

# MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF **ANTIGONISH**

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA**

Tuesday, January 28, 2025, Following Asset Management  
Council Chambers  
Municipal Administration Building  
285 Beech Hill Road  
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

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1. Call to Order – Chair, Warden Nicolas MacInnis
2. Approval of Agenda
3. In-Camera Items
  - a. Personnel Matters
  - b. Acquisition, Sale, Lease and Protection of Municipal Property
4. Approval of January 14, 2025 Committee of the Whole Minutes
5. Business Arising from the Minutes
6. Delegations
  - a. Circular Food Solution: Sodexo & Antigonish Community Fridge Partnership
7. Continuing Business
  - a. Hospitality and Expense Policy Updates
  - b. Off Highway Vehicles
8. New Business
  - a. Write-off of Inactive Accounts
  - b. Council Special District Grants
  - c. Introduction and Overview to Equity, Anti Racism and Anti Hate Plan for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish
9. Community Events

This item provides Councillors with an opportunity to briefly bring to the attention of Council events that are taking place in their communities.
10. Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees and Commissions
  - a. Antigonish Heritage Museum Board
  - b. Antigonish Arena Association
  - c. Eastern District Planning Commission
  - d. Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management Committee
  - e. Pictou Antigonish Regional Library
  - f. RK MacDonald Nursing Home
  - g. County Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee
  - h. Community Navigation & Physician Retention Services Association

11. Additions to the Agenda

12. Adjournment

**MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF**  
**ANTIGONISH**

**Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday January 14, 2025, 5:30pm  
Council Chambers  
Municipal Administration Building  
285 Beech Hill Road  
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Present were: Warden Nicholas MacInnis  
Deputy Warden John Dunbar  
Councillor Mary MacLellan  
Councillor Adam Baden-Clay  
Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin  
Councillor Shawn Brophy  
Councillor Wayne Melanson  
Councillor Gary Mattie  
Councillor Harris McNamara  
Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets: None

Staff Present: Shirlyn Donovan, CAO  
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk  
Megan MacInnis, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Others Present: Gallery

**Call to Order – Chairman, Warden Nicholas MacInnis**

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole was called to order by the Chair, Warden MacInnis, at 5:31 pm.

**Approval of Agenda**

Warden MacInnis called for any additions or deletions to the agenda.

Moved and Seconded

*That the agenda be approved as presented.*

**Motion Carried**

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### **Approval of December 10, 2024 Committee of the Whole Minutes**

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of December 10, 2024. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

### **Delegations**

There were no delegations.

### **Continuing Business**

There was no continuing business.

### **New Business**

#### **Seabright Road**

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the staff memo that was prepared to provide an overview of the history of the requests of residents on Seabright Road to have the section of the roadway not listed by the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works (NSDPW) assumed by the Municipality and maintained. Mrs. Donovan noted that following a presentation at Council in 2024, residents upgraded the roadway to bring it to a public standard to align with the municipal policy. Staff met with representatives from the NSDPW to negotiate maintenance of the roadway if it was taken over by the Municipality, and it was agreed upon that they would provide summer and winter maintenance to the roadway and bill the Municipality if the 900m section of the roadway were transferred to the ownership of the Municipality.

Discussion followed, and it was noted that many of the residents of the roadway were in attendance in the gallery.

Moved and Seconded

*The Committee recommends that Municipal Council take over ownership of a 900m portion of Seabright Road and develop a maintenance agreement with the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works for ongoing winter and summer maintenance.*

**Motion Carried**

### **Community Partnership Grants**

Mrs. Donovan spoke to the annual community partnership grant process, which usually opens at the end of January. Staff usually recommends 3% of the tax revenue to be assigned for grants, which will include the special district grants. Mrs. Donovan noted that the policies were included in the agenda package for information. She also

provided an overview of the grants that were provided in the current fiscal year. Consensus was provided to proceed with 3% of the tax revenue for the grants.

### 2025 Boundary Review

Ms. Schumacher provided the Committee with an overview of the boundary review process undertaken in 2023/24. She also provided the Committee members with copies of the June 21, 2024 decision of the UARB, reviewing the write-up and noting the direction for the Municipality to conduct a study after the October 2024 municipal election into the appropriate number of councillors and polling districts, and the fairness and reasonableness of the district boundaries, and to file its study and an application on later than December 31, 2025.

Ms. Schumacher noted two options available for moving forward with the required study. The Municipality could utilize a consultant again to do the study, or have staff do the work with the caveat that support for mapping services would be required. The floor was then opened to the Committee for discussion and feedback.

Members of the Committee expressed that they wanted a process where they could have more input on the proposed boundary adjustments, acknowledging that boundaries would need to be moved to bring the districts into parity. Discussion followed regarding the advantages and disadvantages of using a consultant, whether the question of the number of districts should be reviewed again, and the timing and quantity of open houses utilized for public consultation.

Staff was directed to prepare a full information package for the Committee with copies of reports and studies from previous boundary reviews, as well as some preliminary timelines and costs, for further discussion prior to a decision being made.

### Hospitality and Expense Policy Updates

Ms. Schumacher noted that the Expense and Hospitality policies were included in the agenda package and as discussed at previous meetings, were under consideration by Council for amendment or approval as required under Section 23(7) of the Municipal Government Act. Key sections of the policies were reviewed for the committee's information. Members of the committee were asked to provide staff with their input on any possible revisions, and that the policies would be back in front of the committee with a staff memo

### Off Highway Vehicle Discussion

Warden MacInnis shared feedback from residents in his district from off-highway vehicle groups that are looking for connections between trails and resources in their districts. He noted that Richmond and Inverness counties have both passed new policy for roads to connect trails, working in conjunction with the province. Councillors shared the off-highway vehicle usage in their communities and desire of residents to be able to access

other resources without breaking the law by travelling on the roadway. Those who were in attendance when the provincial representatives presented on the subject in April 2024 provided feedback on their presentation, with examples such as signage.

Warden MacInnis noted that the off-highway group forming in his district will be meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Andrews Community Centre at 1pm. Staff was directed to create a summary of the experiences in other municipalities.

### Street Light Requests

#### *Bayfield Summerside Road*

Deputy Warden Dunbar noted that at the intersection of Bayfield Road and Summerside Road would benefit from a streetlight for safety reasons. He noted that the visibility at that location can vary given the weather conditions and would benefit from the lighting.

Moved and Seconded

That the Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the installation of a streetlight at the intersection of Bayfield Road and Summerside Road.

**Motion Carried.**

#### *Intersection of Pomquet Monkshead Road and Pomquet River Road at Highway 104*

Councillor Melanson noted that a streetlight at a busy intersection on Highway 104 that was damaged in an accident several months ago has yet to be replaced, creating a safety concern in that location. Staff will follow-up with Department of Highways about the timing of the reinstallation of the damaged light at this intersection with the streetlight.

#### *Pleasant Valley Road and Murphy Road*

Councillor MacLellan noted that she was asked for a streetlight to be installed at the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road and Murphy Road.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the installation of a streetlight at the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road and Murphy Road.

**Motion Carried.**

Discussion followed. Members of the Committee felt that it would be worthwhile to look at reviewing the Streetlight Policy, as it has not been updated since 2001.

### Municipal Transfer Station Hours of Operation Discussion

Deputy Warden Dunbar brought forward a suggestion he had received from constituents and saw discussed online requesting consideration of an extension of

operating hours at the transfer station on Saturdays. Currently, the hours of operation on Saturdays are from 8am – noon. He suggested consideration of an extension to a later time such as 3pm.

Mrs. Donovan noted that she had talked with the Director of Public Works, and he had not received requests from the public to consider an extension of those hours. Mrs. Donovan reviewed the current operating hours of the transfer station. Councillor Garvie shared that many residents along the Beech Hill Road wait until after the transfer station has closed to go out walking on the roadway, due to the volume of traffic along Beech Hill Road when the transfer station is open. Councillor Baden-Clay expressed concerns about extending staff hours further into the weekend.

### **Community Events**

- Deputy Warden Dunbar shared that over the holidays there was the mural unveiling in District 7, as well as holiday events in Heatherton including a tree lighting and Christmas concert.
- Councillor MacLellan noted that floor curling and yoga, as well as bridge and pickleball, are underway in the community centres in her district.
- Councillor McNamara shared that a number of four-wheelers attended a rally in District 9 as part of a fundraiser. The Fire Department is holding a fundraising breakfast every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month to raise money for a new truck. Card plays are underway, and a concert is held on the last Sunday of every month.
- Councillor Melanson shared that he attended a concert in his district on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. A dance was held on December 28<sup>th</sup> by the fire department, and it was sold out. Planning is underway for the Pomquet Winter Carnival in February.
- Councillor Garvie attended the L'Arche fundraising dinner. He shared that he attended several minor hockey games and encouraged members of Council to attend and support the youth playing hockey in the community.
- Councillor MacLaughlin shared that she attended the Levy hosted at the Legion. Lochaber community centre hosted a breakfast last weekend, and a skating rink has been created on the tennis courts at the community centre. In St. Joseph's, a breakfast is being planned for the upcoming weekend. The breakfasts are important fundraisers for the community centres, supported by the volunteers in the community.
- Councillor Brophy attended the Lights of Love event at the RK MacDonald Nursing Home. The Lions Club is hosting a pancake breakfast as a fundraiser.
- Warden MacInnis noted he attended the New Years Levy. He noted that he is meeting with Allison White of the Rivers Association, who received funding from

the Federal Department of Environment and also hosted a successful fundraiser in the fall.

**Additions to the Agenda**

There were no additions to the agenda

**In-Camera Business**

There was no in-camera business.

**Adjournment**

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:24pm.

**Motion Carried**

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Warden Nicholas MacInnis

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Shirlyn Donovan, CAO



# Circular Food Solution: Sodexo and Antigonish Community Fridge Partnership

**Date prepared:** January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

## Overview

### Project Summary

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The Circular Food Solution is a collaborative initiative between Sodexo and the Antigonish Community Fridge, aimed at tackling food waste and food insecurity in rural Nova Scotia. By repurposing surplus food from the Sodexo foodservice operation at St. Francis Xavier University (StFX), we provide nourishing meals to those in need within the community.

### Key Issues Addressed

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This project addresses two critical challenges: food waste and food insecurity. By transforming surplus food into meals, we not only reduce waste but also support individuals and families facing hunger in our rural areas.

### Goals and Objective

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- **Create a Circular Food System:** Foster sustainability by utilizing available resources to feed rural Nova Scotians.
- **Enhance Food Security:** Provide consistent access to meals through the Antigonish Community Fridge.
- **Reduce Food Waste:** Repurpose surplus food from StFX to minimize waste and increase meal accessibility. Secure additional sources of food to enter the circular food system



# Current Impact

Since launching in September 2023, we have distributed **16,184 meals**. Currently, in January 2025 we are averaging **400 meals per week**. Our operations are effectively established, with weekly deliveries to the community fridge already in place. We estimate meals distributed for the 2024-2025 Academic year to reach **9,000 meals, 7000 distributed since September 2024**.

# Further Funding Required

The Circular Food Solution represents a vital step toward a more sustainable food system in Antigonish. We are actively seeking funding to support the ongoing success of our program and ensure that its resources continue to benefit the community.

We are seeking **\$3500** annual funding for paper products to ensure continuation of the project for 1 academic year.

\*Sodexo to continue providing the food and labour resources to package free of charge for these meals.

***Estimated annual impact 8000 Meals (\$.43 per piece ave.)***

We appreciate your consideration in supporting this impactful initiative. If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please contact:

Tim Hierlihy General Manager Sodexo [thierlih@stfx.ca](mailto:thierlih@stfx.ca) 902-867-2491  
Guerin Sykes Executive Chef Sodexo [gsykes@stfx.ca](mailto:gsykes@stfx.ca) 902-867-5133  
Breanna Scott Registered Dietitian Sodexo [bscott@stfx.ca](mailto:bscott@stfx.ca) 902-870-4516

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF  
**ANTIGONISH**

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**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Committee of the Whole

**FROM:** Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk

**SUBJECT:** **Expense and Hospitality Review under S.23(7) of the Municipal Government Act**

**DATE:** 28/01/2025

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is putting forward the following recommendation for consideration by the Committee:

*The Committee recommends that Municipal Council re-adopt the **Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement** and the **Municipal Hospitality Policy** as required by Section 23(7) of the Municipal Government Act, subject to the per diem information in the **Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement** being updated, if necessary, following the completion of the compensation review currently underway.*

**BACKGROUND**

Section 23(7) of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) reads as follows:

By the January 31<sup>st</sup> immediately following a regular election held under the Municipal Elections Act, the council shall review the expense and hospitality policies and, following a motion by the council, either re-adopt the policies or amend one or both of the policies and adopt the policies as amended.

Both the Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement and the Municipal Hospitality Policy were last updated on December 14, 2020.

**DISCUSSION**

Staff first introduced the requirement for updates to the named policies in memos regarding the proposed code of conduct policy at meetings of the Committee of the Whole on November 25 and December 10, 2024. Copies of those policies were included in both of those agenda packages for information and review. At the January 14, 2025 meeting of the Committee of the Whole meeting, staff provided an overview of the policies as part of a discussion item on the agenda, and was asked by the committee to look at whether the per diems listed in the Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement required any updating.

Staff began a preliminary online scan of policies posted by municipalities and other provincial organizations to create the table found below, as a means to get a general sense of the per diem amounts provided by those organizations to their staff.

Unit	Year	Incidental	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Total Per Diems
Antigonish County	Last revised in 2020	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 81.00
East Hants	info shared Sept 2024	\$ 15.00	\$ 18.00	\$ 21.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 84.00
Barrington	info shared Sept 2024		\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 75.00
Clare	info shared Sept 2024		\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 70.00
Wolfville	Last revised October 2024		\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 71.00
HRM	Last revised 2022	\$ 10.00	\$ 13.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 27.00	\$ 65.00
Town of Antigonish	Last revised 2014	Provincial rates for per diem				
Cumberland County	response in 2023		\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 75.00
Province of Nova Scotia (NSGEU)	2024 Expense Form		\$ 18.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 73.00
Nova Scotia Health	Approved Sept 5, 2024	\$ 5.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 48.00

After further discussion amongst senior staff, a suggestion was made to hold off exploring the matter in greater detail, where it was part of the compensation analysis being undertaken as part of the compensation review currently underway.

## NEXT STEPS

Staff is putting forward a recommendation to the Committee of the Whole, that Municipal Council re-adopt the Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement and the Municipal Hospitality Policy as required by Section 23(7) of the Municipal Government Act. This recommendation includes language in the proposed motion that this re-adoption be subject to the per diem information in the Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement being updated, if necessary, following the completion of the compensation review currently underway.

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF  
**ANTIGONISH**

<b>TOPIC:</b>	<b>Municipal Hospitality Policy</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	<b>November 19, 2019 (Min# 2019-148)</b>
<b>DATE REVISED:</b>	<b>December 14, 2020 (Min#2020-174)</b>

**1. TITLE**

1.1 This Policy may be cited as the “Hospitality Policy”

**2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

2.1. The Municipality recognizes that hospitality-related activities are, at times, necessary and legitimate expenses supporting the effective conduct of government business and for reasons of diplomacy, protocol, business development, or promotion, or advocacy.

2.2. This policy establishes uniform standards and procedures respecting Municipal Council members, the CAO, and municipal employee hospitality claims.

2.3. The object of this policy is to:

2.3.1. Provide direction and guidance with respect to the appropriate reporting of necessary hospitality expenses;

2.3.2. Ensure hospitality is offered in an accountable, economical, and consistent; and,

2.3.3. Ensure public funds are used prudently and transparently.

**3. INTERPRETATION**

3.1. In this Policy:

3.1.1. “Municipal Council” means the Council of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;

3.1.2. “Municipality” means the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;

3.1.3. “Municipal” means the business or property of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;

3.1.4. “Signing Authority” means an individual authorized to sign on behalf of the Municipality.

3.1.5. “Claimant” means the individual submitting the expense claim for the items listed in this policy.

**4. HOSPITALITY AND HOSPITALITY EVENTS**

4.1. A hospitality event is a reception, ceremony, conference, meal or other event that involves hosting individuals from outside the Municipality. Hospitality may be offered under the following circumstances in accordance with this policy:

4.1.1. Hosting foreign dignitaries;

4.1.2. Engaging in official municipal business matters with representatives from other governments, business, industry or labour leaders, or other municipal or community leaders;

4.1.3. Sponsoring or hosting conferences;

4.1.4. Hosting ceremonies and/or recognition events; and,

4.1.5. Other official functions, as approved by the CAO, their designate, or Municipal Council.

## **5. SIGNING AUTHORITIES**

5.1. A Signing Authority is prohibited from authorizing expenses incurred on their own behalf.

## **6. PRIOR AUTHORIZATION**

6.1. Subject to this policy, all hospitality events in require prior authorization.

6.2. A request for prior authorization for hospitality events requires the following information:

6.2.1. Rationale / purpose of the event;

6.2.2. Estimated numbers of attendees and their respective affiliations;

6.2.3. If alcohol is to be provided at the event, the reasons that the provision of alcohol is appropriate and warranted in the circumstances; and,

6.2.4. Estimated itemized costs including gratuities and supplementary expenses.

6.3. Requests for hospitality events shall be reviewed by Municipal Council, which shall consider the value and benefit of the proposed event in relation to its cost in deciding whether to approve the hospitality event.

6.4. In instances where a hospitality event has been held without prior approval, claims for reimbursement must provide details outlined above and include a document outlining the reasons prior approval was not possible.

## **7. SERVING OF ALCOHOL**

7.1. While the standard for hospitality is the provision of non-alcoholic beverages, the provision of alcohol in the context of hospitality for reasons of diplomacy, protocol, business development, promotion or advocacy is deemed an acceptable expense in limited circumstances. Any request for approval to serve alcohol at a hospitality event must have prior approval by either the CAO or Designate, or Municipal Council.

7.2. The Municipality, its employees, and Members of Council are expected to act responsibly in the use of public funds and in the care of well-being of themselves, other employees, and their respective guests with respect to the serving of alcohol.

7.3. The Municipality will demonstrate good judgement in the reasonableness of the quantity and expense of alcoholic beverages offered to guests.

7.4. If alcohol is provided at a hospitality event, food must be served.

## **8. GIFTS**

8.1. For reasons of diplomacy, protocol, business development or promotional advocacy, the giving of token gifts to individuals outside of government is sometimes appropriate. Any giving of gifts requires prior approval by the CAO if the monetary value does not exceed \$250, or Municipal Council if it does.

## **9. CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF HOSPITALITY EXPENSES**

9.1. Claims for reimbursement of hospitality expenses must be submitted on the form provided from time to time by the Municipality and shall be signed by the Claimant.

9.2. Hospitality expense claims must include the following:

- 9.2.1. A copy of the signed prior authorization for the hospitality event for which the expense was incurred;
  - 9.2.2. The names, titles and organizations of the guests at the hospitality event;
  - 9.2.3. The business objective for the expense; and,
  - 9.2.4. A detailed itemized receipt for the expense.
- 9.3. In instances where prior approval of the hospitality event was not possible, the hospitality expense must also include the information required in section 6.4.
- 9.4. If no receipt is available for a hospitality expense, a written attestation signed by the Claimant must be submitted to explain why the receipt is unavailable, and a description itemizing and confirming the expense must be provided. Debit or credit card transaction records are not acceptable as receipts.
- 9.5. Hospitality expenses incurred by one individual on behalf of another must be attributed to the individual for whom those expenses were incurred.
- 9.6. No hospitality expense claim shall be paid unless the claim is approved for payment by two Signing Authorities. Before approving an expense claim, a Signing Authority must ensure that the claim is consistent with this policy.
- 9.7. In considering a hospitality expense claim for payment, a Signing Authority may be request additional explanations, documentation, or justification from the claimant, and may refuse to approve any claim or expense that did not have prior authorization and that the Signing Authority decides is unreasonable or not in compliance with this policy. In such an instance the claim may be withdrawn or shall be referred to Municipal Council.
- 9.8. The use of petty cash to pay a hospitality expense claim is prohibited.

**10. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- 10.1. Pursuant to Section 65A of the *Municipal Government Act*, the CAO shall ensure that the Municipality does the following:
  - 10.1.1. Within 90 days of the end of each fiscal quarter, prepares and posts a hospitality report of the Municipal website that describes all the hospitality expenses incurred by the Municipality, including purchases of alcohol, during the quarter.
  - 10.1.2. By September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, prepares and files with the Minister of Municipal Affairs an annual summary report that summarizes the hospitality expense reports for the preceding fiscal year, which is compliant with the requirements of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the requirements set out in the Financial Reporting and Accounting Manual.

**11. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

- 11.1. The Municipal Audit Committee shall review the hospitality annual summary report by October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.
- 11.2. By the January 31<sup>st</sup> immediately following a regular election held under the Municipal Elections Act, Council shall review this policy and, following a motion from Council, either re-adopt the policy or amend the policy and adopt the policy as amended.

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF  
**ANTIGONISH**

<b>TOPIC:</b>	<b>Policy on Municipal Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	<b>March 15, 2016</b>
<b>DATE REVISED:</b>	<b>September 20, 2016 (Min#2016-119)</b> <b>March 19, 2019 (Min#2019-036)</b> <b>December 2020 14, 2020 (Min#2020-173)</b>

**1. TITLE**

1.1 This Policy may be cited as the “Council and CAO Expense Reimbursement Policy”

**2. PURPOSE**

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the reimbursement of expenses when members of Municipal Council (including the Warden and Deputy-Warden) and the CAO are required to travel on Municipal business, and for conference-related expenses.

**3. INTERPRETATION**

3.1. In this Policy:

3.1.1. “Municipal Council” means the Council of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;

3.1.2. “Municipality” means the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;

3.1.3. “CAO” means the CAO or designate of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;

3.1.4. “Designated Signing Officer” means those who are authorized to sign financial and legal documents on behalf of the Municipality; and,

3.1.5. All other words used have the same meaning as that used in governing provincial or municipal legislation or subordinate legislation from time to time, unless the context indicates otherwise.

**4. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1. Everyone who incurs and expense in relation to Municipal business is responsible for:

4.1.1. Familiarizing themselves and complying with the provisions of this policy;

4.1.2. Completing and submitting expense claims with necessary supporting documentation;

4.1.3. Exercising reasonable diligence and care in incurring expenses prudently and responsibly; and,

4.1.4. With respect to travel, cancelling reservations as required and considering alternatives to travel such as teleconferencing and video-conferencing.

**5. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

5.1. Municipal Council members shall be reimbursed for the reasonable expenses incurred in attending:

5.1.1. The Nova Scotia Federal of Municipalities (NSFM) annual meeting and spring workshop;

5.1.2. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) annual meeting once per term, except the Warden, who may attend each year;



- 5.1.3. Any meetings, conferences, or events at which the member's attendance is authorized or requested by Municipal Council;
- 5.1.4. Attendance at any Municipal Council, or Committee of Council meeting;
- 5.1.5. Attendance at a meeting of any Board, Commission, or other organization to which the member has been appointed by Municipal Council, except that no reimbursement shall be provided by the Municipality if the member is entitled to reimbursement of expenses directly from the applicable organization;
- 5.2. The CAO shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in attending:
  - 5.2.1. The Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) annual meeting and spring workshop;
  - 5.2.2. Any meetings, conferences, or events at which the CAO's attendance is authorized or requested by Municipal Council;
- 5.3. Travel expenses include, but are not limited to, accommodations, airfare, rail, ferry transport, mileage, per diems, taxi fares, parking, and other applicable tolls;
- 5.4. Other eligible expenses include, but are not limited to, registration for conference and events;
  - 5.4.1. For members of Municipal Council, phone and Internet stipends are also considered other eligible expenses.
- 5.5. Only actual incurred expenses that are considered eligible under the terms of this policy will be authorized for reimbursement.

## **6. INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

- 6.1. Expenses incurred by a member of Municipal Council or the CAO in attending or participating in a political activity or political event are not reimbursable by the Municipality.
- 6.2. The expenses of a Municipal Council member for political activity associated with election or re-election is not reimbursable by the Municipality.
- 6.3. Fees, deposits, interest, and surcharges incurred on a personal credit card shall not be reimbursed.
- 6.4. The cost of any alcoholic beverages or cannabis shall not be reimbursed. Please refer to the Hospitality Policy for further detail.
- 6.5. Any fees or expenses incurred by a spouse, family-member or travelling companion will not be reimbursed by the Municipality. However, any fees or expenses associated with the courtesy booking arrangements for an individual travelling with member of Municipal Council or the CAO must be reimbursed to the Municipality within thirty (30) days of the expense being incurred. If the expense is not reimbursed within the thirty (30) day time allotment, the expense will be withdrawn from the Municipal Councillor's monthly stipend / the CAO's bi-weekly remuneration.
- 6.6. When personal and Municipal travel is combined, only documented expenses directly related to the Municipal portion are reimbursable. Extended travel time and related expenses are at the traveler's own expense.

6.7. Reimbursement shall not be provided for loss of personal effects (e.g. lost luggage, clothing, and other personal belongings), or for personal services (e.g. dry cleaning, haircuts, valet services, etc.).

6.8. Members of Municipal Council and the CAO are prohibited from claiming reimbursement for anyone other than themselves.

**7. REQUIREMENT FOR RECEIPTS**

7.1. Receipts or other satisfactory documentary proof must be submitted with the reimbursement claim for all expenses except:

7.1.1. Claims for per diem meal allowances; and,

7.1.2. Claims for personal vehicle mileage.

**8. AUTHORIZATION FOR REIMBURSEMENT**

8.1. Designated Signing Officers may authorize reimbursement of expenses and mileage. The individual claiming the expense reimbursement is prohibited from authorizing their own reimbursement claim.

8.2. Directives with respect to the use of municipal credit cards are outlined in the Municipal Credit Card Policy.

**9. PER DIEM MEAL ALLOWANCE**

9.1. Councillors and the CAO will be given an allowance for meals during conference/training attendance, not to include meals that are provided as part of the registration fee. Allowances inclusive of gratuity will be paid as follows:

Meal	Rate (per day)
<b>Incidental</b>	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>\$15.00</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>Dinner</b>	<b>\$36.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$81.00</b>

**10. MILEAGE**

10.1. The mileage allowance reimbursed for Municipal Council members and the CAO using personal vehicles for authorized travel shall be at the rate stipulated from time to time by the Province of Nova Scotia as the maximum mileage rate for its employees.

10.1.1. Those claiming mileage are expected to take the most direct route of travel reasonably possible.

10.2. In order for the Municipality to consider mileage reimbursement for members of Municipal Council from their home to the Municipal Office for meetings as a non-taxable benefit, the following must be satisfied:

10.2.1. The Municipality must maintain that there is no available space at the Municipal Office for the Councillors to have an office to work out of; and,

10.2.2. As a result of clause 10.2.1, Councillors must use a designated area of their homes to perform a substantial portion of the work related to the Municipality and their elected official duties (e.g. check email, answer phone calls, have meetings, etc).

10.3. Mileage reimbursement for the CAO is from the Municipal Administrative Office to the meeting, conference, or event location.

10.4. Where several Municipal Council members attend the same meeting, conference or function, each shall make reasonable efforts to share a vehicle.

## **11. LIMITS ON REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

11.1. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Policy, the following limits shall apply to the reimbursement of expenses:

11.1.1. Airplane travel shall be booked by Municipal staff or shall only be reimbursed at the lowest rate that would have been available if Municipal staff had booked the airfare;

11.1.2. Hotel accommodations shall be booked by Municipal staff or shall only be reimbursed at the lowest rate that would have been available if Municipal staff had booked the accommodations;

11.1.3. Reimbursement of only one personal long distance phone call shall be permitted for each night of overnight travel;

11.1.4. Travel will be reimbursed at the most economical fare available (e.g. airfare, mileage).

11.2. Requests to attend any seminar and/or conference outside of the Atlantic Region shall be considered on an individual basis by the Committee of the Whole, which shall make a recommendation to Municipal Council with respect to attendance.

## **12. ADMINISTRATION**

12.1. Expense claims must be submitted on the form provided on a monthly basis to the CAO's Office and shall be signed by the claimant before receiving their reimbursement.

12.1.1. The CAO may reject any reimbursement claim not in compliance with this Policy, but the claimant shall have a right of appeal to Municipal Council.

12.1.2. The Warden will authorize the CAO's reimbursement claims, and the CAO has the same right of appeal to Municipal Council if the Warden deems the CAO's claim to be non-compliant.

12.2. If no receipt is available, a written attestation signed by the claimant must be submitted to explain why the receipt is unavailable, and a description itemizing and confirming the expenses must be provided. Debit or credit card transaction records are not acceptable as receipts.

12.3. In considering an expense claim for payment, the Designated Signing Officer may request additional explanations, documentation, or justification from the claimant, and may direct any claim or expense that the Designated Signing Officer feels is irregular or not in compliance with this policy to Municipal Council for consideration.

12.4. The use of petty cash to pay an expense claim is prohibited. Travel advances will not be provided.

### **13. SPECIAL CLAIMS**

- 13.1. Municipal Council, by majority approval, may approve reimbursement of expense claims that do not comply with the requirement of this Policy, except that no variance shall be allowed with respect to subsections 6.1 and 6.2.

### **14. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- 14.1. Pursuant to Section 65A of the *Municipal Government Act*, the CAO shall ensure that the Municipality does the following:
  - 14.1.1. Within 90 days of the end of each fiscal quarter, prepares and posts an expense report of the Municipal website for the Warden, the CAO (including an employee of the Municipality delegated any of the responsibilities or power of the Clerk Treasurer pursuant to subsection 29(b) of the *Municipal Government Act*) and each member of Municipal Council on their expenses regarding the following:
    - a) Travel and travel-related expenses, including transportation, accommodation, and incidentals;
    - b) Meals;
    - c) Training and education.
  - 14.1.2. By September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, prepares and files with the Minister of Municipal Affairs an annual summary report that summarizes the expense reports for the preceding fiscal year, which is compliant with the requirements of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the requirements set out in the Financial Reporting and Accounting Manual.

### **15. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

- 15.1. The Municipal Audit Committee shall review the expense annual summary report at least once each fiscal year.
- 15.2. By the January 31<sup>st</sup> immediately following a regular election held under the Municipal Elections Act, Council shall review this policy and, following a motion from Council, either re-adopt the policy or amend the policy and adopt the policy as amended.

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## MEMO FOR INFORMATION

**TO:** COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
**FROM:** SHIRLYN DONOVAN, CAO  
**SUBJECT:** OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLES  
**DATE:** 28/01/2025

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### SUMMARY

#### Road Trails Act for Off-highway Vehicles: Overview

The Government of Nova Scotia has passed legislation to allow off-highway vehicles on designated road shoulders and roadways.

In October 2018, Nova Scotia launched a pilot project in 7 communities across the province to safely enhance trail connectivity for four-wheeled off-highway vehicles (OHV). In September 2023, the Government of Nova Scotia proclaimed the Road Trails Act, making the pilot sites permanent designated areas and setting out the rules of the road.

The Road Trails Act allows four-wheeled and two-wheeled off-highway vehicles to access the shoulders of roadways, and the roadway itself where necessary, to safely travel from one trail to another or to access facilities (like gas stations) in designated areas.

Only registered, licensed and insured off-highway vehicles can operate on the shoulders or the roadway, in the designated areas. The operator must have a valid driver's licence, riders must wear a helmet and all passengers on an off-highway vehicle must be 9 or older.

#### Designated sites

The designated sites for off-highway vehicles include:

- Bloomfield, Digby County - Bloomfield Cross Road
- Capelin Cove, Richmond County – St Peter’s Forchu Road
- Churchover, Shelburne County - Old Shore Road
- Doucetteville, Digby County – Henry Maillet Road, Doucetteville Road, Fourth Lake Road
- Framboise, Richmond County – MacDonald Road, St Peter’s Forchu Road, North Framboise Road
- Gabarus, CBRM – Oceanview Drive and Route 327
- Hunts Point, Queens County – Beech Hill Road
- Kemptown, Colchester County – Kemptown Road
- Lennox Passage, Richmond County – Louisdale Connector to Rogers Road, Isle Madame
- Margaree Centre, Inverness County – Cranton Cross Road to West Big Intervale Road
- Mooseland, HRM – Mooseland Road
- New Germany, Lunenburg County – Trunk 10
- Port Clyde, Shelburne County – Route 309, Shore Road and Greenwood Road
- Porters Lake, HRM – Myra Road
- Pubnico, Yarmouth County – Trunk 3
- Riversdale, Colchester County – Riversdale Road, Thorpe Road

- Shelburne, Shelburne County – Spa Road
- Sherbrooke, Guysborough County - Hospital Road
- Sherbrooke, Guysborough County - Trunk 7
- Ship Harbour, HRM – Portions of West Ship Harbour Road and Trunk 7
- St Peter’s, Richmond County - Mountain Road
- Summerville, Queens County – Trunk 3 and River Head Road
- Tusket, Yarmouth County - Route 308
- Walton, East Hants – Bancroft Road
- Weymouth, Digby County – Trunk 1

### **Licensing and registration**

- registration fees and application processes apply as outlined in the Off-highway Vehicles Act
- to operate an off-highway vehicle on the right of way, the operator must hold a valid driver’s licence under the Motor Vehicle Act
- drivers holding a learner’s licence are not permitted to drive on roads
- for non-residents of Nova Scotia, the equivalent of a Class 5 in their jurisdiction of residence will be required
- any off-highway vehicle accessing designated areas must have a number plate affixed to the vehicle
- off-highway vehicles need to be insured in accordance with Section 15B of the Off-Highway Vehicles Act

### **Operation**

- when operating in designated areas off-highway vehicles will be limited to speeds of no more than 25km/h
- off-highway vehicles are only permitted to travel in designated areas from the hours of a half an hour before sunrise to a half an hour after dusk
- off-highway vehicles are permitted to be driven on the shoulder of the designated highway only in the same direction as traffic using the same side of the highway
- off-highway vehicles are permitted to be driven on roadways in the same direction as traffic using the same side of the highway if:
  - there is no shoulder
  - the shoulder is obstructed
  - they are preparing to make a left turn across the roadway
  - the shoulder is not wide enough to be driven with all tires completely off the roadway, or when being driven across a level railway crossing
- when entering the shoulder or roadway of a designated highway off-highway vehicles will be required to yield the right of way to any traffic already using the shoulder or roadway (OHVs will be permitted to enter shoulder only when safe to do so)
- before commencing a left turn the off-highway vehicle will be required to (without interfering with traffic) move away from the shoulder or right edge of the roadway and be positioned on the roadway in the position to make a left turn; upon completing a left turn, the OHV will be required to (without interfering with traffic) move back to the right edge of the roadway or shoulder

- off-highway vehicles will be required to travel in single file and are not permitted to pass when riding in designated areas
- the operation of an off-highway vehicle with a passenger younger than 9 years old is prohibited in designated areas

#### Equipment

- off-highway vehicles may only carry passengers in designated areas if the OHV is designed by the original equipment manufacturer to carry both a driver and a passenger
- in addition to any other provision in the regulations, no person will be permitted to operate an off-highway vehicle in a designated area unless it meets all equipment requirements in accordance with the Nova Scotia's Off-highway Vehicles Act and general regulations

The provincial policy that supports the Act is still under review. Derek Harvey from the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works has said he will send it along when it is complete. The application form to apply for roads to be designated is attached following this memo.

Staff asked Inverness and Richmond County CAO's about their involvement with roads in their jurisdictions being designated and their municipalities were not involved in the application process.

Richmond County had had discussions with the ATV association but once it was determined that the roads of interest were provincial roads, the ATV association worked with the province to complete the application.

The club or the municipality or ATVANS could be the group to complete the application. One of the criteria they look for, is that there is support in community.



## Application for Designation of a Road Trail

Type of OHV's to be used on Road Trail	
<input type="checkbox"/> ATV's (including side-by sides)	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-Road Motorcycle

Trail 1			
Trail Name			
Trail Number (if applicable)		PID (if known)	
Road Name			
Trailhead Location Description (distance from nearest intersection, civic number, etc.)			
Trailhead Coordinates (decimal degrees) Eg. 44.808323, -63.384829			
	Latitude(4X.XXXXXX)	Longitude (-6X.XXXXXX)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Landowner permissions attached			
<input type="checkbox"/> Land owned by municipality (deed) – if applicable			

Trail 2			
Trail Name			
Trail Number (if applicable)		PID (if known)	
Road Name			
Trailhead Location Description (distance from nearest intersection, civic number, etc.)			
Trailhead Coordinates (decimal degrees) Eg. 44.808323, -63.384829			
	Latitude(4X.XXXXXX)	Longitude (-6X.XXXXXX)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Landowner permissions attached			
<input type="checkbox"/> Land owned by municipality (deed) – if applicable			

Route between Trail 1 and Trail 2 (or Trail 1 and Core Services)	
Road Name	Distance (X.XX km)

Core Services		
Names	Civic Address	Type (store, gas, restaurant, etc.)

Applicant (Recognized Organization or Municipality)			
Organization/Municipality:			
Applicant’s Name:			
Mailing Address:			
Telephone No.:		Fax No.:	
Mobile Phone No.:		Email Address:	

Conditions:  
Road Trails will not be approved on controlled access highways, or in areas where there are safety concerns that cannot be mitigated.

Have you engaged with groups that may be affected by designating the highway as a road trail (e.g., municipality, residents, business councils/federations, associations)? If yes, explain how you have done this.

**Application for Designation of a Road Trail**

Is this connector part of a larger trail network/strategy? (municipality only) If so, please provide a short description or link to the trail network/strategy.

In addition to the application form the following documentation may be provided:

- Letters of support from applicable organizations (e.g., municipality, partners, other affected groups, association/clubs)
- Visual materials (i.e., map of location, maps demonstrating trail connectivity)
- Municipal documents supporting designation (e.g., bylaws, council meeting minutes)
- Any additional relevant information

File Name	Description

**CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT:**

All information submitted to the Government of Nova Scotia as part of the application to the Department of Public Works will be governed by the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ([FOIPOP](#)). Any information submitted will be retained by the Government of Nova Scotia.

**MEMO FOR INFORMATION**

**TO:** Committee of the Whole  
**FROM:** ALLISON DUGGAN, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE  
**SUBJECT:** **WRITE-OFFS FOR INACTIVE ACCOUNTS**  
**DATE:** 28/01/2025

**Recommendation**

*That the Committee recommend that Municipal Council approve write-offs in the amount of \$1,831.51.*

**Background**

The three assessment account numbers listed below are deemed uncollectible and should be written off. Budget allows for these types of write offs.

**Inactive Accounts for Write-Off Requests January 2025**

<u>AAN</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Reason</u>
07205287	\$1343.46	Moved out of county in 2022
07958196	\$457.41	Destroyed by hurricane in 2023
09532552	\$30.64	Sold in 2021 to DPW

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF  
**ANTIGONISH**

<b>TOPIC:</b>	<b>Council Special District Grants Policy</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	<b>November 19, 2013 (#2013-147)</b>
<b>DATE REVISED:</b>	<b>November 20, 2018 (#2018-163)</b>

**TITLE:**

This Policy may be cited as the “Council Special District Grant Policy” of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

**PREAMBLE:**

The Municipal Government Act (1998), Part IV, Section 65, provides the broad framework within which policies authorizing the expenditure of public monies are developed.

Councillor's often receive requests for assistance from individuals and local community groups that are either ineligible, too small or time-sensitive to be handled in an effective manner by Community Partnership Grants, administered by the Municipality of the County of Antigonish (*herein referred to as the Municipality*). Flexibility is required to address such local requests. Therefore, an amount is allocated in the Budget for Council Special District Grants (*herein, referred to as “Grants” or “Grant”*), to provide a simple, effective method of providing funding for use within each district.

This policy is intended to assist members of Council and staff in the appropriate expenditure, record-keeping and reporting of expenses related to *Grants*.

**POLICY:**

**1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 Generally, *Grants* focus on local activities related to social welfare; culture; community development, engagement or support; charitable fund-raising by a recognized institution or community group; civic events; environmental protection; and, community-based educational initiatives.
- 1.2 In all cases, *Grants* can only be used for the intended purpose for which it was authorized.

**2.0 Parameters for Awarding Grants:**

- 2.1 The amount allocated to *Grants* will be established annually through the Municipal budget.
- 2.2 The fiscal year starts April 1 and ends March 31. No expenses shall be claimed or reimbursed after March 31 for the ending fiscal year.
- 2.3 There shall be no *Grant* over-expenditures.

- 2.4 *Grant* funding may be carried forward to future fiscal years.
- 2.5 Multi-year commitments of *Grants* are not permitted.
- 2.6 Any *Grant* request in excess of \$2000 shall be approved by consensus of all members of Council.
- 2.7 *Grants* may be awarded to individual persons or families in emergency situations only.
- 2.8 Any *Grants* to parishes, individual churches or religious groups in excess of \$1000 shall be approved by consensus of all members of Council.
- 2.9 Staff is not to encourage individuals or groups in lobbying members of Council. If a request for *Grant* funding is received, staff are expected to relay the request to members of Council. Such information should be relayed in writing.
- 2.10 *Grants* are not intended for use in fund-raising activities that are of direct benefit to a department, program, project or service of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.
- 2.11 Funding requests for individuals participating in sporting, cultural or educational events shall be referred to the Recreation Department for consideration under the Community Partnership Grants for Travel Assistance or Leadership Development.
- 2.12 *Grants* expenditures shall be suspended 3 months prior to Nomination Day in an election held pursuant to Section 54(4) of the Municipal Elections Act. Once an incumbent has officially declared their candidacy in a government election, their use of *Grants* shall cease. Spending shall resume upon the day a candidate is officially sworn into office as an elected representative.
- 2.13 *Grants* shall not be spent on election related costs.
- 2.14 In the event of an incumbent's acclamation to Council, access to *Grants* shall not be suspended.

### **3.0 Accountability Requirements:**

- 3.1 Each member of Council is responsible for making a clear determination if expenditures are permissible and shall be expected to award all *Grants* in accordance with this policy.
- 3.2 Written authorization shall be required for all *Grant* expenditures in the form of an invoice, fax, email, letter or cheque requisition. Where written authorization cannot be provided in advance of the expenditure, the councillor awarding the *Grant* shall sign the cheque requisition.
- 3.3 Written authorization for *Grant* expenditures shall include the name of the recipient, the amount supported by an invoice or receipt and a clear and concise description of the purpose of the *Grant*.
- 3.4 A donation to a registered charitable organization or event shall be recognized with a receipt. Members of Council shall receive no personal tax benefit. All receipts for such

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donations are to be written out to the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and submitted to the Finance Department.

- 3.5 In the case of uncertainty, the authority and responsibility for the determination of a permissible award is that of the Committee of the Whole. The Committee's determination is final.
- 3.6 *Grants* are included in the annual audit. Any audit shall check for complete and appropriate documentation, compliance with policy, the fair and consistent application of policy, accurate reporting, and any other issues determined relevant by the audit team.

#### 4.0 Reporting Requirements:

- 4.1 The Finance Department shall be responsible for processing *Grant* awards, the maintenance of financial records including all original receipts, invoices, and cheque requisitions, and shall oversee the auditing of accounts as required.
- 4.2 Staff shall prepare for Municipal Council a quarterly, itemized report of *Grant* expenditures by electoral district, recipient and amount. A clear and concise rationale for the expenditure shall also be provided. An example of this report can be found in Annex A.

#### 5.0 Policy Review:

- 5.1 This policy shall be assessed after one (1) year of implementation to evaluate its scope, relevance and effectiveness. Thereafter, the policy shall be reviewed:
  - 5.1.1 Every five (5) years, or
  - 5.1.2 Upon request of Council, or
  - 5.1.3 To reflect substantive changes in legislation.



**Annex A**

**Council Special District Grants**  
*Report to Council*

<b>District</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Rationale</b>

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**MEMO FOR INFORMATION**

**FROM:** TAMMY FELTMATE, DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES  
**TO:** COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
**SUBJECT:** EQUITY, DIVERSITY, ANTI RACISM AND ANTI HATE PLAN  
**DATE:** 24/01/2025

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**OVERVIEW**

***Nova Scotia's Dismantling Racism and Hate Act***

Nova Scotia has committed to addressing systemic hate, inequity, and racism, and to supporting underrepresented and underserved communities and the intersectionality between and amongst them.

The *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act*, passed in 2022, was developed by an all-party committee following engagement with Nova Scotians, and it outlines the provincial government's approach to addressing systemic hate, inequity, and racism. Recognizing the important role municipalities and villages play in addressing racism, hate and inequity, the [Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy](#) identified them as being the first public sector bodies that would be required to develop equity and anti-racism plans. This has developed to include anti-hate specific language.

Nova Scotia is the first province in Canada to develop plans at a local government level, and all municipal plans are due April 1, 2025.

Time is short for development of this plan, and the initial plan will just be a start, this is a roadmap of where to go short and long term. We have been speaking regularly with staff at the Town of Antigonish to ensure our plan development is similar, that they compliment each other and resources are pooled where possible to have the greatest positive impact as possible in our community.

We are on track for submission of inaugural plan, initial training for Council and staff and engagement activities.

# Equity and Anti-Racism Plan Guidance for Municipalities and Villages

## Office of Equity and Anti-Racism

### Introduction

**This resource is designed to help municipalities and villages to develop equity and anti-racism plans by April 1, 2025, as required under the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* and associated regulations.**

In addition to this resource, the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism (OEA) will provide municipalities and villages with a self-assessment tool that can help identify areas of focus for their equity and anti-racism plans, as well as an equity and anti-racism primer resource that introduces foundational concepts. The Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia will also be supporting municipalities and villages as they undertake this work.

### **Nova Scotia's *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act***

Nova Scotia has committed to addressing systemic hate, inequity, and racism, and to supporting underrepresented and underserved communities and the intersectionality between and amongst them.

The *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act*, passed in 2022, was developed by an all-party committee following engagement with Nova Scotians, and it outlines the provincial government's approach to addressing systemic hate, inequity, and racism. Recognizing the important role municipalities and villages play in addressing racism, hate and inequity, the [Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy](#) identified them as being the first public sector bodies that would be required to develop equity and anti-racism plans. This exercise requires municipalities and villages to undergo a planning process to identify actions that will promote equity and anti-racism by considering the needs of underrepresented and underserved communities.

### **Municipalities and Villages as Prescribed Public Sector Bodies (PPSBs):**

Municipalities and villages are important partners in becoming an equitable, anti-racist and accessible province. PPSB organizations, including municipalities and villages, represent a wide range of sectors and cover essential areas of the lives of people in the province.

Both the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* and *Accessibility Act* allows government to prescribe public sector organizations to meet several legislative obligations including the creation of plans to address the goals of each Act. OEA and the Accessibility Directorate are working collaboratively to support municipalities and villages to meet requirements under both the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* and *Accessibility Act* into one interconnected planning approach. Municipalities and villages are encouraged to use this resource in tandem with resources prepared by the Accessibility Directorate to develop a single plan that meets legislative requirements of both Acts (i.e., combine efforts to produce a single equity, anti-racism and accessibility plan for 2025-28).

Other public sector bodies that are not yet prescribed under the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* are encouraged to consider equity and anti-racism in the updating of their accessibility plans and in other activities and/or planning exercises where applicable. Accessibility plans, to be truly effective, must incorporate the intersectionality that exists within the disability community. PPSBs that are not municipalities and villages are welcome to voluntarily create equity and anti-racism plans using this guide.

# Overview of Equity and Anti-Racism in Nova Scotia

Did you know..

- In 2021, there were 52,425 Indigenous people in Nova Scotia, making up 5.5% of the population<sup>1</sup>.
- Respondents to the 2021 Census were asked whether they identified with specific categories of visible minority. These racialized groups accounted for 9.8% of the population in Nova Scotia<sup>2</sup>.
  - Nova Scotians that identified as Black made up the largest population in a racialized group in Nova Scotia (28,220). This was followed by those who identified as South Asian (21,655), those who identified as Chinese (11,600), those who identified as Arab (10,610) and those who identified as Filipino (6,615).
- Nova Scotia the highest proportions of transgender and non-binary people aged 15 and older in Canada (0.48% or almost 1 in every 200 people living in Nova Scotia) and amongst aged 15 to 34 among the provinces this statistic increases (1.17% or 1 in every 100 people living in Nova Scotia)<sup>3</sup>.
- In 2020, the number of police reported hate crimes<sup>4</sup> increased by 70% in Nova Scotia (roughly six incidents per 100,000 population)<sup>5</sup>.

## Underrepresented and Underserved Communities in Nova Scotia

When we speak of underrepresented and underserved communities, we are referring to those groups who experience discrimination and exclusion because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions.

This includes systemic hate, inequity and/or racism towards people based on one or more protected characteristics as identified in the *Human Rights Act*, which includes: age, race, colour, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, ethnicity, national or Indigenous origin, family status, marital status, source of income, and political belief, affiliation or activity.

Below are examples of underrepresented and underserved groups in Nova Scotia. Each of these groups has their own unique story, historical setting and history of discrimination and marginalization (this list is not exhaustive and may not include all groups who would identify as underrepresented and/or underserved):

- Mi'kmaq and Persons of Indigenous descent
- African Nova Scotians and Persons of African descent
- Persons of Colour/Racialized Persons
- Newcomers (immigrants and refugees)
- 2SLGBTQIA+
- Persons with disabilities
- Minority faith-based groups
- Persons who are neurodivergent
- In some contexts, women.

## Intersectionality

It is important to take intersectionality into account as many policies impact individuals in multiple ways as a result of their intersecting identities. The wheel of power and privilege can be used as a visual tool for promoting awareness and understanding of interconnected systems of privilege, oppression, and power dynamics within society. It provides examples within the Canadian context to illustrate how intersectionality of

<sup>1</sup> <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/page.cfm?lang=E&topic=8&dguid=2021A000212>

<sup>2</sup> <https://novascotia.ca/finance/statistics/news.asp?id=18264>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220427/cq-b004-png-eng.htm>

<sup>4</sup> "Police-reported hate crime is defined as a criminal violation against a person or property motivated by hate, based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, or any other similar factor."

<sup>5</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00005-eng.htm>

thirteen categories of social identity uphold power and privilege and shape our interactions and experiences. Mapping out these complex dynamics can help to recognize personal positions of privilege as well as help to understand how systemic inequalities impact different groups within society. This understanding is essential for:

- identifying and addressing barriers to participation;
- guiding efforts to ensure inclusive, meaningful, equitable and accessible services and engagement initiatives for all members of the community;
- navigating conversations around inequities, ensuring diverse perspectives are heard and valued; and
- developing strategies to address power imbalances and create more equitable outcomes in projects, programs, policies, and decision-making processes.

## What do we mean by Equity and Anti-Racism?

When thinking about what to include in your equity and anti-racism plan, it is important to understand that this plan is not the same as traditional equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) plans. EDI plans have traditionally been focused internally on an organization and mainly on the employees of an organization. They include actions that promote diversity within the organization and equitable hiring practices.

While equity and anti-racism includes EDI, it is not solely EDI. In your equity and anti-racism plans, public sector bodies are expected to look at: the way that policies and programs are developed; how services are delivered; and how budgetary decisions are made. It is not enough for an organization to be actively improving on the diversity of those at all levels of their organization through traditional EDI plans. Organizations also need to be considering its policy making process including: who they engage with to determine their priorities for a given year; who they engage with to determine what options are appropriate for a particular policy, program or service; how they determine impacts; and how they make decisions on the options to pursue.

The provincial Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy includes this policy and engagement focus. The provincial government is committed to enhancing its policy development process by including equity impact assessments (EIA) and evaluations. The EIA supports departments in incorporating an equity and anti-racism focus at every step of developing, for example, a new law or regulation or a new program. Equity evaluations support analysis of existing laws, regulations and policies to determine if they are perpetuating systemic hate, inequity and racism.

Please keep this policy and engagement focus while considering what to include in your plans. OEA and the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia will be there to help you along the way.

## Creating your Equity and Anti-Racism Plan

### Plan Requirements

Your plan is an opportunity for you to share publicly your organization's commitment to equity and anti-racism. Equity and anti-racism plans **must** be:

- informed by engagement with underrepresented and underserved communities within the jurisdiction that the plan covers;
- in place by April 1, 2025;
- publicly available in an accessible format; and
- updated every three years, in line with *Accessibility Act* requirement.

### Planning Process Summary

Municipalities and Villages are encouraged to follow the same process for developing their equity and anti-racism plans as outlined in the Toolkit for Updating Accessibility Plans as developed by the Accessibility Directorate. Municipalities and villages may choose to adapt or follow their own planning process. Appendix A

offers a proposed structure that municipalities and villages may want to consider for the development of their plan.

Some requirements and specific considerations are outlined below that should be embedded within your planning process.

- **Complete an assessment of any previous diversity, equity and inclusion plans.** Document progress including:
  - the actions that were fully completed;
  - actions that were started and are still underway (partially completed); and
  - actions where work has not yet started.
- **Identify and document what you learned** from implementing other equity, inclusion and diversity plans and efforts. Here are some questions that can help:
  - What challenges did you experience implementing these plans? Why did they occur?
  - What successes did you experience implementing these plans? What factors contributed to the success?
- **As an organization, reflect on what actions should your municipality or village take in the next three years to advance equity and anti-racism.**
  - What equity and accessibility issues have emerged over the past few years?
  - For an understanding of hate motivated crimes and acts of hate in your municipality or village, in addition to listening to community voices, considering consulting with your local law enforcement agencies to hear about their experiences.
  - What concerns have underrepresented and underserved communities raised—historically or currently? Are there themes?
  - What policy areas may have significant impacts on underrepresented and underserved communities (e.g., land use and zoning by-laws)?
  - What programs are accessed by underrepresented and underserved communities? Do we know if these programs are meeting their needs? Do we know if there are barriers that are preventing them from accessing programs? Are we aware of gaps in programming?
  - What is working well from the actions that have been taken so far to improve equity and anti-racism?
  - What changes have you noticed in the community in terms of culture, such as inclusion, when people with underrepresented and underserved communities are valued and engaged? What actions should be considered in the plan to address or recognize these changes?
- **Some broader equity and anti-racism priority area examples** to consider including in your plan include:
  - Equity and Anti-Racism in Service Delivery
  - Anti-Racism Training and Education
  - Diverse Representation and Inclusion
  - Equitable Hiring and Promotion Practices
  - Language and Cultural Accessibility
  - Equity and Anti-Racism in Planning and Development
  - Community Engagement and Consultation
  - Equitable Access to Economic Opportunities

### Example of an Action within an Equity and Anti-Racism Plan

[Recreation Nova Scotia's Anti-Racism Charter in Recreation](#) provides unifying guidelines for the recreation sector to address and combat systemic racism within the sector. Municipalities and villages can become signatories to this charter as a commitment to a more equitable and inclusive recreation system as a part of their equity, anti-racism and accessibility plan and identify specific actions to support this commitment (e.g. initiatives that introduce recreation programs to racialized communities, identify practical and financial barriers and plan to address these barriers).

- **Ensure that underrepresented and underserved communities that your municipality or village serves are engaged in the development and implementation of your plan.**
  - Before you begin planning engagement, develop an understanding of the demographics of the people you serve to inform your engagement approach and ensure underrepresented and underserved populations are included.
    - Appendix B provides a summary of Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities in Nova Scotia. Where applicable, plan to involve these the community(-ies) in the development of your equity and anti-racism plan.
  - What community-based organizations and not-for-profits exist in your municipality or village that serve underrepresented or underserved communities? Can you partner with them on engagement or for advice and input into your equity, anti-racism and accessibility plan?
  - Before you engage community, identify the key questions you are looking for input on (you may use questions similar to the previous prompt). Since you have already assessed progress made through previous equity and anti-racism plans and efforts, you may have a draft framework and guiding principles ready for direct input.
  - When considering how to include underrepresented and underserved communities in your work, be mindful and reflective of your existing relationships or lack thereof with these communities. Consider previous initiatives undertaken with these communities and how these can positively or negatively impact efforts related to your equity and anti-racism plan.
  - For more information and guidance on community engagement, please review OEA's Public Engagement Guidebook available at [oeaengagement.ca](http://oeaengagement.ca).

### An Example of Community Engagement

To further the (Halifax) Anti-Black Racism Framework, a phased approach for public engagement was undertaken to aid the development of the Anti-Black Racism Strategy and Action Plan. Collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to receive input, suggestions, and recommendations into the process was central to the development the strategy and plan.

*-Halifax Regional Municipality Website*

- **Invite feedback from your partners and community on a draft plan**, particularly underrepresented and underserved communities, including persons with disabilities and representatives from organizations representing underrepresented and underserved communities. For example, posting it online or holding an in-person meeting.
  - Consider contacting the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism ([OEA@novascotia.ca](mailto:OEA@novascotia.ca)) for feedback on your draft plan.
- **Revise and update** the plan based on feedback.
- **Publish your plan publicly in an accessible format.**
- **Email a link to your approved and published plan** to [OEA@novascotia.ca](mailto:OEA@novascotia.ca). While government does not currently approve or endorse each organization's plan, compliance monitoring will be undertaken.



## Appendix A – Example Equity and Anti-Racism Plan Template

- **Executive Summary and/or Opening Message**
  - Overview of the municipality/ village's commitment to equity and antiracism.
  - Key objectives.
  - Summary of key initiatives.
  - Can take the form of summary or a message from mayor of municipality, chair of a village, or other lead/sponsor.
- **Overview/How the plan was developed**
  - Purpose of the action plan.
  - Acknowledgement of underserved and underrepresented constituents/members you serve
  - Who did we hear from and work with to create this plan and who will be involved in implementing it?
  - How will we track progress and measure success.
- **Action Plan Commitments/Areas of Focus**
  - Group actions/commitments in thematic areas. Aim for at minimum 3-5 areas of focus for the next three years.
  - Identify specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) indicators associated with actions and commitments where possible.
  - Identify any key partners for commitments/areas of focus (e.g., community-based organizations, other municipalities).
- **Conclusion/Closing Section**
  - How will we commit to continuous improvement and revisiting the plan as needed?
  - Reaffirm commitments to equity, anti-racism and accessibility, including ongoing engagement with underserved and underrepresented communities.

# Appendix B – Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian Communities in Nova Scotia

## Mi'kmaq Communities

The Mi'kmaq are the Indigenous people of Mi'kma'ki. Mi'kma'ki encompasses what is known as present-day Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec (Gaspé Peninsula), New Brunswick (north of the St. John watershed), parts of Newfoundland and Labrador, and parts of Maine.

Mi'kmaq have been rooted in Mi'kma'ki for over 13,000 years according to the carbon dating of artifacts from the Mi'kmawey Debert site.

### Seven Districts of Mi'kma'ki:

1. Unama'ki aq Ktaqmkuk
2. Epekwitk aq Piktuk
3. Eskikewa'kik
4. Sipekne'katik
5. Kespukwik
6. Sikniht
7. Kespek



### Thirteen First Nation communities in Mi'kma'ki:

- Acadia First Nation
- Annapolis Valley First Nation
- Bear River First Nation
- Eskasoni Mi'kmaw Nation
- Glooscap First Nation
- Membertou First Nation
- Millbrook First Nation
- Paq'tnekek Mi'kmaw Nation
- Pictou Landing First Nation
- Potlotek First Nation (formerly Chapel Island)
- Sipekne'katik First Nation (formerly Indian Brook/Shubenacadie)
- Wagmatcook First Nation
- We'koqma'q First Nation



## African Nova Scotian Communities

African Nova Scotians inhabited land in Nova Scotia over 400 years ago.

There were multiple known waves of migration into Nova Scotia, such as the Black Loyalists in 1783, the Jamaica Maroons in 1796, refugees from the War of 1812 between 1813-1814 and a Caribbean migration in 1904. In each migration, African Nova Scotians settled in different parts of the province.

The relationship between ANS settlers and Mi'kmaw communities started early. This relationship between communities was essential to the survival of ANS communities. Many settlers learned skills and knowledge of how to live off the land. This included using natural medicines, farming, fishing, and building/labour.

