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**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Strategy Committee**  
**Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, N.S.**  
**Tuesday, February 18, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Attendance**

Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte, District 10, Chair  
Councillor Alison Smith, District 6, Vice Chair  
Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile  
Councillor Morgen Reinhardt, District 1  
Councillor Martin Bell, District 2  
Councillor Wendy Oickle, District 3  
Councillor Pam Huble, District 4  
Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5  
Councillor Edgar Burns, District 7  
Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8  
Councillor Ben Brooks, District 9

**Staff**

Tom MacEwan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Alex Dumaresq, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Tina Robichaud-Bond, Acting Municipal Clerk  
Joanne Powers, Executive Assistant

**1. Call to Order**

Deputy Mayor Veinotte called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and began by acknowledging that the meeting was held in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

**2. Announcements, Acknowledgements, Recognition - Nil**

**3 Public Input - Nil**

**4. Changes/Approval of Agenda (as circulated)**

It was requested that the following amendments be made to the agenda:

- Item 10.1 Report on FCM's Sustainable Communities Conference 2025 be deferred to a later date.
- Item 11.1 Road Conditions be added
- Item 9.3.2 Strategic Priorities Engagement Report, be moved ahead in the agenda.

**Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Brooks that the February 18 2025, Policy & Strategy Committee agenda be approved as amended above. Carried unanimously.**

**5. Approval of Minutes – January 21, 2025**

It was requested that the January 21, 2025, Minutes include that the strategic priorities be accepted as presented including affordability.

**The Minutes of January 21, 2025, were approved as amended.**

## **6. Business Arising from Minutes**

It was noted that there were items brought up in Public Input in the meeting that will be included on future agendas. They included items regarding cluster development, active transportation, procurement regarding parks and potential public transit.

### **9.1 Economic Development**

#### **9.1.1 Osprey Village Beautification & Enhancement Plan – What We Heard**

Nathan MacLeod, Upland Planning + Design, gave a presentation on “Osprey Village Beautification & Enhancement Plan – What We Heard Initial Consultation” (included in the agenda package), providing the results of the public consultation on the Osprey Village Beautification and Enhancement Plan and more specifically what was heard on the following elements of the project:

- Vehicle Movement
- Sidewalks and Active Transportation
- Accessibility
- Street Furniture

Discussions followed regarding the pond, sidewalks, and what to expect next.

## **9. Staff Reports**

### **9.2 Planning & Development**

#### **9.2.1 Clean Foundation – Climate Change & Community Climate Capacity Program**

Haley Drapeau, Climate Lead and Darby Haysom, Assistant Climate Lead, Clean Foundation, gave a presentation about the Community Climate Capacity Program (included in the agenda package) providing details on the following:

- Understanding Climate Change
- Earth’s Climate Systems
- Earth as a Complex Interrelated System
- Influencing Climate
- Natural Greenhouse Effect
- Human Enhanced Greenhouse Effect
- Climate Change
- Evidence of Climate Change
- Climate Impacts on Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia’s Unique Vulnerability
- Climate Impacts on Local Communities

- Cost of Inaction – Benefits of Action
- Cost of Inaction – 2023 Fires and Floods
- Municipal Liability
- Benefits of Action
- Case Study: Grindstone Creek
- Overview of Local Climate Actions
- Mitigation – Reducing Climate Change Impacts
- Adaptation – Adjusting to Climate Change Impacts
- Opportunities in Climate Action
- Community Climate Capacity Program (CCC)
- CCC Participating Communities
- CCC Structure
- CCC Program Work
- Day in the Life of a Climate Lead
- Funding & Engagement Specialist
- Mitigation Specialist
- Policy and Planning Specialist
- GIS & Adaptation Specialist
- CCC Progress Highlights
- Climate Lead Update
- Our Award

The question was raised as to what MODL’s carbon footprint was and it was stated that the Planning Department would follow-up with that information.

The meeting recessed at 10:26 a.m. and resumed at 10:36 a.m.

## **7. Presentations/Scheduled Times**

### **7.1 Be the Peace Institute**

Sue Bookchin, Executive Director and Stacey Godsoe, Project & Resource Coordinator, Be The Peace Institute, gave a presentation via Teams entitled, “Gender Based Violence and Municipal Leadership” (included in the agenda package). Topics covered in the presentation included:

- What is GBV?
- Who is Impacted by GBV?
- High Rates/Low Reporting
- GBV Prevention: Municipal Leadership Opportunities
- Role of Municipal Councils
- “GBA+” Lens
- GBV as an Epidemic
- Economic Considerations & Recommendations
- Community Safety and Wellbeing and Recommendations
- Transportation and Recommendations
- Housing and Recommendations

- Policing and Recommendations
- Public Awareness and Advocacy
- The Reports

Discussion about whether programs exist in schools, transit, housing, the local shelter, and how collaborations are vital to overcoming gender based violence. Ms. Bookchin advised that they were hosting a GBV Summit on April 7 and 8, 2025, at Oak Island Inn and extended an open invitation to attend.

### **9.3.2 Engagement Report on Strategic Priorities**

A report titled "Engagement Report on Draft Strategic Priorities" was circulated with the agenda.

Alex Dumaresq, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, gave a presentation entitled, "Draft Strategic Priority Areas Engagement Report" (attached to the minutes). The presentation included the following:

- Background
- Councils 4 Strategic Priorities
- Lenses for Evaluating New Initiatives
- Public Engagement Process
- Participation Totals
- Data Uses & Coding Methodology
- Limits of Data
- Summary Table
- Analysis & Options
- General Analysis
- #1 – Cell Service (Recommended)
- #2 – Affordability (Recommended)
- #3 – Waterways (Recommended)
- #4 – Social Inclusion (Not Recommended)
- #5 – Climate Change Options – 2 options

The recommended revisions were reviewed and accepted. It was requested that that Climate Change be added a 5<sup>th</sup> priority as per Option A of the report.

**Moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor DeLong that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council adopt the amended Strategic Priorities as discussed. Opposed – Councillor Brooks. Motion carried.**

**Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor Smith that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council adopt the lenses for evaluating projects and proposals as presented. Opposed – Councillor Brooks. Motion carried.**

Councillor Oickle left the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

The meeting recessed at 12:35 p.m. and resumed at 1:30 p.m.

### **9.2.2 MODL Policy 100 – Land Conservation Policy**

Abhi Jain, Manager of Climate Change and Sustainability, reviewed the report titled "Policy 100 – Land Conservation Policy" (circulated with the agenda) providing details on the draft Land Conservation Policy.

Haley Drapeau, Climate Lead at Clean Foundation, gave a presentation entitled, "Policy 100 – Land Conservation Policy" (attached to the minutes) providing details on the terms of the policy.

Councillor Bell left the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

**Moved by Councillor DeLong, seconded by Mayor McLean-Wile that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council adopt Policy 100 – Land Conservation Policy, as presented, and hereby give seven days' notice of its intention to adopt the policy on February 25, 2025. Opposed Councillor Brooks. Motion carried.**

### **9.3 Administration Department**

#### **9.3.1 Accessibility Progress and Goals Report**

A report titled "Accessibility Progress and Goals Report", providing details on the accessibility work the Municipality has taken to date was included in the agenda package.

Sarah Kucharski, Manager Corporate Services and Communications, gave a presentation on "Accessibility Progress and Goals Report" (attached to the minutes) providing details on the following:

- Accessibility Act
- Disability Rate in NS
- Disability Rate and Age
- Disability Rate and Type of Disability
- Types of Barriers
- Accomplishments to Date
- Action Items
- Resourcing & Budget

Councillor Bell returned to the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

### **9.4 Finance Department**

#### **9.4.1 MODL Policy 058 – Fee Policy Review**

Elana Wentzell, Director of Finance, discussed the report entitled, “Policy 058 Fee Policy Review” (included in the agenda package). She advised that the fees in Policy 058 represent 0.88% of municipal revenue. It was recommended that no changes be made to the fees at this time as increases can be a barrier to residents who are already burdened with other rising cost-of-living expenses.

**Moved by Councillor Hubley, seconded by Councillor Bell that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council make no adjustments to the service fees in MODL Policy 058 – Fees. Carried unanimously.**

**10. Mayor’s/Deputy Mayor’s/Councillors’ Matters - Nil**

**11. Added Items**

**11.1 Road Conditions**

Councillor Moore spoke about the recent weather conditions which have created extremely icy road conditions all over the Municipality. She asked that Council consider writing a letter to the Minister of Public Works, Fred Tilley, for Increased snow removal standards and salting/sanding levels to provide more timely service and to ensure appropriate staffing is allocated.

**Moved by Mayor McLean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Moore that a letter be written to The Honourable Fred Tilley, Minister of the Department of Public Works, to request that the Department increase the snow removal standards and salt and sanding levels to provide more timely service to the residents of Nova Scotia, and further, that the Minister take steps to ensure that the Department is appropriately staffed so that the increased service levels can be achieved and maintained. Carried unanimously.**

**12. In Camera**

**At 2:35 p.m., it was moved by Councillor DeLong seconded by Councillor Moore that the Policy & Strategy Committee go In Camera to discuss:**

**12.1 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA**

**12.2 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA**

Councillor Oickle returned to the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Policy & Strategy Committee In Camera in session.

**At 3:45 p.m., it was moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Policy & Strategy Committee come out of In Camera and return to open session. Carried unanimously.**

Policy & Strategy Committee in session.

## **12.2 Pickleball Courts on Municipal Property**

**Moved by Mayor McLean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Smith that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council rescind the motion made on January 28, 2025, which states “that Council accept the recommendation of the Policy & Strategy Committee and direct staff to draft a 5-year Management Agreement with the South Shore Pickleball Club for establishing six outdoor pickleball courts on PID 60413234, part of the Municipal Activity Recreation Complex (MARC), and further, that the agreement be brought back to Council for final approval”. Opposed: Councillors Burns and Brooks. Motion carried.**

**Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Hubley that the Policy & Strategy Committee recommends to Council that Municipal Council authorize staff to draft a lease agreement with the South Shore Pickleball Club for the purposes of establishing six outdoor pickleball courts on PID 60413234, part of the Municipal Activity Recreation Complex (MARC), and that the agreement be brought to Council for final approval, and furthermore that the agreement states that the Municipality will provide the funding upfront outlining the expectations of the amount to be paid back to the Municipality over the agreed lease period. Opposed: Councillors Brooks and Burns. Motion carried.**

## **13. Adjournment**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:49 p.m.**

# Draft Strategic Priority Areas Engagement Report



**Policy & Strategy Committee**  
**February 2025**



# Background

- Council has laid out broad vision and mission statements
- Strategic priorities are key part of establish budget plans and options
- January staff report summarized where last council was and proposed new statements for Council consideration;
- Report today summarizes public input on the draft priorities and lenses



# Councils 4 Strategic Focus Areas

Regional  
Economic  
Development

Infrastructure

Quality of Life

Communications  
& Engagement



# Lenses for evaluating new initiatives

- Strategic Focus
- Finances/Budget
- Sustainability/Climate Change
- IDEA@MODL
- Strategic Communications



# Public Engagement Process

- Public presentation to January PSC
- engagement page established on [engage.modl.ca](https://engage.modl.ca)
- in person open house - February 6, 2025.



# Participation totals

- **1025** unique visits;
- **108** engaged residents:
  - downloaded documents;
  - visited multiple pages; and/or
  - contributed a comment.
- **40** residents attended open house.



# Data Uses & Coding Methodology

- **Excellent quality of input**
  - Data for Council  $\Rightarrow$  Finalize strategic priorities
  - Context for staff  $\Rightarrow$  inform staff research & reports
- Quantification:
  - Coded for themes
  - Sub-coded for support or opposition
  - Multiple topics in a single post coded separately



# Limits of Data

- Value of the input is in the detailed contributions, numbers only summarize
  - Subjective judgement required to code comments;
  - Numbers reflect the amount a theme was stated, not the number of residents who said it;
  - Numbers can't statistically be generalized to the general public



# Summary Table

Topic	supportive	opposition
Regional Economic Development	21	5
Infrastructure Investments	17	7
Climate Change Work	22	n/a
Enhancing Connections	19	n/a
Community Engagement	12	3
Housing	12	n/a
Proposed Lenses	10	1
Comprehensive Land-Use Planning	10	n/a
Affordability/Tax Policy	8	n/a
Transit	3	1
Miscellaneous	5	



# ANALYSIS & OPTIONS



# General Analysis

- general enthusiasm and support for priorities listed
- Support for lenses proposed
- Several statements could be amended to reflect resident input
- Climate change theme requires further discussion



# # 1 – cell service (recommended)

## Regional Economic Development

**Support initiatives that focus on regional economic development**

- Commercial development (~~cell service~~, zoning, advocate for small business)
- Advocate for improved cell service
- Regional industrial park (investment for future tax benefit)
- Establish region economic development platforms



# # 2 – Affordability (recommended)

## Quality of life

Programs and services to maintain and improve ~~the~~ affordability and quality of life ~~of~~ for our residents



# # 3 – Waterways (Recommended)

- Infrastructure Upgrades, Expansion, and Management

## Planning and investing for growth

- Collaborate regionally to expand infrastructure that supports growth
- Create a plan that identifies needed infrastructure to support all types of housing
- Strengthen recreational assets to support our growing diverse communities, with a focus on access to waterways



# # 4 – Social Inclusion (Not recommended)

## Quality of life

**Programs and services to maintain and improve the affordability and quality of life of for our residents**

- • Address loneliness, ~~reconnecting~~ **ing** community, and improve social inclusion



# # 5 Climate Change options

- Option A:
- **Climate Change Action**
- **Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate**
  - Reduce the District's corporate emissions
  - Invest in climate resilient infrastructure
  - Create opportunities for more food security in the region
- Option B: keep climate in the lenses section



- Move that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council adopt the amended strategic priorities as discussed at the Policy and Strategy Committee.
- Move that the Committee recommend that Municipal Council adopt the lenses for evaluating projects and proposals as presented





# # 5 Climate Change options

- Option A:
- **Climate Change Action**
- **Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate**
  - Reduce the District's corporate emissions
  - Invest in climate resilient infrastructure
  - Help residents adapt to a changing climate and food security issues in the region
- Option B: keep climate in the lenses section



# Policy 100 – Land Conservation Policy

## **Policy and Strategy Committee**

February 18, 2025

Presenters: Abhimanyu Jain, Manager of Climate Change and Sustainability  
Hayley Drapeau, Climate Lead, Community Climate Capacity Program



## **1. Purpose**

The Municipality's Land Conservation Policy aims to increase conserved land within its boundaries, foster connections between people and nature, enhance community resilience, and ensure responsible stewardship for future generations.

## **2. Goal**

To conserve 20% of land and watersheds within the Municipality by 2030, as outlined in the Local Climate Change Action Plan 2030. This includes municipally, provincially, and federally protected lands, as well as lands conserved by other organizations with legal mechanisms for perpetual protection.

## **3. Overview**

The Land Conservation Policy outlines the Municipality's conservation values and assessment criteria. It ensures municipal lands are evaluated for conservation before being declared surplus, requires staff to regularly review tax sale properties for alignment with conservation values prior to auction or public tender, and provides a framework for assessing external requests to conserve land or support conservation efforts within the Municipality.

## 4. Definitions

**a) Conservation Easement** means a legally binding agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization or government entity that restricts certain development and land use to align with conservation values. The landowner retains ownership but must adhere to the easement's terms, ensuring perpetual preservation of the land's natural, ecological, and cultural features.

**b) Conservation Land** means land permanently protected to preserve biodiversity, ecological integrity, and natural features. These areas are managed to safeguard ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and cultural values while supporting low-impact recreation, such as hiking and birdwatching, with minimal environmental disturbance. Protection is provided through legal mechanisms, including conservation easements, partnerships with land trusts, or government designations, ensuring long-term stewardship for future generations.

**c) Municipality** means the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg.

**d) Proponent** means a proponent is an individual or organization, such as an NGO or land trust, requesting the Municipality to support the conservation of land within its boundaries.

**e) Species at Risk** means species facing significant threats to survival, classified as endangered, threatened, or vulnerable under provincial or federal designations.

**f) Stewardship** means responsible management, care, and monitoring of land to ensure its natural, ecological, and cultural values are preserved or enhanced over time.

## 4. Definitions

**g) Surplus Land** means land declared surplus by the Council and no longer required for municipal purposes.

**h) Tax Sale** means the sale of property by public auction or tender to recover unpaid taxes.

**i) Zoning** means the classification of land that regulates its use, development, and building standards within the Municipality.

## 5. Conservation Values

**(1) Protection of Biodiversity** - Conserving natural systems to support diverse species and maintain ecological balance. Key priorities include:

a) **Intact Natural Areas:** Preserving landscapes with minimal human disturbance to maintain their ecological integrity.

b) **Habitat Restoration:** Restoring degraded habitats to support species recovery and improve ecological resilience.

c) **Species at Risk:** Prioritizing conservation efforts for habitats that support at-risk species identified under provincial or federal designations.

d) **Critical Ecosystems and Richness:** Protecting ecosystems that are essential for biodiversity and support areas with high species diversity or ecological significance.

## 5. Conservation Values

**(2) Enhancing Resilience and Reducing Risks** - Conserving land to protect communities and ecosystems from environmental pressures and promote long-term sustainability. Key priorities include:

- a) Flood and Storm Protection: Preserving wetlands and coastal buffers to reduce the impacts of flooding, storm surges, and erosion.
- b) Temperature Regulation: Protecting forests and natural areas to moderate local temperatures, provide shade, and reduce the impacts of extreme heat.
- c) Wildlife Adaptation: Conserving connected landscapes and critical habitats that allow wildlife to move freely, find resources, and adjust to environmental changes.
- d) Water Security: Safeguarding wetlands and watersheds that ensure clean water and help prevent droughts.

## 5. Conservation Values

**(3) Protecting Ecosystem Services** - Maintaining the natural processes that provide essential benefits to communities, wildlife, and the environment. Key priorities include:

- a) **Pollination Support:** Conserving habitats that support pollinators is essential for food production and ecosystem health.
- b) **Carbon Capture:** Protecting forests, wetlands, and grasslands that absorb and store carbon naturally.
- c) **Soil and Erosion Control:** Preserving landscapes that prevent soil degradation and maintain land stability.
- d) **Air and Water Filtration:** Protecting ecosystems that naturally clean air and filter water.

## 5. Conservation Values

**(4) Social and Community Benefits** - Conservation of land that reduces hazard-related risks to communities (e.g., flooding, wildfire, extreme heat). Enhancing community well-being through equitable access to conserved lands and collaboration. Key priorities include:

a) Low-Impact Recreation: Conserving lands that support activities like hiking and birdwatching while protecting natural ecosystems.

b) Equity and Inclusion: Prioritizing conservation efforts that benefit equity-deserving groups, including Mi'kmaq communities and African Nova Scotians, and ensuring green spaces are distributed equitably across all communities in the Municipality.

c) Collaborative Partnerships: Working with land trusts, NGOs, First Nations, and other stakeholders to conserve and steward land.

d) Health and Well-being: Improving quality of life through access to natural spaces that support physical and mental health.



## **6. Principles**

**(1)** The Municipality is committed to treating all proponents with fairness and respect throughout the land acquisition process, ensuring transparent and equitable interactions during assessments and acquisitions. The Municipality strives to ensure the land conservation process is inclusive and accessible to all.

**(2)** Situated on unceded Mi'kmaw territory, the Municipality prioritizes partnerships with Mi'kmaw communities, recognizing their sovereignty and essential role as stewards of the land.

**(3)** The Municipality values the rich history of African Nova Scotian communities and prioritizes requests from these groups, honouring their deep and significant connections to the land.

## **7. Land Conservation Mechanisms**

### **(1) Municipally Owned Lands**

a) Reallocation of Municipal Property: The Municipality may designate existing municipal property to conservation land if it aligns with conservation values. The Municipality will evaluate properties for conservation potential before declaring them surplus, including their ability to protect natural areas, support wildlife, enhance resilience, and preserve ecosystem services.

b) Trading Land: The Municipality may consider trading surplus land for property with higher conservation value.

c) Donations: The Municipality may accept land donations, either in full or as a partial donation, for conservation purposes.

## 7. Land Conservation Mechanisms

d) Purchase: The Municipality may purchase land for conservation purposes. This includes:

(i) Tax Sale Properties: Staff will regularly review tax sale properties prior to auction or public tender to assess their alignment with conservation values. If deemed appropriate, the Municipality may bid on and acquire these properties to support conservation goals, as permitted under Sections 143 and 144 of the Municipal Government Act.

(ii) Co-ownership and Joint Purchases: The Municipality may collaborate with partners such as land trusts, NGOs, cultural institutions, or the Province to co-own or jointly purchase property for conservation purposes. In such arrangements, any party may hold the property title, depending on the terms of the agreement. The Municipality may contribute a portion of the total funds and work with the titleholder to ensure the land remains protected for conservation. Roles and responsibilities, including management and stewardship, will be clearly defined in a legal agreement between all parties to ensure effective protection and long-term conservation of the property.

## **7. Land Conservation Mechanisms**

### **(2) Externally Owned Conservation Lands**

- a) Conservation Easements: The Municipality may enter into conservation easements with private landowners to ensure long-term protection of ecologically significant areas.
- b) Donation to Other Entities: The Municipality may donate land it owns to other entities, such as NGOs or land trusts, for conservation purposes.
- c) Support for External Conservation Efforts: The Municipality may provide financial or other forms of support to entities seeking to acquire and conserve land within municipal boundaries.
- d) Zoning for Conservation: The Municipality may re-zone conserved areas, upon request by conservation entities, to formalize their status and apply appropriate land-use restrictions.

## **8. Land Conservation Process**

### **(1) Initiation of Process**

The Land Conservation Process can be initiated internally or externally. Externally, it begins when a proponent requests the Municipality to conserve or assist in conserving land within its boundaries along with submission of a completed application. Internally, it is initiated through the annual assessment of tax sale properties, or identification of high conservation value Municipal properties.

### **(2) Preliminary Review and Report to Council**

Staff will review the proposed property and application (if applicable) to assess alignment with the Municipality's conservation values, stewardship capacity, and protection options, such as land purchase, designation, zoning, or other legal mechanisms. Based on this review, staff will prepare a report for Council outlining their findings and providing a preliminary recommendation on whether to proceed with the land acquisition or conservation process.

### **(3) Council Decision**

The Council may choose to either decline further pursuit of the conservation request or direct staff to conduct a detailed site assessment before making a final decision.

## **8. Land Conservation Process**

### **(4) Detailed Site Assessment**

If directed, staff will oversee a detailed site assessment and present their findings to Council to determine whether the Municipality will acquire the property. A detailed site assessment may include:

- a) Appraisal
- b) Ecological site assessment
- c) Financial review
- d) Hazard assessment
- e) Legal review
- f) Protected area designation and zoning considerations
- g) Public Engagement
- h) Site visit
- i) Species at risk assessment
- j) Stewardship considerations

## **9. Funding and Incentives for Land Conservation**

**(1)** The Municipality will support the Land Conservation Policy through strategic budgeting, external funding opportunities, and contributions from municipal resources, partnerships, and proponents, while recognizing that support may vary based on available resources and priorities.

### **(2) Prioritization of Land Acquisition Proposals**

The Municipality may prioritize land acquisition proposals from proponents who:

- a) Contribute matching funds or a portion of acquisition costs, determined on a case-by-case basis.
- b) Contribute matching funds or a portion of the costs for required studies, such as ecological assessments, species-at-risk evaluations, environmental impact studies, climate adaptation assessments, or cultural heritage reviews.
- c) Secure external funding, confirmed grants, or partnerships to help cover acquisition, required studies, or long-term management costs.

## **9. Funding and Incentives for Land Conservation**

### **(3) Tax Exemptions for Conservation Easements**

The Municipality encourages landowners with conservation easement agreements to explore tax exemption eligibility under the Nova Scotia Conservation Property Tax Exemption Act. Landowners should contact Nova Scotia Environment to determine if their property qualifies. These exemptions are subject to approval by the Minister of Environment.

## **10. Post-Acquisition Zoning Review**

After acquiring land, planning staff will evaluate the newly acquired property and recommend to the Council whether it requires rezoning under the Municipal-wide Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw or other protective measures. The Council will determine the most appropriate zoning or legal protections based on the property's conservation values.

# **11. Stewardship of Municipal Conservation Lands**

## **(1) Lands Managed with a Partner**

The Municipality prioritizes acquiring conservation land where management responsibilities are shared with or handled by a partner. Partnering with organizations brings additional expertise and resources, ensuring effective and sustainable stewardship.

## **(2) Lands Managed by the Municipality**

The Municipality may independently manage conservation lands if staff possess the required technical expertise and capacity to fulfill stewardship responsibilities.

## **(3) Long-term Protection of Conservation Lands**

Conservation lands recognized under the Land Conservation Policy are protected in perpetuity, with restrictions remaining permanent and irrevocable. If the Municipality, a co-owner, or a land management partner is no longer able to manage the property, it may be transferred to another qualified entity. The receiving entity must uphold all existing restrictions and assume full conservation responsibilities.



## **12. Review and Revision**

The Municipality will review the Land Conservation Policy every five (5) years to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with current conservation practices and community needs. Reviews of the Land Conservation Policy will include input from stakeholders, such as the public, landowners, and conservation partners, and will consider changes in environmental regulations, land management practices, and conservation science. Revisions will be made as needed to address new challenges and opportunities in land conservation and stewardship.



# Accessibility Progress and Goals Report

Policy & Strategy Committee

February 18, 2025

# Agenda

- **Legislative Requirement**
- **Quick Facts about Disability**
- **Accomplishments to Date**
- **Potential Projects**
  - Regional
  - MODL
  - Capital
- **Resourcing and Budget**



# Accessibility Act

## **The Accessibility Act is provincial law.**

- We are required to have an accessibility advisory committee and accessibility plan (must be updated every 3 years).
- We are required to help identify and remove accessibility barriers.

## **Municipalities must comply with regulations under the Accessibility Act. Standards are being developed in 6 areas:**

- built environment
- education
- employment
- delivery of goods and services
- information and communication
- transportation and transportation infrastructure

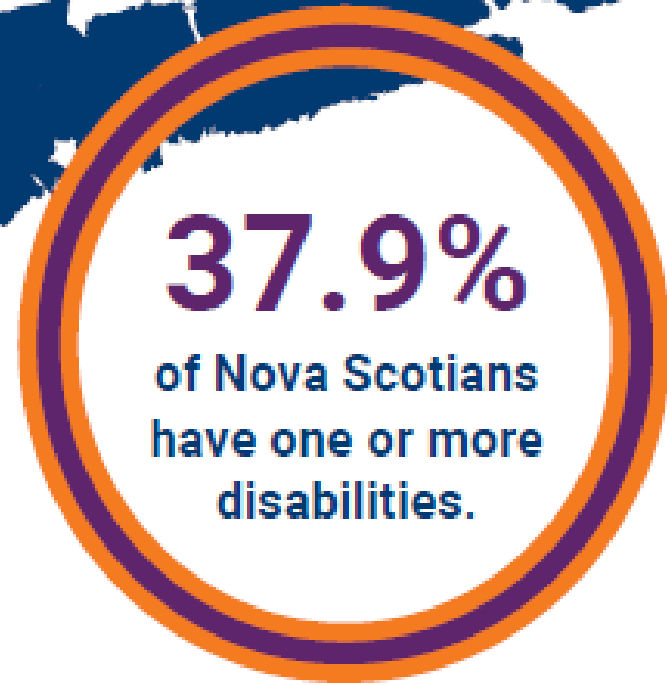
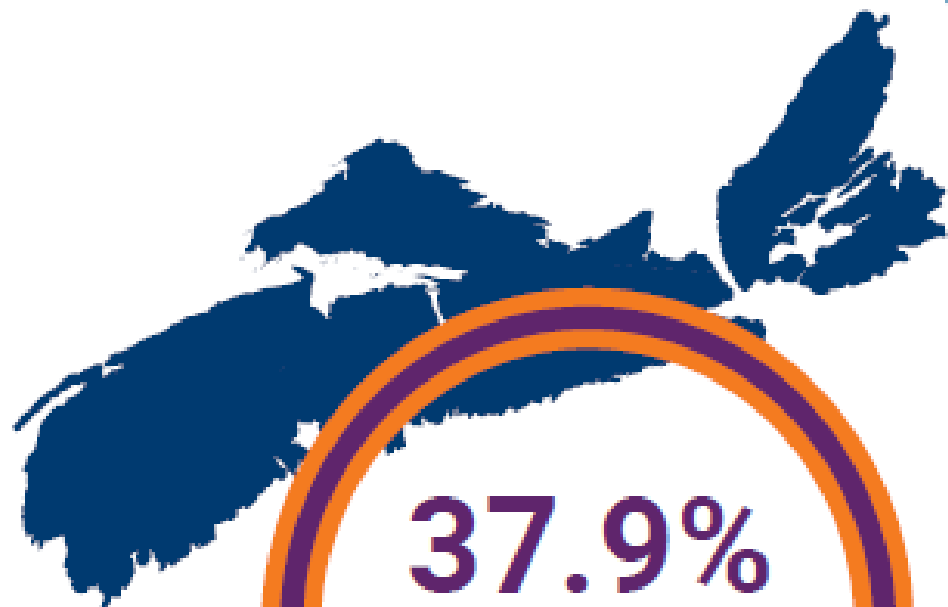
# Disability Rate in Nova Scotia

**Nova Scotia's disability rate is 37.9%.**

That means 37.9% of Nova Scotians aged 15 and older report having one or more disabilities.

Nova Scotia has the highest disability rate in the country.

The rate for Canada overall is 27%. That means the Nova Scotia rate is almost 11% higher than the national rate. The other Atlantic provinces also have high rates of disability with New Brunswick at 35.3%, Prince Edward island at 31.8%, and Newfoundland at 30.9%. Quebec has the lowest rate at 19.3%.



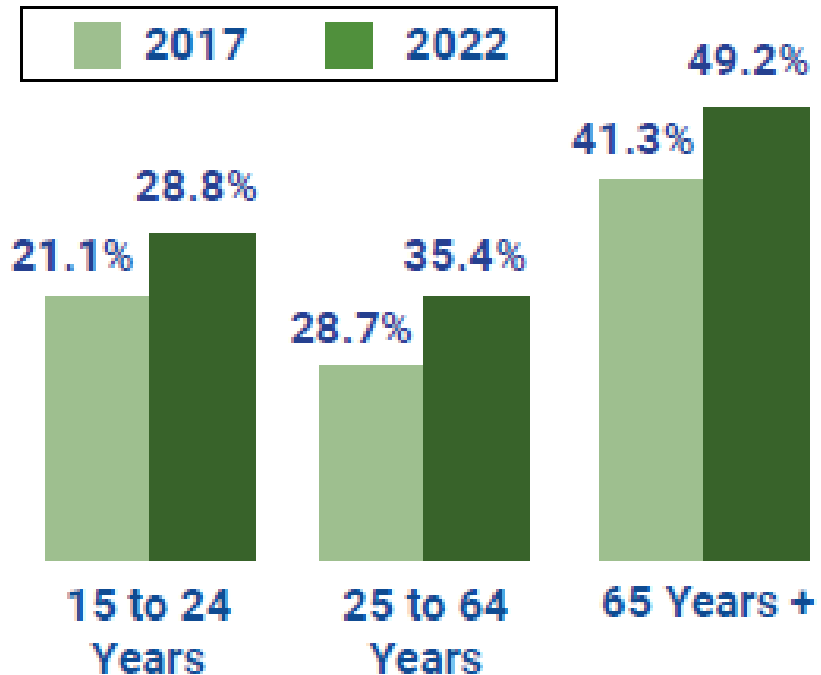
# Disability Rate and Age

**49.2% of Nova Scotians aged 65 and older report having one or more disabilities.**

Disability increases with age. This is an increase of 7.9 % from 2017.

In 2022, 35.4% of Nova Scotians 25 to 64 years of age, and 28.8% of youth (15 to 24 years) reported having one or more disabilities, compared to 28.7% and 21.1 % respectively in 2017.

**Figure 2: Prevalence of disability by age (%), all Nova Scotians, CSD 2022, 2017**



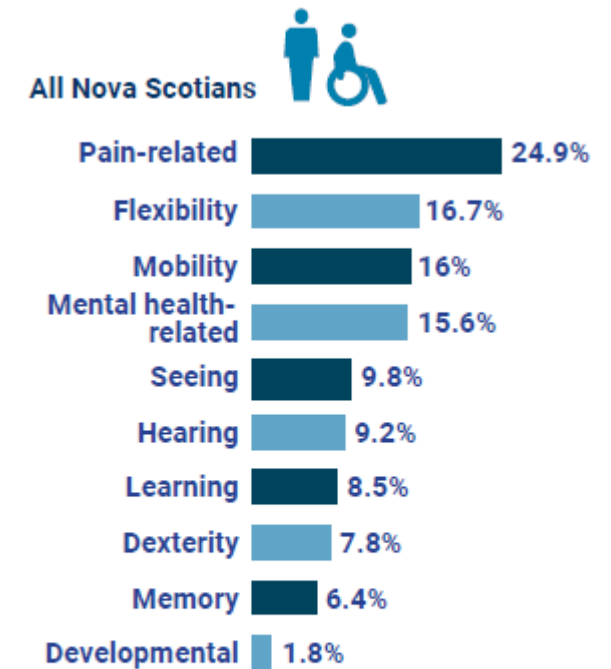
# Disability Rate and Type of Disability

Among all Nova Scotians, age 15 years and older, pain-related disabilities are the most common type of disability in Nova Scotia (24.9%), followed by flexibility (16.7%), mobility (16.0%) and mental health-related (15.6%) disabilities. The prevalence of other types of disabilities is as follows: seeing (9.8%), hearing (9.2%), learning (8.5%), dexterity (7.8%), memory (6.4%), and developmental (1.8%) disabilities.

**Figure 4:** Prevalence of Disability by type (%), all Nova Scotians, CSD 2022

Among Nova Scotians with disabilities, age 15 years and older, 65.7% report a pain-related disability, followed by flexibility (44.1%), mobility (42.3%), and mental health-related (41.0%) disabilities. Other reported types of disabilities include seeing (25.9%), hearing (24.4%), learning (22.5%), dexterity (20.5%), memory (17.0%), and developmental (4.7%).<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 5:** Prevalence of disability by type (%), Nova Scotians with disabilities, CSD 2022



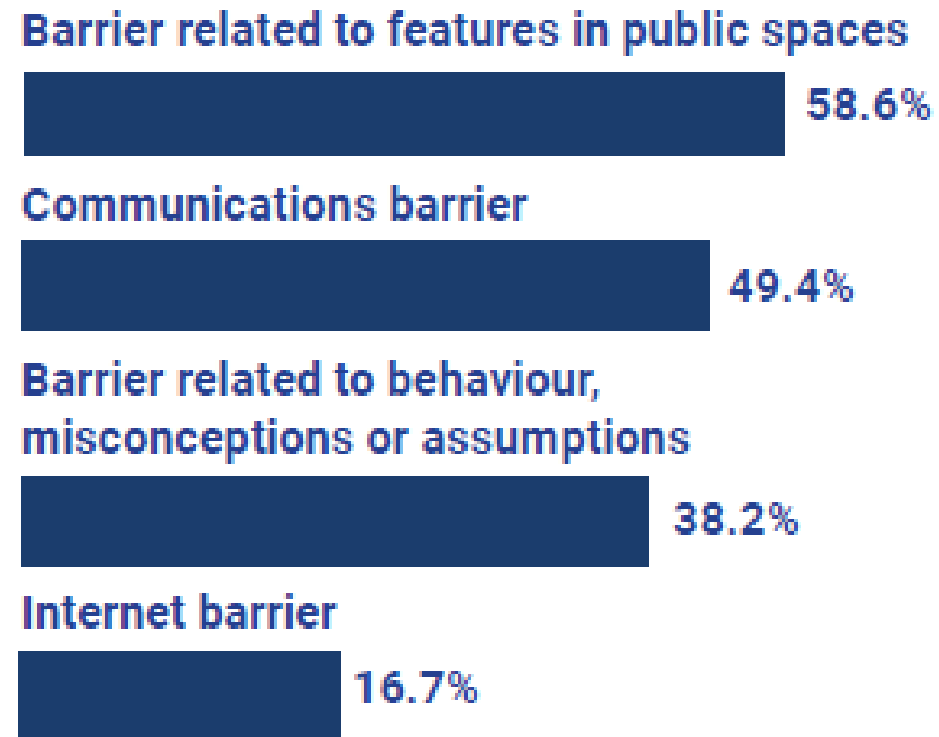
<sup>2</sup> Respondents could report multiple types of disabilities.

# Types of Barriers

Nova Scotians with disabilities 15 years and older report experiencing barriers to accessing the built environment (58.6%), followed by barriers to communication (49.4%), barrier related to behaviour, misconceptions or assumptions (38.2%), and barriers using the internet (16.7%).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Respondents could report multiple types of disabilities, so percentages do not sum to 100%

**Figure 13:** Types of barriers experienced by Nova Scotians with disabilities (%), CSD 2022





# Accomplishments to Date

**New Municipal Services Building:** Fully accessible with doors, hearing tech, bariatric seating, and more.

**Capital Projects:** Accessibility lens applied; audits identified barriers in parks.

**Parks Upgrades:** Mobi-mat at Mushamush Beach; accessible picnic tables at Church Lake.

**Digital Accessibility:** Website (modl.ca) reached 99% accessibility with WCAG standards.

**Council Operations:** Livestreamed meetings, accessible agendas/reports, social media training.

**Expanded Recreation:** Programs for diverse abilities.

**Lunenburg County Wheels:** Dial-a-ride service expanded but in high demand.

**Commitment:** Ongoing efforts to remove barriers and promote inclusivity.



# Action Items

- Regional Accessibility Plan Joint Actions
- Joint Actions with Anti-Racism and Diversity Plan (also a provincially legislated plan)
- District of Lunenburg Action Items (some overlap with regional items)
- Potential Accessibility Lens Applied to Future Capital Projects



# Resourcing & Budget

- Integrated Approach: Accessibility is embedded in organizational culture and processes.
- Resource Efficiency:
  - Shared Regional Accessibility Coordinator position
  - MODL IDEA .2 FTE (established in 20224)
  - Accessibility lens embedded in all staff responsibilities
- **Funding Strategy:**
  - Accessibility upgrades deliberated in capital budget decisions
  - Actively pursue grant funding to support initiatives





**Thank You**

