

**MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

The Regular Session of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of the County of Colchester was conducted in-person and virtually combined, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 6:00 pm.

In peace and in friendship, and in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, it was acknowledged that the Municipality of Colchester is in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

**Roll Call**

Mayor Christine Blair, Chair	
Councillor Paul Weatherby	District 1
Dep. Mayor Laurie Sandeson	District 2
Councillor Sheldon Richardson	District 3
Councillor Mike Cooper	District 4
Councillor Tim Johnson	District 5
Councillor Nigel Leggett	District 6
Councillor Sherry Martell	District 7
Councillor Lisa Patton	District 8
Councillor Marie Benoit	District 9
Councillor Charlene Fletcher	District 10
Councillor Allan Kennedy	District 11

**Staff Present**

Dan Troke, Chief Administrative Officer  
 Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works  
 Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services  
 Dennis James, Municipal Solicitor  
 Jenn Martin, Economic Development Officer  
 Tracey Veno, Recording Secretary  
 Pam Macintosh, Manager of Planning Services  
 Jeanette Himmelman, Systems Analyst  
 Robert Matheson, Manager of Reduction and Recovery Operations  
 Jill MacGillicuddy, Senior Planner

**Public Hearing –  
 Development  
 Agreement , Land of  
 4432357 Nova Scotia  
 Ltd and Andrew  
 Blackburn**

*Councillor Patton declared a conflict of interest and recused herself from discussion on this matter.*

Mayor Blair called this Public Hearing to order respecting an application for amendments to enter into a development agreement (DA) to allow a mixed use planned development with permitted uses including a variety of residential housing forms along with mixed commercial/residential, commercial, recreational and institutional uses as well as open spaces and environmental protection areas on PIDS 20067658, 20069027, and 20408456, located on Pictou and Vimy Roads. The proposed DA and a related staff report have been circulated to Council members and have been made available to the Public. There is a recommendation by staff to approve this DA.

Dan Troke, CAO, advised that the guidelines of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) regarding the process for the Public Hearing have been followed.

Council members were reminded that only those present throughout the Public Hearing can vote on the proposed development agreement when eventually considered by Council. This Public Hearing is Council's opportunity to hear details of the DA and any concerns of area residents. Council will have opportunity to debate the merits of the DA when the motion is presented to Council. Staff are present to answer any technical questions that may arise concerning the DA.

Chris Markides, Senior Planner with zzap Consulting, presented on behalf of the applicant, Five Corners Properties. The presentation began with information on comprehensive development districts (CDD) and development agreements. Highlights of the presentation also included information on the proposed development plan including its alignment with the 2007 Village of Bible Hill master plan; a high level overview of the concept plan; details on the four proposed zones within the development; parkland within the development including sports field, neighbourhood park, walking trails and new trail parking lot; details on the Active Transportation consisting of sidewalks and multi-purpose trails; concerns of residents received through the public engagement process; studies undertaken to date and review outcomes; next steps in the process if approval is granted; and project phasing and timeline details.

Responding to a query on timeline of phase 1, Mr. Markides indicated that the applicant would like to start the project as soon as possible.

Jill McGillicuddy, Senior Planner, provided a brief presentation on the application detailing the rezoning request; location and description of property, including maps; input from various internal and external departments related to water, roads, school, stormwater; emergency services; and policy considerations. The Municipality's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) provides policy for consideration of a Development Agreement on the lands and staff recommend that Council approve the application as presented.

Brief discussion was held on addressing stormwater management. Ms. McGillicuddy indicated that preliminary plans have been submitted with further requirements for same for each phase of the project.

Councillor Johnson, Chair of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), provided the report for the PAC meeting held on December 15, 2025.

The CAO advised that no written submissions were received concerning this application.

The following members of the public were in attendance to address Council concerning the proposed DA:

Paul Callan – Mr. Callan, resident of Bible Hill, appeared before Council to address a number of concerns that he feels has not been part of the considerations. These include policing – feels that Bible Hill does not get the police in the area that we are paying for; schools; increased taxes; no environmental impact study; no study on aquifer; and population density – if two people per occupancy, highest urban density in the Maritimes, if 4 people per occupancy, it would have the highest density in all of Canada. Mr. Callan also inquired about what considerations Council vote would be based on for this development.

Responding to Mr. Callan's points, staff indicated the criteria as outlined in the MPS is what have been followed for the recommendation. Other points noted were:

- Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education has been provided with details of plans and staff have been advised that this will be taken into consideration as part of their future planning.
- RCMP recently completed a Policing Review and work is underway with the Department of Justice (DOJ) on managing fundings and resources.
- Road networks have been part of the discussion and both municipal and provincial public works will continue to be involved as each phase of the subdivision progresses.
- The development is on central water. There are no municipal or provincial requirements under the MPS to undertake a study for this type of development.

- This type of development provides mitigations for density and is a better/more cohesive fit for the community.

A question on whether there has been discussion on a possible interchange for traffic congestion as well as easy accesses in case of emergency. Staff indicated that the provincial authority has indicated that a roundabout would be the preferred option to address traffic concerns. Additionally, there are a number of access points at difference streets of the development. Both of these would be taken into consideration with each phase of the development.

Addie MacCallum - Mr. MacCallum is a long-term resident of Bible Hill (20 years) and he indicated that he sees a lot of similarities in this development with the original Bible Hill Master Plan and said he applauds Council and the developer for a plan that addresses today's needs as long as proper infrastructures are in place. One key area of concerns is public safety. As a retired RCMP Officer, he indicated that in Colchester the ratio between population to police is significantly below both the national and provincial average. He would like to see a transparent, long-term plan in place to address sufficient public security now and into the future.

The CAO advised that during the 2025/26 budget, the Municipality added funding for three new officers, and this will be part of consideration of future budgets. Also, the recent review by the DOJ will help to determine the best policing model and determine if the model needs to change. As discussions progress with the DOJ on the review, it is anticipated that it will become public once adopted.

There were no additional questions or comments of staff in response to issues raised by the public.

With no further discussion regarding the application, the Chair of PAC put the following motion on the floor:

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council approves by way of Second Reading, the application for the proposed development agreement on PIDs 20067658, 20069027, and 20408456, located on Pictou and Vimy Roads.” Carried unanimously.

Mayor Blair noted that Council's decision on this development agreement is appealable to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board. Any appeal of Council's decision must be made within 14 days of the advertising of this decision.

With no further business on this matter, Mayor Blair declared the Public Hearing closed.

#### **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor Weatherby, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That the agenda be approved with the addition of Item #13, Legal Matter in closed session.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Leggett

“That the minutes from January 29, 2026, be approved as presented.” Carried unanimously.

#### **Business Arising from Minutes**

None.

**Standing Committee  
Reports and  
Recommendations**

*Deputy Mayor Sandeson, Chair of Council Committee, presented the reports from the meeting held on February 12, 2026.*

Amendments to Personnel Policy 5.04 Performance Review

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That Council approves the updated Performance Review Personnel Policy as presented.”

*It was noted that during electronic voting, Councillor Weatherby voted against the motion incorrectly, resulting in the motion being carried unanimously.*

Amendments to Personnel Policy 3.01 Salary Administration

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Johnson

“That Council approves the updated Salary Administration Personnel Policy as presented. ” Carried unanimously.

Council Correspondence Policy

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

“That Council adopts the Council Correspondence Policy as presented. ” Carried unanimously.

Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Policy

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Cooper

“That Council approves the amendments to the Low-Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program Policy as presented. ” Carried unanimously.

Bussing

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That Council approves that a letter be written to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, copied to MLAs, regarding the bussing issue and asking that it be addressed. ” Carried unanimously.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Fundy Discovery Site  
Visitor Information  
Centre Renovation**

Scott Fraser, Director of Corporate Services, reported that this item deals with the renovation of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) building at the Fundy Discovery Site. The report included information on approved capital budget, scope of the renovations, tender details and submissions received, and anticipated timelines for the project. The renovation to the VIC supports the Municipality’s efforts to create a more accessible community.

Moved by Councillor Patton, seconded by Councillor Richardson

“That Council approves awarding the Visitor Information Centre building renovation to DKI Truro at a price of \$93,387.12, excluding HST, with source of funds being the Municipal Infrastructure Reserve.” Carried unanimously.

**Correspondence –  
ACTION****David K. Parker, Fund  
Raising Chair**

A letter received February 18, 2026, requesting support for student attending Science Fair Nationals.

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Martell

“That the request for support from the Chignecto Central Science Fair Committee Fund Raising Chair for the Science Fair Nationals be received for information.”

*It was noted that during electronic voting, Councillor Fletcher voted against the motion incorrectly, resulting in the motion being carried unanimously.*

Brief discussion on this matter included not providing support for school functions, municipal support for school functions being part of the municipal mandatory contributions to the province for education, and as such, this should be noted in the response letter. On a query concerning previous year requests, the CAO confirmed that no funding was provided in the past.

**Emma Jean MacNutt**

A letter dated February 2, 2026, requesting street lighting at the paved end of Tattrie Settlement Road and Route 6 intersection.

Moved by Councillor Martell, seconded by Councillor Benoit

“That the request for streetlights at the intersection of Route 6 and Rocklyn Road/Tattrie Settlement Road be referred to staff to provide feedback based on requirements of County Street Light Policy.” Carried unanimously.

**Correspondence -  
INFORMATION****Development Officer**

A copy of Development Activity Report for January 2026.

**Building Inspector**

A copy of Building Permit Statistics for January 2026.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Sandeson, seconded by Councillor Weatherby

“That the reports from the Development Officer and Building Inspector be received.” Carried unanimously.

**INFORMATION ITEMS****Community Trail  
Funding Program**

The Community Trail Funding Program provides support to eligible, nonprofit, community organizations in the planning, construction, maintenance, and promotion of public recreational trails. Three applications were received under the Community Trail Funding Program for the January deadline. The following grants have been approved pending confirmation of matching funding - Tatamagouche Area Trails Association, \$30,150; and Dalhousie University, \$4,297. The third application, from Ashton’s Garden Centre, was not approved because the applicant is a business and does not meet the Community Trail Funding Program eligibility criteria.

**Award of Tender –  
Fundy Discovery Site**

This item provided details on the tender award for the construction of 482m of new asphalt trail, and 300m of new crusher dust trail at the Fundy Discovery Site in Lower Truro.

**Trails Construction  
Contract**

Included in the report was approved budget information, tender timelines, bids received, and anticipated project start and completion dates.

**Reports from Council  
Members**

Copies of reports from the Mayor and Councillors were circulated in the package and 'On Table' for this evening's meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Moved by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Johnson

"That the meeting go into closed session at 7:16pm." Carried unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Richardson, seconded by Councillor Kennedy

"That the meeting reconvene in open session at 8:02pm." Carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councillor Kennedy and seconded by Councillor Benoit, the meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

Tracey Veno  
Recording Secretary