). This work is a lens to all the work, not its own separate project.

3

Flexibility

We know that things change and that we need to be flexible to respond to changes. Various Acts and Standards will come into effect and legislation may change in the coming years. Things like technology and world occurrences will also change. We understand that this plan must be flexible to make sure we can respond to these changes, take advantage of opportunities and respond to the emerging needs of community. We consider this plan to be a living document.

4

Collaboration

It is essential to continue to collaborate with other municipal units, the regional committees, organizations at the provincial level, and community partners to advance this plan and work towards a community of belonging.

5

Intersectionality

We know that people have multiple identities and that can mean they face multiple barriers to feeling belonging in our communities. These might be related to cultural or ethnic background, gender, disability, sexuality, or other identities people may have. When these identities overlap, it can magnify the impact of the barriers that person faces overall. We must consider intersectionality and align our plans with broader equity, diversity and inclusion work.

Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan

Glossary of Terms

We recognize that language around equity work is always evolving and that people have different preferences about how to describe themselves. Although we intend to be respectful and inclusive, we know our language choices may not fit for everyone. If you have feedback about our choices, please let us know.



Glossary of Terms

Accessibility Act (2017): The provincial law enacted to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The law defines the role and responsibilities of the Accessibility Directorate and the Accessibility Advisory Board, and addresses standards, compliance, and enforcement.

(nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf)

Accessibility Lens: An Accessibility Lens is a tool for identifying and clarifying issues affecting persons with disabilities used by policy developers and analysts to assess and address the impact of all initiatives (policies, programs or decisions) on persons with disabilities. It is also a resource in creating policies and programs reflective of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

Accessibility Standard: Under the *Accessibility Act (2017)*, standards are the laws that will be developed to increase accessibility in Nova Scotia. Standards will be developed in six areas; Built Environment, Education, Employment, Goods and Services, Public Transportation, and Information and Communications. As standards are enacted into law, they will include who needs to comply with them.

Barrier: Something that makes it harder for some people to participate. Nova Scotia's *Accessibility Act* defines a barrier as "anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice."

Disability: As defined in Nova Scotia's *Accessibility Act*: "a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society."

Diversity: Diversity is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, political beliefs, geographic, and academic/professional backgrounds. This includes people with different opinions, backgrounds (degrees and social experience), heritage and life experience.

Equitable/equity: A commitment to fairness. Equitable access is different from equal access. Equality means everybody is treated the same; equity means everybody is treated fairly, based on their needs and abilities. Equity recognizes and values differences, removing systemic barriers and accommodating individual differences, as needed.

Equity Deserving Groups: A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes (Canada.ca)

Glossary of Terms

Intersectionality: How a person’s identities, such as their gender, ethnicity, and sexuality, affect their access to opportunities and privileges.

Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC): The committee established by the five municipalities in Lunenburg County that is responsible for advising the municipal councils on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. The LCAAC is made up of one elected official from each of the five municipalities and the Village of Chester and six community members. At least half of LCAAC members must be persons with disabilities or represent an organization that represents persons with disabilities.

Lunenburg County Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Advisory Committee (ARADAC): The committee established by the five municipalities in Lunenburg County that is responsible for advising the municipal councils on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to people from underserved and underrepresented groups in municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. The ARADAC is made up of one elected official from each of the five municipalities, six community members and two indigenous members (1 each from Acadia and Sipekne’katik First Nation). A matrix is used to have wide diversity of representation from equity deserving groups.

Meaningful: In the context of our work, the term meaningful is used to ensure the efforts being made are deemed valuable by those affected by the efforts.

Plain language: Clear, conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information (plainlanguagenetwork.org/).

Letter from Mayors & Warden

Greetings,

As elected municipal representatives of Lunenburg County, we are proud to support the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan - an important step toward more inclusive and equitable communities.

We recognize that accessibility barriers exist across our region, creating inequities for individuals living with disabilities. These barriers impact daily life, limiting opportunities for participation, mobility, and engagement in our communities. Addressing these challenges is not only a priority but a responsibility we all share.

Over the past few years, we have made meaningful progress in this regard; however, we recognize there is still much to do. People in our region move between municipalities every day, and they should be able to count on spaces, services, and programs that meet their accessibility needs. To maximize our impact and resources, we will align our efforts to create an inclusive experience for residents and visitors alike. This is not a quick fix; it is a journey that we must take step by step, working together to create lasting change.

Importantly, we recognize that true progress cannot be achieved without the voices of those with lived experience. As we move forward, we are making a commitment to listening to and learning from members of our community with firsthand knowledge of accessibility challenges. Your insights will guide our decisions and help us prioritize initiatives that will make a real difference.

Together, we can build a Lunenburg County where everyone can fully participate in community life, free from barriers. We invite you to join us in this effort - whether by sharing your experiences, supporting accessibility initiatives, or advocating for change.

Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Mayor David Mitchell
Town of Bridgewater

Mayor Suzanne Lohnes-Croft
Town of Mahone Bay

Warden Allen Webber
Municipality of the District of Chester

Mayor Jamie Myra
Town of Lunenburg

Evaluation

In the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan, we have identified 17 actions we will take to increase accessibility within our community. We will track our progress on these actions and update on progress to the community every year.

We will continue to connect with the community, especially persons from equity deserving communities, to learn about their experiences and if what we are doing is making a meaningful difference. We will do this through community engagement sessions, surveys, and monitoring complaints and comments from the public.

We will also ask municipal staff, volunteers and elected officials about equity in our organizations to make sure we are increasing understanding over time.

As this work is both change focused and human-centred, we will continue to partner with organizations that specialize in data and evaluation. This makes sure we are not duplicating efforts and we engage with organizations that specialize in this area.

Disability in our Community

Based on the Canadian Survey on Disability (2022), Nova Scotia has the highest disability rate in Canada at 37.9%. The Canadian disability rate is 27%. This survey asks people to report on their disability and function. The data includes people 15 years and older and does not include people living on First Nations reserves, Armed Forces bases, or in institutional settings such as long-term care facilities. The disability rate goes up with age. For Nova Scotians aged 65 and older, 43.2% reported having one or more disabilities. That rate decreases to 35.4% for those aged 25 to 64 years, and again to 28.8% for youth aged 15 to 24 years.

Disabilities

Of persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia, 65.7% reported having a pain related disability. This was the most common answer, followed by flexibility at 44.1% and mobility at 42.3%. Mental health related disabilities were reported by 41.0% of Nova Scotians with disabilities. The remaining types of disabilities reported include seeing (25.9%), hearing (24.4%), learning (22.5%), dexterity (20.5%), memory (17.0%), and developmental (4.7%). Many people reported having more than one type of disability.

Barriers

We know that creating accessible communities means identifying, removing, and preventing barriers. Nova Scotians who reported having disabilities also reported which types of barriers were most common in their lives.

The most common answer was physical barriers (58.6%). Next, 49.4% reported experiencing barriers to communication, while 38.2% reported experiencing barriers related to attitudes from others.

Progress

Since 2021, many things have changed in the way we incorporate accessibility into our work. Using the first plan as a guide, we have made changes to policies, processes, bylaws and spaces to improve accessibility. As a region we continue to build and support processes that help ensure these improvements continue.

Regional Progress

Regional Committee

The Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC) continued meeting following the completion of the first plan and has provided accessibility advice to municipalities on multiple projects. They currently meet 10 times per year.

Regional Collaboration

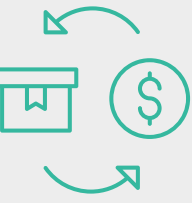
Following the first plan, we hired a Regional Accessibility Coordinator to support accessibility work. Since August 2021, the coordinator has worked to support accessibility in each municipality and across the region. This contract position became permanent in fall 2024, showing a commitment by our region to continue to prioritize accessibility improvements. Starting in 2024, we created a group that meets regularly to focus on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility issues. This group includes senior staff from each municipality, the Regional Accessibility Coordinator, Regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator, and additional staff who are responsible for equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility work within their own organizations. By meeting regularly, we can make sure we are sharing updates, concerns, and successes, working together where we can, and keeping issues of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility a priority.

All five municipalities have been working to increase accessibility guided by the first accessibility plan. You can read a summary of progress from each municipality in the appendix at the end of this plan.

Key Findings

The first plan organized information into five categories that were taken from the Standard areas in the *Accessibility Act*. We continued to use these categories to guide our questions to community and to help organize what we heard. However, we found there was a sixth idea that people consistently mentioned. We have called this “Awareness” and it is woven through the other five categories.

Goods & Services



People told us the goods and services they receive from us do not consistently meet their accessibility needs. This includes interactions with us (for example, paying a bill, getting a permit), meetings and events, and recreation programming.

People said that they may not participate in recreation programs because the programs and facilities are too far away, they don't know if their accessibility needs will be met, don't feel safe trying something new with unfamiliar staff, or they have had experiences in the past when their accessibility needs were not met.

Although the accessibility of businesses is not a municipal responsibility, we heard that people continue to face barriers to accessing businesses in our region.

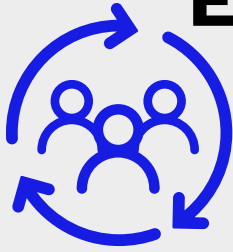
Information & Communications



Many people said they can find, access, and understand information from their municipalities. For others who faced barriers accessing information, finding what they need when visiting the website, knowing where to find information about the accessibility of municipal spaces and events, and knowing how to share a concern or complaint about accessibility were all mentioned as problems. Many people also said they cannot always access and understand emergency communications from their municipality, or that there is a lack of information shared with the public about urgent and non-urgent issues.

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Key Findings



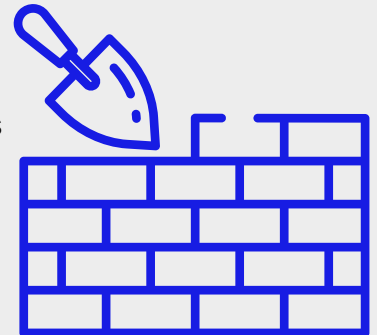
Employment

People told us that negative attitudes of employers and others toward disability is a major barrier to getting a job. Difficulty learning about job opportunities, lack of flexibility in working hours, accommodations, and other supports are also barriers to getting and keeping a job. Of those who described positive employment situations, they said it was because their employer provided flexibility or they are self-employed and can make decisions to support their own needs.

Built Environment

Although some people told us they can access municipal facilities without encountering accessibility barriers, many are still encountering barriers in these spaces. This tells us that, although we have been working to increase accessibility in our buildings, we still have work to do. In particular, access to accessible washrooms is a challenge, with more than half of people in our survey saying that these facilities sometimes or rarely meet their needs.

Several people mentioned the improvements that are happening in parks and outdoor spaces. For example, LaHave Sunset Park and Mushamush Beach Park in MODL and Wild Rose Park in MOC, which have each had significant improvements to accessibility in the past year.



continued ->

Key Findings



Transportation

People identified getting to where they need or want to go as a challenge. Public transportation is limited in Lunenburg County and does not meet the needs of many people with disabilities. People described being grateful for accessible transportation services but that they still have trouble getting everywhere they want or need to go, especially on evenings and weekends.

People told us that getting around using sidewalks and road shoulders can be challenging or impossible, especially with a mobility disability. They also said that events like snow and construction can create barriers to getting around and that we don't always manage these situations in ways that meet their accessibility needs.

Accessible parking is also a concern. People said there is not always enough accessible parking and when they are available, they are sometimes too far from destinations, making them less accessible. The design of the existing accessible parking spaces only works for some people and not others. In particular, people who use accessible vans described having difficulty finding appropriate places to park.

Feedback

Wins

People also had positive things to share about accessibility in Lunenburg County. Some examples are:

- Interactions with municipal staff who really listen and follow up when there is a problem
- Asking persons with disabilities for input and having it taken seriously
- Improvements to the physical spaces in municipal buildings (Municipality of Chester, District of Lunenburg)
- The DesBrisay Museum in Bridgewater
- Improvements to outdoor spaces accessibility
- Wheelchair basketball in Town of Lunenburg

Areas of Growth

We know we can never hear from everyone in the community but we want to make sure we are hearing from people with different experiences so we can make good decisions about accessibility. We recognize that our public engagement did not include enough diversity of experience and that this means we may be missing important information about the barriers people are facing.

We need to hear more from people and organizations with experiences related to:

- Youth with disabilities
- Persons who are blind or low vision
- Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Persons with intellectual disabilities
- Persons with episodic disabilities
- Persons from the 2SLGBTQAI+ community
- Persons who are Black, Indigenous, or persons of colour

Areas of Focus

The findings from community engagement tell us that the five areas we used to organize our actions in the first Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan are still areas where people with disabilities are facing barriers and where we can focus our efforts. In addition, we have added Awareness as a sixth area of focus. This is a way to acknowledge we have a role to play in raising awareness both in our own organizations and in the broader community about accessibility and disability. This is also an area that can overlap with our regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Plan.

Each of the six areas of focus are shown here with their long term goal.

Goods & Services

Residents and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to goods and services provided by our municipalities.

Information & Communications

People with disabilities can equitably access information and communications provided by our municipalities.

Transportation

Residents and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to transportation provided by our municipalities.

Employment

Our municipalities are accessible and equitable employers and support the careers of employees with disabilities. We will seek to attract and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diverse residents of the municipalities.

Built Environment

Municipal buildings and outdoor spaces within the municipalities provide meaningful and equitable access for users with disabilities.

Awareness

Municipal staff, volunteers, and elected officials consider accessibility in decision making and encourage a culture of accessibility and equity in their organizations and in the community.

Priorities

To help us reach these goals, we have 28 priorities. We have used these to help select actions we will take as a region. We will also use them to select actions we will take in our individual municipalities.



List of priorities by category :

Goods and Services	
Services	Enhance services provided by municipal units by making municipal services and events more accessible to persons with disabilities
Physical Space	The entrance areas of our municipal buildings should support positive accessible customer service experiences.
Programs	Deliver programming to people of all ages and abilities.
Meetings and Events	Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.
Procurement	Apply an accessibility lens to all procurement processes, including creating common accessibility language, accessibility requirements, and including accessibility into the scoring process for procurement.
Policy	Apply an accessibility lens to all policy, by-laws, procedures, and practices.
Emergency Management	Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Priorities

Information and Communications

Communications Delivery	Improve communications about existing municipal programs, services, and events by delivering communications in a wide range of accessible formats.
Advertising/Marketing	Create and use a standardized symbol system when we communicate about public programs and events. This will let people know what accessibility features and barriers they can expect.
Wayfinding	Improve signage and wayfinding for municipal buildings and public facilities by having new signage and wayfinding projects designed using best practice in accessibility.

Transportation

Pedestrian Infrastructure	Make it easier for people to move around our communities while walking, cycling, and using mobility devices. This may include building and improving sidewalks, improving lighting, adding seating where people can rest, and including tactile attention indicators, curb ramps, and accessible pedestrian signals at pedestrian crossings.
Snow Removal	Ensure snow clearance of transit stops, public buildings, and municipally managed parking areas is timely and thorough.
Parking	Ensure all municipal parking areas and municipally managed parking areas have accessible parking spaces and appropriate drop-off locations for larger vehicles. Accessible parking shall meet the <i>Accessibility Act's</i> Built Environment Standard (when implemented).
Transit Connectivity	Where possible, support improving transit connectivity by expanding public transportation systems.
Transit Infrastructure	Improve existing transit infrastructure and ensure transit vehicles, transit stops, and signage are accessible to people with disabilities.

Priorities

Employment	
Job Opportunities	Improve opportunities for persons with disabilities to gain employment at the municipality by ensuring job postings clearly state they are open to persons with disabilities, accommodations may be available in the workplace, and/or advertise job postings across different platforms.
Hiring	Improve processes, policies, and practices to remove accessibility barriers and encourage the recruitment, selection, transition, and advancement of persons with disabilities in their employment at the municipalities. Update job standards to make sure they reflect the actual standards of the job.
Flexibility	Improve support and flexibility in the workplace by ensuring municipal staff and Council with disabilities have access to assistive technology, possible accommodations in the workplace, appropriate and supportive leave practices and return to work plans, and a flexible work environment such as the ability to work from home.
Culture of Inclusion	Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains, and provides opportunities for career growth to persons with disabilities.
Representation	Actively recruit persons with disabilities on all municipal committees and working groups. Review committee and Council recruitment materials to ensure they are accessible.

Priorities

Built Environment	
Buildings	Improve and maintain the accessibility of municipal buildings and outdoor spaces to comply with the Nova Scotia Building Code, and the <i>Accessibility Act's</i> Built Environment Standard (when implemented), aiming to exceed them when feasible.
Public Spaces	Improve access to public spaces and opportunities for recreation by improving access to parks and playgrounds, lakes and beaches, diversifying recreation equipment, and creating accessible parks, playgrounds and trails. Municipalities will comply with the <i>Accessibility Act's</i> Built Environment Standard (when implemented).
Washrooms	Look for opportunities to construct and maintain more accessible public washrooms and retrofit existing washrooms where possible.
Temporary Disruptions	Put processes in place to ensure accessibility is maintained during temporary disruptions including emergencies, evacuations, and special events.
Emergencies	Ensure emergency management and building evacuation plans are reviewed with accessibility in mind.
Construction Mitigation	Municipalities should ensure accessible detours are available and communicated to the public when a sidewalk is affected by construction.

Awareness	
Internally (Organizationally)	Support new and existing municipal staff and Councils to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights, and accessibility barriers in our community by providing ongoing awareness and training programs.
Externally (In Community)	Build an understanding and awareness of disability and accessibility within our community by supporting development of programming and awareness materials and events that highlight the experiences of people with disabilities in our community.

Regional Actions

To work toward meeting the priorities in this plan, we will work together on 17 actions.

Goods and Services	
Action	Priorities
Create or adopt a guide to be used by staff that provides guidance on how to plan a meeting or event using equitable best practices, including accessibility.	Meetings and Events - Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.
Provide support to community members who face barriers to participating in municipal meetings and events to enable engagement. We will explore how to do this within the scope of our role as municipalities.	Meetings and Events - Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.
Develop a guide for staff and council members of municipal units on how to review and update policies, by-laws, procedures, and practices with an equitable best practices lens.	Policy– Apply an accessibility lens to all policy, by-laws, procedures, and practices.
Develop an Anti-Hate & Anti-Discrimination Policy to support regional municipal units for anti-hate and anti-discriminatory efforts until all policies can be reviewed with an equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility lens.	Policy– Apply an accessibility lens to all policy, by-laws, procedures, and practices.
Ensure that emergency information from the Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) is communicated using Plain Language.	Emergency Management – Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.
Schedule regular meetings between REMO staff and the Regional Accessibility Coordinator to support considering accessibility in emergency management.	Emergency Management – Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.
Look for opportunities to provide emergency preparedness information to persons with disabilities through digital and written materials and presentations.	Emergency Management – Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Information and Communications

Action	Priorities
Collect and share information about the accessibility of municipal facilities and outdoor spaces using a standardized symbol system.	Advertising/Marketing – Create and use a standardized symbol system when we communicate about public programs and events. This will let people know what accessibility features and barriers they can expect.
Create a website dedicated to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility work in Lunenburg County to create a consistent space for people to find information about accessibility in the region.	Advertising/Marketing – Create and use a standardized symbol system when we communicate about public programs and events. This will let people know what accessibility features and barriers they can expect.

Transportation

Action	Priorities
Collaborate regionally to learn more about what barriers people face related to transportation access as they move within, between, and beyond our municipalities.	Transit Connectivity – Where possible, support improving transit connectivity by expanding public transportation systems.

Employment

Action	Priorities
Explore the development of a safe space for municipal employees who belong to equity deserving groups. This could be in the form of an affinity group or employee resource group where employees can explore shared experiences, barriers, and solutions.	Culture of Inclusion – Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains, and provides opportunities for career growth to persons with disabilities.
Assess Municipal/Town physical spaces for opportunities to display signs of inclusion and belonging.	Culture of Inclusion – Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains, and provides opportunities for career growth to persons with disabilities.
Create opportunities for youth with disabilities to provide feedback to municipalities on accessibility matters.	Representation – Actively recruit persons with disabilities on all municipal committees and working groups. Review committee and Council recruitment materials to ensure they are accessible.

Awareness

Action	Priorities
<p>Review our governance processes related to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. This includes determining responsibilities for decision making, accountability and how we interact with other organizations doing similar work in the community.</p>	<p>Building Awareness in our organizations) – Support new and existing municipal staff and Councils to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights, and accessibility barriers in our community by providing ongoing awareness and training programs.</p>
<p>Create an awareness plan to support our organizations to learn about and comply with the Built Environment Accessibility Standard when it is released.</p>	<p>Building Awareness in our organizations) – Support new and existing municipal staff and Councils to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights, and accessibility barriers in our community by providing ongoing awareness and training programs.</p>
<p>Create a community awareness plan outlining how to engage the community on equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.</p>	<p>Building Awareness in Community – Build an understanding and awareness of disability and accessibility within our community by supporting development of programming and awareness materials and events that highlight the experiences of people with disabilities in our community.</p>
<p>Encourage awareness about accessibility and disability through participating in Access Awareness Week and the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>Building Awareness in Community – Build an understanding and awareness of disability and accessibility within our community by supporting development of programming and awareness materials and events that highlight the experiences of people with disabilities in our community.</p>

Community Collaboration

As we conducted engagement and continue to do so, we have partnered with many community organizations to implement actions and have wider community impact. Some of these partners are:



South Shore
Regional Centre for Education



**YOUR ORGANIZATION
HERE**

We understand as this is community work, we need to grow in collaboration. We anticipate tracking the additional partners we engage with over the years to capture larger community ownership and awareness of equity work

If you are interested in working with us, please connect with the regional coordinator: ejohnson@chester.ca.

PARTNERS

Next Steps & Conclusion

As we have identified opportunities to begin this work, it is only the start...



- ➔ Each municipality in Lunenburg County will prepare and make public an implementation plan showing what they will do to meet the priorities in this plan.
- ➔ We will work to support addressing gaps in local data available about persons with disabilities in Lunenburg County to help us make good decisions about accessibility.
- ➔ We will continue to ask the community for feedback as part of our evaluation process.
- ➔ We will support the LCAAC, ARADAC, Regional Accessibility Coordinator and Regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator to work together to make sure we learn more about barriers faced by persons with disabilities who are also Black, Indigenous, persons of colour, and part of the 2SLGBTQAI+ community.
- ➔ We will seek opportunities to connect with people and organizations who have experience and knowledge of barriers faced by people with experiences of disability that we did not hear enough from in our public engagement (people who are blind or low vision, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, have intellectual disabilities, or experience episodic disabilities).

Appendix

Summaries

Summary of Progress: Town of Lunenburg

The Town of Lunenburg has been working to improve accessibility in a variety of ways.

Our town is a unique, historic community with a built heritage dating back more than 270 years. This, along with our location on a steep hill, means there are barriers to accessibility in our built environment. We have been working hard to identify, prevent and remove barriers where it is possible. Examples of some of our efforts include:

- Applying an accessibility lens to our updated Heritage Conservation Policy and Bylaw
- Working with the business community to support accessibility improvements
- Working with the Province of Nova Scotia to support the development of education materials about new accessibility requirements for restaurants.
- Incorporating accessibility reviews into key community development and engineering projects
- Including tactile attention indicators and curb ramps in new and redesigned sidewalks and crosswalks
- Completing accessibility audits of the arena and community centre
- Adding a ramp to the arena entrance
- Adopting an accessible housing unit incentive policy

We also took steps to make parking more accessible. We incorporated accessibility into our parking and traffic study in 2024. The study mapped all existing accessible parking spaces and gave recommendations on how to improve parking and access. New designated accessible parking spaces have been placed on Bluenose Drive and meet a higher standard of accessible design than we have used in the past. We also hired a full-time bylaw enforcement officer, who monitors and enforces accessible parking use, making it easier for people who need accessible parking to find it.

To make sure more people can access and participate in our council meetings, committee meetings, and public engagement, we have made several improvements. Some examples include:

- Adding an accommodation request process to the planning and public input policy
- Hosting our first focus group specifically to hear from persons with disabilities about a major project
- Recording and livestreaming all council, committee and working group meetings so they can be accessed in different ways

We know there are challenges to increasing accessibility in our historic town and are committed to taking steps to ensure that all residents and visitors can access and enjoy our community.

Summary of Progress: Municipality of Chester

The Municipality of Chester made a commitment to improving accessibility in 2018. Since then, we have worked on how we can translate that commitment into action. We have paid particular attention to our public spaces, our municipal buildings, and delivery of services.

Facilities and public spaces

In 2022, we completed an accessibility audit of our municipal buildings, where the public comes to attend meetings, pay taxes, apply for permits, and access other services. As expected, the audit showed that we have a lot of work to do. We used (and continue to use) the recommendations from the report to plan and implement improvements. Some examples of our improvements include:

- Added accessible signage and automatic soap and paper towel dispensers to washrooms.
- Repaved an outdoor pathway to improve the surface quality.
- Improved signage for accessible parking spaces.

We are also making efforts to increase the accessibility of the physical environment of trails and outdoor spaces and to share information about accessibility of these spaces so people can decide for themselves if they want to visit. Some examples include:

- Reviewed wayfinding and information signage using an accessibility lens.
- Adopted consistent, high colour contrast and intuitive pictograms to communicate information about parks and trails such as difficulty level.
- Incorporated information about a trail's level of difficulty in the communication on signs, websites, etc. so people can make decisions about where to go.
- Purchased trail rider adaptive equipment to facilitate access to trails for persons with disabilities.
- Upgraded Wild Rose Park to include universal washrooms, adult change table, and improved walking paths with additional improvements to come.



Communicating

We identified large gaps in the way that we share information and invite feedback. Recognizing that we still have quite a bit of work to do (as outlined in our Action Plan), these are some examples of what we have put in place so far:

- Upgraded Council Chambers technology to improve audio and visual quality for in-person and virtual meetings, including an assistive listening system and arranging equipment to provide an optimal location for ASL interpreters when needed.
- Added speech transfer systems/hearing loops to reception desks and our two meeting rooms.
- Livestream and record council meetings so people can view remotely or at a later date.
- Use more accessible online platforms when we do community engagement.
- Had a number of staff participate in plain language training.
- Supported three staff to complete Presentation Skills training which included an accessibility component.
- Apply Braille to 20% of business cards printed.

Governance

In terms of governance, we continue to create avenues and support for services that provide accessible options. Leading up to 2025, we have already implemented some actions, such as:

- Support for Chester Community Wheels through an annual financial contribution.
- Developed an Outdoor Dining By-Law using an accessibility lens.
- Reviewed our Village of Chester Land Use By-Law and Secondary Planning Strategy with an accessibility lens. After approval, we have made a commitment to create the lengthy document as an accessible pdf.
- Added medical, dental, and life insurance benefits for Councillors and regional employees, which removes some barriers for people and encourages retention.
- Created a draft policy to minimize scents in the workplace and will implement a plan to educate employees, Councillors, and the public.
- Revised our Human Resources Policy to include accessibility language and provisions.
- Improved the municipal website to meet the public's needs as well as applied accessibility practices to social media posts, such as contrast, language, and alt text, etc.

Summary of Progress: Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Since 2020, the District of Lunenburg has made significant strides in accessibility, ensuring that all residents can participate fully in community life. It began with the construction and opening of the new Municipal Services Building, a transformative milestone. The old facility lacked wheelchair access at one of the customer service entrances or an elevator, and visitors with mobility challenges had no access to public washrooms. Today, the new building features fully accessible doors, assisted hearing technology, bariatric seating, and more, welcoming everyone with fully accessible amenities and services under one roof.

The District also adopted a proactive approach by integrating an accessibility lens into the development of proposed capital projects. Accessibility audits for five park facilities uncovered barriers and opportunities for improvement, guiding thoughtful changes. For example, Mushamush Beach now features a Mobi-mat, providing all users seamless access to the water. At Church Lake, visitors can enjoy accessible picnic tables, promoting inclusive outdoor recreation.

Digital accessibility has also been a priority. In 2020, the District's website, modl.ca, achieved 99% accessibility. Collaborating with the Association of Municipal Administrators' Municipal Website Venture and digital accessibility experts Access Changes Everything, the District ensured the site met Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards. The result is a platform where residents can access vital information with ease, regardless of ability.

Council operations have also embraced inclusivity. Meetings are now livestreamed, enabling residents with mobility or transportation challenges to participate remotely. Council agendas include contact information for accessibility inquiries, and all reports, bylaws, and policies are prepared using accessible templates. Training in accessible social media practices has further enhanced the reach and inclusivity of District communications.

Inclusivity extends beyond infrastructure and digital spaces. Expanded recreation programs cater to diverse abilities, reflecting the District's commitment to providing opportunities for all. Advocacy and funding efforts have also transformed Senior Wheels into Lunenburg County Wheels, a dial-a-ride service now available across the entire municipality. This door-to-door service has become a lifeline for residents with mobility challenges, fostering independence and community connection.

Each improvement reflects the District of Lunenburg's dedication to breaking down barriers and building a more inclusive community. We look forward to more opportunities to consider accessibility in major capital spending plans and everyday operational decisions.

Summary of Progress: Town of Bridgewater

In 2017, the Province of Nova Scotia passed the *Accessibility Act* with the goal of creating an accessible province by 2030. The Town partnered with the Municipal Districts of Lunenburg and Chester, Village of Chester, and the Towns of Lunenburg and Mahone Bay to create the Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC) in 2019 and the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan in 2021.

The Province is developing standards in six areas, including education. The other five areas of accessibility standards are:

1. Goods and Services
2. Information and Communications
3. Transportation
4. Employment
5. Built Environment

As part of the regional effort, since 2020 the Town of Bridgewater has been focused on these five areas and has made significant progress.

Goods & Services

There have been several modifications made to the Council Chambers and Committee room to improve public accessibility. There has been accessibility awareness training delivered to the new Council and some planning staff have undergone specialized accessibility training. When people come to the main counter in Town Hall, there is a Speech Transfer system for staff to better hear people and there is technology available to which people can connect certain personal hearing devices. When purchasing significant software systems, accessibility requirements were included as part of the procurement process.

Information and Communication

Some staff have had further training in using plain language when writing. We have changed our communications standards to ensure website and social media posts include either alt text or that all information embedded in image files is also included in postings in screen-reader compatible format. We have also made some changes to the printed Recreation Guide to improve accessibility.

Transportation

In 2020 we purchased two low-floor buses with accessible ramps, and we are now installing an accessible bus shelter near the Regional Hospital and on North Street. When designing bridges, sidewalks and other aspects of active transportation, accessibility considerations have been incorporated. In 2022, we installed our first rectangular rapid flashing beacon at a crosswalk on Jubilee Avenue and we now include Tactile Walking Indicator Surfaces (TWIS) at crosswalks. From a planning perspective, we have incorporated accessibility design requirements into the Sidewalk Café By-law. The Traffic Operations study, that included accessibility review, is foundational work for future projects.

Employment

As part of our attraction and retention strategy we have embraced a flexible work policy that enables our people with different life needs to contribute effectively to delivering our services. We have incorporated our communications standards into our onboarding guide for new staff. Recognizing that sometimes people just need a little extra support, we now provide menstrual products in all washrooms. We have also added automatic door openers.

Built Environment

While it is challenging to change what has already been built, we have taken advantage of certain renovation opportunities. At the Bridgewater Memorial Arena, we have included an exterior ramp, an accessible door and an elevator. There are now accessible, gender-neutral, washrooms at Town Hall. We have conducted an accessibility audit of the Town's outdoor pool and improvements to signage, contrast painting and pool accessibility modifications are ongoing. At Shipyard's Landing, cobble-type pavers have been replaced with accessible-standard concrete sidewalks. Finally, Shipyard's Landing Public Washrooms will soon be open to the public!

While there is still lots of work to do to improve the life of our residents, accessibility thinking will continue to be integrated into our everyday work.

Summary of Progress: Town of Mahone Bay

The Town of Mahone Bay is a place for people to live, work, and play, and with that the Town recognizes the importance of having accessible spaces and services. Since the passage of the *Accessibility Act*, the Town has worked diligently to improve access for those living in or visiting Mahone Bay. The following is a broad overview of accomplishments made since 2020 in this vein.

Built Environment

The Town has had a large focus on accessibility in its built environment via the upgrading of facilities and adoption of regulations including:

- Built a new, accessible fire station
- Town Hall Upgrades
 - Barrier free entrance
 - Accessible washroom
 - Painted door frames for greater contrast
 - Replaced/added colour contrast strips on stairs
 - Added colour contrast strips on glass gates
 - Removed plexi glass barriers in the public section of Town Hall
 - Replaced the debit machine with a more accessible one
 - Added a building directory at all public entrances
 - Added room identifying signage in consistent places in relation to doors for intuitive location
 - Replaced all door knobs with lever handles
 - Purchased lamps for staff to have better control over lighting in work spaces (as requested)
 - Purchased adjustable height desk additions (as requested)
- Added RRFBs at trail/road intersections
- Upgraded pathway along waterfront
- Upgraded field track surface
- Audited nine (9) outdoor spaces for accessibility
- Upgraded Aquatic Garden Park bridge
- Community Orchard Design
 - Benches and picnic tables on concrete pads
 - Paths have gentle slopes and crushed gravel surface with planned paving
 - Currently addressing concerns about drop off areas and visibility of tree guards.
- Added accessible picnic table at the Visitor Information Centre
- Painted slopes on curb ramps

- Upgraded tennis court parking lot by paving and designing accessible parking
- Revised all road side accessible parking spaces to align with the CSA B-651 standard
- Assessed and plan to renovate public washrooms on Edgewater Street to increase accessibility and include an adult change table
- Incorporate accessibility standards into all new built infrastructure projects
- Ordered various styles of chairs for Council Chambers and front entrance

Education

- Provided social media accessibility training to community groups to increase accessibility of posts shared by the Town

Information and Communication

- Adopted in-house communication standards for print communications internally and externally
- Livestream and record Council meetings with ability to add auto-generated captioning if needed

Transportation

- Provided financial support to Lunenburg County Wheels

Governance

- Update Human Resources Policies and procedures and use CAN/ASC-1.1:2024 National Standard of Canada- Employment as a reference guide
- Adopted the Accessibility Implementation Plan
- Adopted CSA/ASC B651:23 Accessible Design for the Build Environment to inform design of accessible parking spaces

Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee

Name	Role
Louise Hopper	Community Member
Peggy McCalla	Community Member
Teresa Alexander-Arab	Community Member
Scott Lutes	Community Member
Vacancy	Community Member
Vacancy	Community Member
Kacy DeLong	Councillor, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Abdella Assaff	Deputy Warden, Municipality of Chester
Jennifer McDonald	Deputy Mayor, Town of Bridgewater
Gale Fullerton	Councillor, Town of Lunenburg
Penny Carver	Councillor, Town of Mahone Bay
Geraldine Pauley	Chair, Village of Chester Commission

Schedule 7.5

From: [Garth Sturtevant](#)
To: [Abdella Assaff](#); [Allen Webber](#); [Carol Nauss \(canauss@gmail.com\)](#); [Chad Haughn](#); [Darlene Scott](#); [Emily Statton](#); [Hassen Hammond \(hasshammond@hotmail.com\)](#); [Lee Harnish](#); [Leslie Taylor \(Gmail for MPAC\)](#); [Margeson Reeves](#); [Nick Buckle](#); [Pam Myra \(she/her\)](#); [Paul Riley](#); [Sandra Hiscock \(sandra.hiscock@hatch.com\)](#); [Sharon Church](#); [Tristan Mills \(contact.millsandmac@gmail.com\)](#); [Allen Webber](#); [Brenda Mulrooney](#); [Carol Nauss \(canauss@gmail.com\)](#); [Chad Haughn](#); [Darlene Scott](#); [Emily Statton](#); [Heather Archibald](#); [Heather McCallum](#); [Pam Myra \(she/her\)](#); [Paul Riley](#); [Randall O'Malley](#); [Syd Dumaresq \(syd@spda.ca\)](#); [Tom Bremner](#); [Tristan Mills \(contact.millsandmac@gmail.com\)](#)
Cc: [Brian Webb \(He/Him\)](#)
Subject: Invitation to FBM Presentation of Municipal Growth Plan
Date: April 3, 2025 10:20:22 AM
Attachments: [image812053.png](#)
[image513198.png](#)
[image620013.png](#)
[image564269.png](#)
[image754538.png](#)
[image444937.png](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Good Moring VPAC & MPAC Members,

I am following up on an item that has been discussed at both committees in recent months. Last year, the Municipality hired Fowler, Bauld and Mitchell (FBM) to provide a report and outline steps toward a Growth Plan or Growth Strategy. FBM has been working closely with Municipal staff and has hosted numerous public events to solicit feedback and provide education on their work. More information on this work can be found here via the project website:

<https://www.engagechester.ca/charting-a-course-for-growth>

FBM has now completed the Final Report, which is being presented to Council on Thursday, April 17, 2025. Council asked me to extend an invitation to all PAC members who are available to attend Council on April 17th. The presentation is scheduled to begin at 8:45am and run for 20 minutes, followed by questions from Council.

If you are unable to attend in person, the meeting will be livestreamed and available as a YouTube video following the meeting. Livestreams and meeting recordings can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@modcvideo/streams>

There is no requirement to confirm attendance in advance, but if you have any questions, please do let me know.

Best,
 Garth



Garth Sturtevant

Senior Planner
 Community Development & Recreation

Municipality of Chester
 186 Central Street, Chester, NS, B0J 1J0

Office: 902-275-4135
General Inquiries: 902-275-2599
Web: www.chester.ca



♻️ Consider the environment. Do you really need to print this email?

I (we) respectfully acknowledge that I (we) live and work in Mi'kma'ki as a steward of the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people.

This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the intended recipients in communication with the Municipality of Chester. If you are not an intended recipient you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. E-mail transmission cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error-free as information could be intercepted, corrupted, lost, destroyed, arrive late or incomplete, or contain viruses. The sender therefore does not accept liability for any errors or omissions in the contents of this message, which arise as a result of e-mail transmission. If verification is required please request a hard-copy version.

THE VISION

THE STRATEGY

municipality
of chester

village of
chester

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
CHESTER

Kespukwikt Land Acknowledgement

The Municipality of the District of Chester is located in the Kespukwikt* (Lands End) district of Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Municipality acknowledges the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed and recognizes that we are all Treaty People. We acknowledge the responsibility to deeply engage and move forward with the work of truth, reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Kes-pahk-wikt

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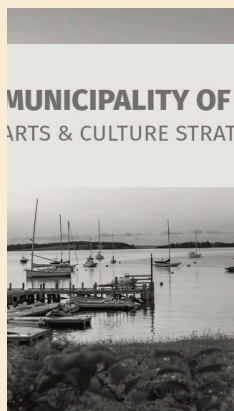
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Municipality of Chester Arts & Culture Strategy - Priority #4	

Executive Summary

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan represents the commitment that the Municipality of the District of Chester and Village of Chester have to combatting discrimination and racism. We are working together with community partners to realize a vision where:

- Equity, diversity, and inclusion are recognized as core values that help inform decision-making, resource allocation, and the development of by-laws, policies, and practices.
- Diverse staff, committee members, and volunteers are recruited, retained, and supported.
- Collaborative internal and external partnerships support the emerging needs of Council and administration, residents, businesses, and organizations, to ensure a respectful and equitable community for all to live and work.

We have been undertaking this work over the last several years – internally, locally, and regionally. We want to model open and honest governance, allyship, and effectual change to a system that has not always been accessible. To do that, we need to learn, listen, and act.

Key initiatives for this coming year include learning, policy and service review, and relationship.

The actions that will support these initiatives are outlined and developed with input from our citizens, businesses and non-profit organizations, partners, and staff. This document is not intended to be a complete and finite strategy as there is always room to grow and change.

Allen Webber, Warden
Municipality of the District of Chester

Geraldine Pauley, Chairperson
Village of Chester Commission

Overview

In July 2020, the Municipality of Chester was shown a significant gap in public policy. The experience revealed how policy can exclude people just by how it's worded. It also revealed that there is such a thing as corporate conscience. It was the following week that work began on correcting our course.

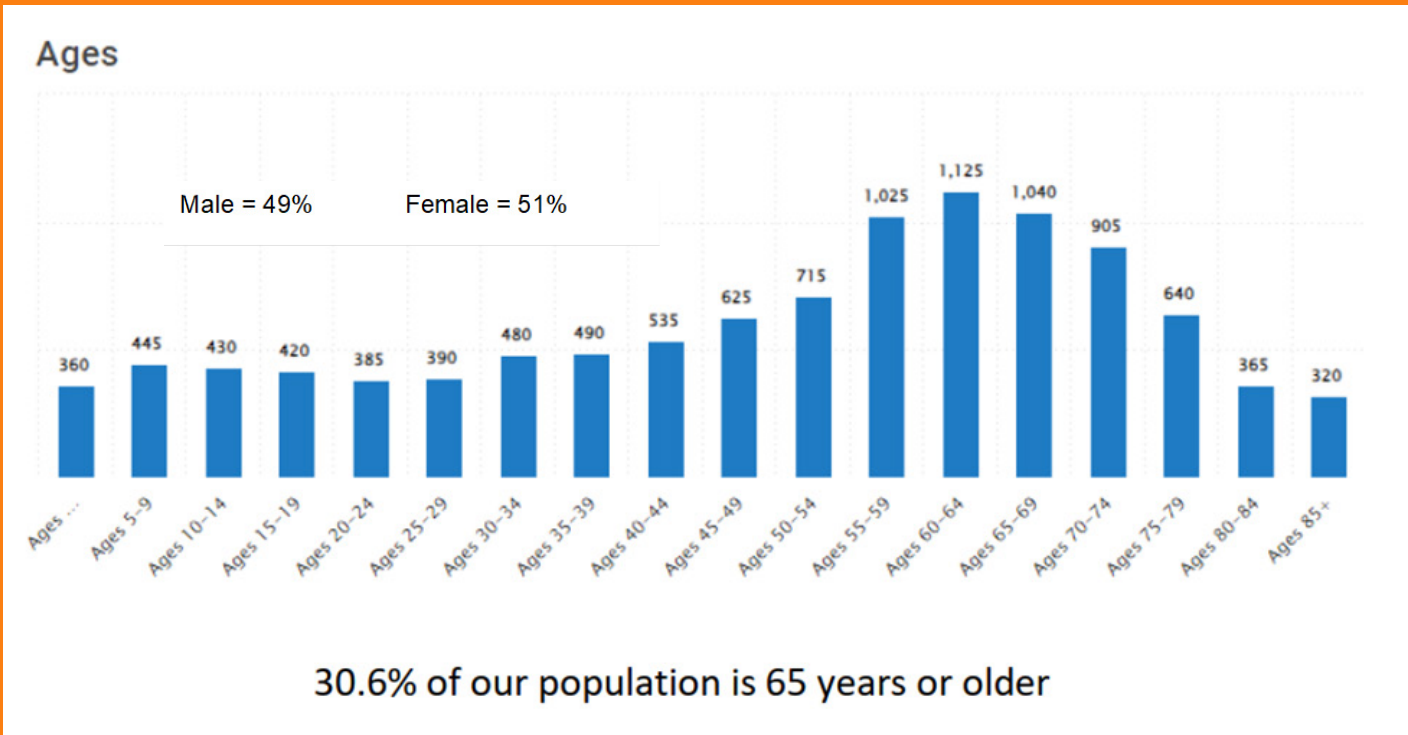
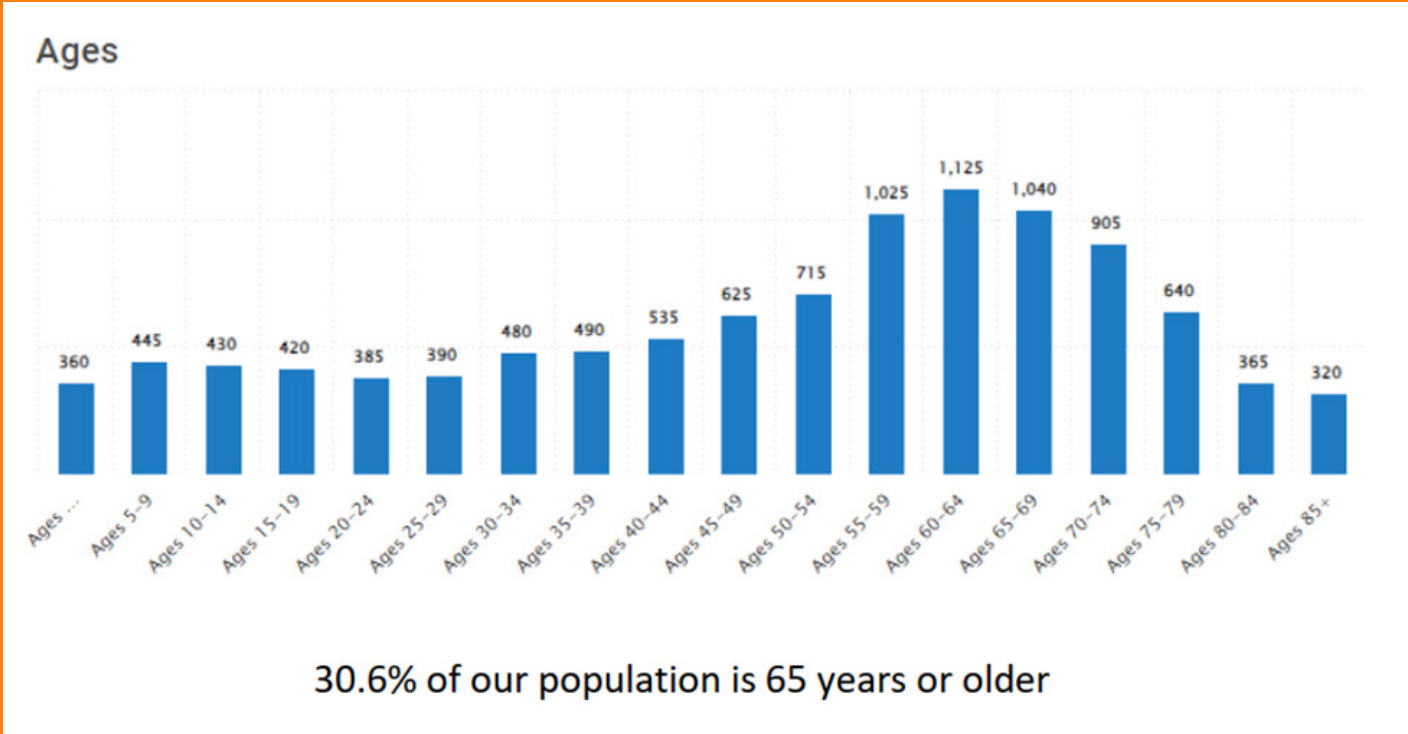
Since that summer, Council committed to developing an action plan for diversity and inclusion; began reviewing policies and priorities; committed to improving equity, diversity, and reduce discrimination within the organization and the community by endorsing initiatives in a preliminary Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan; established an advisory committee; and revised its Action Plan for the second time. The Municipality of Chester also partnered with the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, and Town of Mahone Bay to develop regional anti-racism and inclusion goals and initiatives serving Lunenburg County with a Regional Coordinator.

In partnership with the Village of Chester, we want residents, visitors, businesses, and organizations to feel heard, safe, and a sense of belonging. We want to do what we can within our respective roles of public service to support our communities. This joint EDI Action Plan is our guide.

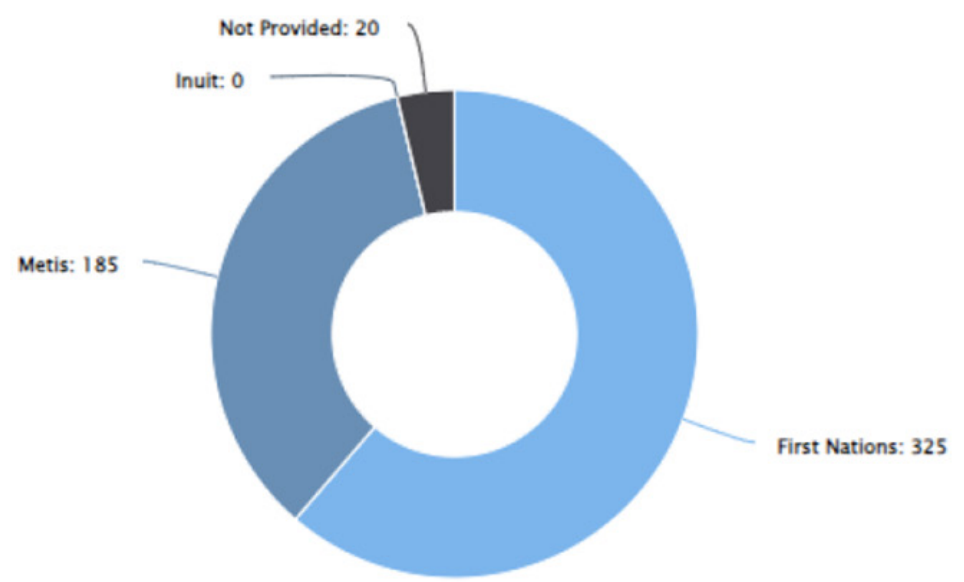


**THE MUNICIPALITY OF
CHESTER**

Who we are serving



Indigenous Identification



Visible Minorities



Arab = 0.5% of population

Filipino = 0.3% of population

Black = 0.2% of population and South Asian = 0.2% of population

According to data from the 2019 to 2021 Canadian Community Health Survey, approximately 1.3 million people, or 4.4% of the Canadian population aged 15 years and older, reported being 2SLGBTQIA+.

Among the 2SLGBTQIA+ population, 52.7% were cisgender women, 39.2% were cisgender men, 3.9% were transgender women or transgender men, and 4.2% were non-binary people.

Among all age groups, youth made up the largest share of the 2SLGBTQIA+ population from 2019 to 2021. Overall, 1 in 10 youth aged 15 to 24 years (10.5%) reported being 2SLGBTQIA+. By comparison, 4.1% of adults aged 25 to 64 years and 1.3% of adults aged 65 years and older reported being 2SLGBTQ+.

According to data released in April 2022 by Statistics Canada, one in every 200 people in Nova Scotia identify as trans or non-binary. This increases to one in every 100 for people aged 15 to 34 in Nova Scotia.

While we don't have data specific to the Municipality of Chester, we can use these statistics to get a broad idea of representation.

Who we consulted

We opened engagement through drop-in public sessions, an online survey, and individual meetings with industry-focused organizations, non-profit groups, and municipal staff. We didn't meet with all of the community partners we approached but will have more opportunities as the work progresses.

A sample of some of the specific groups we met with to inform our initial and/or revised plan:

- +Chester Art Centre**
- +Chester Municipal Heritage Society**
- +Lunenburg County Pride**
- +Lunenburg County Seniors Safety**
- +Our Health Centre**
- +small and medium business sector**
- +developers, retail, industrial**

The feedback received - along with continuing actions from the previous Action Plan and priorities flagged by Council and our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee - was incorporated into this Action Plan. Actions advanced to the regional level are still included as the work will be supported by the five municipal units within Lunenburg County and will be flagged as "regional".



Implementation and progress

Implementation

Primarily, the Municipality of Chester and the Village of Chester will implement the plan through collaboration and partnerships with community, equity-seeking groups, local organizations, and regional support from the Lunenburg County Regional Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Coordinator and Advisory Committee. Human and financial resources have been dedicated to the internal implementation of this Plan as well as support for the external-facing actions.

Tracking Progress

This Action Plan will be consulted frequently with regular check-ins with our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee. Items will be brought forward for discussion and recommendation by the Committee at each meeting. We will continue to meet with community members and partners.

We will measure progress by:

- Completing action items;
- Providing regular status reports through our EDI Advisory Committee to Municipal Council and Village of Chester Commission that will include individual measures noted in each action item;
- Receiving positive and corrective feedback from partners;
- Recording high engagement online and in person; and
- Recording public participation in programs/workshops.



The Municipality of Chester and the Village of Chester are working together to continue existing initiatives and advance new projects under a five-tier framework, laid out on the following page

We engage local organizations as well as national resources to help guide us in our journey. We are members of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (Canadian Commission for UNESCO), accredited under the Rainbow Registered Program, and commit to reconciliation using the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples..

**EQUITY
DIVERSITY
INCLUSION
ACTION
PLAN** **OBJECTIVES**

Canadian Commission for UNESCO

**COALITION
OF INCLUSIVE
MUNICIPALITIES**

*fostering equity
and diversity*

Action Plan Objectives

The Municipality and Village, in collaboration with our EDI Advisory Committee and the Regional Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Coordinator for Lunenburg County, have agreed on these areas of focus:

ENGAGEMENT

Develop, where relevant, communications plans, social media content, and community engagement strategies that feature our communities as respectful and equitable places for all to live and work.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Work to eliminate barriers to public-facing programs, services, and facilities.

GOVERNANCE

Continue to develop internal governance and

administrative capacity, practices, and tools that proactively counter, and enable immediate reaction against, all forms of discrimination, exclusion, and racism in our communities.

RELATIONSHIP

Develop a network of agencies and organizations active in equity, diversity, and inclusion work in order to share information, opportunities, and resources with community organizations and businesses that will advance and support their EDI initiatives in our communities.

COMMUNITY

Provide advice and recommendations to

Council concerning opportunities to create welcoming and inclusive cultural and social spaces ensuring a respectful and equitable community for all to live and work.

The Municipality and Village, through community partners and staffing resources, will work to complete actions under each of the areas as outlined in the following work plan according to assignments with regular check-ins with Committee, Community, Council, and Commission. A full review will be completed by March 31, 2028.

Each action item in the Work Plan includes suggested benchmarks. These benchmarks will be used to measure qualitative and quantitative outcomes and serve as a baseline for future reviews. Regional initiatives will be measured on a regional level.



Objective #1 Engagement

Develop, where relevant, communications plans, social media content, and community engagement strategies that feature our communities as respectful and equitable places for all to live and work.*

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
Present the EDI Advisory Committee revised Action Plan to Council for adoption and submit approved Plan to the Province of Nova Scotia. BENCHMARK: Approval of the Action Plan.	Communications Officer	March 2025 April 2025	This is a 'living document' to be revisited and updated often. Specific actions will be brought before Council, as required.
Continue to share the Action Plan, initiatives, and efforts in community, including public information meetings, pop-up meetings, engagement sessions, etc. BENCHMARK: Share information in six locations per year.	Municipal and Village staff.	2025-28	Range of outcomes include communication and awareness; cultivating champions; feedback; more actionable ideas. Prepare a pop-up meeting display to use in various locations.
Continue to raise public awareness by sharing local stories of interest. BENCHMARK: Feature at least one story in each municipal newsletter.	Economic Development, Accessibility Coordinator, and Communications Officer, Village staff	2025-28	Continue to a) profile local business EDI stories in municipal newsletter; b) share stories about employers' experience removing accessibility barriers; c) profile recreational experiences in recreation guide; and d) local historical/cultural information.
<i>Develop anti-stigma campaigns for social media channels, public engagement website, and municipal newsletter.</i>	<i>Communications Officer and Regional Coordinators for Accessibility and Anti-Racism</i>	2025-28	<i>Work with regional staff to develop campaigns around gender-based discrimination, 2SLGBTQIA+, racism, different abilities, social biases, and intersectionality.</i>

* Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.

Objective #1

Engagement (*con't*)

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
Present the EDI Advisory Committee revised Action Plan to Council for adoption and submit approved Plan to the Province of Nova Scotia. BENCHMARK: Approval of the Action Plan.	Communications Officer	March 2025 April 2025	This is a 'living document' to be revisited and updated often. Specific actions will be brought before Council, as required.
Continue to share the Action Plan, initiatives, and efforts in community, including public information meetings, pop-up meetings, engagement sessions, etc. BENCHMARK: Share information in six locations per year.	Municipal and Village staff.	2025-28	Range of outcomes include communication and awareness; cultivating champions; feedback; more actionable ideas. Prepare a pop-up meeting display to use in various locations.
Continue to raise public awareness by sharing local stories of interest. BENCHMARK: Feature at least one story in each municipal newsletter.	Economic Development, Accessibility Coordinator, and Communications Officer, Village staff	2025-28	Continue to a) profile local business EDI stories in municipal newsletter; b) share stories about employers' experience removing accessibility barriers; c) profile recreational experiences in recreation guide; and d) local historical/cultural information.
Encourage Council, Commission, and staff to promote awareness of EDI by participating in campaigns, events, etc. BENCHMARK: Coordinate at least four campaigns per year.		2025-28	Develop a social media campaign around observances (group photos), participate in awareness events (Moosehide Day, Pink Shirt Day, etc.), offer microlearning opportunities, develop alternate temporary municipal logos to demonstrate support.

* *Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.*

Objective #2

Service Delivery

Work to eliminate barriers to public-facing programs, services, and facilities*

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
<p>Complete a review of programs and services to remove barriers and apply best practices in delivery.</p> <p>BENCHMARK: 2025 - Meet with all department heads and Council to introduce guidelines and develop scope of work.</p>	<p>Municipal and Village staff (identify) and EDI Advisory Committee (recommend)</p>	<p>2025-28</p>	<p>Will be carried out by department and will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income • Age • Language • Culture • Different abilities • Access to technology • Transportation
<p>Work with organizations to contribute to a welcome program for new Canadians moving to the Municipality.</p> <p>BENCHMARK: Request an initial meeting to discuss municipal role.</p>	<p>Community Economic Development, Communications, and Recreation</p>	<p>Summer 2025</p>	<p>Assemble a package of information to share with newcomers that is in a format easy to understand.</p> <p>Purchase translation devices to have on hand and/or lend.</p>
<p>Review Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and identify municipal actions.</p> <p>BENCHMARK: Review 10 Calls to Action.</p>	<p>Sub-Committee of municipal staff, EDI Committee members, and First Nations</p>	<p>Spring 2025</p>	<p>A sub-committee will review the Calls to Action and select items for larger committee review and potential recommendations to Council.</p>
<p>Consider a subsidy program for reduced fees for users experiencing income challenges.</p>	<p>Recreation & Parks</p>	<p>2025</p>	<p>Research opportunities to implement a pay-what-you-can model for recreation programs.</p>
<p>Provide equipment in municipal office spaces to accommodate differently abled persons.</p>	<p>Municipal and Village staff</p>	<p>2025-28</p>	<p>Examples: accessible and universal technology, hand toggles, vision and hearing accommodations, raised desks.</p>
<p>Ensure 5-10% of smoke detectors given away during Fire Prevention week are visual smoke detectors.</p>	<p>Fire Services</p>	<p>2025-28</p>	

* Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.

Objective #3

Governance

Continue to develop internal governance and administrative capacity, practices, and tools that proactively counter, and enable immediate reaction against, all forms of discrimination, exclusion, and racism in our communities.*

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
<p><i>Review By-Laws, Policies, and Forms.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Develop process for triggering review.</i> <i>Develop a guide for municipal units on how to review and update policies, by-laws, procedures, and practices with an equitable best practices lens.</i> 	<p><i>Regional Coordinators with support from Councils, staff, and EDI Advisory Committee</i></p>	<p>2025-28</p>	<p><i>Municipal units will work with regional staff to flag and revise forms, policies, and by-laws to remove gendered language, apply plain language principles, and implement best practices for equity.</i></p>
<p>Review human resources framework to address explicit and implicit biases and barriers. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training to those hiring staff and recruiting volunteers Broaden definition of relevant background, training, experience Broaden representation on committees Directly promote staff and volunteer opportunities to equity-seeking groups <p>BENCHMARK: Ensure 100% of all employment ads are sent to employment organizations serving underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>Council, CAO, HR Director, and Communications Officer</p>	<p>2025</p>	<p>This effort will also be a high-level focus of the Regional Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Advisory Committee. Once developed, regional can be incorporated into local frameworks.</p>
<p>Provide an inclusive language resource to staff, especially those developing external-facing and HR documents.</p>	<p>Communications Officer</p>	<p>April 2025</p>	

* Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.

Objective #3

Governance (con't)

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
<i>Continue to provide training for elected officials, staff, and appropriate committee members.</i>	<i>Regional Coordinators with support from Councils and staff</i>	2025-28	<i>Schedule foundational EDI training and follow-up with workshops, lunch & learns, etc. Establish budget on regional and municipal levels. Training needs include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis intervention • Dealing with discrimination from customers • Management and HR
<i>Provide a complaint process for people experiencing discrimination.</i>	<i>Regional Coordinators</i>		
Collect data from grant recipients, economic development engagements, hiring, Quality of Life Survey. BENCHMARK: Meet with AMANS to discuss further (Fall 2025)	All departments	2025-28	Data will be used to adjust programs and amend policies as needed.
Develop a Renewal of Commitment statement to demonstrate support for EDI initiatives. BENCHMARK: Have statement prepared for review and approval by Fall of 2025.	Communications Officer and EDI Advisory Committee	2025	
Research procurement best practices as they relate to equity. Provide information report and guidelines to Council for consideration.	Corporate and Strategic Management staff	2025-28	

* Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.

Objective #4 Relationship

Develop a network of agencies and organizations active in equity, diversity, and inclusion work in order to share information, opportunities, and resources with community organizations and businesses that will advance and support their EDI initiatives in our communities.*

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
Continue to develop and cultivate relationships with groups, agencies, and organizations active in EDI work. BENCHMARK: Provide a monthly progress report to the EDI Advisory Committee.	All partners	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly contact local and regional agencies and groups committed to the same work. • Share resources, such as training and funding opportunities. • Facilitate guest speaking engagements. • Facilitate programming for newcomers and elders. • Facilitate training/awareness sessions for local businesses. • Sponsor or facilitate welcoming spaces or events for newcomers. • Support mentorship and cooperative programs.
Explore a program scope to connect businesses with equity-seeking groups and possible partnerships.	Community Economic Development Officer	2025-28	Continue promotion of Rainbow Registered program with tourism businesses. Establish list of local venues as hosts for training and workshop events.
Share and create opportunities for community partners to flourish in their own EDI efforts and initiatives. BENCHMARK: Share monthly online and bimonthly in newsletter.	Various staff	2025-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share and promote funding and training opportunities. • Provide independent learning opportunities through programming. • Create subscriber list to receive updates.

* Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.

Objective #5 Community

Provide advice and recommendations to elected officials concerning opportunities to create welcoming and inclusive cultural and social spaces ensuring a respectful and equitable community for all to live and work.*

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	NOTES
<i>Facilitate cultural experiences with BIPOC artists.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art installations in community spaces • Identify grant opportunities for a program that could be modelled on the MOC's Trail Art program 	<i>Recreation & Parks and Community Economic Development Officer</i>	2025-26	<i>A region-wide program/project will be brought forward.</i>
**Embed EDI in Arts & Culture Sector Planning.	Community Economic Development Officer, Policy Analyst, Director of Community Development		Implement Priority #4 from the Municipality of Chester Arts & Culture Strategy (attached as Appendix A).
Review naming of municipal assets, infrastructure, facilities, and roads.		2025	Review municipal open spaces and consider honouring community members by commemorating spaces in their names. Consider amending road/place naming policies to exclude harmful names.
Create more opportunities for elder residents to contribute to their communities.	Various staff members	2025-28	Identify opportunities for partnership between community groups, mentorships, and programming.
<i>Be present in community to foster engagement and invite shared experiences.</i>	<i>Regional Coordinator with support from municipal staff</i>	2025-28	<i>Dialogue with community members will inform how local government can meet the needs of our residents without exclusion.</i>

* Actions in italics are identified as being elevated to the regional level and supported by MOC and VOC.

Conclusion

The Municipality of Chester and the Village of Chester want our residents and visitors to feel like they belong in our communities; to feel secure and welcome.

Our joint approach reflects our desire to create systemic change by embedding specific human rights and examples into our policies, services, and programs. Specific because broad, high-level policy and one-stroke service delivery doesn't represent all aspects of our lives here.

Our Action Plan outlines objectives, measurable benchmarks, and ongoing evaluations to track progress. From raising public awareness to reviewing policies with an equity lens, we are determined to improve. Regular engagement with our EDI Advisory Committee, Council, Commission, and community members will help us meet the needs of our population.

This is a work-in-progress that will guide us and ensure accountability. Our journey will sometimes seem slow, but taking the steps is important.

The background of the page is a blue surface with a network of thin, light-colored lines connecting several orange, stylized human figures. One figure is in sharp focus in the center, while others are blurred in the foreground and background. The text is overlaid on this network.

APPENDIX A

Arts & Culture Strategy

Priority 4

MUNICIPALITY OF CHESTER

ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030



PRIORITY 4

EMBED EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY IN ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR PLANNING

Embedding Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) in MOC's arts and culture strategy is essential to creating a welcoming environment that uplifts all voices, especially those of marginalized communities. The municipality can foster equity by working with partners to address pay disparities in the arts, where marginalized artists are often compensated even less. By prioritizing EDIA, MOC can work on relationship building with underserved communities, building trust, ensuring fair representation, and access. Arts and culture provides a powerful avenue for this transformation, offering creative spaces where healing, connection, and collaboration can flourish.

GOAL

Meaningfully include, amplify and collaborate with underrepresented voices to create safe, fair, accessible, and barrier-free cultural opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 4.1

Respectfully engage with local First Nations (Wasoqopa'q and Sipekne'katik) on cultural planning and policy development to reflect Indigenous knowledge, heritage, and advance decolonization and reconciliation efforts.

MOC Role:

- Collaborate and learn
- Incorporate Indigenous knowledge and reconciliation into planning and policy

ACTIONS

PHASE 1

1. In relation to Arts & Culture planning - review the Municipality's outreach and engagement with local First Nation Communities (including Wasoqopa'q and Sipekne'katik). Identify communication improvements needed, focussing on relationship and trust building.
2. Ensure MOC grant applications and criteria address cultural appropriation.

OBJECTIVE 4.2

Build a healthy arts and culture ecosystem by emphasizing fair, equitable pay for all artists and cultural workers.

MOC Role:

- Support capacity building of the Arts & Culture Sector by incorporating fair pay into Municipal planning and projects.

ACTIONS

PHASE 1

2. Research national pay models (CARFAC, Canada Council for the Arts, Writers Guild, PACT) and incorporate a baseline pay framework for artists into Municipal projects, services and policy. Share as best practice for the sector and business community. See Arts Nova Scotia for resources.

OBJECTIVE 4.3

Actively engage marginalized groups in decision-making processes to rebuild trust and build relationships.

MOC Role:

- In partnership with the EDI committee, Accessibility Coordinator and Anti-Racism & Diversity Coordinator, collaborate with marginalized groups.

ACTIONS

PHASE 2

3. Develop recommendations outlining tangible opportunities to partner with marginalized communities to formally celebrate their work, history, and heritage.

4. Collaborate with and support Indigenous-led, culturally sensitive frameworks and projects to ensure their perspectives and priorities guide decolonization and reconciliation efforts within the municipality's cultural planning, policies, and community programs.
5. Collaborate with local First Nations (Wasoqopa'q and Sipekne'katik), marginalized communities and cultural partners to decolonize public spaces, identifying key concerns and priorities. Incorporate storytelling, signage, renaming of spaces, acknowledgement of accurate history to reflect diverse histories in public spaces.

OBJECTIVE 4.4

Align the arts and culture strategy with accessibility, EDI, and anti-racism goals by collaborating with staff, Municipal Arts Organization and community partners.

MOC Role:

- Collaborative partner

ACTIONS

PHASE 2

5. Set up regular meetings with key staff and partners to review progress on goals, share updates, and to adjust the arts and culture strategy as needed depending on emerging issues and community needs.
6. Develop and incorporate grant evaluation criteria for anti-racism, EDI, and accessibility impact of arts & culture projects and programming. Ensure goals are applied in community proposals.

Schedule 8.1



**Village of Chester Commission
Request for Decision
April 9, 2025**

RE: Setting 2025 Audit Committee, Annual General Meeting, and Election Dates

Issue Summary

Staff are requesting that dates of key governance events in Q1 of 2025/26 be scheduled now. Having the dates set allows for improved advance planning and promotion.

April							May							June						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

Background and Description

- Audit Committee Meetings x2

The MGA 44 (3) and the Village’s Audit Committee Policy requires the formation of an audit committee which “...shall meet at least twice in each fiscal year.”

Recommended dates:

- Week of April 28, 2025 for Kick-off meeting **Note: Awaiting confirmation from Lawrence*
- 1st or 2nd week of June, 2025 for Committee approval of audit **Note: Sandra is not available on June 5 & 6*
- Past practice is to schedule these for 2:00 pm

- Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The MGA 413 requires this to be held “...on or before the first day of July in each fiscal year.”

Recommended dates

- If the APM is held with the Regular Monthly Meeting (immediately before or after), that date is Wednesday, June 18, 2025.
- If the Commission prefers to hold the APM and Monthly Meeting on separate evenings, either Tuesday, June 17 or Thursday, June 19 are suggested.
- Promotion: Funds to send out a flyer through the Post Office about the APM and Election are in the 2025/26 budget. In hopes of improved attendance, St. Stephen's Community Centre should be considered.

- Annual Commission Election – two seats this year:

The MGA 416 and the Village's Elections By-law respectively require this to be held "...within one week following the annual meeting" and "...the first Tuesday immediately following the Annual Public Meeting".

Recommended dates

- Election Day Tuesday, June 24, 2025
- Advance Poll Saturday, June 21, 2025

Considerations

- Financial Impacts
 - Annual Public Meeting and Election costs have been included in the annual budget, per past practice.
- Policy Impacts
 - Adherence to the *Municipal Government Act* is mandatory.

Options

1. The Commission may approve any or all of the suggested dates above.
2. The Commission may revise any or all of the suggested dates above.

Recommendation – Nil

Draft Motion

That the Chester Village Commission set the following dates for governance events in 2025: Audit Committee meetings on _____ and _____, 2025 at 2:00 pm; the Annual Public Meeting on _____, 2025 at 6:00 pm; and the annual Election on June 24, 2025 with the advance poll on June 21, 2025.