

DAVIS PIER

## RECOMMENDATIONS

# MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF INVERNESS ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

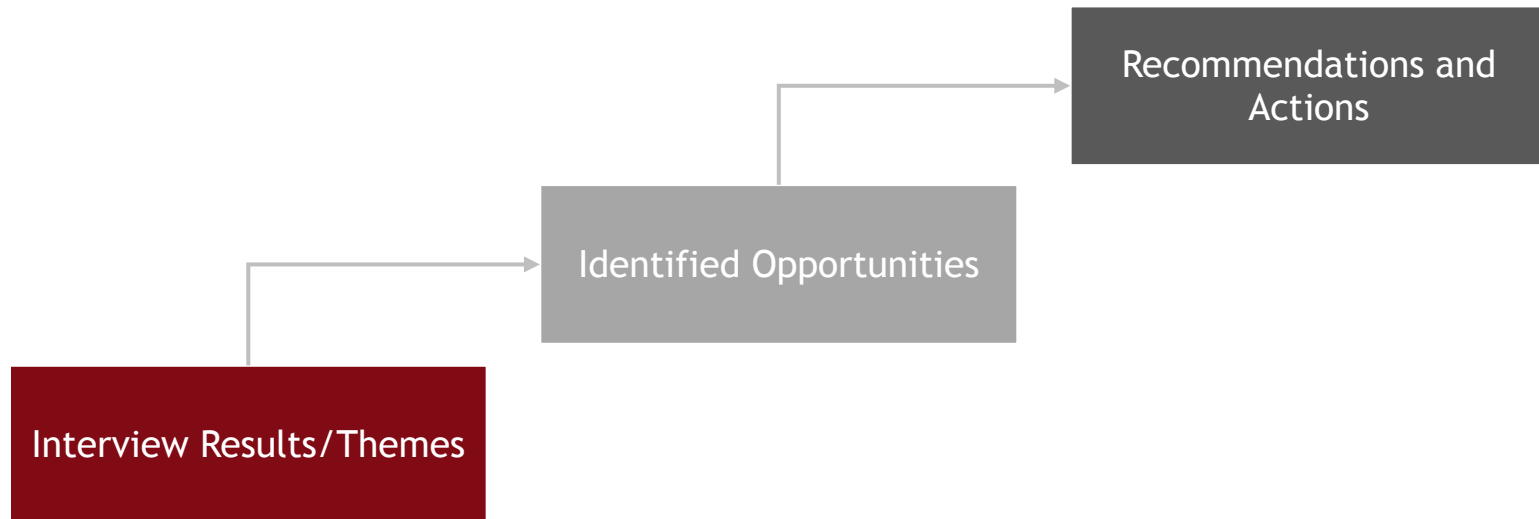
DECEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2017

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
Background & Context	3 - 4
Recap: Opportunities Identified	5
Recommended Actions	6
Recommendation Format	7
Opportunities & Recommendations	8 - 27
Alignment with Strategic Plan	28
Proposed Timeline	29
Summary	30 - 31
Appendix – Current State Presentation	32 - 57

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Davis Pier was engaged to provide an organizational review to the Municipality of the County of Inverness. This report serves as the deliverable for this engagement and includes:



# CONTEXT

Prior to a the new CAO being in place some recommendations can begin to be implemented, however, recommendations with higher implementation complexity should be considered by the incoming CAO prior to efforts to implement.

# OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

Based on interview themes, five key opportunities have been identified:



## Themes

## Opportunities

1 Council Operations

More Productive & Efficient Council Operations

2 Decision Making and Allocation of Funds

Increased Structure Regarding Funding and Decision Making

3 Communication

Heightened Clarity of Roles and Increased Communication






4 Human Resources Management

Increased Focus on Staff Satisfaction

5 Public Works Operations

Identifying and Addressing Gaps & Risks

# RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

	#	Recommended Actions
	1	Formalize <b>council process</b>
	2	Creation and adoption of ' <b>Request for Decision</b> ' template
	3	Engage Municipal Affairs to complete a <b>refresh on roles and responsibilities</b>
	4	Creation and adoption of <b>council meeting minutes template*</b>
	5	Development and adoption of <b>request for funding template</b>
	6	Participate in <b>evidence based decision making training</b> by Municipal Affairs
	7	Development of enhanced <b>CAO/staff report</b> format to council
	8	Finding ways to <b>support other departments</b> when necessary
	9	Set more <b>formal communication channels</b>
	10	Introduce time at the beginning of <b>council meetings for citizen engagement</b>
	11	Increase the <b>focus on HR elements</b>
	12	Create <b>succession plan</b> procedure for the organization
	13	Complete and react to <b>survey of salaries</b> for key Public Works positions*
	14	Focus on <b>new website implementation</b> to increase community engagement*
	15	Prioritization of the <b>gaps and creation of action plans</b> to address the gaps
	16	Determination of when <b>contractors or consultants are best utilized</b>
	17	Identification of opportunities for <b>sharing services with other municipalities</b>
	18	A more in-depth look at the <b>risks within the Public Works</b> department

\* Initiatives where implementation has already begun or is completed

# RECOMMENDATION FORMAT

- Recommended actions were identified for each opportunity
- For each of the actions the following factors were considered:
  - Implementation Complexity
  - Dependencies & Considerations
  - Tools, Templates, Resources (in applicable cases)
  - Roles

The implementation complexity was estimated for each of the activities as either low, medium or high. Considerations were given to time to implement, approval required and level of change. When rating an action item, each category should be considered, however the complexity level that is most common will prevail.

Implementation Complexity	Time to Implement	Level of Approval	Level of Change for Organization
Low	10 days or less	Department Head Discretion	Minimal
Medium	10 days - 1 month	Council or CAO Approval	Moderate
High	More than 1 month	New policy or by-law required	Significant

# OPPORTUNITY 1

## More Productive & Efficient Council Operations

### Rationale

- **Agendas** - opportunity to improve the function of council meetings with greater adherence to set agendas
- **Materials** - additional process and rigour around materials to aid in informed decision making could benefit both council and staff
- **Structure/Order** - there is an opportunity to refresh council and staff on roles and responsibilities. Additionally, there is an opportunity to work together to improve the flow of council meetings and foster respectful debate and dialogue
- **Follow up** - more formal process related to meeting minutes, required actions (by person), and deadlines would be helpful



# OPPORTUNITY 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## MORE PRODUCTIVE & EFFICIENT COUNCIL OPERATIONS

#	Recommended Actions	Implementation Complexity (H-M-L)	Dependencies & Considerations	Template, Tool, Resource?	Roles
1	Development of more formal process for council operations	M	Will require commitment to updated processes by councilors	Consider using New Glasgow bylaw as a starting point to update current <a href="#">Bylaw Link</a>	Lead: Council Support: CAO
2	Create template/guide for request for decision to be utilized for council decisions	M	There will be an adjustment and familiarization period for staff and council	Proposed template shown on next slide	Lead: CAO Support: Council
3	Engage Municipal Affairs to complete a refresh on roles and responsibilities	L	Connect with Municipal Affairs following CAO appointment		Lead: Council Attendance: CAO, Dept heads & Council
4	Create an effective template for council meeting action items and follow-ups	L	There will be an adjustment and familiarization period for staff and council	Proposed template shown on subsequent slides	Lead: CAO

# OPPORTUNITY 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT'D)


## MORE PRODUCTIVE & EFFICIENT COUNCIL OPERATIONS

The *Request for Decision Template* will provide council consistent details required to enable transparent, and evidence based decision making

### Includes:

- Current Situation
- Recommendation
- Background
- Discussion
- Implications
  - Policy
  - Financial/Budgetary
  - Environmental
  - Strategic Plan
- Reference Documents
- Communication Requirements

REQUEST FOR DECISION AND DIRECTION



CANADA'S  
**MUSICAL  
coast**  
Inverness County

**REPORT TO:** *Municipal Council*

**SUBMITTED BY:** *Name of Department*

**DATE:** *Date*

**SUBJECT:** *Subject*

**ORIGIN:** *Origin of this Request*

<b>Prepared By:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Reviewed By:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Authorized By:</b>		<b>Date:</b>

**CURRENT SITUATION**

*This section should include details related to the status of this subject. Whether this include policy.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

*This section should identify the recommended action based on the author's research*

**BACKGROUND**

- Level of detail dependent on the scale of the decision or direction
- Include relevant policy excerpts

**DISCUSSION**

**IMPLICATIONS**

Area	Impact (Circle 1)	Comments
Policy	Yes or No	
Financial/Budgetary	Yes or No	

10/30/17
Request for Decision and Direction

# OPPORTUNITY 1 - RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT'D)

## MORE PRODUCTIVE & EFFICIENT COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Template: Council Meeting Follow-ups:



Council Meeting Follow-ups  
Municipality of the County of Inverness

#	Council Meeting Date	Action Item	Responsible	Date for Resolution	Status
	YYYY/MM/DD	Provide update on letter to minister of education re: xyz	CAO	Nov Meeting	Open or Closed
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

Council Follow-Up Items

1

This template can be used to keep track of items following Council meetings as well as clearly identify the person(s) responsible for moving the action forward.

# OPPORTUNITY 2

## Increased Structure Regarding Funding and Decision Making

### Rationale

- **Transparency** - keeping transparency at the forefront of decision making is important for any municipal government, therefore the opportunity to evaluate and improve upon practices should be taken
- **Allocation of Funds** - developing a process for the allocation of funds can increase efficiency by streamlining smaller funding requests/decisions, and provides a tool to help evaluate larger funding decisions
- **Accountability** - ensuring accountability for the tax payers is of critical importance, and aligning with strategic goals

# OPPORTUNITY 2 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## INCREASED STRUCTURE REGARDING FUNDING AND DECISION MAKING

#	Recommended Actions	Implementation Complexity (H-M-L)	Dependencies & Considerations	Template, Tool, Resource?	Roles
5	Development of request for funding template with thresholds for level of analysis required based on dollar value	M	There will be an adjustment and familiarization period for staff and council	Proposed template shown on next slide	Lead: CAO Support: Council & Dept heads
6	Participate in <i>Evidence Based Decision Making</i> training provided by Municipal Affairs	L	Connect with Municipal Affairs following CAO appointment		Lead: Council Attendance: CAO, Dept heads & Council
7	Development of enhanced CAO/staff report format to council	L	There will be an adjustment and familiarization period for staff and council	Proposed template shown on next slide	Lead: CAO Support: Dept heads

# OPPORTUNITY 2 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## INCREASED STRUCTURE REGARDING FUNDING AND DECISION MAKING

Request for Funding Template:

### REQUEST FOR FUNDING FORM



REPORT TO: *Municipal Council*

SUBMITTED BY: *Name*

DATE: *Date*

SUBJECT: *Subject*

ORIGIN: *Origin of this Request*

Date of Request:	
Total Project Cost:	
Amount Requested:	

Project Description

Project Justification/Impact

Prepared By:		Date:	
Reviewed By:		Date:	
Authorized By:		Date:	

For internal use only

Funding Amount	Required Documentation
\$1 - \$2,499	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for Funding Form</li><li>Written Request</li><li>Grant Application</li></ul>
\$2,500 - \$9,999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for Funding Form</li><li>Written Request</li><li>Grant Application</li><li>Financial Statements</li></ul>
\$10,000 and up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for Funding Form</li><li>Written Request</li><li>Grant Application</li><li>Financial Statements</li><li>Business Plan</li></ul>


2

This template should be used in requests for funding. Department heads would fill out and organize any additional reports to be presented to council at the same time as the form.

# OPPORTUNITY 2 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## INCREASED STRUCTURE REGARDING FUNDING AND DECISION MAKING

### Departmental Report Template



Departmental Status Update: **Department A**

Date: December 15, 2017			
Council Follow-Ups	Status		Completed Since Last Status Update
Example 1	Ongoing	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &lt;Placeholder&gt;</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Example 2	Complete	G	
Example 3	Ongoing	R	
Challenges, Issues and Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &lt;Placeholder&gt;</li> </ul>		
Notes (e.g., questions for Council, decisions or inputs required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &lt;Placeholder&gt;</li> </ul>		

This template should be used by Department Heads to CAO. This will help ensure consistent tracking of items month to month, and allow CAO to take relevant points to council.

# OPPORTUNITY 3

## Heightened Clarity of Roles and Increased Communication

### Rationale

- **Between Departments** - small organizations often benefit from nimble staff that can support each other during peak times
- **Staff and Council** - opportunity to improve relationships, and follow proper communication channels to minimize 'make work' or duplication of efforts
- **Council and CAO** - opportunity to refresh proper communication channels (e.g. Council -> CAO -> Staff), and work together on strategic priorities in an organized manner
- **Citizens** - improving citizen engagement helps produce vibrant communities and promotes transparency and accountability



# OPPORTUNITY 3 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## HEIGHTENED CLARITY OF ROLES AND INCREASED COMMUNICATION

#	Recommended Actions	Implementation Complexity (H-M-L)	Dependencies & Considerations	Template, Tool, Resource?	Roles
8	Finding ways to support other departments while looking to break down departmental silos through use of cross functional teams, activities and meetings, when appropriate	M	Modification to culture can take some time		Lead: CAO Support: All department staff
9	Set more formal communication channels (set frequency and form - clarifying proper communication channels and ensure alignment on the prioritization of items)	M	Development of and adherence to strategy will take time	Proposed inclusions for communication strategy shown on next slide	Lead: CAO Adherence: Council
10	Allowing a short amount of time at the beginning of council meetings for citizen engagement	L	Communication of new process to citizens will be required		Lead: Council

# OPPORTUNITY 3 – RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT'D)

## HEIGHTENED CLARITY OF ROLES AND INCREASED COMMUNICATION

Communication Strategy/Plan should be considered with incoming CAO. Some guidelines could include:

- Follow a process and structured activity log after council meetings
- Refresh communication channels from council to staff (via CAO), and reminder of importance of CAO in priority setting for staff
- Allowing the first 15 minutes of each council meeting for the public to speak
- CAO updates on ongoing tasks/Dept head updates as needed

# OPPORTUNITY 4

## Increased Focus on Staff Satisfaction

### Rationale

- **Performance Management** - improved performance management procedures can help staff celebrate accomplishments as well as address any performance challenges early on, resulting in more efficient organizational operations overall
- **Succession Planning** - with several staff likely to retire within the next 10 years (42%-61%) there is a key opportunity to begin a succession planning process to ensure knowledge gaps are minimized

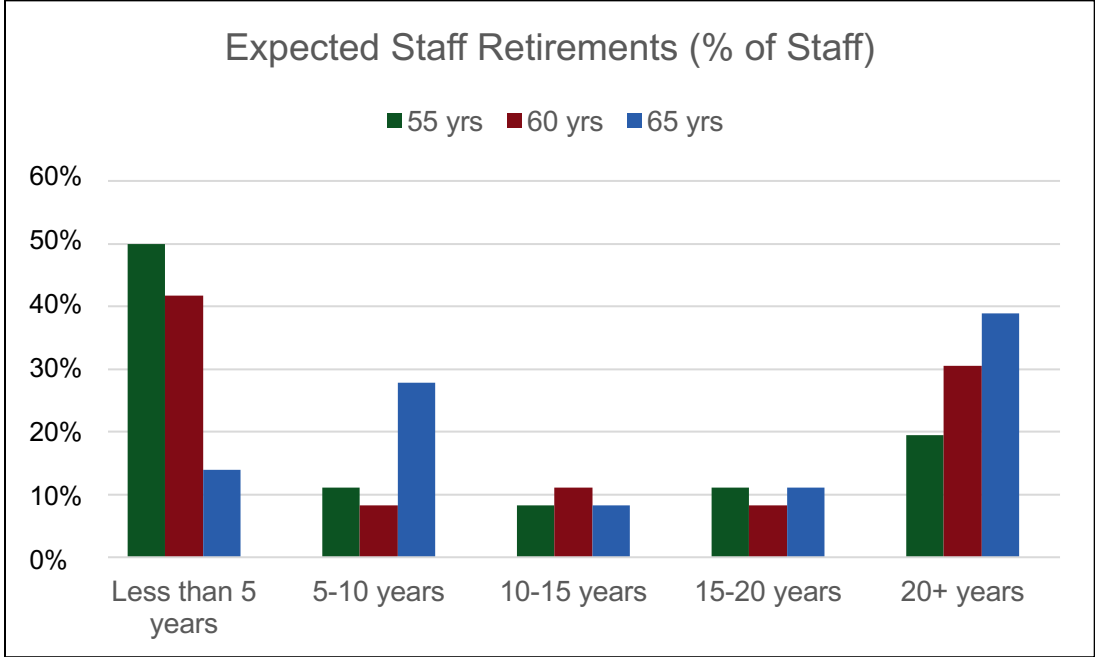
*\* Numerous recommended actions will result in increased staff satisfaction, including improved communication, clarification of roles, and increasing feedback and recognition*

# OPPORTUNITY 4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## INCREASED FOCUS ON STAFF SATISFACTION

#	Recommended Actions	Implementation Complexity (H-M-L)	Dependencies & Considerations	Template, Tool, Resource?	Role
11	Increase the focus on HR elements of feedback, recognition, discipline, training and development	M	Dependent upon how the identified skills gaps are addressed	Option Analysis on subsequent slides	Lead: CAO
12	Create succession plan for the organization, considering impacts to each department	M	Recommend priority placed on key positions (i.e. Water Operator II)		Lead: CAO
13	Survey of salaries of key Public Works positions to determine pay relative to other jurisdictions	L	Review of salary survey information can feed into determination of next steps	Results on subsequent slides	Lead: CAO
14	Focus on website design and implementation to enable further community engagement	Complete	Continue to find ways to make website more interactive for citizens		Lead: CAO

# OPPORTUNITY 4 - ORGANIZATION DEMOGRAPHICS



- Within the next 10 years it is estimated that up to 61% of staff will retire

Development of a succession plan needs to be a priority for key positions/individuals with subject matter expertise, credentials or experience that may retire in coming years. Emphasis on water and wastewater operators, as well as resources in Tourism, Recreation & Culture Department.

# OPPORTUNITY 4 - SALARY COMPARISON

A salary comparison was completed for 5 key Public Works roles

Position	Inverness Wage (\$/hr)	NOC* Wage (\$/hr)			Other Surveyed Municipalities (\$/hr)
		Low	Median	High	
Mechanic	\$25	\$13	\$20	\$29	-
Water Operator (Class I)	\$18	\$22	\$25	\$36	\$22
Water Operator (Class II)	\$28	\$16	\$25	\$42	\$24
Garbage Truck Driver	\$17	\$14	\$19	\$23	\$15
Recycling Sorter		\$13	\$17	\$20	

Considerations
Other surveyed municipalities do not have a mechanic on staff
Other jurisdictions have on average 1 water operator for each system, whereas Inverness has 2 for 20 systems
Majority of NS municipalities contract out garbage services

\* The National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016 is the authoritative resource on occupational information in Canada providing a standard taxonomy and framework for dialogue on Labour Market Information. When available data is provided at a regional level, provincial level and national level.

# OPPORTUNITY 5

## Identifying and Addressing Gaps & Risks

### Rationale

- Gaps in focus, resources or competency were identified in the following areas:
  - HR
  - IT
  - By-law enforcement
  - Procurement/Purchasing
  - Health & Safety
  - Fire Fighting and EMO
  - Asset Management
  - Service offerings in French
  - Water and Wastewater Treatment Operators
- Ongoing Risks
  - Within Public Works operations there are a number of risks identified related to priority task setting, equipment management and competency requirements

# OPPORTUNITY 5 - RECOMMENDATIONS

## IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING GAPS & RISKS

#	Recommended Actions	Implementation Complexity (H-M-L)	Dependencies & Considerations	Template, Tool, Resource?	Governance
15	Prioritization of the gaps and creation of action plans to address the gaps	M	Coordination by CAO and collaboration with all staff	Develop options and some pros and cons	Lead: CAO Support: All staff
16	Ongoing consideration of using contractors or consultants when additional resources are required or a specific skillset is needed	M	To be considered to address skill gaps or expedite work		Lead: CAO
17	Ongoing exploration of opportunities for sharing services with other municipalities	L	Consider existing skill gaps		Lead: CAO Support: Dept Heads
18	Complete an in-depth review of the risks within the Public Works department (priority on water and wastewater treatment staffing, succession planning and NSE interfaces)	H	Consideration given to gaps in asset management, task management, and resourcing		Lead: CAO Support: PW Director



# OPTIONS FOR ADDRESSING GAPS & RISKS

There are a multitude of ways to address the identified resource gaps, and once the new CAO is in place a comprehensive discussion should be had regarding who has the skills, capacity, and interest in the identified areas.

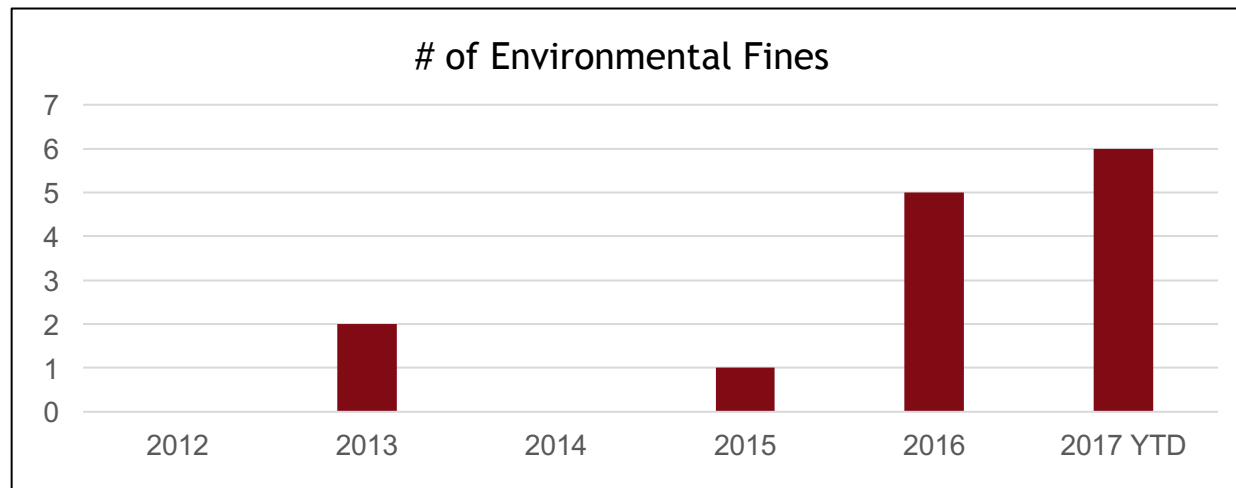
The following table identifies some options and considerations to be used as a starting point in this discussion

#	Option	Details	Pros	Cons
1	Add a Director of Corporate Services	This role would be the lead for IT services, HR, procurement, health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable a contact point for the areas lacking in support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential difficulty in obtaining a candidate with knowledge in all these areas</li> </ul>
2	Distribute the lead amongst department heads and CAO	Based on the skillsets of current department heads and CAO, identify the lead for each of the gap areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional costs for new position</li> <li>• Enabling current staff to feel empowered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially adding increased responsibility to staff already at capacity</li> <li>• May not have skillsets within current staff</li> </ul>
3	Investigate shared services with other municipalities	Share resources with other jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable resources to be focused while sharing the costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased complexity to sharing resources</li> </ul>
4	Combination of any of the above	Dependent on outcome from discussion regarding skills, capacity and interest design a custom model to meet the needs of the municipality		

# ADDRESSING PUBLIC WORKS RISKS

When reviewing public works operations consideration should be given to the following areas:

1. **Environmental Risks** - It is recommended that the municipality work with NS Environment to identify and address ongoing environmental concerns and develop additional checks and balances to ensure ongoing compliance with regulations



# ADDRESSING PUBLIC WORKS RISKS

When reviewing public works operations consideration should be given to the following areas (cont'd):

2. **Resourcing** - Initial focus on water & wastewater operations (Certification, number of systems/operator, backup strategy) and consideration of a casual pool to draw from.
3. Creation of an **asset management** program - including location, age and condition of equipment, preventative maintenance program and capital replacement strategy
4. Utilization of a more formal **task management process** - this will be necessary to ensure proper execution and follow up of tasks and projects. If implemented, the municipality will be able to better utilize current resources and keep projects on track.
5. Opportunities to **focus on core services**:
  1. Utilize mechanics on a contract basis versus on staff
  2. Consider contracting out of garbage collection
    - Majority of municipalities within the province contract out garbage collection services
    - It is easier to hold private contractors accountable for their service deficiencies than municipal departments
    - C.D. Howe Institute Report estimates that contracting out waste collection should save municipalities roughly **24%**

# ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN




















The Organizational Review and Strategic Plan are in alignment and have several areas of overlap.

● =Priorities from Strategic Plan

# PROPOSED TIMELINE

 = Ongoing

	#	Recommended Actions	Y1		Y2	
			Q1/Q2	Q3/Q4	Q1/Q2	Q3/Q4
	1	Formalize <b>council process</b>	█			
	2	Creation and adoption of ' <b>Request for Decision</b> ' template	█			
	3	Engage Municipal Affairs to complete a <b>refresh on roles and responsibilities</b>	█			
	4	Creation and adoption of <b>council meeting minutes template</b>	█			
	5	Development and adoption of <b>request for funding template</b>	█			
	6	Participate in <b>evidence based decision making training</b> by Municipal Affairs	█			
	7	Development of enhanced <b>CAO/staff report</b> format to council	█	█		
	8	Finding ways to <b>support other departments</b> when necessary	█			
	9	Set more <b>formal communication channels</b>	█	█		
	10	Introduce time at the beginning of <b>council meetings for citizen engagement</b>	█			
	11	Increase the <b>focus on HR elements</b>		█		
	12	Create <b>succession plan</b> procedure for the organization		█		
	13	Complete and react to <b>survey of salaries</b> for key Public Works positions	█	█		
	14	Focus on <b>new website implementation</b> to increase community engagement	Complete			
	15	Prioritization of the <b>gaps and creation of action plans</b> to address the gaps	█	█		
	16	Determination of when <b>contractors or consultants are best utilized</b>				
	17	Identification of opportunities for <b>sharing services with other municipalities</b>	█	█	█	█
	18	A more in-depth look at the <b>risks within the Public Works</b> department		█	█	█

# SUMMARY

# SUMMARY

- The municipality is in a healthy financial position, with a growing tax base which is unique in Nova Scotia's current demographic climate
- There is a strong passion for community within the council and staff
- There are some areas of improvement, that when acted upon will contribute to bringing the municipality into a more sustainable position

**Thank you** to both staff and Councilors for their time and contributions to this review!

# APPENDIX A – CURRENT STATE PRESENTATION



DAVIS PIER

CURRENT STATE

# MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF INVERNESS ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

OCTOBER 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2017

# CONTENTS

- Background and Context
- Organizational Factors
- Engagement Insights
- Key Opportunities
- Summary
- Next Steps

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The following factors contribute to the the need for an organizational review at this time:

- **Time to re-evaluate** - No organizational review in some years
- **New incoming CAO**- The CAO position is anticipated to be filled over the next 2-3 months
- **Strategic Direction** - Take opportunities to improve operations and align strategic priorities
- **New council members** - 50% of the current council is new

# PURPOSE OF TODAY'S PRESENTATION

We are here today to share a summary of 'What We Heard'

- Before moving forward with recommendation development, we want to update the Advisory Committee on themes and ensure we are on the same page regarding future opportunities
- Areas of focus and stakeholders engaged to date are based on initial direction received from Council and Department Heads
- Once current state themes are validated, we will move forward and develop recommendations and a plan through:
  - Further targeted consultation with Council and staff
  - Follow-up with other jurisdictions
  - Application of best practice approaches

We are proposing that once draft recommendations are developed, we 'pause' to consider any implications stemming from the Strategic Plan

# EXPECTATIONS OF ORG. REVIEW

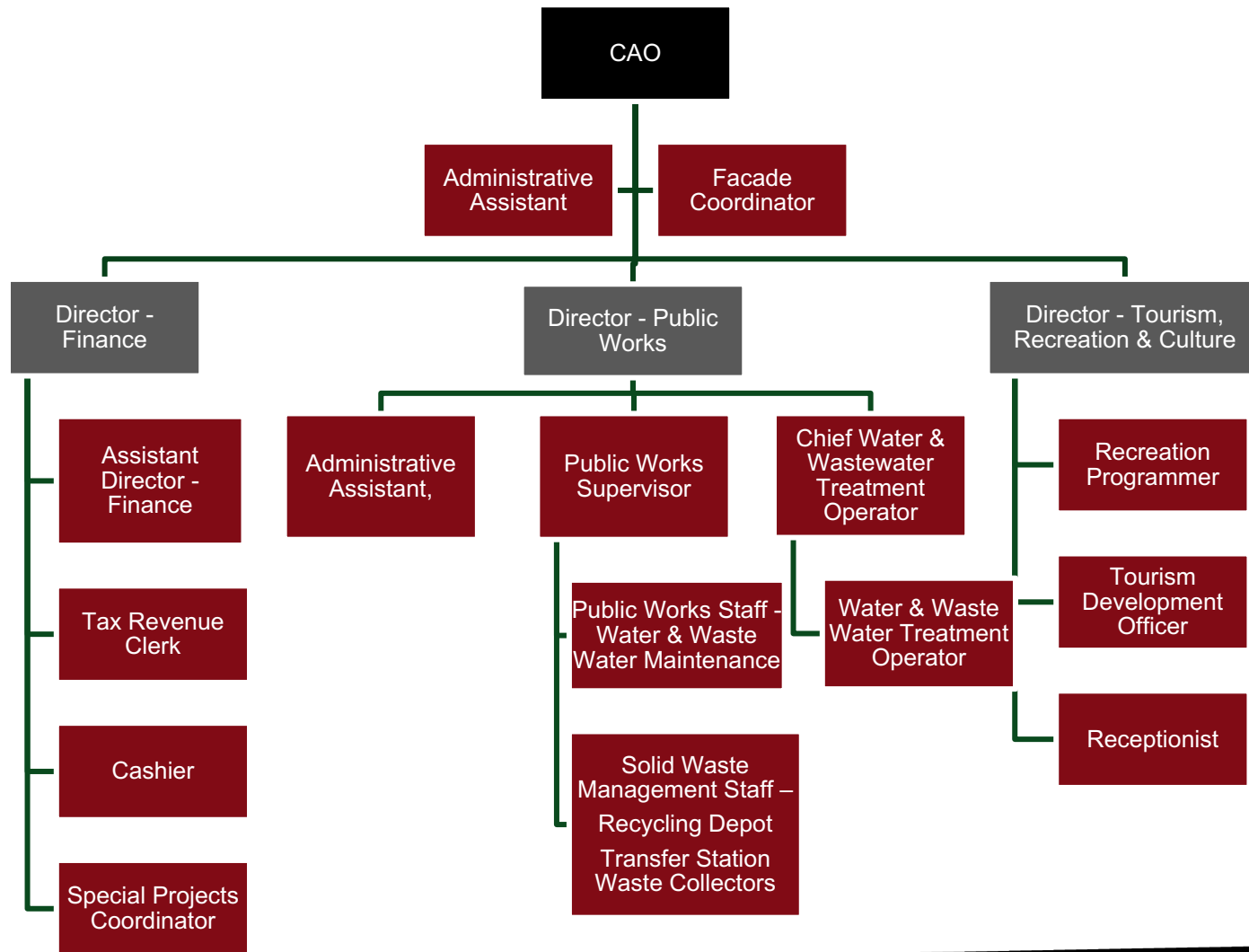
The Stakeholder	Expectations
Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved efficiencies and effectiveness of the organization</li><li>• Increased function of council meetings</li></ul>
Municipal Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved relationships with council and other departments</li><li>• Path towards working together more cohesively as an organization</li></ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved communication throughout the organization</li><li>• Clarity around the operational direction of the organization</li><li>• Increased focus on individuals</li></ul>
External Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased focus on strategic goals and opportunities</li><li>• Identification of areas of opportunity</li></ul>

# ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

There are five key organizational factors: strategy, **structure, processes and systems, people practices** and culture. Within this review we focused on three factors:

Organizational Factor	Description
Strategy	Understanding of strategic direction of the municipality Alignment to vision & agreement on priorities
Structure	<b>Clarity of roles and accountabilities</b> <b>Reporting relationships &amp; inter-departmental relations</b> Work Alignment Capacity
Processes & Systems	<b>Decision-making processes</b> <b>Meeting effectiveness</b> <b>Communication</b> Technology use <b>Standardized operational processes &amp; practices</b>
People Practices	<b>Leadership</b> <b>Staff engagement</b> <b>Organizational competency/capacity</b> <b>Performance management</b> <b>HR practices</b>
Culture	Behaviours & Values - driven by strategy and leadership

# CURRENT STATE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





# STAKEHOLDER INPUT TO DATE

## Internal Stakeholders

### Elected Officials

- Warden - Betty Ann MacQuarrie
- Deputy Warden - Alfred Poirier
- Councillor - Laurie Cranton
- Councillor - John Dowling
- Councillor - John MacLennan
- Councillor - Jim Mustard

### Municipal Management

- Former CAO - Joe O'Connor
- Interim CAO/Director of Finance - Tanya Tibbo
- Director of Public Works - Garrett Beaton
- Director of Recreation/Tourism - Donna MacDonald

### Staff

- 9 Staff from with input from all Departments

## External Stakeholders

### External Partners

- Municipal Affairs - Mark Peck & Emily Pond
- Nova Scotia Environment – Stefan Furey
- AMA – Janice Wentzell
- UNSM – Betty MacDonald
- Cape Breton Partnership – Keith MacDonald

### Other Jurisdictions

- Municipality of Chester - CAO
- Municipality of Argyle - CAO
- Municipality of the County of Annapolis - CAO
- Municipality of the County of Antigonish - Clerk & Warden

# WHAT WE HEARD - AREAS OF STRENGTH

Healthy  
Financial  
Position

Available  
external  
resources

Growing tax base  
-unique in Nova  
Scotia's current  
demographic  
climate

Upcoming Website  
changes will be  
more interactive  
for citizens






Passion for  
Community

Flexible and  
Nimble Staff

Desire to succeed  
and make  
improvements  
(e.g. call for Strategic Plan  
and Org Review)

# WHAT WE HEARD - THEMES

Based on our interviews with department heads, staff and councilors, the following **themes** were identified:

	Themes	
	1	Council Operations
	2	Decision Making and Allocation of Funds
	3	Communication
	4	Human Resources Management
	5	Public Works Operations

# WHAT WE HEARD CONTINUED...

## Theme

1

### Council Operations

- **Agendas** - interviewees noted that council agendas and time estimates could be better adhered to
- **Materials** - lack of detailed materials ahead of time impact the function of operations
- **Structure/Order** - adhering to 'Robert's rule of Order' is not always happening
- **Follow up** - tracking of follow-up items does not appear to be structured or consistently communicated between all relevant parties (e.g. staff to CAO to Council)

## Theme

2

### Decision Making and Allocation of Funds

- **Transparency** - interviewees reiterated the importance of transparency in council's decision making process, all decisions should be introduced and debated in public council meetings
- **Allocation of Funds** - lack of process in terms of funding decisions. Decision making process should reflect the size of the investment/funding request
- **Accountability** - funding decisions are not followed up with an evaluation of allocated funding (e.g. impact of investment)
- **Tracking of Action Items** - lack of clear next steps and roles in moving decisions forward

# WHAT WE HEARD CONTINUED...

## Theme

3

### Communication

- **Between Departments** - interviewees identified departments often operate in silos, and relationships could be strengthened
- **Staff and Council** - lack of process can create confusion and 'make work' for all parties to be on the same page
- **Council and CAO** - information is not currently flowing through the proper channels Council->CAO->Staff, as per guidelines of Municipal Government Act, resulting in lack of process related to work prioritization for staff
- **Citizens** - lack of citizen engagement with municipal decision making

## Theme

4

### Human Resources Management

- **Designated HR Lead** - responsibility for HR management (hiring, onboarding, discipline, recruitment, etc.) falls on Department Heads with no HR lead for the municipality
- **Performance Management** - lack of process and formal documentation on individuals' performance, creating gaps in process for: feedback, recognition, disciplinary issues, ongoing evaluation, individual progress/growth, and training/development
- **Succession Planning** - several staff are within 10 years of retirement creating a risk of knowledge loss, challenges and delays in hiring new resources
- **Feedback and Recognition** - staff contributions are not always recognized

# WHAT WE HEARD CONTINUED...

Theme

5

## Public Works Operations

- **Task Management** - lack of workload prioritization results in delays in daily work assignments resulting in idle staff while waiting for assignments
- **Resourcing** - Lack of casual pool to draw from when work assignments do not align with available resources. Interviewees noted need for additional resources at peak times.
- **Water and Wastewater Treatment** - continues to be a risk for the following reasons:
  - **Number of systems** to upkeep and maintain - 20 systems, daily sampling workload, and large geographic area to cover
  - **Maintenance and age of equipment** - no preventative maintenance plan and minimal information available on current assets, condition, redundancies, replacement dates, tec.
  - **Competency** required - current chief water and wastewater treatment operator is the only WT Class II License holder in the organization, and is very close to retirement
- **Asset management** - lack of asset listing identifying location, age and condition of equipment. No preventative maintenance program or capital replacement strategy to properly plan for maintenance, repairs and replacements

# OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

Based on interview themes, five key opportunities have been identified:



## Themes

1 Council Operations

2 Decision Making and Allocation of Funds

3 Communication

4 Human Resources Management

5 Public Works Operations

## Opportunities

More Productive & Efficient Council Operations

Increased Structure Regarding Funding and Decision Making

Heightened Clarity of Roles and Increased Communication

Increased Focus on Staff Satisfaction

Identifying and Addressing Gaps & Risks

# OPPORTUNITY 1

## More Productive & Efficient Council Operations

### Rationale

- **Agendas** - opportunity to improve the function of council meetings with greater adherence to set agendas
- **Materials** - additional process and rigour around materials to aid in informed decision making could benefit both council and staff
- **Structure/Order** - there is an opportunity to refresh council and staff on roles and responsibilities. Additionally, there is an opportunity to work together to improve the flow of council meetings and foster respectful debate and dialogue
- **Follow up** - more formal process related to meeting minutes, required actions (by person), and deadlines would be helpful

### Possible Actions

- Development of more formal process for council operations (i.e. creation of a procedural bylaw)
- Create template/guide for request for decision to be utilized for all council decisions
- Engage Municipal Affairs to complete a refresh on roles and responsibilities
- Create an effective template for minutes (including tracking decisions, action items and follow-ups)



# OPPORTUNITY 2

## Increased Structure Regarding Funding and Decision Making

### Rationale

- **Transparency** - keeping transparency at the forefront of decision making is important for any municipal government, therefore the opportunity to evaluate and improve upon practices should be taken
- **Allocation of Funds** - developing a process for the allocation of funds can increase efficiency by streamlining smaller funding requests/decisions, and provides a tool to help evaluate larger funding decisions
- **Accountability** - ensuring accountability for the tax payers is of critical importance, and aligning with strategic goals

### Possible Actions

- Development of request for funding template with thresholds for level of analysis required based on dollar value
- Participate in evidence based decision making training provided by Municipal Affairs, in alignment with goals of strategic plan
- Development of enhanced CAO/staff report format
  - Including development of consistent monthly reporting format from department heads to CAO

# OPPORTUNITY 3

## Heightened Clarity of Roles and increased Communication

### Rationale

- **Between Departments** - small organizations often benefit from nimble staff that can support each other during peak times
- **Staff and Council** - opportunity to improve relationships, and follow proper communication channels to minimize 'make work' or duplication of efforts
- **Council and CAO** - opportunity to refresh proper communication channels (e.g. Council -> CAO -> Staff), and work together on strategic priorities in an organized manner
- **Citizens** - improving citizen engagement helps produce vibrant communities and promotes transparency and accountability

### Possible Actions

- Finding ways to support other departments when necessary
- Set more formal communication channels (set frequency and form)
- Clarifying proper communication channels and ensure alignment on the prioritization of items
- Allowing a short amount of time at the beginning of council meetings for citizen engagement

# OPPORTUNITY 4

## Increased Focus on Staff Satisfaction

### Rationale

- **Performance Management** - improved performance management procedures can help staff celebrate accomplishments as well as address any performance challenges early on, resulting in more efficient organizational operations overall
- **Succession Planning** - with several staff likely to retire within the next 10 years (42%-61%) there is a key opportunity to begin a succession planning process to ensure knowledge gaps are minimized

### Possible Actions

- Increase the focus on HR elements of feedback, recognition, discipline, training and development (could be accomplished through a variety of means)
  - Create succession plan procedure for the organization, considering impacts to each department
- \* Numerous recommended actions will result in increased staff satisfaction, including improved communication, clarification of roles, and more increasing feedback and recognition*

# OPPORTUNITY 5

## Identifying and Addressing Gaps & Risks

### Rationale

- Gaps in focus, resources or competency were identified in the following areas:
  - HR
  - IT
  - By-law enforcement
  - Procurement/Purchasing
  - Health & Safety
  - Fire Fighting and EMO
  - Asset Management
- Ongoing Risks
  - Within Public Works operations there are a number of risks identified related to priority task setting, equipment management and competency requirements

### Possible Actions

- Prioritization of the gaps and creation of action plans to address the gaps
- Identification of opportunities for sharing services with other municipalities
- A more in-depth look at the risks within the Public Works department should be completed when the new CAO is in place. Suggestion that a comprehensive session with Nova Scotia Environment take place

# ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

## Operating Within Mandate

- Opportunity for the municipality to focus their efforts on those items within the mandate of the municipality, while communicating regional issues to provincial counterparts and working to support provincial or regional initiatives that serve the constituents

## Opportunity for Shared Services

- Consider further use of shared services to efficiently delivery services:
  - Some options include:
    - HR services,
    - IT services,
    - Health & Safety,
    - and EMO)

## Increased Utilization of Network

- Leverage the supports, resources and connections available within the UNSM, AMA, REN, EPDC, and other municipalities to capitalize on lessons learned, best practices, and a network of supports

# NEXT STEPS

# NEXT STEPS

- Incorporate feedback from today
- Further progress development of recommendations
- Development of materials to support recommendations (e.g. development of processes and procedures, templates, etc.)
- Utilization of input from strategic plan

# APPENDIX B - SUPPORTING INFORMATION



# HUMAN RESOURCE SCOPE

Based on the feedback received the following areas of focus need to be considered related to the HR function:

- Recruitment
- Training and career development
- Administration of compensation and benefits
- Health and safety
- Employee relations
- Determination of required diversity of the workforce (including Francophone services)

AMA Survey Results - At a minimum 75% of the municipalities in NS have formal current job descriptions, defined salary bands, annual performance reviews and an EAP program.

These items are currently missing or lacking in Inverness, and should be considered when determining a strategy for addressing HR functions