



Municipality of the District of Yarmouth

Strategic Plan

2021-2025



LETTER FROM WARDEN CUNNINGHAM



To the residents of the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth,

In my role as Warden of the Municipal District of Yarmouth, I am very pleased to have participated with my fellow Councilors in our strategic planning exercise, focused on mapping a path forward to address the challenges and opportunities facing our Municipality.

Developed on behalf of all residents, the timing of this plan is important.

Reflecting what Councilors heard from our residents during the recent 2020 election campaign and the unprecedented nature of the Covid-19 global pandemic, we wanted to advance this planning process early in the mandate of this Council.

This plan is the result.

I am grateful to Councilors and our staff team for their diligence and thoughtful input in preparing this plan.

The importance of local government in providing high quality, responsive services to our citizens has been underscored by the turbulence of this past year. But we are also looking ahead over the next four years to a future which offers both significant opportunities, as well as continuing challenges, which, skillfully managed, can enhance our economy, our environment and the quality of life that we collectively enjoy within our municipality.

This is our focus and our commitment to all citizens of the Municipal District of Yarmouth and the spirit of the plan which follows.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Cunningham". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John Cunningham

Warden

LETTER FROM THE CAO VICTORIA BROOKS



To the residents of the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth,

In service to our Council and, ultimately, the residents of the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth (MODY), I am proud of our staff team and their commitment to a culture of performance excellence, accountability and responsiveness to our citizens - their communities and their aspirations.

As we have been able to show over the past year, this is a team that can pivot quickly and adapt to an ever-changing context.

In closing out our earlier strategic plan and participating in the creation of this new plan, we have, for the next four years, an actionable blueprint which addresses the complex issues and opportunities MODY faces.

It is a blueprint which allows for ongoing citizen engagement, as projects and initiatives advance and as we move toward the renewal of the Municipal Development and Land Use Plans.

It is also a plan which centrally focuses on collaboration as an essential 21st Century tool to effectively address the complex issues communities and regions are facing; issues such as population growth, climate change, affordable and attainable housing, shared regional assets and inclusive growth.

As a plan that is both inspiring and critical to our municipality's future success, our team, with sleeves rolled up, is ready to press ahead vigorously.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Brooks". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Victoria Brooks

Chief Administrative Officer

PREAMBLE

This strategic plan establishes a shared vision and commitment for a vibrant and forward looking MODY.

It sets out our highest priorities and focuses on the work Council and the staff team will advance to:

- Earn and sustain the trust and confidence of our citizens
- Further enhance the high quality of life residents currently enjoy
- Attract new residents, businesses and innovative partnerships to create opportunities at home; and
- Improve our infrastructure and optimize shared assets with adjoining municipalities on behalf of all MODY citizens

The plan is guided by a refined vision and mission and underscored by a set of values that express our collective commitment to residents at the level of both the elected Council and the staff team.

In considering key strategic directions, the Council first measured them against key criteria including their:

- Responsiveness to 'what's heard on the doorstep' from MODY residents.
- Continuity with previous plan.
- Potential to address emerging issues/challenges/opportunities.
- Urgency and importance; and
- Timing.

Plan development also included a PESTLE analysis – an analytic tool which takes into account six external factors that can affect an organization including political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental.

Following this in-depth process, this Plan identifies four key strategic directions, each underpinned by strategic priorities and key objectives.

An underlying commitment of the Council is to ensure that the strategic plan is a 'living document', one which is consistently referred to and used in the implementation and management of strategic priorities. That is why MODY uses a format which enshrines these strategic directions into an '*Action Register*' which tracks progress against the plan on a quarterly basis. This results in regular reporting to Council and ensures that the plan:

- Is consistently monitored.
- The results being achieved are measured; and
- Redirection of strategic priorities and objectives are updated on an ongoing basis, as required.

Combined, these elements focus the Municipality's leadership and guide staff on how their work fits into these strategic priorities. In this way, the plan operates within a strong accountability framework.

MISSION

MODY serves its residents by providing the highest quality services through effective, efficient, and ethical stewardship of the resources and assets entrusted to us by our citizens.

VISION

To support and grow thriving, resilient and welcoming communities known for their:

- Resourceful and innovative people
- Embrace of diversity and inclusion
- Connectivity and openness to new ideas and opportunities
- Attention to the environment and the County's natural beauty, heritage and architecture

VALUES

- Accountability to the taxpayers
- Collaboration as a way to move forward
- Respect within our Council, staff team and the citizens we serve
- Integrity in all we do
- Openness in how we conduct our operations
- Reliance on the best information available to support decision making
- Commitment to sustainable practices
- Health and wellness of our people



STRATEGIC DIRECTION: ECONOMY

Enhancing competitiveness and creating the right conditions to attract new businesses while supporting inclusive growth and the success of existing businesses / industry

PRIORITIES	OBJECTIVES YEAR 1	OBJECTIVES YEAR 2	OBJECTIVES YEAR 3
<p>Population Growth: Collaborating with the Western Regional Enterprise Network (WREN) and community partners to grow our population by attracting and supporting newcomers and creating welcoming communities that reflect our rich and diverse cultures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MODY Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to apply to the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Advisory Council • MODY Economic Development Officer (EDO) to work with WREN under the Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP) • Engaging with the WREN on the Land Use By-law/Municipal Planning Strategy (LUB/MPS) Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MODY CAO to partner in LIP • MODY EDO work with WREN AIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing partnerships related to immigration and population growth
<p>Fisheries: As a critically important industry, supporting a thriving and sustainable fishery through advocacy and awareness building with a focus on conservation and supporting innovation in the sector; activities to be aligned with the efforts of industry, government partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collaborate with other municipal units on sector stewardship activities • Build relationships with Ignite Labs and the <i>Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship</i> (COVE) • Engage with as many fishery sector associations as are willing (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and demonstrate allowable uses under our By-Law's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be adjusted following assessment of Year 1 results 	

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<p>Tourism, Culture & Heritage: Enhancing MODY's value proposition as a tourism destination through targeted initiatives related to astro-tourism, Cape Forchu, and marketing of the County's built heritage and architecture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance the Fog Alarm Look off – Cape Forchu • Through policy and procurement support dark sky initiative • Fund built heritage program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance efforts in relation to the Cape Forchu Salt Marsh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance efforts in relation to Cape Forchu Rocky Ridge
<p>Cell service: Striving for reliable and enhanced cell service throughout MODY through advocacy and partnership with service providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate with Develop NS to improve cell service (residual funds in NS Internet Trust) • Engage with the Provincial government to support cellular infrastructure improvements • Through private sector and public sector relationships, advance cell service upgrades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be adjusted following assessment of Year 1 results 	
<p>Internet: Continuing broadband expansion plans to support business, education, new housing developments and to enable population growth and <i>work from home</i> (WFH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish the implementation of approved projects • Monitor and report on results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish the implementation of approved projects • Gap identification and develop strategies to address these gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be adjusted following assessment of Year 2 results

STRATEGIC DIRECTION: PEOPLE

Supporting the people of MODY as the foundation of our diverse and inclusive communities and its culture by working hard to enhance quality of life, placemaking, business success and access to recreation opportunities

PRIORITIES/GOALS	OBJECTIVES YEAR 1	OBJECTIVES YEAR 2	OBJECTIVES YEAR 3
Talent Supply: Collaborating with the WREN and partners to support attraction and retention of talent for existing business and industry and to grow new businesses within MODY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Connector program and facilitate municipal officers and employees to be 'connectors' Support recruitment activities in the community (i.e. NS Works/Doctor Recruitment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing work to support the Connector program and facilitate municipal officers and employees to be 'connectors' Ongoing work to support recruitment activities in the community (i.e. NS Works/Doctor Recruitment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing work to support the Connector program and facilitate municipal officers and employees to be 'connectors' Ongoing work to support recruitment activities in the community (i.e. NS Works/Doctor Recruitment)
Accessibility: Continued effort to bring MODY into compliance with Nova Scotia's <i>Accessibility Act</i> , (Bill 59) by establishing and prioritizing key accessibility projects during the plan period and through ongoing engagement with the Province of Nova Scotia and stakeholders on the Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility plan approved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance implementation plan recommendations Secure budget for ongoing implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget for on-going implementation Council and staff to participate in accessibility training at least once per council term.
Diversity and Inclusion: Development of a policy to enhance diversity and inclusion and creation of a diversity and inclusion lens to guide municipal decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop scope and plan for research related to enhancing diversity and inclusion (D&I) Draft D&I Policy Identify necessary financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine policy Fund the work Begin implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement policy
Placemaking: Development of a placemaking policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define "Placemaking" in a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be adjusted following

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<p>for use as a reference point, lens and leading practice indicator in community development projects and partnered activities</p>	<p>MODY context, i.e., how to incorporate branding and MODY identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and draft policy • Identifying financial resources 	<p>parameters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine financial investment 	<p>assessment of Year 2 results</p>
<p>Support for Recreation & Active Living: Continued build out of active living opportunities/infrastructure throughout the Municipality through partnerships and aligned with activities and initiatives of adjoining municipalities and the Province</p> <p>Note: sport and recreation now falls under Nova Scotia Communities, Culture and Heritage (CCH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of the Physical Activity plan • Pursuit of 275 Main street as aquatics bridge • Submission of funding application for Mariners Centre Expansion • Completion of Lake Milo Active Transportation Plan • Revisit draft active transportation project scoring matrix for measurement and monitoring • Connecting with regional office of CCH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council decision on implementation of Lake Milo Plan • Rank possible active transportation projects • Identify links to existing active transportation paths • Identify goals for the parkland dedication fund • Define financial resources/ budget for projects • Connect and collaborate with the CCH regional office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop vision for investment plan around built recreation infrastructure • Potential launch of Mariners Centre (MC) expansion (funding dependent) • Ongoing collaboration with regional office of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage

STRATEGIC DIRECTION: STEWARDSHIP

Taking the best care of the assets we've been entrusted with by the residents of MODY for today and into the future

PRIORITIES/GOALS	OBJECTIVES YEAR 1	OBJECTIVES YEAR 2	OBJECTIVES YEAR 3
<p>Asset Management Plan: Implementation of MODY's draft <i>Life Cycle Asset Management Plan (LCAM)</i> and hardening of key assets (reducing risk) to address anticipated climate change impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and hire the Director of Municipal Services position Research and choose Asset Management software/platform Development of workplan & implementation strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate financial resources for software and plan implementation Update and advance activities under the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be adjusted following assessment of Year 2 results
<p>Protecting the Environment and Natural Assets: Focused on a sustainable approach to Municipal Planning, to be accomplished through a variety of targeted measures, this strategic priority addresses MODY's adoption of strong environmental stewardship practices. Near term priorities include addressing water shortages in dug wells and encouraging expanded use of renewable energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include on-site drinking water as an MPS/LUB consideration Develop awareness campaign on our <i>Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE)</i> and Water Supply lending By-Laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify revenue generating green energy projects for MODY Engage with the cohort of municipalities involved in green energy projects/initiatives, for improvements on process for negotiating power purchase agreements (win/win for all parties) Advance and undertake demonstration projects early and often 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include green energy projects into capital investment plan Advance ongoing implementation projects
<p>Cybersecurity and Enhanced Digital Infrastructure: Upgrading of MODY digital infrastructure including conducting an IT infrastructure review, upgrading and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a comprehensive scoping exercise for an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System implementation, training, data transfer and commissioning the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be adjusted following assessment of Year 2 results

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<p>standardization of corporate software, enhanced cybersecurity and development of a business continuity plan leveraging lessons learned during the pandemic</p>	<p>enterprise system (software) to support enhanced cyber-secure municipal transactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of new phone Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system • Conduct a lessons learned session arising from the pandemic to formulate business continuity planning (Council and Leadership team) 	<p>new system, verifying results</p>	
<p>Enhanced Management of Intermunicipal Agreements (IMAs): Optimize outcomes for MODY in the negotiation of upcoming IMAs. Focus on the development of key criteria as a decision support tool and emphasizing factors such as: value for money for MODY taxpayers, evidence-based decision making, fairness and equity and strategic importance</p>	<p>Prior to engagement with municipal and other partners, develop an <u>internal</u> MODY-charter designed to support an effective <i>rules of engagement framework</i> as the basis for these collaborations to support clear, accountable and evidence-based decisions on behalf of MODY citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach Yarmouth County partners and determine if there is mutual support for the framework • Research best practices in criteria identification and use • Understand scoring methods • Access best possible advice to inform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft standard agreement metrics

STRATEGIC DIRECTION: GOVERNANCE

Providing accountable, open, high-quality services to residents and visitors

PRIORITIES/GOALS	OBJECTIVES YEAR 1	OBJECTIVES YEAR 2	OBJECTIVES YEAR 3
Accessible Meetings of Council: Leveraging lessons learned during the pandemic by enhancing access to meetings for staff and citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review what worked well and what didn't Identify tools necessary to overcome barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund and procure technology tools Deliver training Launch tools Monitor/report results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal check in January 2023 Adjust as required
Enhanced Municipal Service Design and Implementation: Recruiting and hiring a Director of Municipal Services (Professional Engineer) to enhance asset management and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive draft asset management plan from the Director of Municipal Services (DMS) Approve plan including possible amendments Determine and budget for financial resources required in subsequent years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget for formal plan implementation Layer asset management reports on decision making metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be adjusted following assessment of Year 2 results
Regional Collaboration/Governance: Identifying areas of improvement for Regional collaboration/governance and revisiting the 'consolidation' discussion with municipal partners and the province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual confirmation of MODY Council's commitment to regional good-faith partnerships through tangible actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Yarmouth County partners to explore ongoing regional collaboration and governance If willing, draft a coordinated/formal process Determine resources necessary to undertake the process Annual confirmation of MODY Council's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget for work Make funding applications where appropriate Confirm process Annual confirmation of MODY Council's commitment to regional good-faith partnerships through tangible actions

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		commitment to regional good-faith partnerships through tangible actions	
<p>Proactive Legislative Agenda: Staying out front of evolving issues and changes to proactively address them to the benefit of MODY's taxpayers. This includes identifying project ready opportunities that align with inter-governmental priorities and funding mechanisms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual review of legislative agenda • Engaging with the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) and DMA regularly through group calls, conferences and one-on-one interactions to anticipate and prepare for legislative change • Council commitment to reviewing, amending and approving necessary by-laws and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual review of legislative agenda • Engaging with NSFM and DMA regularly through group calls, conferences and one-on-one interactions to anticipate legislative changes • Council commitment to reviewing, amending and approving necessary by-laws and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual review of legislative agenda • Engaging with NSFM and DMA regularly through group calls, conferences and one-on-one interactions to anticipate legislative changes • Council commitment to reviewing, amending and approving necessary by-laws and policies
<p>Risk Management: Development of a risk register to identify known and evolving risks and keeping the register up to date through regular monitoring, review and addressing mitigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define risk management areas of focus • Confirm scope • Leverage current vendors for assistance (Cowan/Legal) • Development of a risk register tool and protocols for ongoing management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for Council • Gaps identification • Confirm required response • Determine resource requirements (HR and financial) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be adjusted following assessment of Year 2 results

MEASUREMENT

MODY's Council is committed to monitoring and measuring the results of the 2021-2025 strategic plan.

To gauge progress, MODY uses a format which enshrines these strategic directions into an '*Action Register*'. This tracks progress against the plan on a quarterly basis with regular reporting to Council through the CAO's monthly report to Council.

Further, over the lifecycle of this strategic plan, annual reviews will be undertaken. These afford an opportunity for the redirection of strategic priorities and objectives which can then be updated as required. Measurement and outcomes will be enhanced as key Municipal departments align their operational plans with this Strategic Plan.

Tracking and sharing our progress in the implementation of the Plan are essential elements of a transparent and accountable organization and are central to our Council's service commitment to the communities we represent.

