



**STRATEGIC PLAN
TOWN OF ANNAPOLIS ROYAL 2026
DRAFT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preamble	3
Vision.....	3
Mission	3
Mandate	4
Governance.....	5
1. Strategy – Mandated Services	5
2. Strategy – Infrastructure Deficit.....	6
3. Strategy – Employee Retention	7
4. Strategy - Collaboration	7
Financial Sustainability.....	9
5. Strategy – Fiscal Responsibility	9
Economic Vitality.....	12
6. Strategy – Economic Sustainability.....	12
Environmental Stewardship	13
7. Strategy – Climate change Implications.....	13
8. Strategy - Natural Environment Preservation.....	13
Strengthening Community.....	14
9. Strategy – Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility.....	14
10. Strategy - Heritage and History Preservation.....	15
11. Strategy - Communications.....	16
12. Strategy - Policing.....	18

PREAMBLE

In preparation for this year's strategic plan update, Town Council reviewed the 2025 strategic plan. The Council also updated the SWOC analysis (analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges) and the environmental scan which includes demographics, social, environmental, political and other external factors. Based on this information, members of Council and the CAO revised and updated the plan taking into account the years ahead. Please note that italicized areas indicate the strategies that the Council will focus on as the highest priorities for the year 2026-2027.

VISION

Annapolis Royal is a vibrant, safe, and inclusive community that honours its rich heritage, treasures its natural environment, and fosters sustainable economic vitality. With deep respect for its past and a clear commitment to the future, the Town seeks to preserve the unique charm and spirit of small-town life for generations to come. At the heart of this vision is a dedication to protecting and enhancing both the natural and built heritage, while continually improving the quality of life for all who call Annapolis Royal home.

MISSION

The Town of Annapolis Royal is committed to serving its community by nurturing a unique and culturally rich environment, supporting a high quality of life for all residents. Through the delivery of responsive and effective municipal services, the Town works in partnership with others to promote sustainable economic growth and environmental stewardship, guided by principles of progress, collaboration, and fiscal responsibility.



MANDATE

The Town's mandate comes from the Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act (MGA):
Under Section 9A of the MGA, the purposes of a municipality are to:

- a) provide good government;
- b) provide services, facilities, and other things that, in the opinion of the council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality; and
- c) develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

In addition:

- Make policies and pass resolutions and by-laws on behalf of the Town (MGA Sections 47-49)
- Collect taxes (MGA Part VI, Section 111)
- Collect water payments in accordance with Section 6 of the Schedule of Rules and Regulations for the Annapolis Royal Water Utility
- Acquire, own, sell, or lease property (MGA, Sections 50 to 52)
- Provide police services (MGA Section 54 & Police Act)
- Provide water and sewer and other public works services
- Provide fire protection services (MGA Section 293)
- Encourage economic development (MGA Sections 56 and 57)
- Contribute to the funding of public libraries



GOVERNANCE

1. STRATEGY – MANDATED SERVICES

Operate efficiently, being good stewards of our resources and providing Municipal Government Act (MGA) mandated services to our residents.

OBJECTIVES

1.1 Provide direction and resources to ensure implementation of MGA mandated services in accordance with the Town's Asset Management Policy and the 2024 Atlantic Infrastructure Management (AIM) Capital Program report, for example:

- Maintain safe, reliable and high-quality water service
- Ensure efficient and environmentally responsible wastewater management
- Maintain and improve road infrastructure for safe and accessible transportation
- Strengthen resilience and response plans for severe weather events

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Adequate supply of high-quality drinking water based on provincial requirements as evidenced in monthly reports submitted to Council.
- Efficient and effective disposal of waste as evidenced by a clean and safe environment and based on the contract with Valley Waste.
- Police will maintain and improve public safety and well-being by promoting measures to prevent crime, hate crime, harm and disorder in accordance with federal and provincial laws and policies, and municipal by-laws and policies under the direction of the Board of Police Commissioners and in accordance with the Annapolis Royal Policing Strategy.
- Signature of new MOU between the RCMP/Province of Nova Scotia and the Town of Annapolis Royal for major crime services.
- Residents and visitors are reasonably protected from emergencies and natural disasters in accordance with the Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) plans, recommendations, and reports.

1.2 Continue to focus on value added activity and elimination of redundant, unnecessary or "busy work".

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026:

- Review to ensure all town committees and task teams are acting within their mandate and effectively contributing to Town objectives, taking action when and as required.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Continue to review critical accountabilities for alignment with Town strategies and objectives, taking action when and as required.

2. STRATEGY – INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT

Address infrastructure deficit. Continue to plan for major infrastructure issues that are expected to arise in the future.

OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Collaborate with the County on upgrades and maintenance of the shared water and sewer lines at the causeway.
- 2.2 Explore the purpose of the wharf within the town's public and recreational spaces considering options for ownership, use and future of the town wharf including alternative structures.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Secure necessary background and expert opinion on options for the wharf. Tender for Adaptive Reuse of Wharf Structure awarded to Jost Architects.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Conduct a community consultation to identify citizens' preferences on options for the wharf
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities to execute on a future option, including 400th Anniversary funding and National Trust Competition
- Aim for a decision and to provide strategic direction to the CAO by 2027.

- 2.3 Continue to pursue a second water source

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Determine feasibility of drilling wells on the south side of the Annapolis River, as well as a desalination plant.
- Pursue all relevant grant opportunities

- 2.4 Resolve odour issues at the sewage treatment plant.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Three-year enzyme project continues with verified positive results

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Work with contractors to identify ultimate solution

- 2.5 Continue to upgrade Town infrastructure

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Upgrade Victoria Street sidewalks (Legion entrance to the Public Works yard)

3. STRATEGY – EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Be a desired employer.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Develop and implement effective retention strategies to enhance employee satisfaction and long-term engagement.
- 3.2 Establish a clear staff classification system with defined salary ranges and comprehensive strategies to support fair and competitive employment practices

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Employee Wellness Policy (December 2025)
- Salary Administration Policy (April 2025)
- Police Agreement and Updates (2025)
- Employee benefit plan is voted on by employees annually
- Employee Pension Plan, PSSP (September 2025)

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Police Agreement update
- Development of an Onboarding Process for New Employees

- 3.3 Continue to strengthen and maintain compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Occupational Health and Safety Representative appointed
- OH&S requirements are reviewed and monitored (this will be ongoing)

4. STRATEGY - COLLABORATION

Continue to grow our collaborative network.

OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Work with other municipalities and levels of government to advocate for the Town.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Creation of the Joint Economic Development Coordinator position

- 4.2 Participate actively in the Annapolis County Intermunicipal Working Group (ACIMWG), Intermunicipal Services Agreement (IMSA) with all municipal units in Kings and Annapolis counties, and the intermunicipal quarterly networking group.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CAO regularly attend the ACIMWG and work with their counterparts.

- 4.3 Participate in the Lawrencetown Community Development Co-Operative (LCDC).

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Membership in LCDC

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Participating in the Lawrencetown Community Development Co-op (LCDC) internet services and available to all businesses and residents at significant cost savings
- Town is actively promoting the service

- 4.4 Work with the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to ensure that rural communities and in particular the Town are heard at the provincial and federal level.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Member of Council on NSFM board for the last two years



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

5. STRATEGY – FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Engage in long-range financial planning to permit continuing financial stability by developing strategies to diversify revenue sources for the Town.

Key Success Indicators completed in 2025-2026

- Town's financial vulnerability assessed: dependence on NSPI grant in lieu of taxes continues to decrease and is now below the financial indicator threshold of 15% at 12.45%.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Develop and maintain 3–5 year financial plans for budgeting, operations, and projects.
- Continue to monitor the Town's financial vulnerability, with a focus on dependence on external funding.
- Approve initiatives that diversify revenue and reduce reliance on residential and commercial taxes (e.g., grants, user fees) including completion of the sale of the property near Public Works.
- Monitor the Town's capacity to maintain service levels based on debt, taxes and implementing the appropriate processes to adjust them as needed.
- Monitor the Water Utility and initiate water rate studies when net losses exceed the Town's ability to absorb those losses over a period of several years.
- Review the Town's financial status against Financial Condition Indicators annually.
- Ensure compliance with provincial financial reporting and Town policies and address all Audit Committee recommendations.
- Conduct monthly and quarterly reviews of financial statements to support timely and effective budget management.
- Earmark reserve funds to address the wharf issue.

OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Identify and implement actions to expand the capital reserve fund to cover both infrastructure and vehicle replacement, with the goal of reducing the infrastructure deficit.
- 5.2 Continue the development of a comprehensive risk management plan to minimize the financial impact of the anticipated loss of the Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) grant in lieu of taxes.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Update the 5-year budget forecast to reflect the anticipated loss of NSPI-associated revenue.
- Develop a strategy to mitigate the effects of the loss of revenue on the Town.
- Prepare where possible to execute on the strategy.

5.3 Assess and facilitate the sale of Town owned surplus properties.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Sale of Victoria Street Town-owned property
- Sale of the Town-owned First Lake property in Lequille

5.4 Review of town taxes/tax rate to ensure sustainability of the Town.

5.5 Explore and implement alternative energy sources (solar, wind, tidal, etc.) to reduce the town's energy costs and/or create new revenue streams.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Exploration of all options

5.6 Initiate a water rate study to ensure that current rates are in line with existing and anticipated operating and capital costs.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Water Rate Study completed by G. A. Isenor Consulting Limited with Blaine S. Rooney Consulting Limited in December 2025.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Follow up on pending decision on the 2025 Water Rate Study.

5.7 Continue to identify and pursue grant opportunities in support of the strategic plan.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Support the execution of projects funded to date according to the project plans and capacity of staff.
- Where capacity permits continue to pursue grant opportunities.
- Town awarded the Canada Summer Jobs grant and funding for Canada Day from the Federal Government

5.8 Consider options for the sustainability of the Annapolis Royal Library.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2026-2027

- Develop questions for the Minister of CCTH
- Meeting with the Minister on September 4, 2026

- 5.9 Support the investigation of guaranteed or basic income as an important potential tool to address the economic hardships being faced by the residents in and around our community.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2026-2027

- Encourage a cost/benefit analysis based on the findings of the abandoned experiment in Ontario and the work done in other jurisdictions.

DRAFT

ECONOMIC VITALITY

6. STRATEGY – ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Encourage, support, and promote the Town’s long-term economic well-being.

OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 “Buy local”- Encourage local procurement and support for small business by promoting local procurement in both Town operations and by residents.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Continue to prioritize a local presence and investment as key criteria for allocating contracts as per the Town’s Procurement Policy.
- Depending on grant funding, collaborate with other municipalities to fund an Economic Development Coordinator position.
- Continue to support community-led events that encourage local community engagement and tourism.

- 6.2 “Stay local”- Support local tourism by creating an environment where visitors are encouraged to both visit and stay in the Town.

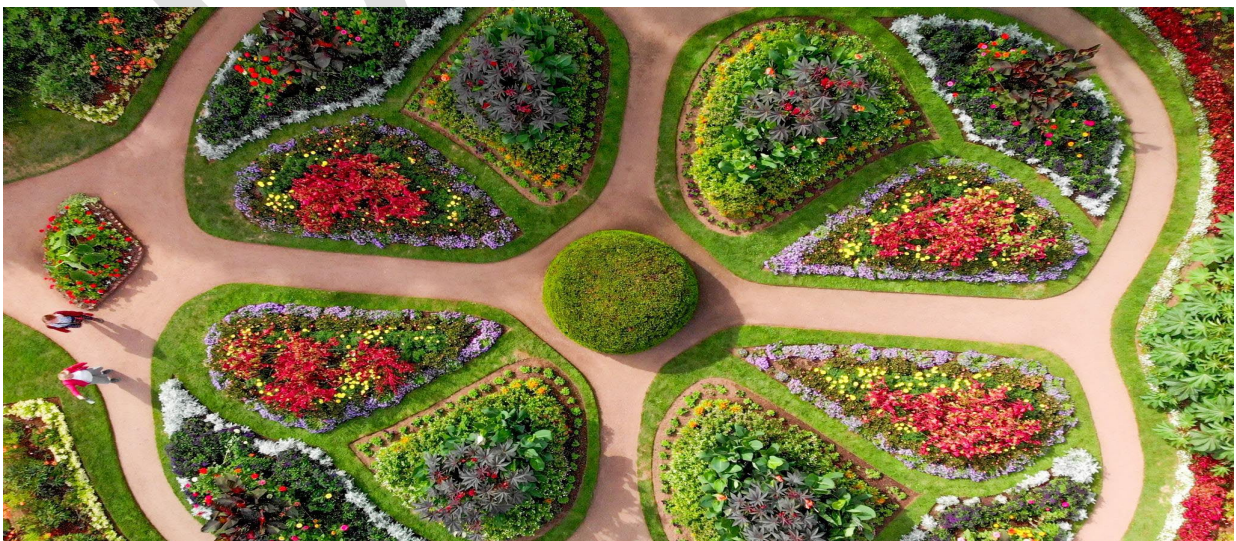
Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Sharing and promoting events on social media, website and the Town’s newsletter

- 6.3 Enhance the town’s self-sustainability through infrastructure resilience, and economic diversification.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Collaborating with the Annapolis County for an Economic Development Coordinator position



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

7. STRATEGY – CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Prepare for and mitigate against the potential effects of climate change.

OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 Develop a town coastal protection plan with the support of Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and in accordance with provincial requirements.
- 7.2 Continue to work with Clean Foundation on the Community Climate Capacity (CCC) initiative and the development of a regional climate change plan in conjunction with the Town of Middleton and the Municipality of the County of Annapolis.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Complete Joint Action Climate Plan report by March 2027
- Hold Engagement session on the plan in the Spring of 2027

8. STRATEGY - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PRESERVATION

Preserve and protect the Town's natural environment.

OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Restore and enhance the shoreline to improved biodiversity, flood protection and ecological health.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- The project was executed according to the project plan and timeline for 2025-26 within projected costs, including contingencies.
- Planning for Phase 2 is in progress including potential sources of funding
- Sufficient explanations were provided and approved for any deviations from deliverables and/or reporting deadlines
- Community engagement and feedback was evident in the finished design.
- Finished design allowed shoreline access and continued enjoyment.
- The design was expected to achieve stated goals of flood protection while maintaining ecological health and biodiversity.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- The decision was made to abandon Phase 1 of the Living Shoreline Project as a result of the Town's inability to secure the necessary easements. All costs incurred to date were covered by grant funding, and all contracts were provided with the

require 30 days' notice for cancellation. Other than a considerable amount of staff time, no direct costs were incurred by the Town.

- 8.2 Expand and protect the Town's tree canopy to promote air quality, shade and climate resilience.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Received Growing Canada's Community Canopies – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies grant (Town portion \$7,000) for a 3-year project from 2026 to 2028.
- The project was executed according to the project plan and timeline for 2025-26 activities within projected costs, including contingencies (i.e. planting 95 trees within the 2-year period).
- Sufficient explanations were provided and approved for any deviations from deliverables and/or reporting deadlines
- Planted 45 of 95 trees as part of the Growing Canada's Community Canopies (2025) as part of the two-year project.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Plant the remaining 50 trees as part of the Growing Canada's Community Canopies (2026) as part of the two-year project.
- Hosted Community Engagement session to highlight the project and tour the trees in September 2026.

- 8.3 Be aware of the provincial landscape around resource development and extraction and establish a clear position and response to its implications for Annapolis Royal.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Recipient of the Sustainable Communities Award by the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (2026)

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

9. STRATEGY – INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Engender an environment where all feel safe and included by implementing inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) measures and continuing to enhance our sense of community.

OBJECTIVES

- 9.1 Support solutions for homelessness and housing challenges by advocating for affordable housing initiatives led by private developers, not-for-profit organizations, other levels of government, etc.
- 9.2 Strengthen social connection and community cohesion through inclusive programs and initiatives.
- 9.3 Enhance programs and events offered by Active Living Coordinator to promote active and engaged lifestyles for all residents.
- 9.4 Make all reasonable efforts to mitigate risks and support the safety and well-being of all residents with a focus on vulnerable groups such as seniors, children and individuals facing challenges.
- 9.5 Advocate for improved health care services from the Province to support community well-being.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Support Annapolis Royal citizens' and community groups in advocating for existing and proposed improvements for health care access.
 - Ensure that concerns about health care in Annapolis Royal are referred to the appropriate person within the health care system for investigation and follow up.
 - Ensure Community feedback regarding health care priorities are communicated to the Province.
- 9.6 Follow up on Truth and Reconciliation Report including:
 - Review the guide titled Pathways to Reconciliation – Cities Respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action
 - Develop practical objectives that can be incorporated into the strategic plan
 - Plan an event to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Oqwa'titek Amphitheater with input from Bear River First Nation for 2027
 - Start planning in 2027 an event to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of Chief Membertou in 2028 with input from Bear River First Nation

10. STRATEGY - HERITAGE AND HISTORY PRESERVATION

Preserve and protect built heritage and environment, while maintaining our deep-rooted history and culture.

OBJECTIVES

- 10.1 Continue to support the rich heritage and history of the town, including initiatives that help conserve our built heritage and preserve the National Historic District and the UNESCO Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve.



Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Delegation consisting of 3 generations attended a Twinning visit to Royan, France (2025)
- Visit of Fulmar vessel to Annapolis Royal (2026)
- 400th Anniversary of Dugas brainstorming planning session

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Involve PHAC and its members in the decision-making process around built heritage.
- Engagement sessions continue to take place.

11. STRATEGY - COMMUNICATIONS

Strengthen two-way communication between the Town, residents, and stakeholders to enhance transparency and engagement.

OBJECTIVES

- 11.1 Continue to engage in community consultation prior to making decisions with major financial, societal and environmental impacts.

- 11.2 Document the many ways that the Town currently communicates with its many audiences and identify and address any gaps.
- 11.3 Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan and address any gaps.

Key Success Indicators Achieved in 2025-2026

- Regular engagement sessions completed with the public on various topics
- Communications survey completed (March 2026) and included in Engagement Session of March 2026.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- Council will approve a communication plan
- The communication plan will be shared with Town residents for comment
- Request for volunteers and formation of a Communication Task Team to make recommendations for a communications strategy (May 2026)
- Upgrade the Town's website to incorporate accessibility, multiple languages and refresh content

- 11.4 Identify ways to strengthen the Town's communications and marketing opportunities through collaboration with others, identifying and implementing basic best practices, and providing educational opportunities for Council members and staff.

Key Success Indicators For 2026-2027

- With the hiring of an Economic Development Officer, this topic is covered under 4.1 and 6.3



12. STRATEGY - POLICING

Provide leadership and support for a safe, inclusive, and resilient community through community-based policing, collaboration, prevention, and public engagement.

OBJECTIVES

- 12.1 Support community-based policing and crime prevention initiatives that enhance public safety and strengthen trust between residents and the police service.
- 12.2 Strengthen partnerships among the Police Service, schools, health and social service providers, emergency services, and community organizations to address community safety and well-being.
- 12.3 Support youth engagement and early intervention programs that promote positive relationships, reduce risk factors, and contribute to long-term community safety.
- 12.4 Advocate for coordinated approaches to mental health, homelessness, addictions, and other social challenges that affect community well-being and public safety.
- 12.5 Promote transparency, accountability, and communication regarding policing priorities, community safety concerns, and progress toward strategic policing objectives.

Key Success Indicators 2026-2027

- Continued delivery of community-based policing services
- Regular reporting to the Board of Police Commissioners and Council on policing priorities and community safety initiatives.
- Ongoing collaboration between the Police Service and community partners to address public safety, youth engagement, and vulnerable populations.
- Increased public awareness of community safety initiatives through engagement and communication activities.