

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2017



Strategic ALIGNMENT

Overview

Strategic alignment is an organization's process of defining its future directions and making choices to guide policy decisions, resource allocations and organizational efforts. In local government, not only does it entail aligning organizational aims with actions, tactics with responsibilities and resources to timelines, but ensuring both Council and staff are on the same page!

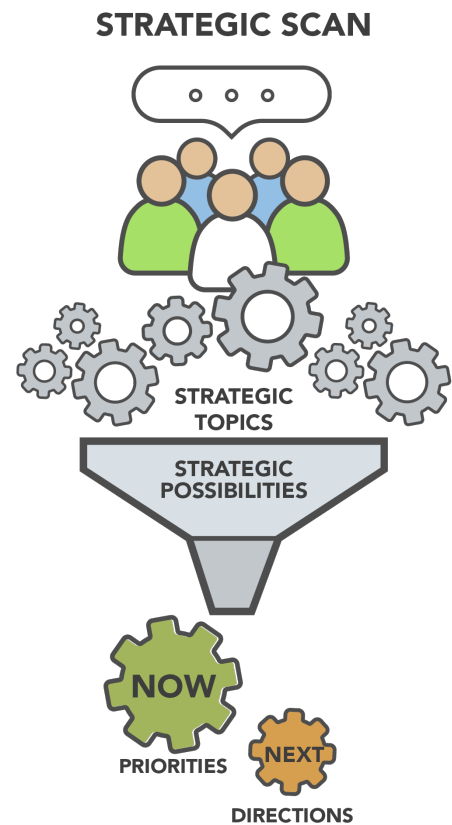
Strategic alignment is the road map to achieving the organization's purpose and implementing Council's priorities for the community. But how are these priorities identified and defined?

Council's priority setting process began with establishing a shared understanding of the organization's mandate and a scan of community conditions and emerging strategic topics.

Each **Strategic Topic** was discussed to explore possible actions to achieve Council expectations. Reality, urgency and responsibility criteria were applied to each emerging **Strategic Possibility** to determine **NOW Priorities** or **NEXT Directions** of Council. Operational strategies were also put forward by Administration.

Council's priorities as well as key operational strategies have been placed on one page - the **Strategic Priorities Chart** found on page 7 of this report. This chart is meant to be extracted from the report along with the **Strategic Work Program** for regular review, revisions and celebration - ensuring Council and staff are on the same page.

The strategic alignment process is dynamic. The sequence of activities noted in the graphic above serve as a reminder of how Council's strategic priorities were developed. Knowledge of the steps and tools used allow Council and Administration to replicate the process, keeping strategic priorities current and relevant.



1

Strategic SCAN

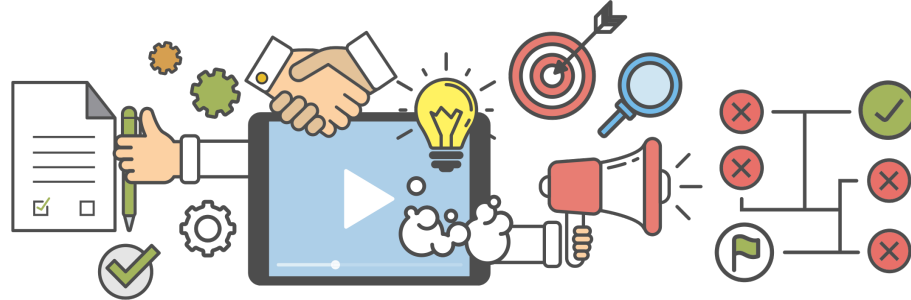
COMMUNITY CHECKLIST

SUCCESS INDICATORS

What does **success** look like?

ASSESSMENT

What is **working well** and **areas for attention**



Council's priority setting process began by looking to the future. Participants engaged in a 'Community Check-up' (see Appendix 1) discussing the five distinct areas of a sustainable community:

- Environment - maintaining a healthy and natural environment through responsible use, protection and sustainable practices
- Infrastructure - well maintained infrastructure and facilities that meet community needs and allow growth and development for prosperity
- Economy - building a strong and vibrant community by attracting, supporting and retaining businesses and residents
- Social - building social capital and engaging citizens and partners to improve the well-being and diversity of the community
- Governance - fiscally sustainable government focused on strategic decision-making, transparency and inclusiveness

Beginning with the end in mind, the preferred future is described. What would make the community a great place to live and work? This vision for the community is informed by elected official (and staff) contact with a wide range of residents and groups as well as previous municipal planning documents and studies.

During the community check-up discussion, success indicators began to emerge describing positive outcomes in each of the sustainability pillars. **Success Indicators** articulate measurable outcomes that can be assessed in quantifiable terms such as amounts or percentages; observable benefits that can be seen or perceived such as feelings and experiences; and tangible outputs that are produced such as services and programs delivered to the community.

The final component of a strategic scan is to assess what current actions are *working well* and *areas for attention*.

The resulting **Community Check-up** insights serves as foundational information for moving forward in the priority setting process. Council can update this Community Checklist annually and utilize it to monitor and assess the health and progress of the organization and community – either internally with staff or externally through public consultation processes.

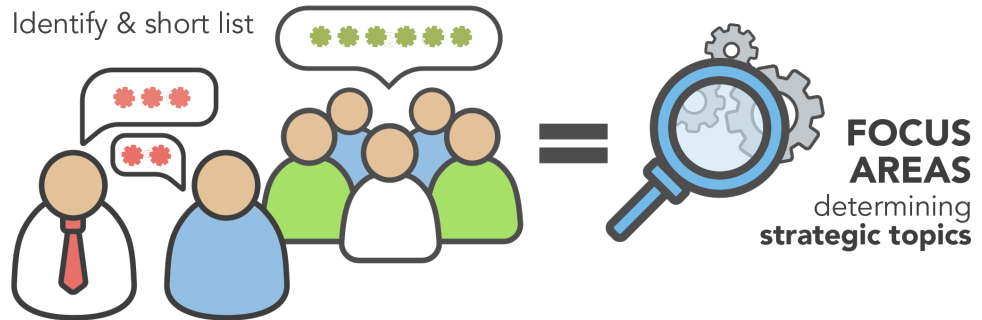


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Strategic TOPICS

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Identify & short list



To be strategic means that in addition to expectations for the future, Council must have a sense of current realities and conditions - both positive and challenging. Conducting this assessment is important for several reasons. It gets the process rooted in the real world after thinking about the ideal future. It collects ideas and information while beginning to focus the strategic priority setting process.

All workshop participants responded to the following question:

“What do you think are the significant issues and opportunities facing the organization and the community we serve?”

An **Issues/Opportunities Long List** was generated (see Appendix 2) and participants indicated their top ten items they felt the organization should be focused on. The resulting **Issues/Opportunities Short List** (see Appendix 3) indicates which emerging items are shared by Council and staff and those highlighted by Council or staff.

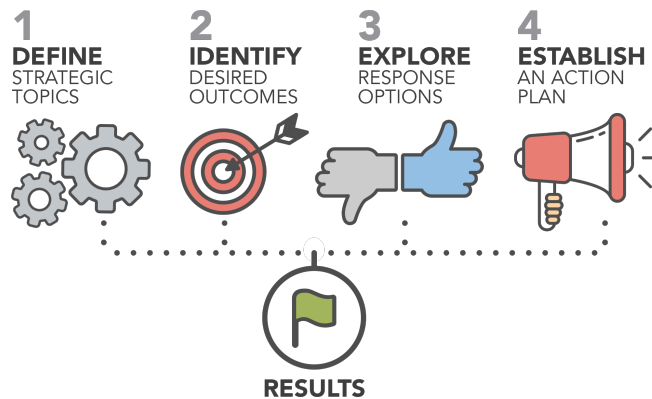
Council reviewed the short list along with consideration for other items from the long list to establish Strategic Topics for discussion during the workshop.

STRATEGIC TOPICS
1. Economic Growth
2. Inter-Municipal Relations
3. Community Marketing
4. Active Transportation
5. Renewable Energy Transition Plan
6. Aging Population / Seniors Needs
7. Poverty Reduction
8. Plans & Studies Review
9. Solid Waste
10. Public Communication
11. Service Capacity

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Strategic POSSIBILITIES

To move from strategic topics to **Strategic Possibilities**, a four-step process, the **Solution Seeking Model**, was utilized (see display below).



Participants began by clarifying the strategic topic, then identifying desired outcomes if the topic was successfully addressed. Next, options or ways to achieve the desired outcome were explored and a 'preferred strategy' was selected. Sometimes multiple preferred strategies emerged - short or long term, plan A or plan B, and strategies with or without resources.

Next action steps were determined to implement the preferred strategy. The action steps generated enough information to consider each preferred option as a strategic possibility. This does not make them priorities – yet. There are too many of them given the organization's limited capacity. An organization's capacity box is not readily visible but does have limitations or boundaries. It is useful to look at organizational capacity as a box of balls. If the box is full then Council must be realistic about putting more initiatives inside. Some of the limitations include:

EXPECTATIONS & OPTIONS



- Policy – procedures that define mandate / roles
- Finances – available net resources
- Culture – norms delineating acceptable behaviours
- Risk – tolerance for organization / legal exposure
- Human Resources – available staff and competency levels

These capacity box elements are impacted by dynamic internal and external factors:

- Funding – available funding beyond day-to-day operations
- Scrutiny – level of visibility for organizational actions
- Demands – diverse requests from clients and the public
- Environment – conditions impacting the organization
- Support – legitimacy and trust among stakeholder

STRATEGIC POSSIBILITY	POTENTIAL ACTIONS
1. CUMBERLAND BUSINESS CONNECTOR <i>CBC Start-up</i> <i>CBC Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a memorandum of understanding that outlines the process and the Town's commitment to the start-up of CBC. • Review CBC Strategy (when completed) to identify sector targets for attention by Amherst.
2. ECONOMIC GROWTH <i>Economic Readiness Chart</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare an economic readiness chart that identifies specific targets for Amherst to ensure there is no duplication of CBC efforts.
3. SOLID WASTE <i>Landfill Regulatory Issues</i> <i>Landfill Cell Construction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the Province will license a new cell. • Develop a business case outlining costs/benefits for a new landfill cell for Council decision on the landfill's future.
4. RENEWABLE ENERGY <i>Net Zero Feasibility Study</i> <i>Community Energy Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and review the Net Zero Energy feasibility study. • Prepare terms of reference for the development of a Community Energy Strategy.
5. COMMUNITY MARKETING <i>Marketing Program</i> <i>Branding Refresh</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Regional Marketing Strategy and budget for the development of a Community Marketing Program that will compliment efforts of the Cumberland Business Connector. • Update the current community brand.
6. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION <i>Active Transportation Plan</i> <i>Bicycle Lanes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Active Transportation Plan with Council. • Confirm capital priorities contained in the Active Transportation Plan and include in current budget and Capital Plan. • Identify gaps for planning of future bike lanes.
7. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION <i>Public Communication Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine Council expectations for public engagement and identify appropriate mediums for consistent public messaging.
8. SERVICE CAPACITY <i>Service Capacity Review</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule a service capacity review workshop to assess resources and current levels of service relative to Council expectations and organizational priorities.
9. SENIORS SERVICES <i>Seniors Strategy Review</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the current seniors strategy to identify needs and gaps in service.
10. INTER-MUNICIPAL RELATIONS <i>Areas of Common Interest</i> <i>Regional Protocol</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the Cumberland and Oxford to determine areas of common interest and potential for shared services. • Develop a regional protocol to guide the relationship.
11. POVERTY REDUCTION <i>Poverty Reduction Forum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a forum to discuss the impacts and strategies to address poverty in the community.
12. FOOD SECURITY <i>Food Security Initiatives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work on food security initiatives including community gardens, edible landscaping and food sustainability.
13. PLANS & STUDIES REVIEW <i>Strategy Review Action Chart</i> <i>Community Check List</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a chart of plans, studies and strategies for review and updates. • Review Vital Signs Report and create an indicator check list as a tool to determine the health of the community.

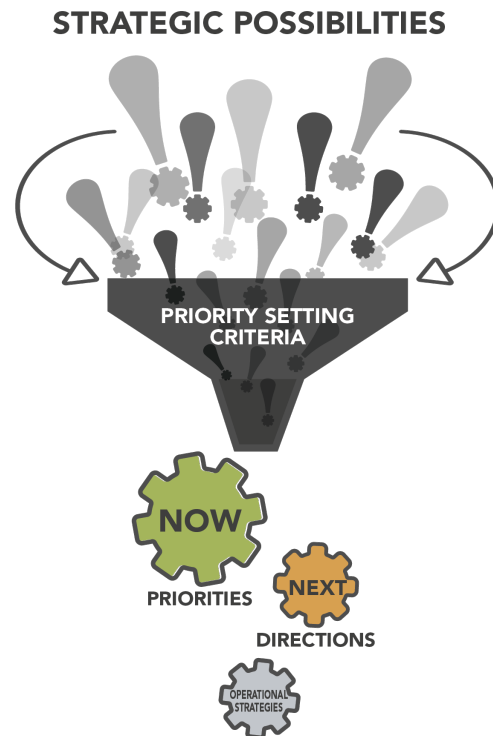
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Strategic Priorities

Based on the number of topics and organizational capacity assessment, the strategic possibilities were translated into short-term priorities and longer term directions. The process was guided by the application of priority setting criteria:

- Reality criteria to ensure the possibility can be acted on NOW, otherwise NEXT or LATER (see [Appendix 4.a](#))
- Urgency criteria to assess IF there is a timeliness factor dictating immediate action (see [Appendix 4.b](#))
- Responsibility criteria to determine if it falls within the political or administrative realm (see [Appendix 4.c](#))

The resulting NOW Priorities and NEXT Directions have been placed on one page for easy reference. The Strategic Priorities Chart (see [next page](#)) also captures staff's operational strategies.



Items listed in **BOLD CAPITALS** indicate priorities Council wishes to address NOW. These items automatically enter the appropriate operational unit at the bottom of the chart. This shows the alignment of staff work with Council's focus. Items listed in CAPITALS indicate matters that will be addressed NEXT or when a NOW item is completed. Italicized items reflect matters being advocated on behalf of the community to other levels of government or agencies for action.

In addition to Council strategic priorities and direction, there are other strategic matters receiving the attention of Administration. These Operational Strategies are noted in regular font on the Strategic Priorities Chart.

The focus of the Strategic Priorities Chart is on five NOW priorities. When these are completed, one-by-one they are replaced with NEXT items. These longer-term directions (or emerging strategic topics) should be discussed further using the Solution Seeking approach and using the priority setting criteria to consider new strategic priorities. NEW items can be reviewed using specific criteria and move up the list as resources become available or as new needs emerge. Sometimes, an emerging strategic priority may cause an existing one to be moved to NEXT status to ensure strategic priorities are consistent with available resources.

To this end, the Strategic Priorities Chart should be reviewed regularly as a reminder of the organization's capacity. It should be included in every Council meeting agenda as a constant reference (not review), updated monthly by the CAO (Chief Administrative Officer) with Council and reviewed quarterly by the CAO with staff and then Council to make adjustments, change priorities and celebrate achievements.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CHART

January 2017

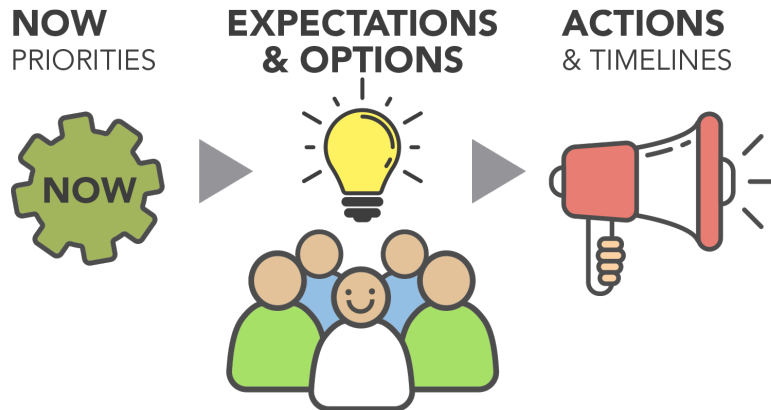
CORPORATE PRIORITIES (Council/CAO)

<p>NOW</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> INTER-MUNICIPAL RELATIONSHIPS: Meeting SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: Future Status MARKETING PROGRAM: Refresh (Budget Request) ECONOMIC READINESS STRATEGY: Terms of Reference ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION: Plan 	<p>TIMELINE (2017)</p> <p>March March March March June</p>
<p>NEXT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COMMUNITY ENERGY STRATEGY SERVICE CAPACITY REVIEW: ToR SENIORS STRATEGY: Need Assessment PLANS / STUDIES: Review Chart COMMUNITY DASHBOARD: Checklist POVERTY REDUCTION: Forum NET ZERO FEASIBILITY: Study 	<p>ADVOCACY / PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Business Connector Start-up</i> <i>Business Connector Strategy</i> <i>NS Solid Waste Regulatory Issues</i> <i>Net Zero Feasibility Study</i> <i>Solid Waste Management Future</i>

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES (CAO/Staff)

<p>CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (Greg)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> INTER-MUNICIPAL RELATIONS: Meeting - Mar. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: Future - Mar. SERVICE CAPACITY REVIEW: ToR - April <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECONOMIC READINESS: Action Chart - Mar. Salary Administration Policy Review - April 	<p>POLICE (Ian)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Assurance Review - May Police Fentanyl Response Strategy - April Collective Bargaining - April <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health Interaction Training - June Departmental Wellness Program - Nov.
<p>FIRE (Greg)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Retention: Review - May Departmental Strategic Plan: Review - April Fire Fentanyl Response: Strategy - Mar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Security Strategy - April 	<p>COMMUNITY (Bill)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> MARKETING PROGRAM: Refresh - Sept. ECONOMIC READINESS: Workshop - Sept. POVERTY REDUCTION: Forum - Oct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SENIORS STRATEGY: Needs Assessment - Sept. NET ZERO FEASIBILITY: Study - June
<p>CORPORATE (Vince)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Pension Plan Sustainability - April Internal Control Documentation - Sept. Electronic Vendor Payment - Nov. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Connector: Accounting Setup - Mar. 	<p>OPERATIONS (Jason)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION: Plan - June PLANS & STUDIES: Review Chart - Dec. COMMUNITY ENERGY STRATEGY - Dec. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lion's Park Redevelopment - Oct. Asset Management Plan - Sept. Service Delivery Standards - Sept.

CODES: BOLD CAPITALS = NOW Priorities; CAPITALS = NEXT Priorities; *Italics* = Advocacy; Regular Title Case = Operational Strategies



As the final stage in the solution seeking process, preliminary action steps were developed that identify resources and responsibilities. The resulting action plans for each NOW strategic priority and NEXT direction form the **Strategic Priorities Work Program**. The work program is used to determine key performance milestones and to serve as a feedback mechanism monitoring progress and results. It is necessary for:

- **Budgeting** – the true acid test for a strategic priority is whether it gets funds within the annual budget process. If not it should move to NEXT status.
- **Work Planning** – the CAO will be better equipped to assign work knowing the time and effort required of staff to implement Council priorities.
- **Performance Monitoring** – Council will be able to perform its oversight role better if there are timeframes to monitor progress and results.

The work program (see Appendix 5) lays out what is necessary from staff and/or partners to implement a strategic priority. The work program clearly itemizes Council expectations in terms of:

- **Who** – responsibility for implementation and decisions
- **Why** – success indicators to monitor progress and results
- **What** – specific task and activities that need to be done
- **When** – sequencing of activities with target dates
- **How** – human, material and fiscal resources required

The Strategic Priorities Work Program defines the desired outcomes for each priority (column 1), options for achieving the priority (column 2), and actions and timelines (column 3).

Extracted from the report, the Strategic Priorities Chart and Work Program are intended to be working documents. Regular updating of the chart and work program ensures that everyone is 'on the same page'. Roles are clear, the focus is defined and progress is monitored and celebrated.

Strategic FOLLOW-UP

The following recommendations are offered for Council's consideration:

That Council adopts the 2017 *Strategic Priorities Update* for continuous reference at each Council meeting, quarterly updates and annual strategic priority reviews.

That Council requests the CAO to schedule an annual Priority Setting update session prior to the start of the annual budget process. *The annual budget should reflect Council's priorities.*

Appendices

1. Community Check-up
2. Issue and Opportunity Long List
3. Issue and Opportunity Short List
4. Priority Criteria
5. Strategic Priorities Work Plan

Dr. Gordon McIntosh, CGLM



GORDON McINTOSH | President
C: 250.881.0761 T: 250.655.7455

CIVIC GOVERNANCE | LEADERSHIP | STRATEGY

COMMUNITY CHECK-UP

ENVIRONMENT Maintaining a healthy and natural environment through responsible use, protection and sustainable practices

SUCCESS INDICATORS	WHAT WORKS WELL	AREAS FOR ATTENTION
<p>Human Environment Community Aesthetics Natural Area Protection Environmental Quality Land Use Environmental Footprint Energy Conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of natural environment • Preservation of ground water resources • Air quality • Water quality • Maintain/protect urban forest • Environmental stewardship • Green space and parks planning • Transportation alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticulturist/ urban forest landscape • Bird sanctuary • Walking trails • Canadian Living article • Beautiful community • Tidal power in Parrsboro • Clean water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community gardens • Senior friendly walkways and spaces • Youth engagement • Green space development • Marsh protection

INFRASTRUCTURE Well maintained infrastructure and facilities that meet community needs and allow growth and development for prosperity.

SUCCESS INDICATORS	WHAT WORKS WELL	AREAS FOR ATTENTION
<p>Transportation Community Utilities Facilities Community Systems Service Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure capacity for future growth • Waste to Energy infrastructure • Achieving solid waste standards • Quality recreation facilities/green spaces • Long term infrastructure capital planning • Infrastructure lifecycle/maintenance plan • Access to high speed internet • Adequate revenue/funding capital priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation system • CCTS / taxi system • Solid utility infrastructure • Great facilities – West Highlands, YMCA, pool • Walking track • Skateboard park • Dickey Park • Football stadium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New transportation options • Wifi access • Facility promotion • Facility upgrades/planning • Cell phone coverage • Active transportation plan • Electric car charging station

ECONOMY Building a strong and vibrant community by attracting, supporting and retaining businesses and residents.

SUCCESS INDICATORS	WHAT WORKS WELL	AREAS FOR ATTENTION
<p>Job Creation Business Retention Business Growth Business Attraction Business Investment Community Image Community Sustainability Tourism Community Reputation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job creation with living wage • Stable/predictable tax base • Positive community image and promotion • Partnerships with community stakeholders • Business retention • Attraction/growth of small businesses • Attractive, active downtown • Adequate funding for promotions/programs • Accommodations for conference marketing • Current data and intelligence for marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation of CBC • Ideal location on the border • Economic development function • Historic assets • Natural assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business visitations • Marketing material • Regional marketing • Job creation • Youth retention • Youth career counselling • Senior engagement • Bus tour attraction • Retired executives as mentors • Downtown as an attraction • Partner with CBC • Spring job fair • Tourism research data

COMMUNITY CHECK-UP

SOCIAL Building social capital and engaging citizens and partners to improve the well-being and diversity of the community.

SUCCESS INDICATORS	WHAT WORKS WELL	AREAS FOR ATTENTION
<p>Arts & Culture Community Support Network Citizen & Property Safety Healthy Lifestyles Health Service Access Sense of Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active lifestyle opportunities • Healthy lifestyle program choices • Services for all age groups • Understanding seniors needs/services • Access to health care/medical services • Preservation of history and culture • Public awareness of programs and services • Citizen and property safety • Accessible community support network • Energized and committed volunteers • Community brand that tells the Amherst story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown festivals/events • Artisan market • Community Helping Tree • Sports opportunities • Walking track • Health service access • Saturday market • ARHS theatre • Community music talent • Community artisans • Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging demographics • Poverty reduction • Healthy lifestyle attitudes • Citizen/property safety • Sense of heritage • Public communication • Welcoming community • Volunteer burn out • Community branding • Centre First Study – seniors • Youth programs

GOVERNANCE Fiscally sustainable government focused on strategic decision-making, transparency and inclusiveness.

SUCCESS INDICATORS	WHAT WORKS WELL	AREAS FOR ATTENTION
<p>Good Policies Strategic Direction Role Clarity Agency Liaison</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community involvement and engagement • Sound, strategic decision making • Positive, collaborative decisions • Fiscal responsibility • Regional partnerships to reduce duplication • Good working relationship with the Province • Access to Federal/Provincial funding • Good staff morale and organizational culture • Effective and regularly updated policies • Positive Staff/Council relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective policies • Engaged and intelligent Council • Role clarity • Strategic priority process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy communication • Policy/bylaw review • Priority setting • County/Town relations • Customer service expectation

ISSUE & OPPORTUNITY LONG LIST					
'C' indicates COUNCIL scoring. 'S' indicates STAFF scoring.					
ISSUE / OPPORTUNITY	C	S	ISSUE / OPPORTUNITY	C	S
Aging Population - Seniors needs	12	10	Aboiteau Removal	-	-
Aging Infrastructure	-	12	Municipal Alcohol Project	-	-
Active Transportation - Trails	10	14	Land Use Bylaw/MPS Review	-	7
Policing Costs	14	22	Work Force Engagement	-	18
Mt. A / NSCC Future	-	-	Federal & Provincial Relations	5	-
Commercial Assessment	-	5	Business Connector Group	-	10
Solid Waste Management	16	-	Border Town Location	5	-
Climate Change Adaptation	-	-	Community Marketing / Branding	24	9
Organizational Structure Review	-	16	Workforce Safety	-	-
Service Levels / Expectations	7	-	Poverty Reduction	12	9
Long Term Financial Sustainability	-	18	Downtown Revitalization / Housing	7	10
Staff Succession Plan	6	12	CCUBIC - Operations Plan	-	9
Pension Plan Sustainability	2	1	Volunteer Retention/Recruitment	-	1
Beaubassin	-	-	Inter-Municipal Relations	29	29
Entrepreneurial Climate	6	-	Urban Forest / Edible Landscape	4	-
Job Creation - Job Fairs	18	-	Highway Traffic	-	-
Youth Retention	2	-	Citizen Engagement	-	2
Economic Growth / Sustainability	34	30	Dickey Brook	7	-
Provincial Jobs	8	3	Culture / History Preservation	-	-
Living Wages	-	5	Wind Energy	-	8
Tourism Strategy	7	-	Electric Fleet Transition	-	-
Web-based Commerce	-	-	Economic Development Delivery	-	9
Transparency / Confidence	5	-	Festivals / Events Planning	-	15
Service Standards	-	17	Population Growth/Retention	8	-
Quality Assurance	-	-	Health Care Sustainability	4	-
Vacant / Unsightly Buildings	3	-	Victoria Park Fountain	-	-
Vital Signs Report	5	-	Low Income Housing	2	-
Car Charging Station	9	-	Transit	-	3
Province Funded Police Positions	9	-	Strategies, Studies, Plans Review	12	9
Selling Change	1	-	School Enrollment	-	7
Marijuana Industry Impacts	5	-	Library - YMCA	-	4
Business Liaison	2	-	Recreation Plan Implementation	1	1
Renewable Energy Transition Plan	24	-	Entrance Ways - Signage	8	-
Community Pride	4	3	Built Heritage	-	-
Website Upgrades	3	-	Communities in Bloom	-	-

ISSUE & OPPORTUNITY SHORT LIST			
'C' indicates COUNCIL scoring. 'S' indicates STAFF scoring. #=Rank.			
ISSUE / OPPORTUNITY	COUNCIL	STAFF	TOTAL
ECONOMIC GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY	34 - #1	30 = #1	64
INTER-MUNICIPAL RELATIONSHIP	29 - #2	29 - #2	58
POLICING COSTS	14 - #7	22 - #3	36
COMMUNITY MARKETING / BRANDING	24 - #3	9	33
RENEWABLE ENERGY TRANSITION PLAN	24 - #4	-	24
Active Transportation / Trails	10	14 - #9	24
AGING POPULATION - SENIORS NEEDS	12 - #8	10 - #10	22
POVERTY REDUCTION	12 - #9	9	21
STRATEGIES, STUDIES, PLAN REVIEW	12 - #10	9	21
JOB CREATION	18 - #5	-	18
Workforce Engagement	-	18 - #4	18
Long Term Financial Sustainability	-	18 - #5	18
Service Standards	-	17 - #6	17
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT	16 - #6	-	16
Organizational Review	-	16 - #7	16
Festivals / Events Planning	-	15 - #8	15
BOLD CAPITALS = COUNCIL / STAFF COMMON ITEMS			
CAPITALS = COUNCIL ITEMS and Title Case = Staff led items			

4.a REALITY CHECK CRITERIA	SUCCESS		
	LIKELY		UNLIKELY
LEGISLATIVE EASE	Yes	Maybe	No
POLICY CONSISTENCY	Yes	Maybe	No
CONTRACTUAL EASE	Yes	Maybe	No
POLITICAL WILL	High	Neutral	Uncertain
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	High	Medium	Low
SAVINGS REALIZED	High	Medium	None
TIME EFFICIENCY REALIZED	Likely	Maybe	Not Likely
TIMEFRAME FOR RESULTS	Reasonable	Challenging	Unrealistic
SUCCESS LIKELIHOOD	High	Medium	Uncertain
COMMUNITY SUPPORT	High	Average	Low
FISCAL RESOURCES	Confirmed	Available	Difficult
PARTNERSHIP POTENTIAL	Ready	Maybe	Uncertain/No
LEVERAGE OTHER RESOURCES	Yes	Maybe	Uncertain/No
ONGOING SUSTAINABILITY	Likely	Maybe	Uncertain/No
HUMAN RESOURCES	Yes	Somewhat	No
EXPERTISE	In-house	Available	Uncertain/No
CONSEQUENCES/RISK	None	Uncertain	Negative
AFFORDABILITY	Yes	Average	No

4.b URGENCY CRITERIA	URGENCY	
	URGENT	NOT AS URGENT
IMPERATIVE - Requirement to Act	Legislation	No Legislation
LIABILITY - Risk Exposure	Legal	Inconvenience
SAFETY - Direct vs. Potential Threat	Life - Imminent	Property Damage
FINANCIAL - Magnitude of Cost	Significant	Operational
VISIBILITY - Implications to Organization	Negative	Neutral
PUBLIC BENEFIT - Who receives outcomes?	Most	Few
COMMUNITY NEED - Who's asking?	At Large	Minority Interest
TIMELINESS - Resource Alignment	Unique	Frequent
STRATEGIC - Linkage to goals/priorities	Critical	Useful
OBLIGATION - Commitment to others	Contractual	Casual
LEADERSHIP - Political Requirement	High	Low
TIMELINE - Imposed Timeframe	Deadline	None

4.c RESPONSIBILITY CRITERIA	RESPONSIBILITY	
	POLITICAL	ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICY	New or Change	Procedure or Implementation
FINANCIAL	New or Change in Budget	Approved in Budget
EXTERNAL LINKAGE	Political Level	Staff Level
CORPORATE IMAGE	Agency Integrity	Service Quality
SERVICE LEVELS	New or Terminate	Service Standards
STRATEGIC DIRECTION	New or Change	Implementation
PERSONNEL	CAO Performance	Staff Performance
LEGISLATION	Ignore or Seek to Change	Interpretation
SENSITIVITY	High Visibility	Low Visibility
OBLIGATION	New or Change in Contract	Permissible
MEMBER LIAISON	Elected Official	Staff

PRIORITY/Desired Outcomes	OPTIONS/ Strategy	ACTION - What, When
NOW		
<p>1. INTER-MUNICIPAL RELATIONSHIP</p> <p><i>How do we work with Cumberland and Oxford to the mutual benefit of our citizens?</i></p> <p>* Areas of Interest</p> <p>* Regional Collaboration Protocol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual areas of interest identified • Effective / efficient programs and services • Reduce duplication • Stronger/unified voice • Fair processes • Equitable funding formulas • Good working relationship • Financial sustainability • Value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Host meeting with Cumberland & Oxford Councils - March 2. Discuss areas of common interest - March 3. Develop joint action plan
<p>2. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT</p> <p><i>What approach should the Town take as the Province reduces the number of landfill licenses?</i></p> <p>* Future Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation compliance • Implementation of the Town Solid Waste Strategy • Promote recycling • Meet solid waste diversion targets • Business case - identify cost/benefit of new cell option • Research temporary/long term trucking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination • Build new cell • Determine options • Defer until Provincial decision 	<p>APPROACH</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine preferred approach - March 2. Advocate position to partners - March 3. If new cell option - undertake detailed design - March 4. Tender project - May <p>LANDFILL LICENSE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate for landfill license status clarity

PRIORITY/Desired Outcomes	OPTIONS/ Strategy	ACTION - What, When
<p>3. MARKETING PROGRAM</p> <p><i>How can we market and promote Amherst to retain residents and attract visitors?</i></p> <p>* Marketing Plan</p> <p>* Branding Refresh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send and promotion of community pride • Targeted marketing material • Website upgrade • Encourage immigration • Promote 'Border Town' location • Refresh / rejuvenate entrance ways • Tell the Amherst story - history and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination 	<p>MARKETING PLAN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review current strategy - March 2. Determine budget for brand refresh - March 3. Finalize plan and brand updates - September <p>CUMBERLAND BUSINESS CONNECTOR STRATEGY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review CBC strategy 2. Promote with new brand within regional context
<p>4. ECONOMIC READINESS</p> <p><i>What is the Town's role and partnership opportunities in promoting economic growth of Amherst?</i></p> <p>* Economic Readiness Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective marketing and promotion • Attract and retain businesses • Identify desired targets and gaps • Job creation • Diversify economy • Increase tax base • Mentor Entrepreneurs • Downtown revitalization • Encourage tourism • Business friendly processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Strategy • CBC Strategy • TOA feeds into Regional Economic Development Strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify opportunities and gaps - March 2. Determine targets - April 3. Seek stakeholder input - June 4. Work with CBC to determine shared tasks - Fall

PRIORITY/Desired Outcomes	OPTIONS/ Strategy	ACTION - What, When
<p>5. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION <i>How do we move forward on trails, walking paths and bike lanes?</i></p> <p>* Active Transportation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active, healthy lifestyle opportunities • Upgraded trails and neighbourhood networks • Sidewalks and pathways for seniors • Bike lanes • Capital priorities determined • Adequate funding in the capital budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination 	<p>PLAN IMPLEMENTATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review plan - March 2. Define priority setting criteria - March 3. Confirm priorities - March 4. Submit capital budget items - April <p>BIKE LANES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine gaps - March 2. Create budget envelope - June
NEXT		
<p>COMMUNITY ENERGY STRATEGY <i>How do we address climate change impacts and move forward on alternative energy projects?</i></p> <p>* Energy Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a sustainable and secure energy system • Policies and programs to reduce carbon footprint • Change in control of energy generation • Energy management • Energy reduction targets • Low carbon technologies • Attract new industry and businesses investment • Net Zero Energy project • Revenue generator • 100% renewable energy goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination 	<p>NET ZERO ENERGY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare strategy terms of reference - March 2. Allocate budget - March 3. Undertake process <p>COMMUNITY ENERGY STRATEGY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop feasibility study terms of reference - June 2. Determine budget impact 3. Seek Council direction 4. Approve strategy - December

PRIORITY/Desired Outcomes	OPTIONS/ Strategy	ACTION - What, When
<p>SERVICE CAPACITY REVIEW <i>How can we balance community expectations with organizational capacity?</i> * Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service levels defined • Revenue options examined • Programs and services aligned with resources • Inventory of current services • Priorities / expectations defined • Ensure reasonable workloads • Assessment of alternative service delivery • Recruit and retain staff • Maximize efficiency • Ensure fiscal accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • In house with facilitator 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop terms of reference - April 2. Prepare inventory of current services - June 3. Conduct workshop - September 4. Identify targets 5. Prepare adjustment strategy
<p>SENIORS STRATEGY <i>How do identify and program for services aimed at our senior population?</i> * Senior's Need Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding needs and expectations • Retention of senior population • Senior input to services and programs • Community mentors • Source of community volunteers • Accessible /barrier free infrastructure • Aging in place housing options • Access to quality healthcare options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Seniors Groups • Combination 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review current strategy - June 2. Identify service needs and gaps - September 3. Determine strategies to address needs

PRIORITY/Desired Outcomes	OPTIONS/ Strategy	ACTION - What, When
<p>PLANS/STUDIES</p> <p><i>What information and intelligence can we garner from our plans and studies to be aware of trends and move forward on community initiatives?</i></p> <p>* Review Chart</p> <p>* Community Dashboard Check List</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of community goals • Community sustainability • Indicator list and chart for data comparison • Health of our natural environment • Quality of life indicators • Poverty reduction • Economic growth • Understand trends • Predict housing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination 	<p>PLAN REVIEW</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review plans and studies 2. Develop an indicator list and review chart <p>COMMUNITY DASHBOARD CHECK LIST</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Vital Signs Report 2. Draft a quality of life indicator list
<p>POVERTY REDUCTION</p> <p><i>What is the Town's role in addressing poverty reduction in Amherst?</i></p> <p>* Community Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of quality services • Supporting food security programs • Advocating for low income housing • Promoting access to support agencies • Community awareness and community discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house • Consultant • Combination 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidate existing information - May 2. Determine stakeholders/invitees - Summer 3. Prepare agenda - Summer 4. Host community forum - September

Bolded items indicate the Council **priority**, the preferred **option** to achieve the outcome and the primary **action** necessary to address the priority. The question used by the Council to focus their priority setting discussion is *italicized*.

ADVOCACY	
PRIORITY/Desired Outcomes	STRATEGY / Actions
CUMBERLAND BUSINESS CONNECTOR * <i>Business Connector Start-up</i> * <i>Business Connector Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a memorandum of understanding that outlines the process and the Town’s commitment to the start-up of the Cumberland Business Connector. • Review CBC Strategy (when completed) to identify sector targets for partner attention.
NOVA SCOTIA SOLID WASTE REGULATORY ISSUES * <i>Landfill License</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the Province will license a new cell.
NET ZERO ENERGY PROJECT * <i>Feasibility Study</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue funding for pilot project.
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT * <i>Future Plans</i> * <i>Licensing Status</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the Town’s position re: land fill future. • Seek Provincial status re: a future landfill facility licensing.