



Via E-mail: jsunderland@digbymun.ca

September 2021

To: Mayor & Council
Jeff Sunderland, CAO – District of Digby
From: Gordon McIntosh

Subject: **STRATEGIC PRIORITY SETTING SESSION**

The Strategic Priority Setting Sessions during September was for council with senior staff to identify STRATEGIC TOPICS for discussion; explore each strategic topic as a STRATEGIC POSSIBILITY; and determine STRATEGIC PRIORITIES along with actions for implementation.

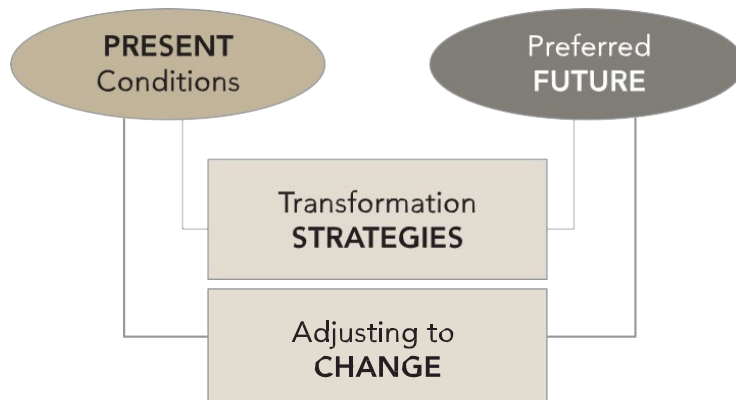
This memo summarizes the outcomes of Strategic Priority Session as follows:

- **Strategic Process** overview
- **Strategic Topics** for discussion
- **Strategic Possibilities** for potential implementation
- **Strategic Priorities** for NOW, NEXT and LATER attention
- **RECOMMENDATIONS** for follow-up

STRATEGIC PROCESS

The priority setting process started by looking at **present** conditions - issues and opportunities. The emerging strategic topics were explored with a preferred **future** – desired expectations in mind. It is in the transformation stage where the present/future gap is closed by defining achievable **strategies**. Effective strategic priority setting involves making strategic choices consistent within the Town’s mandate and capacity.

A critical important element of an ongoing strategic priority process is adjusting to **change**. Strategic priorities should be regularly monitored and adapted to changing external conditions and internal capacity using the ‘one page’ *Strategic Priorities Chart* and *Strategic Priority Work Program*. Once priorities are completed, NEXT items can take their place.



STRATEGIC TOPICS

The priority setting process began by looking to the future. Participants engaged in a 'Community Check-up' discussing the five distinct areas of a sustainable community:

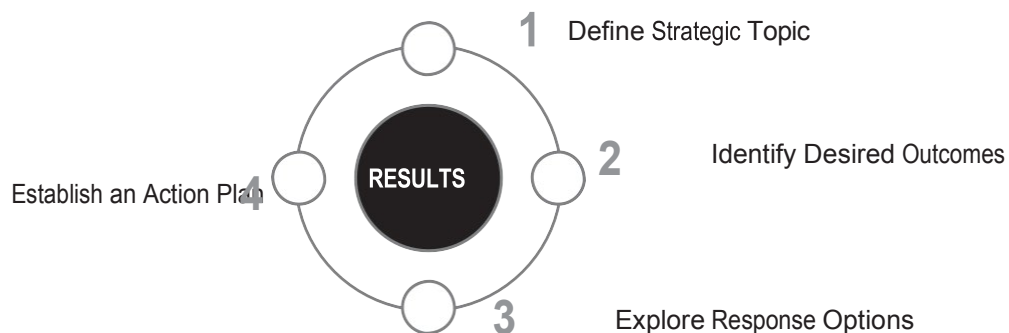
- **Environment** - healthy and natural environment through responsible use and protection
- **Infrastructure** - well maintained infrastructure and facilities that meet community needs
- **Economy** - a vibrant community by attracting, supporting and retaining businesses and residents
- **Social** – citizen/partner engagement to improve the well-being and diversity of the community
- **Governance** - sustainable government focused on strategic and transparent decision-making

Councillors and staff identified issues and opportunities facing the organization and community (*See attachment 1*) and it was agreed that the following strategic topics (& related other items) warranted discussion:

1. Rural Internet	9. Economic Development
2. Cell Service	10. Housing
3. Succession Planning	11. Office
4. Fire Services	12. Capital
5. RCMP Service	13. Modernization
6. Airport	14. Accessibility legislation
7. Weymouth Highway	15. Medical Professionals
8. Tourism	16. Internal Communication

STRATEGIC POSSIBILITIES

Participants 'unpacked' each strategic topic utilizing a four-step Solution Seeking process.



Participants began by clarifying the strategic topic, then identifying desired outcomes if it was successfully addressed. Next, options to achieve the desired outcome were explored and a 'preferred strategy' was selected. Action steps were then identified to implement the preferred option as a **Strategic Possibility** (*next page*).

STRATEGIC POSSIBILITIES (AKA Action Plan) September 2021

STRATEGIC TOPIC – <i>Expectations</i>	STRATEGIC POSSIBILITY
1. Rural Internet - <i>resident attraction/retention business retention/ attraction, reliable affordable, services, high speed, high band capacity, value for District investment</i>	Monitor Bell Project completion - June Determine remaining gaps – 2022/23 Mainland Project Planning
2. Cell Service - <i>resident attraction/retention business retention/ attraction, reliable service, emergency response</i>	<i>Advocate for Senior Government Funding (NSFM & FCM)</i>
3. Human Resource Planning (Succession Planning) – <i>employee development, retention, attraction, meet emerging needs or gaps, retirement, best functional alignment, accurate job descriptions, refresh function and staff chart</i>	Organizational Review – December Prepare a Human Resource Strategy – January
4. Fire Services – <i>coordinated effort, volunteer retention/recruitment, standardization of practices, cost effectiveness, reduce administrative burden, engaged volunteers, service efficiency</i>	Fire Service Support proposal – December Meet with Service re: administration support needs - 2022
5. RCMP Service – <i>lack of presence due to systemic gaps; poor response time, no responsive to local needs, poor communication, overstaffed?, value for money, pending wage increased impact, seldom fully staffed</i>	Meet with Staff Sargent – Annual Plan Review Contract provisions - 2022
6. Airport Feasibility – <i>tax subsidy rationale, accurate user fees, future capital needs</i>	'Airport Future' Plan Review – February
7. Weymouth Highway – <i>roadway safety</i>	<i>Refresh advocacy letter - Advocate for placement on the 5-year capital plan</i>
8. Tourism	Include in Economic Development #9
9. Economic Development – <i>diversify, business retention, expansion & attraction, good jobs, increased/resilient tax base, industrial land development, dedicated staff gap, community marketing,</i>	Current Plan: Review – 2022 Hotel Levy Bylaw: Approval - 2022
10. Housing - <i>Increased supply, social housing, diverse stock, developer interest, affordable for seniors & young families, sustainable community, community growth, attract residents, community growth, increased retail market, local employee pool</i>	Area Structure Plan: Terms of Reference - 2022 <i>NSFM Housing Study: Review</i> MPS Housing Policies: Review - 2022 <i>Barton School Property: Transfer - October</i>

11. Office - <i>public accessibility, staff safety, improved functionality</i>	Office Access Proposal – January
12. Capital – <i>long term financial planning, infrastructure reliability, legislative compliance, adequate future financing, accurate cost recovery,</i>	Asset Management Status: Sewer – June Utility User Fee: Review – February
13. Modernization (collaboration) – <i>shared services, mutual strategies, rich communication, mutual respect</i>	<i>Joint Meeting with Town - Invitation</i>
14. Accessibility legislation - <i>public safety, inclusionary community, regulatory compliance</i>	Complete Accessibility Plan – March
15. Medical Professionals – <i>residential & business retention and attraction, medical staff recruitment</i>	<i>Medical Recruitment Partnership: Town</i>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Based on the application of reality, urgency and responsibility criteria, five (5) **strategic priorities** were selected to be addressed NOW and placed on the *Strategic Priorities Chart (Attachment 2)* in **BOLD CAPITALS**. These priorities automatically enter the appropriate operational unit on the chart to align staff work with council direction. Items listed in CAPITALS indicate strategic directions that will be addressed NEXT/LATER when a NOW item is completed or displaced. In addition to council priorities, there are strategic items receiving administration's attention. These operational strategies are noted in regular font.

The *Strategic Priorities Chart* should be included in every council meeting agenda as a reference, updated regularly as a reminder of the organization's capacity to make adjustments, change priorities, and celebrate progress and reviewed annually. A **Follow-up Action List** (Att. 3) can be used to track other requests of council that impact the staff workload.

To enhance continued alignment of strategic directions and expectations it is also suggested that the following templates be considered:

- **Request for Decision [RFD]** (Att. 4) - to provide key information at-a-glance for council decisions re: impact on strategic priorities, budget and staff work program
- **Request for Clarification [RFC]** (Att. 5) – to 'unpack' emerging topics - what the topic expected outcomes and potential options are before staff prepare the RFD

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions are offered to sustain the strategic priority setting efforts:

1. **That Council requests the CAO to update the Strategic Priorities Chart with staff prior to quarterly council reviews and schedule an annual review.**
2. **That the CAO initiate use of the follow-up action list for matters referred by council**
3. **That the CAO initiate use of the Request for Decision for recommendations to council**
4. **That the CAO initiate use of the Request for Clarification for emerging strategic topics**

I trust the forgoing accurately portrays the session outcomes in a manner that facilitates follow-up to the ideas raised. If you have any questions or I can be of any further assistance, please to not hesitate to contact me.


ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES LIST

Issue/Opportunity	C	S	T
Newcomers resources	5		5
Fire Services Coordinator	23	11	34
<u>Accessibility</u>	6	13	19
Beach Access			0
Tourism Coordinator	16		16
<u>Office Renovations</u>		17	17
Marketing Levy	9	3	12
Harbour Improvements			0
Bylaw Review		5	5
Upgrading Power Grid			0
MPS Update Zoning	7	6	13
Barton School Property	6	4	10
Lighthouses		2	2
Climate Change Initiatives			0
Rising Municipal Costs			0
Tax Reduction			0
Haines Lake Property	2		2
Service Delivery Options			0
Asset Inventory			0
Role Clarity			0
Covid			0
Cell Service	33	15	48
Industrial Park Land			0
Economic Development Coordinator	15		15
RCMP - All aspects	17	7	24
Communications - Internal	1		1
Transportation	2		2
Labour Shortage	2		2
Long Term Capital Planning	0	9	9
New MLA - Relationship	1		1
Provincial Downloading			0
Relationships - Neighboring Councils			0
Volunteerism - Cultivation	2		2
Trails/Green Spaces			0
Green Projects			0
Alternate Revenue			0
DARC Capital Needs			0
Rural Internet	39	18	57
Succession Planning	8	30	38

Fishery Dispute (Lobster)			0
Airport Feasibility	8	11	19
Affordable housing	11		11
Medical Professionals	9	7	16
Weymouth Highway	14	4	18
Rising Assessments			0
Communications - External	3	3	6
Staff/Council Relations	2		2
Municipal Modernization			0
Rising Sea levels			0
Youth Retention			0
Professional Retention	1		1
Gravel Road Repair	4		4
Saving Money/Pullback			0
Food Security/Community Gardens			0
Com Group Support	4		4
Grant Opportunities	3		3

STRATEGIC DASHBOARD

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (Council/CAO) – SEPTEMBER, 2021

NOW		Timeline	<p style="text-align: center;">Council Advocacy / Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>IT Programs – June 2022</i> ✓ <i>Cell Coverage Funding</i> ✓ <i>RCMP – NSFM Resolution (FCM)</i> ✓ <i>Hwy 101 (Weymouth) – 5-year capital plan</i> ✓ <i>Hwy 101 (Weymouth) – Refresh letter</i> ✓ <i>NSFM Housing Study (Review)</i> ✓ <i>Explore Medical Partnership (Joint meeting Town of Digby & Health Foundation)</i> ✓ <i>Modernization (Joint meeting Town of Digby)</i>
1.	Barton School: Residential Transfer	November	
2.	Hotel Levy: Bylaw	January 2022	
3.	Airport Feasibility: Review	February 2022	
4.	Fire Services: Proposal	March 2022	
5.	Economic Development Plan Review	May 2022	
<p>NEXT </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet Gaps • Annual Plan review with Staff Sargent • RCMP Contract (Research) • Industrial Commission–Area Structure Plan/Terms of Reference • Accessibility Plan 			
ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES			
✓ Be Environmentally Friendly	✓ Maximize Community Engagement	✓ Encourage Youth Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop Alternative Revenue Sources ✓ Pursue Partnerships/Build Relationships
OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES			
CAO - Jeff 1) Staffing Strategy – January 2022 2) Barton School Residential Transfer – November 2021 3) Hotel Levy Bylaw – January 2022 Economic Development Plan Review Fire Services Proposal Human Resource Strategy		Manager of Municipal Services/Operations - Tyler 1) Dog Control Bylaw Review – December 2021 2) Office Accessibility Proposal – January 2022 3) Airport Feasibility Review – February 2022 Asset Management (Sewer) Accessibility Plan Municipal Planning Strategy: Update	
Corporate – Cora Lee 1) Sewer Utility Review – February 2022 2) 3) 4) 5)		Follow-Up Items 1) Fire Services Formula: Review - November 2) MLA Meeting: Agenda 3) 4) 5)	

Blue=NOW; Red=NEXT; Green=Advocacy/Partnerships; Black=Operational Strategies

FOLLOW-UP ACTION LIST

Item	Target	Who	Status
<u>September 2021</u> Fire Service Financing Formula – Explanation			

REQUEST for DECISION

SUBJECT: <i>Decision-making topic title</i>		
RECOMMENDATION: <i>Clear decision-making resolution answering What?, Who?, How?, When?.</i>		
CAO COMMENTS: <i>Any additional comments regarding the reason for the recommendation</i>		
RECOMMENDATION	Report/Document: Attached <input type="checkbox"/>	Available <input type="checkbox"/> Nil <input type="checkbox"/>
KEY ISSUE(S)/CONCEPTS DEFINED: <i>Define the topic, reference background material and state question to be answered</i>		
RELEVANT POLICY: <i>Cite existing policies, practices and/or legislation</i>		
STRATEGIC RELEVANCE: <i>To Goals or priorities of current work program</i>		
DESIRED OUTCOME(S): <i>Main Result along with - highlighted requisites & benefits</i>		
RESPONSE OPTIONS: <i>Possible ways to achieve the main result with analysis highlights</i>		
1. _____		
2. _____		
3. _____		
PREFERRED STRATEGY: <i>Rationale for selected option –including pros a& cons</i>		
IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION:		
GENERAL: <i>Consequences to community, overall organization and/or other agencies</i>		
ORGANIZATIONAL: <i>Policy change or staff workload requirements</i>		
FINANCIAL: <i>Current and/or Future Budget impact</i>		
FOLLOW UP ACTION: <i>Timelines, decision-making milestones and key products</i>		
COMMUNICATION: <i>Strategy to inform, consult or involve stakeholders</i>		
OTHER COMMENTS: <i>By others reviewing this RFD</i>		

Submitted by: Writer
 Reviewed by: CAO

Endorsed by: Other
Reviewers

REQUEST for CLARIFICATION

SUBJECT: *Discussion Topic title*

SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP ACTION: *Next steps to develop the topic further discussion or decision?*

CAO COMMENTS: *Any additional comments regarding the suggestion.*

BACKGROUND: Report/Document: **Attached** **Available** **Nil**

1. DEFINE THE TOPIC

KEY INFORMATION: *Key summary of existing information to understand the nature of the topic.*

RELEVANT OBSERVATIONS: *Note issues or opportunities related to the complexity of the topic*

STRATEGIC QUESTIONS: *What needs to be known before recommendations can be developed?*

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: *The key question to guide the information and recommendation activities*
_____ ?

2. DETERMINE DESIRED OUTCOMES if the **essential question** is addressed

KEY RESULT: *The tangible outcome the organization can achieve to address the essential question.*
** _____

DESIRED BENEFITS OF KEY RESULT: *What positive conclusions are expected?*

REQUISITES: *What must happen before the key result can be achieved?*

UNINTENDED OUTCOMES: *Are there possible undesirable effects that could occur?*

3. EXPLORE RESPONSE OPTIONS to achieve the **key result** (Pros & Cons)

1.		

2.		

3.		

Submitted by: Writer

Reviewed by: CAO