

**Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

**Committee of the Whole**

**AGENDA**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025**

**10:00 A.M.**

Council Chambers  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
320 Esplanade, Sydney, NS

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# Cape Breton Regional Municipality

## Committee of the Whole

**Tuesday, March 4, 2025  
10:00 a.m.**

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

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#### **Land Acknowledgement**

#### **Roll Call**

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** (Motion Required)

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- Nominating Committee – February 14, 2023
- Fire and Emergency Services – May 2, 2024
- Committee of the Whole - February 4, 2025

**3. PROCLAMATIONS:**

**3.1 Amyloidosis Awareness Month**

Councillor Glenn Paruch (See page 6)

**3.2 International Women's Day**

Councillor Earlene MacMullin (See page 7)

**3.3 National Impaired Driving Prevention Week**

Councillor Steve Gillespie (See page 8)

**4. PRESENTATIONS:**

**4.1 Nova Scotians For Equalization Fairness (NSEF):** Russ Green and Charles Sampson, NSEF (See page 9)

**4.2 Nova Scotia Community Solar:** Mila Simon, Senior Project Coordinator, Solarbank (See page 10)

**Continued...**

**PRESENTATIONS (Cont'd):**

**4.3 Cape Breton Partnership Q3 Quarterly Report for the CBRM REN:**  
Tyler Mattheis, President and CEO (See page 33)

**5. PLANNING ISSUES:**

**5.1 Adoption of Wayfinding Strategy for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality:** Will Roy, Community Development Coordinator (See page 56)

*Wayfinding Strategy Report and Preliminary Breakdown of Anticipated Costs for Signage circulated separately*

**5.2 New Staff Appointment – Assistant Building Official:** Tyson Simms, Director of Planning and Development (See page 61)

**6. IN CAMERA**

**6.1 Approval of In Camera Minutes** (Previously Circulated)

- **Nominating Committee – November 5, 2018**
- **Committee of the Whole – February 4, 2025**

**6.2 Business Arising - Council – February 11, 2025:**

**a) Vacancies on Various Committees:** Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk

*[In accordance with Section 22(2)(c) of the Municipal Government Act]*

**6.3 Correspondence – Legal Advice:** Robert Sampson, K.C., Solicitor

To be circulated prior to the meeting.

*[In accordance with Section 22(2)(g) of the Municipal Government Act]*

**Continued...**

**Committee of the Whole**  
**March 4, 2025 (Cont'd)**

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**7. BUSINESS ARISING:**

**7.1 Council – February 11, 2025:**

a) **Vacancies on Various Committees:** Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk  
(See page 63)

**8. PUBLIC SERVICES:**

**8.1 Update: Active Transportation Projects - 2025:** Wayne MacDonald,  
Director of Engineering and Public Works (See page 65)

**9. CORPORATE SERVICES ISSUES:**

**9.1 Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy:** Jennifer Campbell, Chief Financial  
Officer (See page 68)

**10. FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES:**

**10.1 Recommendation for Pre-Authorization of Ladder Truck Purchase in  
April 2026:** Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief (See page 76)

**11. COMMITTEE REPORTS: N/A**

**12. CORRESPONDENCE:**

**12.1 Various Correspondence:** Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk

- Commissioner William Kaplan, Industrial Inquiry Commission  
Reviewing Canada Post (See page 78)
- Honourable John A. Lohr, Minister of Municipal Affairs (See page  
79)

**For information only.**

**ADJOURNMENT**



## **PROCLAMATION**

### ***Amyloidosis Awareness Month***

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**WHEREAS:**

Amyloidosis is a group of rare diseases that occur when an abnormal protein, amyloid, accumulates in the body's tissues and organs and, if left untreated, can result in organ failure and can be fatal; and

**WHEREAS:**

Amyloidosis most often affects people in middle age, younger people have also been diagnosed with this disease and can be challenging to diagnose as its signs and symptoms can mimic those of more common medical conditions, including shortness of breath, weight loss, fatigue, swelling in the ankles and legs, numbness in the hands and feet, foamy urine, carpal tunnel syndrome, bruising around the eyes and an enlarged tongue; and

**WHEREAS:**

The Canadian Amyloidosis Support Network, Inc. is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization formed by amyloidosis patients and their family members, to raise awareness, fund research and support those living with amyloidosis and their loved ones.

**BE IT THEREFORE  
RESOLVED:**

That CBRM Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim the month of March 2025, as Amyloidosis Awareness Month in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

*Councillor Glenn Paruch - CBRM District # 6*

**March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**



## **PROCLAMATION**

### ***International Women's Day***

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**WHEREAS:** International Women's Day is observed annually on March 8th to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women around the world; and

**WHEREAS:** This day also serves as a reminder of the ongoing need to advance gender equality, challenge bias, and break down barriers to create a more inclusive society for all; and

**WHEREAS:** The theme for International Women's Day 2025, "Accelerate Action", emphasizes the importance of taking swift and decisive steps to achieve gender equality. It calls for increased momentum and urgency in addressing the systemic barriers and biases that women face, both in personal and professional spheres.

**BE IT THEREFORE  
RESOLVED:** That CBRM Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim March 8, 2025, as "International Women's Day" in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

*Councillor Earlene MacMullin - CBRM District #2*

**March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**



## PROCLAMATION

### ***National Impaired Driving Prevention Week***

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**WHEREAS:**

National Impaired Driving Prevention Week takes place from March 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada is proud to join governments, law enforcement agencies and community organizations recognizing the importance of educating Canadians about the consequences of impaired driving due to alcohol, drugs, fatigue or distraction which destroys lives and health of thousands of Canadians; and

**WHEREAS:**

Crashes involving alcohol and/or drugs are a leading criminal cause of death in Canada and impaired driving does not just apply to cars, it also applies to motorcycles, boats, ATVs, snowmobiles and other forms of transportation; and

**WHEREAS:**

All citizens are urged to commit to safe and sober driving practices and to take a stand against impaired driving by planning ahead, using designated drivers, and supporting initiatives that promote road safety.

**BE IT THEREFORE**

**RESOLVED:**

That CBRM Mayor Cecil P. Clarke and Council proclaim March 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, as Impaired Driving Prevention Week in collaboration with MADD in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

*Councillor Steve Gillespie - CBRM District #4*

March 4, 2025



December 6, 2024

Dear Municipal Clerk's Office of the CBRM:

We formally request the opportunity to make a presentation to Mayor and Council on the topic of property taxation in the CBRM.

Please advise us by return email when we can present.

Regards,

Rev. Dr. Albert Maroun on behalf of

The Nova Scotians for Equalization Fairness

To Mayor and Council:

Request to Municipal Clerk's office to present to CBRM Council.

Presenters on behalf of the NSEF:

Russ Green (Introduction and NSEF's position)

Charles Sampson (Discussion of Ayman Nadar's report on Section 36 of the Constitution of Canada)

Dear Mayor and Council:

The current tax rates in downtown Sydney are more than double than downtown Halifax.

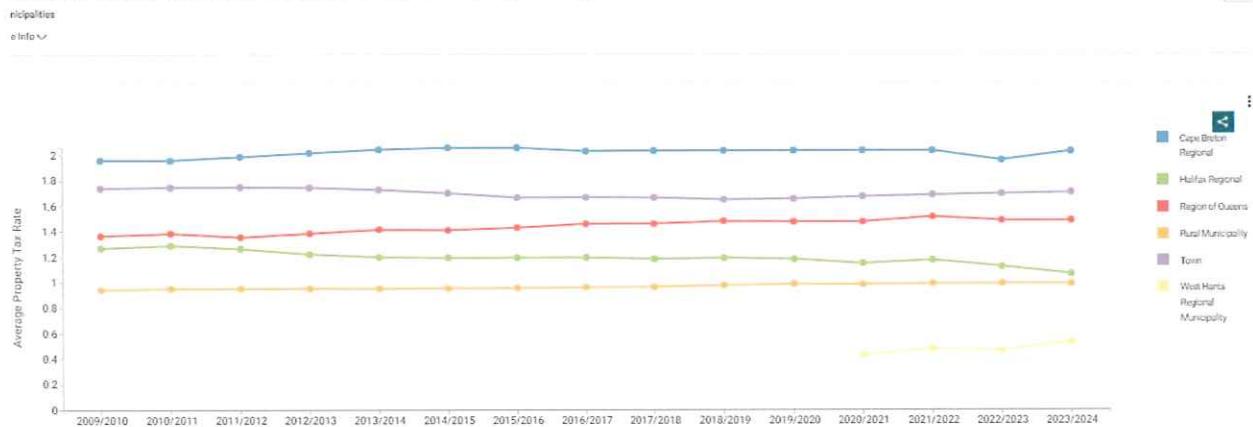
Section 36 of the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 states:

**Commitment to promote equal opportunities**

- **36 (1)** Without altering the legislative authority of Parliament or of the provincial legislatures, or the rights of any of them with respect to the exercise of their legislative authority, Parliament and the legislatures, together with the government of Canada and the provincial governments, are committed to
  - **(a)** promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of Canadians;
  - **(b)** furthering economic development to reduce disparity in opportunities; and
  - **(c)** providing essential public services of reasonable quality to all Canadians.
- **Marginal note: Commitment respecting public services**
  - (2)** Parliament and the government of Canada are committed to the principle of making equalization payments to ensure that provincial governments have sufficient revenues to provide reasonably comparable levels of public services at reasonably comparable levels of taxation

The Members of Parliament of Cape Breton, past and present, have failed to provide the NSEF with the legal authority to transfer these billions yearly to Nova Scotia "unconditionally" after almost 20 years of asking. The constitution is clear on the intended purpose of equalization yet the residents of the CBRM are faced with unconstitutionally high property taxation. Roughly 20% of the total transfer is sent because of a municipal deficiency in fiscal capacity related to property and miscellaneous revenues. We can not raise enough revenue in taxation to deliver services to a Canadian standard.

## unicipal Property Tax Rates: Average Property Tax Rate by Area Type – Residential



The above chart clearly shows that the CBRM has the highest property taxation in the province of Nova Scotia and that our taxation rates are trending even higher. The chart also shows that the HRM has one of the lowest taxation rates and they are trending lower as we increase. The other communities are remaining unchanged, and those communities are not feeling the pain that the CBRM is feeling.

The RCMP has investigated the claims of the NSEF over an 8<sup>th</sup> month long investigation and they agreed with our claims. They stated that they did not possess the powers to police anything past section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

What can be done to seek justice?

A human rights complaint or a Charter of Rights and Freedom challenge is a starting point. The NSEF is prepared to publish an ad in Canada's national newspapers (The Globe and Mail and the National Post) to seek for a constitutional lawyer who might be interested in taking our Charter challenge or human rights complaint and represent the CBRM in Ottawa.

The CBRM is being used to generate much funding for the province because of our poor fiscal capacity and that is a fact. The CBRM can no longer allow this constitutional injustice we endure at the hands of the provincial government. We must put party politics aside and we must stand up to our abusers.

We have presented in the past to council, a set of questions that we asked the CBRM council to submit to the province for answers. That was done several years ago, and we have never received an answer. It is time for the CBRM to take ownership of this issue and demand a response from the provincial and federal governments on behalf of the overtaxed residents of the CBRM.

The NSEF has had unanswered correspondence now for years with the past three Justice Ministers and Attorney Generals of Canada. Our MPs from Cape Breton and our MLAs have all neglected the issue of equalization unfairness.

This mayor and council must take a stand with the province on the equalization issue. When our residents start to lose their homes, it will be too late. People who have recently moved to the CBRM are paying some of the highest property taxation in North America. There is no room to raise our property taxation further and the property taxation rates must be lowered if we want this community to grow and prosper. The residents of this municipality are beyond frustrated with the growth of Halifax while we continue to decline without any transparency or accountability from all levels of government regarding the equalization transfers.

Will this mayor and council finally stand up for the overtaxed residents of the CBRM?

#### Reference Section:

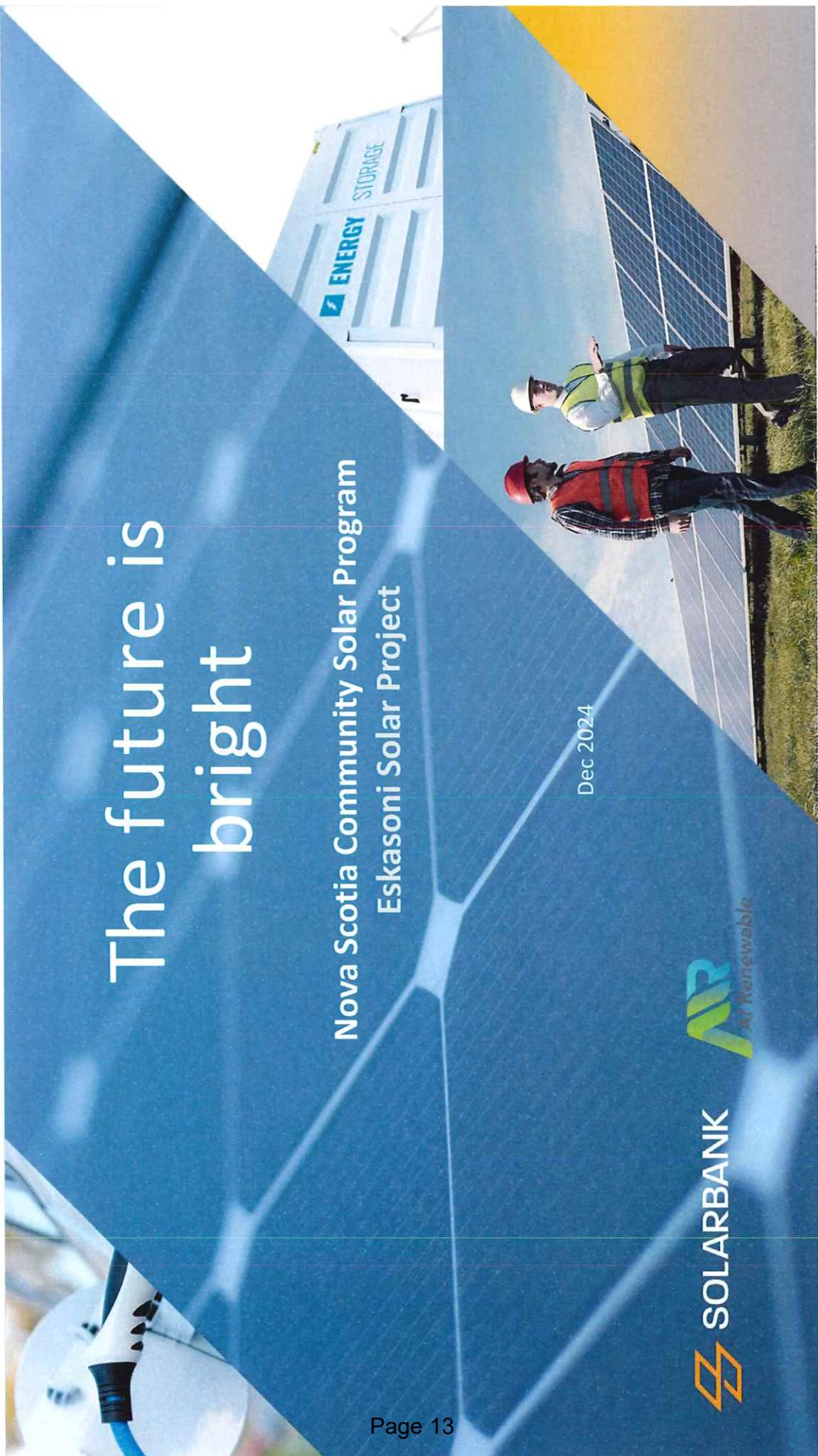
Please reference page 358 to page 367 of the link below to see the federal responsibility and that "equalization" must have conditions.

<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/288305084.pdf>

"Parliament and the federal government must also place conditions on the use of federal grants to the provinces in order to ensure that "all Canadians" are provided with essential public services of "reasonable quality".

Complying with the Constitution of Canada is the responsibility of all Canadians and not just government. A legal ruling for the Supreme Court of Canada in a 1950 ruling states:

"The constitution of Canada does not belong either to Parliament, or to the Legislatures: it belongs to the country and it is there that the citizens of the country will find the protection of the rights to which they are entitled."



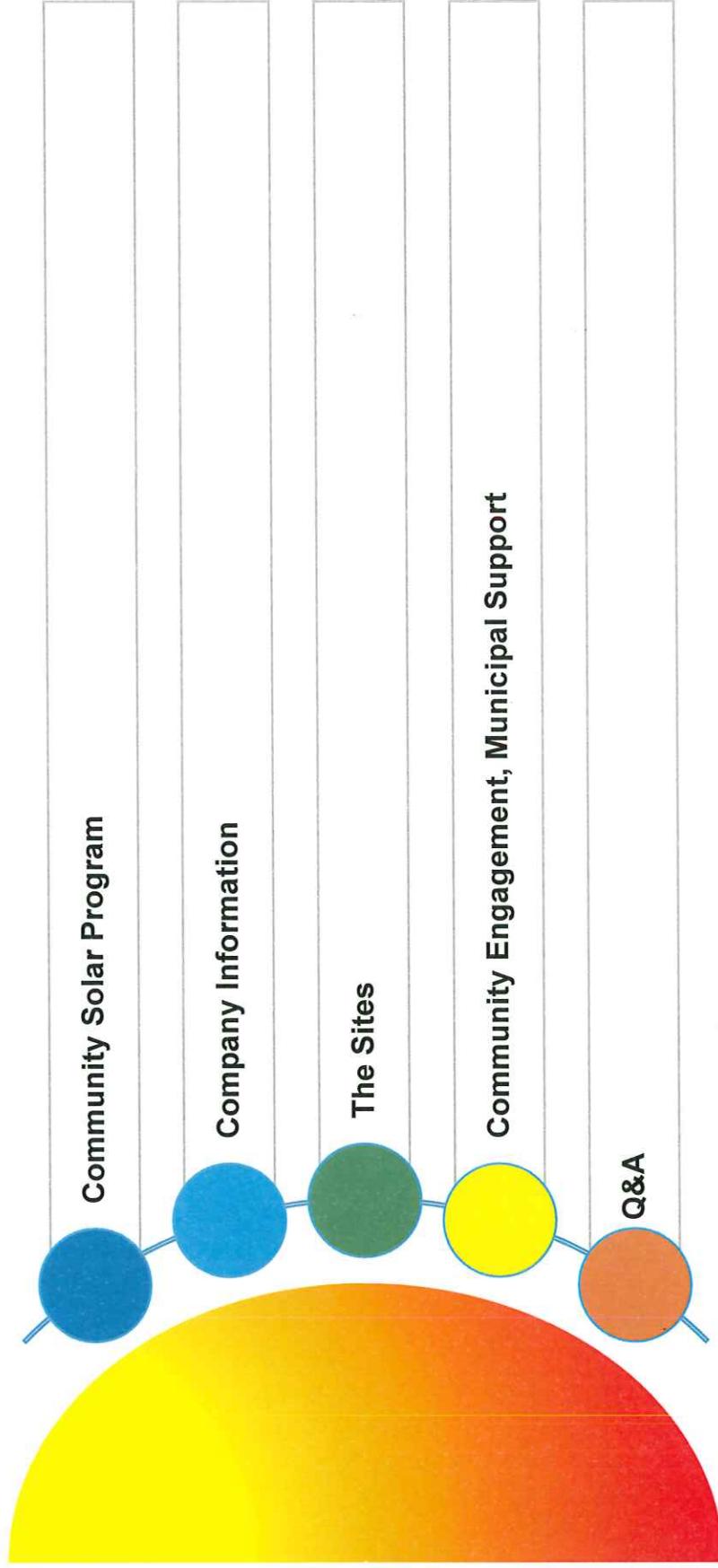
# The future is bright

Nova Scotia Community Solar Program  
Eskasoni Solar Project

Dec 2024



## Table of Contents



# Nova Scotia Needs Renewable Energy

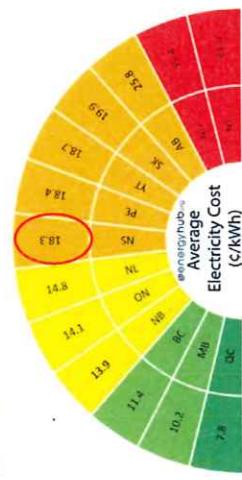
❖ NS has the following challenges:

- High electricity price: Average \$0.183/kWh
- High emission on electricity generation
- Fossil fuel production: **31% of electricity from Coal; 17% from Natural Gas**
- ❖ NS has the most ambitious goals in Canada for cutting GHG emissions:
- 53% below 2005 levels by 2030, net-zero, by 2035
- ❖ NS will get **80% of its electricity from renewable resources by 2030** by:

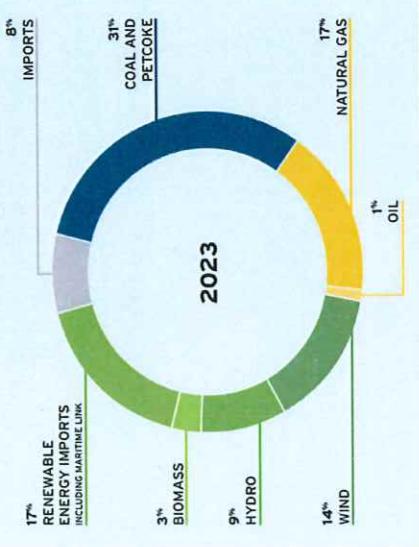
- Rate-Based Procurement: 306 MW of contracts issued in August 2022,
- Green Choice Program: Procurement of up to 350 MW issued December 2023,
- **Community Solar Programs: 100 MW (2024)**
- ❖ AI Renewable Flow-through LP will participate in the current and future solar programs in Nova Scotia and will consider further Atlantic Canada expansion opportunities.

## Electricity Prices in Canada 2023

Published by Ryden Urban on Feb 14, 2020. Last updated Sep 3, 2023.



## WHERE YOUR ENERGY COMES FROM NOW



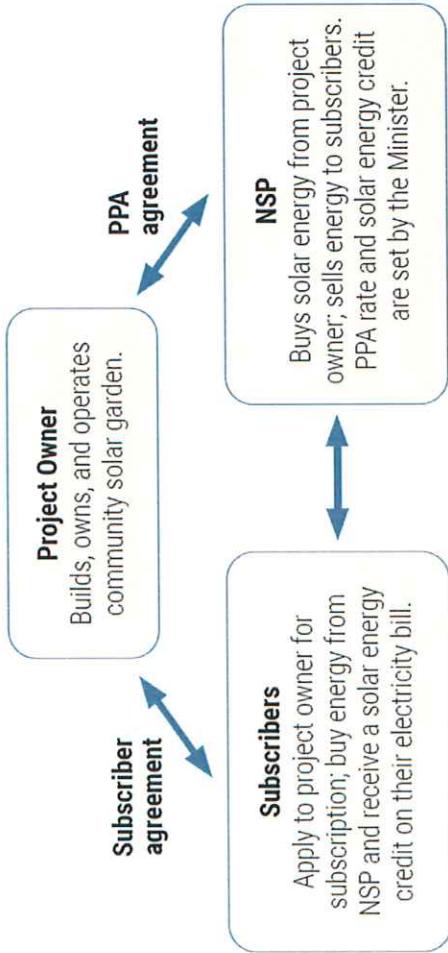
# Nova Scotia's Community Solar Program

- ❖ The NS Community Solar Program seeks to expand solar energy to those residences or businesses who are interested in using green energy but unable to install solar PV panel
  - to build a community solar garden between 500 kW to 10 MW AC
  - Total Capacity for 2024 procurement: 100 MW AC

## ❖ How it works:

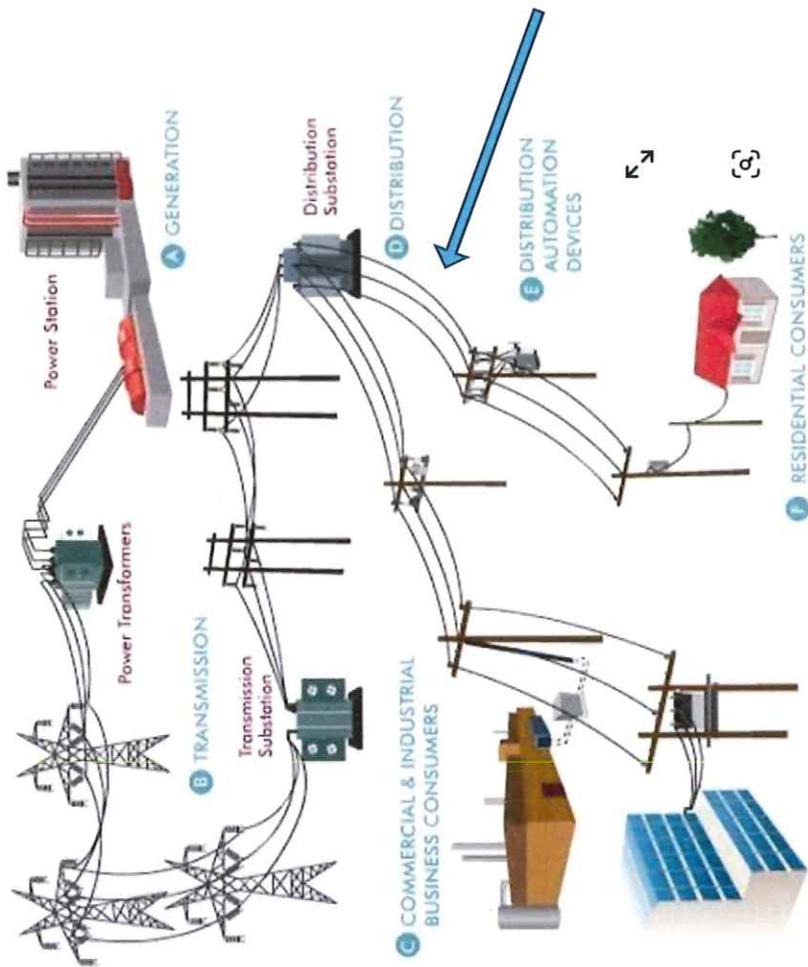
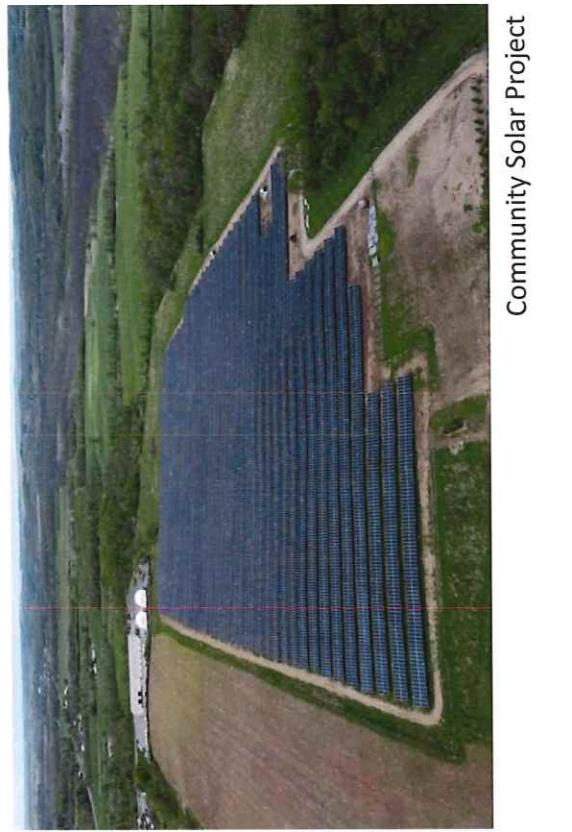
- Project owners construct, generate and operate the community solar garden
- Generated solar energy is connected to Nova Scotia Power Incorporated (NSPI)
- Residences or businesses (Subscribers) enter a virtual subscriber agreement (PPA) with the Project Owner
  - NSPI administers the solar energy to subscribers, such as billing, payments
  - Project owners continue to engage subscribers and manage subscription

- ❖ Program was Launched on March 1, 2024.  
Review at first come first serve basis.
- ❖ Contract Term: 25 Years



# Community Solar Project – Distribution Connected

- ❖ The Community Solar Project would be connected to the local distribution grid and will service the local community.
- ❖ It will help increase grid stability and resilience.



# Community Benefits

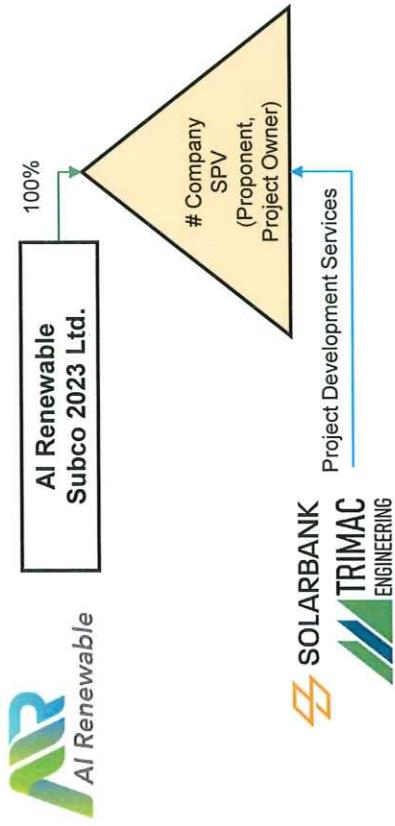
A community solar project in CBRM has many **community benefits**, and can play a significant role in strengthening future renewable energy initiatives in the community in several ways:

- ❖ Energy Cost Savings: Subscriber will receive \$0.02/kWh credit on their bills for the solar electricity subscribed
  - approx. 10-15% off your NSP bill.
  - No commitment & no fees.
  - Priority Subscription offered to local community and other marginalized communities.
- ❖ Local job creation and economic growth
- ❖ Local green energy generation to increase grid resilience
- ❖ Reduce emissions (GHG)

# The Proponent

## Proponents

**Proponent** means a Person registered under the Community Solar Program for the purpose of applying for the process, who is responsible to develop, finance, own and operate the Project. For greater certainty, the Proponent must have a Controlling interest in the Project at the time of Proposal submission and at the time that the Agreement is executed.



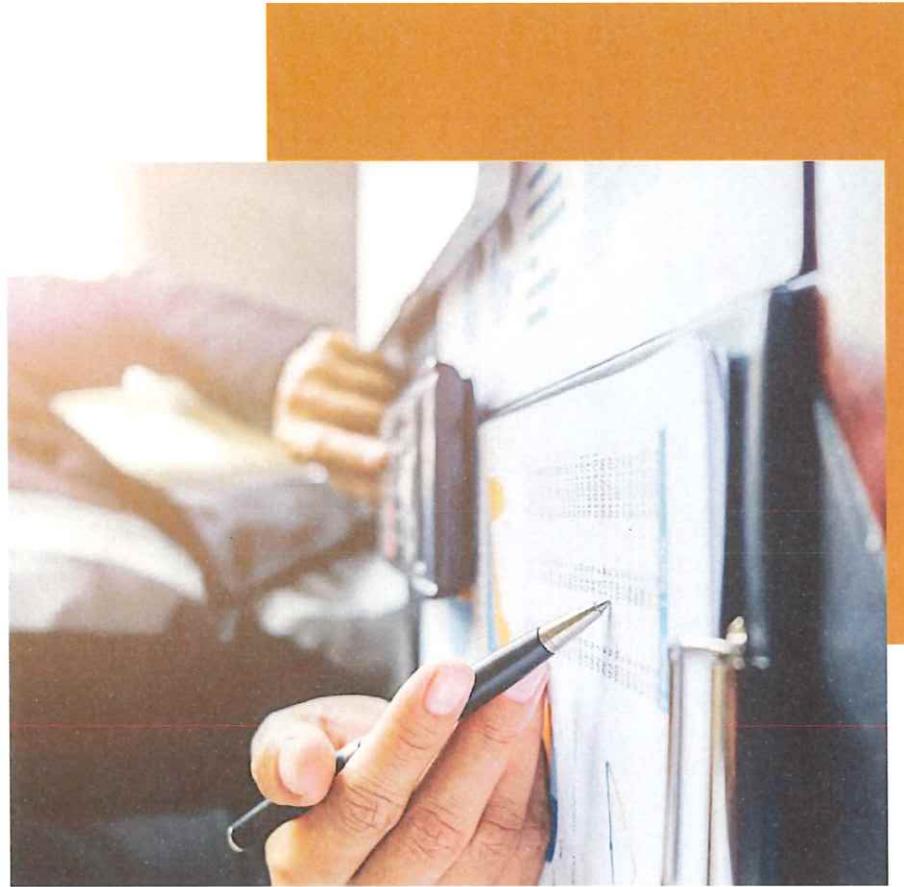


# AI Renewable 2023 Limited Partnership

The AI Renewable 2023 LP, Is A Flow-through Limited Partnership, To invest on **Clean Infrastructure and/or Renewable Energy Projects** That Help To Reduce Energy Costs and GHG Emissions In Canada While Producing **Tax Benefits And Long-term Steady Cash Flows** For Investors.

## MISSION STATEMENT:

*To Be Part Of The Solution To Climate Change Through Tax-effective Sustainable Investments In Clean Infrastructure & Renewable Energy Technologies.*



## SolarBank Highlights

**\$200M+** Project Financing Managed      **70 MWP+** Projects Built      **\$7.3M** Cash/Investment      **10,000+** Homes Powered

### EXPERIENCED DEVELOPER



10+ years experience in the Ontario, New York, and Maryland renewable energy markets

Experts in Engineering, Procurement & Construction (EPC)

100+ solar projects permitted, constructed and operating to date

### EXCELLENT MANAGEMENT



An executive management team with 100+ years of combined experience in solar, clean and renewable technology, and finance

In-depth knowledge of energy markets and off-take contracts

### ATTRACTIVE OPPORTUNITY



Project pipeline with long-term site control and limited permitting and operating risk

100% customer retention since inception with 90% government contracts and 10% C&I and municipal customers

### LEADING RE+ MARKETS



Comprehensive understanding of regulatory climate, incentive programs and surging customer demand for Net-Zero

Access to low-cost development capital through U.S. and Canadian tax advantage investment funds



**100+** Solar Plants Under Management

**24/7/365** Control Center

**1GWp+** Development Pipeline

**10,000+** Homes Powered

**70 MWP+** Projects Built

**\$200M+** Project Financing Managed



TRUE GREEN CAPITAL

JINKO

EGING PV

ZNSHINE SOLAR

KEDYSTAR

POLAR

SCHLEITTER

Schneider

Electric



# Full Vertical Integration

- While most of our competitors focus on single areas of the renewable energy value chain, **our expertise at every stage makes us highly competitive on cost and volume.**

- We create value by designing, constructing and operating projects to **maximize long-term performance and returns.**

- Our in-house development, engineering and construction expertise means that **we can finish turnkey solar projects in an efficient and timely manner.**

## ORIGINATION:

- Policy analysis
- Financial analysis
- Site control

## DEVELOPMENT:

- Grid Interconnection
- Regulatory Permitting
- Environmental Approvals
- Incentives & Tax Agmt.
- Power Purchase Agmt.

## FINANCING:

- Equity
- Investment Tax Credit (ITC)
- Long-term Debt
- Construction financing

## DELIVERY:

- Engineering
- Procurement
- Construction
- Commercial Operation

## On-going Operation:

- Operation & Maintenance
- Subscriber Management
- Asset Management

# Trimac Engineering

TriMac Engineering is a locally owned engineering firm with offices located in Sydney and Halifax, Nova Scotia. We are Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Consultants. Incorporated in 2015 with roots dating back to 1991, we offer our clients a wide range of Engineering Consulting and Project Management services in the industrial, institutional and commercial sectors.

The firm has particular expertise in the design and implementation of piping, mechanical, electrical and control systems with extensive experience in the power generation, mining, pulp & paper and construction industries.

Our Engineering process is guided by a value-added and client-focused philosophy. No matter the project complexity, the goal is simple – optimize project outcome, minimize project lifetime cost ([www.trimaceng.ca](http://www.trimaceng.ca)).



**Joel MacNeil,  
P.Eng.  
Mechanical  
Engineer,  
Principal**

Joel has over 10 years of mechanical engineering experience in the majority of which has focused on Renewable Energy. Joel's experience includes pumping systems, oil/water separation, process piping and equipment, commissioning PLC/DCS based industrial control systems, industrial measurements & final control elements. He also has experience in electrical distribution & motor control systems up to 4kV and building management and project management. He has overseen, managed and executed all aspects of projects from scoping/concept, through detailed design, construction, to final commissioning and completion. Andrew has worked in the engineering consulting, power generation and manufacturing industries.



**Blair MacNeil,  
P.Eng. Senior  
E&I Engineer,  
Principal**

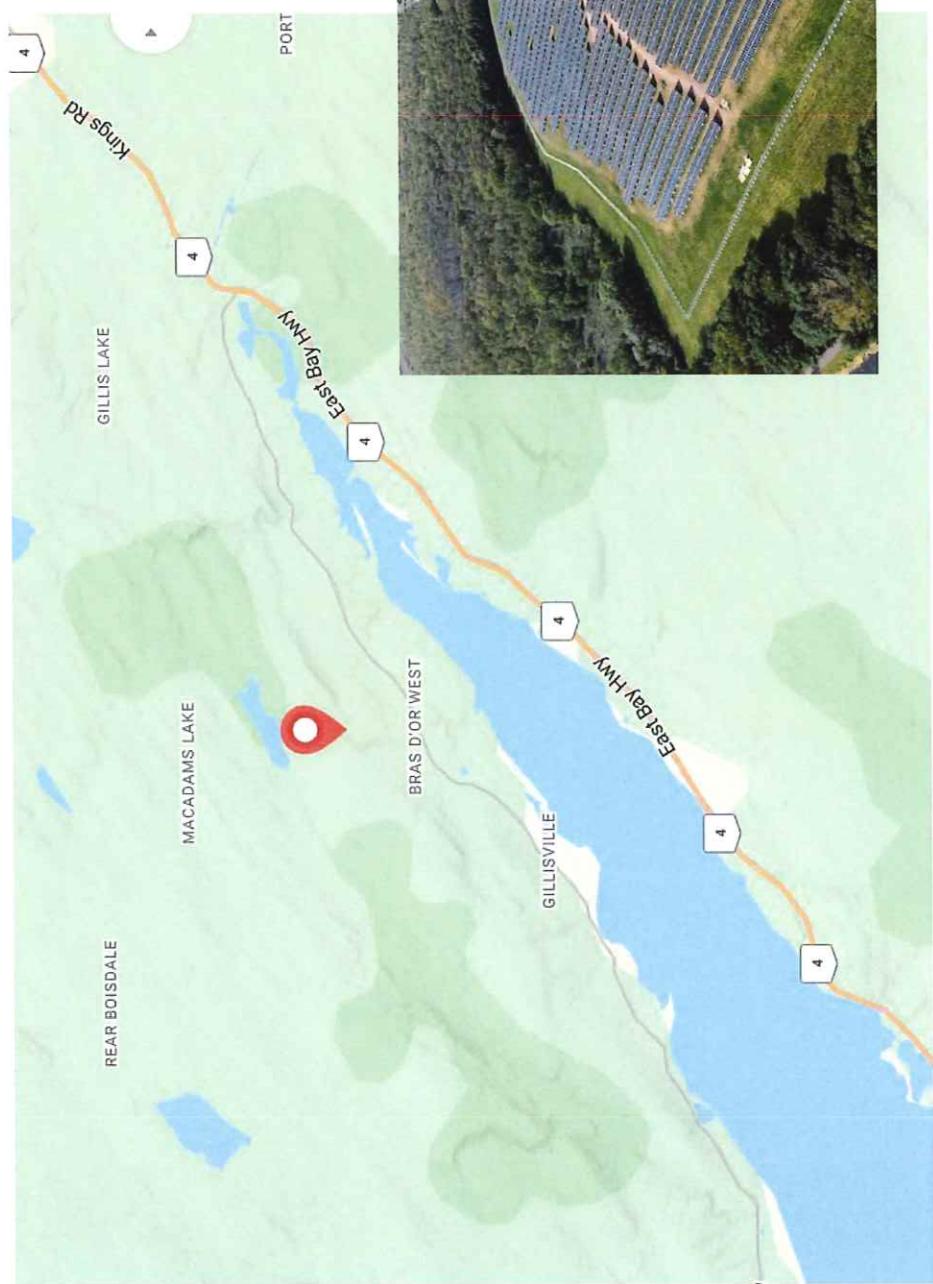
Blair has over 40 years of engineering experience with commissioning programming & designing PLC/DCS based industrial control systems. Industrial measurements & final control elements. His also has experience in electrical distribution & motor control, instrumentation & controls (P&I), metals fabrication, machining, machine sales, and more. As a design engineer, project manager, and commissioning engineer, Joel uses his diverse knowledge base and skills portfolio to quickly find solutions to any challenge.



**Andrew  
MacNeil,  
P.Eng. Senior  
Mechanical  
Engineer,  
Principal**

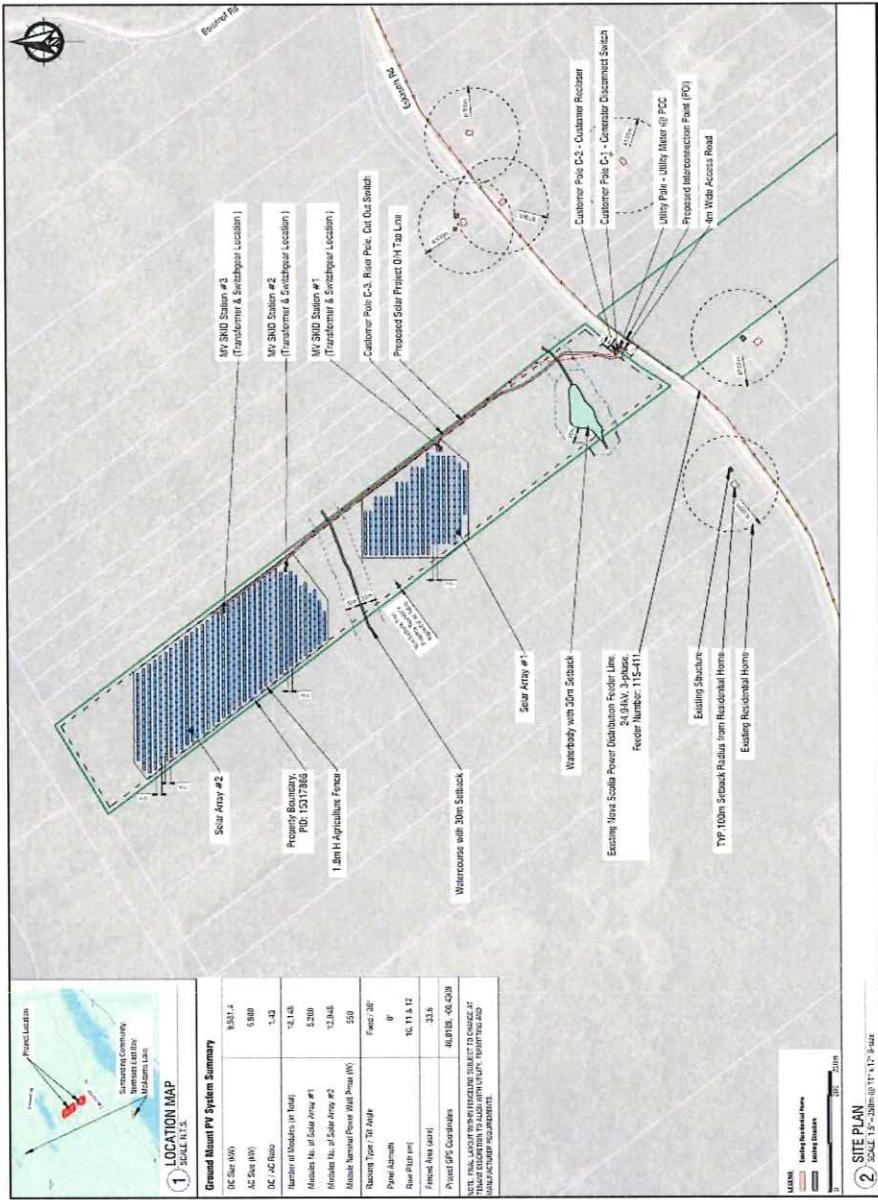
Andrew has over 15 years of mechanical engineering experience including HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, process equipment and piping, metals fabrication, commissioning and project management. He has overseen, managed and executed all aspects of projects from scoping/concept, through detailed design, construction, to final commissioning and completion. Andrew has worked in the engineering consulting, power generation and manufacturing industries.

## Eskasoni Solar Project - Site Location



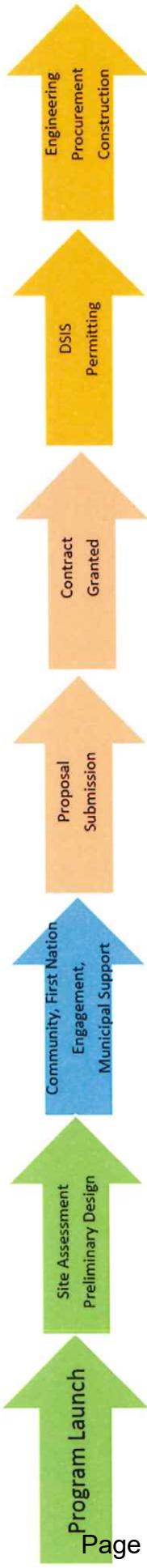
- Red dot shows the Location of the Solar Project.
- Yellow diamonds indicate Private lands with long-term Lease Agreements executed with the Landlords.

NS-53 Eskasoni Solar Project – Site Location



# Municipal Support Letter or Resolution

- ❖ The program first launched on March 1, 2024 and operates on a first-come, first-serve basis until the full 100MW is allocated. We are currently in the phase of preparing a proposal to submit to the Nova Scotia Community Solar Program for review.



- ❖ We have completed the site assessment, preliminary design and submitted Preliminary Interconnection Assessment
- ❖ We are currently working on fulfilling the program engagement requirements, which include **Community Engagement and Municipal Support**, other preliminary feasibility studies, and checking with Planner for solar permitting requirements
- ❖ Once we have completed all application requirements, we will submit a proposal submission to the province
- ❖ If selected for a contract, detailed engineering work will commence after the contract is granted; and all protocols including, but not limited to site plan review, geotechnical study, applicable visual screening, and other requirements, will be followed.

# Progress Update

Community solar projects require activities/plans in the program application process. Examples include but are not limited to:

## Community Engagement

## Municipal Support

- First Nations Engagement
- Permitting
- Geotechnical preliminary assessment
- Preliminary engineering and design
- Plans to subscribe to the community solar project
- Financing Plan
- Construction Plan
- The long-term economic viability of your project and risk assessment
- How the Project will benefit your community
- Interconnection Preliminary Assessment

# Community Engagement Plan

- ❖ For Public:
  - Public Meetings: on-line and in-person
  - Project Website Notification: <https://www.airenewable.ca/community-solar/eskasoni-solar-project/>
- Emailed or sent letter correspondence, notifying of project outline and public meeting to:
  - Residents and property owners near the site (around 100 letters)
  - The municipal staff and council
  - Local ward Councillor
- ❖ First Nations Engagement
- ❖ Marginalized Community Engagement
- ❖ Provided contact info for on-going inquiries and questions

# Progress & Subscription Plan

Below is a summary of the engagement meetings completed/scheduled for Eskasoni Solar Projects:

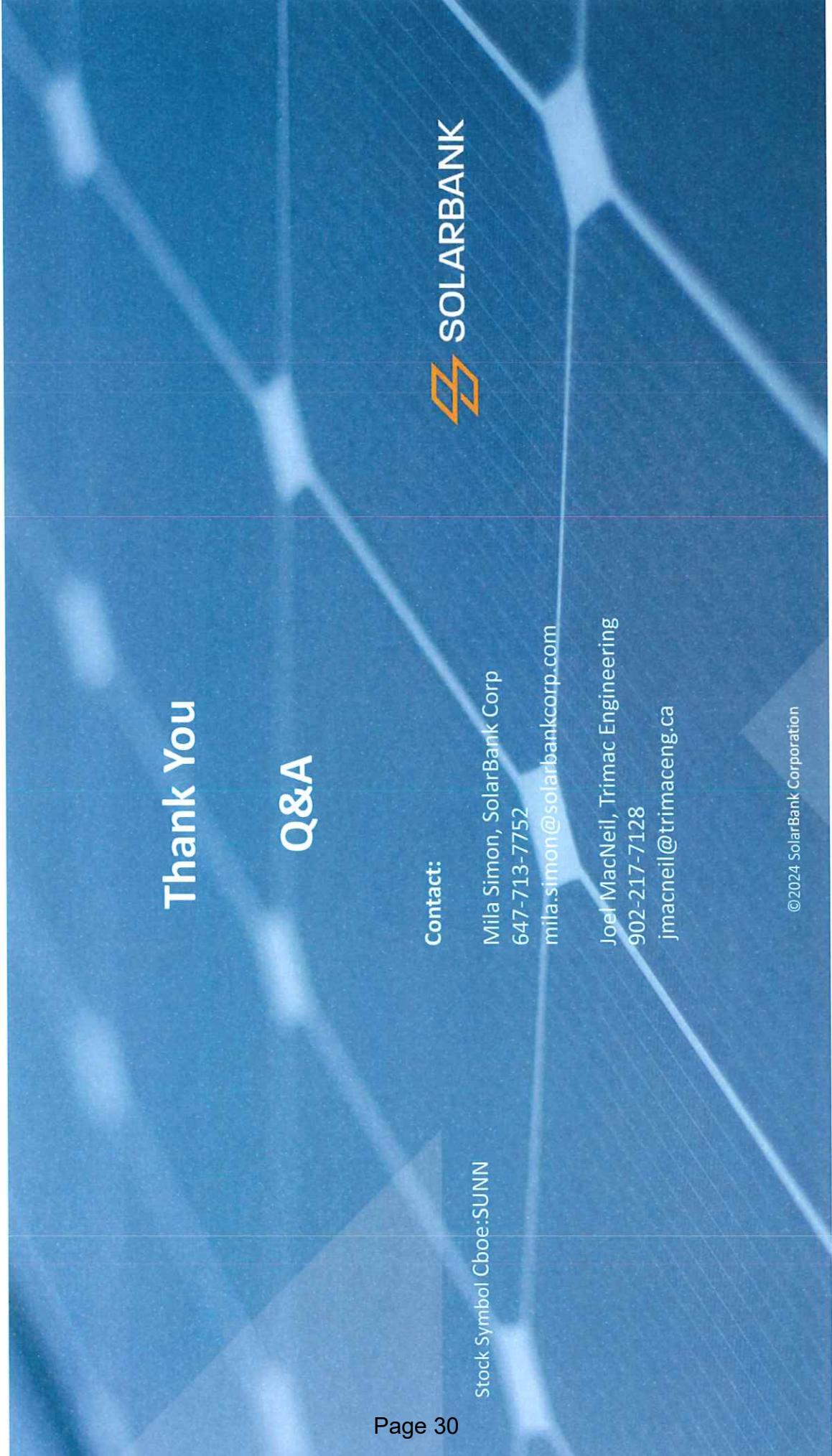
- ❖ Public Meeting #1: Sunday, November 10th, 2024 at 1 pm
- ❖ Public Meeting #2 (online): Tuesday, November 19th, 2024 at 6 pm
- ❖ Council Meeting: TBD

## Priority Subscription Plan

We are offering priority subscriptions to communities interested in green energy & energy savings

- ❖ Firstly, to projects surrounding communities and marginalized communities, such as Eskasoni local residences, low income or senior housing, First Nation community
- ❖ Second, to other communities in project adjacent areas and other marginalized communities
- ❖ Finally, to the general public and businesses for the excessive capacity

**Next Step: Municipal Support Resolution or Letter**



# Thank You

## Q&A

Contact:

Stock Symbol Cboe:SUNN

Mila Simon, SolarBank Corp

647-713-7752

[mila.simon@solarbankcorp.com](mailto:mila.simon@solarbankcorp.com)

Joel MacNeil, Trimap Engineering

902-217-7128

[jmacneil@trimaceng.ca](mailto:jmacneil@trimaceng.ca)



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Cape Breton Regional Municipality  
Regional Council  
320 Esplanade  
Sydney, NS B1P 7B9

**SAMPLE!**

Solarbank  
803-505 Consumers Rd  
Toronto, ON M2J 4V8

Re: Letter of Support for Submission to Nova Scotia Community Solar Program

To Whom it May Concern:

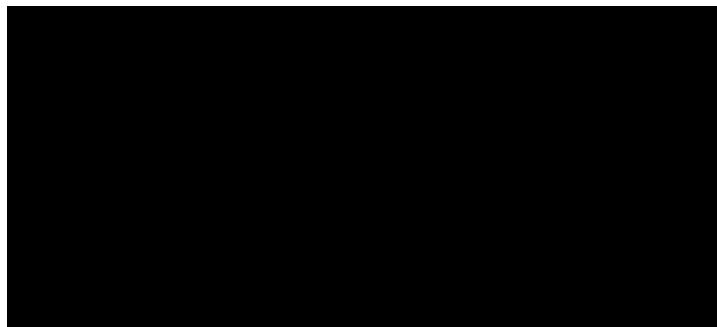
Please accept this letter on behalf of CBRM Council in support of the proposed Community Solar Project, presented by 4579229 NOVA SCOTIA LIMITED (Enon Project), 4601981 NOVA SCOTIA LIMITED (Sydney Project) and SolarBank Corp., scheduled for submission to the Nova Scotia Community Solar Program.

As outlined in the presentation, the SolarBank-Enon and Sydney projects promise to provide clean, renewable energy. Members of CBRM Council have reviewed the proposed project's outline, including the background information, site location details, community engagement plan, and the benefits it offers.

We are aware that a Municipal support resolution or letter is a prerequisite for project submission. The CBRM Council supports this initiative as presented, finding it in alignment with our community's values and objectives, particularly appreciating the dedication to community engagement.

Should you or any members of your team have any questions regarding this letter or CBRM Council support, please contact us at 902-563-5010.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular box used to redact a signature.

# CBRM REGIONAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK UPDATE

2024-25 Q3 Report for CBRM Council  
March 2025



Regional  
Enterprise  
Network

CBRM



# CBRM FORWARD

Collaborative Community Planning

Economic Development Strategy

PAGE

# Collaborative Community Planning

# RM FORWARD

Economic Development Strategy

## CBRM's Economic Development Mission:

Together, we are building community, growing economic opportunity, and fostering an environment where business and residents thrive.

## CBRM's Economic Development Vision:

The CBRM is a hub of economic opportunity and prosperity.



# **CBRM Regional Enterprise Network**

## *Operator – the Cape Breton Partnership*



### **MISSION**

To support the growth of Unama'ki - Cape Breton's economy through the sustainable attraction and retention of investment, population and innovation.

### **VISION**

A stronger and more prosperous Unama'ki - Cape Breton that leads the surrounding region into the future.

**PROMOTE** Our Island as a great place to live, work, and invest.

**GROW** A culture that values and celebrates creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and entrepreneurship.

**CONNECT** Entrepreneurs and companies to the resources they need to succeed.



# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## What is the CBRM REN?

- Regional Enterprise Networks (RENS) lead collaborative economic development initiatives throughout Nova Scotia, in partnership with municipal, First Nations, and provincial funders
- REPs were established in 2014, the CBRM REN administered by the Cape Breton Partnership was established in 2019
- REPs are business-led and business-facing, and operate in partnership with governments, non-profits, and private-sector organizations
- CBRM REN funding is cost-shared by the CBRM and the Government of Nova Scotia, and leveraged by the Cape Breton Partnership for additional benefit



# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## Leveraged Investment

### CBRM REN Core Services:

- Sector Development
- Investment Attraction
- Business Planning & Advising
- Business Growth
- Succession Planning
- Immigration Consultation & Engagement
- Human Resources Advisory
- Creative Economy Development
- Marketing & Communications

Annual  
Municipal Investment  
in CBRM REN:  
\$300,000  
(2019-current)

+

Annual  
Provincial Investment  
in CBRM REN:  
\$300,000  
(2019-current)



# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## Leveraged Investment

Leveraged CBRM REN  
Funding to Provide  
Additional Services &  
Initiatives to CBRM

Page 38

- Rail Study
- Atlantic Immigration Program
- Nova Scotia Nominee Program
- SMED / 5S Training
- Louisbourg Project with Build NS
- CBU Transportation Pilot
- CanExport Projects
- Connector Program
- LMI Dashboard
- Mitacs Accelerate Program
- Destination Canada Program
- Creative Sector supporting funding
- Green Energy Engagement Initiative





# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## Board of Directors

The following private sector business leaders make up the CBRM REN Board:

- **Ron Blinkhorn** - Casino Nova Scotia (Chair)
- **Tracey Boutilier** - Vibe Creative Group
- **Brad Jacobs** - Colbourne Auto Group
- **Shaowei Xu** - SW East International Trading & Consulting
- **Howie Doiron** - Lindsay Construction
- **Darrell Gallant** - Marine Atlantic
- **Nicole Morrison** - Mabel Systems
- **Mary Jane Morrison** - Cape Breton University

# **CBRM Regional Enterprise Network**

Liaison Oversight Committee (CBRM REN LOC)

- **Steve Gillespie** - CBRM Council (Chair)
- **Dave Mackeigan** - CBRM Council
- **Jennifer Campbell** - CBRM Chief Financial Officer
- **Tyson Simms** - CBRM Director of Planning & Development
- **Donald Ferguson** - Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration
- **Evan Williams** - Nova Scotia Department of Growth & Development



# Supporting CBRM Businesses

Initiatives enabled by the CBRM REN



CAPE BRETON  
**CONNECTOR**  
PROGRAM

Cape Breton - Unama'ki  
**CREATE**

EntrepreneurCB.com

MICRO-LOAN PROGRAM  
Empowering Female Entrepreneurs



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Cape Breton  
Unama'ki  
Excellence  
Awards



WELCOME TO  
Human Resources  
**Cape Breton**

Services  
Safety  
**FIRST**  
Cape Breton

Immigration  
Services  
CAPE BRETON **JOB BOARD**



© CBRM



Cape Breton  
Partnership



© NOVA SCOTIA

- CBDC Workshop at CBU: **October 11**
- Charlotte Street Grand Opening: **October 18**
- Cape Breton Partnership Investor's Summit: **October 24**
- Etuaptmunk/Two-Eyed Seeing Workshop: **October 31**
- Community Dialogue on Sustainable Futures in Unama'ki – Cape Breton: **November 5**

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# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## Key Activities & Events in Q3

- Lunch & Learn with BDC: **November 27**
- Regional Assessment for Offshore Wind Workshop: **December 6**
- Coffee & Connect in CBRM: **December 9**
- Sustainable Tourism Plan Engagement Session: **December 11**
- Cape Breton Eagles / Centre 200 Economic & Community Impact studies
- Working with CBRM Public Works and Community Development Officer on a Louisbourg Waterfront Development project currently
- The Whale House café in Downtown Sydney, alongside Multicultural Association of Cape Breton
- Hollywood Executive tour to filming locations around the Island
- Film & TV shows being shot on-location in October and November

**Lunch & Learn\*** with bdc



**Adam MacNeil**  
President and CEO, Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network  
and Vice-Chair, Nova Scotia Economic Development Corporation

**Steve Pitt**  
Vice-President, Business Development, bdc

Join us for a special lunch and learn session, featuring two key speakers from bdc, to discuss the opportunities for your business to benefit from the growth of the offshore wind energy sector in Nova Scotia. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the potential for your business to benefit from this exciting new industry.

**When:** November 27, 2024  
11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
Port of Sydney's Kaventugh Room

**Cost:** \$100.00 per person



Total economic output generated by Centre 200, 2023:

- > \$7.59 Million
- > 67 jobs created
- > 64 of the jobs created in Unama'ki - Cape Breton
- > \$1.35 Million in new money coming to the Unama'ki - Cape Breton economy from 2024-2025 through ticket sales for Cape Breton Eagles games and other events.

# **Cape Breton Eagles / C200 Studies**

## Community & Economic Impact Studies

- Studies took place from July – October 2024, working with Turner Drake & Partners
- Quantified impact of both the Eagles hockey club and Centre 200 area on the CBRM, Cape Breton, and Nova Scotia
- 2 reports were produced and are available to read on [CapeBretonPartnership.com](http://CapeBretonPartnership.com)

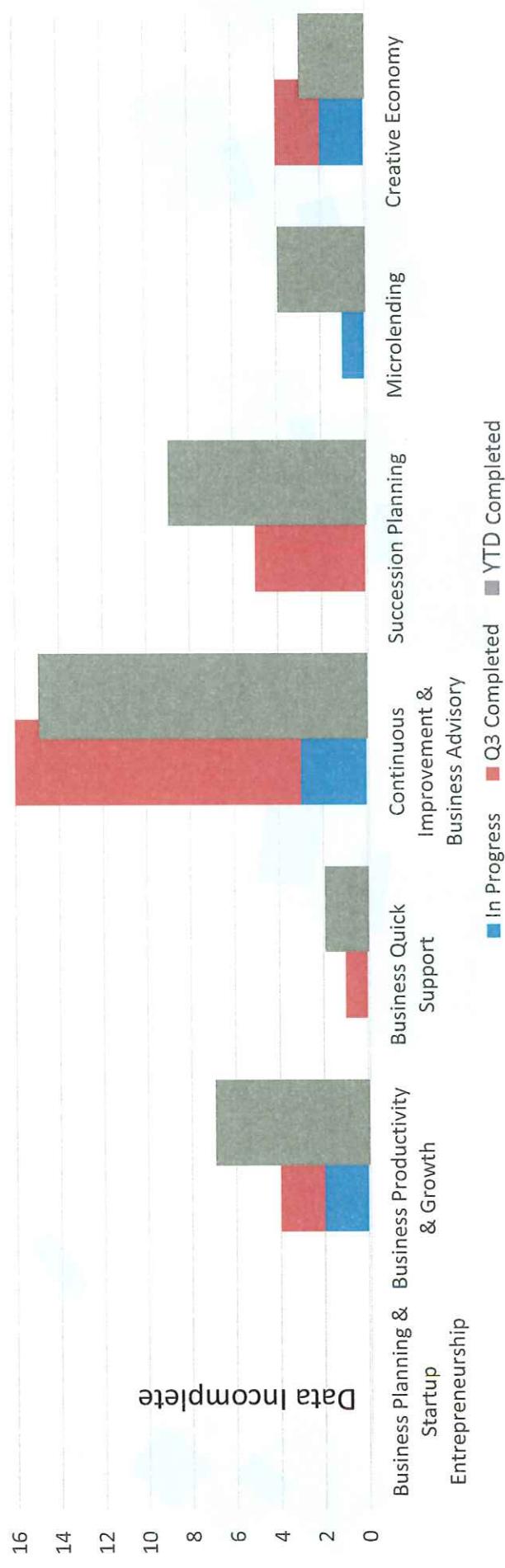
### **Key Findings – Community Impact Survey**

- 87% see Centre 200 as vital to Cape Breton
- 39.5% believe the arena contributes to the local economy
- Centre 200 in CBRM: **\$3.92 million**
- Combined on NS economy: \$7.59 million, 67 jobs  
**(64 in Cape Breton)**
- 79% attend games in-person only vs watching on TV

# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

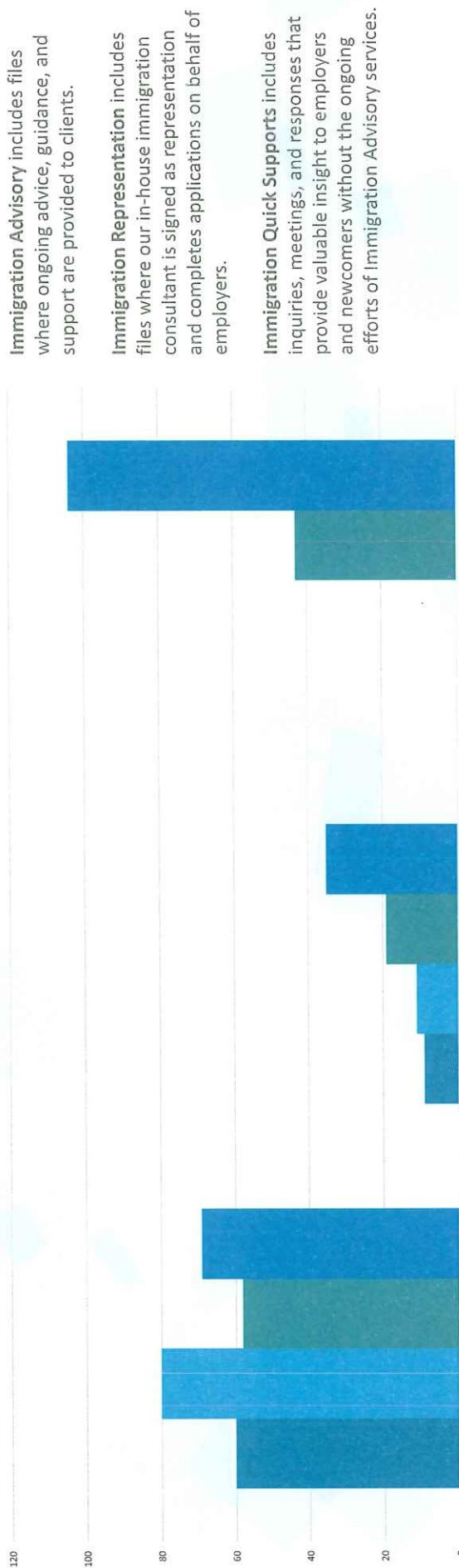
## Q3 Business Support, Sustainability & Growth Services

(From Addendum 1 from the 2024/25 Q3 Report)



# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## Immigration Services



# **CBRM Regional Enterprise Network**

## People & Labour Market Team: Immigration Support



**Kelly Mackinnon**  
Labour Market & Immigration Advisor

- Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant
- Helps navigate the immigration system and select appropriate programs
- Supports all types and levels of immigration programs
- Works in partnership with Labour, Skills and Immigration and ACOA
- Provides support on Atlantic Immigration Program & the Provincial Nominee Program
- Hosts information Sessions for employers and newcomers
- Labour, Skills and Immigration position
- Located in the Cape Breton Partnership office
- Supports employers to navigate Provincial programs
- Direct contact with LSI



**Dani Mombourquette**  
Immigration Engagement Coordinator

- Works in partnership with Labour, Skills and Immigration and ACOA
- Provides support on Atlantic Immigration Program & the Provincial Nominee Program
- Hosts information Sessions for employers and newcomers
- Labour, Skills and Immigration position
- Located in the Cape Breton Partnership office
- Supports employers to navigate Provincial programs
- Direct contact with LSI



**Kris Kolanko**  
Community Navigator, Cape Breton

- Labour, Skills and Immigration position
- Located in the Cape Breton Partnership office
- Supports employers to navigate Provincial programs
- Direct contact with LSI

**Immigration**  
Services



# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## People & Labour Market Team: Labour Support

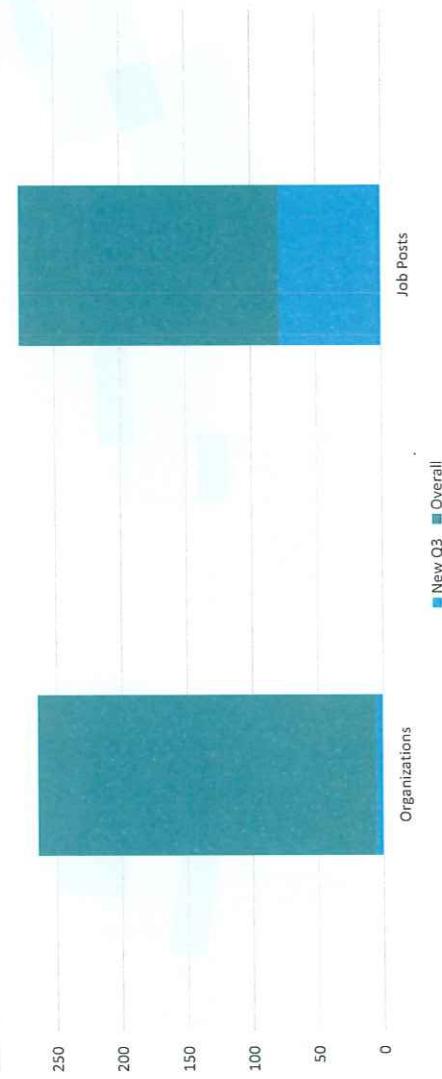


### Human Resources Services

**Jessica MacDonald**  
Human Resources Advisor

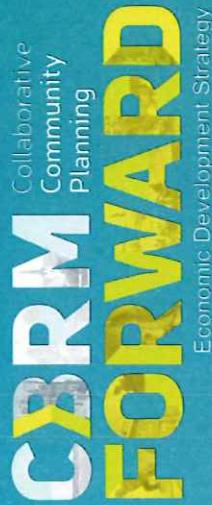
- Provides insight for employers into Human Resources practices and policies
- Focused on legislative compliance, recruitment and retention

### CAPE BRETON JOB BOARD Metrics:



# **CBRM Forward: CBRM REN & Economic Development**

The CBRM Forward Economic Development Strategy was adopted by Council on August 23rd, 2022.



## **Updates:**

- Execution of this strategy is not just the responsibility of the CBRM REN team
  - Many great strides have already been made by the CBRM's staff on this, with great collaboration
  - Partner agencies are also critical – CB Local Immigration Partnership, CB Regional Chamber, and others.
- There has been progress on 75% of the strategy's action items after 2 years
- CBRM Forward forms the backbone of the CBRM REN's strategic plan, and informs our business plan
  - Annual Business Plan and quarterly updates all available on the Partnership website
- A second CBRM Moving Forward stakeholder meeting was held at CBU on August 14, 2024 focusing on the strategic direction of the University and how other regional stakeholders can participate in CBRM-wide growth based around CBU's growth as an institution



# Economic Development Strategy

## (From Business Plan) - Implementation Plan - Progress on Recommendations

CBRM Economic Development Strategy Goals		# of Recommended Actions	Actions Started / In Progress / Completed	Actions Not Started or Unknown Status	Progress Visualization
Economic Development Capacity	Ensure the CBRM has the necessary tools, processes, and resources to attract and retain investment	18	14	4	
Leveraging Local Strengths	Grow the economic potential of the CBRM's strategic advantages. Foster opportunities in tourism, marine development, culture, entrepreneurship, postsecondary education, and as Cape Breton's urban hub	22	16	6	
Economic Opportunity through Population Growth	Address workforce development needs, grow the local consumer base and ensure a sustainable tax base	7	5	2	
Strategic Partnerships	Collaborate on areas of mutual benefit to maximize impact and return	6	4	2	
Optimizing regional Projects	Support and maximize the economic return to the local economy for regional projects	5	4	1	
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>15</b>	



## Notable Recent Projects

1. Green Energy Engagement Program



2. Distant Location Incentive / Film & TV Productions



3. Cape Breton Rail Study



4. Northside Business Park



5. Green Cement Study – Sydney Harbour



6. By the Bay Properties

# CBRM Regional Enterprise Network

## Getting the Word Out

### RADIO



- Tyler Cole Interview (October 30)
- Bill Culp Interview (January 23rd, 2025)
- More to come!

### PODCAST



**102**  
+17

**1825**  
+456

**2286**  
+478

**Downloads**  
All Time

**Unique Listeners**  
All Time

**Followers**  
Apple + Spotify

**Top Listener Locations**  
(All Time)

Canada (93%)

United States (4.7%)

United Kingdom (0.5%)

Toronto (5%)

### DIGITAL KIOSK



### PULSE

**PULSE**  
Partnership



Partnership  
Cape Breton

NOVA SCOTIA

Partnership  
Cape Breton

CBRM

## Your CBRM REN Economic Development Officer team:

### Lan Zheng

Economic Development Officer - CBRM

[lan@capebretonpartnership.com](mailto:lan@capebretonpartnership.com)

### Tyler Cole

Economic Development Officer - CBRM

[tcole@capebretonpartnership.com](mailto:tcole@capebretonpartnership.com)



Scan the QR code to download Lan & Tyler's contact information, and to learn more about the CBRM REN





CAPE BRETON  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

CBRM

Regional  
Enterprise  
Network



Cape Breton  
Partnership

[capebretonpartnership.com/cbrmren](http://capebretonpartnership.com/cbrmren)





## CAPE BRETON REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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**TO:** Mayor Clarke and Members of CBRM Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Demetri Kachafanas, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** February 24, 2025

**RE:** **Adoption of Wayfinding Strategy for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

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### ORIGIN

CBRM Staff led initiative.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that CBRM Council adopt the wayfinding strategy prepared by Fathom Studio, as set out in Attachment A, and approach to wayfinding and implementation, as outlined in the Discussion and Financial Implications sections of this report.

### BACKGROUND

CBRM has lacked a consistent wayfinding system that connects current residents, new residents, and visitors. This is significant as CBRM is a large municipality consisting of 110 communities across 8 former municipal units, 2 Mi'kmaq communities, multiple provincial parks, a national historic site, other tourism assets and community facilities spread across a large geographic area.

Several policy and strategy documents cite the need for improved wayfinding in CBRM as a program worth investing in. These plans include the CBRM Forward Municipal Planning Strategy, CBRM In Motion, CBRM Accessibility Plan 2022 as well as plans from partners such as the Downtown Sydney Urban Core Plan of 2017, and the #Riseagain2030 Cape Breton Island Destination Development Strategy.

In 2022/23 the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) provided federal funding for a comprehensive wayfinding strategy under the Rediscover Main Streets Program. Through a tender process, Fathom Studio was contracted to work with CBRM staff to complete a new comprehensive wayfinding strategy for the municipality.

## **DISCUSSION**

### *What is Wayfinding?*

Wayfinding is the practice of helping people find their way through public spaces. Signage plays a big role in wayfinding, making places more “legible” to residents, visitors and newcomers. Effective wayfinding should anticipate needs and answer many questions that people have about new environments. For example, a good wayfinding system should help visitors with questions including: 1) is this the best/correct route? 2) have I arrived at my destination? 3) What destinations should I know about in this new place?

Wayfinding is a set of strategies to help point residents and visitors in the right direction. People who return to the same places, day after day, month after month, often do not require assistance finding their way. However, visitors and newcomers who are looking for a destination in an unfamiliar place will need some cues to get to their intended destination.

Wayfinding is also about destinations, what name to use, when, and whether to use names or symbols or both. Including every possible destination would be impossible, as such wayfinding is about prioritizing what destinations to include, at what point in the process, and when, where, and what elements of the system they may appear on.

### *The Need for Physical Wayfinding in a Digital Age?*

Digital wayfinding tools are a supplement to conventional media such as signage rather than a replacement for physical wayfinding options. Implementing a quality wayfinding system allows residents and visitors to navigate by observing their surroundings, this helps develop a sense of place and foster an appreciation and knowledge of their surroundings. Wayfinding contributes to a welcoming environment enabling visitors to arrive at their destination safely, find the services they need or want, and leave with a positive perception of the community. Further, for residents, signage can instill a sense of community pride and raise awareness of less known amenities and attractions, especially in a large community like CBRM.

### *Best Practices in Wayfinding*

Best practice in wayfinding is to use as few signs as possible while maintaining functionality. This includes minimizing the use of confirmation signage and ensuring directional signs are only placed at key decision points along the way to a destination. It is also important to ensure new signs replace existing signs and old signage is removed at the time of installation. This approach ensures signs are up to date and in good repair without duplicative or cluttered messaging.

Effective signage design and placement ensures signage is concise, legible, relevant, and useful. Symbols or pictograms used should aid in understanding and should be limited to symbols that are in wide use and recognizable. Colour may be used to reinforce messaging and may contribute to improved brand recognition and sense of place. Signs and navigation should meet accessible design standards, including placing signs at legible height, with high contrast text, and simple messaging.

### *Review of CBRM’s Current Wayfinding*

Fathom Studio performed an audit of CBRM’s wayfinding infrastructure which greatly reinforced the need for a comprehensive wayfinding strategy. Key findings from Fathom Studio’s initial audit included:

- 1) Current CBRM gateway identification signs do not incorporate all elements of the Municipality’s current brand or colours;

- 2) Community identification signs vary widely in shape, size, style and brand, sometimes even within a single community. There is also inconsistency in placement of signs at community boarders and boundaries. Some gateway signs are in significant disrepair;
- 3) Road Signs are in place however often there is inconsistency between styles. Other times, there are duplicate signs in close proximity;
- 4) Park identification signs vary in style and repair. Some are very attractive but do not feature CBRM branding. Signs are often installed parallel to traffic and do not assist residents and visitors searching for a particular destination; and
- 5) Similar to park identification signs, facility identification signs vary in size, style and appearance.

#### *Branding and Sign Hierarchy*

Branding did not form a component of the wayfinding strategy. Based on feedback from staff, Fathom Studio kept sign branding minimal to ensure signage remains flexible and relevant in the event of updates to municipal branding. Flexibility granted through a minimally branded sign type allows easy integration updates to brand, colouring or community symbols. Should Council proceed with a review of municipal branding in the future, signage adopted and installed under the wayfinding strategy will allow for changes that reflect updated or new municipal branding and design.

The wayfinding strategy focuses on the hierarchy of signage, emphasizing scale and form to improve navigation and accessibility. The strategy provides guidelines for signage installation, ensuring consistency and functionality across the community. This framework enhances wayfinding, adapts as the community grows and allows for future changes in branding.

#### *Choosing Destinations for Wayfinding*

When choosing destinations within CBRM, staff and Fathom were selective, prioritizing direct users of community assets, both CBRM-owned and otherwise, that are accessible, useful, important year-round, and available to a broad audience. Destinations that are of recreational, cultural, historical, and or utilitarian importance were also targeted.

#### *Implementation of Deliverables from Wayfinding Strategy*

In addition to the work completed as part of the audit of CBRM's existing signage, Fathom Studio prepared a comprehensive wayfinding strategy that allows for effective implementation. Notably Fathom Studio has identified:

- 1) An entirely new sign family for use in wayfinding within the CBRM;
- 2) A detailed location plan of all 339 recommended gateway, directional and facility identification signs;
- 3) Fabrication specifications for each sign type;
- 4) Complete design for all initially proposed signs;
- 5) A guide for how to update the wayfinding system to reflect our community as it evolves; and
- 6) Initial estimates of costs for each sign type.

#### *Next Steps – Approach to Wayfinding in CBRM and Proposed Implementation*

Staff recommend that Council adopt an implementation approach to wayfinding that is phased, beginning with high visibility gateway signs, and replacement of missing or worn destination signs. Staff recommend an ad-hoc approach to replacement of signage, whereby signs are replaced on an as-needed basis when they are due for replacement. Staff will also explore opportunities for funding as signage is replaced. The strategy further recommends:

- 1) Replacement of Gateway Signage at Entry Points to the Municipality
  - a. Seek funding for fabrication and installation of wayfinding system starting with major gateway signs to establish wayfinding signage look and feel as visitors enter the CBRM.
- 2) Identification of Initial Priority Signs
  - a. Identify current gaps in wayfinding signage (missing facility identification or destination signs).
  - b. Identify signs that are redundant, at end of life and or in poor repair.
  - c. Grouping wayfinding sign installations by region to ensure that wayfinding interventions are complete, including all navigation and destination signage.
- 3) Installation of Wayfinding Signage
  - a. Install new signs at Municipal Gateways.
  - b. Install missing or replace deteriorated facility identification/destination signage.
  - c. Begin installation of wayfinding signs by region or cluster in a phased approach.
  - d. Continue to replace signs with new sign typologies as old signs reach end of life and are due for replacement.
- 4) Maintain New Wayfinding System
  - a. Inspect signs for wear, visual obstructions, and damage annually.
  - b. Ensure that wayfinding signs or pathways are updated as routes, destinations or other changes occur.
  - c. Use wayfinding strategy to determine appropriate wayfinding for new community assets as they are developed.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The level of community engagement was consultation through in-person meetings with stakeholder organizations and an open house session held at the James McConnell Memorial Library. Additionally, Fathom Studio held consultation with the Municipality's neighbouring Mi'kmaq communities.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Development of the wayfinding strategy has no further budget implications. Funding for Fathom Studio to undertake this work was funded through a combination of planning department professional services and a significant contribution from ACOA under the Rediscover Main Streets Program.

Installation and maintenance of a cohesive wayfinding system requires additional budgetary commitments. Fathom Studio's initial estimate for the cost to implement all proposed signs in this plan is \$1,872,450.00. This includes the fabrication and installation of 339 signs throughout the municipality. Over one third of the total amount is allocated for major gateway signs welcoming residents and visitors to CBRM. The remainder is allocated to facility identification signs, including navigational signage throughout the municipality. A preliminary breakdown of anticipated costs for signage is provided as Attachment B.

To ease budgetary implications, staff recommend phasing new signage in over time and accelerating implementation when external funding can be obtained. Funding from other levels of government may be sought for signs with significance to tourism, including major gateway signs. Fathom Studio noted

most signs come with a five-to-ten-year warranty and often remain in service for far longer. By amortizing directional, navigation and facility signs over this time, staff recommend an annual maintenance and implementation budget for navigational signage at under \$150,000.00 per annum.

Costs may increase when facilities and sites are added beyond the scope of the initial location plan proposed by Fathom Studio, as new content would require modification or the addition of new signs and supportive navigation signage.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Council may choose to adopt the wayfinding strategy and recommended approach, as set out in this report, subject to modifications.
2. Council may choose not to adopt the wayfinding strategy and recommended approach.

#### **ATTACHMENTS** - Circulated separately

**Attachment A:** Wayfinding Strategy Report

**Attachment B:** Preliminary Breakdown of Anticipated Costs for Signage

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#### **Report Prepared by:**

William Roy, Community Development Coordinator, Planning and Development 902.563.5072

Tyson Simms, Director, Planning and Development 902.574.1936



# CBRM

A Community of Communities

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**TO:** Mayor Clarke and CBRM Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Demetri Kachafanas, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** February 25, 2025

**SUBJECT:** **New Staff Appointment – Assistant Building Official**

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## **ORIGIN**

This report originates from staff.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) Council appoint Kyle Reynolds as Assistant Building Official responsible for the Administration and Enforcement of the CBRM Minimum Standards By-law (M-100), the CBRM Vacant and Derelict Building By-law (V-300), the CBRM Swimming Pool Fences By-law (S-600), the CBRM Licensing By-law for Shared Dwellings (L-100), and Part XV of the Municipal Government Act dealing with Dangerous or Unsightly Premises.

## **BACKGROUND**

Assistant Building Officials are required to perform the same duties as the Municipality's Property Maintenance Inspectors, which is to administer and enforce a variety of CBRM By-laws and the Dangerous or Unsightly Premises provisions of the Municipal Government Act. Following a recent competition, Kyle Reynolds was hired to fill a vacant position with the Building Services Division of the Planning and Development Department.

## **DISCUSSION**

Kyle Reynolds has accepted a full-time position as Assistant Building Official with the Building Services Division of the Planning and Development Department. In accordance with the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations, before a Building Official can be appointed by Council the candidate must first possess a valid diploma from the Nova Scotia Building Code Training and Certification Board and must be a member in good standing of the Nova Scotia Building Officials Association. Following successful completion of the required training program, anticipated in the

summer of 2025, staff will return to Council with a formal request that Kyle Reynolds be appointed as a Building Official for the Municipality.

During the interim, Kyle Reynolds will continue the code training program and assist the Building Services Division through administration and enforcement of the CBRM Minimum Standards By-law (M-100), the CBRM Vacant and Derelict Building By-law (V-300), the CBRM Swimming Pool Fences By-law (S-600), the CBRM Licensing By-law for Shared Dwellings (L-100), and Part XV of the Municipal Government Act dealing with Dangerous or Unsightly Premises.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications associated with this report. The subject position (Assistant Building Official) has been approved under the 2024-2025 budget for Planning and Development.

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Building Code Act, Administration and Enforcement of Act in Municipality, Subsection 5(2).*

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.

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Report Prepared by: Tyson Simms, Director, Planning and Development 902.574.1936

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320 Esplanade Sydney, Nova Scotia, B1P 7B9 902-563-5010

Sydney, Nova Scotia, B1P 7B9

902-563-5010

**To:** Mayor Clarke and Committee of the Whole  
**From:** Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk  
**Date:** March 4, 2025  
**Subject:** Vacancies on Various Committees

## Background

As directed by Council at its December 2024 meeting, expressions of interest for citizen positions on various internal and external committees were publicly advertised in the Cape Breton Post. Notice was also placed on the CBRM website, and social media. The deadline for submissions was February 3, 2025, with the exception of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Accessibility which have been extended.

At the February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, meeting, COTW recommended Council:

- Defer all applications for the Library Board for additional time for review
- Defer all applications for Police Commission for additional time for review

Applications for Police Commission and Library Board were as follows:

Committee	Positions Available	Applications
Police Commission	Three	6
Library Board	Two	9

A confidential matrix with applications was provided to Committee of the Whole on February 4, 2025, and an overview of applications occurred during an in-camera session for protection of personal and confidential information, and the above applications were deferred for further review.

## Next Steps:

An overview of the applications will be conducted confidentially for protection of personal information. COTW can then defer the applications or refer the applications to Council. Determination of the appointments will be made in open session, and applicants will be

advised of their approved appointment. Following their acceptance, the appointments will be made public.

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [www.cbrm.ns.ca](http://www.cbrm.ns.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902-563-5010.

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Report Prepared by: Christa Dicks, Municipal Clerk 902-563-5010

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Active transportation projects promote non-motorized modes of travel, such as walking and cycling, by developing trails, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. These projects enhance pedestrian safety, improve connectivity, and encourage healthier, more sustainable transportation options.

Projects currently applied for through the Provincial GRID fund, Federal Rural Transit Solutions Fund, and Provincial Connect2 funds.

Project	Description
<b>ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS</b>	
Washbrook Greenway	New Active Transportation Trail
Kings Rd Sidewalk (Greenhill to Parkwood)	Pedestrian Safety Improvement
Victoria Rd RRFB's	Pedestrian Safety Improvement
Victoria Rd Bicycle Lane	Bicycle Lane Pilot Project
Active Transportation Sidewalks	Sidewalk connections identified in AT Plan
· Towerview Place (Civic 50 to Alexandra)	
· Young St (Borden to Victoria)	
· Hospital St (Cabot to Centennial Rink)	
· Argosy St (Borden to Victoria)	
· Brookdale St (Manse to Victoria)	
· Westmount Rd (College to Fairhaven)	
· Keltic Dr (Bridge to Existing)	
Baird St (King to Holic)	Paving existing gravel AT trail (Grant)
Coal Town Trail Paving	Pedestrian Safety Improvement
Kings Rd Corridor Safety Improvements	

**Total Cost \$4,132,240**

**CBRM Cost \$270,944**

Project ID: LI-25-5

The Government of Canada has allocated \$500 million to be spent over the next 5 years on Active Transportation Projects through the Federal Active Transportation Fund with a 60% Federal cost share.

CBRM has a pending application worth \$23M for projects in fiscal years 2026 to 2030.

Project Details Are Below:

1. The Sydney River Multi-Use Path - \$11M spread over fiscal 28/29 and 29/30
2. 25km of Curb and Sidewalk rehabilitation - \$10M spread over 5 years
3. 300 Crosswalk Improvements (Signage, Paint, RRFB's, etc.) - \$1.7M over 5 years
4. 150 Bench replacements and new installations - \$0.3M spread over 5 years.

The intent for this funding is to leverage federal monies to further improve and expand the existing Active Transportation System in CBRM. All projects will align with the CBRM Forward Active Transportation Master Plan and include additional focus on improving connectivity to CBRM transit.

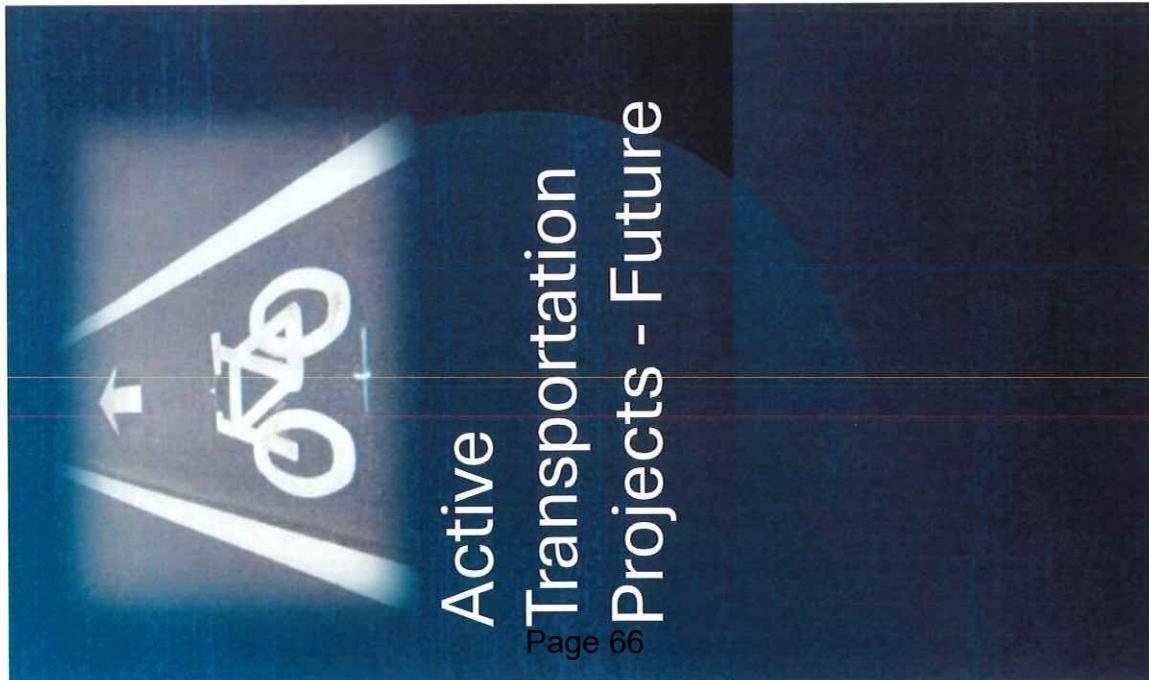




FIGURE 3.13 Sydney River Multi-Use Trail Options

**Off-Rail Line Option**

	Trail Length	3600 m		
	Retaining Wall Length	550 m		
Item	Quantity	Units	Unit Price	Total
Clearing & Grubbing	2.304	ha	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 69,120.00
Base Fill Volume (from Civil3D)	51000	cu m	\$ 50.00	\$ 2,550,000.00
Base Cut Volume (from Civil3D)	4090	cu m	\$ 12.00	\$ 49,080.00
Type 1 Structural Fill (150mm)	2808	cu m	\$ 45.00	\$ 126,360.00
Type 2 Structural Fill (250mm)	4680	cu m	\$ 45.00	\$ 210,600.00
Retaining Wall (550x2m high)	1100	sq m	\$ 400.00	\$ 440,000.00
Railings	550	m	\$ 150.00	\$ 82,500.00
Asphalt Path (3.2m)	576	cu m	\$ 600.00	\$ 345,600.00
Light Standards @ 30m OC	120	ea	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 840,000.00
Interpretive Rest Stations	4	ea	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
Storm Drains	20	ea	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Gravel Shoulder (1m each side)	1080	cu m	\$ 45.00	\$ 48,600.00
150mm Topsoil and Hydroseed	5040	sq m	\$ 15.00	\$ 75,600.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>				\$ 5,077,460.00
<b>Estimated Land Costs</b>				\$ 2,000,000.00
<b>Contingency (20%)</b>				\$ 1,415,492.00
<b>Inflation for building in phases (10%)</b>				\$ 707,746.00
<b>Design and Construction Admin (15%)</b>				\$ 973,942.80
<b>Legal/Admin for Land Acquisition</b>				\$ 200,000.00
<b>Total (no Tax)</b>				<b>\$ 10,374,640.80</b>

**On-Rail Line Option**

	Trail Length	3250 m		
Item	Quantity	Units	Unit Price	Total
Remove/Dispose Rail Ties	3250	m	\$ 12.00	\$ 39,000.00
Type 1 Structural Fill (150mm)	2535	cu m	\$ 45.00	\$ 114,075.00
Asphalt Path (3.2m)	520	cu m	\$ 600.00	\$ 312,000.00
Light Standards @ 30m OC	108	ea	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 756,000.00
Interpretive Rest Stations	4	ea	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
Gravel Shoulder (1m each side)	975	cu m	\$ 45.00	\$ 43,875.00
150mm Topsoil and Hydroseed	4550	sq m	\$ 15.00	\$ 68,250.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>				\$ 1,533,200.00
<b>Contingency (20%)</b>				\$ 306,640.00
<b>Design and Construction Admin (15%)</b>				\$ 275,976.00
<b>Land Lease over 10 years @2500/yr/km</b>				\$ 81,250.00
<b>Total (no Tax)</b>				<b>\$ 2,197,066.00</b>

# STAFF REPORT

**Date:** February 14, 2025

**To:** Mayor and Council

**From:** Jennifer Campbell, CPA, CA Chief Financial Officer

**Re:** Low-income tax exemption policy

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## **BACKGROUND:**

The current Low-income tax exemption policy's income thresholds and rebate amounts have not been updated since 2022 and we have seen a significant decline in uptake to the program in the years following. It is reasonable to assume, given our demographics, poverty statistics, unemployment rate, and outstanding receivables, that the decline in uptake is not a result of our residents no longer needing the exemption, but rather that they no longer meet the eligibility requirements of the program due to the static \$35,000 income threshold noted in our policy.

## **OPTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

While the policy was amended to increase the income threshold in 2022, a jurisdictional scan to assess how CBRM's policy compares to policies of other municipal units is overdue. Specifically, the following were considered:

1. What is an appropriate income threshold and structure (ie. single or multi-tiered)?
2. What is an appropriate rebate amount?

### **FINDINGS:**

In comparing CBRM's policy on low-income tax exemption to similar policies from other municipal units, income thresholds and exemption amounts significantly vary. Key findings are summarized below; however the full summary document is also attached.

- Income ceilings range from a low of \$23,000 (Lockeport) to \$83,287 (East Hants).
- Flat rate exemption amounts range from \$100 (Bridgewater) up to \$1,300 (Halifax).
- 14 municipal units use a tiered structure based on family size and/or income brackets.
- 21 municipal units have 1 income threshold, regardless of family size.
- 4 municipal units rebate a % of the tax bill. 3 of the 4 cap the rebate at specified amount.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is staff's recommendation that any low-income tax exemption policy should be based on a fair and reasonable income threshold and be easily understood and administered. Therefore, the following income threshold and rebate amounts are proposed:

- 1) Continue using an overall combined household income, as opposed to having a tiered structure with varying brackets and rebates. This method is the most widely used amongst other municipal units.
- 2) The threshold used to be based on the Government of Canada's combined family income limit to qualify for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (2025 - \$40,800). While not all residents qualifying for CBRM's tax exemption program will be seniors, this is a reasonable basis for income for this program and would ensure CBRM's income threshold keeps pace with inflation.
- 3) Municipal units whose income thresholds are \$40,800 or greater, 3 offer a rebate greater than \$300, 3 offer a rebate less than \$300, and 3 offer a rebate based on a % of their tax bill with established minimums/maximuns. It is recommended that the existing rebate of \$300 be maintained for 2025-26.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The increased uptake due to expanded eligibility is not easily determined. If those eligible in 2022-23 (our highest rebate year), are again eligible under the new income threshold, the current budget allotment should be sufficient to fund the program in 2025-26.

It is important to note that any changes to income thresholds and exemption amounts would be applicable to the 2025 taxation year (fiscal year 2025/26), and future years and will not be applied retroactively.

The draft Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy incorporating the recommended changes for Council's consideration for approval is attached.

**Motion:**

That Council approve the draft proposed Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy as amended.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jennifer Campbell, CPA, CA, Chief Financial Officer

# **Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

## **“ POLICY ”**

### **Low-Income Tax Exemption Policy**

#### **STATEMENT:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a tax exemption for low-income property taxpayers. This policy is adopted under Section 69 of the Municipal Government Act, which permits council to grant a tax exemption for a person whose income is below the amount established in policy.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

- 1.0 “Family” includes persons related by blood or marriage, common law spouses, registered domestic partners and persons related through adoption.
- 1.1 “Family Income” means total income from all sources for the calendar year preceding the fiscal year of the Municipality excluding any allowances paid pursuant to the War Veterans Allowance Act (Canada) or military pension paid pursuant to the Pension Act (Canada) and includes the income of all members of the same family residing in the same household.
- 1.2 “Owner” means:
  - i. The person assessed for the property;
  - ii. A person who holds title, including a part owner, joint owner, tenant in common, or joint tenant of the property;
- 1.3 “Taxes” means residential property taxes, inclusive of area rates applicable to the assessed property.

#### **CRITERIA:**

The low- income exemption must be applied for in each taxation year, and is only available to persons who meet the following criteria:

- 2.1 The applicant must be a permanent resident of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality;
- 2.2 The applicant must have legal title to the property;
- 2.3 The property is the applicant(s) primary residence and is assessed in his/her name. Seasonal residences, vacant property, and income properties are not eligible for the low-income exemption.
- 2.4 ~~The applicant's family income is less than \$35,000.~~ The applicant's household income is less than the maximum income threshold as stipulated in the Federal Guaranteed Income Supplement program for a couple receiving full Old Aged Security Pension. This value is updated on an annual basis by the federal government for any cost of living increases.

**APPLICATION:**

- 3.1 An application form duly completed and sworn or affirmed to, must be submitted on or before December 31 for processing in the then current taxation year. Satisfactory proof of income must be submitted with the application. Failure to supply satisfactory proof of income shall render the application ineligible.
- 3.2 Property owners meeting eligibility criteria above and demonstrating satisfactory proof of income shall be granted a maximum tax exemption of \$300.00 for the taxation year applied.
- 3.3 At no time shall the exemption amount approved exceed the annual taxes levied on the subject property.
- 3.4 Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, no exemption is conferred from obligations to remedy unsightly or dangerous premises or any other infractions against a statute, regulation or by-law, whether Municipal, Provincial, or Federal and any charges imposed upon a property arising from the enforcement of such provisions shall not be subject to a tax exemption pursuant to this Policy.

Approved by Council June 26, 2018

Amended: April 19, 2022

Municipal Unit	Income Threshold	Maximum Tax Reduction
Cape Breton Regional Municipality	\$35,000	\$300
Halifax Regional Municipality	up to \$32,000 32,000-36,000 36,000-40,000 40,000-44,000 \$44,000-48,000	100% \$1,000-\$1,300; Mintax \$160 80% \$880-\$1,040; Min Tax \$340 60% \$660-\$780; Min tax \$380 40% \$440-\$520; Min tax \$420 20% \$220-\$260; Min tax \$460
Region of Queens Municipality	\$35,000	\$400
Municipality of Annapolis County	\$31,000	\$400
Municipality of Antigonish County	\$36,000	\$300
Municipality of Colchester County	Less than \$31,026 (single) Less than \$40,980 (couple) Less than \$49,177 (family 3+)	\$626.28
Municipality of Cumberland County	\$35,776	\$525
Municipality of Inverness County	\$24,999	\$150
Municipality of Kings County	\$46,000	\$560
Municipality of Pictou County	\$30,000	\$250
Municipality of Richmond County	\$25,000	\$150
Municipality of Victoria County	\$35,000	\$300
Municipality of the District of Argyle	less than \$28,000 \$28,000 - \$55,999 \$56,000 - \$63,499	\$300 \$250 \$100
Municipality of the District of Barrington	less than \$25,375 \$25,375 - \$30,450 \$30,450 - \$35,525 \$35,526 - \$40,600	\$400 \$300 \$200 \$100
Municipality of the District of Chester	less than \$17,896 \$17,896 - \$30,036 \$30,036 - \$32,251	\$882; \$528; \$354
Municipality of the District of Clare	\$28,000	\$300
Municipality of the District of Digby	less than \$15,999 \$16,000 - \$20,999 \$21,000 - \$25,999 \$26,000 - \$31,999	\$600 \$500 \$400 \$350

Municipal Unit	Income Threshold	Maximum Tax Reduction
Municipality of the District of East Hants	\$83,287, family of 6; \$73,883, family of 5; \$65,152, family of 4; \$53,733 family of 3; \$43,658, one adult and one child; \$35,102, two adults; \$28,840, single	\$263 or up to 20% of their annual tax bill, whichever is the greater amount
Municipality of the District of Guysborough	\$40,000	\$200
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg	less than \$28,560 \$28,561 - \$39,984 \$39,985 - \$51,840	\$650 \$450 \$250
Municipality of the District of Shelburne	\$35,250 or less \$29,500 or less \$23,500 or less	\$150 \$300 \$600
Municipality of the District of St. Mary's	\$25,280	\$180
Municipality of the District of West Hants	\$46,000	50% of tax bill up to \$400
Municipality of the District of Yarmouth	\$29,877.32	50% of tax bill up to \$200
Town of Amherst	\$28,000	\$450.00
Town of Annapolis Royal	\$28,000	\$500
Town of Antigonish	\$28,510	\$450
Town of Berwick	\$28,560	\$350
Town of Bridgewater	Less than \$20,000 \$20,000 - \$25,000 \$25,000 - \$30,000 \$30,000 - \$35,000	\$800 \$500 \$300 \$100
Town of Digby	\$23,095	\$312
Town of Lockeport	\$12,000 or less \$18,000 or less \$23,000 or less	\$500 \$300 \$150
Town of Mahone Bay	Less than \$30,000 \$30,000 - \$35,000 \$35,000 - \$40,000	\$1,000 \$500 \$250
Town of Middleton	\$23,400	\$275

Municipal Unit	Income Threshold	Maximum Tax Reduction
Town of Pictou	\$29,150	\$465
Town of Port Hawkesbury	\$27,000	\$350
Town of Shelburne	Less than \$35,000 \$35,000 - \$40,000	\$400 \$200
Town of Stewiacke	Tied to GIS	\$250
Town of Trenton	\$26,200	\$250
Town of Truro	\$31,609	\$253
Town of Wolfville	\$45,000	\$1,040
Town of Yarmouth	Less than \$25,000 \$25,000 - \$29,000 \$29,000 - \$39,000	\$750 \$350 \$200

# Cape Breton Regional Fire and Emergency Service

Deputy Fire Chief, Craig MacNeil  
362 George Street  
Sydney, Nova Scotia  
B1P 1K1



PH: (902) 563-5350  
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Email: [wcmacneilcell@cbrm.ns.ca](mailto:wcmacneilcell@cbrm.ns.ca)

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To: Mayor and Committee of the Whole  
From: Craig MacNeil, DC  
Date: March 4, 2025  
Subject: Recommendation for Pre-Authorization of Ladder Truck Purchase in April 2026

## Recommendation:

That Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to pre-approval the purchase of a new ladder truck for the 2026 budget year.

## Background

The acquisition of a new ladder truck was being requested as part of this year's budget. However, due to the extended delivery timelines associated with such specialized equipment, actual delivery is not anticipated until at least a year after placing the order. This action is crucial to secure the necessary vehicle within the allocated budgetary constraints and to take advantage of the current fiscal year's pricing.

## Discussion:

### Pre-approval is essential for the following reasons:

**Letter of Intent and Purchase Order:** To initiate the manufacturing process, a letter of intent and a subsequent purchase order are required. These documents are necessary to formalize a transaction and begin the procurement process and are contingent on Council's pre-approval of the purchase.

**Cost Containment:** By securing purchasing at this year's pricing, we will avoid any potential price increases that could arise in the next fiscal year, effectively managing and optimizing our budget allocations.

**Budgetary Planning:** This pre-authorization will ensure that the financial impact is accounted for in this year's budget, providing clarity and stability in future fiscal planning.

## Timeline for Purchase

The timeline for the purchase process is as follows:

February 2025: Issue RFP as required  
March 2025: Approval of specifications and order  
April 2026: Processing of purchase

This strategic decision will safeguard against unforeseen cost escalations and align with our budgetary commitments.

Thank you for considering this crucial procurement strategy that ensures both fiscal responsibility and operational readiness.

Thank You,  
Sincerely,  
DC MacNeil



CAPE BRETON REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OFFICE of the MAYOR

February 11, 2025

Commissioner William Kaplan  
Industrial Inquiry Commission  
Reviewing Canada Post  
samuel@williamkaplan.com

Dear Commissioner Kaplan:

RE: Written Submission in Support of the Future of Canada Post

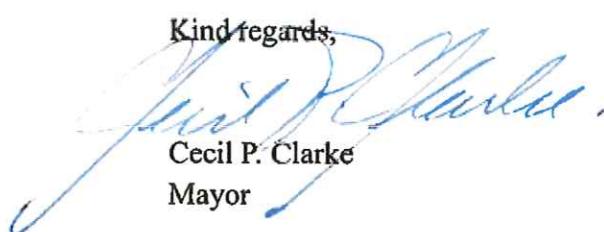
I am writing to express my support for Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) who play an essential role in ensuring the reliable and secure delivery of mail services across Canada. As Mayor of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), I have seen firsthand the vital role that Canada Post plays in supporting individuals, local businesses and communities and connecting Canadians from coast to coast.

Canada Post has consistently demonstrated its commitment to offering a wide range of services, and its role in maintaining connections between urban and rural communities cannot be overstated. It serves as a critical link for individuals and businesses who depend on its reliable and accessible service.

Recognizing these are times of economic change and challenges, it is important that Canada Post and CUPW collaborate in their efforts to ensure the sustainability and growth of this essential service, and I urge you to continue supporting Canada Post's services and infrastructure.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. I am confident that, working together, Canada Post and the CUPW will continue to provide a mail system that benefits all Canadians.

Kind regards,

  
Cecil P. Clarke  
Mayor

CPC/tfd  
c: All Council, CBRM



**Municipal Affairs  
Office of the Minister**

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

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February 11, 2025

Dear Mayors and Wardens:

Recent events in our world are changing the landscape of our province and country. We are experiencing new fiscal challenges that will have a significant impact on our economy. It is clear we need to become more self-reliant. And, at the same time, we need to better integrate our economy with other Canadian provinces and territories.

Our Government has recently announced that Nova Scotia must say "yes" to both a reduction in inter-provincial trade barriers, and to resource development within our province. Both steps need to be taken carefully and in consultation with our communities. Resource development, in particular, is of incredible importance.

If you are supportive and agree, I am asking for you and your council to signal your support for greater resource development within our province - by letter or press release.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Honourable John A. Lohr  
Minister of Municipal Affairs

c: Chief Administrative Officers  
Juanita Spencer, NSFM

