

The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

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Funding to Help End Gender-Based Violence

A historic funding agreement signed on December 14, will see the federal government invest \$18.3 million over four years to help Nova Scotia end gender-based violence. Through the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence, the Province can help fund programming by community-based service providers that aligns with Standing Together, the provincial action plan to prevent domestic violence, and the recommendations of the Mass Casualty Commission. A 10-year plan that aims to build a Canada free of gender-based violence, it focuses on three priority areas: increasing prevention efforts, ensuring underserved populations are prioritized and supported in culturally appropriate ways, and strengthening and supporting the gender-based violence response sector. Under the plan, provincial and territorial governments will work together in partnership with survivors and their families, Indigenous partners, service providers, experts and advocates, and across government to respond to emerging issues and the evolving needs of survivors and victims.

Bible Hill man arrested

Brent Eugene Fox, 55, who was wanted out of Truro on a province-wide arrest warrant has been arrested. Fox was held in custody and appeared in Truro Provincial Court on December 14th.

More Supports for People Experiencing Homelessness

New initiatives will help ensure the safety and well-being of those experiencing homelessness in Nova Scotia. Twenty-eight new supportive housing units in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) will provide 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals access to services and supports in an inclusive environment. The North End Community Health Centre will provide 24/7 on-site support for people in the two buildings, including referrals to mental health and addictions counselling, employment services, skills training and more. Length of stay and services offered will be based on the needs of residents. One building has been filled and the second is expected to open this winter; all residents are from the By-Name List, a list kept by the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia of people who are homeless and looking for stable housing.

Province Increases Investment in Roads, Highways

More roads and highways across the province will be improved and made safer for Nova Scotians with increased investment by the government. The work is outlined in the 2024-25 Five-Year Highway Improvement Plan released on December 14. It includes major highway and road projects, repaving, major bridge replacements, maintenance and other infrastructure work. In 2024-25, the Province will invest more than \$500 million in roadwork and major projects already underway. The new work includes an increase of about \$75 million in the budget for gravel road upgrades and rehabilitating paved roads. Construction on the following major projects will continue: Highway 101 from Three Mile Plains to Falmouth; the Highway 102 Aerotech Connector; Highway 103 from Tantallon to Hubbards; the Bridgewater Interchange and the Highway 107 Sackville-Bedford-Burnside Connector. Work on infrastructure upgrades for the Tancook Ferry will also begin.

Province Purchasing New Helicopter Water Bombers

The Province is taking advantage of federal funding to replace its fleet of four helicopter water bombers.

"Being prepared for emergencies such as wildfires is critical to protecting communities and Nova Scotians. That's why we're considering all options and are upgrading our fleet of helicopters to ensure we can manage wildfires in the future," said Tory Rushton, Minister of Natural Resources and Renewables. "Helicopters are very effective in fighting wildfires and they also serve us well for other uses. We're grateful for our partnership with the federal government to support this major equipment purchase." The Province has started the procurement process to replace the fleet over four years. The cost is subject to negotiation with the supplier. While fighting wildfires, helicopters can scoop and dump water on a faster rotation than fixed-wing aircraft, dropping a higher volume in total on a wildfire. They can also draw water from smaller water bodies, making good use of Nova Scotia's many lakes and ponds. Some fixed-wing aircraft need to land to reload, and others can only scoop from a large lake or the ocean. A federal-provincial agreement on wildfire equipment and training is in place from 2022-27, with each level of government contributing \$12.8 million. That will cover the cost of the helicopters and other equipment and training.

Province Releases Green Hydrogen Action Plan

A new action plan will help grow Nova Scotia's green hydrogen industry and advance the transition to clean energy. The Green Hydrogen Action Plan, which includes seven goals and 23 actions, will help develop the sector in alignment with the Province's climate change goals. It will support both domestic use and export of green hydrogen and is focused on safety, a strong and skilled workforce, research and innovation, and opportunities for public engagement. Green hydrogen can be used in Nova Scotia to help with the move to clean fuels for transportation and industrial uses. It can also be used globally in the move to clean energy, which creates significant export opportunities for Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia's clean energy leadership and prime location for export to Europe are among the reasons it is sought after for large-scale green hydrogen production.

While developers are getting started with onshore wind, they will scale up using some of the world's best offshore wind resources off Nova Scotia's coast. To help spur development, the Province has set a target to offer seabed leases for five gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030.

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Building Permits up \$14,000 this year

The following is an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since April 2023 as presented to Council committee on September 15th by Paul Smith, Director of Community Development. The report will be separated into several separate articles and scattered through this and future issues of the Shoreline Journal. This segment deals with the county's inspection service.

By Paul Smith

Building Inspection:

One Building Official obtained his final Level 2 course requirements and will be eligible for his Level 2 qualification once 120 field inspections have been completed. The other Building Official has obtained his Level 1 qualification and is now working towards his Level 2. Fire inspections are being carried out and will escalate in the Fall after a busy construction season.

Animal Control:

The SPCA continues to carry out animal control services for the County and have recently hired some new recruits to assist in by-law enforcement. The Animal Control Officer keeps the Municipality updated with monthly reports and is quick to respond with any questions or concerns that may arise.

Construction Value:

2023 has been an unprecedented year for construction with a year to date (January 1st, 2023, until July 31st, 2023) value of \$69,040,226. Comparatively for the same period in 2022, building value totaled \$54,981,396, representing an increase of roughly \$14,000,000 for this year.

Development Services

The Development Officer continues to be occupied with increases in permit applications and subdivision plans, marking a 25% increase over the previous year. Inquiries from developers and the public are ongoing and form a large part of the day-to-day activities.

Property Information / Gis Services:

System Upgrades

The Enterprise GIS database system has successfully been upgraded, along with other software and database updates, resulting in improved capability to securely share internal mapping applications and sensitive data with staff through registered account

access. Public Works admin and office staff have been added to the system, and the Department will move on to gradually onboard Community Development staff, and others.

Public Works Map Applications

Staff have continued developing infrastructure and asset data sets, and corresponding web map applications, and handling authoritative geospatial content migration into our Enterprise database. Framework and procedures for field data collection is still in progress.

Electronic Permitting / Property Data Management:

Documentation continues of legacy database schema and practical workflows for permit applications and processing, and property information management. Completed evaluation and selection process for new permitting system options with the preferred vendor being Camino.

Implementation of the new system will begin shortly and expected to continue over the next three to four months.

Other Recent / Ongoing Projects:

Staff continue to work on mapping for municipal districts, trail assets, and wind energy projects. Terrain and elevation analysis performed for Fundy Discovery Site, as well as a new tourism themed map to be displayed at the VIC. Built map applications for classifying and gathering data on municipally owned properties and identifying potential locations for forest management. Compiled additional residential statistics for Waste Management logistics, and for housing development and building permits. Ongoing civic address administration and property information file maintenance has continued through the busy season, and everything is going well with production and provision of civic number signage upon demand.

Paul Smith is Colchester's Director Community Development

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During the holidays remember to take care of yourself during the hustle and bustle. Taking good care of our customers has been our number one priority this past year.

To our families, friends and customers, thank you for your support. Have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Peter Bakes, B.Sc. (Pharm) and staff

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