

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA

Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 5:30pm Council

Chambers

Municipal Administration Building 285 Beech Hill

Road

Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

1. Call to Order – Chair, Warden Nicholas MacInnis
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of March 25, 2025 Committee of the Whole Minutes
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
5. Delegations
 - a. PARC – Request for a Recreation Needs Assessment
 - b. Deirdre Smythe –Proposal to Prohibit Gas Powered Leaf Blowers via the Noise By-law
6. Continuing Business
 - a. Climate Risk Assessment Request
7. New Business
 - a. Tourism Strategy Overview and Updates
 - b. Code of Conduct Investigator Selection
 - c. EDPG Appointments
 - d. A Roof Over Your Head Request for Board Representation from Council
 - e. Antigonish Jr. B Bulldogs Request for Funding
8. Policy Review
 - a. Policy 1 – Municipal Complaint Handling Policy
9. Staff Reports
10. 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.
11. Additions to the Agenda
12. In-Camera Items
13. Adjournment

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Tuesday March 25, 2025, following Asset Management Committee
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 Shawn Brophy
Councillor Gary Mattie
Councillor Harris McNamara
Councillor Sterling Garvie

Regrets: Councillor Richelle MacLaughlin
Councillor Wayne Melanson

Staff Present: Shirlyn Donovan, CAO
Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk
Allison Duggan, Director of Finance
Tammy Feltmate, Director of Sustainable Communities
Blaise MacDonald, AREMO

Others Present: Adam McAllister (by Zoom)
Gallery (in person and by Zoom)

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 7:01pm.

Deputy Warden Dunbar read a few words in memorial of County resident Johnny Rogers. Mr. Rogers had been a member of the municipality's Accessibility Committee, and his funeral had taken place earlier in the day in Heatherton. A moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Agenda

Warden MacInnis called for any additions or deletions to the agenda. A request to add an item, Streetlight Request, was put forward by Deputy Warden Dunbar.

Moved and Seconded

That the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion Carried

Approval of March 11, 2025 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Warden MacInnis called for any errors or omissions in the Committee of the Whole minutes of March 11, 2025. Hearing none, the minutes were considered approved.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Delegations

There were no scheduled delegations.

Continuing Business

There was no continuing business.

New Business

Climate Risk Assessment Update

Mr. MacDonald provided an introduction for Mr. McAllister and provided the committee with some background to Mr. McAllister's involvement in bringing his proposal to the committee. Mr. McAllister provided the committee with a detailed presentation on his proposal to work with the municipality to obtain funding from the Green Municipal Fund for the purpose of undertaking a Climate Risk Assessment and Prioritized Adaption Plan project for the County of Antigonish.

Mr. McAllister reviewed the proposed scope of the climate risk assessment, which is proposed to involve:

- Municipality-wide all-hazards mapping
- Social vulnerability mapping, including equity-deserving groups
- Physical vulnerability mapping, including critical infrastructure and cultural heritage
- Information aggregation into a comprehensive climate risk assessment, and
- Prioritized climate adaption planning, including integration into our existing municipal service models.

The floor was then opened to question from the committee. Mr. McAllister was asked about format of the report, and whether it would provide a list of action items for the municipality to follow, whether there was a template to rank the identified risks,

examples of what kinds of community engagement would be utilized, and whether Mr. McAllister was working with any other municipalities in Nova Scotia on undertaking similar projects. Mr. McAllister was thanked for his presentation, and it was noted that the discussion on the proposal would continue at the April 8, 2025 meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

Anti-Hate, Anti-Racism, and Equity Plan

Ms. Feltmate introduced the *Nalikitquniejk Antigonish Equity, Anti-Hate & Anti-Racism, Plan* to the committee. She reviewed the mandated timeline for the adoption of the plan and listed many of the provincial resources that were utilized in the development of the document. The plan was developed in partnership with the Town of Antigonish. Ms. Feltmate noted that the actions in the plan would be undertaken separately by each municipal unit, but creating a joint plan allowed them to be able to do more with tight resources when they are serving the same population. Ms. Feltmate also stressed that the plan is considered a working document.

The floor was turned over to the committee for questions, and discussion followed. Ms. Feltmate was thanked for her work on the plan and her leadership on the subject.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves and endorses the *Nalikitquniejk Antigonish Equity, Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Plan* as presented and submit the plan to the province of Nova Scotia.

Motion Carried

Community Events

- Councillor Brophy shared that the Lions Club will be hosting their monthly pancake breakfast fundraiser. He also celebrated how well the Bulldogs hockey teams have done this season.
- Councillor Baden-Clay shared information regarding an upcoming fundraiser on March 26th at Candid Brewing to support arts and culture programming in the community called All You Need is Cake. He also shared details regarding the upcoming 50th anniversary event for Festival Antigonish.
- Councillor Garvie noted that the U13AA Bulldogs are still in the playoffs.
- Councillor McNamara shared that there is a benefit dance happening in Havre Boucher on March 29th. March break events in Havre Boucher were successful thanks to having a lot of community volunteers. A St. Patrick's Day dance was held as well.
- Councillor Mattie shared that the community centre in Monastery is still having issues with their heating system.

- Councillor MacLellan shared that there is good participation in the Active Living online fitness program in Arisaig. She also shared an update regarding fundraising efforts in the community for an accessible playground.
- Warden MacInnis shared that the new Off-Highway Vehicle Club has been accepted into the ATVANS organization.

Reports from Inter-Municipal Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Heritage Museum

- The next meeting is scheduled for April 7th.

Antigonish Arena Association

- The next meeting has not yet been scheduled.

Eastern District Planning Commission

- The Board will be meeting on March 27th.

Eastern Regional Solid Waste Management

- Nothing to report.

Pictou Antigonish Regional Library

- The next meeting will be held in April. Information has been shared from PARL by email regarding funding updates.

RK MacDonald Nursing Home

- The Board will be meeting on March 27th.

County Paqtnkek Joint Steering Committee

- Nothing to report. Warden MacInnis has reached out to Chief Julian.

Community Navigation & Physician Retention Services Association

- Nothing to report.

PARC

- The committee met last week and are working on presentations for Town and County Councils. Their focus has changed and they are now looking at what is out in the community and identifying gaps.

ACALA

- Next meeting will be on March 26th.

AREMO

- Next meeting in April.

Deputy Warden Dunbar reminded members of the committee of the upcoming NSFM spring conference in Truro. Discussion followed regarding concerns with the accessibility of the conference venue. Deputy Warden Dunbar noted that he would bring those concerns to the NSFM Board.

Additions to the Agenda

Streetlight Request

Deputy Warden Dunbar made a request for the consideration of the installation of a streetlight at the intersection of the Summerside Road and the Old Ferry Branch Road, noting that the intersection is on a curve and can be dangerous in inclement weather. A map and street view of the intersection was brought up on the screen and discussion followed. Deputy Warden Dunbar asked for the streetlight to be as close to being over the stop sign on the Old Ferry Branch Road as possible, which may require a pole to be installed where the existing hydro poles and lines are on the opposite side of the Summerside Road.

Moved and Seconded

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council approves the installation of a streetlight at the intersection of Summerside Road and the Old Ferry Branch Road.

Motion Carried

Adjournment

Moved

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 8:44pm.

Motion Carried

Warden Nicholas MacInnis

Shirlyn Donovan, CAO

A Recreation Needs Assessment in the 2025-26 Fiscal Year

Presented by Stephanie Cooper and Paul Curry

Working Group

A working group was formed with members of PARC, Town and County, to discuss and navigate a path forward to addressing recreation concerns among community members.

The goal of the group was to clearly define PARC's future ask to Councils.

Scope

Our community requires a needs assessment to guide future decisions around recreation development.

* At this point, this does NOT include building a recreation centre.

What is a Needs Assessment?

“A systematic process that identifies needs and determines how to address them.”

What Resources Would Be Required?

Allocation of staff to assist in:

- RFP development
- Grant finding/writing
- Working with the hired firm to provide any relevant documentation
- Ensuring project outcomes are met


What Can We Offer?

We are invested in helping to move this process forward. We would like to offer Human Resources to assist staff.



Our Options

We are requesting that Antigonish Town and County commit to forming a steering committee to undertake one of the following recreation study options as a project in the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Option 1 - Needs Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Facilities Assessment- Community Input- Gap Identification- Prioritization of Needs 	\$75k total
Option 2 - Feasibility Study <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Needs assessment plus feasibility study	\$200k total

Details of a Recreation Needs Assessment

- **Inventory of Existing Facilities & Current Use:** Cataloging and assessing all existing recreational facilities in the Town and County to understand their condition, capacity, utilization, and access.
- **Community Input:** Find out what people in the Town and County want/need in terms of recreation facilities and access to facilities.
- **Gap Identification:** Identify facility gaps based on a combination of community demand and comparison to other communities.
- **Prioritization of Needs:** Receive and review recommendations for which improvements to existing facilities or new facilities should be prioritized.

Why Now?

This investment will inform future plans for recreation facilities in Antigonish, identify priorities, and ensure resources are being allocated effectively.

You will receive **valuable data** needed to make **strategic decisions** about recreational facilities for the wellbeing of our community and it's residents.



We request that Council provide \$25,000 towards a recreation needs assessment to be supported by Town and County staff in collaboration with PARC in the 2025/26 fiscal budget

March 24, 2025

TO: Antigonish County Municipal Council
RE: Prohibiting Gas Powered Tools

As Co-owners of 34 Brookside Way, this letter is in support of a ban on gas-powered tools such as leaf blowers in the community. We share ownership of 34 Brookside Way with my mother, Deirdre Smythe who is a senior living in the community. She has health issues (including asthma and heart disease) that are continuously affected by gas powered tools.

Looking at your Strategic Priorities chart for 2021, I see that one of the Advocacy initiatives is the provincial “Aging In Place Program”, which in our understanding helps seniors to access resources and removes barriers for seniors to be able to live at home. I hope you will consider this in the removal of gas powered tools from the neighbourhood.

There are many other reasons to consider this request such as:

- Hazardous Localized Pollution
- Toxic Emission Exposure (local and public parks)
- Noise Pollution (low and high frequency)
- [Harms to Pollinators](#)


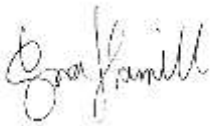
For example, in Cambridge, MA near where we live, gas powered tools have recently been banned by [City ordinance](#) for many of the same reasons listed above. All of [greater Boston](#) is moving in this direction. I include appendix A so you can see more information. All of this just happened in March 2025.

Closer to home, Halifax is also [looking into such an ordinance](#). The CBC has also [done a feature](#) on this issue.

There are other options and alternatives: electric or battery-powered tools; hand-operated tools; or [wilding yards](#), which is much better for the environment.

I hope you will consider the health of the community, and the health of the environment in your decision, thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Kyna Hamill
Lukasz S. Pomorski

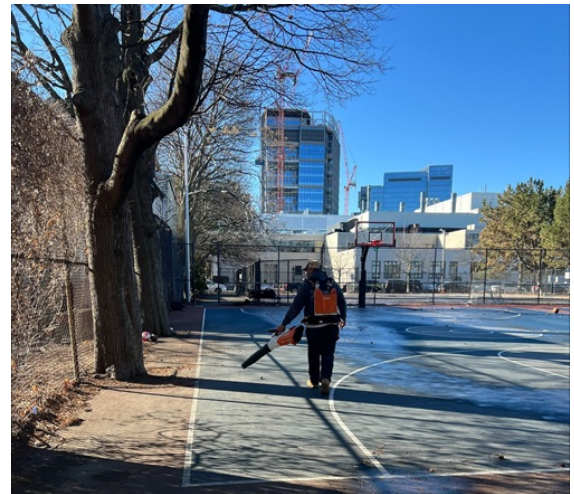
28 King Avenue, Medford, MA 02155
Co-Owners 34 Brookside Way, Antigonish, NS

City of Cambridge Announces Ban on Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers to Protect Health and Environment

February 28, 2025 • 3 weeks ago

The City of Cambridge is taking another step toward reducing noise and air pollution by officially prohibiting the use of gas-powered leaf blowers and requiring all users to transition to electric or battery-powered leaf blowers. This initiative aligns with the city's commitment to protecting public health and reducing harmful emissions.

Under the updated Leaf Blower Ordinance passed by the Cambridge City Council in December 2023, property owners will no longer be allowed to use gas-powered leaf blowers on their own property after March 15, 2025.



This transition will reduce the negative effects of gas-powered leaf blowers, including:

- **Noise Pollution:** Gas leaf blowers generate excessive noise at high-decibel levels that can be damaging to both humans and wildlife.
- **Air Pollution:** The combustion of petroleum-based fuels releases harmful emissions that contribute to poor air quality and climate change. One hour of using a gas-powered leaf blower can emit as much pollution as driving a modern car for 1,100 miles, according to a 2021 report by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).
- **Harm to Wildlife, Soil, and Plants:** Gas-powered leaf blowers can disrupt birds and pollinators while the strong airflow can blow away topsoil, nutrients, and mulch, making it harder for plants to grow.

Commercial leaf blower operators, multi-parcel owners (adjoining parcels of land owned by the same owner and totaling two or more acres), city employees, and city contractors will be allowed to continue using gas-powered leaf blowers until **March 15, 2026**, providing additional time to transition to the more sustainable alternatives.

Per City Ordinance, the use of leaf blowers continue to be limited to **March 15 to June 15 and September 15 to December 31** each year. During these periods, leaf blowers can only be used (a) Monday through Friday, between the hours of **8:00 a.m.** and **5:00 p.m.**, and (b) on Saturdays,

between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. They are not allowed at any other times, including Sundays and legal holidays except for Veteran's and Indigenous Peoples' Day when they are allowed during certain hours as detailed in the Ordinance.

Before purchasing or using a leaf blower in the city, ensure it is electric or battery-powered and complies with the sound emission levels outlined in the Ordinance

For more information on the updated ordinance, please visit: CambridgeMA.gov/leafblowerordinance

Page was posted on 2/28/2025 12:01 PM

Page was last modified on 2/28/2025 12:04 PM

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MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

STAFF REPORT

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Beth Schumacher, Deputy Clerk

SUBJECT: **Climate Risk Assessment and Prioritized Adaption Plan Green Municipal Fund Application**

DATE: 08/04/2025

Recommendation

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

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council directs staff to apply for a funding opportunity from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Local Leadership for Climate Adaption initiative for a Climate Risk Assessment and Prioritized Adaption Plan for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

Background

Early in the summer of 2024, the municipality was approached by Adam McAllister of McAllister & Craig Disaster Management Inc. regarding an opportunity to partner with them for funding to undertake a project that proposed to assist the municipal team with receiving climate change adaption training at no expense other than a limited amount of staff time. As part of providing support for this project to receive this training, a letter was submitted, which is attached as Appendix A.

In preparing the submission for the funding program under the Green Municipal Fund, a motion of Council to proceed with the application was identified. At the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Committee of the Whole, Mr. McAllister provided a presentation to the committee regarding the proposed project and outcomes.

Discussion

As noted in Mr. McAllister's presentation to the Committee of the Whole, the project is proposed to deliver:

1. municipality-wide all-hazards mapping,
2. social vulnerability mapping, including for equity-deserving groups,
3. physical vulnerability mapping, including critical infrastructure and cultural heritage assets,
4. information aggregation into a comprehensive climate risk assessment, and

5. prioritized climate adaptation planning, including integration into our existing municipal service models where appropriate.

Mr. McAllister also noted that all existing municipal data, and all new data created during the project, will be owned by the Municipality.

Budget Implications

The only contribution expected of the municipality would be an in-kind contribution totalling in value of \$32,000, of which \$18,500 would be staff time, and the remaining \$13,500 would addresses items such as use of community meeting space, use of municipal message boards, availability of distribution lists for community members with noted preferences for consultation/engagements, etc. that may be needed at various times during the project's 18 month duration. No capital contributions have been requested of the municipality.

Next Steps

If the committee agrees to proceed with partnering to undertake the Climate Adaption initiative for a Climate Risk Assessment and Prioritized Adaption Plan for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, then approval of the recommended motion would be necessary. Following this, staff would coordinate with Mr. McAllister to finalize the required paperwork for the funding application, including a letter identifying the in-kind contribution as noted above.

July 31, 2024

Adam McAllister
CEO, McAllister & Craig Disaster Management
266 Charlotte Street, Suite 401
Peterborough, ON
K9J 2V4

Dear Mr. McAllister,

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish is partnering with McAllister & Craig Disaster Management Inc. along with a coalition of municipalities in Atlantic Canada to propose a project under the Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation Program. This proposal is focused on Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island and will engage communities of various sizes and attributes to address the complex climate change risks affecting us all.

The proposal will be put forward under two streams within the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Green Municipal Fund. Component 1 will see your firm partner with GlobalMedic to focus on climate change adaptation training under the Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation Capacity Development Partner Grants stream. Component 2 will focus on enabling the processes and plans needed for municipalities to set priorities and reduce risk associated with the changing climate under the Climate-Ready Plans and Processes stream.

Component 1 will see our municipality receive climate change adaption training to boost our capacity for equity-informed community resilience at strategic and operational levels. The training package will increase our ability to respond to the risks we face today and ensure resilient planning for the risks we will face tomorrow.

Component 2 will enable the secure and validated collection of key data related to our municipal emergency preparedness and response system, port resilience, cultural heritage preparedness and response capability, critical infrastructure, hazards, and demographics. The depth and breadth of data, presented in consistent formats and collected within similar timescales, will enable collaborative planning within and across municipal partners to advance adaptation action at local and regional levels. The resulting data-driven, visualized, Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Assessments will allow my municipality to make systemic, measurable, and meaningful increases in our climate resilience.

Working together in this effort will greatly benefit the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and our public and private sector partners in Atlantic coast region, as we strive to increase our climate resilience through integrated, equitable, and innovative actions.

Across the project duration, we are prepared to provide a 25% in-kind contribution to the project for Component 1. This contribution will include up to twenty days of staff time, as well as provision of meeting space for community engagement as may be necessary from time to time. My municipality is not required to provide any capital contribution to engage in this highly valuable project.

As a project partner, I encourage the FCM – Green Municipal Fund’s Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation Program to consider this proposal and enable the significant benefits and resilience planning the project will provide locally and regionally.

Sincerely,



10r
Shirlyn Donovan
Interim CAO

TITLE

CLIMATE RISK ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITIZED ADAPTATION PLAN FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH



PROJECT DURATION

18 MONTHS



IDENTIFIED PARTNERS

13 MUNICIPALITIES ACROSS NOVA SCOTIA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

McALLISTER & CRAIG

SUMMARY

DESCRIPTION

To understand risk and drive adaptation, we must have actionable information gained from objective, validated, representative data. Moreover, that information must be intuitively accessible and visually sensible so that risk management and climate adaptation choices made by the Municipality are objective, transparent, and defensible.

The project will deliver:

- (1) municipality-wide all-hazards mapping,
- (2) social vulnerability mapping, including for equity-deserving groups,
- (3) physical vulnerability mapping, including critical infrastructure and cultural heritage assets,
- (4) information aggregation into a comprehensive climate risk assessment, and
- (5) prioritized climate adaptation planning, including integration into our existing municipal service models where appropriate.

All existing municipal data, and all new data created during the project, will be owned by the Municipality.



TARGET REGION



NOVA SCOTIA
CANADA

OUTPUTS

- All-hazards/vulnerabilities, data-driven climate risk assessment, including risk visualization and future scenario planning.
- Risk-informed climate adaptation plan as gateway to infrastructure adaptation funding.

FUNDING

- No capital funding from the municipality.
- Contribution is in-kind only and will support community engagement, output review, etc.
- Funding organization is the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
- Total funded cost = \$110,000.00

Project Name:

Climate risk assessment and prioritized adaptation plan for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Funding Source:

Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Climate-Ready Plans and Processes Fund

Capital Funding Requirements:

- No capital funding from County of Antigonish.
- Municipal contribution is in-kind only and will ensure support with engaging the community and review of outputs.
- Project funded cost = \$110,000.00

Description:

The municipality will face increasing intensity of hurricanes, forest fires, floods, and severe weather due to climate change. This project will vastly improve our ability to plan for a resilient future, while also managing for a safe and prosperous today.

During the project, we will meaningfully engage the full breadth of our municipality, including equity-deserving groups (e.g. racialized person, indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, women, 2SLGBTQIA+), the private sector, and various other groups that represent community interests. The proposed work fully aligns with Canada's National Adaptation Strategy and the Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation Program; it will create a data-driven, risk-informed climate change adaptation plan that outlines immediate priorities and enables transparency and accountability for climate adaptation decisions across government. Near-term targets generated by project-supplied, community-based resilience data will ensure defensible, objective, immediate actions that leverage a whole-of-society effort with measurable results.

To understand risk and drive adaptation, our community must have actionable information gained from objective, validated, representative data. Moreover, that information must be intuitively accessible and visually sensible so that not only local leadership, but all residents, can understand climate adaptation options and see that choices we make are based on facts, not only opinions. Our project will deliver:

- (1) municipality-wide all-hazards mapping,
- (2) social vulnerability mapping, including equity-deserving groups,
- (3) physical vulnerability mapping, including critical infrastructure and cultural heritage,
- (4) information aggregation into a comprehensive climate risk assessment, and

(5) prioritized climate adaptation planning, including integration into our existing municipal service models where appropriate.

Through this project, we will use the visual risk tools within Resilience Engine to reflect our municipality's physical, social, environmental, and economic conditions. This will enable us to create a trusted picture of risk across our land base. The project has been specifically designed such that there will be no dependency, financial or otherwise, created with respect to future use of Resilience Engine – it is a project specific tool. Moreover, our municipality will retain full ownership of our data and a copy of all data contributing to the climate risk assessment will be a distinct project deliverable.

Concluding Outputs:

1. Multi-hazard, data-driven climate risk assessment, including ability to examine various risk scenarios based on municipal development plans, changing hazard intensities, critical infrastructure, etc.
2. Risk-informed climate adaptation plan that will enable higher likelihood of success when applying for municipal infrastructure adaptation funding, especially to the FCM Adaptation in Action fund.

Who Else Is Involved:

- We will be working in collaboration with 13 municipalities across Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, including all of Cape Breton Island.
- Our two non-municipal partners are Green Municipal Fund, under the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and McAllister & Craig – an established adaptation, risk, and resilience firm with significant domestic experience and global expertise.

Duration:

Work will be completed within 18 months, with up to 6 months of contingency time to address delays that may be generated by municipal events.

Likelihood of Project Approval:

Very High. Early indications from the proposal review team are that the project is on track for approval in early April. However, the fund managers require a Council Resolution endorsing the project before funding can be released to the municipality.



**McALLISTER
& CRAIG**

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

E: info@mcallister-craig.com

W: www.mcallister-craig.com

PREPARED FOR:

Green Municipal Fund
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
24 Clarence Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 5P3

SUBJECT:

Confirmation of financial contribution for GMF application: A climate risk assessment and prioritized adaptation plan for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

Lead Municipality - Municipality of the County of Antigonish

DATE:

March 5, 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is to confirm that McAllister & Craig will make in-kind contributions of \$8,000.00 to undertake the “A climate risk assessment and prioritized adaptation plan for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish” project mentioned above and for which funding is requested from the Green Municipal Fund.

If additional clarification is required, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Adam McAllister | CEO

+1.705.768.8288 | amcallister@mcallister-craig.com



MCALLISTER-CRAIG.COM

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Staff Report

TO: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
FROM: MEGAN MACINNIS, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: **ANTIGONISH TOURISM STRATEGY**
DATE: APRIL 8, 2025

Recommendations

Staff recommends the following two motions:

-That Municipal Council direct staff to proceed with the development of a Tourism Partnership Agreement in collaboration with the Town of Antigonish, the Antigonish Tourism Association (ATA), Paqtnkek, and St. Francis Xavier University.

-That Municipal Council approve an annual contribution of \$70,000 to the Antigonish Tourism Association for a period of four years, conditional upon the execution of a formal partnership agreement, as outlined in the Antigonish Tourism Strategy.

Summary

Tourism has been a key topic in Antigonish, with a recognized need to better promote the region and establish it as a premier destination. In response, Municipal Councils identified Tourism and Events as a strategic priority in 2021. A collaborative effort led to the development of the Antigonish Tourism Strategy, endorsed in Fall 2023. The strategy outlines five strategic directions and a new tourism brand. To implement this, a Director of Tourism position has been proposed, with the Antigonish Tourism Association (ATA) overseeing the role. Staff is requesting the County match the Town's \$64,000 marketing levy contribution with a \$70,000 annual commitment for four years to fund this initiative.

Background

In 2022, the County, Town, Paqtnkek, StFX, DEANS, and the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce partnered to develop a Tourism Strategy, issuing an RFP that was awarded to Mary Tulle Consulting and Group ATN. The strategy, endorsed in 2023, identified five key strategic directions and introduced a new tourism brand to better market Antigonish.

Since its adoption, a working group was formed, and Mary Tulle was brought in as a consultant to guide implementation. A key recommendation was hiring a Director of Tourism to lead tourism efforts. The ATA is revising its governance structure to oversee this role, ensuring County representation on a Tourism Advisory Board.

Discussion

To support the development of the Antigonish Tourism Strategy, County Council allocated \$50,000 in last year's budget. As the strategy moves into its next phase, the Town has committed \$64,000 for the upcoming fiscal year from its tourism marketing levy (excluding StFX's contribution).

Staff are recommending that County Council increase its annual contribution to \$70,000 for the next four years. This funding would align with the Town's commitment and support the hiring of a dedicated Director of Tourism to lead the implementation of the strategy on behalf of the Antigonish region.

This investment will ensure strong leadership to carry out the strategy, enhance tourism marketing efforts, and help position Antigonish as a premier destination—benefiting both the local economy and the broader community.

Next Steps

If Council chooses to proceed with next steps in the Tourism Strategy as recommended by staff, the following steps will be taken:

- Draft a partnership agreement with the Antigonish Tourism Association (for Municipal councils review at next committee meeting)
- Advertise the Director of Tourism position in May, with position being filled and individual commencing work in July.

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

MEMO FOR INFORMATION

TO: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
FROM: MEGAN MACINNIS, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES COORDINATOR
SUBJECT: ***SELECTION OF INVESTIGATOR FOR MUNICIPAL CODE OF CONDUCT***
DATE: APRIL 8, 2025

Recommendation

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

The Committee recommends that Municipal Council appoint Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP as their investigator under subsection 23C(1) of the Municipal Government Act to receive and investigate complaints received under the Municipal Code of Conduct for Elected Officials.

Summary

In November 2024, Municipal Council adopted the model Code of Conduct for Municipalities prescribed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In accordance with the provincial legislative requirements, all municipal units and villages must retain legal counsel to provide guidance and conduct investigations should the need arise.

Background

To help municipalities, the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS) underwent a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process, resulting in a list of ten qualified investigators. These investigators have been thoroughly evaluated against financial, legal/adjudication, and human resources criteria by AMANS as part of their RFQ process.

Discussion

Using the list provided by AMANS, staff reached out to three of the listed law firms to ask further questions. After reviewing their qualifications, availability, and service proposals, staff recommends Noella Martin of Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP as the preferred choice for conducting municipal investigations.

Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP brings extensive experience in municipal law and governance, ensuring a thorough and legally sound approach to investigations. Their

professionalism and expertise in adjudication make them well-suited to handle potential complaints effectively and efficiently.

Next Steps

If council chooses to proceed with Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP as recommended by staff, the following steps will follow:

1. Staff will define the scope of services with Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP.
2. Staff will conduct a review to identify and address any potential conflicts of interest.
3. Staff will proceed with engagement and contract negotiations as required.



Eastern District Planning Commission

606 Reeves Street, Unit #3, Port Hawkesbury NS B9A 2R7
Ph.: 902-625-5364
Fx.: 902-625-1559
1-888-625-5361

John D. Bain
Director
jdbain@edpc.ca

April 2, 2025

Mr. Shirlyn Donovan, CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, Nova Scotia B2G 0B4

Reference: Revised Appointments

Dear Ms. Donovan,

As in years past we would ask that the Municipality of the County of Antigonish Council make the following appointments at your next regular session of Council replacing all previous appointments of District Planning staff to various Municipal positions effective **Immediately**:

- **Building Inspection:**
Building Inspectors: **Sean Donovan** and **Jonathan Martin**
Assistant Building Inspector: **Todd Samson**
Alternates: **David MacKenzie, André Samson** and **Luke Ross**
- **Development Officer: Andrew Jones**
Alternates: John Bain; Brendan MacDonald; Kristen Scanlan and Mikayla Tait
Assistant Development Officers: Heike Bruckner, Jonathan Martin and Sean Donovan
- **Fire Inspector: Sean Donovan**
Alternates: A. Samson, L. Ross, T. Samson; D. MacKenzie; and J. Martin.
- **Dangerous or Unsightly Premises**
Administrators: **Sean Donovan** and **John Bain**
Alternate: Jonathan Martin and André Samson
- **Special Constables: Building/Fire Codes, Dangerous or Unsightly Premises, Land Use By-laws**
Sean Donovan and **Jonathan Martin**

These appointments stay in place so long as they are employees of the Commission or until they are replaced by new appointments. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

John Bain
Director

/jb



Speireag Hendra

Executive Director

A Roof Over Your Head Society

19 James St, James St Plaza

902-870-9919

admin@aroyh.ca

March 24, 2025

Beth Schumacher

Deputy Clerk

Municipality of the county of Antigonish

Beech Hill Road,

Beech Hill, NS

B2G 0B4

Subject: Request for Municipal Council Representation on our Board

Dear Deputy Clerk,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am reaching out on behalf of *A Roof Over Your Head Society* to formally request a representative from the municipal council to join our board.

Given that housing was identified as a priority during your recent strategic planning, we believe having municipal representation on our board would be both beneficial and appropriate. Your insights and collaboration would strengthen our efforts to address housing challenges in our community, ensuring alignment with municipal priorities and enhancing the impact of our work.

We have reviewed your External Board Policy and meet the criteria as highlighted:

- i. Housing determined as a priority
- ii. External Board meets regularly- Every third Thursday of the month
- iii. We follow a Board Governance model with policies and procedures in place
- iv. We have General liability and Board of Directors insurance- Proof is available upon request

We appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to the opportunity to work together in this capacity. Please let us know how we can further discuss this request at your convenience.

Sincerely,
Speireag Hendra
Executive Director
A Roof Over Your Head

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

TOPIC:	Municipal Complaint Handling Policy
POLICY NUMBER:	1
DATE APPROVED:	April 21, 2015 (#2015-054)
DATE REVISED:	

Title

1. This Policy may be cited as the “Municipal Complaint Handling Policy” of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

Preamble

2. This policy is intended to enable the Municipality to promptly and effectively address program and service delivery concerns raised by members of the public. The policy will assist the Municipality in providing excellent service to the public, and contribute to continuous improvement of operations. The Municipality strives to reduce customer dissatisfaction by:
 - Providing a timely and accurate response to complaints; and,
 - Using complaints as an opportunity to improve program and service delivery issues.

Interpretation

3. In this policy:
 - a. “Complainant” means the individual filing the complaint with the Municipality;
 - b. “Complaint” means an issue or concern raised with a municipal program, service, or operation that is not resolved at the time of the incident and for which the complainant submits their concerns to the Municipality in accordance with this policy;
 - c. “Council” means the Council of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;
 - d. “Designated Officer” means the Municipal Clerk/Treasurer of the Municipality;
 - e. “Employee” means the employee of the Municipality;
 - f. “Municipality” means the Municipality of the County of Antigonish;
 - g. “Ombudsman” means the Nova Scotia Office of the Ombudsman;
 - h. “Warden” mans the Warden of the Municipality.

Scope

4. This policy is not meant to address:
 - a. Complaints about non-municipal services;
 - b. Issues already addressed by legislation, or an existing Municipal by-law, policy or procedure;
 - c. A decision of Council or a decision of a committee of Council; or,
 - d. Internal employee complaints

Designated Officer

5. A Designated Officer may delegate the authority to investigate a complaint to another employee, where s/he deems appropriate.
6. A Designated Officer may not delegate the authority to investigate a complaint to an employee who is or may be named in the complaint.
7. If a complaint is made against the Designated Officer, the Warden shall consult with the Municipal Solicitor and;
 - a. shall consult with Council; and,
 - b. may refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

Frontline Resolution

8. It is the responsibility of the complainant to attempt to resolve concerns by dealing with employee(s) directly involved with the issue where appropriate.
9. It is the responsibility of all employees to attempt to resolve issues or concerns before they become complaints, and identify opportunities to improve municipal services.

Filing a Complaint

10. Where frontline resolution cannot be achieved, complaints should be submitted to the Designated Officer and include:
 - a. The name, phone number, e-mail address, and mailing address of the individual submitting the complaint.
 - b. The nature of the complaint including the:
 - i. Background leading to the issue(s);
 - ii. Date(s), time(s), and location(s) of any incident(s); and,
 - iii. Name(s) of any employee(s) previously contacted regarding the issue(s); and,
 - c. Any action(s) being requested of the Municipality.
11. Complaints shall be submitted on the form provided in Schedule A.

Receipt and Acknowledgement

12. The Designated Officer shall acknowledge in writing that the complaint has been received within five (5) business days of receipt of the complaint.

Investigation

13. The Designated Officer shall review the issues identified by the complainant and in doing so may:
 - a. Review relevant municipal and provincial legislation;
 - b. Review the Municipality's relevant policies and procedures;
 - c. Review any existing file documents;
 - d. Interview employees or member of the public involved in the issue;

- e. Identify actions that may be taken to address the complaint or improve municipal operations; or,
 - f. Take other actions the Designated Officer deems expedient to resolving the matter.
14. The Designated Officer shall maintain a file of the complaint in compliance with the Municipality's records management policy.
15. The Designated Officer may, at their discretion, notify Council of an open complaint investigation for information purposes.

Decision

16. Within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of a complaint, the Designated Officer shall provide a response in writing to the complainant. The response shall include:
- a. Whether the complaint was substantiated,
 - b. If the complaint is not substantiated, the Designated Officer shall provide reason(s) for their decision; and,
 - c. Any actions the Municipality has or will take as a result of the complaint.
17. If the Designated Officer is unable to provide a response within thirty (30) calendar days, they shall notify the complainant of the delay and provide an estimate of when a response will be provided.
18. Decisions made by the Designated Officer may not be appealed to Municipal Council.

Complaints Regarding Staff/Services Contracted by Municipality

19. Complaints regarding staff members that are employed by a service provider contracted by the Municipality shall be subject to the policies of that service provider and not that of the Municipality.
20. Complaints regarding services provided by a service provider contracted by the Municipality shall be handled in accordance with this policy, and may also be subject to any complaints policies and procedures employed by that service provider.

General

21. Forms of correspondence and notices here above may be amended and adapted as appropriate.
22. Copies of all correspondence and notices shall be retained in the complaint file.
23. Where appropriate, copies of correspondence shall be placed in the personnel file of the subject of the complaint.
24. Communications with a complainant **shall not** provide details of disciplinary measures imposed on any employee.
25. All notes and correspondence shall be dated and identified by author.
26. The Designated Officer or their delegate shall make dated records of any communications and attempted contacts with complainants

ANTIGONISH

Schedule A – Complaint Form

Additional information:

Office Use Only:

Received by: _____	Date: _____
Forwarded to: _____	Date: _____
Acknowledgement Letter <input type="checkbox"/>	Additional Correspondence <input type="checkbox"/>
Sent Date: _____	Sent Date: _____
Staff Name: _____	Staff Name: _____
	Reason: _____

Action Taken:

Final Response Letter

Sent Date: _____

Staff Name: _____

Thank-you for taking the time to explain your concern. We will provide a response to your concern within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving your complaint. If you have any questions about the process, please contact the Municipal Clerk/Treasurer at 902-863-1117

MEMO FOR INFORMATION

TO: Committee of the Whole
FROM: SHIRLYN DONOVAN, CAO
SUBJECT: **APRIL 2025 STAFF REPORT**
DATE: 08/04/2025

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

- Signage on Secondary Highways – Requested quotes for signage and initiated discussions with Daryl on the most effective installation methods to ensure durability and visibility and will continue these conversations.
- Tourism Strategy Next Steps – Engaged with Mary Tulle Consulting to outline the next steps in establishing a Tourism Advisory Board to bring to council. This board will play a pivotal role in overseeing the recruitment of a Tourism Executive Director, who will lead efforts to bring the Tourism Strategy to life and drive growth in the sector.
- County Connect – Began gathering ideas, images, and discussing content for the upcoming Spring/Summer edition of County Connect.
- Communication Strategy – Continued collaboration with Forward Creative by supporting their auditing process while coordinating engagement sessions for both council and staff to enhance our strategic communications.
- CAO attended:
 - Municipal Strategic Priority Setting Workshops
 - Meetings with Nova Scotia Department of Public Works
 - Monthly meeting with StFX, Town and County
 - Grant Information Session
 - HAF meetings
 - RK MacDonald Steering Committee Meetings
 - Planning Advisory Committee Meeting
 - Strait Area Mayors, Wardens, Chiefs and CAOs meeting
 - Biweekly meetings with Town Staff to discuss joint initiatives
- Work ongoing for the Compensation Review with Director of Finance.
- April 1 was the deadline for the Community Partnership Grants.
- An article written by the Deputy Clerk, Director of Recreation, and the Active Living Coordinator highlighting the Antigonish Active Transportation Corridor was published on April 3, 2025 in Plan Canada, a national publication distributed to members of the Canadian Planning Institute.
- Energy - Net Zero Community Buildings ongoing a full update to come next month including wrap up plans and schedule for official commissioning of the project. Energy Management at the County continues, an update will be available for onsite early fall.

- Director of Sustainable Communities, is presenting at community session at Antigonish Library on May 10th @10 am on a panel re climate change and work of the county. And been asked to participate in AMANS spring conference May 7-8 at Whitepoint Resort on panel discussion/ workshop, re Equity, Anti Hate & Anti Racism and partnership, relationship building; more details to come.
- OHS & W- Training and budget development underway. First Aid Training dates shared with all of Council and Staff, please sign up asap, contact T Feltmate for information. Wellness program had great uptake again this year, not as many staff eligible because of just joining the team. Applications included supportive clothing, technology, memberships and training/coaching, as well as activity specific footwear. Total on wellness applications- \$4123.00.
- Nalikitquniejik Antigonish Equity, Anti-Hate & Anti-Racism Plan was passed by Council at COW on March 25th and at the Town of Antigonish on March 26th 2025. Once the plan is officially recognized at Council it will be posted live on our website. A public launch of the plan along with committee update and implementation plan coming in the next month.
- Progressing Generator Installation at the Legion
 - Next step - April 4th Siemens will be onsite to do the modifications to the switchboard
- Working with Saint Andrews/ Goshen/ Antigonish County VFDs on determining the appropriate coverage for the Lochaber Area
- Preparing to conduct review of Regional Hazmat Response capability
- Provided 4-Valleys VFD (Ashely Tozer) with a letter of recommendation from a municipal official for Fire Chief George DeRabbie in regards to the Canadian Volunteer Fire Services Association's "**CVFSA Lifetime Achievement Award**", which annually honours a volunteer firefighter or fire officer whose outstanding achievements in the fire service and community exemplify the duties of a firefighter. To be considered for the award, nominees must have been a volunteer firefighter or volunteer-on-call firefighter for at least twenty (20) years.
- AREMO Planning Committee meeting planned for 3rd week of April

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

- Approximately 1,800 Water bills have been prepared and stuffed in envelopes to be mailed in early April.
- Two Finance department staff are board members on the County's Occupational Health and Wellness committee which meet monthly.
- Finance staff attended and provided support during Council's Strategic Priority Setting Sessions.
- Finance staff was part of a Grant Info session with councillors to go over all the funding options that the County offers throughout the budget.

- Finance Staff attended the AMANS Joint Regional Meeting in Guysborough. The Strait and Guysborough/Antigonish region is comprised of Guysborough, Antigonish Town & County, Inverness, Richmond, Victoria, Mulgrave, St. Mary's and Town of Port Hawkesbury.
- Reports submitted to the province: 2025-2026 HST Offset Program and Capital Investment Plan (CIP), Annual Pension reporting and final report submission requirement for a \$744,000 grant from the Sustainable Growth Fund.
- Worked collaboratively with Blaise MacDonald, AREMO Coordinator to submit two reimbursement claims to ACOA for a total reimbursement amount of \$373,000.
- Audit preparation for the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and Antigonish County Water Utility. MNP Inc. is on site the first week of April conducting their audit procedures. Also, preparation for the Antigonish Arena audit was completed and will be provided for their audit.
- Director of Finance is working with the CAO on the compensation review for council and staff.
- Finance department is on the Association of Municipal Tax Collectors (AMTC) board and is sharing responsible for maintenance of their website.
- Ongoing day to day operations (collections, reconciliations, payroll, property tax and utility customer maintenance, bill payments, monthly HST remittances, etc.).
- Member of the Finance Department is a board member for Strait IT. Board meetings occur monthly.
- Finance staff support the Antigonish Arena in the role of financial accounting (day to day accounting, year end audit preparation, HST remittances, reconciliations, etc.).
- Finance Department is preparing for Budget F25/26.
- HST changed effective April 1, 2025, to 14% so the County's financial module required additional HST codes to be created.
- Finance staff working with a total nine municipal units through an intermunicipal partnership to assess current hosting solution of the County's property taxation, utility billing, financial software program.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Antigonish Scotiabank Mini-Pitch

- Mark Your Calendars: Plans are in the works for a Mini-Pitch opening ceremony and Make Your Move Antigonish (MYMA) Family Fun Day.

Other Programs, Services, initiatives

- We hosted additional skates and swims during March break which were a hit. The free skates and swims are now finished for the season.
- We are hosting a few MYMA sessions in hopes to introduce the initiative to some key individuals who we think can 'champion' the movement.
- Summer staff salary budget
- End of year invoicing for Gym Rentals
- Interview summer staff, offers being sent out
- Wrapping up winter swim session this week.
- Equipment loan/day camp survey

Active Transportation

- Beginning plans for an AT Workshop in June.
- The construction of the Church St roundabout is slated to go ahead this construction season.

EDIA Navigator Initiatives

- Providing support to individuals and community groups in their planning of upcoming sport seasons, most specifically with respect to :
 - funding availability
 - how to access facilities
 - protecting programming enrollment for females and at-risk-males
- Ongoing Mini-Pitch support to Rec Dept
- Re-engaging with Scotiabank on plans for Mini-Pitch opening ceremony

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

- A Request for Proposals for Bulky Waste Collection was advertised and closed on Friday April 4th. A staff recommendation will follow at an upcoming meeting of the Committee of the Whole.