

TOWN OF BERWICK
Committee of the Whole Meeting
February 22, 2022 - 6:30pm
AGENDA
Via Webex Conference

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Agenda**
3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**
4. **Departmental Reports**
 - a. RCMP *Attached*
 - b. BDVFD *Attached*
 - c. Active Living *Attached*
 - d. Recreation *Attached*
 - e. Economic Dev. *Attached*
 - f. Public Works *Attached*
 - g. CAO *Attached*
5. **New Business:**
 - a. Public Works and BEC Restructuring
 - b. Draft Accessibility Plan
6. **Ongoing Business:**
 - a. (Revised) Snow and Ice Control Policy (information only)
7. **Mayor/Councillor Reports**
 - a. Mayor Clarke
8. **Adjournment**



Berwick Policing Report January 2022



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Kings District Employees

Inspector Kurtis Kamotzki, Kings District Commander.

Forty general duty constables police Kings District as first responders. These officers are supervised by 8 corporals, 2 sergeants and 1 staff sergeant.

Kings East School Safety Resource Officer is Cst. Jennifer Britton. Kings West School Safety Resource Officer is Cst. Jeff Wilson.

Kings District General Investigation Section members are Cpl. Glenn O'Halloran, Cst. Kelly McPherson, and Cst. Jody Whiteway.

Kings District Street Crime Enforcement Unit members are Cst. Jason Sehl of Kentville Police Service, as well as Cst. Josée Lagace and Cst. Ken Slade of Kings District RCMP.

Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault investigator is Cst. Melissa Lee. This is a temporarily funded position.

Kings District Community Policing and Victims Services Officer is Cst. Kelli Gaudet.

Kings District has 10 Detachment Service Assistants who perform administrative functions at the 3 Kings District offices.

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School Safety Resource Officers

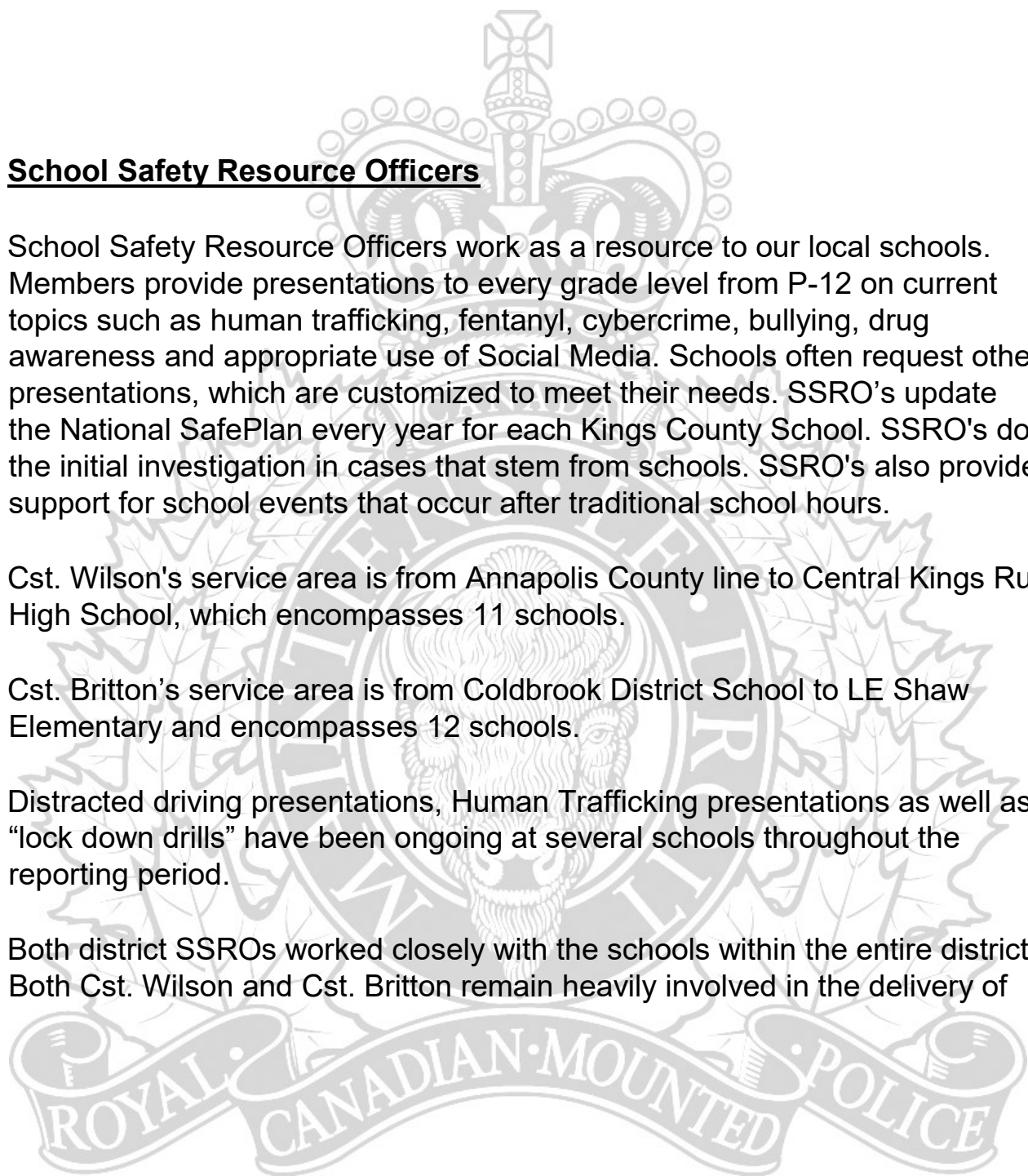
School Safety Resource Officers work as a resource to our local schools. Members provide presentations to every grade level from P-12 on current topics such as human trafficking, fentanyl, cybercrime, bullying, drug awareness and appropriate use of Social Media. Schools often request other presentations, which are customized to meet their needs. SSRO's update the National SafePlan every year for each Kings County School. SSRO's do the initial investigation in cases that stem from schools. SSRO's also provide support for school events that occur after traditional school hours.

Cst. Wilson's service area is from Annapolis County line to Central Kings Rural High School, which encompasses 11 schools.

Cst. Britton's service area is from Coldbrook District School to LE Shaw Elementary and encompasses 12 schools.

Distracted driving presentations, Human Trafficking presentations as well as "lock down drills" have been ongoing at several schools throughout the reporting period.

Both district SSROs worked closely with the schools within the entire district. Both Cst. Wilson and Cst. Britton remain heavily involved in the delivery of



the mandated objectives while assisting other investigations that require their skills and experience with youth.

Highlights

SSRO Cst. WILSON continues to be active in the community with traffic enforcement and assisting with calls for service.

January is Cyber Security Awareness Month

The Internet and communication technologies provide Canadians, businesses, and institutions with the essential means to access information, offer services and create opportunities. Over the years, however, the exponential growth in these technologies has also increased the potential for cyber threats. Cyber criminals are increasingly targeting and exploiting Canadian citizens, businesses, and our critical infrastructure systems.

Cyber capabilities, once rare and expensive, have now become commonplace and affordable. That, along with the borderless and anonymous nature of cybercrime, amplifies the pool of potential victims.

Cyber security has always been important, but with more and more people relying on the internet for work, day-to-day tasks, business, social connections, financial services and more, it is vital that we learn how to keep ourselves safe.



January is Cyber Security Awareness Month and the RCMP is asking Canadians to take time this month to learn about cybercrime, how to protect yourself, and what to do if you are victimized.

What can Canadians do?

- Visit the RCMP's [Cyber Safety pages](#) and social media, as well as, [Get Cyber Safe's](#) website. Follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for great cyber tips and information!
- Know how to report a cybercrime or cyber fraud. If an individual, business or organization experiences a cybercrime, they should contact their local police immediately. It's also important that they report the incident, whether they fell victim or not, to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre [online](#) or toll-free at 1-888-495-8501.
- Share the information you learn with those around you!

What is law enforcement doing?

The criminal exploitation of new and emerging technologies requires new policing measures to keep pace in a digital era. Cybercrime investigations are complex and technical in nature. They require strong domestic and international partnerships, specialized investigative skills, and advanced tools and technologies. The RCMP takes cybercrime seriously and has a number of programs, units and teams actively working on it, including:

- National Cybercrime Coordination Unit (NC3)
- Federal Policing Cybercrime
- Cybercrime Investigative Teams including Cyber Capability



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- Specialists from federal, provincial, local and international police
 - Cyber Capability Specialists
 - Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

The RCMP works closely with law enforcement partners and other lead security agencies, private and public sectors, including academia in Canada and abroad, to investigate and address cybercrime.

Quick facts

- Cybercrime continues to be the cyber threat that is most likely to affect Canadians and Canadian organizations.
- It is estimated that only 5-10% of all cybercrimes and fraud are reported to police.
- The RCMP continues to see an increase in ransomware in Canada. Since June 2020, the National Cybercrime Coordination Unit (NC3) has received over 4,200 requests for assistance from domestic and international law enforcement partners. Of these requests, over 30% related to ransomware.
- The NC3 and Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) are working together to implement a [new national cybercrime and fraud reporting system](#). The new system is currently live in a beta version and is accepting up to 25 reports per day. The system is expected to be fully operational by 2024.



Annual Performance Plan

The Kings District Annual Performance Plan runs from April 1st, 2021 to March 31st, 2022. Objectives of Kings District Annual Performance Plan are:

- **Safe Roads and Safe Highways in Nova Scotia** - To date Kings District members have charged in excess of 53 people with impaired driving, issued TBD roadside suspensions for alcohol consumption, issued TBD traffic enforcement charges and conducted 174 check stops.
- **Reduction of Cybercrime in Nova Scotia**
Community resource officers and Senior Safety Coordinator continue to educate students and seniors on Cybercrime.

Reduce Crime Against People

Members continue to conduct physical checks on offenders/accused who are on court ordered curfews or house arrest with the goal to prevent recidivism.

- **Intelligence led policing effort**

In 2020/21, Kings District senior managers recognized a lack of intelligence led policing efforts within the district. This is a national strategic policing priority of the RCMP and as such, efforts to improve in this area have been made through training and mentorship. This improvement has resulted in an increase in drug-related and property crime-related investigations within Kings District.



Calls for Service

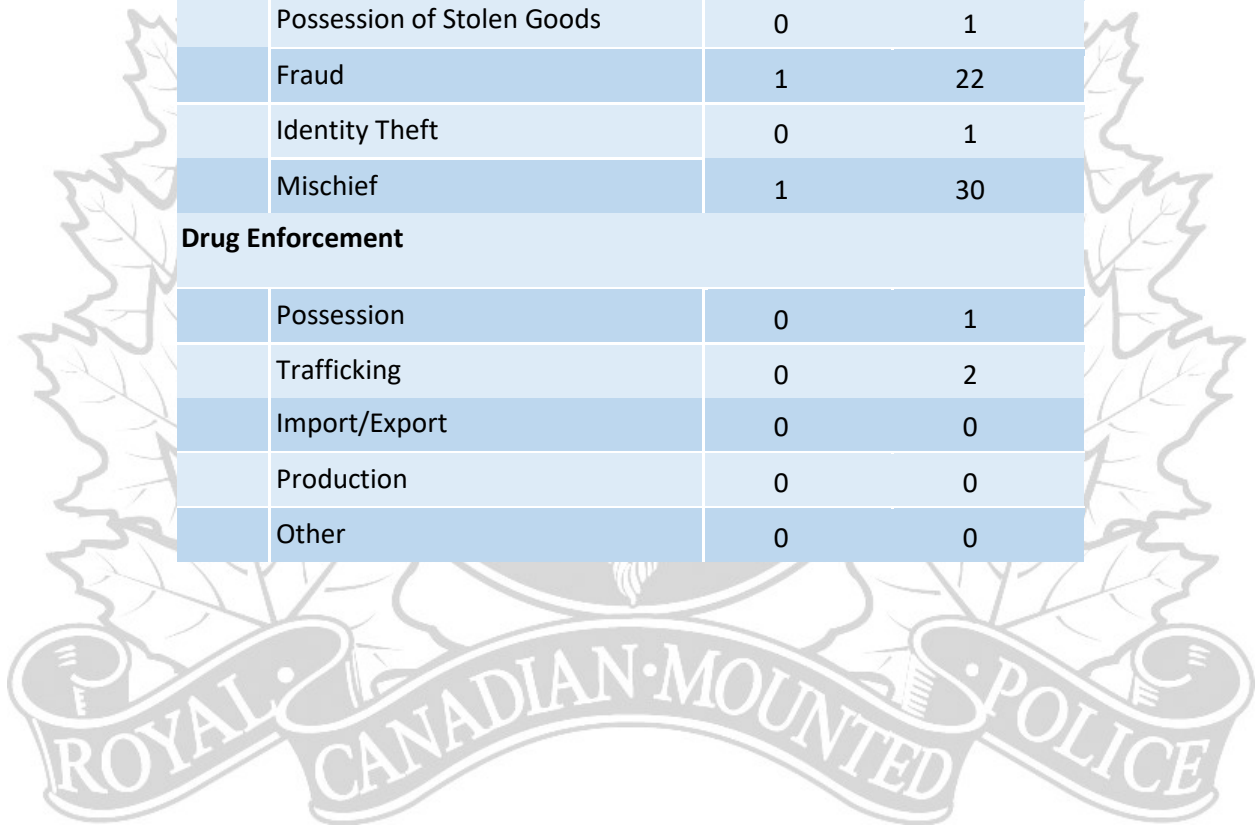
In the month of January 2022, Kings District responded to 746 service calls. There were 51 service calls in Berwick during this reporting period. See the attached chart for breakdown of the service calls.

Type of Crime & Occurrence Type	January Berwick	January Kings
	2022	2022
Crimes Against Persons		
Offences Related to Death	0	1
Sexual Offences	0	6
Assault	2	20
Kidnapping/Hostage/Abduction	0	0
Robbery	0	0
Extortion / Intimidation	0	1
Criminal Harassment	0	1
Indecent Harassing Comm.	0	3
Uttering Threats	0	4
Property Crime		
Arson	0	0






Break and Enter	0	4
Unlawfully in a Dwelling House	0	0
Theft Over	1	0
Theft of Motor Vehicle	0	0
Theft of Other MV / Motorcycle	0	0
Take MV w/o Consent	0	0
Theft Under	1	14
Shoplifting	0	14
Theft (mail, bicycle, et al)	0	0
Theft from Motor Vehicle	1	3
Possession of Stolen Goods	0	1
Fraud	1	22
Identity Theft	0	1
Mischief	1	30
Drug Enforcement		
Possession	0	1
Trafficking	0	2
Import/Export	0	0
Production	0	0
Other	0	0



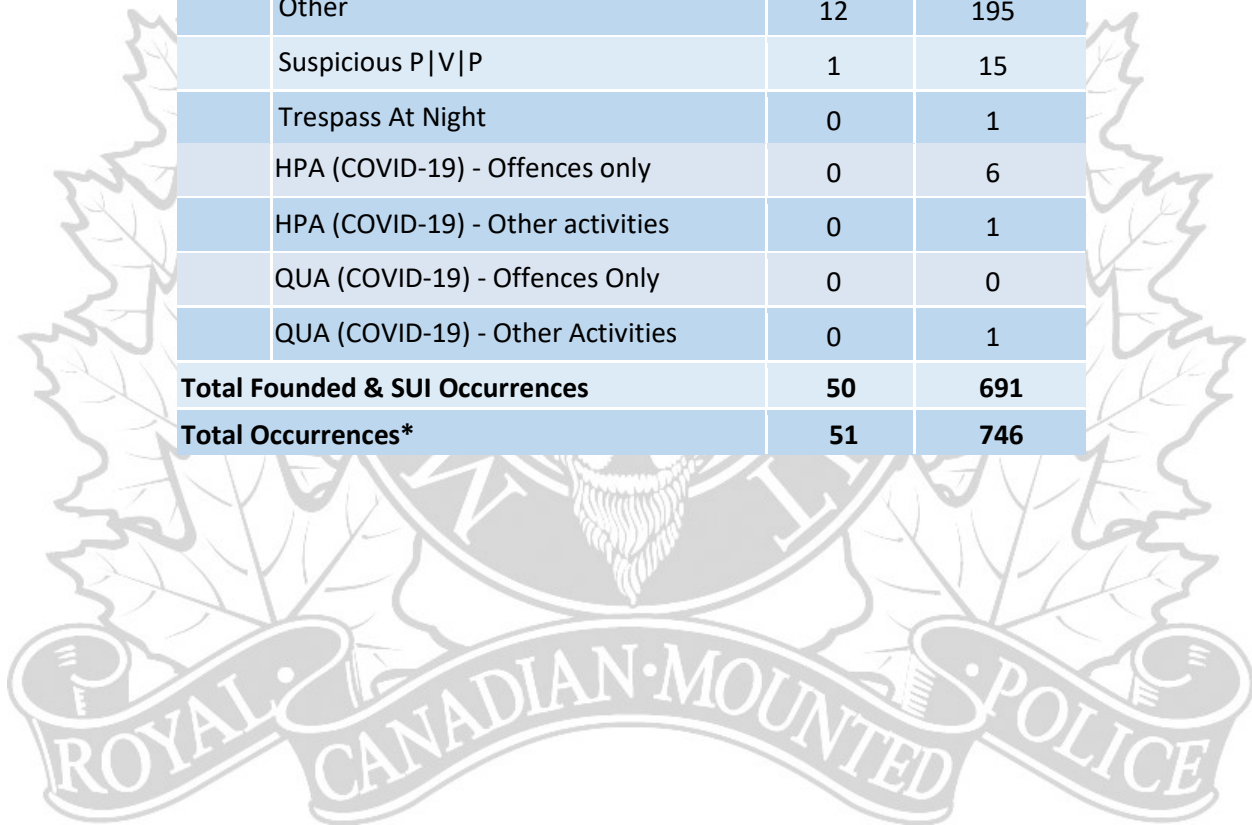


Type of Crime & Occurrence Type	January Berwick	January Kings
Traffic		
Dangerous Op of MV	0	0
Impaired by Alcohol	1	7
Impaired by Drug	0	0
Failure/Refusal	0	1
Driving while Disqualified	2	3
Fail to Stop or Remain	0	3
Seatbelt Violation	0	13
Intersection Violation	1	4
Speeding Violation	1	46
Insurance Violation	1	1
Road Side Suspension (Alcohol)	0	1
Road Side Suspension (Drug)	0	0
Collision - Fatal	0	0
Collision - Non - Fatal Injury	0	3
Collision - Reportable	2	29
Collision - Non Reportable	2	30
Off-Road Vehicle Collision	0	1
Municipal By-laws	0	1





Other Traffic Offence/Violation	13	95
Other Traffic Related Duties	0	2
Checkstop	3	5
Other		
911 Call	0	21
Breach of Court Order	2	5
Liquor Act	1	2
Mental Health Act	1	36
Missing Person	0	24
Municipal Bylaw - Other	0	3
Other	12	195
Suspicious P V P	1	15
Trespass At Night	0	1
HPA (COVID-19) - Offences only	0	6
HPA (COVID-19) - Other activities	0	1
QUA (COVID-19) - Offences Only	0	0
QUA (COVID-19) - Other Activities	0	1
Total Founded & SUI Occurrences	50	691
Total Occurrences*	51	746



Significant Investigations

January has been a steady month district wide but in regard to Berwick there were no significant investigations to report.

Members have been very busy with responding to various types of calls yet have continued to be proactive with traffic enforcement limiting the serious incidences. An increase in calls in the district with a significant decrease in Berwick.

During the month of January Kingston RCMP have conducted 431 patrols in the town of Berwick. Members from Kings District along with South West Nova Traffic Services have also made patrols and enforcement in and around the community of Berwick.

Kings District RCMP responded to a call of an MVC.

Police File: 2022-77178

Kingston RCMP received a report of a Motor Vehicle Collision. Members arrived on scene and determined the driver of one of the vehicles was displaying signs of impaired. Minor injuries to the passenger in the offending vehicle. The driver was arrested and taken back to the Kingston detachment. Samples were obtained and revealed they were over twice the legal limit. They were then released to appear in Kentville Provincial Court on charges of Impaired driving and driving while over the legal limit.

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Kings District RCMP located a stolen vehicle in Wolfville.

Police file: 2022-88261

While conducting an investigation on a stolen vehicle in Kings County, members were taken into Berwick as information was gathered. During paroles in the town of Berwick, members located the stolen vehicle in a parking lot in Berwick. Further investigation led members to a residence where two male subjects were arrested for Possession of Property obtained by Crime and theft of Motor Vehicle.

Kings District RCMP locate impaired driver in West Brooklyn January 21th, 2022, Wolfville, NS Police file: 2022-79519

Kings District RCMP arrested an impaired driver after responding to a call from a concerned community member.

At 10:20 am. on January 20th, Kings District RCMP responded to a call of a possible impaired driver believed to be somewhere on the roadways near Berwick. The vehicle was located on West Brooklyn Rd. in West Brooklyn. The driver of the vehicle displayed signs of impairment. The driver provided a sample of breath roadside on an ASD (Approved Screening Device), which resulted in a fail. The driver was then transported by police to the New Minas RCMP Detachment. Further investigation revealed two breath samples with readings of 180 mg% and 170 mg%, over twice the legal limit in Nova Scotia.

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A 57-year-old West Brooklyn man is facing charges of Impaired Operation of a Conveyance and Operating a Conveyance with a Blood Alcohol Concentration equal to or exceeding 80 mg%.

The 57-year-old man was released from police custody and will appear in Kentville Provincial Court on March 15th, 2022.

Demonstrations/Protesters in Berwick

Police file: 2022-89824

Kingston RCMP continue to monitor the protests that have taken place in the town of Berwick over the Health Act. Mandates. They all have been peaceful to date. No big concerns and the organizers have respected all regulations. It's an ongoing matter and the RCMP continue to be engaged making sure everyone is safe.

Kings District RCMP Respond to an Assault with a weapon.

Police file: 2021-1924399

New Minas RCMP received and report of an assault with a weapon that had occurred. After responding to the call for service it was determined the victim had been shot with an air rifle, suffering injuries to the back of his head. Our police officer prepared a search warrant and executed same. Two air rifles were seized, an adult male was charge with several firearm related offences along with the charge of assault with a weapon.



He was released to appear in Kentville Provincial Court.

A reminder to all that air rifles can cause serious injury. They can also cause death and should be handle in the same manor as any other firearm.

Kings District RCMP Respond to an Internet Extortion

Police file: 2021-1723115

New Minas RCMP received a report of a male being extorted after being in communication with an unknown female via the internet. While on Instagram, the male exchanged photos with an unknown female in the hopes of receiving the same in return. Once the photos were sent out the extortion began.

This type of extortion is becoming more frequent than most would expect. The term used for this type of extortion is “Catfished”. We would like to remind everyone to always be mindful of all internet interactions. Once you send something out on the internet, it’s out of your control as to how it’s used going forth.

Kings District RCMP responded to a two vehicle collision with serious injuries.

Police file: 2022-116564

January 28th, 2022 at 16:10 hrs Kings District RCMP were dispatched to a head-on collision on Hwy. 101 west of Exit 14 in Brooklyn Corner. The

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collision blocked both east bound and west bound traffic. The driver of one vehicle was unconscious and transported by EHS to Valley Regional and later Life Flighted. The driver of the second vehicle was extracted using the jaws of life and had suspected major injuries to his lower extremities and was transported to Valley Regional by EHS. Two other passengers of the second vehicle had possible broken bones. Hwy. 101 was shut down between exits 14 and 15 for 6 hours as the traffic reconstructionist conducted his investigation.

Road conditions were terrible at the time of the collision. Visibility and icy road conditions played a role in the cause of the collision.

Frauds via internet or phone calls

Kings District RCMP have been dealing with various new types of Frauds. As in the past these were more in the form of telemarketers and phone scams. The new wave of scams that are being seen are those via email, marketplace sales, services provided but never completed, or request for payment prior to obtaining the purchased items.

These types of frauds are extremely difficult to detect and to investigate. The fraudster normally changes his add and contact information. On some occasions the add will be then reposted on another site with new names and contact information.

One of the more prominent cybercrime scams (gift cards):

The caller convinces the victim to purchase gift cards at a local store, remain on the line while doing so and provide the code for the card(s) as a means to make payment. This scam is used with a variety of themes such as the victim has outstanding fines with CRA, has a warrant for their arrest and legal costs are being rectified, and business deal payments.



Drug Trafficking

During this reporting quarter, Kings District RCMP made significant drug seizures as a result of great police work during traffic road checks within the district. These drugs would have had a serious impact in the town of Berwick.

In total, there were 6 drug enforcement related investigations which have removed over \$70,000 worth of street level drugs (namely cocaine and heroin) off the streets of Kings County.

Compliance Checks

Members of Kings District RCMP continue to complete compliance verifications of persons who are released on conditions. These checks have proven valuable as they are an effective deterrent for offenders who are considering to re-offend.

Check Stops/Traffic Violations

Check stops and traffic enforcement continue to be conducted by Kings District members. This a very important area in policing that prevents serious event from occurring. Kings District has had several serious motor vehicle collisions on the many road systems in Kings County. Police visibility and enforcement continue in efforts to reduce infractions that lead to motor vehicle collisions. Bad weather over the two months of December and January have created a reduction in recorded infractions in Speeding. These are directly related to poor road conditions due to freezing rain and snow. Collisions were up in December and back down in January. Other traffic infractions maintained steady numbers.



Check Stops have both produced Control Drugs and Substance Act infractions and impaired drivers. This an extremely important function as it provides visibility and enforcement opportunities that would otherwise be missed.

Freedom Protests

Kings District RCMP are respectful of groups and individuals as it relates to their right to peacefully gather, protest and/or demonstrate. When such events take place, we proactively work with organizers to ensure there is clear communication with them.

Nova Scotia has seen a ground swell movement both locally and nationally as it relates to Freedom Convoy protests. Locally, Kings County has experienced two in the past week. Kings District, along with Kentville Police, have worked closely with the organizers of these events in an effort to minimize disruption to traffic while maintaining both public order and safety. Both events took place with no serious issues and the community experienced moderate traffic disruption.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this report or any other community matters, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

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A.S.Sgt. Mitch PELLETIER
Sr. Operations NCO
Kings District Detachment
New Minas
Telephone: 902-679-5555

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Berwick & District Vol. Fire Department COTW Report for Feb. 2022

Five alarms to report as of February 16, 2022.

Covid 19 Update: We have had some members test positive for Covid 19 and several members who have been in close contact to a positive case. This has not disrupted our service to the community in anyway. All members are following all masking protocols at the station and while responding to all emergencies.

Fire Hall: Budget meetings are planned for next week.

Fuel Spill at the Berwick Needs: We had multiple agencies to assist us and the Kings County Hazmat Team during the fuel spill on Feb 1, 2022. Thank you to every agency who contributed to this and having a successful outcome. We do plan on purchasing some additional tools to help contain a spill in the event of another hazmat emergency. Great job by all.

Equipment: Tanker 21 has had the tank fill valve replaced.

Regards,

Luke Redden

Thanks,

Chief Redden

AND DISTRICT

VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.

**Berwick & District Vol. Fire Department COTW Report for
Feb. 2022**



**TOWN OF BERWICK
REPORT TO COUNCIL**

From: Kimberly Halliday, Active Living Coordinator

Date: February 17, 2022

Subject: Monthly Active Living Coordinator Report

1) Meetings & Webinars

- Meetings with Community Development Department and CAO
- Budget Meetings
- Accessibility Advisory Committee Monthly Meeting
- Accessibility and Inclusion Meeting Monthly Meeting
- Blue Route Meeting
 - Secured funding through Active Communities Fund, working out details of timelines and if it will be possible to go through with
- Meeting with Olivia from Western Health Board
 - Wellness Funding received, \$1000 (original project was the e-bikes)
 - Might need to figure out alternative project if Connect2 funding does not come
- Sport Hub Meeting
- Active Smarter Kids Meeting
- Valley Female Leadership Network Meeting
 - Discussions around diversifying committee through a subcommittee, currently working with Melissa from Sport NS and Ashley from County of Kings
- Gender Equity in Recreational Sports Workshop
- An African Nova Scotian Call in Panel – Webinar
- Valley Active Communities Meeting
- Active Living Strategy Planning
- Parasport Funding chats with Berwick and District School
- Physical Activity Practitioners Exchange

2) Programming

- NS Walks – Weekly walk series ongoing (Tuesday and Friday)
 - Walk with Chris Palmer, MLA challenge to get on trails, might need to be postponed due to bad weather, date set for Feb. 18th right now
- Accessibility Plan
 - Draft finalized
- Winter Safety/Equipment loan Campaign
 - Promote safe and fun winter activities through equipment loan program
- Active Kids Healthy Kids Fund Promotion
 - Spring intake to use up remaining funding

3) Communications

- Continue to update Facebook for the Town of Berwick re:
 - Weekly Walk posters
 - Winter Safety Campaign

4) Miscellaneous

- Blue Route – planning to come here late Spring to do work, extension on grant was allowed by Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage department to cover the majority of the project
- Barrier-free entrance signs at Carol's Place – received wrong ones, waiting for replacements

Priorities for February 2022

- Winter Safety Campaign
- Grant writing (Trans Canada Trail, Parasport Funding, Municipal Wellness, AKHK)

**TOWN OF BERWICK
REPORT TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

From: Taylor Boylan, Recreation Coordinator
Date: February 15, 2022
Subject: Monthly Recreation Coordinator Report

1) Meetings & Webinars

- Weekly meetings with Community Development Department
- Valley Recreation Committees: Executive, Accessibility & Inclusion
- School Physical Activity Partnership Committee
- Internal budget meetings

2) Programming

- Restrictions began to be lifted February 14 and After School, which has run with a great deal of creativity on behalf of J.Hebb, is now able to be run as one group both indoors or outdoors as we are 29 participants/staff combined. Major kudos to all ASP staff for their hard-work and planning to ensure we could continue to run programming despite earlier restrictions (maximum of 15 participants/staff per cohort)
- Multisport is scheduled to begin March 3 on Thursday evenings. A combination of Covid-19 restrictions, unpredictability and reopening of other sport and recreation has registration at a low number, despite extensive advertising. If we do not reach a number of participants to run a program, J Hebb has created a full plan for a drop-in program to be run using in-house resources
- Gym rentals have returned with the exception of adult fitness classes, pickleball has expanded to an additional day

3) Communications

- Continue to update social media for the Town of Berwick (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) as well as the electronic sign, and other miscellaneous communications
- Documents have been created as blank templates for use on social media for regularly occurring events (power outages, construction, winter parking regulations, office closures) so all staff can share these, and physical closure signs have been created to be displayed on doors during unexpected closures

4) Events

- We assisted Berwick and District School with their Winter Olympics Day, in lieu of our traditional Winter Walk Day, and provided treats and activities for students at one of the outdoor stations (J Hebb, K Halliday, myself)
- J Hebb is working on some March Break pop-up activities

5) Misc

- Maternity Leave preparations: Have prepared a binder of information, wrapped up some committee work, delegated tasks etc.

Priorities for March 2022:

- My last day in office will be March 3, 2022!

**TOWN OF BERWICK
REPORT TO COUNCIL**

From: Katie Verrette, Economic Development Officer

Date: February 16, 2022

Subject: Economic Development Officer Report

1) Meetings & Webinars

- Weekly meetings with M.Payne, T.Boylan, K.Halliday, J. Hebb
- Monthly REN Business Supports Response Team Meeting (monthly)
- Town of Berwick Safety Meetings (Co-Chair, monthly)
- Construction Safety NS Focus Group Meeting
- Budget Preparation Meetings (Capital, Operating, for Town Hall/Fitness Centre)
- Community Land Trust Meeting
- Trails Committee Meeting
- STAR Meeting - Strategic Tourism Information Session hosted by REN
- Community Development Committee Meeting
- Valley Recreation Meetings (Treasurer)

2) Communications

- Without the ability to edit the website, most social media posts continue to be shared on Facebook. Valentine's day "show your love locally" post had great interaction. Training for the website was postponed in consideration of the new Recreation Coordinator needing to be present.
- Relevant emails continue to be circulated to the business community via the email distribution list.

3) Projects

- Logistical discussions around the boxcar project have been explored with both the planner and DNR. The RFP for boxcar access construction is set to release this month and the Co-op student application has been approved. Interviews to fill the position for a "Berwick Train Station Revitalization" student will happen next week.
- With restrictions starting to ease the Business Forum will be set to go this spring. Brainstorming discussions have focused around the concept of a complimentary breakfast at the Lions Club accompanied by a welcome from the Town and guest speakers.

4) Fitness Centre

- Classes and personal training opportunities continue to be offered. The corporate rate program has been reviewed and Alison is working diligently to share the information broadly.

5) Other

- The MAD Bakery has moved from their in-home location to the former "Hello Smoothies" location at 185 Commercial Street. On behalf of the Town of Berwick several staff visited the establishment to offer congratulations.
- Mainstreet Video is under new ownership. The owners have experience in the industry and are excited for this new adventure. The operation of the business will remain much the same as in the past.
- "Del's Reiki Room" will be opening March 1st at 106 Mill Street. The business will offer Reiki sessions, crystals, card and more.

Priorities for January 2022

- Box Car project
- Updating the Business Directory
- Hiring Summer Student

Public Works COTW Report for February 22, 2022

- The team has been out filling pot holes on clear days, they have used approximately two tons of cold pack up to February 17, 2022.
- I am sending a truck to Truro on February 17, 2022 to pick up 6 Tons of bulk cold pack for the streets, we are seeing a bad winter for street break up this year.
- Public Works has had three very bad snow events over the last two months, the team struggled with being able to move the snow from the streets and sidewalks, and to clear snow away from all intersections. In order to get the job done and keep safety at the top of our list I had two contractors come in and work alongside our team with trucks and large loaders.
- Just in the last storm we had two plow trucks at the repair shop to get fixed, and a backhoe broke down behind the Apple Dome for a few days waiting for a part to come in. We had the oldest sidewalk machine break down for a few days, until we found the problem.
- Salt use is up this winter with the regular mild to freeze events every few days, eight trailer loads of salt have been delivered since November 2021, this would be approximately 280 tons.
- We are working each day to open the width of some streets along with some storm drains, the extensive amount of solid ice is like working with cement.
- We are still mixing sand with the salt as much as we can to help reduce salt use, and to maximize transaction.
- I am very busy working on budget items with Karen Peckford for 2022/2023 budget year, plus many hours working on wastewater and other issues to keep everything running in the most efficient manner.

Thank You,

Tim Harding.
Director of Public Works

Monthly Report to Committee of the Whole

Michael Payne, Chief Administrative Officer

2022 Feb 22

Attended the following meetings / events:

AREA management team weekly telecons
Berwick Electric Commission
AREA Board meeting
Community Development Committee
Housing Committee
Regional meetings re a Pilot IMSA for Valley Waste and KTA
Kings Region CAO's re a potential Climate Change IMSA
Partner CAO's re a refresh of the Valley REN IMSA
MoK re formalizing a contract for fire services with the Fire Commission and BDVFD as signatories.
Berwick Trails Committee
Valley REN Liaison and Oversight Committee
Several meetings with WCB and CUPE officials re personnel and contractual interpretation

- Weekly meetings and ongoing liaison with staff in support of Community Development and Recreation activities, plans and projects.
- Review and implementation of SWOT analysis recommendations for planning and development control processes and services.
- Participating in a Regional Building Energy Road Map project with Quest and EQ Engineering, funded by the Low Carbon Communities Fund to conduct building assessments. Town properties include Town Hall, Apple Capital Heritage Museum, BDVFD Fire Hall and the conjoined PW/BEC building. Building assessments will provide a blueprint for any required energy retrofits.
- Coordinated and facilitated leadership group succession planning and structural recommendations for Berwick Electric that were approved by the Commission on 2022 Feb 15.
- Partners with the Jijjuku'kwejk Watershed Alliance and Ducks Unlimited submitted a proposal to E&CCC for funding of a feasibility study re construction of an engineered wetland adjacent to the Cornwallis River and our WWTP. The idea is gaining momentum.

Priorities for the next month

- Finalize the draft Fire Services contract with MoK and partners
- The MGA requires municipalities to apply to the UARB in 2022 to confirm or alter the number of Councillors (and boundaries of polling Districts, if applicable); CAO to prepare a report.
- Work with partners to continue advancing the potential of an engineered wetland development
- Formalize restructuring of Public Works and Berwick Electric; facilitate several staffing actions.

Issue Report

Michael Payne, Chief Administrative Officer

2022Feb15

Issue

Modernization of the organizational structures of Berwick Electric Commission (BEC) and *Public Works*.

Information

On 2021 Oct 19 the BEC approved a request to begin a succession planning exercise for a Utility Manager and a review of resourcing levels. A review committee was struck that consisted of Payne, Don Regan, the Director of Finance, the assistant Superintendent and the General Manager for AREA.

The Committee determined that they had sufficient expertise and experience to conduct a fulsome analysis and coalesced around some ideas for the general structure. They expanded the group to include the Billing Clerk) and Tim Harding, the *Director of Public Works (PW)*.

A brainstorming exercise was conducted on 2021Jan11 that reviewed the total operations and structure of the Utility, now and for the foreseeable future. Background inquiries were conducted with several municipal electric/water utilities in the region and legal advice was obtained as well.

Background

BEC currently has a 50% Utility Manager and three Power Line Technicians (PLT's). Historically the utility had four PLT's for many years (including Regan). BEC also provides PLT services to the AREA windfarm at Ellershouse on a cost recovery basis. Electric meter reading had been subject of a two-year contracted service that ended in December, 2021. PLT's have resumed meter readings throughout the service territory. Electrical inspections are done in house by Regan.

BEC owns and operates a small hydroelectric generating station that is currently out of service because the generator is being rebuilt. The Town will begin construction shortly on a \$10 million 5,337 MWh community solar garden on 25 acres off Willow Avenue. The Town had twenty residential housing starts in 2021. There are several larger residential housing proposals working their way though the Town's development process that include duplexes and several apartment buildings.

Administrative support for BEC is provided by the town through the Department of Finance.

Considerations

The Committee determined that AREA could provide strategic advice internally at reasonable costs or through contracted parties via it's Request for Standing Offers, on a per project basis. The overarching management needs of BEC involve human resource management, asset management, project management, financial management, procurement and regulatory.

The depth and breadth of discussions led the Committee to conclude that *PW* has similar needs and requirements as well, excluding regulatory. While a background in electrical engineering would be an

asset for BEC as a standalone entity, the overarching needs of both units would prioritize civil engineering. Electrical engineering expertise is currently facilitated through the private sector.

Proposal

BEC and the Town would cost share a new position called, *The Director of Municipal Works (DoMW)*. The Assistant Superintendent of BEC and the *Director of PW* would be reclassified as Lead Hand and Foreman* respectively, and report directly to the *DoMW*. The *DoMW* would be the senior employee of BEC, reporting to the Commission and to the CAO as well.

On 2022 Feb 15 the BEC approved the request to staff a *DoMW* as well as the addition of a fourth PLT.

*The *Director of PW* position would not be reclassified until the retirement of the incumbent.

Financial Impacts

There are a number of factors that warrant consideration. All costs presented below are the all-in costs including benefits and pension.

DoMW

It is proposed that BEC and the Town will cost share the *DoMW* at 70%/30% respectively for an interim period. The proposed total salary cost is \$118,000.00 (\$35,400.00 for TOB). Upon retirement of the *Director of PW*, which is not anticipated for several years, the cost share of the *DoMW* for TOB would be increased from 30% to 50%.

Financing

The 30% cost share of the *DoMW* has been included in the F2023 payroll budget. The F2023 payroll costs for the *Department of PW* are approximately 13% greater than F2022 (\$65K), due to a CPI of 4.06% and the addition of the *DoMW* position.

Positive Impacts

As a small Utility owned by a small Town there are a lot of synergies to be gained by aligning BEC and *PW* in this fashion. A *DoMW* would simultaneously address the management needs of BEC and *PW*, at a shared cost, now and for the long-term future. It is anticipated that this unique employment opportunity will draw considerable interest.

While BEC and *PW* would continue to operate with distinct mandates, aligning the management structure would reinforce their ability to share resources and support each other.

Negative Impacts

None anticipated.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council approve the hiring of a Director of Municipal Works, cost shared with the Berwick Electric Commission.

TOWN OF BERWICK 2022 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

“A Little Town with a Lot to Offer”



TOWN OF
berwick

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WELCOME MESSAGE

The Town of Berwick rightly calls itself a “little town with a lot to offer”. We have always prided ourselves as a community that welcomed newcomers, sheltered and let flourish generations of growing families, and looked forward to new generations who will help us to grow and change with the times.



Part of being welcoming is to understand that our town is made up of a multiplicity of people, all with different abilities and needs. In 2017 the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act was passed, and all municipalities were then tasked with the goal of helping to achieve an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030.

Accessibility is a basic human right, and now it is finally a provincial mandate. It is with an eye to improving the accessibility of the town, and to the inclusion of those citizens who live or visit here, that the Accessibility Advisory Committee was launched. We will strive to create with this plan what we consider to be a “living document” that will be tweaked and improved upon as time passes and we hear feedback from those

citizens who are helping us to make Berwick a more accessible town.

We have been honoured to work on this very important task, and I thank the other committed Accessibility Advisory committee members, the staff - in particular Kimberly Halliday - who have worked tirelessly on the report, the Town Council, and the citizens of our wonderful town who provided feedback and counsel during this process.

Some notes on the report:

- Please see the “definition of terms” section in the Appendix. We tried to make the report as clear and simple as possible, but there are specific terms that are particular to this subject. We have added an extensive list of definitions to help with clarity.
- We have chosen the font “Verdana” for this report as it has proven to be one of the most accessible and readable fonts. For the ease of those who may be print-restricted or have low vision, we have used a slightly larger font than is usual.

INTRODUCTION

After the Accessibility Act was passed in 2017, the Government announced its framework for *Access by Design 2030: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia* in 2018. This document and the Act are ways of ensuring an accessible future for all Nova Scotians and highlights five key areas for which the municipality should clarify, improve standards, and codify: the **Built Environment, Information and Communications, Employment, Goods and Services, and Transportation**. Berwick has committed to develop and uphold these standards as set forth in the Accessibility Act.

In this plan, Berwick will lay out the commitment we are making, the overview of where we stand now — our achievements so far, and any barriers, — and action items for the first three years of our plan's implementation for each of the five standards. We will continue to monitor and evaluate the plan yearly, and revisit it formally every three years.

Most information from this plan was collected through a survey that was disseminated within the town via posters, flyers, mail-outs, and electronically via our social media accounts in November 2021. We had intended in-person community engagement sessions, but given the pandemic and irregular wintry conditions, we had to be satisfied with the questionnaire. At a later date, more community consultations will be planned.

This plan will be available to view on the Town's website, and will be available in hard copy at our Town Hall. If you require any assistance accessing this document or reading it, please contact our Town Hall at 902-538-8068.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Berwick is committed to ensuring that our Built Environment becomes more accessible to those community members who have a disability, whether the land and/or infrastructure is owned, leased, or managed by the Town of Berwick.

Overall, the response from the survey has indicated that Berwick is on the right track when it comes to the accessibility of our built environment, but there is room for improvement.

With this guiding document, Berwick will begin to investigate our Town-owned spaces by creating checklists that will be available for community members to view at any time and which address the barriers we mentioned below. We will commit to applying an accessibility lens to any future projects and to keep engaging our community members so that this plan will have the most impact for those townspeople and visitors who live with disabilities.

Achievements Identified:

- Brand new recreation and municipal office facilities that are *mostly* accessible – Carol’s Place, Town Hall, the Fitness Centre at King’s Mutual Century Centre
- High-visibility and reflective crosswalk markings, and two push-powered signal crosswalks
- Sidewalk snow removal is done promptly and thoroughly

- Bezanson Drive sidewalks
- The crosswalk in front of Berwick Public School, and the new sidewalk in front of the school, have been designed with accessible transportation in mind
- Raised garden beds around Town allow most people to participate
- Trails are wide and well-groomed
- The library is an inclusive space with well-trained staff who are equipped to handle a variety of people and stages of development
- Carol's Place has accessible washrooms that are available in the Spring/Summer and early Fall



Carol's Place in Berwick, a place for gatherings

Listed below are the current barriers for persons living with disabilities that were identified in our community.

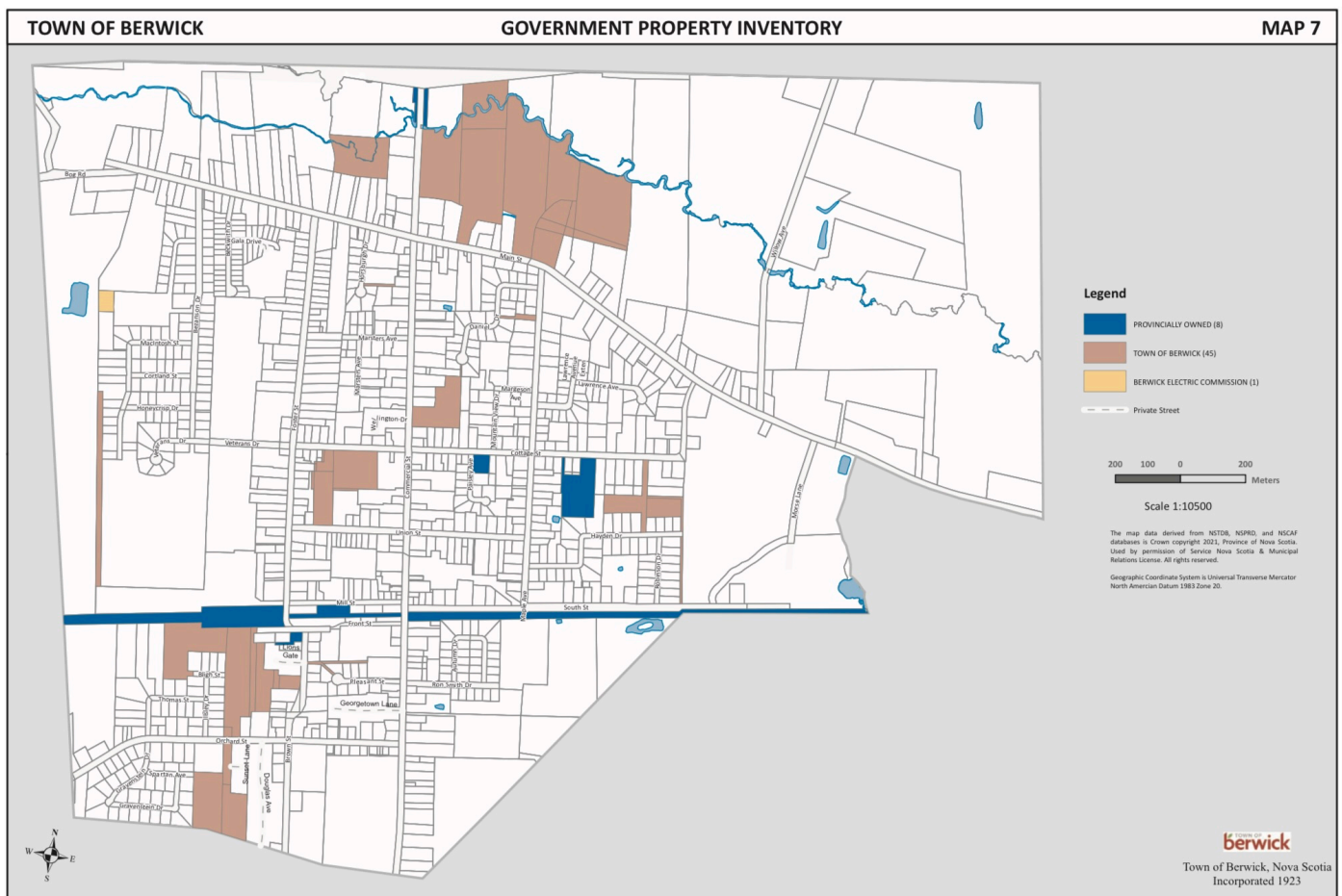
Identified Barriers

Public Works	The Public Works building does not have much interaction with the public, but their entrance and public-facing section are not accessible to those who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices. This discourages not only walk-ins from the public, but employment of persons with disabilities.
Side Streets	Some side streets in town do not have sidewalks, which makes active living for those who use assistive devices difficult. In winter, it makes it very difficult for any sort of movement around town.
Centennial Park	There is no paved walkway to get to Carol's Place
Trails/ Sidewalks	More benches/rest areas on trails and in town are needed for those who have a disability that requires them to take breaks when navigating through town. One bench on the trail has been buried deep into the gravel when the trail is graded, and it's largely impossible to use for a sitting spot
Peter Connell Park	The Park parking lot's accessible washroom is currently difficult to access

Suggested Actions:

- Committee and Council to prioritize accessibility when planning new builds or retrofitting old buildings.
- It is suggested that a member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee be added to all pertinent Town Committees of Council (Planning Advisory, Community Development Advisory, REMO, Community Development Advisory committees, for example).
- An audit of all Town-owned property and infrastructure will be done on the following timeline:
 - Create a checklist (2022)
 - conduct walk-throughs and evaluate built environment with the help of a disability consultant or someone with Rick Hansen certification (2022-2023)
- Sidewalks. We will assess and prioritize all sidewalks in the Town of Berwick that need maintenance and upgrading through Committee evaluations and public engagements. We suggest that adequate sidewalks be built into any new developments plans for any new builds
- Improved pedestrian crosswalks. Lighting and marking
- Engage Berwick community members in ongoing discussions and public engagements about accessibility in the Town in terms of the built environment
- Where possible, ensure a higher standard of Accessibility in all Municipal public-facing built environments, according to CSA B651-18 guidelines
- Improve existing infrastructure

- Tennis courts entrance is not accessible
- retrofit doors inside of Town Hall so that persons with disabilities can access the main office without assistance
- Increase lighting behind the Town Hall, near entrance to Town Gym so that those using the accessible spots will have adequate visibility.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Town of Berwick will endeavour to ensure that the needs of community members are met during meetings, public gatherings, sharing of information, and through communications with community members. We will commit to ensuring our information is written in plain language or by providing definitions to make sure it is clearly understood for all abilities.



Inclusive yard sign offered to townspeople

The Town currently shares all information through a variety of means:

- Social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- The electronic sign on the corner of Cottage and Commercial Streets
- By mail (for example, print promotional materials can be sent through with power bills from Berwick Electric).
- Electronically, via addition to e-bills
- On our website at berwick.ca

Identified Achievements

- Berwick MESH. The Town provides free internet access (mainly at KMCC, up Commercial street, the Town Gym, and in Council Chambers). Wifi is available at the Fitness Centre.
- Council Chambers has a video system and tracker with great audio
- Consistent information being published to social media sites. This is especially useful when information needs to be shared quickly, such as power outages and estimated restoration time. This form of dissemination also invites a dialogue with citizens.

Identified Barriers

Town Website	<p>We have heard anecdotally that the Town of Berwick website is a little “cluttered”; finding information often means drilling down through a long line of links, which is hard to do for those citizens who have low vision, for example.</p> <p>There is a perceived lack of easily <i>accessible</i> information for where to go, i.e., for new community members about town services (power setup, etc.)</p> <p>A simplification (using WCAG guidelines) of the website would be welcome, for clarity.</p>
Internet Access	<p>Not all citizens have reliable internet access, and the Berwick MESH does not reach to all neighbourhoods</p>
Town Hall Technology	<p>We have excellent technology for council chambers especially; we need to activate all of the accessible features (for example, CART) and allow remote attendance at meetings</p>

Identified Barriers

Accessibility of Information	Care should be taken when the Town is posting information on social media to ensure that descriptive captions are used on all photos.
------------------------------	---

Suggested Actions: Information and Communication

- Determine where and what way-finding signage is needed through AAC audits and evaluations. Have consistency in municipally owned signage. include an accessibility lens when creating signage, for example, braille signage and high contrast lettering
- Explore new communication technologies and identify services (for example, “speech to text” capability in virtual and in-person meetings)
- Research what is needed in order to have a list of ASL interpreters the Town can use if necessary. Make this a budget line item for the Town.
- Train staff on inclusive and plain language communications. This need not be complicated - Inclusion NS (inclusionns.ca) offers instruction and translation to community organizations and government if there is a need.
- Ensure that all pictures posted electronically by the Town have descriptive text
- The Town, where able, will provide recordings of public meetings with captions.

- On request, the Town of Berwick should provide communications in all types of Accessible formats
- Town Public Meetings with regard to By-law changes etc. should have in the announcement template (newspaper and digital) a request that citizens please contact the Town for ASL interpretation at least a week prior
- The Town will provide information in written and verbal formats as requested
- Continuously engage the community to discover needs: the AAC can continue to research any unmet needs by those people with disabilities living in and visiting the town.
- Continue to work on improving the reach of Berwick MESH
- When needed, and where feasible, seek the advice/email chair of AAC to review and provide direction
- All official notices that the Town sends out should be amended to state: "Berwick is committed to fostering full inclusion in our meetings; if you require accommodation to attend our meeting, we will endeavour to meet your needs. If ASL interpretation is necessary, please provide one week notice."

EMPLOYMENT

Berwick is an equal opportunity employer and will continue to remove barriers to employment within the Town. The organizational chart below is current as of early 2022.



There are currently 20 full time (FT) employees, 10 part time (PT), and 8 seasonal full time positions.

Council	7, including the Mayor
Administrative	2 FT
Finance	4 FT
Community Development	4 FT (Director position vacant)
Public Works	7 FT
Berwick Electric	3 FT and 1 PT
Fitness Centre	2 FT and 4 PT
After School Program	5 PT
Summer Day Camp	5 seasonal FT
Summer Parks	3 seasonal FT

Identified Achievements

- Council members have received iPads for reading all council and committee materials, which allows them to control the font size, zoom into images as needed, and has the technology to read or hear text.
- Town Hall staff is eager to accommodate any person with a disability employed with the Town who needs an assistive device to access employment, there is however no specific policy as such, and no one point-person responsible for this service.

Identified Barriers

Town Hall lobby entrance	<p>The doors into the main offices, off the lobby in the town hall, are not accessible. This discourages employment of persons with disabilities. Additionally, the way the main reception is configured does not allow adequate space for turning radius of wheelchairs, and the reception desk is quite high, making a respectful sight-line for someone in a wheelchair difficult to achieve</p>
Human Resources	<p>Berwick Town does not have a formal Human Resources department or Accessibility Coordinator; these matters are handled by individual managers, and by the CAO's office.</p>
Accessible washrooms	<p>There is only one accessible washroom available in town hall, outside of the Town Hall office. It has a door that can only be operated manually.</p> <p>An informal accessibility audit that we can forward to the town has identified areas of issue.</p>

Suggested Actions: Employment

- Become truly barrier-free in Town Hall public and private spaces.
- Staff and Council will be encouraged to complete online training, *Working with Abilities*, provided by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca) which is free of charge.
- When able, Berwick will supply assistive devices to any employee who needs them to succeed at their jobs, and will report to the CAO for requests unless someone else is formally given that role.
- To these ends, Town of Berwick will attempt to secure grants necessary to provide any assistive devices necessary. The AAC is willing to help with both accessing grants and with the actual applications thereof.
- Job opportunities advertised by the Town will include mention of alternative interview styles as needed to allow those who have a disability an equitable opportunity for the job (for example, setting up a virtual interview rather than in-person)
- Make use of the already existing accessibility audit with regard to the accessible washroom in the Town Hall

GOODS AND SERVICES

Part of Berwick’s continuing desire to be “the Little Town with a Lot to Offer” is to ensure that we continue to offer equitable access to all of those people who live in and visit the town. In order for Berwick to be committed to ensuring that people of all abilities have equitable access to the goods and services provided by the Town, we will be reassessing our current structure and applying an accessibility lens to all future programs.



Berwick currently is responsible for

- All public communication surrounding Town initiatives (see Information and Communication section)
- Offering recreational programming
- Hosting Council and AAC meetings
- Providing Customer Service at the Town Hall for resident information concerning property, electric bills, general questions, programs, etc.
- Maintaining streets, including sidewalk snow removal
- Maintaining all Town-owned properties and infrastructure including parks, trails, Splash pad, Carol’s Place, sewer and stormwater services, and hydro.
- Berwick is served by the RCMP detachment based in Kingston NS for policing services, and Fire Services are

provided by the Berwick and District Volunteer Fire Department.

- Fitness Centre, in the Kings Mutual Century Centre

Identified Achievements

- In the summer of 2021 Berwick offered a “Pay as you Can” Day Camp for children, a three-tiered system to provide families with different options of payment that fit their needs. People with disabilities for a number of reasons often live in poverty, so this serves the disability community’s needs.
- “NS Weekly Walks” is an ongoing Active Living service that promotes health by walking with a group of community members. Most walks are accessible, but some may stray into less accessible areas that need attention by the town.
- The Town has 13 new Community Charging Stations for electric vehicles, to help make owning e-vehicles easier for all.
- The Town has plans to install a Solar Garden to make solar power accessible to everyone, regardless of whether they own or rent a home.
- Our volunteer fire department is in a largely accessible building

Identified Barriers

Website	As mentioned previously, the website is not entirely user-friendly
Budget	To date, the Town has not identified specific funds for accessibility
Sport/Recreation	There are few opportunities for parasport programming from the town

Suggested Actions: Goods and Services

- Offer diversity and cultural competency training for all staff so they are able to provide inclusive services
- Partner with community agencies to help develop and implement inclusive programming so Berwick is able to offer direct support and programming for people with disabilities.
- Explore different ways of promoting Town events/activities that reach all community members.
- Review all current programming offered by the Town and where applicable, make them accessible
- We will encourage Gala Days and other events to apply an accessibility lens while planning to accommodate people who have a disability and may need support, including but not limited to: more accessible washrooms, a quiet space during fireworks and other louder events, etc.
- Events planned by Berwick will have an accessibility lens applied during the planning process
- Promotion of quiet spaces and accessibility needs in marketing for all events

- Waiving of entrance fee for individuals whose role is to support a person with a disability. This is a common courtesy and ensures full participation of a person with a disability who requires an aide, without undue financial hardship.
- Build leadership capacity within our programs to host different abilities through partnerships and training
- When possible, provide emergency preparedness kits (including ear muffs or earplugs to decrease sound without removing the individual from the festivities, etc.)
- Establish partnerships for different parasport programming/ events

TRANSPORTATION

Active Transportation is a key daily activity and determinant of health; our relatively flat topography on trails and sidewalks that line the main streets make getting to Town Hall and businesses fairly easy, if the Town takes care with the built environment and way-finding. It is not necessarily the *disability* that is "disabling," but the inability to navigate our surroundings with ease that causes distress and inequity.

Berwick will endeavour to ensure that everyone will have equitable access to publicly funded transportation through Kings Transit Authority and access to safe Active Transportation. We will continue to make roadways and sidewalks clear of snow and other dangers so that people of all abilities can use them for transportation.

Berwick also, in partnership with Kings Transit, offers public transit throughout Kings County. We have numerous bus stops and one accessible shelter currently within Town limits.

Identified Achievements

- An accessible and covered bus shelter was built in front of the Foodland grocery store
- New sidewalk and crosswalk just outside of Berwick Public School are accessible
- Kings Transit buses are fully accessible, with low floor buses for improved accessibility, and the option to have the bus

“kneel” on request to curb level. They have safe and secure tie down spaces. For those users travelling with an attendant, that attendant can accompany the passenger for free.



Kings Transit bus with accessible entry ramp

Identified Barriers

Accessible Parking Spots

Accessible spots are not clearly identified. The accessible spaces at the Town Hall, for example, have no signage. In winter, the symbol that shows it is accessible is covered with snow.

(These spots around town are often misused by people “just running in for a minute”)

Identified Barriers

Kings Transit	Signage for bus stops have small lettering, which is difficult to read, and the placement is not ideal. Bus Routes are not publicized well
Sidewalks	Sidewalks on side streets are not always available. This makes way finding difficult and dangerous for people in wheelchairs, or who use scooters, walkers, or canes, particularly in winter months

Suggested Actions: Transportation

- A public information campaign regarding the misuse of accessible parking spots (and the fines that can be levied) could be a part of Berwick’s current marketing, or part of the social media posts. (“B Respectful”?)
- Posts installed to identify accessible spots may be useful. This way there is no misunderstanding. The signage on the post might be useful to market Berwick as a town with a lot of Accessibility to Offer”
- Install more bus shelters at key bus destinations
- Ensure snow removal of streets, sidewalks, and entrance to Town Hall is done in a timely manner



Town Hall accessible spot on a winter's day

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Responsibilities

- The Town of Berwick is responsible for adopting and overseeing this Accessibility Plan
- The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Plan, with astute delegation to appropriate Directors and staff
- The CAO is first contact for receiving and responding to public concerns, complaints, and suggestions; but the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be happy to give feedback and recommendations to CAO and Town Council

Monitoring and Timeline

The Action items in this plan will be addressed and implemented by the end of the first three year period, or they will be rolled into the subsequent plan and prioritized. In total, the goal is to reach full accessibility by 2030, as the Nova Scotia government's *Access by Design 2030: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia* dictates.

The Berwick Accessibility Advisory Committee will prepare a "report card" for council by 31 March of each year (the end of the fiscal year). This report card will measure the performance of the actions in this plan. The committee may also make recommendations to improve the plan.

The Report Card will be a public document, posted on the Town's website.

The checklists at the end of each section (and also in the appendices) have been created so that the Town and the AAC can easily access the information, and ensures that the actions we have recommended are implemented.

In the third year of this plan's implementation (2024-2025), another round of reporting from the Accessibility Advisory Committee will commence regarding the first plan, and the Committee will then begin community engagement on a new plan for the next three years, using this first report as a launching off point.

Responding to Questions and Complaints

- Anyone who lives or visits can express a concern about accessibility to the town. These would be directed to, as stated above, the CAO of the Town.
- The CAO will respond within a reasonable time, after consulting with the staff person responsible for that area of inquiry. A record should be kept of these concerns and comments, and disseminated to the AAC for their continuing review and fine-tuning of the Plan and may inform future changes.

CONCLUSION

We thank all of those who have participated in our journey toward ensuring that Berwick achieves equitable access to all citizens.

This is the very beginning of a formal process, and we want continually to form relationships with the people most impacted by this plan. We will continue to reach out and engage our community, and welcome all feedback and suggestions.

We will uphold the actions set forth in this living document and continue to strive for inclusion.

Town of Berwick Accessibility Advisory Committee

Joan Langevin Levack (Chair)

Elaine Furniss (Vice Chair)

Chris Cooke

Bradley Dundas

Councillor Chris Goddard

Kenisha Gordon

Michael Harris

Councillor Derrick Jamieson

Kimberly Halliday, Active Living Coordinator

APPENDICES

DEFINITION OF TERMS

AAC: Accessibility Advisory Committee. A volunteer committee established by a municipality to advise council about identifying, preventing, and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. The committee plays a pivotal role in helping the municipality become a barrier-free community that complies with Nova Scotia’s 2017 Accessibility Act. At least one half of the committee must have a disability or represent an organization that represents people with disabilities.

Accessibility Lens: Looking at issues through an “accessibility lens” means that pertinent decisions made by Council will be looked at from the viewpoint of those with disabilities, to build accessibility or equity through those decisions.

ASL: American Sign Language. A form of sign language developed for and by those who are deaf or hearing impaired in the US and also used in English-speaking parts of Canada.

Auditory: Relating to the sense of hearing.

Barrier: Something that makes it harder for some people to participate. Nova Scotia’s Accessibility Act defines a barrier as “anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice”.

Braille: A form of written language for people who are blind or have a visual impairment, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips.

Built Environment: man-made structures, features and facilities viewed collectively as an environment where people live and work.

CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation. CART is the live, word-for-word transcription of speech to text so that individuals can read what is being said.

CSA: Canadian Standard Association. The CSA is a standards organization that develops standards in 57 areas. CSA publishes standards in print and electronic form and provides training and advisory services.

Disability: As defined in Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act, disability is "a physical, mental, intellectual, learning, or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society".

EMO: Emergency Management Office. The Emergency Management Office is responsible for emergency planning and coordinating emergency responses. There are regional Emergency Management Offices that are responsible for providing a prompt and coordinated response to emergencies that occur in their jurisdiction, and Berwick falls under the Kings REMO.

Of note for people with disabilities is the "**Vulnerable Person's Registry**" which is a free, voluntary, and confidential service aimed at improving the safety of residents living at home who would be at greater risk in emergencies. The registry improves safety by providing key information to emergency response teams to help them be more aware when addressing large scale

emergencies. The registry is updated on a yearly basis and there is online registration available here (<https://www.kingsremo.ca/>)

Equitable/Equity: This term refers to a commitment to fairness. *Equitable* access is different from *equal* access. Equality means everybody is treated the same; equity means that EVERYBODY is treated *fairly*, based on their needs or abilities.

Infrastructure: Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (i.e. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.

Living Document: a Living Document is a document that is continually edited and updated. The Accessibility Advisory Committee is a fluid group and will change with time; needs with regard to accessibility in the Town will also change and evolve. There is a regular timeline for the document to be updated.

NSFM: Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities. Municipal interests are represented through three caucuses - regional, rural, and towns. The NSFM works to help municipal councils better understand issues and opportunities. It does this through events, bringing people together, and sharing ideas. It also does this through the work of committees in developing toolkits and templates, the sharing of research documents, and the sharing of best practices.

Pedestrian: a pedestrian is a person traveling by foot and is *inclusive* of those using assistive devices (tricycle, quadricycle, or wheelchair).

Plain Language: Plain language is clear, conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly that the

intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information.

Retrofit: to retrofit is to add a component or accessory to something that it did not have originally.

RHF: Rick Hansen Foundation. The Rick Hansen Foundation has a goal to create and deliver innovative solutions that lead to a global movement to remove barriers and liberate the potential of people with disabilities. They offer Accessibility Certification. Information on this organization can be found here:
www.rickhansen.com/be-come-accessible/rating-certification

Tactile: Relates to anything designed to be perceived by sense of touch.

WCAG: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium, the main international standards organization for the Internet. These guidelines are fluid, and new guidelines are set or occasionally. They can be found at <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>

BUILT ENVIRONMENT: LIST OF TOWN ASSETS

Current Property List (2022)

Infrastructure

The town of Berwick currently maintains the roads, sidewalks (including trimming overhanging shrubs) and curb cuts, pedestrian crossing lights and other crosswalks, street parking spots.

Parks and fields, playgrounds

Berwick Town Hall outdoor areas : field, footpath, Berwick Garden Project and a beach volleyball court

Centennial park: includes gazebo and picnic tables, footpaths, green space, former washroom (opportunity for replacement)

Chute park: mountain biking skills park and space for BMX riding, walking trail, Picnic spaces

Peter Connell park (formerly Brown Street ballfields): ballfields including canteen and washrooms (seasonal)

Rainforth park: softball field, a splash pad, tennis and pickle-ball courts, a basketball net, green space and playground.

Spicer park: a community garden and a playground, trail, and green space

Trailhead of "Apple Capital Heritage Trail": parking area, interpretive panel, community garden with raised beds, train display, Berwick mural project

Buildings

Town hall, includes town administration offices, gym and Berwick library

Carol's place: multi-use recreation building, with public washrooms

Utilities/ Service buildings:

Berwick Electric Commission

Berwick Public Works department

Berwick Waste Management facility

Berwick Fire Hall (50% owner town of Berwick)

Town Buildings not owned (leased space or other arrangement)

Berwick Visitor Information Center, (inside) Apple Capital Museum, main level

Kings Mutual Century Center, Berwick fitness center based on fee

Trails within Berwick

Harvest Moon Trail: Runs east/west through town on the old rail bed, owned by the province, maintained by the town.

West boundary trail: Runs north/south along the power line, hard packed and very wide.

Spicer Park Trail: From Cottage St. to South St.; unfinished from Hayden Dr. to South St.

Brown St. Connector Trail: From Harvest Moon Trail to Chute Bicycle Park, awaiting trail through park and crosswalk on Orchard St.

Brown St. to Pleasant St. and Allweather Windows (153 Commercial St) (unfinished to Allweather).

Daniel Dr. to Maple Ave.: unfinished.

Marsters Ave. to Cottage St.: A short, wide grass trail, used informally by local pedestrians.

KMCC Connector Trail: From KMCC to the west boundary trail.

ACTION CHECKLIST

Suggested Actions: Built Environment

- Committee and Council to prioritize accessibility when planning new builds or retrofitting old buildings.
- It is suggested that a member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee be added to all pertinent Town Committees of Council (Planning Advisory, Community Development Advisory, REMO, Community Development Advisory committees, for example).
- An audit of all Town-owned property and infrastructure will be done on the following timeline:
 - Create a checklist (2022)
 - conduct walk-throughs and evaluate built environment with the help of a disability consultant or someone with Rick Hansen certification (2022-2023)
- Sidewalks. We will assess and prioritize all sidewalks in the Town of Berwick that need maintenance and upgrading through Committee evaluations and public engagements
- Improved crosswalks. Lighting and marking
- Engage Berwick community members in ongoing discussions and public engagements about accessibility in the Town in terms of the built environment
- Where possible, ensure a higher standard of Accessibility in all Municipal public-facing built environments, according to CSA B651-18 guidelines
- Improve existing infrastructure

- Tennis courts entrance is not accessible
- retrofit doors inside of Town Hall so that persons with disabilities can access the main office without assistance
- Increase lighting behind the Town Hall, near entrance to Town Gym so that those using the accessible spots will have adequate visibility.

Suggested Actions: Information and Communication

- Determine where and what way-finding signage is needed through AAC audits and evaluations. Have consistency in municipally owned signage. include an accessibility lens when creating signage, for example, braille signage and high contrast lettering
- Explore new communication technologies and identify services (for example, "speech to text" capability in virtual and in-person meetings)
- Research what is needed in order to have a list of ASL interpreters the Town can use if necessary. Make this a budget line item for the Town.
- Train staff on inclusive and plain language communications. This need not be complicated - Inclusion NS (inclusionns.ca) offers instruction and translation to community organizations and government if there is a need.
- Ensure that all pictures posted electronically by the Town have descriptive text

- The Town, where able, will provide recordings of public meetings with captions.
- On request, the Town of Berwick should provide communications in all types of Accessible formats
- Town Public Meetings with regard to By-law changes etc. should have in the announcement template (newspaper and digital) a request that citizens please contact the Town for ASL interpretation at least a week prior
- The Town will provide information in written and verbal formats as requested
- Continuously engage the community to discover needs: the AAC can continue to research any unmet needs by those people with disabilities living in and visiting the town.
- Continue to work on improving the reach of Berwick MESH
- When needed, and where feasible, seek the advice/email chair of AAC to review and provide direction
- All official notices that the Town sends out should be amended to state: "Berwick is committed to fostering full inclusion in our meetings; if you require accommodation to attend our meeting, we will endeavour to meet your needs. If ASL interpretation is necessary, please provide one week notice."

Suggested Actions: Employment

- Become truly barrier-free in Town Hall public and private spaces.

- Staff and Council will be encouraged to complete online training, *Working with Abilities*, provided by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (workwithabilitiesns.ca) which is free of charge.
- When able, Berwick will supply assistive devices to any employee who needs them to succeed at their jobs, and will report to the CAO for requests unless someone else is formally given that role.
- To these ends, Town of Berwick will attempt to secure grants necessary to provide any assistive devices necessary. The AAC is willing to help with both accessing grants and with the actual applications thereof.
- Job opportunities advertised by the Town will include mention of alternative interview styles as needed to allow those who have a disability an equitable opportunity for the job (for example, setting up a virtual interview rather than in-person)
- Make use of the already complete accessibility audit with regard to the accessible washroom in the Town Hall

Suggested Actions: Goods and Services

- Offer diversity and cultural competency training for all staff so they are able to provide inclusive services
- Partner with community agencies to help develop and implement inclusive programming so Berwick is able to offer direct support and programming for people with disabilities.
- Explore different ways of promoting Town events/activities that reach all community members.

- Review all current programming offered by the Town and where applicable, make them accessible
- We will encourage Gala Days and other events to apply an accessibility lens while planning to accommodate people who have a disability and may need support, including but not limited to: more accessible washrooms, a quiet space during fireworks and other louder events, etc.
- Events planned by Berwick will have an accessibility lens applied during the planning process
- Promotion of quiet spaces and accessibility needs in marketing for all events
- Waiving of entrance fee for individuals whose role is to support a person with a disability. This is a common courtesy and ensures full participation of a person with a disability who requires an aide, without undue financial hardship.
- Build leadership capacity within our programs to host different abilities through partnerships and training
- When possible, provide emergency preparedness kits (including ear muffs or earplugs to decrease sound without removing the individual from the festivities, etc.)
- Establish partnerships for different parasport programming/ events

Suggested Actions: Transportation

- A public information campaign regarding the misuse of accessible parking spots (and the fines that can be levied) could be a part of Berwick's current marketing, or part of the social media posts. ("B Respectful"?)

- Posts installed to identify accessible spots may be useful. This way there is no misunderstanding. The signage on the post might be useful to market Berwick as a town with a lot of Accessibility to Offer”
- Install more bus shelters at key bus destinations
- Ensure snow removal of streets, sidewalks, and entrance to Town Hall is done in a timely manner

Department: Council

First Adopted: December 10, 2003

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To establish a standard practice for the timely and efficient clearing of snow and ice from Town streets, sidewalks, public parking lots and pathways during and after winter storms.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. The objectives of the Snow and Ice Control Policy will be to:
 - a. reduce the hazards of snow and ice conditions to motorists and pedestrians;
 - b. minimize economic losses to the community and business;
 - c. facilitate the handling of emergencies by Fire, Police and Ambulance;
 - d. identify criteria used to prioritize the sequence for the clearing of streets and sidewalks in the Town; and
 - e. define the levels of service for snow and ice control

3. Policy

- 3.1. It shall be the policy of the Town of Berwick that plowing, salting and sanding of streets, sidewalks, parking lots and pathways will take place when the weather has/may cause conditions to become hazardous.
- 3.2. Severe weather events may cause the delay or pause of snow and ice control removal services until it is safe for crews to do so.
- 3.3. Due to limited human, financial and equipment resources, it is not possible to clear all Town streets, sidewalks, parking lots and pathways concurrently. For this reason, a policy on the priority and sequence of snow and ice control is required.

- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the Director of Public Works to manage all human and equipment resources to achieve the greatest level of efficiency and cost effectiveness in the delivery of snow and ice control services.

4. Streets: priority criteria for Snow and Ice Control

- 4.1. In determining the priority for street clearing during and after a storm, all streets in the Town will be classified into one of three classes based on the following criteria:
 - a. Emergency Services (i.e. Police, Fire, Emergency Health Services)
 - b. High volumes of traffic
 - c. Business Core and Industry
 - d. Civic Facilities (School, Post Office, Town Hall, etc.)
 - e. Residential
 - f. Efficiency in service delivery

Street and their classifications are attached as **Schedule "A"**

5. Streets: Levels of Service

- 5.1. The Town does not have a municipal water supply and is mindful of the use of salt in snow and ice control operations. The Town generally uses a combination of salt/sand at a 50% mix that may work a little slower but provides effective traction.
- 5.2. Hard packed snow may occasionally build up on well-travelled streets due a combination of factors including: temperatures at or below -13C, snowfall volumes and/or the unavailability of crews prior to 5:00AM. As hard packed snow builds up, crews transition to 100% salt but until temperatures rise it is difficult to remove.

- 5.3 Two priority streams of service apply for snow and ice control services in the Town. Those streets included in Class I and II shall be plowed their full width followed by an application of salt/sand. Streets included in Class III shall initially be plowed only one vehicle width. Once all Class I and II streets have been plowed the full width, Class III streets shall be plowed full width followed by an application of salt/sand.

6. Sidewalks

- 6.1. The clearing of sidewalks will follow the same criteria as used for streets and will commence after the adjacent street has been plowed. Hence, sidewalks along Class I and II streets will be the first to be cleared with an application of salt and sand being applied at the same time before sidewalks along Class III streets are cleared.

7. Parking Lots

- 7.1. The public parking lots cleared by Town staff will be cleared in the following order:
- a. BDVFD Fire Hall
 - b. Town Hall
 - c. Kings Mutual Century Centre
 - d. Carol's Place
 - e. Rainforth Park
 - f. Trail Head

8. Town WWTP Pumping Stations

- 8.1. Once all Town streets, sidewalks and public parking lots have been cleared the Town's WWTP pumping stations will be cleared in order to ensure an immediate access to the waste water collection infrastructure.

9. Public Pathways, Connectors, Active Transportation (AT) Routes

- 9.1. As an accessible and Active Transportation community the Town has a series of pathways, connectors and AT routes. Most consist of gravel and or grass and are the lowest priority. They will be cleared only when the ground is frozen and after all snow and ice control measures have been completed for the other areas covered by this policy.

Public Pathways, Connectors and AT Routes are attached as **Schedule "B"**

10. Private Driveways

- 10.1. Private driveways may be filled with snow as a consequence of plowing operations, either before/ or after the property owner/occupant has cleared their driveway. The Town does not take responsibility for removing snow from private driveways.

11. Snow Removal

- 11.1. Excess snow that accumulates along Town streets in the business core shall be removed as soon as practicable.

12. Damage to Private Property

- 12.1 At the discretion of the Director of Public Works, damage to private property owners' fences, hedges, mail boxes or lawns, located within the Town's right-of-way, due to snow and ice control practices may be repaired at the Town's expense one time only. Private property owners/occupants will be asked to make the necessary adjustments to prevent similar damage in the future.
- 12.2 Damage to private property outside the Town's right-of-way shall be repaired at the Town's expense.

Schedule "A" - Town Streets Classification

<u>Class I</u>	<u>Class II</u>	<u>Class III</u>
Brown Street Commercial Street Cottage Street Foster Street Main Street Orchard Street South Street Union Street	Front Street Maple Avenue Marsters Avenue Mill Street Willow Avenue	Autumn Drive Beckwith Drive Bezanson Drive Bligh Street Cortland Street Daniels Drive Gala Drive Gravenstein Drive Hayden Drive Honeycrisp Drive Horsburgh Drive Illsley Drive Lawrence Avenue Macintosh Street Margeson Drive Morse Lane Mountainview Drive Paisley Avenue Pleasant Street Robinson Drive Ron Smith Drive Spartan Avenue Thomas Street

Schedule "B" - Public Pathways, Connectors and AT Routes

Spicer Park Illsley Park Apple Valley Acres Daniel Drive Bezanson Drive KMCC Connector Brown St/Orchard St Connector South Street Connector
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