

Spring 2024

Issue 4



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Message from Warden Bruce Morrison

It's spring, a season of growth, longer days, and best of all, watching our world come alive again!

As we enjoy the excitement the new season brings, following careful consideration and discussion, Victoria County Council reduced the tax rate by 5 per cent, on average. This difficult decision is intended to ease the burden of rising costs for residents. The 2024-2025 Budget is approved and, in this Issue, we've included a breakdown of where Municipal expenditures will go for 2024-2025.

As you may have noticed, the 2024 Spring Newsletter is a bit thicker as we've included a 2024 - 2025 Positive Aging Directory. These 211 services are offered to all residents in Victoria County. If you need help navigating the information contained in the directory, or you're uncertain about using the contacts listed in the directory, please contact Cassandra Yonder, Victoria County's Seniors Safety Coordinator at (902) 295-3672.

For spring and summer activities, it's been a busy time for the Recreation and Active Living Department! There's a new Recreation Equipment Loan Program coming onboard soon for not-for-profit organizations. Also, there is great news on the development of the trails program. One day, outdoor enthusiasts will be linked from one end of Victoria County to the other. We included an update on the program and progress being made by dedicated community organizations.

Finally, in celebration of spring and new growth, we've included a composting pilot project which has seen successful results! All it takes is a little soil and worms.

Happy Spring!

Victoria County Council



Bruce J. Morrison
Warden – District #3
(902) 565-8229

bruce.morrison@victoriacounty.ca



Larry Dauphinee
Deputy Warden – District #6
(902) 322-7102

larry.dauphinee@victoriacounty.ca



Paul MacNeil
Councillor – District #1
(902) 295-8477

paul.macneil@victoriacounty.ca



Perla Macleod
Councillor – District #2
(902) 295-0229

perla.macleod@victoriacounty.ca



Barbara Longva
Councillor – District #4
(902) 304- 0123

barbara.longva@victoriacounty.ca



Fraser Patterson
Councillor – District #5
(902) 674-2703

fraser.patterson@victoriacounty.ca



Jackie Organ
Councillor – District #7
(902) 336-2212

jackie.organ@victoriacounty.ca



Norman MacDonald
Councillor – District #8
(902) 285-4333

norman.macdonald@victoriacounty.ca



Contact Us:

Victoria County
Municipal Building
495 Chebucto Street,
Baddeck, NS BOE 3M0

Phone: (902) 295-3231
Fax: (902) 295-3331
Email: info@victoriacounty.ca
Office Hours
Monday—Friday
8:30 a.m.— 4:30 p.m.



UPCOMING: Spring Municipal Dates & Meetings

May 20, 2024 – Victoria Day – Municipal Office Closure

May 27, 2024 (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm) Council Session

June 18, 2024 (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm) Committee of the Whole

June 24, 2024 (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm) Council Session

Municipal Staff Contacts

Administration

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) — Leanne MacEachen
leanne.maceachen@victoriacounty.ca

Executive Assistant — Steff MacLeod
steff.macleod@victoriacounty.ca

Finance & Revenue

Chief Financial Officer — Alix Redden
alix.redden@victoriacounty.ca

Financial Analyst — Heather Ross heather.ross@victoriacounty.ca

Accounts Payable — Zina MacNeil zina.macneil@victoriacounty.ca

Revenue Coordinator — Caithlin Deveau
caithlin.deveau@victoriacounty.ca

Revenue Clerk — Lauri Macaulay lauri.macaulay@victoriacounty.ca

Customer Service Clerk — Shampa Mandal
shampa.mandal@victoriacounty.ca

Public Works

Manager of Public Works — Kelly Brett
kelly.brett@victoriacounty.ca

Public Works Technician — Greg Weir greg.weir@victoriacounty.ca

Communication

Communications & Marketing Coordinator — Jennifer Dagsvik
jennifer.dagsvik@victoriacounty.ca

Digital Communications Assistant — Jessica Klein
jessica.klein@victoriacounty.ca

Tourism & Recreation

Manager of Tourism & Recreation — Dan Coffin
dan.coffin@victoriacounty.ca

Tourism & Community Development Coordinator — Colleen Whelan-Smith colleen.whelan-smith@victoriacounty.ca

Active Living & Recreation Coordinator — Christopher Woodford
christopher.woodford@victoriacounty.ca

UPCOMING

IMPORTANT DATES:

June 2024

- Property Tax Bills will be sent in June 2024
- Municipal Low-Income Tax Exemption applications open, deadline Dec. 31st.
- Senior's Tax Rebate applications open, deadline Dec. 31st.

Senior Safety Coordinator — Cassandra Yonder
seniorssafety@victoriacounty.ca

Building & Fire Inspector — David MacKenzie dmackenzie@adpc.ca

Emergency Management & Fire Services Coordinator — Lyle Donovan
lyle.donovan@victoriacounty.ca

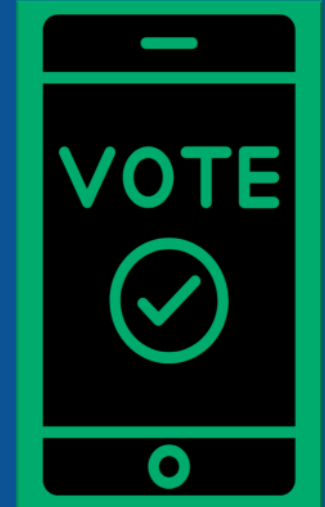
Economic Development Officer — Parker Horton
parker@capebretonpartnership.com

Transit Administrator — Terri Shobbrook
terri.shobbrook@victoriacounty.ca

Did you know?

2024 Municipal Election — October 19, 2024

- Blair Gallop is the Returning Officer for the 2024 Municipal Election in Victoria County.
- Victoria County will do electronic voting (internet and by phone) from Intelivote Systems Inc.
- Dates for advance polling period are set from Thursday, October 10, 2024 to October 19, 2024.
- Nomination Day is being held on Tuesday, September 10, 2024.
- The Returning Officer determines any additional notification mechanisms to improve accuracy of electors' lists.
- Returning Officer is responsible for public education on the upcoming election and offer information session(s) for potential candidates.



Contact Blair Gallop
elections@victoriacounty.ca
(902) 295-2117

Spring is the Season for Home Renovations

Our Clean Energy Financing program might be right for you if:

- You are worried about the cost of heating your home.
- You are not sure which energy upgrades might be right for you.
- You would prefer to finance any upgrades you make.
- You need help applying for rebates.

Learn more & apply: <https://cleanenergyfinancing.ca/victoria/>

Or call toll-free: 1-844-727-7818



**Clean Energy
Financing**
Victoria County

Plan Victoria County Update



What is Plan Victoria County?

Every municipality in Nova Scotia has to develop and adopt a comprehensive municipal plan to meet minimum planning standards. Plan Victoria County project is one part of the larger “Plan Eastern Nova” project and includes separate plans for the Municipalities of Antigonish, Richmond, and Inverness. The work is being undertaken by Halifax-based consulting firm UPLAND Planning + Design Studio.

Plan Victoria County is the planning strategy and land use by-law for unplanned areas of the Municipality of the County of Victoria. This encompasses the entire municipality, except for the Village of Baddeck, where no changes will be made to existing planning regulations at this time, as the Village has a municipal land use plan.

Plan Victoria County: Work to Date

Project planning began in the Fall of 2021 with public consultation meetings held from October 2021 to January 2022. This first phase involved a series of public meetings (in-person and online) to introduce the project, a public survey, an online mapping activity, a community workbook activity and a series of engagement interviews. An additional online meeting was held for any-

one who could not attend an in-person session and a recording of the presentation was uploaded to the project website.

Over winter 2022, the first Draft Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) were written. In spring and summer of 2022, another round of public consultation took place. This phase involved public meetings, a draft mapping activity and online feedback. In 2023, edits were made based on feedback and the second Draft MPS and LUB were released for public review in February 2024. The engagement period closed on March 31, 2024.

Next Steps

The draft planning documents will now go through another round of edits based on direction received from Victoria County Council at a meeting in April 2024. The final draft MPS and LUB will go for Council First Reading, followed by a Public Hearing and Second Reading. If passed by Council, the documents will go for final review by the provincial government before December 31, 2024.



Public Works



Opening Day at the Baddeck ReUse Centre on April 27, 2024

Do you have items to donate? Help local not-for-profit groups raise money by donating items in good condition to the ReUse Centre! Donations can be dropped off anytime between 8:00 am – 3:00 pm from Monday to Saturday.

For More Information Contact: recycle@victoriacounty.ca 902-295-2026

Here's the list of not-for profit organizations who will be running the ReUse Centre every Saturday morning until October 2024 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Shop at the ReUse Centre and support a good cause.

May 18, 25, June 1	Alderwood Working Council
June 8, 15, 22	Hospice Garden
June 29, July 6, 13	Baddeck Nordic
July 20, 27, Aug 3	Baddeck and Area Cat Rescue
Aug 10, 17, 24	Rocking Horse Ranch
Aug 31, Sept 7, 14	Baddeck Valley 4H Club
Sept 21, 28, Oct 5	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Oct 12, 19, 26	Middle River Recreation Association

Waste Educator's wormy experiment discovers compost gold!

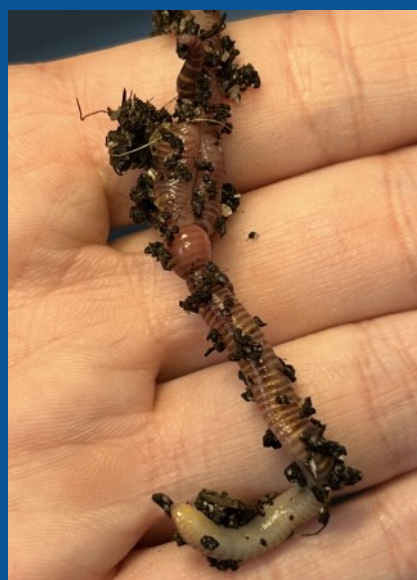
Over the past half year, as a pilot initiative, Victoria County's Maddy MacPherson tried a growing trend among savvy composters called vermicomposting or worm composting. With a little investment of time and money, over the winter (in her office!) she used a large plastic bin, some soil, red wiggler worms, and spent approximately 1/2 hour a week to feed and look after her worms.

Maddy's pilot project results were excellent! In less than six months, her worms produced a natural, odor-free compost, rich in the nutrients needed for a garden.

For a detailed "how to", there are great sites on the internet or books to read which provide the simple steps involved. This fun project is low in cost, diverts food waste and produces excellent compost!



Get bedding for your worms - use leaves, straw, shredded paper, shredded cardboard, egg cartons.



Care for your worms - worms breed at two months old and like being part of the family. At least Maddy thinks so.



When ready, screen the vermiculture and voila! Your worms produce high-nutrient fertilizer!

Upcoming Changes for Waste Disposal in Nova Scotia

***NEW* Light Bulb Collection Program**



Beginning August 1st, 2024, a Light Bulb Collection Program is coming on board. Drop off will be at the Jim Bradley Recycling Depot and Dingwall Transfer Station. Light bulbs will be banned from disposal and accepted for recycling. This includes all types of bulbs from florescent to incandescent bulbs. We will shed more light on this new recycling program in the summer issue of Victoria County News & Views.

Provincial Treated Wood Disposal Ban

As of July 5th, 2024, due to changes made to the Construction and Demolition (C&D) Regulations by the Province, treated wood (chemically treated during manufacturing to resist decay such as pressure-treated wood or creosote timber) can no longer be disposed of at C&D sites.



Expanded Electronics Recycling Program

On June 1st, 2024, the Electronics Recycling Program is expanding to include new items! Drop these off at the Jim Bradley Recycling Depot or Dingwall Transfer Station. The items listed below will be banned from disposal. Recycle—don't toss!

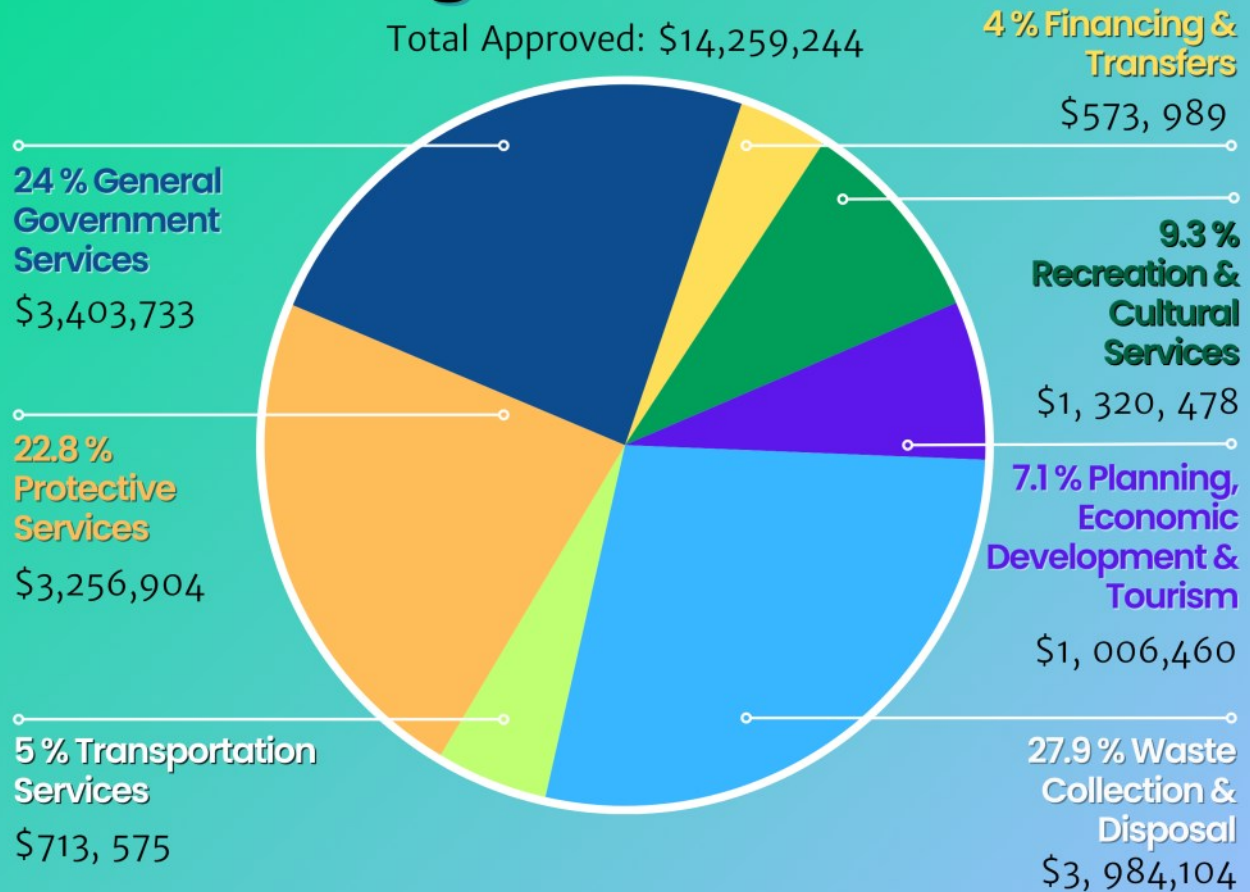
- Floor and Carpet Care appliances
- Garment Care appliances (steamer)
- Counter-top cooking appliances (toaster, electric kettles)
- Devices for sealing containers or packages
- Personal care appliances (hairdryers, electric razers)
- Scales (digital weigh scales)
- Portable air treatment appliances (humidifiers, air purifiers)
- Devices for measuring time (digital timers, clocks)



Water Issues? Leaks? For Public Works Emergencies after hours call: 1-855-748-6067

Budget 2024-2025

Total Approved: \$14,259,244



Examples of Budget Expenditures

General Government Services – council, administrative departments, election expenses, not-for-profit grants, taxation related expenses

Protective Services – RCMP contributions, Emergency Management planning, volunteer fire department funding and fire support services

Transportation Services – Victoria County Transit, municipally owned roads, sidewalks and street lights

Waste Collection & Disposal – Waste transfer stations (2), recycling depots (2), curbside pickup, sorting and disposal

Planning, Economic Development & Tourism – Planning and zoning, economic development initiatives, tourism initiatives and community development

Recreation & Cultural Services – Recreation grants and funding, trail development, programming, library services

Financing & Transfers – Transfers to operating reserve, capital reserve and Village of Baddeck

Revenue Department



2024-2025 Victoria County Tax Rates:

Residential – \$1.15 per \$100 assessment

Commercial – \$2.09 per \$100 assessment

Resource Property – \$1.15 per \$100 assessment

Taxation fiscal year is April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

Property taxes are due August 1, 2024

Property Tax Billing

Update your address! You are responsible for making sure that the Municipality has your correct address. Please let us know if you move so that we can update your civic address and mailing information.

Low Income Tax Exemption

You may qualify for a Low-Income Tax Exemption on your Municipal Property Taxes. If your household income is less than \$35,000/year, you may qualify for a \$300 tax credit. Application forms are available at the Municipal Building at 495 Chebucto St. in Baddeck and online at victoriacounty.ca.

Seniors Tax Rebate

Seniors living in Victoria County who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) may also be eligible for the Nova Scotia property tax rebate. You must reside on the property you are applying for. Please contact our Revenue Department at 902-295-3231 or email county-tax@victoriacounty.ca for more information.

Did you know?

Victoria County Council Sessions are livestreamed!

Watch Online:

<https://victoriacounty.com/livestream>





Recreation & Active Living

What is Recreation?

Defining recreation seems to vary from person to person. Is it a sporting activity or a hobby? Victoria County Recreation Department defines recreation as an activity an individual or group enjoys participating in during their leisure time. It might improve their physical, mental, emotional, or social well-being in a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment. The types of activities we support range from sports, to walking, knitting or painting. Our goal is to promote an activity which creates a healthier version of you, our resident. Try a new recreation activity...it might catch on!

Recreation Equipment Loan Program (R.E.L.)

The new Recreation Equipment Loan Program is coming soon to not-for-profit organizations in Victoria County! This program will give residents the opportunity to borrow different types of recreation equipment for different ages! If you're a not-for-profit organization interested in learning more, get in touch! Contact info below.

Community Champion Program

If you're passionate for recreation or have a particular recreation activity you'd like to see delivered within your community, the Victoria County Community Champion program might be right for you. This program is designed for people, like yourself, to help deliver recreation activities within your community.

Interested in learning more?

Contact:

Christopher Woodford

Active Living & Recreation Coordinator

christopher.woodford@victoriacounty.ca

902-294-0063



Community Development

Trails Development Plan—Update

- The current trails development plan has 3 phases. Research- *Completed*, Trails Development – *In progress*, and finally, Management, Maintenance & Marketing.
- 35 kms out of a planned 73 kms of multi-use trails are currently complete or under development.
- We've successfully partnered with local trail user groups to tackle projects like the Mary Barker Trail into Ingonish, and the Big Glenn Road in Big Baddeck.
- Trailheads at Hunter's Mountain, and North River are being planned for 2024, while Trailheads at Big Baddeck, St. Ann's and Ingonish will be completed later in the timeline.

The focus for 2024/2025 will be to:

- Complete the connection through Big Baddeck. Connectors to the Gaelic College, Baddeck Inlet, and a non-motorized trail to Bald Mountain will follow in 2026/2027.
- Priorities are on safe trail surfaces, bridges and access to the trails system. Secondary focus is on the experience for trail users, access and sustainable use of destination points.
- Program funding is available for not-for-profit groups and trail users for work on the trail projects that align with Municipal Trails Development Plans.



Photo by Jim Eldridge of St. Ann's taken on the Lewis Mountain Trail between Baddeck and St. Ann's

Did you know?

The Nova Scotia Government owns most of the roads in Victoria County. If you have concerns about signage or road conditions you can reach out to:

[Nova Scotia Public Works](#)

Toll Free 24/7 : 1-844-696-7737



www.victoriacounty.com

Contact Us

Victoria County Municipal Office
495 Chebucto Street, Baddeck
Nova Scotia B0E 1B0

Telephone: (902) 295-3231
Fax: (902) 295-3331
info@victoriacounty.ca