

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL MEETING
May 11, 2020

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:00 p.m., by videoconference, with the following members present:

- Lindsay (Eddie) Nickerson, Chair
- Murray Atkinson
- Jody Crook
- George El-Jakl
- Shaun Hatfield

- Chris Frotten, CAO
- Leah d'Eon, Director of Finance
- Lesa Rossetti, Municipal Clerk

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was agreed that the following items be added to the agenda:

- Letter of Appreciation - Frontline workers - COVID-19
- Batting Cages

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Being duly moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Being duly moved and seconded that minutes of the Committee of the Whole Council Meeting held April 20th and Special Committee meetings held April 21st, 23rd, 28th and 30, 2020 be approved as circulated.

Motion carried unanimously.

2nd DRAFT 2020/2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

The 2nd draft of the 2020/2021 Municipal Budget was presented which contained changes as a result of budget meetings held last month. Documents presented are attached and form part of the minutes.

Based on approval of the above documents, a final budget package will be prepared and circulated to members as soon as possible.

COVID-19 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OPTIONS

The CAO circulated a Staff Report outlining COVID-19 financial assistance options. A copy of

the Staff Report is attached and forms part of the minutes.

Possible Financial Assistance Options include:

- Tax Financing Program
- Interest Rate Reduction
- Waiving Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) Charges
- Waiving the Paymentus Credit Card Service Fee
- Provincial Loan Program Available to Municipalities
- etc.

Members were reminded that the Municipality has already implemented some measures to assist those facing financial hardship due to COVID-19 which are as follows:

- Interim Tax Bills were mailed out the first week of May, as opposed to the first week of April and the interest free period was extended from 45 days to 60 days, bringing the due date to June 30, 2020.
- Interest was frozen on all accounts from March 17th to May 1st, to give time to adjust to the new normal without the concern of increasing interest charges.
- The Committee of the Whole Council has made a recommendation to Council to increase both the maximum income threshold and exemption amount to help low-income individuals and families.

Members were advised that a tax payment comparison has been carried out which does not show any effect of COVID-19 at this time.

Question was raised as to the number of property owners who pay their taxes through their mortgage. It was agreed that the Director of Finance would compile information and forward it to members.

Discussion took place regarding the implementation of a Tax Financing Program and the Provincial Loan Program available to municipalities.

The CAO was directed to draft a policy more specific to Barrington for review by members at a future meeting.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION

Correspondence has been received from Nova Scotia Power advising that they and the Department of Energy and Mines are seeking Expressions of Interest in partnering to install Electric Vehicle charging stations in our area. The program will cover up to 50% of the charging station infrastructure costs. Each station costs approximately \$7,000.00 - \$8,000.00.

Resolution COW200501

Being duly moved and seconded that it be recommended to Council that Nova Scotia Power be advised that the Municipality is not interested in the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at this time.

Motion carried unanimously.

LETTER OF SUPPORT RE: ASSET MANAGEMENT PROJECT

The CAO informed members that a letter of support is required for the funding application we are submitting to FCM for an asset management project. The Municipality will be requesting a grant in the amount of \$50,000.00 to assist with the cost of Phase 2 of our Asset Management Plan. The total cost of this project is \$62,000.00.

Resolution COW200502

Being duly moved and seconded that it be recommended to Council that a letter of support be provided to accompany our application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for funding in the amount of \$50,000.00 to assist with the cost of the development of an Asset Management Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

BEACH STRATEGY UPDATE

A Staff Report was presented which provided an update on Beach Strategy Action Items. A copy of the Staff Report is attached and forms part of the minutes.

Resolution COW200503

Being duly moved and seconded that it be recommended to Council that the Municipality go forward with Phase 2 of the Stoney Island Beach Parking area project as described in the Staff Report with a total budget of \$10,223.73 from the beach facilities capital budget.

Motion carried unanimously.

It was noted that members favoured Option B, as contained in the Staff Report, for the parking lot design.

Resolution COW200504

Being duly moved and seconded that it be recommended to Council that Causeway Computers be awarded the work of fabricating the beach signage for the quoted price of \$22,000.00. + HST.

Motion carried unanimously.

Structured engagement sessions were then discussed.

Resolution COW200505

Being duly moved and seconded that it be recommended to Council that a short (3-5 questions) survey be launched that would ask residents and visitors to answer general questions about our beaches.

Motion carried unanimously.

It was noted that questions will be formulated and presented to members at a future meeting.

REQUEST FROM DR. YEE FOR A PLEXIGLASS SEPARATOR AND WIN 7 UPGRADE

Correspondence has been received from Dr. Kenny Yee advising that he has installed a plexiglass separator around the reception area of his office to protect his staff and patients and is requesting 50% reimbursement from the Municipality. The total cost of the project was \$2,219.50.

Dr. Yee also advised that two of the desktop PCs in his office that are used for Family Medical Residents and other learners run Windows 7 which is no longer supported by Microsoft. He is therefore requesting Council to consider upgrading the PCs to Windows 10, if possible and if not, then to purchase two new PCs for his office.

After much discussion it was agreed that additional information be obtained and presented back to the Committee for consideration.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION - FRONTLINE WORKERS - COVID-19

It was reported that some health care workers from our area have stepped up to the plate to provide a helping hand at Northwood Manor in Halifax during the pandemic.

Resolution COW200506

Being duly moved and seconded that the CAO craft a letter to be signed by the Warden acknowledging the health care workers from our area that are providing service to Northwood Manor during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motion carried unanimously.

It was noted that the workers are staying at the Four Point Sheraton and Councillor Hatfield agreed to provide the names of the workers to the CAO.

BATTING CAGES

It was noted that batting cages could be used if municipal buildings are opened up in the next few weeks. The CAO advised that one batting cage has been completed and work has commenced on another one.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Chair

Secretary for the Meeting

20 21 Budget Adjustments - 2nd Draft

Increase	Expenses	Salaries - Cost of Living, Group Ins Adj	- 9,753.00
	Expenses	Library Heat & Lights	- 3,000.00
	Expenses	Education	- 20,123.00
	Expenses	Senior Services Funding	- 16,000.00
	Expenses	Bank Charges	- 1,000.00
	Expenses	Library Covid-19 Improvements	- 1,000.00
	Expenses	RCMP Contract	- 15,590.00
	Expenses	Councillors Technology Allowance	- 4,000.00
	Expenses	Low Income Exemptions	- 20,000.00
	Expenses	Beach Signage	- 5,000.00
	Expenses	Library Roof	- 30,000.00
	Expenses	Sewer Lateral	- 25,000.00
	Expenses	Beach Facilities	- 50,000.00
	Revenue	PCAP Grant 50% Flow Meters	10,000.00
	Revenue	Admin Ctr - Community Services	9,735.00
	Revenue	Bylaw Enforcement RRFB	7,324.00
	Revenue	Gas Tax Tranfer - Beach Facilites	50,000.00
	Revenue	Operating Reserve Transfer	43,600.00
	Revenue	Grant for beach signage	10,000.00
			<hr/>
			- 69,807.00
Reduce	Expenses	Reduce furniture disposal cost	5,000.00
	Expenses	Corrections	1,441.00
	Expenses	Road Contract	486.00
	Expenses	Marathon	4,000.00
	Expenses	Conferences / Training - Cancelled	11,250.00
	Expenses	Reduced Pool Operations	9,550.00
	Expenses	Recreation / Day Camp Reduced	11,200.00
	Expenses	VIC Closure	26,380.00
	Expenses	Tourism Expense	3,500.00
	Expenses	Janitorial Supplies	1,500.00
	Expenses	Portable Facilites	6,000.00
	Revenue	Interest on Taxes - April 2020	- 10,500.00
			<hr/>
			69,807.00

Budget Surplus (Loss)

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2020 / 2021 Capital

Projects	Project Cost	Current Year	General Operating Fund	Deed Transfer Tax	Capital Reserve Fund	Gas Tax Fund	Grants	Borrowing	Total
Recreation Centre	3,000,000	3,000,000					2,130,000	870,000	3,000,000
Beach Facilities	75,000	75,000		25,000		50,000			75,000
Roof Replacement - Library / CED	110,000	110,000		110,000					110,000
Replace Fencing Barrington Ballfield	14,000	14,000		14,000					14,000
Replace Cargo Trailer	12,000	12,000	12,000						12,000
Roof Replacement - Brass Hill TP	15,000	15,000	15,000						15,000
Manhole Covers	20,000	20,000	20,000						20,000
Fencing WH Treatment Plant	15,000	15,000	15,000						15,000
Zero Turn Mower	12,000	12,000		12,000					12,000
Fall's Point Lift Station Retrofit	15,000	15,000	15,000						15,000
Flow Meters Treatment Plant	20,000	20,000	20,000						20,000
Portable Toilets - Recreation Facilities	8,000	8,000		8,000					8,000
Municipal Admin Office Renovations	350,000	225,000			225,000				225,000
Sewer Lateral	25,000	25,000			25,000				25,000
Internet Project	200,000	200,000				200,000			200,000
	3,891,000	3,766,000	97,000	169,000	250,000	250,000	2,130,000	870,000	3,766,000

**Parking Lot
Long Term Projects**

Year	5 Year Projects	Cost Estimate	10 - 15 Year Projects	Cost Estimate
1	SCADA/PUMP Station Upgrades	420,000	Arena Replacement	4,000,000
1	Beaches	200,000	Highway Property Sewer	1,800,000
1	Internet Project	300,000	Brass Hill Treatment Plant	8,000,000
1	Property Services Building	500,000	Woods Harbour Treatment Plant	4,000,000
1	Little League Ballfield	120,000	Business Park - Former Knowles	1,500,000
1	Signage Strategy	200,000		
2	Former Knowles Property - Road	250,000		19,300,000
2	Admin Centre Renos / New Bldg	1,000,000		
3	Landfill Cell	350,000		
4	Medical Centre	4,500,000		
		7,840,000		

**2020 - 2021 Financial Budget
Summary**

Rev/Exp	Department	Grouping	2019 - 2020 Actuals to Date	Budget 2019 - 2020	Budget 2020 - 2021	
Revenue	Property & Other Taxes	Taxes	5,501,981	5,503,174	5,670,229	
		Fire Area Rates	619,035	619,220	637,380	
		Health Services - Sewer	341,478	342,528	342,037	
		Business Property	292,369	269,784	256,200	
	Property & Other Taxes Total			6,754,863	6,734,706	6,905,846
	Grants in Lieu of Taxes	Federal Government	41,643	47,001	47,500	
		Provincial Government	98,590	96,246	96,570	
	Grants in Lieu of Taxes Total			140,233	143,247	144,070
	Services to Other Governments	Services to Other Governments	139,092	132,135	110,789	
	Services to Other Governments Total			139,092	132,135	110,789
	Sale of Services	Municipal Arena	100,407	116,900	121,100	
		Recreation Programs	67,750	42,645	16,220	
		General Government Services	101,735	111,200	107,200	
		Swimming Pool	17,584	14,100	8,250	
	Sale of Services Total			287,475	284,845	252,770
	Other Revenue	Licenses and Permits	39,532	44,250	46,750	
		Rentals	95,488	65,705	58,339	
Interest on Investments		32,333	25,000	25,000		
Interest on Taxes		142,579	155,000	139,500		
Fire Services		175,776	132,534	388,348		
Wind Turbine Revenue		54,366	65,000	65,000		
Admin Revenue		37,942	18,000	42,500		
Other Revenue Total			578,015	505,489	765,437	
Unconditional Transfers	Provincial Government	156,314	172,335	179,659		
Unconditional Transfers Total			156,314	172,335	179,659	

**2020 - 2021 Financial Budget
Summary**

Rev/Exp	Department	Grouping	2019 - 2020 Actuals to Date	Budget 2019 - 2020	Budget 2020 - 2021
Revenue	Conditional Transfers	Federal Government	568,295	766,700	2,486,000
		Provincial Government	141,064	149,500	165,755
	Conditional Transfers Total		709,359	916,200	2,651,755
	Other Transfers	Special Reserve Fund	313,263	544,000	718,600
		Debenture Receipts	-	-	870,000
		Other	-	-	-
Other Transfers Total		313,263	544,000	1,588,600	
Revenue Total			9,078,614	9,432,957	12,598,926

**2020 - 2021 Financial Budget
Summary**

Rev/Exp	Department	Grouping	2019 - 2020 Actuals to Date	Budget 2019 - 2020	Budget 2020 - 2021
Expense	General Government Services	Legislative	121,361	142,908	145,595
		General Administrative	600,662	664,855	760,303
		Property Services	325,528	372,790	377,500
		Financial Management	23,778	18,750	20,000
		Taxation	225,163	278,034	301,690
		Other General Government	84,977	79,800	123,800
		General Government Services Total		1,381,469	1,557,137
	Protective Services	Police Protection	1,024,096	1,046,826	1,071,149
		Law Enforcement	11,205	11,500	11,000
		By-Law Enforcement	6,442	22,500	7,500
		Fire Protection	796,212	751,754	1,025,728
		EMO	10,350	16,652	14,902
		Building Inspection Services	113,648	131,591	125,300
		Fire Services Coordinator	64,256	70,615	85,445
	Protective Services Total		2,026,208	2,051,438	2,341,024
	Transportation Services	Road Transportation	92,146	82,890	287,514
		Street Lighting	144,240	158,000	158,000
		Community Clean-up Program	831	2,000	1,000
	Transportation Services Total		237,217	242,890	446,514
	Environmental Health	Sewage System - Barrington	144,318	170,906	188,020
		Sewage System - Woods Harbour	70,076	84,456	92,970
		Sewer System - Sherose Island	21,428	26,900	32,400
		Solid Waste Management	670,622	736,457	840,365
		Landfill	208,458	238,232	250,170
		Sewage Collection and Disposal	2,489	7,200	7,200

**2020 - 2021 Financial Budget
Summary**

Rev/Exp	Department	Grouping	2019 - 2020 Actuals to Date	Budget 2019 - 2020	Budget 2020 - 2021
Expense	Environmental Health Total		1,117,390	1,264,151	1,411,125
	Public Health and Welfare	Public Health	90,647	80,000	95,000
		Housing	24,761	25,000	28,000
	Public Health and Welfare Total		115,408	105,000	123,000
	Environmental Development	Planning Advisory Committee	5,423	5,500	5,500
		Regional Enterprise Network	38,630	39,000	39,000
		Community Development	12,291	11,925	9,605
		Wind Turbine Generator	20,050	16,000	19,000
		Visitor Information Centre	35,870	42,446	10,300
		Tourism and Community	93,790	111,611	126,170
		Senior Services Coordinator	146,337	122,054	103,472
	Environmental Development Total		352,391	348,536	313,047
	Recreation and Cultural	Recreation Department	74,983	72,811	77,060
		MPAL	50,884	53,803	57,385
		Summer Staff	33,302	29,715	25,560
		Municipal Swimming Pool	44,154	40,554	38,830
		Municipal Arena	310,033	298,313	325,600
Arena Canteen		-	-	-	
Curling Club		8,126	11,600	11,100	
Recreation Facilities		70,678	81,200	68,750	
Recreation Centre		7	-	-	
Recreation Programs		62,905	53,275	34,850	
CED Centre/Library		24,860	20,100	24,600	
Western County Regional Library Learning Centre		44,470	44,470	45,470	

**2020 - 2021 Financial Budget
Summary**

Rev/Exp	Department	Grouping	2019 - 2020 Actuals to Date	Budget 2019 - 2020	Budget 2020 - 2021
Expense	Recreation and Cultural Total		724,390	705,841	709,205
	Education	Education	1,220,509	1,331,464	1,360,123
	Education Total		1,220,509	1,331,464	1,360,123
	Financing	Transfers to Own Reserves	1,215,324	1,756,500	4,096,000
		Debt Charges	70,000	70,000	70,000
	Financing Total		1,285,324	1,826,500	4,166,000
Grand Total		Surplus (Deficit)	618,309	-	-



STAFF REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Frotten

DATE: May 3, 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Financial Assistance Options

ORIGIN

Over the past few weeks, local governments have been considering initiatives/programs to implement that could provide financial assistance to those facing financial difficulties due to COVID-19. Since we are in the midst of finalizing our budget and any assistance we offer may have an impact on our budget, Staff has prepared a list of additional measures and/or initiatives we could consider and is requesting your decision.

BACKGROUND

The Municipality has already implemented some measures intended to assist those facing financial hardship due to COVID-19 and help stabilize the turmoil of the initial closures ordered by the Province.

As our interim tax bill is typically sent out in the first week of April, we suspended billing until further notice and then made the decision to delay it until the first week of May. We also extended the interest-free period from 45 days to 60 days, bringing the due date to June 30th, 2020.

From March 17th to May 1st, we froze interest on all accounts to provide our taxpayers time to adjust to the new normal without the concern of increasing interest charges.

Finally, at our last budget meeting, Committee made a recommendation to Council to increase both the maximum income threshold and exemption amount to help low-income individuals and families.

The implementation of these measures will certainly help those facing hardship or find themselves in a vulnerable position. There has been discussion on trying to provide additional support to those facing financial hardship directly related to COVID-19. The list of options presented could help with this objective and is a combination of measures/initiatives being discussed provincially, have been implemented by other municipalities in our Province or in Canada or would be unique to us.

DISCUSSION

Tax Financing Program

As you know, The NSFM/AMANS worked tirelessly to develop a province wide tax deferral program that all municipalities could follow. Unfortunately, that idea did not come to fruition, so they reoriented their focus and developed a tax financing program – encouraging all municipalities to implement all or a part of it. This financing program also coincides with the Province’s \$380 million loan program available to Municipalities (please see below).

The model policy, along with some Q&As are attached to this report. Here is a summary:

- The property tax financing program is not a tax deferral or forgiveness program.
- The policy is authorized under Municipal Government Act sections 111-113
- Taxpayers would start amortized installments six months after tax bill due date.
- Taxpayers would have 24 months to make payments but no option for early repayment.
- Interest charged on financed payments would be the cost of the capital borrowing from the Province plus a potential admin fee.
- The Program eligibility would be criteria-based:
 - Financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency. I.e. individuals through proof of access to provincial or federal program or commercial through documentary proof of hardship.
 - Account must be in good standing before and during the period. This would include accounts where tax payment arrangements exist and are current.
- On the residential side, the program would be open to
 - Residents of Nova Scotia.
 - Registered property owners who are ordinary residents and have lost their jobs due to service reductions from the State of Emergency (documentation required).
 - Property owned and registered as a Tourism Operator with Tourism Nova Scotia for the 2019 tourist season.
- The program would exclude:
 - Vacant land
 - Properties owned by non-residents of Nova Scotia
- On the commercial side, the program would be open to:
 - A taxable commercial property used as commercial, shopping, office, industrial, farm (cumulative assessment) and has a total taxable 2020 property assessment value equal to or under a certain dollar value.
 - Without limitation on assessed value, owner occupied:
 - Land owned by a tourism operator registered with the *Tourist Accommodations Registration Act*
 - Automotive and recreational/leisure dealership
 - Private and non-profit recreation facilities
 - Hospitality industry – restaurants, bars, cafes, coffee shops

- Service industry – hairdressers, nail salons, gyms, tattoo studios
 - Health care providers required to reduce hours – dentists, naturopaths, doctors, chiropractors, physiotherapists
- the program would exclude:
 - Property owners who have not experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency.
 - Property owners who have received compensation from *Business Interruption Insurance* towards the payment of property taxes.
 - Provincially subsidized day care centers.
 - Properties used for landfill, pipeline, managed forest, parking, and commercial vacant land.
 - Properties with an active tax agreement with the Municipality through legislation or bylaw.
 - Municipally funded non-profit organizations with property taxes already partially exempted by the municipality.
 - All properties managed under Payment-In-Lieu (PILT) programs.
- In terms of implementation and administration, CBRM is developing a common online intake process to help reduce administrative burden for those municipalities who choose to adopt the model policy. The local interaction and monitoring of the program would be administered internally.

Both Leah and I have discussed this policy at length. Our efforts in assisting residents and businesses who are facing financial hardship due to COVID-19 all while considering our financial capacity has been at the core of each of our conversations. In terms of the policy, we do not have any issue with the concept or the eligibility criteria, but we are not fond of the 30-month repayment term and the possible administrative burden. Depending on the uptake, we may not have enough human resources to take in the applications and monitor the program and we are concerned with one's ability to pay two tax bills at once (once the October final bill, 2021 interim bill and so on are issued). We had originally thought of recommending a payment arrangement plan program but that did not seem to go far enough in assisting a resident or business bringing in much less income or revenue due to COVID-19. In the end, we would recommend this policy but change the repayment term to 12 months.

Both NSFAM and AMANS believes that the solution presented using Sections 111-113 is our best option. With these types of programs, it is important to look at what our neighbouring units intend to do to avoid residents questioning why we may not have a program, when the others do. In discussion with both the CAOs of Shelburne and Argyle, they intend to recommend either a version of this policy or a measure that resembles the policy. At this point, it is uncertain whether the Towns will implement a policy or measures allowing financing of property taxes.

Interest Rate Reduction

Some municipalities have made the decision to reduce their interest rate (Shelburne – 14% to 10%, Argyle 16% to 10% and Halifax 15% to 10%). Our interest rate is 18% and we typically generate anywhere between \$11,000 and \$14,000 per month in interest. Although this is not the revenue you want to

generate, it is a considerable amount and the traditional tool used to penalize those that are overdue on taxes, area rates and other charges.

This option has been discussed extensively internally and we would recommend keeping the interest rate as is. Our reasons are the following:

1. Reducing the interest rate would help those in arrears which are, on occasion, the most vulnerable, but it would also reward those who consistently do not pay taxes.
2. Most that may find themselves with overdue taxes will have an opportunity to participate in the financing program.

Waiving Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) Charges

We charge a \$25 NSF fee which we could waive for the next few months. We do not have control over the banks' NSF charges, but this could be a way to help those that have automatic payments or pay by cheque and are facing hardship due to COVID-19.

Some municipalities, town and cities are waiving this charge and it would be possible for us to do the same without any considerable impact on our revenues.

Waiving the Paymentus Credit Card Service Fee

Paymentus charges the taxpayer who pay by credit card for the use of their service to cover the cost of payment handling and processing. We do not receive any part of this service fee. The service fee charged by Paymentus Corporation for tax account payments is 1.75% of the payment amount and the amount is billed directly to the credit card used.

As our offices are closed to the public and that may be the case until June, we could consider paying this fee ourselves (waiving the fee to the resident or business) for a certain period. Although we have a number of alternative payment methods and this fee may only represent a \$10-\$50 savings to the resident, it could be a way of helping those that may need to use credit to pay their taxes because they don't have the funds available now.

If Council were interested in pursuing this option, I would first ask the Finance Department to determine its logistical possibility and determine the estimated cost we may incur.

Provincial Loan Program Available to Municipalities

On April 28th, a new operating loan program was introduced by the Province to help municipalities with financial losses due to COVID-19. The \$380 million loan program, which was developed in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and the Association of Municipal Administrators, is available through the Municipal Finance Corporation.

Municipalities interested in accessing a loan must first need to determine their revenue shortfall. We have estimated our shortfall to be approximately \$2 million based on a calculation using "per sector" percentages that is more likely than not to apply for a tax deferral (i.e. hotel and accommodation,

restaurants, salons are 100%, non-profit organisations are at 20% and residents are at 35%). We believe these percentages to be high for our municipality but were recommended to use the percentages to ensure a baseline for calculations among all municipalities.

Municipal councils will then be required to pass a temporary borrowing resolution and submit it to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The Department will analyze requests and if approved will forward the approval to the Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation. Upon approval by the corporation's board of directors it will administer a loan agreement.

This loan program is intended to offset the cost, at a very low cost (1.1% interest rate), of providing a financing program to residents and businesses. It has been clear that the approval of the temporary borrowing resolution will weigh heavily on whether a municipal unit provides a financing program.

Other

There may be a program or initiative that we could design specifically for Barrington that would be unique. If we do choose this route, we should keep in mind that there are a lot of program out there already and we should focus on the gaps. Maybe we want to help seniors more by investing more in Senior Services. Maybe we want to help businesses by providing a subsidy program or rebate on the taxes charged on their increased assessment for this year. Maybe we want to help young families with childcare costs or reducing or waiving recreation costs for our summer programs. Whatever it may be, we have to be clear on the details and purpose and always keep in mind that we want to help those most affected that don't have anywhere else to go – all while doing it within our means.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As mentioned, any assistance we offer may have an impact on our current budget. If the financing program were implemented, it would be difficult to predict what the impact would be on our budget as we do not have a clear idea of what the uptake would be. The interest cost will be passed on to the resident or business but if the uptake is substantial, we may be required to incur costs such as hiring a part-time employee to administer the program.

As for the waiving of NSF charges and credit card convenience fees, we do not see that having a substantial impact on the budget as we do not process many cheques or receive many post-dated payments and we do not typically have a large amount of payments through by credit card.

The reduction of our interest rate would be the largest impact on our budget as our rate, at 18%, typically generates anywhere between \$11,000 and \$14,000 per month. Although this is not the revenue you want to generate, it is a considerable amount.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The policy has been reviewed by Charles Thompson of Burchell MacDougall, who sees minimal risk in using the policy. He points out that there is nothing in the MGA that explicitly prohibits such a policy, and that the MGA needs to be interpreted flexibly in this extraordinary time. In addition, the amendments to

section 2 and new 9A and 14A added to the MGA in 2019 mandate a broad interpretation of municipalities' and councils' powers. AMANS, therefore, believes that it is a reasonable solution for the difficult problem we are facing at this time. That being said, they do recommend that each unit have it reviewed their own solicitor, so we have sent it to ours for their review and comments.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATIONS

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

This report is not intended to advocate for or against any of these measures/initiatives but rather outline possible options. A brief explanation on the feasibility or necessity of implementing each option is included in the discussion and we also want to be clear the decision to move forward with any option would require more work (i.e. policy development, administrative procedures, etc.).

SUGGESTED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

- Property Tax Financing Program Model Policy
- Property Tax Financing Program Policy Q&A

Chapter [--]

COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program Policy

Title

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

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

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

Section 113 of the *Municipal Government Act* allows Council to charge interest for non-payment of taxes when due, at a rate determined by policy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.2.2.1 The owner of the property is a tourism operator registered under the *Tourist Accommodations Registration Act* and the property is used for tourist accommodations (e.g., hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts);

4.2.2.2 The owner of the property carries on the business of an automotive or leisure/recreational vehicle dealership on the property;

4.2.2.3 The owner of the property uses the property as a private or non-profit recreation facility (e.g., golf courses, indoor playgrounds, campgrounds, racing venues);

4.2.2.4 The owner of the property carries on a business on the property in the hospitality industry, including bars, cafes, and coffee shops;

4.2.2.5 The owner of the property carries on a business on the property in the service industry, including hairdressers, nail salons, gyms, tattoo parlours;

4.2.2.6 The owner of the property carries on a business on the property as a health care provider (including, but not limited to, dentists, naturopaths, chiropractors, physiotherapists, physicians and other doctors), where that business has been required to reduce hours as a result of the State of Emergency.

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

4.3.1 Property owners who have not experienced financial hardship through loss of revenue related to the State of Emergency;

4.3.2 Property owners who have received compensation from Business Interruption Insurance towards the payment of property taxes;

4.3.3 Properties occupied by daycare centres in receipt of federal or provincial funding, or those in receipt of other emergency funding;

4.3.4 Properties used for landfill, pipeline, managed forest, parking, and commercial vacant land;

4.3.5 Properties for which there is an active tax agreement with the Municipality through legislation or bylaw;

4.3.6 Properties owned by non-profit organizations that are funded by the Municipality or that are partially exempted from property tax;

4.3.7 All properties managed under payment-in lieu-programs.⁷

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

4.4 General Requirements

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

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

4.5 Application

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

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

5. **Administration**

5.1 Tax Installments

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.2 Terms of the Program

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Council will:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. **General Provisions**

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

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

Application for COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program

Residential Property

Civic address of property: _____

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

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

Mailing address (include civic number): _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

I declare that:

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

Complete one of I, II, or III below

I. Owner-occupied residence

I also declare that:

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

Dated this __ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

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

II. Registered tourism operator

I also declare that:

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

Dated this __ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

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

III. Rental residential property

I also declare that:

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

Dated this __ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

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

Application for COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program

Commercial Property

Civic address of property: _____

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

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

Mailing address (include civic number): _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

I declare that:

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

Complete one of I or II below

I. I also declare that:

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

Dated this ___ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

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

II. I also declare that:

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

Dated this ___ day of _____, 2020.

Signature of owner

2020-04-28 – COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program Policy Q&A

Q: For clarity, delaying provincial mandatory costs is now off the table with the COVID-19 Property Tax Financing Program?

A: Yes, this option is not being considered by the Province.

Q: What implication will this program have on the tax sale process within the period of the program?

A: Taxpayers in the program are 'in good standing', as they have arranged to make payments through a tax installment pre-payment plan. Default of payment of an installment when due will result in removal from this program with the balance of outstanding taxes becoming immediately due and payable. Collection procedures would then begin as per local policy.

Q: If Council Approves this new policy would that imply that those residents would then be exempt from being taken to Tax Sale; currently we do not offer payment arrangements.

A: The assumption would be that in adopting the model policy Council would be accepting payment arrangements. Taxpayers in this program are considered to be in good standing and would therefore be exempt from being taken to or sheltered from a tax sale. Collection procedures would begin as per local policy should the applicant default on payment.

Q: Does it have to be owner occupied for the residential properties?

A: As the policy is written, the applicant must be the owner of the residential property, the property must be the owner's primary residence, and the owner must have experienced financial hardship through a significant reduction in income due to the State of Emergency declared by the Government of Nova Scotia in response to COVID-19, demonstrated through receipt of Provincial or Federal program assistance, or a Record of Employment.

Q: Once this policy is in place, we must assume only taxes owing for 2020-21 are eligible, as we do not have the financial backing to continue in subsequent years, correct?

A: Yes, that is correct.

Q: Footnote 9 says 5.2.2 assumes program funding is secured through MFC. Is this a requirement to offer the tax financing program to property owners?

A: Municipalities are not required to offer this financing program to their property owners. Should municipalities choose to finance their own program in their own method, this is also allowed.

Q: Is the June 30 deadline (Section 4.4.3) a suggestion or tied to an MFC / DMAH timeline?

A: The June 30 deadline is only a suggestion. This date can be adjusted by individual councils.

Q: Are the first six months interest free?

A: The decision to charge interest during the first six months is a local decision which must be made by individual councils. However, the municipality would have to absorb the MFC borrowing rate if the choice is made to provide six months of interest free payments to applicants in the program.

Q: How do we address the increased resources municipal units will need to manage the program?

A: The policy contemplates an administration fee of 25 basis points. AMANS is developing a central portal to receive applications to further reduce the costs associated with program administration for those units that closely adhere to the model policy. Individual units will decide whether costs incurred as a result of program administration are offset by the program's benefits.

Q: Type of business relates to commercial entity, but they may not be owner. The owner may have tenants with only one business qualifying. How do we provide relief to only part of the commercial assessment?

A: Commercial landlords that have experienced a loss in revenue as a result of the COVID-19 crisis are eligible for the program under s. 4.2.1. It is recommended that municipalities only accept applications for specific properties, and not the entirety of the owner's commercial real estate holdings within the municipal unit.

Alternatively, municipalities may choose to exclude commercial landlords from the program. There are specific programs in place, such as the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) program and COVID-19 Rent Deferral Support Program (CRDSP), that have been created to provide targeted support to commercial landlords.

Q: If the program is not for vacant land, how will units handle tax bills that have both residential and resource assessment on accounts, would be whole bill be eligible or only the part that has residential assessment?

A: The policy as drafted only covers occupied land. Individual councils may choose to alter the eligibility criteria to include vacant land.

Q: What is the timeline you would want municipalities to approve the policy?

A: It is recommended that Council approve as soon as possible.

Q: Implementing the policy will likely ensure we need to access MFC op line. Will the 3-year repayment on a large borrowing impact the debt ratio indicator? Do units have room in debt ratio?

A: This will be looked at when municipal affairs reviews cashflow, but this portion of the loan will not be taken into consideration with the debt-ratio indicator. For impact on your FCI scores please contact your municipal advisor.

Q: What solicitor has reviewed?

A: The policy was reviewed by the Association of Municipal Administrators' solicitor Burchell-MacDougall Law. Councils are encouraged to conduct their own due diligence.

Q: Would the commercial side of this be in contradiction of MGA 57(2) A municipality shall not grant a tax concession or other form of direct financial assistance to a business or industry. If the program is not open to all commercial.

A: No, commercial accounts in this program will not receive direct financial assistance as a result of this program. The program provides an opportunity for property owners to spread taxes due over a longer

time horizon. A commercial property owner in the program will ultimately end up paying more in taxes, fees and interest than an owner who opts to make payment by the scheduled due date.

Q: So, the AMA would take the applications, but the Municipalities are responsible for the vetting and everything afterwards? This sounds to be quite a significant increase in administration and just wondering if there is concern with staffing required to run and track the program - It appears there will be 2 different interest rates, and 2 different collection processes.

A: Yes, AMA would assist in reducing the administrative burden required to develop an intake form, but municipalities are responsible for vetting. There will be an increase in administration as a result of 2 different interest rates and 2 different collection processes. It is up to the municipality to weigh the administrative burden of implementing this program and the need for cashflow against another to determine if they'd like to implement this policy.

Q: As I read the policy this program only applies to property tax and excludes levies (streetlights, fire, etc.), fees (sewer, solid waste, etc.) and local improvement charges, which may all appear on the same bill. Am I understanding that correctly?

A: The program has been designed for property tax but other items that are covered by uniform charge may also be included. Utilities were purposely excluded because residents are expected to pay their utility bills.

Q: The AMANS application model would be positive in terms of its simplicity, however I am not sure the public would fully understand who they are submitting their personal information to (third party organization vs their expectation of local gov't), how and where it is handled/stored, and who has access to it.

A: The idea would be for citizens to be redirected to a third-party platform via a link on the municipal website. If we weren't able to have a form via a third-party, there may be some confusion from residents using an online form that is embedded on the AMA website. We will look into a redirect link from each individual units' website instead of a form embedded on the AMA website. NOTE: the redirect link would provide criteria based on the sample policy. Should the sample policy be veered from the intake form may not encompass the individual changes completed by each unit.

Q: Throughout the repayment term, is the outstanding balance attracting interest because OUR outstanding balance is. If it IS attracting interest, then it is in arrears? Please clarify.

A: If under this program, it is determined that if you are making payments you are not in arrears.

Q: Was the intent to capture just interim bills? The Sept 30 date may pick up both interim and final for some units, meaning full year tax gets installments.

A: No. The intention was to support municipalities during this time and months after for COVID-19.

Q: What about rural municipalities where internet is a challenge and the online option does not work for them?

A: Municipalities may want to look at using a delivered via mail option or have the ability for someone to call a number and the municipality will input the appropriate information into the form. Individual

municipalities will be responsible for determining the groups which need to be reached offline and the best ways to reach them, if not via an online in-take form

Q: If the application process is all online, particularly through a central application portal, how will applicants submit their supporting documentation (ie. CERB benefits, ROE, commercial property proof of loss of revenue, etc.)? Not all applicants will have the ability to scan/email documents.

A: Documents can be uploaded via many different avenues. IE: taking a photo or dragging and dropping files from their computer. PNG and JPEG files will both be supported. The online application will also be mobile user friendly

Q: Will the amounts approved for borrowing by the municipal unit be backed up by a list of approved accounts that have applied for deferred taxes and the related receivables to be collected over the 24 months? Or will it be based on estimates that units think they will need?

A: Municipalities are asked to reach out to their municipal advisor to know what information is to be included with the ask. It is likely that it will be based on estimates.

Q: The draft policy provides that the registered property owners that have experienced significant reduction in income can apply. Has there been any thought to extending the income reduction to the family as opposed to the registered owner to cover situations where the main income earner in the household is not the registered owner? For example, if professionals/small business owners opt to have the home in their partners / spouse's name to protect the asset. The draft policy would not apply to this group because the registered owner has not experienced a significant reduction in income, but the family will have suffered the loss.

A: Administratively, AANs and titles are nicely tied to the names of registered owners. Individual municipalities may choose to amend the policy, but accepting an ROE registered to the same address may substantially increase administrative burden.

Q: What are the thoughts on documentation commercial taxpayers must provide to prove financial hardship?

A: Commercial taxpayers can show a loss of revenue, or ROEs filed for their employees as an example.

Q: If there are 4 people on the DEED, and 2 live in the home, but not all were affected by income loss would this situation be included.

A: Yes, as long as the applicant is the owner of the residential property, the property is the owner's primary residence, and the owner has experienced financial hardship through a significant reduction in income due to the State of Emergency declared by the Government of Nova Scotia in response to COVID-19, demonstrated through receipt of Provincial or Federal program assistance, or a Record of Employment.

Q: Any concerns we are inadvertently allowing residents to incur debt for taxes and that things like CERB won't go to basics (like taxes) and inability to pay will grow, not shrink over time??

A: Taxpayers are best positioned to determine what is financially prudent for their households. As governments, we can only ensure that taxpayers are provided with the information necessary to make an informed decision.

Q: If a resident is in the program, I assume they are still paying the interest rate charged by the Municipality which is 10 percent per year

A: The rate of interest will be the Municipal Finance Corporation Borrowing Rate, plus 25 basis points to cover administration fees. Section 113(2) of the *Municipal Government Act* talks about a rate of interest for non-payment of taxes when due. This is the rate already in place for municipalities.

The Policy is setting up an installment plan for eligible taxpayers. As long as they pay the installments on schedule, the taxes are not “overdue” under 112(4) or 113(2) and therefore do not have to attract the higher interest rate. There is nothing explicit in s. 112 and 113 that says there cannot be a lower rate of interest payable on taxes being paid in installments.

If the applicant defaults on payment, then they are removed from the program. Removal from the program will result in the addition of municipality’s normal rate of interest for overdue taxes to the Special Tax Installment Rate, resulting in a compound rate.

Q: Does this policy have to be in place prior to council setting the tax rate?

A: No. The tax rate could have been set prior to this policy being implemented.

Q: Can municipalities choose to administer the program without involvement from AMANS?

A: Yes, municipalities may choose to administer the program themselves. The idea is that AMANS is meant to assist in providing an online in-take form that can help reduce the administrative burden in getting one set up for municipalities.

Q: When is the due date to apply for MFC?

A: Municipalities may apply to draw from the fund within the current fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.

Q: When is the due date for clients to apply for the program?

A: The due date for applications for the program is to be set by individual municipalities.

Q: Can you also comment on how providing 30 months to pay this year's tax bill will impact the next two year's taxes that would be issued in 2021 and 2022.

A: Next year’s taxes will be issued and will not impact the 2021, 2022 tax bill. If people are in this program and are paying, they are not considered to be in arrears.

Q: What about consistency? Some units do an interim billing during April to Sept and some do one tax bill.

A: It will be up to the municipal units to determine when they need their cashflow.

Q: Just trying to understand what this would look like on the AR side. We have our bills sent out under a common tax code that is linked to a common interest code. It appears that for example if 500 people participated in the program, would the Province “pay for those bills” and then the AR for them would be zero and therefore a loan set up with a new code and new interest rate just for those people. I ask because when we run our monthly interest, there is not a way to have two interest for the same tax code as the bills are already sent with the one code.

If our tax bill is due July 31, then does that mean that the 6 months is after that, in which case it must be assume that #1 is applied and that those “500 people “ are now set up with different codes as they will receive 6 months limited payments and then 24 moths equal payments. While all other taxpayers would be charged the normal MDS interest rate come July 31

A: This seems to make sense, although not familiar with the system this appears to be a way around needing two tax rates, and two tracking processes.

Q: Has any consideration been given to how this will be recorded administratively?

A: This would be recorded as a tax receivable, as it is not a load, as the taxpayer is not receiving anything other than time to pay their taxes.

Q: Tax payments are applied to the oldest charges to an account. If we schedule payments over 2 years, how is a payment next year to be applied to the account?

A: Payments for taxes next year are to be applied to the 2021 account. This financing program is separate from regular tax payments not during COVID. It will require a separate tracking.

Q: What was the cost to the Province for arranging this debt for municipalities?

A: MFC added 10 basis points to the cost of borrowing, instead of the normally 25 basis points.

Q: S. 112(1) says instalment policy needs to be in place before the tax rate is set. So, councils need to get this in place no later than the date they plan to set the rates?

A: No, councils can have this policy in place after they have set their rates. Section 112(1) allows for municipalities to send out interim bills before the current year's tax rate is set, but it doesn't prevent councils from providing for the payment of taxes by installments at other times. These other dates need to be clearly set out as described in s.112(2), and the way the amount of each installment is calculated also needs to be clear.



STAFF REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Frotten

DATE: May 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Beach Strategy Action Items Update

ORIGIN

On December 9th, 2019, Council approved the Municipality's first Beaches Strategy which outlines the vision and key action items to achieve the development of amenities at its local beaches to help increase their usage and awareness and increase the opportunity for local events. Work on key action items is underway and now require Council's approval before moving forward.

BACKGROUND

Since the approval of the beach strategy, planning has been underway on this year's action items. This report, along with the attached beach strategy report card, will serve as an update and request for decision on the following three action items:

1. Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach

We have committed to assessing existing infrastructure that supports people's access to our beaches and maintain and further develop infrastructure on the appropriate beaches. Last year, we developed a parking area at Stoney Island Beach and are proposing to continue with the second phase of this project.

2. Structured Engagement Sessions

Public engagement on such important assets in our communities is crucial. Our strategy commits us to hosting community engagement activities to help keep our residents and visitors informed and have a more balanced approach to decision making.

3. Develop Signage and Directional Signage for the Beaches

Enabling our residents and visitors to easily find our beaches will help make the user experience that much better. Our beach strategy outlines the key action items which will allow us to share our story to add to the experience and help educate people on their surroundings and the habitat that share our beaches.

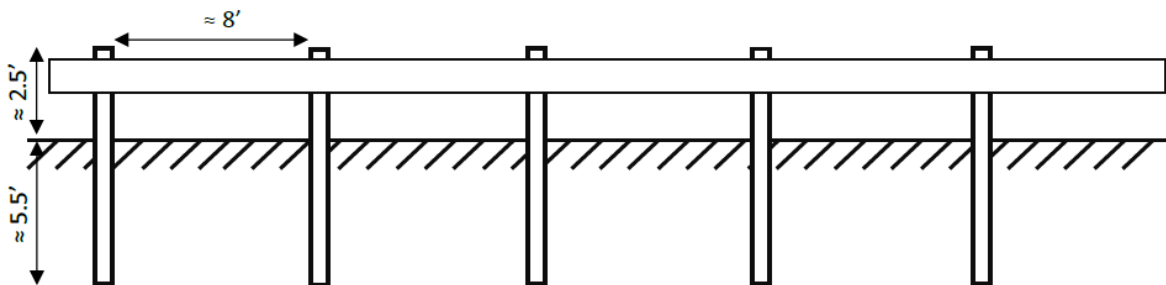
DISCUSSION

As noted above, we are at a point where we require Council's consideration and decision regarding some of the key action items listed above. Your decisions will allow staff to move forward in the implementation of the beach strategy. Here is a detailed update on each action item and the requested decision.

Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach

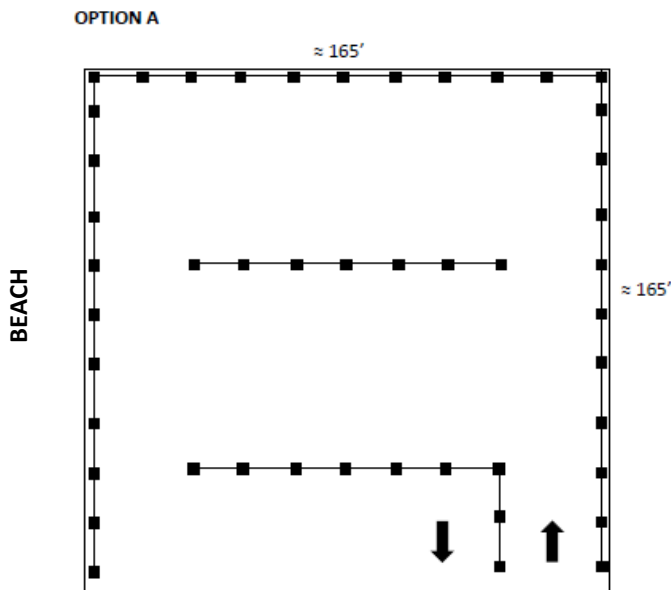
As noted, we developed a parking area at Stoney Island Beach last year and to continue the project, it has been proposed to install barricades to avoid vandalism and help with traffic flow.

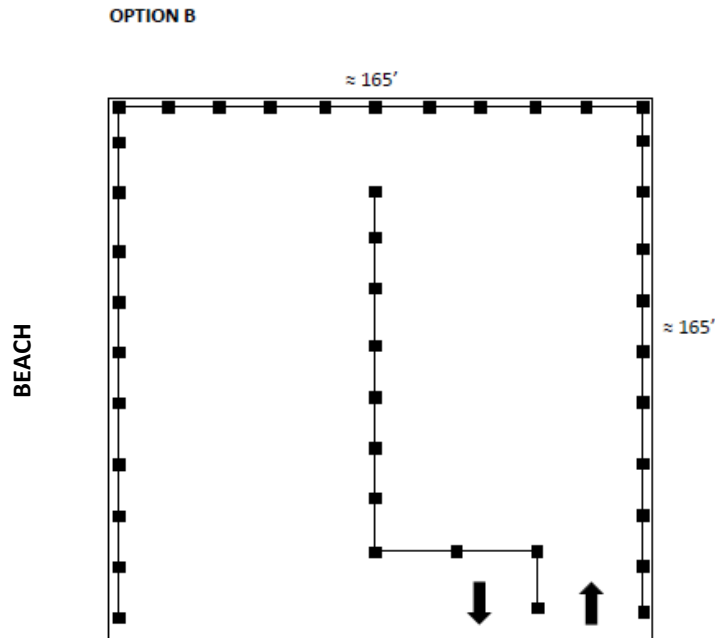
The proposed work is envisioned to resemble the parking area at Sandhills. It would include 8-foot 8x8 marine grade pressure treated wood posts every 8 feet and have a 2x8 guard rail approximately the same height as highway guardrails (2 feet) fastened with leg bolts.



We would perform the work ourselves and it would take approximately 4 days to complete. Ideally, we would complete this work before the beaches reopen or before the summer season arrives.

As for the pattern of the wooden posts – they could be laid out in two different ways:





Structured Engagement Sessions

Better engagement leads to better decisions, more buy-in and more people stepping up to share responsibility and workload. Each municipality has their own approach to involving people in their decision-making process and it can consist of a wide array of activities that range from informing to the cocreation of policy.

It's common to think of public engagement as the activities that you use to involve people in your municipality's decision-making process (e.g., focus groups, surveys, workshops). These activities are definitely core public engagement pieces, but there's also a lot more involved. That being said, before getting to deep into the elements of a public engagement system and how different pieces of a municipality's public engagement work and fit together – we must start with the core public engagement pieces.

For this reason, we are proposing that we launch a short (3-5 questions) survey that would ask residents and visitors to answer general questions about our beaches. Sample questions could be:

1. What activity do you typically do at our beaches?
2. Last summer, about how often did you visit one of our beaches?
3. In what seasons do you use our beaches?
4. How far do you typically travel to get to one of our beaches?
5. What would make you visit our beaches more often? (were better maintained, were safer, were open (lifeguarded) more often/longer hours, had better facilities (bathrooms/changing area), etc.)

We would post the survey on our municipal website and social media channels and have paper copies for those who do not have access to the internet or prefer to write their answers.

To ensure a good representation of answers, we would aim to get responses from at least 10% of our residents (647 responses) but would also have the survey open to non-residents (visitors) as they provide a different but valuable perspective.

Develop Signage and Directional Signage for the Beaches

Last month, you approved the beach signage plan which defines the location and design of new beach signage within the municipal boundaries.

Since that time, we have reached out to three local sign shops to get quotes and the results are included in the attached quote evaluation report.

As for the location of the signs, we have developed a google map which indicates the proposed locations of each sign. Please note that these locations are not set in stone and will be modified based on Council's feedback and DOT regulations.

The map can be accessed at:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/drive?state=%7B%22ids%22%3A%5B%221keblpQzMsyMP6ofJ2dZ4gTnz3LgVz1%22%5D%2C%22action%22%3A%22open%22%2C%22userId%22%3A%22100862029533429877728%22%7D&usp=sharing>.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach

The budget for phase 2 of the Stoney Island Beach parking area project is as follows:

83 8x8 posts	\$5,395.00
104 2x8s	\$1,695.20
Leg Bolts	\$300.00
Gravel	\$1,500.00
HST	\$1,333.53
TOTAL	\$10,223.73

Structured Engagement Sessions

Other than for the nominal monthly subscription to the survey platform that we already pay, there would be no cost to launch the survey.

Develop Signage and Directional Signage for the Beaches

The estimated budget included in the signage plan was \$20,125.00. The quotes received range from \$22,000 - \$23,750 + HST.

A reminder that we will be applying to the Beautification and Streetscaping Program which is designed to support the development of attractive and inviting areas where visitors are enticed to spend money in a municipality. The Program can fund up to 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$25,000.

Finally, all costs associated with the above action items have been included in the draft 20/21 budget.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

PUBLIC CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATIONS

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach

Due to the recent issues with vandalism at the parking area and the necessity to properly manage traffic flow, we recommend moving forward as soon as possible with phase 2 of the parking area project.

Structured Engagement Sessions

As we have not formally engaged the public on the enhancement of our beaches, we recommend beginning with a survey and consider the feedback during our planning process. The survey would also highlight common themes which we could build on in the future and guide our future engagement.

Develop Signage and Directional Signage for the Beaches

Based on the financial evaluation and provided scope, it is recommended that Causeway Computers be awarded the work for the quoted price of \$22,000.00 + HST.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach

Move to recommend to Council to go forward with phase 2 of the Stoney Island Beach parking area project as described with a total budget of \$10,223.73 from the beach facilities capital budget.

Structured Engagement Sessions

Move to recommend to Council that a short (3-5 questions) survey that would ask residents and visitors to answer general questions about our beaches.

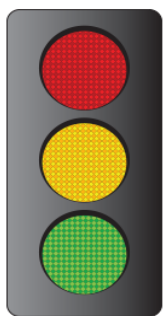
Develop Signage and Directional Signage for the Beaches

Move to recommend to Council that Causeway Computers be awarded the work of fabricating the beach signage for the quoted price of \$22,000.00 + HST.

ATTACHMENTS

- Beach Strategy Report Card
- Beach Signage Plan
- Beach Strategy
- Beach Signage Quote Evaluation Report
- Aerial Photo of the Stoney Island Beach Parking Area

BEACH STRATEGY REPORT CARD



ROADBLOCKS

SLOW PROGRESS

ON TRACK

STRATEGY NAME	Beach Strategy
LEAD	Chris Frotten
PROJECT CODE	N/A
DATE OF STATUS ENTRY	May 3, 2020
PERIOD COVERED	2019-2022

OVERALL STATUS THIS MONTH

OVERALL STRATEGY STATUS	ON TRACK	NOTES	Although we are still early in our work to complete the key action items within our beach strategy, we are still on track.
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COMPONENTS

ACTION	STATUS	YEAR	NOTES
Purchase land at Stoney Island Beach	DONE	2019	Purchased the property.
Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	2019	Phase 1 (site work) complete. Working on phase 2 (leveling, wooden barricades).
Structured engagement sessions	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2020	No work has begun on these yet. One possible first step would be to issue a survey throughout the municipality to get feedback
Assessment of existing infrastructure	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	2020	A quasi strategic planning discussion was held during budget deliberations. A high-level assessment was developed but more discussions are needed.
Assessing accessibility	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2020	No work has begun on this yet.
Develop collaborations and partnerships	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	2020	Initial conversations with some key stakeholders have begun.
Organize yearly beach clean up	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	2020	We hope to be able to plan a beach clean up to coincide with our community litter clean-up day.
Provide waste bins to help keep our beaches clean	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	2020	We are currently sourcing possibilities.
Recruit and facilitate a Beach Resource Team	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2020	No work has begun on this yet.

Support and promote stewardship of our beaches	<input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2020	No work has begun on this yet.
Develop signage and directional signage for the beaches.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>	2020	Our beach signage plan was approved on April 27, 2020 and work has been on-going to source the signs.
Organize yearly beach clean up	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2021	
Seek funding opportunities to help build infrastructure	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2021	
Develop collaborations and partnerships	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2021	
Engage stakeholders to support and promote stewardship	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2021	
Develop new infrastructure as assessed.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2021	
Organize yearly beach clean up	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Design and develop interpretive panels.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Install beach logs.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Include QR Codes on signage.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Develop new infrastructure as assessed.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Seek funding opportunities to help build infrastructure	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Support and promote stewardship of our beaches	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	
Reassess Beach Strategy to align with strategic planning and goals of council	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	2022	



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MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF BARRINGTON
Beach Signage Plan



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
BARRINGTON

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Introduction

The Municipality of Barrington determined in its most recent strategic plan that the promotion and support of the local tourism industry was a priority. One of the strategic actions outlined in this priority is the development of amenities at its local beaches to help increase their usage and awareness and increase the opportunity for local events.

On December 9th, 2019, Council approved the Municipality's first Beaches Strategy which outlines the vision and key action items to achieve the above-mentioned strategic goal.

One of the initial steps was to review the current state of beach wayfinding signage and gather all of the input received from the variety of businesses, community groups and other stakeholders.

The purpose of this signage plan is to outline a more defined plan for beach wayfinding in the Municipality of Barrington.

Overview

This plan provides guidance on the location and design of new beach signage within the municipal boundaries as well as suggests additional signage opportunities within the Municipality and how the beach signage plan could integrate in an overall signage strategy.

The primary intent of the new municipal beach signage is to attract, direct and inform people travelling through the Municipality to entice their further exploration of our beaches.

Therefore, the signs' design will be authentic to the Municipality's identity, strengthen the image the Municipality wishes to enhance, and foster pride among residents and organizations, especially those that attract and host visitors. The proposed design reflects the community's input, supports our existing brand and introduces new features that are functional and aesthetically complementary to existing community elements. It also offers a sustainable, cost-effective, time sensitive and flexible approach to growth and revision of sign and design elements over time.

In addition to wayfinding signage, we must recognize that the most effective wayfinding strategy also includes maps, handouts, and mobile or web-based resources. These supplementary resources, which will be developed over time, will reflect the design strategy and note the same amenities and facilities. In the future, other amenities and points of interest, which are not part of this plan, will be considered and added, especially to online resources.



Table of Contents

ALIGNMENT OF THE BRAND

WHAT WE HAVE

DESIGN DESCRIPTION and FEATURES

DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

FUNDING



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Alignment to Brand

The Municipality's vision is "a community shaped by the sea, that provides an ocean of opportunity to live, work and play."

The signage plan and sign designs build from and contribute to this vision by creating a more welcoming reception for visitors and tourists, reflecting a vibrancy in the colours, and considering the environment through grouping signs and minimizing maintenance. The plan and designs also considers the needs of citizens and the community by ensuring clear readability and consistency.

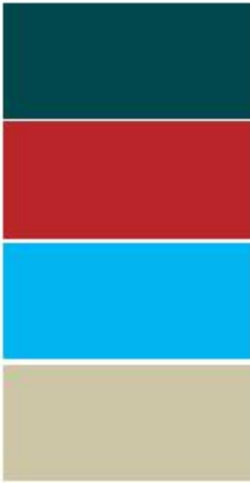
A defined brand allows the Municipality to build awareness of what it has to offer, while managing the tone and personality that the community portrays throughout various touchpoints.

As the most southern point in Atlantic Canada, we enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery and mildest winters in the province. Locals and visitors can experience exquisite seaside vistas from one of our many white sand beaches or visit the mysterious drowned forest at Hawk Beach. They can explore scenic trails that are a haven for nature lovers, bird watchers, and photographers, try rowing a traditional Nova Scotian dory, or explore our unique surroundings by canoe or kayak. The many lighthouses dotting our coastline, including the Maritimes' tallest lighthouse located on Cape Sable - best viewed from The Hawk are also a mainstay in our area.

It's no surprise that our status as the lobster capital of Canada comes with a long fishing history. Our brand speaks to the tradition of enjoying fresh seafood caught the same day, or by visiting our picturesque fishing villages known for the brightly coloured famous Cape Island Boats. Visitors can learn about Barrington's forestry heritage during their very own Lumberjack AXExperience alongside the Barrington River and visit our many museums including the Woolen Mill Museum where they'll find the very first piece of Nova Scotia Tartan and the unique Shag Harbour UFO Centre helps visitors learn more about the only government documented sighting in the world. All of these elements form our brand messaging which will play a big role as we move forward in future projects, including our beach signage plan.



COLOURS



The Municipality's main colours are green and red. They are on signs, logos, buildings, vehicles and have been adopted in other ways. The logo also includes blue and brown, which, with red and green reflect the natural elements around the Municipality.

Research shows that it is wise to keep these colours which therefore form the base of the signage program. To maintain a professional consistent identity the municipal colours are being adopted into the signage plan which will also help strengthen brand recognition.



LOGO

The Municipality's logo is a colourful landscape depicting our friendly seaside community with its rich history, fresh seafood, and mile long white sand beaches as far as the eye can see. The colours of the logo are being used in the signage plan and the outline shape is reflected in the signage design theme.

SLOGAN

The Municipality has had a history of slogans in recent memory. The research conducted as part of this branding review has shown that by tapping into the hearts and minds of our unique community through a variety of engagement sessions and workshops, the new slogan encompasses the Municipality's story in a voice that is authentic and meaningful. For the purposes of creating new beach signage, the slogan will be added to any signage to continue.

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BARRINGTON TARTAN

The Cape Sable Historical Society has created Barrington's own tartan with colours that celebrate and embody our rich heritage.

Red represents our long tradition in the lobster fishery, and our reputation as the Lobster Capital of Canada. White symbolizes the many lighthouses that dot our shorelines, including the Maritime's tallest lighthouse located on Cape Sable. Brown is for the Municipality's forestry heritage and vibrant lumberjack culture. Blue is for the ocean, harbours, and lakes. For grey represents the many incredible beaches in the Municipality. Black is for the bird sanctuaries which attract rare and endangered migratory species. Finally, our tartan includes yellow in memory of our fishermen lost at sea.



What We Have



The current state of the Municipality's signs is poor. There is no consistency with the design or placement as most signs were installed on a case by case basis and many have been vandalized and/or are in need of repair due to their age. In terms of beach signage, most directional signs are blue with white lettering and direct motorists towards beaches that are close with arrows. As you approach a beach, there are, on occasion, small blue signs with white lettering directing you. At our beaches, some have welcome signs and interpretive panels that are beige in colour with white green lettering.

Although this plan relates specifically to beach signage, any new signage should be considered with a comprehensive signage strategy in mind. The following sections provide an overview of the signs intended for welcoming and directing visitors and locals to our beaches and how they integrate in an full strategy for the future.



BEACH SIGNAGE

GATEWAY ENTRANCE SIGNAGE

Identity Signage

Positioned at the entrances, these signs welcome visitors to the beaches and establish the municipality's distinct identity as well as introduce the signage program's primary aesthetic.

*Crow Neck Beach signage currently has different restrictions in place, as it is owned by the Nature Trust and will not be included in all aspects of this plan.



WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Municipal Signage

Once inside the municipal limits, the directional signs to community amenities and facilities will be themed. These signs have consistent features including black reflective lettering on white metal panels, colour-coded panels, use common symbols, and stand on wooden posts to coordinate with the standardized look. They also have a decorative finial on top to echo the tops of the other signs. The shape (round or square) and diameter of the posts will be determined in the requisitioning and estimating process.

FUTURE SIGNAGE IDEAS

The Municipality's new directional signage is of three versions:

1. **Stand Alone Signs** – These signs have two posts, finials, and metal panels slatted between the posts or on a solid metal panel to look like individual slats depending on construction.

2. **Lamp Post Metal Panels** – These signs are attached to the Lamp Posts and can point in any direction. Ideally there should be no more than four pointing in a single direction, and therefore if more than four sign metal panels are needed, more than one lamp post may be required to hold signs before each intersection. They will be mounted above the reach of pedestrians where possible.

3. **Trail Markers** – These stand-alone single poles are situated at the entrance to the community trail system. Each marker would use the provincial standard symbol to signify where each trail leads. For visibility, the symbols would be white paint on coloured square metal material matching their amenity type (green, brown, yellow, blue) and attached with brass or copper coloured hardware. Since these are smaller ground level posts which may be near to vehicles, it is recommended that these posts be yellow colour to avoid damage. They will be used to identify :

- boat/kayak launches
- walking trails to the arena, farmers market, and campground
- hiking trails
- dog walking paths.





ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE

The following sign types would be helpful for residents and tourists. Although not part of the beach signage plan, our review found additional opportunity for signage that the Municipality could further develop to make the community even more welcoming and memorable. These include:

Interpretative Signage

Common interpretive signs could be added for parks (e.g. Island View Park, Drinking Brook Park, etc.), walking and nature trails, historical buildings and lighthouses.



Service Club Identification Signage

Although independent from the municipality, knowledge, through signage, of the availability of service groups within the community can be of interest to travelling members and to show the level of community engagement that exists within the Municipality for potential future residents.

Facility Signs

The Municipality has somewhat inconsistent signage on many of its facilities. However there are some facilities such as the Pool which lacks signage entirely. These should be addressed in a timely manner, which would help to quickly identify Municipally owned properties.



Product & Installation General Outline

Free Standing Signs:

- Installed facing traffic in identified locations, not impeding pedestrian or vehicle traffic
- Two wooden posts
- Bottom most aluminum flat bar should be no lower than 180 cm (6') for visibility
- If more than one sign is needed they should be placed at least 30 m apart
- Aluminum flat bars should be 15 cm (6") with 7.5 cm (3") letters, including white symbol and colour coded arrow with white outline.
- Copper-coloured bracket

Trail Marker Posts

- 100 cm (40' high)
- Wooden Post
- White symbol on color coded metal plate
- Copper-coloured bracket

Lamp Post Signs

- Installed facing traffic in identified locations, not impeding pedestrian or vehicle traffic
- Aluminum flat bars should be 15 cm (6") with 7.5 cm (3") letters, including white symbol and colour coded arrow with white outline.
- If more than four signs are needed facing one direction, a second lamp standard should be used prior to the turning intersection.
- Copper-coloured bracket

Design Specifications Lettering, Symbols & Colours

To ensure consistency in application of colour, font, and symbols the following guidelines are presented. When identifying amenities, white lettering for the name and a white symbol shall be used. The directional arrow will be colour coded to match the type of facility. The colours for the arrows match the colours in the Municipality of Barrington logo. Additionally, the arrow shall be outlined in white. All white is to be reflective so it is visible easily at night.

Amenities & Facilities Colour Coding Table	Color	Significance	Pantone #
Parks/Trails	Green	Trees, grass	102c
Attractions	Blue	Typical of Provincial Attraction Signs	299c
Museums	Yellow		355c
Bird Watching	Brown	Parks Canada Colour	4975c
Beaches	Red		



As the colours are arbitrary to each category, additional amenities may be assigned to these five logo colours as needed and a consistent colour should set where more than one colour may naturally apply. However, additional colours should not be introduced as these five are directly associated with the corporate logo.

COLOUR SPECIFICATIONS

The colour references below have been taken from an electronic sampling of the provided logo using online calculations and may not be accurate for printing on all surfaces. It is absolutely mandatory to do optical checks and proper color proofing before using this information for production purposes. The following may be used for ease of reference.

Primary colours



Secondary colours



TYPEFACE

Best Practices

It is recommended the Municipality use a sans serif font in upper and lower case such as the standard Highway Gothic series used by the US and Canadian governments, and their sign suppliers.

The provincial and municipal street names use a different typecase for lettering. Street names in the Municipality are UPPERCASE. However, Upper and Lower Case letters (Title Case) is known to be easier and faster to read and is friendlier in appearance, especially in the current digital context when ALL UPPERCASE is considered the equivalent of “shouting.” Therefore, it is recommended the Municipality use a sans serif font in upper and lower case such as the standard Highway Gothic series used by the US and Canadian governments, and their sign suppliers.

This will ensure readability as well as consistency with the Police and Parking signs, which are to be ordered from the provincial government and will be used within municipal limits.

High contrast is also recommended and therefore the theme signs are designed to have white reflective letters, symbols, and white outline arrows on coloured metal panel. As a general guideline, the lettering should be 75- 100 cm (3 of 4”) high on a 12.5-15 cm (5 or 6”) high, allowing 30-50% of blank (negative) space above and below the lettering for readability purposes. According to the Legibility Index¹. a letter size of 2.75” Helvetica white on black could be read at over 60 feet. Provincial standards for lettering height should be followed.

Approved suppliers have ready-made signs and templates that are compliant with ministry of Transportation and Highways Manual to meet the standards of:

Letter height 3” (75 mm)

Height 6” (150 mm)

Lengths 18”, 24”, 30” 36” (450,600,750, 900mm)

Material Aluminum Flat Bar

Highway Gothic TrueType Font in a variety of widths

<http://www.cufonfonts.com/en/font/8582/highwaygothic>



Draft Budget

Description	Quantity	Cost	Total
Large Gateway Signs	3	\$1250.00	\$3750.00
Beach Gateway Signage	5	\$285.00	\$1425.00
Small Beach Gateway Signage	10	Individual signs vary in price	\$7450.00
Directional Signs	75	\$100.00	\$7500.00
Total			\$20,125.00

Prices to not reflect cost of poles and hardware, installation and does not include HST.

Funding

The Beautification and Streetscaping Program is designed to support the development of attractive and inviting areas where visitors are enticed to spend money in a municipality. Key investments can rejuvenate areas, foster local pride, encourage economic development and enhance the character of municipalities. The Beautification and Streetscaping Program may fund up to 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$25,000. The applicant or other sources needs to fund the balance of the project.





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MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF BARRINGTON

Beaches Strategy



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
BARRINGTON

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The Municipality of Barrington's Beaches Strategy is an encompassing strategy that makes clear the need to manage our beautiful beaches in consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders. The MODB identified our beaches as one of their key action items in its Strategic Plan under Promotion and Support of the Tourism Industry. Council has committed \$250,000 over the next 5 years to support the improvement and development of its beaches.

Beaches are an important part of life not only within the Municipality of Barrington, but in Nova Scotia as a whole. Tourism Nova Scotia identifies the seacoast as one of its biggest tourism strengths, people choose to come to Nova Scotia to explore our seacoast, beaches and ocean. Beaches provide many recreational opportunities for our residents and visitors. Boating, fishing, swimming, surfing, walking, beachcombing, bird-watching, playing and sunbathing are among the common activities our beachgoers enjoy. Many of our beaches provide unique habitats for a variety of plants and wildlife, including species at risk that depend on our beaches for their survival. Our beaches provide protection to residents living near the ocean by acting as a buffer against the high winds and waves of powerful storms. Finally, beaches also play an important role in the economy, as spending time at the beach is among the fastest-growing nature-based outdoor activities for visitors to Nova Scotia.

The MODB Beaches Strategy includes five strategic outcomes. These five outcomes compliment one another and addressing them as equal priorities will achieve the strategy's vision: Our beaches are welcoming, accessible, clean, safe and healthy, today and for future generations to come.

Our five strategic outcomes for our beaches are:

- » **Everyone can experience a day at the beach;**
- » **Our beaches are vibrant, healthy and clean;**
- » **Our infrastructure compliments the beach and nature of the beach and is respected & maintained;**
- » **Our beaches are easy to find and help to tell our history, heritage and habitat; and**
- » **There is collaborative stewardship of our beaches.**





The Municipality of Barrington's beaches extend from Baccaro to Cape Sable Island and play an important role for our residents and visitors alike. We understand the need for them to be maintained, protected and where necessary, enhanced to ensure future generations are able to enjoy them.

Some of our beaches are included in the international network of Important Bird Areas and are particularly special as they provide critical nesting habitat for endangered Piping Plovers or are important stopover sites for migrating shorebirds during the late summer and fall.

Our Property Services team currently manages the amenities provided at our beaches, except for Sand Hills Provincial Park which is maintained by the Department of Lands & Forestry. Our operational or maintenance work includes providing and maintaining garbage bins & picnic tables, organizing the installation of port-a-potties during the summer months, maintaining the boardwalk/gazebo at North East Point beach, general lawn/vegetation maintenance where necessary, installation of signage and maintenance of parking lots where necessary/required.

The Municipality also supports and participates on the Shelburne County Beach Stewardship committee which is committed to educating residents and visitors on the importance of healthy and safe beaches.



*Our beaches are welcoming,
accessible, clean, safe and healthy,
today and for future generations to come.*

Our Beaches



The Hawk Beach,

Cape Sable Island GPS: Lat 43.415975 - Lon -65.614321

The Hawk Beach is located on the most southerly tip of Nova Scotia. Walk this white sandy beach and explore the 1500 year old drowned forest exposed at low tide, a broad area of tree stumps still rooted in the original soil.

As part of the Cape Sable Important Bird Area (IBA) The Hawk is one of the best birding areas in Nova Scotia. From the beach you can view the Cape Sable Lighthouse, the tallest lighthouse in the Maritimes, standing at 101 feet tall.

Current Status

Parking	No	Beach Name Signage	No - Destroyed by storm
Washrooms	No	Other Signage	Yes (currently not installed)
Change Rooms	No	Picnic Tables	No
Garbage Bins	No	Boardwalk Access	Yes (but privately installed)



Daniel's Head (South Side) Beach,

Cape Sable Island GPS: Lat 43.513249 Lon -65.608507

Walk for miles on this white sandy beach. Like all our beaches, a great backdrop to your special day. A place to collect sea glass, swim or just relax and enjoy the sights and sounds! Another spot for that birding enthusiast.

Current Status

Parking	Yes	Beach Name Signage	Yes
Washrooms	Yes (Port-a Pottie)	Other Signage	Yes
Change Rooms	Yes	Picnic Tables	Yes
Garbage Bins	Yes	Boardwalk Access	Yes



Stoney Island Beach, Cape Sable Island GPS: Lat 43.463583 Lat -65.577334
 One of the more secluded beaches on Cape Sable Island. When you walk along the Stoney Island beach you will feel the warm silvery powdered sand between your toes. Another spot for swimming, walking, picnics or soothing the day away!

Current Status

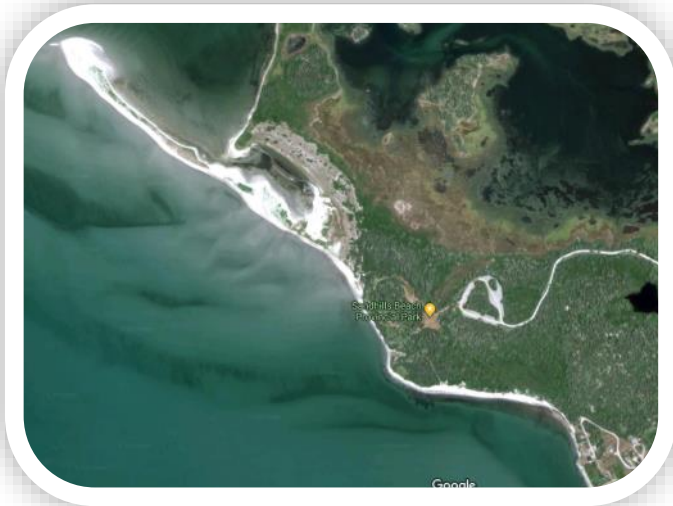
Parking	No	Beach Name Signage	No
Washrooms	No (Vandalized in past)	Other Signage	Yes
Change Rooms	No	Picnic Tables	No
Garbage Bins	Yes (no recycle bin)	Boardwalk Access	No



North East Point Beach, Cape Sable Island Causeway
 GPS: Lat 43.513249 Lon -65.608507
 Located across the Causeway from the center of Barrington Passage. This beach is a local hot spot for swimming, soaking in the sun, playing in the white sand or catching a boat race or two! Stroll along the boardwalk, have a picnic in the gazebo or watch the sailboats and dorys in the Bay.

Current Status

Parking	Yes	Beach Name Signage	Yes
Washrooms	Yes (Port-a-potties)	Other Signage	Yes
Change Rooms	No	Picnic Tables	Yes (Gazebo)
Garbage Bins	Yes	Boardwalk Access	Yes (Floating Dock access)
Other	Wi-Fi Hotspot & Power Access		



Sandhills Provincial Park,

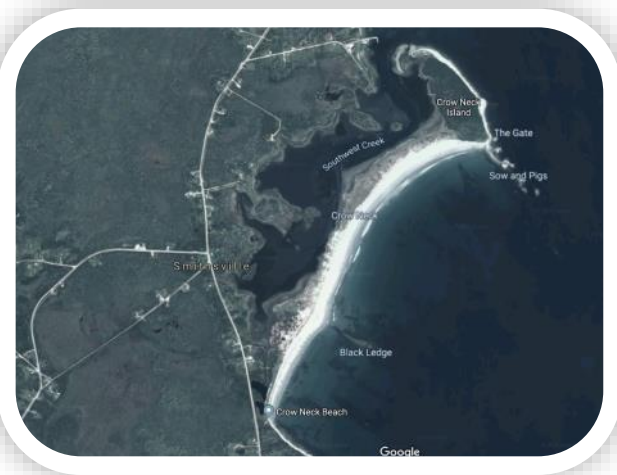
Villagedale GPS: Lat 43.530850 Lon -65.554485

Sandhills Provincial Park features a 2.5KM white sand beach. At low tide there are wide sand flats that are warmed by the sun, when the tide comes back in the water is warmed that makes this a unique beach for swimming and snorkeling. A spectacular sand dune system backs the beach area.

This provincial park offers the explorer beach combing, searching for sand dollars, deep sea clamming (in season), kite flying and so much more! Bring the family for the day, pack a lunch that can be enjoyed in the large picnic area. Sit back and soak up the fresh sea air!

Current Status

Parking	Yes	Beach Name Signage	Yes (Provincial)
Washrooms	Yes	Other Signage	Yes (Provincial)
Change Rooms	Yes	Picnic Tables	Yes
Garbage Bins	Yes	Boardwalk Access	Yes
Other	Outdoor Shower & Taps		



Crow Neck Beach,

Baccaro GPS: Lat 43.468787 Lon -65.470762

The property is owned by the Province, with the provision that it is protected as a Nature Reserve, and will also be protected through conservation by the Nature Trust and the Province.

Crow Neck, located in Baccaro, is another beach for bird watching, beach combing or taking a nice leisurely stroll next to the Atlantic Ocean. Baccaro is the oldest place name in Nova Scotia. Just around the corner is the Baccaro Lighthouse; rebuilt in 1934 this 45 foot tall lighthouse is land assessible.

Current Status

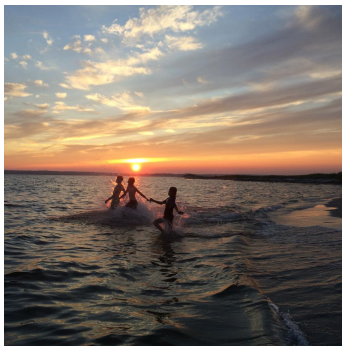
Parking	No	Beach Name Signage	No
Washrooms	No	Other Signage	No
Change Rooms	No	Picnic Tables	No
Garbage Bins	No	Boardwalk Access	No

Strategy Vision

The five strategic outcomes for the MODB’s Beaches Strategy are complimentary. Being able to deliver on these outcomes as equal priorities will achieve the strategy’s vision:

Our beaches are welcoming, accessible, clean, safe and healthy, today and for future generations to come.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



Everyone can enjoy a Day at the Beach

Our residents & visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds are able to enjoy the beach to explore, unwind & play on.



Our beaches are vibrant, healthy and clean.

Our residents and visitors are able to enjoy clean stretches of white sand beaches and help to maintain the cleanliness of them.



Our infrastructure compliments the beach and nature of the beach and is respected & maintained

Our infrastructure is planned, managed and maintained with the best interests of the beach, stakeholders, residents & visitors alike in mind.



Our beaches are easy to find and help to tell our history, heritage & habitat.

We install proper signage both at the beaches and wayfinding signage to guide our visitors to our beaches. We install stewardship signs and interpretive panels to help educate & inform.



There is collaborative stewardship of our beaches

All levels of government, key stakeholders, the community and visitors who benefit from the Municipality’s beaches contribute to their management.



Everyone can enjoy a day at the beach

With a growing, ageing and increasingly diverse population, it's very important to manage our beach environment so that everyone can experience a day at the beach.

For the Municipality of Barrington, this will mean

- » People of all abilities can enjoy a day at the beach. The beaches are open and accessible to everyone - whether you are on foot or in a wheelchair, you will be able to enjoy our beautiful beaches.
- » Residents and visitors will be able to enjoy a day at the beach swimming, surfing, body boarding, playing, sunbathing, birdwatching, photography or attending events



Action Items

1. Deliver infrastructure that will support beach access and use

We will conduct an assessment of existing infrastructure that supports people's access to our beaches. This will include parking, amenities, access points and equipment that will support better access to our beaches for everyone. We will maintain and further develop infrastructure on the appropriate beaches where and when necessary. We will conduct community engagement/surveys on beach experiences.



Our beaches are vibrant, healthy and clean

The value of a natural beach environment is often overlooked and provides significant social and economic benefits in addition to beach ecological values. The Municipality of Barrington is fortunate to have 6 naturally beautiful, white sand beaches. Maintaining these vibrant, healthy and clean beaches is important

For the Municipality of Barrington, this will mean

- » Reducing the flow of traffic over sand dunes, protecting them from negative impacts
- » Encouraging and educating people on the importance of litter free beaches
- » Organizing beach clean ups at least once a year
- » Working with local groups and organizations to help protect our beaches and wildlife
- » Residents and visitors will be attracted to our world class white sand beaches



Action Items

2. Monitor and improve the vibrancy of our beaches

We will work with local groups, residents and organizations who are actively engaged on our beaches to help maintain the vibrancy and health of our beaches for both visitors and wildlife.

3. Maintain clean beaches

We will ensure adequate garbage and recycling bins at each beach where deemed necessary. We will encourage residents to pick up after themselves and their pets when using our beaches. We will acknowledge the volunteers who take their time to clean our local beaches. We will organize a yearly beach clean up day.





Our infrastructure compliments the beach and nature of the beach and is respected and maintained

Each one of our beaches are unique and therefore should be managed with specific characteristics in mind. Not every beach needs infrastructure in place to improve the quality of the beach experience.

For the Municipality of Barrington, this will mean

- » Working with various levels of government, community groups, residents to support and analyze various types of infrastructure development and implementation on and around our beaches
- » Consider each beach individually and how it's used, promoted and managed and develop them according to their specific characteristics in mind
- » Maintain and improve the user experience at our beaches

Action Items

4. Develop a Beaches Resource Team who will work together with the best interests of our beaches, residents, wildlife and visitors in mind.

This will be made up of various government organizations, including Department of Natural Resources, Bird Studies Canada, Shelburne County Beach Stewardship Committee, council, staff and residents.

5. Fund, support and maintain infrastructure development at our beaches, that support our overall vision and outcomes of our beach strategy.

Our beaches are easy to find and help to tell our history, heritage and habitat

Enabling our residents and visitors to easily find our beaches will help make the user experience that much better. Sharing a bit of our story adds to that experience and helps to educate people on their surroundings and the habitat that share our beaches. Through the use of QR Codes, we can connect visitors and residents to relevant information, videos, resources (wildlife, flora, fauna) that pertain to each beach and surrounding area.

For the Municipality of Barrington, this will mean

- » Better signage that will allow residents and visitors to find our beaches
- » Interpretive panels that will help educate and inspire
- » Improve the overall beach experience, including Beach Logs where visitors can leave their comments, suggestion and experiences they have had on our beaches.



Action Items

- 6. Develop a signage strategy that incorporates wayfinding signage, beach signage and interpretive panels when and where required, which is consistent with our branding.** This will work to incorporate the Municipal brand, logo and colours creating consistency with other signage within the Municipality.
- 7. Work with local historical societies/groups, government organizations and Bird Studies Canada for relevant photos and information for interpretive panels**
- 8. Install and maintain all signage and interpretive panels.**





There is a collaborative stewardship of our beaches

The beaches within the Municipality of Barrington are enjoyed by and provide benefits to many people. Residents, visitors, businesses, government/non profit organizations and wildlife either directly or indirectly benefit from our beautiful white sand beaches. It is important that we work together to ensure they are maintained and healthy for generations to come.

For the Municipality of Barrington, this will mean

- » Everyone understands the benefits to having vibrant, clean, healthy and accessible beaches
- » There is investment in managing our beaches from various levels of government and those who benefit from the beaches within the Municipality.
- » Research and community engagement activities help to keep everyone informed and have a more balanced approach to decision making
- » Stakeholders are informed and actively participate in actions required to manage, protect and maintain our beaches and those who use them.

Action Items

9. Develop collaborations and partnerships that support our beaches strategy

We will partner with other levels of government, community members and organizations that support our strategy and approach to our beach management. We will seek funding from various sources that will help to implement our plan.

10. Actively engage local stakeholders in regards to our beaches strategy

We will support and promote a joint stewardship for our beaches. We will provide opportunities for open communication and engagement with our residents about protecting our beaches and the wildlife that call them home. We will continue to educate users of our beaches on best stewardship practices.

The Local Wish List

Keeping in mind that each one of our beaches are unique, they should be managed with specific characteristics in mind. Not every beach needs permanent infrastructure in place to improve the quality of the beach experience.

Here is some of the feedback received from local residents on how we could create a better beach experience for everyone:

- » Accessibility - both for those with disabilities and just better access to our beaches
- » Better parking areas
- » Washroom facilities
- » Change Room Facilities
- » Outside fresh water tap - helpful for cleaning off sand after you are done at the beach
- » Picnic Tables
- » Bicycle Racks
- » Adequate Garbage and Recycle Bins
- » Camping facilities at Sand Hills Provincial Park
- » Better signage
- » Cleaner Beaches
- » Boardwalks
- » Seasonal buildings that can be rented out for tourism providers, food vendors, artisans, etc.





Overview of Key Actions

The key actions of the Beaches Strategy are laid out over the next 4 years. Key implementation actions identified in the strategy will be addressed through available core funding laid out by council and successful application through various funding programs. The strategy will assist staff and council in capital planning and annual work processes. At the end of year four, we will reassess the Strategy to align with the strategic planning and goals of council

2019

ACTION ITEMS

Purchase land at Stoney Island Beach

Develop parking area at Stoney Island Beach

2020

ACTION ITEMS

Structured engagement sessions - online surveys and community engagement sessions

Assessment of existing infrastructure and develop a plan for future infrastructure

Evaluation of our beaches and finding one that will work the best for accessibility

Develop collaborations and partnerships that support our beach strategy

Work with local groups, residents and organizations to organize yearly beach clean ups

Provide waste bins where appropriate and provide better opportunities to help keep our beaches clean

Recruit and Facilitate a Beach Resource Team

Actively engage stakeholders, residents to support and promote stewardship of our beaches

Develop signage and directional signage for the beaches that work with our branding.

2021

ACTION ITEMS

- Work with local groups, residents and organizations to organize yearly beach clean up
- Seek funding opportunities where needed to help build new infrastructure for our beaches
- Develop collaborations and partnerships that support our beach strategy
- Actively engage stakeholders, residents to support and promote stewardship of our beaches
- Develop infrastructure as assessed and planned in previous years

2022

ACTION ITEMS

- Work with local groups, residents and organizations to organize yearly beach clean up
- Design and develop Interpretive Panels where they are deemed necessary
- Install Beach Logs at designated beaches
- Include QR Codes on signage that will allow visitors and residents to access information on our beaches through the use of technology
- Develop appropriate infrastructure as assessed and planned in previous year
- Seek funding opportunities where needed to help build new infrastructure for our beaches
- Actively engage stakeholders, residents to support and promote stewardship of our beaches
- Reassess Beach Strategy to align with strategic planning and goals of council





Successful implementation of the Municipality of Barrington Beaches Strategy will be indicated by cleaner, healthy, vibrant, accessible beaches that will allow everyone, including wildlife to enjoy a day at the beach.

Improving the status of our beaches is a shared responsibility that requires action from more than just the Municipal government. Individual residents, community organizations, different levels of government also have an important advocacy and stewardship roles to play. We must remain respectful of the natural environmental roles our beaches play and keep in mind the unique users on all levels. Each strategic outcome in our plan compliment one another and all play an important role in the vitality and health of our beaches for our generation and into the future.

*Life is Better
at the Beach*





*An ocean of
opportunity*

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QUOTE EVALUATION REPORT

Beach Signage Project

Description of Quotes

These quotes were attained for the fabrication of 157 signs of different sizes as specified in our request and made from aluminum board suitable for outdoor signage using reflective vinyl where possible.

Quotes Received

Number of Tenders Received: 3

Details of Tenders Received:

Tenderers	Tendered Sums Monthly Payments (lowest first)
Causeway Computers	\$22,000.00 + HST
Passage Print & Litho	\$22,435.00 + HST
Ocean Computer & Sign Shop	\$23,750.00 + HST

Compliance with Tender Specifications

Tenderers (in order of tendered sum)	Compliance with tender specifications	Details of any non- compliance
Causeway Computers	Yes	N/A
Passage Print & Litho	Yes	N/A
Ocean Computer & Sign Shop	Yes	N/A

Budget Implications

The estimated budget included in the beach signage plan was \$20,125.00 and this is included in our draft 20/21 budget. These quotes are slightly over that amount, but it seems we will require less directional signs which will bring it on par with the estimated budget.

A reminder that we will be applying to the Beautification and Streetscaping Program which is designed to support the development of attractive and inviting areas where visitors are enticed to spend money in a municipality. The Program can fund up to 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$25,000.

Other

In reviewing the quotes, we focused our attention on the order time and ensuring the sign was fabricated to our specifications. As for ordering time, Causeway Computers had the shortest order time with 2 weeks. Ocean Computer & Sign Shop had a 3-week order time and Passage Print & Litho had a 30-day order time.

As for specifications, all suppliers met the required specifications, but did so in a different way. For example, Causeway Computers would not be laminating the signs as they are using solid color vinyl and solid color reflective which has a 7 year vertical UV rating whereas Passage Print & Litho would laminate for UV & durability protection as they are printing the entire artwork on highway grade reflective illuminite vinyl.

Recommendation

Based on the financial evaluation and provided scope, it is recommended that Causeway Computers be awarded the work of fabricating the beach signage for the quoted price of \$22,000.00 + HST.

AERIAL PHOTO

