



MUNICIPALITY *of the*  
COUNTY *of* KINGS

Municipal Message

Jan. 5, 2022

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**Year-in-Review: Looking Back on Municipal Milestones from 2021**

Financial sustainability was top of mind as the Municipality of the County of Kings focused on service delivery, infrastructure investments and the advancements of special projects in 2021.

Despite facing financial pressures from a variety of sources, the residential and commercial tax rates remained unchanged for the 2021-22 budget approved by Municipal Council.

The below list touches on some examples of key activities undertaken by the Municipality in the last year. It is, by no means, a complete overview - more of a highlight reel of sorts:

**Green Municipal Campus nearing completion**

The Municipality's new, net-zero Engineering and Public Works (EPW) Operations Centre is nearly finished. Construction is expected to wrap up in early 2022. The completion of the facility designed to generate more energy than it consumes marks a major milestone in the Municipality's ongoing response to climate change.

Like the Municipality's neighbouring energy-efficient geothermal Administration Centre opened in the spring of 2019, the EPW operations centre will include a solar array that generates clean, renewable energy while serving as an alternate source of revenue. The buildings are focal points of a Green Municipal Campus supporting the Municipality's ongoing efforts to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions linked to municipal operations.

The 'greening' work will continue into 2022 and beyond. Plans are in place for a phased approach to transitioning the municipal fleet to electric vehicles (EVs), the addition of new EV charging stations, and exploring the potential of two large-scale renewable energy projects.

**Study exploring viability of new recreation facility**

The Municipality teamed up with the towns of Kentville and Wolfville to launch a Regional Recreation Facility Feasibility study that will explore the viability of building a new recreation complex in the Kings Region.

The study will explore potential locations, service options and economic spinoffs. The New Year will be a time to discuss the study's findings and reflect on potential next steps.

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### **New Active Transportation Plan**

Council adopted Active Kings County: An Active Transportation Plan in July. The 15-year plan lays the groundwork for creating more accessible and inclusive active transportation opportunities and networks throughout Kings County.

### **Accessibility planning underway**

Consultants are developing an accessibility plan in conjunction with the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee representing the Municipality and seven villages within its borders. The plan will examine how the municipal units can play a role in making Kings County accessible by 2030.

### **New Strategic Plan**

Council approved a new 2021-2024 Strategic Plan outlining a number of internal and community-based projects supporting five Key Strategic Priorities: Strong Communities, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Development, Good Governance and Financial Sustainability.

### **Strategy for Belonging**

The adoption of “Toward Equity and Diversity: A Strategy for Belonging in the Municipality of the County of Kings” at the regular monthly council meeting in December 2021 highlights one example of how a project outlined in the Strategic Plan can guide action that results in real and meaningful change for Kings County’s residents, guests and communities.

### **Busy year for planning and inspections**

Staff saw a 117 per cent increase in permit applications from last year, processing 1,116 between January and November. The demand for building inspections spiked by 112 per cent from 2020, with 2,935 requests received as of Nov. 19, 2021.

In addition to approving nine development agreements, municipal council OK’d six rezoning applications, supported the proposed locations of one telecommunications tower, amended the Planning Advisory Committee Policy, and accepted text Land Use By-law amendments to allow for wider solar power options in residential areas.

Work continues on the development of a forward-looking Secondary Planning Strategy for the Growth Centre of New Minas, with a target adoption date set for March 2022. Dubbed Vision New Minas, the project centres around the creation of a plan that will shape future developments in the growth centre, and guide how the community evolves in the years to come.

### **More highlights:**

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- A new broadband internet service for Woodville, Canada Creek, Black Rock and the surrounding areas was constructed.
- Sewer treatment facilities in Greenwood and New Minas received multimillion-dollar refurbishments, and upgrades were carried out at pumping stations in Hants Border, Greenwich, Canning and Greenwood.
- The design work required to reimagine the washroom facilities at Aylesford Lake Beach is underway.
- Water towers in Greenwood were recently refurbished, and construction for a Greenwood Water UV upgrade was slated to begin in December. The Greenwood Water System upgrades will continue in anticipation of residential and commercial growth in the community.
- Construction began on a new sidewalk along Scott Drive in North Kentville
- The municipality added to its communications, diversity and economic development offerings with the addition of new staff dedicated to these service areas
- The municipality created new inter-municipal service agreements relating to the provision of fire inspection services for the Town of Kentville and Town of Berwick for five-year terms.

**Mayor Peter Muttart reflects on the Municipality’s accomplishments in 2021 here:**

“While in some respects the COVID crisis has put us back on our heels, in other respects we have been able to concentrate on building, reinforcing and complementing our physical and structural assets over the last two years. Our entire Council takes justifiable pride in this progress.

To name just a few: we have completed our Internet fibre rollout, constructed a net zero [energy] Engineering and Public Works building, taken major initiatives in the alternative energy field, formed first Nations partnerships, paved 20 times the number of J class roads that we have been accustomed to pave on an annual basis, entered into a joint project with our towns to study the feasibility and form of a regional recreation/wellness Centre, completed major upgrades in infrastructure, managed a fiscally responsible temporary hiring and Council wage freeze – all the while holding the tax rate and experiencing very significant increases in building and development applications within the municipality.

With what we have accomplished, and those things yet to come, I personally take great pride in our Council, administration and staff endeavours in the betterment of our community. I look forward to what this Council can accomplish over the next two years of its mandate.”

**An edited version of this article prepared by the Municipality was first published in the Jan. 5 edition of SaltWire Network’s *The Valley Wire*.**

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