

Chief Administrative Officer's Report

**By CAO Stéphane Cyr
July 20, 2022**

PROJECT FILES:

Clare Veterans Centre (CVC)

- **No substantial change from September 15, 2021, CAO Report**
- Staff has reached out on November 8, 2021, for an update as to the status of our application. Unfortunately, Infrastructure Canada is not providing updates on applications currently under review, citing a high level of interest in the program and the need for ministerial review and approval.
- Funding application to the newly launched Green and Inclusive Community Buildings program (GICB) was submitted on May 4, 2021, and is still under review.
- Applicants with small and medium green and accessible retrofit projects to existing community buildings ranging in total eligible cost from \$100,000 to \$3 million are accepted on a continuous basis and funded on a first come, first-served basis.
- The total cost for the proposed CVC project is \$1,990,529 - \$2,330,280, depending on contingencies. Municipal contribution has been set at \$537,443.
- Cement slab for Smart Rink has been poured. Waiting on cement to cure prior to installing boards and synthetic ice. Installation is expected later this month.
- Invitations have been sent to the Chiefs of both the Meteghan and Little Brook Fire Departments to meet on site to discuss proposed plans for needed work to the firehole.

Clare Health Centre:

- Mechanical, Electrical & Civil are ready for tender
- Architectural and Structural are in the process of final quality check, update of envelope details based on products specified.
- Tender package will be issued Friday, July 29, 2022.
- Met with the Honourable Michelle Thompson, Minister of Health and Wellness at the Clare Health Centre on July 18, 2022. The Honourable Jill Balsler, Minister of Labour, Skills and Immigration was also in attendance, as well as senior staff from the Department of Health and Wellness.

Tourism Public Spaces

- Joseph and Marie Dugas Park and Pointe-à-Major:
 - **No substantial change from June 15, 2022, CAO Report**
 - Met with ACOA representative on June 7, 2022, to discuss possible funding application. Dialogue was positive. Currently working on concept paper.
 - Will reach out to Province of NS shortly regarding a possible application for funding.
 - Preparing necessary permits for the NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables for both sites.
 - The anticipated costs for this tourism infrastructure project, as included in the capital budget and including the non-rebated portion of the HST, is \$1.95M.
 - The proposed funding mix, as recommended by the CAO, is 50% federal, 25% provincial and 25% municipal.

- Cape Saint Mary Lighthouse Interpretive Centre:
 - Varcon is finalizing design and pricing for viewing platforms. Current estimate is \$372,531 plus HST.
 - Cost for building rehab plan and exhibit plan for the ground floor has been estimated at \$158,000 plus HST.
 - Cost for new exterior railing and door on top of lighthouse, as well as the replacement of interior railings and ladders, has been estimated \$57,000 plus HST.
 - Design focuses on the fishing industry including vintage lobster traps, a ¼ replica of a barchette, tuna fishing memorabilia, lighthouse lens/foghorn, and visitor information.
 - Total project cost estimated at \$587,531 plus HST.

- Wayfinding and Gateway Signage System:
 - Concept designs for gateway, directional and site identification signage have been created by Denise Saulnier Design and Trivium.
 - Content and sizing currently under review.
 - Cost-to-build budgets expected by September 1, 2022.

- Project is substantially complete (i.e., Phase 2). Final completion, including submission of final claim, expected in early October 2022.

Housing Action Plan:

- **No substantial change from June 15, 2022, CAO Report.**
- Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) is ready to be issued as soon as our land acquisitions are finalized.
- Recommended approach would see all municipal parcels available for development included in same REOI so as to lure prospective developers over the long term.
- Three parcels of land have been purchased. Currently finalizing the purchase of a fourth parcel, adjacent to the Havelock Community Centre.
- Purchase of the fourth parcel likely won't be finalized until August 2022 because of the need to apply under the Quieting of Titles Act for the Havelock Community Centre.
- REOI will also include the two elementary Schools – Joseph Dugas and Stella Maris

Meteghan Sewer Extension – Sunset Road:

- **No substantial change from April 20, 2022, CAO Report**
- Application has been submitted for consideration under the GoC's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Green: Environmental Quality stream.
- Under this program, municipalities can apply for:
 - Upgraded wastewater treatment or collection infrastructure.
 - Upgraded drinking water treatment and distribution infrastructure; and
 - Better capacity to reduce or address soil or air pollutants.
- The maximum allowable contribution is 73.33%.
- Total project cost is \$1,493,400 plus HST.

Meteghan Sidewalks:

- **No substantial change from April 20, 2022, CAO Report**
- Application has been submitted for consideration under the GoC's Active Transportation Fund. Awaiting response.
- Under this program, municipalities can apply for eligible active transportation projects (including sidewalks). The maximum allowable federal contribution is 60%.
- Total project cost is \$1,591,009 plus HST.

Multi-Use Court - Havelock Community Centre

- Contract for construction of multi-use court has been awarded to Spec Resources Ltd., following an open tender process.
- Work in Havelock is currently underway.
- Project completion scheduled for mid to late August.
- Total Estimated Project Cost – \$80,276 plus HST

Clare Transfer Station:

- Sitework & foundation for the new storage building to commence first week of August.
- Trusses are expected at the end of September. Once they arrive, wood construction will begin.
- The remaining repairs to the transfer station (as a result of the fire) will also be completed by Garian Construction Ltd., in parallel to the new building construction.

Track and Field:

- Project Manager (i.e., Tate Engineering) has confirmed that Playteck is pleased with Dexter's placement of the asphalt.
- There were a few areas that were high and will need to be ground down and sealed with liquid by Playteck to achieve the specified tolerances.
- Playteck has commenced the asphalt repairs today. Repairs are expected to take 5-6 days.
- Once complete, they will immediately move onto the placement of the synthetic track surface / line marking. This is expected to take 14 working days, weather depending.
- Anticipated completion date is August 15th.

Wentworth Park:

- The site has been rid of the old outhouses, including removal of the tanks.
- Upland met with staff in June to propose a number of enhancements to the park.
- In order to proceed with construction cost estimates, a decision on the washroom needs to be made. A washroom with electrical, plumbing, a well and septic is estimated to cost upwards of \$100,000 and would leave approximately \$130,000 in the construction budget for other improvements/development. A composite building like the ones the Municipality has in its other parks would come in at a much lower price, approximately \$30,000, and could include a changing room and some storage.
- At the direction of Council, staff will proceed with the lower cost, composite alternative currently being used elsewhere within the Municipality.
- Other project components that are being considered include improvements to the boat launch area (drainage), a floating dock with kayak launch, a smaller floating dock with access from the parking lot, an accessible walkway, picnic tables, hammocks, storage units (for our kayaks and other supplies, equipment, etc.), a playway; all with a natural theme and an emphasis on wood, local artisans, and reusing felled trees when possible.
- A more detailed concept plan with associated costs will be presented to Council in the Fall.

Boundary Review

- Discussed under Business Arising from Previous Council Minutes, Item 6.1.

Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) Conference:

- Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) Conference was very successful.
- Acadian Immersion Pre-Tour June 19-22 (Clare & Argyle) with 6 travel media.
- Acadian Immersion Post-Tour June 26-29 (Clare & Argyle) with 5 travel media.
- Several other tours also visited Clare including Flavors of Southwest Pre and Post Tours (Clare & Digby) as well as the Lighthouses Pre-Tour.
- The conference also included a Media Marketplace component. The Municipality's Tourism Manager had 20 appointments of 15 minutes each to try to find opportunities to collaborate. At least 10 of 20 showed strong promise of a collaboration.
- **Short-term benefits:**
 - Several social media posts and shares by travel media – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
 - Article en français sur Clare et Argyle sur Avenues.ca par Marie-Julie Gagnon, aussi une participant de Pre-tour (Acadian Immersion): <https://avenues.ca/partir/voyage-marie-julie-gagnon/lacadie-en-nouvelle-ecosse/>
 - Blog posts – Darcy Rhyno from South Shore wrote about Ecole Dans l'Anse: <https://dailytraveldeal.ca/free-lobster>
 - Digital marketing specialist, Storyteller and videographer Erica Hargrave from BC stayed in Clare an extra 4-5 days at the Cape View Cottages and has posted 3 times about her adventures in Clare on her Roamancing blog. <https://www.facebook.com/roamancing/>
- **Mid-and long-term collaborations and benefits:**
 - Several articles and blog posts which will include a Clare component that are yet to be published e.g., Laura Paquet from Ottawa will be writing a SW Nova Road Trip blog post; Liz Campbell story about Pre Tour for EastWestNewsService.com
 - Darcy Rhyno will participate in Festival acadien 2022 wearing a Grosse Tete for a confirmed story with Canadian Geographic who is sending a photographer.
 - Several media (QC francophone: Moi, Mes Souliers) and NB (Maritimes Maven) + NS anglophone (Judy Cohen and NS Explorer) are all interested in participating/covering culinary experiences later this summer following the Kilted Chef mentorship program
 - Norie Quintos – a freelance writer with Nat Geo who also writes for Destination Canada is interested in writing about the CMA 2024 in an upcoming newsletter
 - Erica Hargrave from BC wishes to return to film in Clare as part of her “Naturally Ours” nature and storytelling documentary series. This could be as early as 2023, pending funding.

Culinary Enhancement Program for Clare/Argyle:

- The creation of a mentorship program between local restaurants and the Kilted Chef. Project includes marketing support for restaurants based on mentorship recommendations.
- Application also includes marketing support for farmers and art markets
- Total project cost is \$69,874.
- Funded 100% via ACOA's Main Streets Program.
- The Kilted Chef will be visiting Clare and mentoring several restaurants (6 to 10) from August 7-10.
- Larry Peach / Renee Blinn (CDENE) are recruiting the Clare restaurants. There are 5 restaurants confirmed to date.

Fast EV Chargers

- Advised by the WREN on July 12, 2022, that their second application to NRCan, which included 3 Level-3 EV Chargers for Clare, was not successful.
- The chargers in question were slated for the following locations:
 - Joseph and Marie Dugas Park
 - Clare Veterans Centre
 - Cape. St. Mary Lighthouse Park
- At this point, municipal staff will explore alternate funding sources for these chargers

FINANCIAL:

- As of June 30, 2022, the Municipality has recorded \$8,691,069 in revenues versus \$2,859,853 in expenses, for a surplus of \$5,831,216.
- As of June 30, 2022, the Municipality had a balance of \$3,666,247 in its operating fund, \$293,046 in its capital fund and a total reserve balance of \$5,946,470. The total reserve balance can be broken down as follows:
 - Operating reserve - \$1,819,520
 - Capital reserve - \$2,978,691
 - Landfill closure reserve - \$354,186
 - Gas tax reserve - \$794,073