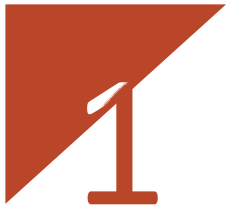


2021-22

COUNCIL PRIORITIES

On May 6, 2021, members of Council met to develop priorities for 2021-22 in an effort to provide clear direction to the community and staff for the next 12-18 months. Council is guided by its strategic plan objectives and integrated community sustainability plan in setting its annual priorities. The following document highlights the top 5 objectives.



1

Rural Internet



2

Mariner Centre Expansion



3

East Pubnico Well Retrofit



4

Trail Retrofit



5

Wedgeport Sewer

1

Rural Internet

One way to support local businesses and provide better services to our residents is to increase the internet service quality in the municipality. As a quality internet connection is vital in today's business world and many government services are now accessed online, it is imperative that all residents and businesses have the opportunity to connect to a reliable, high speed internet connection.

The province is making progress and have announced over 87,000 connections as of January 2021. Since the first Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative projects were announced in February 2020, approximately 41,000 of a total of 87,200 homes and businesses already have the network in place to provide new or improved high-speed Internet, and providers are working to connect the rest as quickly as possible.

The Municipality of Argyle has invested \$690,000 in a rural broadband initiative. Partnering with Develop NS and Bell, we will be collectively bringing fibre to the home to approximately 98% of the homes in Argyle. This work has begun in 2021 and will continue into 2022. The installation, ownership and service provision will be done by Bell. The role of Develop NS and Argyle is to aid Bell in making the business case to install needed infrastructure in our region.

In 2021, Council commits to the following objectives:

1. Contributing our funding portion of the project in 2021, which is expected to be \$350,000, coming from our Federal Gas Tax reserves.
2. Ensure our residents are able to access Develop NS resources to follow the progress of installation.

2

Mariners Centre Expansion

With new streams of both federal and provincial funding becoming available, and this project fitting into those recreation and rural infrastructure streams, council unanimously agreed an expansion to the Mariners Centre initially as a 2019-2020 priority. The application for funding was unsuccessful in 2019. With a new stream of funding available the three Councils of Yarmouth County organized themselves differently to increase their chances of success.

During the COVID pandemic in 2020, we saw the closure of the YMCA and the elimination of aquatic facilities in our area. This strengthened our resolve to restore a service, and create a new aquatic experience, eventually, at the Mariners Center location.

In 2021-22, Council commits to the following objectives:

1. Along with our municipal partners, invest in the development of a professional funding application supporting an aquatic and fitness expansion project valued at \$30 million dollars. Funding application to be submitted through the Green and Inclusive Communities Fund ,a Federal funding initiative.
2. Fund and open "Mariners on Main" to restore fitness and aquatic services in the area, using the former YMCA location until funding for an expansion plan is obtained.
3. Determine a long-term fund raising strategy, both corporate and local.

3

East Pubnico Well Retrofit

In early 2021, Argyle received confirmation of ACOA funding to support the retrofit of 2 wells in Middle East Pubnico. These wells have operated well past their useful life, and all components are to be replaced (pumps, electrical..) The total project cost will approach \$280,000. The project having commenced, it is Council's priority to complete this work.

The timing of the work depends on the demands for water from the customers that use the facility for non-drinkable industrial use. As part of an ongoing strategy to retrofit the water facility, we also plan on doing a detailed examination of the inside of the large tank on Willett Road.

In 2021-22, Council commits to the following objectives:

1. Completion of the well retrofit project by July 31, 2021, with potential COVID delays for product.
2. Re-establish monitoring system with the Department of Environment.
3. Collect final ACOA funds and submit required reporting.
4. Engage third party experts to begin examination of the large water tank to assess repair needs of the tank for a future project.

4

Trail Retrofit

Our Rails to Trails is a 132 km long trail (there is a 2.5-km break between the Yarmouth North and South trailheads) - 47 of which are in the Municipality of Argyle- constructed along the abandoned rail corridors in Yarmouth & Digby counties. The trail weaves in and out of many small villages, and links up with other "rails to trails" projects in Nova Scotia.

There are many entries and exit points along the trail which welcome people who want to walk, bike, ride horseback or with an ATV.

The Municipality of Argyle staff have been working with Yarmouth Trails Association to help identify areas of the trails that need immediate attention. It has been identified that the East Pubnico section of the trails needs the most immediate attention. The trail retrofit will include grating, installing, and compacting new gravel on the trail. The cost to do the above mentioned is approx. \$20000/km. Thus far, MODA has submitted an application for funding to ACOA, and is also working with Yarmouth Rails to Trails who have been working with Trails Canada for potential funding.

In 2021-22, Council commits to the following objectives:

1. Commit \$50,000 per year for a minimum of five years to address needed trail repairs and maintenance.
2. Examine available funding avenues both Federal and Provincial to match our financial commitment and speeding up the required work.
3. Incorporate our Active Transportation strategy in the required retrofits, consider new trails or extensions to connect communities.

5

Wedgeport Sewer

Wastewater management is one of the primary responsibilities of municipal government. Clean water and waste management are important to the health and safety of our residents, the vitality of our communities and the value of our homes.

The Municipality of Argyle initially launched a pilot project in 2017 to install on-site septic solutions as opposed to a central collector system that was deemed too expensive to undertake. The pilot project was a success and saw 41 properties receive new systems.

However, there are still some systems that are failing and creating environmental hazards or do not follow current environmental sewer standards and are polluting waterways, rivers and other natural environments. The Municipality has once again succeeded in obtaining funding for this expansion under the Clean Water and Wastewater Fund, for a project value of \$1,042,000, which should replace up to 50 septic systems in the community.

In 2021-22, Council commits to the following objectives:

1. Complete detailed engineering and installation plan for 50 locations in Wedgeport by fall of 2021.
2. Complete installation of these same locations by Spring of 2022, with operations and billing for these services to occur by May 2022.