Infrastructure Committee Meeting
Town Council Chambers
Date: August 28, 2025. Time: 6:00 p.m.

Present
Councilor J. Sullivan, Chair
Councilor, L. MacLellan,
Deputy Mayor D. Roberts

R. Boucher, Resident of Antigonish
M. Grant, Resident of Antigonish
K. Meisner, Director of Infrastructure & Engineering
L. Basinger, Infrastructure & Engineering Project Manager
D. Halfpenny, Infrastructure & Engineering Administrative Assistant

Call to Order
The Chair, Councilor J. Sullivan, called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda
Items added to the agenda:
1. Tour of Facilities Insights
2. 10-year plan
3. Status Reports.

Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by Deputy Mayor D. Roberts and seconded by Councillor L. MacLellan to approve August 28, 2025, agenda with additions. Motion Carried.

Acceptance of Minutes
June 10, 2025, minutes were accepted as written.

The Chair welcomed L. Basinger, Project Manager, to the meeting. L. Basinger provided a brief introduction to her role with Infrastructure and Engineering team.

Business Arising from the Minutes

1. **Snow Removal Policy**

Chair J. Sullivan advised that he had meet with the Jewkes and provided them with a copy of the New Glasgow Snow Removal Policy. He asked them to have a look at the documents and provide comments for the development of a new Snow Removal Policy for the Town of Antigonish.

Discussion followed on setting up a special meeting and inviting the downtown core businesses to participate in the process.

K, Meisner commented that a draft could be created for the Town of Antigonish Snow Removal Policy which could then be brought to the meeting for review and discussion.

2. Project Updates

a) Bay Street

L. Basinger reported that the Bay Street Project is moving along. Positive feedback has been received from the funding application. The draft tender is being reviewed with a goal of having it posted next week. A meeting with the railway is scheduled for Thursday, September 4th. Railway approval is key to moving the plan forward. The railway work involves digging pits on either side of the tracks and pipes being placed underneath the track to prevent a risk of failure and avoid compromising the track. Staff have been working with landowners regarding site preparation work such land clearing and lateral replacements. She advised land clearing work will be taking place in the next couple of weeks. Bell has also been contacted to identify pole locations. The Town Communications Department has been advised of memos and social media posts that will be required to keep the Bay Street residents aware and the general community.

Deputy Mayor, D. Roberts, commented that it is very important to keep the homeowners aware of what will be taking place. She asked if there are any plans for reinstatement of trees that will be removed or landscaping features such as hedges.

K. Meiser advised that yes staff will be working with the homeowners to provide replacements for landscaping elements to some level.

L. MacLellan asked what the projected overall value of the Bay Street Upgrade is and K. Meisner reported that 5.5 million dollars the number identified in the capital plan with federal/provincial funding to cover 50 % of the costs with the potential of other funding avenues covering more of the costs.

L. MacLellan noted it is an ambitious project, and conditions could change that would potentially effect costs, He stated that an ongoing status report of where the project stands would be beneficial to have prior to the infrastructure meeting.

M. Grant inquired as to how the old piping in the middle of Bay Street will be dealt with.

K. Meisner advised that old pipes would be cut, capped and abandoned, filled with grout or cement as needed. New services will be installed on the St Matha's Regional Hospital side of the street, and the street will be cut for the new laterals as the houses get reconnected. The challenge is to have minimal disruption to traffic and homeowners.

b) James Street West

L. Basinger reported that the sewer and water pipes located have been completed and the site pick up and survey work has been sent to the designer to incorporate into the drawings. The funding application approval paperwork is expected to be received shortly, and the tender draft documents are being prepared and optimally will be finalized and posted by the end of next week.

L. MacLellan expressed concerns about finding a contractor to complete these projects so late in the season.

K. Meisner noted that larger constructions companies such as Nova Construction and Dexters may be interested in bidding and may potentially find efficiencies in bidding on both the James

St West and Bay Street projects as multiple crews on sites may make it more worthwhile for them.

c) Purchased equipment (Loader, Plow Truck)

K. Meisner reported that the request for proposals has closed, and Komatsu has been chosen as the supplier of the new loader. He stated that the warranty package and features offered were the best option for the Public Works operational requirements.

He identified that the decision on the Plow Truck will be finalized shortly. However, he stated all the proposals received identified that the delivery would be in 11 months, which he commented was disappointing. Apparently, a shortage of cab and chassis have caused an issue globally.

d) Substation/Grid Mod Update

Construction has started at the location behind Scott and Stewart property on the new substation that will be owned by the Town and upgrade to a new 138kv transmission line. The Town will still purchase power from NSPi. However, the new substation will provide more dependable 25000-volt power lines. K. Meisner noted that currently the town pays a base charge to Nova Scotia power for five to six substations, and this would reduce it to one substation. However, he stated that one of the old substations may be maintained to function as back up in an emergency and town may be compensated for services rendered. Talks with NSPi will be ongoing to determine best plan of action.

M Grant inquired as to the status of the Solar Garden. K. Meisner explained that Area is the owner of the Solar Garden at present and the Town as a partner in Area owns 62% at his time. The Solar Garden will eventually be owned by the Town in its entirety. The Solar Garden is online but has not reach peak efficiency yet. Area is dealing with an insurance claim and when all is resolved the Town will take over the ownership of the Solar Garden.

L MacLellan advised that the Solar Garden is contributing green energy and will increase efficiency in the upcoming months.

3. Educational Program Update

Councillor J. Sullivan advised that instead of items not to flush we should be focused on the message of the three ‘p’s” only items to be flushed are paper, pee and poo and have that added to all water and sewer bills.

K. Meisner noted that Communication has been working on material for the Welcome packages for StFx off campus students that will be rolling out in upcoming week.

New Business

1. Water Conservation

a) K. Meisner stated that since the Water Conservation measures have been put in place overall usage has been reduced by 20%. He advised that the recent rain fall had registered 25mm at the James River Dam. The James River Dam had been down seven and half feet prior to the rain, and the much-needed precipitation brought the level up to just below the mark of removing the mandatory conservation level. However, he

commented that staff will be closely monitoring the dam in upcoming days to determine if there are any further gains from the rainfall.

Potential water saving measures. Grant commented that all new builds and renovations should be required to update to water conservation technology such as use of gray water from washing machine and dishes. He noted that other areas have such measures in place. He advised that there are residents that are using water totes to haul water in the area to supplement their water usage.

L. MacLellan stated that StFx had decreased their water usage by 75% but switching to water saving products such as low flow toilets, showers, and other methods.

Committee members agreed that with global warming it is extremely likely that water conservation will be a major concern.

Deputy Mayor D. Roberts advised the committee that she will be speaking to the CAO about the Town potential promoting rain barrel usage.

R. Boucher cautioned that it would be important to note that the water in rain barrel would not be potable if coming off a shingled roof. Therefore, it could be used for watering plants.

Councillor L. MacLellan commented that other countries take an active role in decreasing water usage and that Canadians are use a lot of water.

Infrastructure Committee members agreed that global warming will continue to necessitate that steps be taken to use water wisely.

b) **Conservation Measures and Restrictions**.

K. Meisner reported that Water Conservation measures remain in place at this time until the water level rise above the mandatory level and customers will be alerted via social media and the Town website when the conservation measures are lifted.

c) Approval Amendment with NSE/DFO for River Flow.

K. Meisner explained that Nova Scotia Environment and the Department of Fisheries require that water be allocated for the fish. They currently require a maximum low of 1.7 cu per second flow. The hydrologist advised that the 1.1 cu per seconds flow would be adequate for the fish. K. Meisner advised he has requested a change to the permit to operate to allow for the change to 1.1 cu per second flow.

2. Sewer Treatment Plant Update

a) Recirculation Project

Set up is being completed to recirculate flow by pumping a long continuous pump of wastewater back to front to improve treatment efficiency. Preliminary results showed positive results with front-end drop the nitrates and biochemical oxygen demand. This process allowed for increased capacity and helps to maintain a consistent flow of beneficial bacterial and

nutrients which help with the smell issue. He advised that this is difficult to maintain with the present set up and only four staff members.

b) Oxygen levels

Low dissolved oxygen level below 2mg/l can lead to inefficient treatment and create dead zones, Monitoring levels are critical for optimizing the wastewater treatment. When the aerators become clogged with wipes and all the other type of materials that decreases the oxygen level and causes the increase in odours.

c) Blowers and Aerators

Planned retrofit to add extra air up front where the pressure is needed by purchasing a fifty hp blower and adding a diffuser into the pipe to increase the oxygen level in the pond.
A proposed new building with the new blower and the screening component to only let small items through and remove the wipes and other unwanted materials and place them in bins to be properly disposed of at the landfill. The tender is out for the lagoon aeration equipment with a closing date of September 12, 2025.

3. Greening Drive Sidewalk Project

a) Sidewalk Work

The plans have been completed for a new sidewalk to be installed on the west side of Greening Drive. Notices will be delivered to Greening Drive residents on September 3 to advise of traffic control, parking restrictions, and preparation work such as staking, and clearing trees and shrubs.

4. **Main Street Crosswalk Changes**

K. Meisner advised that the Acadia and People's Place Library crosswalks are going to be merged to one crosswalk that will span at spam near the old theatre building. Flashing Lights will be installed there will be a bump out protected area around the tree. Work will take place mid September and expected to be completed in a 2–3-week period.

5. Ten Year Plan

Councillor L. MacLellan commented that he would like to see a ten-year plan for water, sewer, roads, and asset management.
K. Meisner reported that L. Basinger and he had attended an asset management conference put on by the Atlantic Infrastructure Management Network (AIMS). He noted that he does have long range plans and that seeking new wells to increase water capacity is one project than has been being worked on with a hydrologist for over three years. Locations have been pinpointed, and property owners are being consulted to determine if a deal can be worked out for exploratory well drilling. When agreements are reached a series of wells will be drilled and work put in place to pipe the water to the Brierly Brook Water Treatment plant.

M. Grant commented that it is important for taxpayers to see what their increased tax rate is paying for and that there are positive things happening. He stressed that there have been decades of problems not being addressed and transparency is necessary the Town must give to get, and any cost recovery filtered down to the taxpayers.

K. Meisner stated that funding applications have been completed by Town staff in the past three months. Plans to modernize infrastructure such as upgrading the sewer treatment to increase capacity and extend the life of the plant, replace old piping, modernize the electrical grid.

Increase town staff to facilitate more cost efficiency by ensuring construction costs are kept reasonable. Overseeing our own traffic control and investing in equipment are all part of the plan moving forward.

K. Meisner noted that the work started in the next couple of months will be instrument in identifying the commitment the Town has made in upgrading the infrastructure for the community.

6. **Tour of Facilities**

The Chair asked for comments on the resent tour of the Town Facilities that was provided to the Infrastructure Committee and Town Council.

All Committee members that attended advised that they had gained new insight into the workings of the Facilities and Public Works Departments.

Meeting Date and Time

Deputy Mayor D. Roberts called for adjournment. Motion carried.

Motion Approved
Meeting Adjourned 8:06 p.m.

Next meeting Thursday, September 25, 2025